

SMART GROWTH IN CANYON COUNTRY: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN MOAB, UTAH

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BY ABBY SCOTT
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In this paper, I have attempted to take a broad look at development policy in Moab and Grand County. I have used the General Plans of both areas as the starting point and guide. I chose the General Plan because it is a document created for the specific purpose of articulating the long-term goals and policies regarding development in the area. It is necessary for communities in the Western United States to have a clearly articulated plan regarding future growth and development, especially because historically, much development has taken place without careful consideration of the long term context.

In this study I have attempted to recognize both the benefits and costs associated with tourism and I argue that careful planning and management can ameliorate problems while still achieving benefits of tourism. The central thesis of this paper is that the adoption of regionally tailored smart growth concepts as guiding development principles is the crucial first step toward creating a strong economy and community in Moab and Grand County that will have long term benefits for tourists and locals alike by allowing for mindful future development without sacrificing the region's unique sense of place.

Moab is located in Grand County, in the Southeastern part of the Utah. It is situated in an oasis surrounded by enormous red-rock and desert terrain. It is in close proximity to Arches National Park, Canyonlands National Park, the Colorado River and the Manti-LaSal National Forest. The population in Moab fluctuates greatly throughout the year due to the high number of seasonal employees that inhabit the town for stretches of a few months during the summer tourist season. The number of year-round residents of Moab is 4,779 according to the 2000 census. As of 2006, the Grand County population stood at 9,024 people. It is important to note the vast amounts of public land in Grand County. There are 2,363,594 acres of land in Grand County, 71.7% is managed by the federal government; of that 66% is managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), 3.2% is managed by the National Park Service (NPS), 1.2% is managed by the National Forest Service (NFS), and .08% is managed by the U.S. Department of Defense. Only 4.3% of the land is privately owned, the remaining land is owned by the state (15.5%), or is American Indian tribal land (4.4%).

Today, Grand County's economy is dominated by tourism, meaning that the regional economy would greatly diminish in size in the absence of tourism industries. Prior to tourism, Moab and Grand County experienced economic booms related to livestock grazing/ranching and uranium mining. From the late 1800s until the early twentieth century, cattle grazing dominated the region, ending only when years of overgrazing had ravaged the area's native grasses and large corporate cattle operations pulled out. The next major economic and development boom was experienced in the 1950s with the discovery of major sources of uranium to be mined. Moab was "The Uranium Capital of the World" until the early

1960s, when demand declined sharply. Historically, agriculture and farming have never been the primary land use in Grand County, but, are important to the rural character of the area.

After the initial bust of uranium mining, Moab and Grand County went through a period of declining economic activity and population transition. By the late 1980s, Moab had lost 35% of its tax base, 25% of its population, and unemployment was about 20%.¹ Grand County was desperate for a new economic base to provide jobs for the people and tax revenue for the county, and tourism seemed like an ideal choice. Because of its proximity to the national parks, Colorado River and thousands of acres of public land controlled by the BLM, recreational tourism in Moab took off rapidly. It is now estimated that more than one million visitors pass through Moab annually.² In the year 2007 Arches NP had 860,181 visitors, Canyonlands had 417,560 visitors.³ It is also estimated that 47.2% of all jobs are Tourism and Recreation industry related, including jobs in the Leisure and Hospitality (32.2%) and Retail Trade (nearly 15%.) categories.⁴ In 1980, tourism directly and indirectly provided only about 11% of all income received by Grand County residents.⁵

Moab is a gateway town, meaning that the root of its appeal to tourists is that it serves as the gateway to the surrounding public land. Moab is the place that facilitates travel on the surrounding land, and is not itself a tourist destination. The area now attracts, among others, mountain bikers, hikers, kayakers, rafters, jeepers, off-road vehicle users, climbers, photographers and sightseers who will spend some time in the City of Moab.

Initially, some people welcomed the lessening of agricultural and extractive industries as a positive change from the perceived destructive nature of grazing and mining. Tourism also provided jobs for the residents of Grand County. Unemployment in the country went from a rate of 20% in the 1980s to the 5.5% as of February 2008.⁶ Jobs are brought into the area, money is brought into the economy, and people are lifted out of poverty. This is positive for many residents, and the accessibility of such incredible natural treasures is positive for tourists who are looking to experience an area that is new or different.

However, many now believe that tourism is itself an extractive industry, and one that is possibly even more damaging. The type of tourism that exists in Grand County and other gateway communities is

¹ Bill Hedden, "Towns Angling for Tourism Should Beware of the Great White Shark," *High Country News*, Sept. 5, 1994. Adapted from testimony given before the House Committee on Natural Resources, which met in Salt Lake City, Utah, April 7, 1994. http://www.hcn.org/servlets/hcn.Article?article_id=542

² City of Moab General Plan. 2002.

³ NPS Stats – National Park Service Public Use Statistics Office. <http://www.nature.nps.gov/stats/>

⁴ Grand County and City of Moab Housing Study and Initial Housing Plan. March 17, 2008. Sec. VI. Pg. 9-10.

⁵ Grand County General Plan Update. April 13, 2004. Sec. 1.6. Pg. 33.

⁶ NEED TO CITE 1980s NUMBER and Utah Department of Workforce Services. "Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rates." <http://jobs.utah.gov/opencms/wi/pubs/une/season.pdf>

a low-margin business, meaning that large volume of visitors is essential for an area to be profitable. Though costs for gear or guiding and instruction can be high, access to the land in the Western United States is usually cheap or free.⁷ Large numbers of tourists in the Western United States are attempting to recreate as cheaply as possible, and often, these tourists do not focus on the environmental and community costs. This mindset can produce recreational tourism that takes more than it gives to the human and natural resources utilized in the experience, and is, thus, inherently extractive.⁸ Because most Moabites include the surrounding land in the connection they have with their home, disrespect for the land and community is often felt very strongly and personally.

Certain aspects of mass tourism can threaten the collective sense of place. Sense of place is defined generally as the sense of the beauty and the wealth of phenomena that comprise a particular place, the factors that make an environment psychologically comfortable and how one defines themselves in terms of a given piece of land.⁹ Based on the research done for this study, the two main qualities that make Grand County a desirable place to live are the rural character of the area and the scenic and recreational opportunities offered by the surrounding land. The latter being the main reason that people want to visit the area. Tourism can threaten the sense of place of the residents because it creates many more stakeholders, some with a much smaller connection to the land than the residents. The town becomes claimed by so many people with different visions of what the town should be that the locals often do not feel the same ownership of their community. Like many communities in the West, residents tend to fall into one of two opposing views; those who want to keep the population small and discourage further growth and development, and those who work to increase the population and promote growth and development. This creates a special challenge for crafting policy that will apply to all residents.

Other threats to Moab's sense of place include:

(1) Fear of rapid growth of the residential population. This is mainly unfounded in Grand County as the growth rate is projected to be less than 1% after 2002.¹⁰ The growth of second home development in Grand County slightly threatens the availability of affordable housing.

(2) Rapid growth of the tourist population. Reliable statistics on the number of visitors to Moab do not exist, but if Moab visitation trends mirror visitation trends at Arches and Canyonlands National

⁷ There is the notable exception of ski areas, but often, access to the *land* is free, as it is owned by the U.S. Forest Service, and using the privately owned lifts is where the ticket price comes from.

⁸ William L. Bryan. *Appropriate Cultural Tourism – Can It Exist? Searching for an Answer: Three Arizona Case Studies*. In Hal K. Rothman (Ed), *The Culture of Tourism, the Tourism of Culture*. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press. 2003), 142

⁹ Xu, Yan. "Sense of Place and Identity." East St. Louis Action Research Project. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. <http://www.eslarp.uiuc.edu/la/la437-f95/reports/yards/main.html>

¹⁰ Grand County General Plan Update. April 13, 2004. Pg 4.

Parks and trends for new hotel room and campsite construction, it is likely that visitation rates are steadily rising. However, many outside factors could contribute to a slowing of tourist visitation.

(3) Sprawl development and encroachment on open space and public land. This is an important development problem in Moab because the scenic beauty of the area and the vast amount of open space and accessible public land is the cornerstone of the economic vitality of the community, and it must not be compromised.

(4) Homogenization the area through franchise development and loss of local business. Some residents and visitors lament what is perceived as the invasion or corporate franchise development because it is seen as a threat to the unique character of the town. Others see a need for greater access to affordable goods through the expansion or franchise development.

(5) A shortage of affordable housing. A March 2008 study, *Grand County and City of Moab Housing Study and Initial Housing Plan*, finds that housing prices (rental and purchase) have increased at rates considerably faster than wages, decreasing the relative affordability of the housing market. Between 2000 and 2006, home prices increased 112%, rental price increased 74% and wages increased only 34%.¹¹ This, combined with the fact that up to 35% of total housing stock is in dilapidated or unacceptable condition¹², has created a significant shortage of affordable housing in Grand County. The county has had problems in attracting professionals such as teachers, firefighters, police officers, and hospital workers, to the area and has made it difficult for young families to purchase homes.

(6) Workforce challenges. In addition to the challenges associated with attracting young professionals to an area with a dearth of affordable housing, Moab and Grand County also face other significant workforce challenges. Jobs in the tourism industry are often low skill and low paying. In Moab, these jobs are also highly seasonal and with very low rates of unionization. Per capita personal income in Grand County is slightly below the state average, but this figure, “may show that relatively few individuals earn a disproportionately large income while the vast majority earns a much lower income.”¹³ Education levels in Grand County also lag behind state averages. Of persons over the age of 25, 79.9% of Grand County residents are high school graduates, and 85.1% of Utah residents are. There is also a significant gap between Grand County residents with a bachelor’s degree (15.4%) and Utah residents (22.3%),¹⁴ and there is little opportunity for higher education within Grand County.

(7) Potential widespread negative consequences if tourism slows. Tourism is a precarious business, highly dependent on national and global determining factors such as international currency rates, land

¹¹ Grand County and City of Moab Housing Study and Initial Housing Plan. March 17, 2008.

¹² Grand County and City of Moab Housing Study and Initial Housing Plan. March 17, 2008.

¹³ Grand County General Plan Update. April 13, 2004.

¹⁴ Grand County General Plan Update. April 13, 2004. Sec. 1.2.8. Pg. 9

use policy, and unpredictable popularity. Among the factors of concern in Moab and Grand County are rising gas prices and slowing American economy causing fewer people to travel. There is also the risk of Moab becoming so popular that it will lose that special value that is associated with visiting a place that is seen as remote or adventurous. However, as the Euro strengthens in relation to the dollar, it is also likely that the area will see more European tourists.

A destination community is limited in what it can do to decide who visits, and how those visitors will treat the people and the area. This is especially complicated when that destination community must balance the practical needs of jobs and tax income with the desire to protect the land and the culture. There is no easy solution. To help moderate some of the problems associated with development in a tourism-dominated economy, the solution lies in careful planning of the development that is created for tourists as well as the development that is not specifically for tourists, but is related to the fact that tourism is the dominant industry in the area. Through articulation in the comprehensive plan of the area, the community can do a lot to direct development in keeping with the long-term growth and development vision held by the community, the planners and the government. Adoption of the following principles into the long-term vision for the community will not only help regulate the physical aspects of development associated with tourism, but will also help to preserve the crucial sense of place that is associated with the built environment. These principles are based on smart growth concepts, but have been adapted to fit the specific context of Moab and Grand County. Smart growth is generally defined as a means to achieve a better, more equitable and more affordable built environment through adoption of a broad agenda of policies to use land more efficiently and to promote better planning.¹⁵

The following principles are all included in varying degrees into the General Plans of Moab and Grand County, but, in some instances these principles should be expanded upon:

(1) Create a range of housing opportunities and choices. In the Moab and Grand County area, a wide range of housing needs exist, including the need for year-round affordable housing, affordable housing for the seasonal workforce and the desire for luxury developments for full and part-time residents. In both the Moab and Grand County Plans, the need for more affordable housing is explicitly addressed with several plans for policy implementation. There is nothing in either plan that directly addresses a guiding framework for luxury development. There is currently controversy over proposed large-scale luxury developments. It would be in the best interest of the region to articulate a clear vision regarding future luxury and subdivision development, as this is likely to be an issue that is encountered in the future. Further research could be done to investigate how and if other similar regions incorporate

¹⁵ Mary M. Edwards and Anna Haines, "Evaluating Smart Growth: Implications for Small Communities," *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, no. 27 (2007): 49, <http://jpe.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/27/1/49>

guidelines for luxury developments into long-term planning documents. Moab and Grand County should also investigate adopting stronger rules for development of employee housing to accommodate the seasonal workforce.

(2) Encourage regional, community, and stakeholder collaboration. In Moab and Grand County, it is essential to collaborate private landowners, the National Park Service, the National Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management. The Grand County and Moab Plans address collaboration with these agencies where appropriate. Both plans also repeatedly emphasize the importance of collaboration between Moab and Grand County on many development matters, and both include mention of collaboration with several different public and private agencies in certain circumstances.

One of the most important aspects of regional collaboration is between Moab and Grand County and neighboring San Juan County. Spanish Valley, which is an unincorporated suburb of Moab, is strongly tied to Grand County, but is located primarily in neighboring San Juan County. Grand County agencies provide services for San Juan County residents, the residents of San Juan county are given the opportunity to give input in Grand County land use decisions, and vice versa, and are expected to make a fair contribution to the costs of the facilities and services that they use.¹⁶ Grand County addresses the issue of collaboration on shared services, but there is no mention of developing a shared long-term development vision with San Juan County. The Moab Plan does not ever address collaboration with San Juan County directly. Both plans should consider adopting provisions that stress cooperation with San Juan County is issues of land use planning and management and possibly develop binding, mutually beneficial intergovernmental agreements.

Community and stakeholder collaboration has been addressed very thoroughly in both plans, including numerous opportunities for residents to participate in the formation of policy and updates to the General Plans.

(3) Avoid sprawl development with policy that will create walkable and bikeable neighborhoods, mix land uses, strengthen and direct development toward existing communities and/or take advantage of compact building design.

The ability to walk and bike everywhere is seen as an important component of the rural character of Moab, and the City of Moab and Grand County General Plans have done a very thorough job of addressing this need.

Increased residential and commercial density and mixed land uses are less applicable in a place like Moab/Grand County than in metropolitan areas that have less room for expansion and greater population density. Both Plans emphasize a commitment to separation of residential and commercially zoned areas.

¹⁶Grand County General Plan Update. April 13, 2004. Sec. 4.2.5 . Pg. 47.

There are provisions in the Moab Plan to encourage the development of mixed-use housing, combining affordable housing with commercial use and building affordable housing units above commercial ground floor units, and to explore non-traditional housing options such as live/work housing, garage or garden apartments and caretaker units. Expansion of this provision could aid in increasing the stock of affordable housing.

Both Plans make specific mention of exploring the possibility of infill development and/or clustering development in the region. The Grand County Plan emphasizes development clustering in numerous places, and the City of Moab plan includes mention of clustering commercial businesses, residences and public buildings. This is an efficient way to increase the housing stock without expanding too much into undeveloped land. Neither plan directly states a commitment to improving the non-historical dilapidated housing stock. Both plans would do well to explicitly state a commitment to directing development toward existing communities whenever possible, especially working to rehabilitate dilapidated housing.

(4) Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty and critical environmental areas.

Open space, farmland and natural beauty are part the surrounding landscape and agricultural character of the region that is valued so highly by residents and visitors. Both plans include several mentions of the importance the preservation of these qualities, and each directly makes a strong commitment to the preservation of open space, undeveloped ridgelines and farmland, as well as the availability public parks.

(5) Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place. Both Plans address this principle on a number of dimensions. Many of the aforementioned principles include aspects that are related to the distinct, attractive community of Moab and its strong sense of place. It is important that both Plans have made very strong commitments to preserving the aspects of the town that make up the rural character and open space that is so highly valued by the community. The rural character and distinctness of the area could be compromised by further corporate franchise development and residential subdivision development. The importance of the strong and distinct sense of place of Moab should be considered heavily against other concerns when making decisions regarding whether to allow such development, and should be clearly articulated in both plans.

(6) Diversification of economy and preservation of local business.

Economic diversity is cited as a major concern for many Grand County residents. As such, both Plans have provisions that encourage diversity in new business in community (but with respect to maintaining the rural character), and encourage industries that will provide off-season employment. The Grand County Plan expressed not only the need for a strong, diversified, year-round economy, but identified several key industries to pursue; “tourism/conventions, film, 4-year destination college, health care,

retirement/second home ownership and natural resource development.”¹⁷ The Moab Plan did not mention the film industry, health care, and/or retirement second home ownership, but should be included if it is seen as desirable by the community. This is also where Moab or Grand County could include provisions requiring or encouraging business development that would provide a living wage or some degree higher than the federal minimum wage to workers in the area. This should be seriously considered, as the region is plagued by low wage employment and rising housing costs. Neither plan includes any direct provisions regarding local business preservation or encouragement. Both plans should consider adding provisions that would address this concern.

This paper concludes with areas for further study including, evaluation of the implementation of the principles articulated in the general plan, comparison to similar communities, green and sustainable development provision, greater worker protections, and a study of immigrant and seasonal workers.

¹⁷ Grand County General Plan Update. April 13, 2004. Sec. 4.2.4.. Pg. 45.

PERSONAL STATEMENT

Growing up in Salt Lake City, my family spent a lot of time in the deserts of Southern Utah. When I think of the time that I spent as a kid camping out in the desert with our family friends, I think of being one of a big pack of kids riding bikes, climbing rocks, wading up creeks, playing in the dirt all day and watching the stars at night. During this time, however, my family only passed through Moab quickly.

The first time I actually stayed in Moab wasn't until I was nineteen. After my first year of college in San Francisco, I was back in my hometown of Salt Lake City, living at my parent's house and doing data entry and filing work in my father's office. A good friend of mine from high school had moved down to Moab for that summer to work as a river guide, and one weekend my friend Jane and I went down to visit him and play in the desert for a few days. He was a sunburned river guide rowing tourists down the Colorado every day in 100 degree plus temperatures, living in a dive apartment with five other guys, and making about enough money to sustain himself and have just a little saved up at the end of the season. Every day when he and the other guides got off of work, or when they had days off, they would venture out into the surrounding lands to one of an inconceivable number of beautiful places in the desert or the nearby La Sal Mountains. Immediately I was hooked, so was Jane. Jane and I have been in Moab every summer since.

I find myself doing pretty much the same things that I loved doing when I was seven. I ride bikes, climb rocks, wade up creeks, play in the dirt all day and watch the stars at night. I suppose the difference now is that in between the time I'm doing those activities I'm also working full time. I've been in Moab for three summers, working at a rafting company for one and a popular restaurant for the other two.

I was lured to Moab because of the overwhelming amount of breathtaking public land surrounding it. But, once I was living there, I fell in love with the town itself. Most of the residents are friendly and welcoming, but also strong and capable people who are used to working hard to get by. I can bike everywhere I need to go around town. Every time I'm at the City Market I run into someone I know. Many times, I have startled grazing deer while cutting through a field behind my apartment on the way to work in the morning. The library is cool and inviting on hot afternoons. It is all of these things, but it is so much more. There is just something about Moab. It keeps me coming back.

I want to be the first to admit that my experience in the town is limited. Though I have spent many days visiting in the winter, spring and fall, I have only lived there in the summer. Most of the people I spend time with are young seasonal workers without kids or mortgage payments. In a tourist town, it takes a lot more than that to call yourself a local.

After my freshman year in San Francisco, and a year living and working in Montana, I transferred to Occidental College in Los Angeles. Nothing against Los Angeles, but I don't belong here. I have truly enjoyed living in a city of 8 million for the past few years, but I doubt I would have liked it as much without being able to retreat to a town of 5000 every summer. I find myself defending Moab to my friends in LA and defending LA to my friends in Moab.

In my paper, I have attempted to take a broad look at development policy in Moab and Grand County. I have used the General Plans of both areas as the starting point and guide. I chose the General Plan because it is a document created for the specific purpose of articulating the long-term goals and policies regarding development in the area. It is necessary for communities in the Western United States to have a clearly articulated plan regarding future growth and development, especially because historically, much development has taken place without careful consideration of the long term context.

I realize that my paper covers many topics that could each be full and detailed studies. This was a conscious choice. I have spent my time at Occidental studying urban areas, Los Angeles especially, and I saw this as an opportunity to learn more about planning in rural areas, specifically Moab and Grand County. Entire papers, if not entire books, could be written on subjects like affordable housing, open space preservation or the legacy of extractive industries in Moab and other national park gateway communities. I only touch on these subjects briefly. Though I realize that my brief discussion does not do justice to many of the topics I include in my paper, it was important for me that I try to get an overview of many of the issues facing Moab in regards to development. It was very difficult for me to stop researching and actually start writing, as almost every topic that I started to explore lead me down a path of more and more information that all seemed interesting and relevant.

INTRODUCTION

In his essay, *The Scientification of Tourism*, Jafar Jafari outlines different “platforms” from which to view tourism research.¹⁸ The first is the “advocacy platform,” which focuses on tourism’s positive contributions to job creation and economic development. This is opposed by the “cautionary platform,” which points out the costs of tourism to the local culture and economy. The “adaptancy platform,” the viewpoint from which I have attempted to write this paper, recognizes both the benefits and costs associated with tourism and argues that careful planning and management can ameliorate problems while still achieving benefits of tourism.¹⁹

In my research I came upon many examples of the “advocacy platform” and many more examples of the “cautionary platform.” This study attempts to unite this information using the “adaptancy platform.” It is important to first acknowledge that tourism presents many varied problems that can potentially have very negative effects on locals and tourists or threaten sensitive environmental areas. However, equally important is to acknowledge that tourism also has many benefits for travelers as well as destination communities. This study reveals that there are many challenges, but the economic and cultural benefits of tourism can be maintained and the problems mitigated through careful long-term planning. Moab and Grand County, Utah provide the context for this study. The following tells the story of the Moab area, as it has developed through different economic and developmental phases, up until today, when the culture and economy are dominated by tourism. Moab is currently a well-established and popular destination community for visitors seeking outdoor recreation opportunities on the surrounding public land including two national parks in close proximity. The town has reached a point where tourism-related industries form a solid economic base. As such, Moab and Grand County are in a position to more carefully regulate what type of development takes place to ensure that the decisions being made today are in the best interest of the long-term vitality of the region. Such planning must also take into account the landscape of interests from families that have lived in the area for generations to foreign tourists who quickly pass through Moab on a tour of American national parks. This study makes the case that the adoption of regionally tailored smart growth concepts into the General or Comprehensive Plan of the city or county is a crucial step in creating strong economies and communities. To preserve the specific aspects of the community that are important to residents, as well

¹⁸ Jafar Jafari, *The scientification of tourism*. In S. A. El-Wahababd and N. El-Roby (eds), *Scientific Tourism* (pp.43-75), (Cairo: Egyptian Society of Scientific Experts on Tourism), 1992. Cited in David B. Weaver “Tourism and the Elusive Paradigm of Sustainable Development” In *A Companion to Tourism*, edited by Lew, Alan A, C. Michael Hall, and Allan M. Williams, 555-568. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2004.

¹⁹ There is also a forth platform, the “scientific platform,” which “focuses on the objective understanding of tourism as a phenomenon.” I did not include this because this platform is not directly relevant to my research.

as tourists, the long-term growth and development plans must take into consideration the ways that a tourism economy creates benefits, problems, challenges and opportunities.

The central thesis of this paper is that the adoption of regionally tailored smart growth concepts as guiding development principles is the crucial first step toward creating a strong economy and community in Moab and Grand County that will have long term benefits for tourists and locals alike by allowing for mindful future development without sacrificing the region's unique sense of place.

BASIC MOAB INFORMATION

Moab is located in Grand County, in the Southeastern part of the Utah. It is about eight miles away from Arches National Park and 32 miles away from the Islands In The Sky entrance to Canyonlands National Park. Moab sits at an elevation of about 400 feet above sea level and covers an approximate 4-square mile area.²⁰ The town is situated on the Colorado River in an oasis surrounded by enormous red-rock and desert terrain. The climate in the desert can vary from more than 105 degrees Fahrenheit in the summer to below zero temperatures in the winter. The area gets very little rain, mainly in the spring and the month of October, but there are brief, intense thunderstorms during the summer months that often lead to flash floods. The plant life is typical of high or sub-desert biomes and includes sagebrush, rabbitbrush, saltbush, serviceberry, mountain mahogany, and other desert natives at the lower elevations. Juniper and pinion occur with desert shrubs until about 7,500 feet elevation where a mountain ecosystem of aspen, spruce, and fir takes over.²¹

The population in Moab fluctuates greatly throughout the year due to the high number of seasonal employees that inhabit the town for stretches of a few months during the tourist season, which spans from early April to late October. The actual number of year-round residents of Moab is about 5000, or 4,779 according to the 2000 census. As of 2006, the county population stood at 9,024 people. As of 2000, Moab was 90.4% white, 5.5% American Indian and Alaskan Native, 6.4% Hispanic or Latino (4.5% Mexican), and very small percentages of other racial groups. The median household income was \$32,620, and 12% of families and 15.7% of individuals lived below the poverty line. The average household size is 2.43 people and the average family size is 3.1 people.²²

²⁰ Website for the City of Moab, Utah – Moab's Natural Features. <http://www.moabcity.org/visitors/history.cfm>

²¹ Website for the City of Moab, Utah – Climate. <http://www.moabcity.org/visitors/history.cfm>

²² All of this statistical information came from year 2000 census information from Geographic Area: Moab. Obtained from www.census.gov.

MOAB AND GRAND COUNTY DEVELOPMENT HISTORY

This section outlines the history of Moab with special emphasis paid to the different types of dominant economy, as Moab has gone through phases of one economic boom after another. It is important to consider the history of the Moab region in order to get a better understanding of Moab and Grand County today. Tourism, which is now the dominant economy, must be viewed in the context of Moab's evolution up to the point of adopting tourism as the major economic focus.

THE TRACK TO A TOURIST ECONOMY IN THE WESTERN UNITED STATES

There is a common story of development in the Western towns that serve as gateway communities to public land such as national parks, national forests, national recreation areas, and bureau of land management land. First, there were the indigenous populations, who built structures ranging from the temporary dwellings of nomadic groups to cliff dwellings containing more than one hundred rooms.

Then came the days of the wild American frontier. To the non-indigenous populations, the Western United States was first a vast and mysterious place. The narrative of this first stage of exploration is seared into the collective memory of the country. This was the time period that produced American heroes like John Wesley Powell, and Lewis and Clark.

After initial exploration and settlement, for pragmatic reasons, these areas often become dominated by agriculture and grazing. Many areas that are still dominated by these types of economy, and there are few rural Western communities that have completely rid themselves of ranching and farming. Ranching and farming require vast pieces of land, with very little structural development and creates sparse development spread over large amounts of land.

Soon after, extractive industries started to become a major presence in the American West. The nature of mining and other extractive industries such as oil and gas drilling requires large amounts of land, similar to ranching and farming, but the operation is centralized, and workers commute to the jobsite. At this phase, towns start to develop with centralized residential and commercial structures.

In most cases, eventually these large mining interests pull out. Extractive industries are after a finite resource, and once that resource has been fully tapped, there is no reason for the industry to stay. This is usually a painful transition. The economic base of an area is essentially yanked out from under it, leaving significantly less money available to local government that has become accustomed to having a

much larger tax base. Many people are left unemployed and may leave the area to pursue employment elsewhere. At this phase, there is not much new development, and many existing structures, often including the mine itself, are abandoned. The area is left with very little and is desperate for a new economy to replace the one that has been lost.

These areas are wild and open, and at some point, the federal government has seen the importance of preserving this land and national parks are established. After extractive industry interests have pulled out or ranching and farming interests decrease, it is the point when these areas focus their resources on promoting tourism. Land that was once the workspace for few is transformed into a play space for many. Each phase of development up to tourism has left its impact. There are attractive remnants such as cave art or intact dwellings from prehistoric times, and unattractive remnants such as abandoned, polluted mines.

NATIVE INHABITANTS

The first evidence of habitation in the Moab area comes from as early as 300 B.C. Between approximately 900 and 1300 A.D., the Ancestral Puebloans, or Anasazi inhabited the Moab region. They built dwellings and granaries²³ high in the cliffs, many of which survive today. The territory of the Fremont people, who were contemporary with the Ancestral Puebloans, overlapped in the Moab area. By the 18th century, the Ute tribe was the dominant Native American group in the area. The Utes lived in brush wickiups and tipis,²⁴ which do not remain today. However, rock art from members of the Ute tribe remain in the Moab area today. By 1855, members of the Navajo tribe were also living in the Spanish Valley region, just to the south of Moab. The evidence of the Native American inhabitants remains today in the form of rock art and remnants of dwellings and granaries. The rock art is especially important to modern Moab, as many sites are easily accessible by car or short hike and visiting the sites is a popular tourist activity. The official website for the Moab Area Travel Council lists six easily accessible rock art sites in the Moab area,²⁵ but many more exist for hikers and other public land users to discover.

EARLY MORMON SETTLERS

The modern development of Moab began in the spring of 1855, when Alfred Billings and a party of 41 men left the central Utah town of Manti and traveled about 300 miles southeast to establish the Elk

²³ Food storage structures.

²⁴ “Rock Art Sites in the Moab Area” <http://www.discovermoab.com/rockart.htm>

²⁵ “Rock Art Sites In The Moab Area” <http://www.discovermoab.com/rockart.htm>

Mountain Mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (LDS). Upon arrival, they were confronted with the agricultural endeavors of the Ute tribe, including an extensive irrigation system.²⁶

The Mission was located in Spanish Valley, near present-day Moab and close to the Colorado River. It was established to be part of a strategic Mormon “corridor to the sea.”²⁷ This site in Spanish Valley was a practical area for initial settlement because of the good soil, clear water coming down from the La Sal Mountains and location along the well-established Old Spanish Trail.²⁸ The Old Spanish Trail was created as a trade route between the Mexican settlements of Los Angeles and Santa Fe, able to accommodate travel by packhorse or mule. A ford across the Colorado River, though potentially treacherous in high water, generally allowed for the safe passage of wagons and other large supplies.²⁹

For the first few months that these settlers were in the area, a fort was constructed and visited by a steady stream of Native Americans looking to trade. Many of the native peoples were enthusiastic to trade with the Mormons, and a few were converted to the faith.³⁰ By all historical indications, the inhabitants of the Elk Mountain Mission had intended to establish a permanent settlement and expand their community, and the missionaries made these intentions well known to the Native American tribes in the area.³¹ However, by September of 1855, the tenuous peace broke and a “confusing and unplanned” battle broke out.^{32 33}

The clash between the Mormons and the Utes left three missionaries dead and much of the Mission’s crops destroyed. The remaining missionaries decided to abandon the Elk Mountain Mission and quickly made their exit. The Mission settlers had created an irrigation ditch to divert water and grow crops, and in their haste to leave the area, they did not turn off the water. Through the years, the diverted water became an arroyo meandering through the town and flowed for another thirty-five years. It was not until the 1950s that bulldozers filled in the last remnants of the drained arroyo.³⁴ The Mission was

²⁶ Faun McConkie Tanner, *The Far Country: Moab and La Sal* (Salt Lake City: Olympus Publishing Company, 1976), 54.

²⁷ Faun McConkie Tanner, *The Far Country: Moab and La Sal* (Salt Lake City: Olympus Publishing Company, 1976)47.

²⁸ Jose Knighton, *Coyote’s History of Moab* (Moab: Compost Press, 1994), 5-6.

²⁹ Faun McConkie Tanner, *The Far Country: Moab and La Sal* (Salt Lake City: Olympus Publishing Company, 1976)

³⁰ Faun McConkie Tanner, *The Far Country: Moab and La Sal* (Salt Lake City: Olympus Publishing Company, 1976), 56.

³¹ Jose Knighton, *Coyote’s History of Moab* (Moab: Compost Press, 1994),and Faun McConkie Tanner, *The Far Country: Moab and La Sal* (Salt Lake City: Olympus Publishing Company, 1976)

³² City of Moab, Utah, “History,” Official Home Page of the City of Moab, Utah,

<http://www.moabcity.org/visitors/history.cfm>

³³ According to *A Coyote’s History of Moab*, the conflict was the result of cultural insensitivity on the part of the missionaries. The pragmatic Utes could see that the Mormons needed women in order to propagate a society, and so the Utes made a significant offering of many young Ute women in order to join the two societies “in substance as well as spirit.” The missionaries were not interested, as they had or would have other white, Mormon women waiting for them in other places. “All the Utes understood was the blunt fact that their generosity had been rebuked. . . The proud Utes must have ridden off in humiliation, but only a sourceless rage survives in conventional histories.” Faun McConkie Tanner, *The Far Country: Moab and La Sal* (Salt Lake City: Olympus Publishing Company, 1976), 61. And Jose Knighton, *Coyote’s History of Moab* (Moab: Compost Press, 1994), 11.

short lived, but it was the first development by non-native peoples that was intended to be permanent. Until the arrival of Billings and his men, no white travelers had come to Spanish Valley with the intention of staying.³⁵ The Elk Mountain Mission Fort Site was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1978,³⁶ and today a plaque stands at the site.

ESTABLISHMENT OF RANCHING AND OTHER PERMANENT SETTLEMENTS

It was not until 1878 that permanent³⁷ white settlers returned to Moab to establish farms and ranches in the fertile soil of the Moab Valley. The Mormons tried again to settle southeastern Utah in 1879, but they intentionally avoided the route of the Old Spanish Trail, which would seem to be the obvious choice. Likely, this was because of the bad experience with the Elk Mountain Mission. Instead, this expedition carved the Mormon Trail, a meandering route through canyon country. Other towns in Southeastern Utah³⁸ were established as Mormon frontier colonies, but not Moab. This hurt Brigham Young's³⁹ vision of a homogenous community throughout South and Southeast Utah that was unified by a single religion.⁴⁰

Unlike the majority of Utah, and more in keeping with the rest of the western states, the first permanent white settlers were cattlemen lured by grazing lands. Once cattle ranchers and farmers began moving into the area, development grew at a steady pace. Throughout the late 1800s, a steady stream of pioneer parties continued to trickle into the area. The names of these parties can still be seen all over Moab in the form of business and street names and descendants still living in the area. A diverse group of people came to inhabit the Moab area, including "independent ranchers from Colorado and Texas, shepherders, cowboys employed by large cattle companies, prospectors, homesteaders, Baptists, Protestants and heathens, as well as an unconsolidated trickle of Mormon settlers."⁴¹ In 1881-82, donations from Moab citizens made possible the building of a meetinghouse and schoolhouse. This was used for all public gatherings until it burned down and was replaced by a new meetinghouse in 1888-

³⁵ Jose Knighton, *Coyote's History of Moab* (Moab: Compost Press, 1994), 6.

³⁶ National Register of Historic Places. "Utah: Grand County."
<http://www.nationalregisterofhistoricplaces.com/UT/Grand/state.html>

³⁷ The area would remain free of white settlers for almost 20 years after this incident. In 1875, two separate parties brought herds of cattle into the Moab Valley to graze, but did not take up permanent residence. One party and their herd moved north for winter grazing. The second party attempted to stay the winter in the Moab Valley. During the summer of 1877, a party of prospectors came to the area in search of gold and instead, found the remains of one of the men in the second party. His death was attributed to Indians, and the other man was never seen again and presumed drowned. (McConkie Tanner 65-66)

³⁸ The towns of Blanding, Bluff, and Monticello.

³⁹ Brigham Young was president of the LDS Church at the time and is an important historical figure in Utah history.

⁴⁰ Jose Knighton, *Coyote's History of Moab* (Moab: Compost Press, 1994), 11.

⁴¹ Jose Knighton, *Coyote's History of Moab* (Moab: Compost Press, 1994), 11.

89.⁴² The first Mormon ward was not established until 1881, close to thirty years after the failure of the Elk Mountain Mission. The first store opened in 1882, it sold a variety of merchandise and replaced a tent that had provided a few basic goods to the settlers.^{43 44}

In 1883, construction of the Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad between Salt Lake City and Denver brought the railroad to Thompson Springs; only thirty-five miles from Moab. This greatly shortened freighting distance from the previous route, which required traveling a distance of over 100 miles by wagon to Richfield of Salina for supplies. Often, winter storms would delay parties, even prohibiting them from making the return trip until spring.⁴⁵ By 1885, a ferry across the Colorado River was in operation, which served as the only way to cross the river until a three-span steel bridge was completed in 1912.⁴⁶

Until the early twentieth century, cattle grazing dominated the Moab area. Those who came to the area lured by the cattle industry ranged from the large British-owned Carlisle Cattle Company to cattle thieves and outlaws, the natural offspring of the industry. The Robber's Roost Gang, Butch Cassidy's Wild Bunch and other outlaws found welcome in Moab's many saloons. At this time, far from the Brigham Young's initial vision of a Mormon settlement, Moab had developed a reputation as a lawless and open community.⁴⁷ After years of intensive grazing, the land could no longer support large herds that once existed. In 1895-96 Carlisle Cattle, which had come to dominate the cattle grazing economy, sold its Moab interests, and the town quieted down as the cattlemen and rustlers moved elsewhere.⁴⁸

The biggest corporate cattle operations left Moab, but the impact from the years of overgrazing remained. The cattle industry had ravaged the area; the cows had eaten much of the once prevalent native grasses, allowing for the invasion of tumbleweed and Russian thistle. As Keith Knighton writes in *Coyote's History of Moab*, "hit-and-run exploitation of resources would eventually become an established pattern of abuse for Moab."⁴⁹

⁴² Faun McConkie Tanner, *The Far Country: Moab and La Sal* (Salt Lake City: Olympus Publishing Company, 1976), 98.

⁴³ Faun McConkie Tanner, *The Far Country: Moab and La Sal* (Salt Lake City: Olympus Publishing Company, 1976), 103.

⁴⁴ In 1881, the building of a post office required an established name for the town. According to *The Coyotes History of Moab*, "William Pierce, the town's first postmaster, supposedly selected the name from the Bible for similarities to the remote 'far country' of the books of Ruth and Jeremiah..." Though, in the Bible, Moab initially came from the name of Lot's son borne incestuously by Lot's daughter. (Knighton 12-13) The name may also be related to the Paiute language (a language that is related to the Ute language) word for "mosquito water" moapa (mo-ah-pah). "The name of Moab may be more a reminiscence of the place of mosquitoes than of any infamous Biblical landscape." (Knighton 14)

⁴⁵ Faun McConkie Tanner, *The Far Country: Moab and La Sal* (Salt Lake City: Olympus Publishing Company, 1976),.

⁴⁶ Faun McConkie Tanner, *The Far Country: Moab and La Sal* (Salt Lake City: Olympus Publishing Company, 1976),

⁴⁷ Jim Stiles, *Brave New West: Morphing Moab at the Speed of Greed* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2007), 29-30.

⁴⁸ Jose Knighton, *Coyote's History of Moab* (Moab: Compost Press, 1994),16.

⁴⁹ Jose Knighton, *Coyote's History of Moab* (Moab: Compost Press, 1994), 17.

AGRICULTURAL HISTORY

The expense of pumping irrigation water in the desert climate and unpredictable freezes prevented farming from ever being primary land use in Grand County.⁵⁰ However, the area has had a notable agricultural presence starting with the first settlers in the late 1800s and continuing to today. Vineyards and fruit trees were initially cultivated by some of the first non-Native settlers in the area, and by the late 1800s and early 1900s, Moab produced notable amounts of “award-winning” peaches, apples, pears and grapes.⁵¹

Today, agricultural land does not serve as a major food or job resource in Grand County. In the year 2000, total farm employment in Grand County stood at 659 persons, or about 7.8% of the total population of the county.⁵² Agriculture in the county includes alfalfa fields, vineyards and small organic farms. Agricultural land is, however, essential to conception that many residents have about what makes Grand County a special and desirable place to live. During the public participation phase of creating the Grand County General Plan Update of 2004, planners and community members articulated a community vision, including “landscaped, natural, and/or agricultural open spaces [that] create a ‘flow of nature’ through rural neighborhoods and developments...” and “perceptions of an agricultural base...”⁵³ In a citizen’s questionnaire distributed by Grand County in 2004 during the same planning process, “agricultural preservation” was one of the most frequently mentioned concerns.⁵⁴

MINING

Extractive industries have long played a part in Moab’s history, minor gold deposits had been discovered in the La Sal Mountains during the 1890s,⁵⁵ and in the 1920s an oil well was established south of town. Even uranium, which would later become a very important resource to the area, was mined prior to the boom of the 1950s. It is estimated that by 1920, up to 2.5 million dollars of uranium had been produced in southeastern Utah,⁵⁶ but it was not until the Cold War fueled federal demand for uranium and extractive industries really boomed in Moab.

⁵⁰ City of Moab General Plan. 2002. Pg. 6.

⁵¹ City of Moab General Plan. 2002. Pg. 6.

⁵² Grand County General Plan Update. April 13, 2004. Sec. 1.2.4, Pg 6.

⁵³ Grand County General Plan Update. April 13, 2004. Sec. 3.1(e) and 3.1(k). Pg. 41.

⁵⁴ Grand County General Plan Update. April 13, 2004. Sec. 2.2.2, Pg. 37.

⁵⁵ Jose Knighton, *Coyote’s History of Moab* (Moab: Compost Press, 1994), 25.

⁵⁶ Jose Knighton, *Coyote’s History of Moab* (Moab: Compost Press, 1994), 26.

URANIUM MINING

During World War II, vanadium, a mineral related to uranium, was mined in Southeastern Utah. Vanadium was a vital element used in the hardening of steel, which was of great importance to the United States during wartime. Uranium could be accumulated from the vanadium tailings, and, though few realized the potential of uranium at the time, the United States would use a portion of the uranium accumulated from the vanadium tailings as part of the ingredients for the atomic bomb that destroyed Hiroshima.⁵⁷

After World War II ended, American involvement in the cold war created a demand for more uranium. Amateur prospectors began prowling the uranium-bearing strata around the Moab area in war-surplus jeeps with Geiger counters and Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) pamphlets describing how to find uranium-bearing strata. Everything changed for Moab in 1952 when an amateur prospector and geologist named Charlie Steen discovered the largest ore body of uranium bearing pitchblende ever found in the area, making Moab, “The Uranium Capital of the World.”⁵⁸ Almost overnight, Moab’s population boomed, increasing from about 1200 to 6000 people, creating Moab’s first big housing shortage. According to *Coyote’s History of Moab*, “destitute dreamers with dollar signs in their eyes lived with their families in tents and hastily constructed shacks.”⁵⁹

The uranium boom created a development boom. More mining claims were proven and wealthy financial backers, frantic to get a piece of the action, equipped poor and inexperienced prospectors with expensive bulldozers. The federal government, too, sent in construction crews with state of the art equipment in order to aid the prospectors. In the rush to meet high demand for uranium, networks of exploratory roads were created with dynamite, bulldozers, and steel tread, in wildlands that had previously only been tracked by cattle and a very few outlaws, ranchers and Native Americans.⁶⁰ In response to the federal government’s inability to process uranium ore as quickly as it could be mined, Steen convinced the Atomic Energy Commission - the only legal market for uranium ore - to allow him to build and operate the country’s first independent uranium mill to process stockpiled ore.⁶¹

In addition to the mill, Steen was also responsible for one noteworthy piece of residential development. He built a large mansion, named Mi Vida after his mine, on a hillside at the north end of Moab overlooking the town. Today, this building still exists as part of the legacy of the mining era, though now it now houses a restaurant catering to tourists.

⁵⁷ Jim Stiles, *Brave New West Morphing Moab at the Speed of Greed* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2007), 33.

⁵⁸ Jose Knighton, *Coyote’s History of Moab* (Moab: Compost Press, 1994), 26.

⁵⁹ Jose Knighton, *Coyote’s History of Moab* (Moab: Compost Press, 1994), 26.

⁶⁰ Jose Knighton, *Coyote’s History of Moab* (Moab: Compost Press, 1994), 28.

⁶¹ Jose Knighton, *Coyote’s History of Moab* (Moab: Compost Press, 1994), 28.

By 1960, less than ten years after Steen's influential discovery, the uranium industry in Moab began to decline sharply. The United States government had stockpiled enough uranium and was no longer interested in acquiring more. Steen was forced to sell his uranium mill to Atlas Chemical Corporation in 1962 when he was unable to pay the IRS the money that he owed.

In 1984, the Atlas Mine closed its doors, putting many Moab residents out of work and leaving an estimated 16 million tons of uranium mill tailings and tailings-contaminated soil over 400 acres, only 3 miles from Moab.⁶² Atlas declared bankruptcy in 1998, and in 2001, through congressional legislation, ownership of the site was transferred to the United States Department of Energy (DOE).⁶³ The tailings will be relocated 30 miles north to a permanent disposal cell in Crescent Junction, Utah over an estimated 20 years,⁶⁴ and at a cost of between \$635 and \$835 million.⁶⁵ This project may be an important employer of Moab's citizens in the future

In addition to the tailings, another major legacy of the mining era in Moab is the many roads that were carved into the formerly wild areas. By 1960, areas that had formerly been tracked by very few people now contained networks of jeep trails, seismic lines and airstrips.⁶⁶ Many of these roads and trails are now used by hikers, mountain bikers, jeepers and off-road vehicle users.

POTASH MINING

According to *A Coyote's History of Moab*, after the substantial decline in uranium mining, "Moab had become addicted to a bloated tax base, and was desperate to maintain it. Texas Gulf Sulphur Co. presented a proposal to mine the valuable chemical fertilizer potash from the salt beds deep beneath Moab and its surrounding wildlands. They were immediately granted their every wish."⁶⁷ Potash mining was a much smaller operation, but a significant amount of new road construction is associated with its establishment. Surrounding wildland was disrupted to create a two-lane highway down the north side of the Colorado River to the mine site, a railroad spur to the mine and spaces for power lines leading to the new mine.⁶⁸ In 1972, the company converted operations to automated solution mining, putting many of the miners out of work. The mine exists today and the potash is recovered from huge evaporation ponds

⁶² Moab UMTRA Project Information. "Frequently Asked Questions." <http://www.moabtailings.org/faq.htm>

⁶³ Moab UMTRA Project Information. "History." <http://www.moabtailings.org/history.htm>

⁶⁴ WISE Uranium Project. Decommissioning of Moab, Utah, Uranium Tailings. Two articles from *The Salt Lake Tribune* cited (Feb. 7, 2008 and Feb. 9, 2007) <http://www.moabtailings.org/history.htm>

⁶⁵ WISE Uranium Project. Decommissioning of Moab, Utah, Uranium Tailings. Article from *The Salt Lake Tribune* cited (Nov. 3, 2007) <http://www.moabtailings.org/history.htm>

⁶⁶ Jim Stiles, *Brave New West: Morphing Moab at the Speed of Greed* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2007), 35.

⁶⁷ Jose Knighton, *Coyote's History of Moab* (Moab: Compost Press, 1994), 28-29.

⁶⁸ Jose Knighton, *Coyote's History of Moab* (Moab: Compost Press, 1994), 29.

on the surface.⁶⁹ A few grand county residents are employed at the mine, which produces between 700 and 1,000 tons of potash per day.⁷⁰

The Potash Road, created for access to the mine, is now heavily used by recreationists. It is a very popular spot for rock climbing, and on most summer days the road is lined with young people climbing, belaying, or waiting their turn for either. Up the Potash Road is a popular place to drive and view ancient rock art and the put-in for the popular rafting trips from Moab down to Lake Powell by way of Cataract Canyon is at a boat ramp on Potash Road.

Extractive industries remained an important sector of the Moab economy for many years after the sharp decline of uranium mining in 1960. In 1980, income from mining in Grand County made up 62% of all income received by county residents.⁷¹ In 1984, the Atlas mine permanently shut its doors and by 1996, only 16% of all income received was from mining activities.⁷² By 2004, that number was only 2%.⁷³ It should also be noted that when the mining economy collapsed, the demand for housing in Moab decreased sharply. There was a brief period during which many locals were able to buy affordable homes before real estate speculation drove prices back up. Eventually, more affluent visitors to the area would notice the bargain prices and buy up a portion of the housing stock for vacation homes, retirement homes or general investment properties. Those who wanted to purchase a home but were unable to act quickly sometimes found themselves outbid by outside investors with more money.⁷⁴

⁶⁹ Jose Knighton, *Coyote's History of Moab* (Moab: Compost Press, 1994), 29.

⁷⁰ Intrepid Potash Official Website. "Mine Site Locations: Intrepid Potash – Moab, Utah." <http://www.intrepidpotash.com/loc/moab.html>

⁷¹ Grand County General Plan Update. April 13, 2004. Sec. 1.2.6. Pg. 8.

⁷² Grand County General Plan Update. April 13, 2004. Sec. 1.2.6. Pg. 8.

⁷³ Grand County General Plan Update. April 13, 2004. Sec. 1.2.6. Pg. 8.

⁷⁴ Jim Stiles, *Brave New West: Morphing Moab at the Speed of Greed* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2007), 75-76.

TOURISM IN MOAB AND GRAND COUNTY

TRANSITION TO TOURISM

After the initial bust of uranium mining, Moab and Grand County went through a period of declining economic activity, and population transition. In a testimony given before the House Committee on Natural Resources in 1994, former Grand County councilmember Bill Hedden describes the many factors that contributed to Moab's troubled state, beginning in the 1970s and coming to a head by the late 1980s. Among these factors were the free trade policies of the 1980s and discoveries of foreign uranium deposits making domestic uranium production uneconomic and falling commodity prices crippling the local potash industry and forcing cattlemen to sell their ranches.⁷⁵ He states that by the late 1980s, "we lost 35 percent of our tax base and, in the face of 20 percent unemployment, a quarter of the population left town."⁷⁶ Grand County was desperate for a new economic base to provide jobs for the people and tax revenue for the county, and tourism seemed like an ideal choice. Many former-extractive industry towns make this same decision. Tourism can seem like the solution to all of the town's economic problems because it rarely requires tax abatements or givebacks, it provides jobs, and the people essentially get paid for being themselves.⁷⁷

This was not the first time in Moab's history that people pursued tourism for the area. Arches and Canyonlands National Parks had been attracting visitors to the area for decades before this point. The first tourism promoter in Moab was probably Alex Ringhoffer, a Hungarian-born prospector who ventured into a canyon north of Moab and was overwhelmed by the spectacularly odd beauty. Ringhoffer felt he had discovered America's newest scenic wonder, and a delegation from the Denver & Rio Grande railroad agreed with him, deciding to place a railroad station at Thompson Springs, only 35 miles from present day Moab. Steven Mather, who was the director of the National Park Service at the time, was also contacted in an attempt to see if this area might qualify for national monument status. After hesitance on the part of the Coolidge administration, a small parcel of land was proclaimed by President Hoover as Arches National Park in 1929. Initially, only about 5000 acres were set aside for the Park, but President Roosevelt expanded the boundaries to more than 33,000 acres in 1936.⁷⁸

⁷⁵ Bill Hedden, "Towns Angling for Tourism Should Beware of the Great White Shark," *High Country News*, Sept. 5, 1994. Adapted from testimony given before the House Committee on Natural Resources, which met in Salt Lake City, Utah, April 7, 1994. http://www.hcn.org/servlets/hcn.Article?article_id=542

⁷⁶ Bill Hedden, "Towns Angling for Tourism Should Beware of the Great White Shark," *High Country News*, Sept. 5, 1994. Adapted from testimony given before the House Committee on Natural Resources, which met in Salt Lake City, Utah, April 7, 1994. http://www.hcn.org/servlets/hcn.Article?article_id=542

⁷⁷ *The Culture of Tourism, the Tourism of Culture*, ed. Hal K. Rothman, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2003), 4.

⁷⁸ Jim Stiles, *Brave New West: Morphing Moab at the Speed of Greed* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2007), 30-31.

Over the years, tourism in Moab had many advocates. Forty years later, Faun McConkie Tanner ends her detailed history of the Moab and La Sal region with this prediction for the future of Moab; “If all other industry in the region fails, Moab and La Sal can serve humanity well in the industry of tourism. In these troubled times, with the increasing pressures of urban life – polluted air, noise, the rushing about – there will be an increasing need for the few remaining retreats where one can find quiet peace.”⁷⁹

This was written by McConkie-Tanner in the 1970s, at about the time that the community began to see tourism as the best salvation for Moab’s economy.⁸⁰ They had no way of knowing just how important tourism would become in the region. To return to the words of Bill Hedden, “the simplest way to describe what happened in Grand County is to say that in 1986, our resilient community leaders got in their rowboat and went fishing for a little tourism to revive and diversify our economy. They hooked a great white shark.”

TOURISM BOOM

Many descriptions of the initial tourism boom in Moab share a startled wonder and bewilderment at how things could get to out of hand so quickly. Jim Stiles, a Moab resident since the early 1970s, states, “in 1968, when Edward Abbey wrote *Desert Solitaire*, nobody knew where Moab was. Few had even seen pictures, and if they had, they thought they were looking at the Grand Canyon. Today anyone who’s seen a Toyota X-Terra commercial or a Mountain Dew ad or had been bombarded with adventure-tour Web sites and brochures knows how beautiful it is around here. We have \$150 running shoes named after our town for godsake. Moab has been discovered.”⁸¹ A Google search for products with Moab in the name or description returns dozens of pages with products ranging from the Prana “Moab Capri” pants (“this versatile capri is a natural for climbing, hiking or traveling”), Merrell Moab Ventilator Hiking Shoes for Men, Corbeau MOAB Reclining Seat (“the seat Jeepers have been waiting for...”), Pearl Izumi Symphony Sleeveless Bike Jersey in Color MANGO/MOAB, and the Highpoint Craftsman Style! Moab Railing Light (“superior decking lights”).⁸² When, as Hedden describes, the community leaders began to pursue tourism, a combination of many factors allowed for tourism to rapidly take over the area.

⁷⁹ Faun McConkie Tanner, *The Far Country: Moab and La Sal* (Salt Lake City: Olympus Publishing Company, 1976), 331.

⁸⁰ City of Moab General Plan. 2002. Pg. 7.

⁸¹ Jim Stiles, *Brave New West: Morphing Moab at the Speed of Greed* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2007), 5.

⁸² Search of www.google.com, “shopping” using search terms “moab -"I took a look at" -"coolest people" -"the hottest girls"” Conducted April 16, 2008.

Moab was officially promoted by the Moab Area Travel Council and the Utah Travel Council, but also received considerable unofficial promotion from several sources. Though it was not his intention to draw such large numbers of people to the area, the influential writings of Edward Abbey attracted many explorers hoping to witness the landscape that was so poetically described in books such as *Desert Solitaire*. The Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance (SUWA), in an attempt to gather national support for greater wilderness designation in Utah, began to promote the Moab area to people across the country. The logic behind SUWA's efforts was that the federal government owns the land, so, in essence, it belongs to all Americans. This particular position has created a great deal of resentment from many long-time Utah residents who feel much greater ownership of this land than people who are technically just as deserving to use the land, but have much less invested in the area. Recreation and travel publications with significant numbers of affluent urban readers such as *Outside Magazine* and the travel section of *The New York Times* declared Moab to be the next recreation hotspot. These sources put the idea of Moab travel into the heads of many people who may not have considered visiting the area before.

It is also important to note the role of existing road systems, American car culture, and cheap gas prices. Without these factors, there would simply not be the same degree of access to this land. There are few ways to reach Moab without a car. In the early 1970s, around the same time that Moab was being whole-heartedly promoted as a tourist destination, Interstate 70 was completed between Floy Wash and Crescent Junction,⁸³ making the area more easily accessible to tourists with cars. The widespread use of air-conditioning systems in residential and commercial property probably also had a hand in making the Moab area more appealing. Without the possibility of finding refuge from the 100-degree plus summer days in a cool home, hotel room or restaurant, it is likely that fewer people would visit or reside in Grand County.

Economic prosperity was an important factor in this initial tourism boom. Grand County began promoting itself as a tourist destination right as the World War II generation began passing off its wealth to its offspring.⁸⁴ Many of these newly rich young people found Grand County an ideal place to recreate and buy property. Increasingly, too, people can choose where to live based on quality of life factors and telecommute to their jobs.

The conception that Moab is the perfect traditional Western town may have been subliminally predetermined as such in the minds of many people who grew up watching John Ford westerns. In 1949,

⁸³ City of Moab, Utah, "History," City of Moab, Utah, <http://www.moabcity.org/visitors/history.cfm>

⁸⁴ Bill Hedden, "Towns Angling for Tourism Should Beware of the Great White Shark," *High Country News*, Sept. 5, 1994. Adapted from testimony given before the House Committee on Natural Resources, which met in Salt Lake City, Utah, April 7, 1994. http://www.hcn.org/servlets/hcn.Article?article_id=542

film director John Ford came to Moab scouting for new locations for *Wagonmaster*, the newest of Ford's popular Westerns. Ford found exactly what he was looking for in Moab, choosing to film within a few miles of George White's ranch along the Colorado River.⁸⁵ White's ranch exists today as a resort catering to more upscale tourists. The resort is visible from the popular Fisher Towers section of the Colorado that numerous rafting companies float down every day during the summer season. Since Ford's westerns, many other films have been shot in the areas around Moab including *Thelma and Louise*, *City Slickers II* and *Mission Impossible II*. Today, Moab can be spotted in many print and television advertisements as the stereotypical rugged place to drive a tough car or drink an extreme soda. Surely, this all adds to the Moab appeal.

The Moab area offers many recreational opportunities, but the thing that really propelled Moab to the status of recreational tourism Mecca is the sport of mountain biking. In the mid-1980s, mountain biking emerged as a separate activity from biking on paved roads, and found its home in Moab because of the way that the specific landscape of the area catered so well to this new sport.⁸⁶ The remnants of jeep trails from the days of uranium prospecting proved ideal, as they allowed bikers to ride side-by-side along the old two-track roads. Also, the "slickrock" formation that exists in this area is perfect for gripping bike tires and providing fun and scenic trails. Inspired by a story seen in *National Geographic* about the region, the editor of *Mountain Bike* magazine featured Moab prominently in the first issue. In 1986, a local bike and outdoor gear shop sponsored the first ever Canyonlands Fat Tire Festival. Today, there are several world famous mountain biking trails in the area around Moab, and it is a must-visit destination for most people who enjoy mountain biking.

Development from previous economies had a coincidental way of feeding into tourism. The rock art, dwellings and granaries of prehistoric people draw sightseers. Many mining and prospecting trails became jeeping and mountain biking trails. The Potash Road, initially created to provide access to the Potash mines, is now a destination for rock climbers and river rafters.

Finally, there is the obvious draw of the thousands of acres of breathtaking public land that surround Moab, including Arches and Canyonlands National Parks.

NATIONAL PARKS AND PUBLIC LAND

Grand County, and specifically Moab serve as the gateway to both Arches and Canyonlands National Parks. The majority of visitors to these two parks will at least pass through Moab, many of them staying in the hotels, shopping in the souvenir shops and grocery stores, or eating at the

⁸⁵ Jose Knighton, *Coyote's History of Moab* (Moab: Compost Press, 1994), 31.

⁸⁶ Jim Stiles, *Brave New West: Morphing Moab at the Speed of Greed* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2007)

restaurants. Many will also use Moab as a base from which to pursue numerous types of recreation within the parks and on the other surrounding public land such as the in the Manti-La Sal National Forest or the vast amounts of publicly accessible land controlled by the Federal Bureau of Land Management.

There are 2,363,594 acres of land in Grand County, 71.7% is managed by the federal government; of that 66% is managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), 3.2% is managed by the National Park Service (NPS), 1.2% is managed by the National Forest Service (NFS), and .08% is managed by the U.S. Department of Defense. Only 4.3% of the land is privately owned, the remaining land is owned by the state (15.5%), or is American Indian tribal land (4.4%). The parks and the BLM land attract recreational users, but these areas are managed in very different ways. An acquaintance who works with the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, a policy advocacy group that has a lot of involvement in Moab, described a fundamental difference in purpose as driving the different ways that the NPS and the BLM approach land use. He explained that when the national park system was created, the best pieces of land were set aside to be preserved and left in the care of the NPS. The rest of the large expanses of land were given to the control of the BLM, and it became the job of the BLM to find something useful to do with this land. He believes that it is this fundamental difference in the founding of both organizations that drives the way that they operate now. There is often controversy over the BLM's designations of use for these lands stemming from the fact that some want the land to be treated more like a national park where greater precautions are taken to preserve the land, while others feel that the land should be utilized for agricultural, extractive and/or recreational activities, with fewer restrictions on the land.

The establishment of Arches and Canyonlands National Parks was an important prerequisite to the pursuit of tourism in Moab and Grand County. The popularity of these two parks is naturally connected to the popularity of the Moab area. According to Arches monument's first full-time custodian, Henry D. Schmidt, in June of 1940, Arches hosted only 213 visitors.⁸⁷ Fifty years later, these parks would be on the verge of overwhelming use. In 1993, after several years of unprecedented numbers of visitors flocking to Utah's national parks, Park Service officials urged the Utah Travel Council to focus less advertising on the already popular parks. Instead, they suggested that the travel council's efforts be concentrated on some of the lesser known attractions in the state such as Escalante Canyon, Cedar Breaks National Monument and some of the state's 85 scenic highways. This may have eased visitation numbers in the parks, but could have created a new set of problems. The lesser-known areas were much

⁸⁷ Jim Stiles, *Brave New West: Morphing Moab at the Speed of Greed* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2007), 32.

less able to handle the trash and car and human traffic that the parks were used to dealing with.⁸⁸ After significant growth in visitation rates to Arches National Park and Canyonlands National Park during the late 1980s and early 1990s, visitation slowed in 2000, only to steadily rise back up to close to the high numbers of the late 1990s by 2007.⁸⁹ In the year 2007 Arches NP had 860,181 visitors, Canyonlands had 417,560 visitors.⁹⁰

It is also crucial to note how federal investment in roads and infrastructure and American patterns of car ownership have contributed to the accessibility and popularity of national parks. A common activity in many parks is to drive through for photography and sightseeing purposes. Every national park in the United States has some scenic route for cars, and the official National Park Service website for Arches and Canyonlands Parks lists auto touring options for each park.⁹¹

Because of road and trail projects, the parks are much more accessible to a wider range of people. There is the potential for problems such as the over-use of sensitive ecological areas or traffic jams in crowded parks, but increased accessibility also allows for disabled or elderly people to more easily visit these areas. Studies of national parks in the United Kingdom indicate that people tend not to venture far from their cars at the destination, meaning that areas close to roads and scenic sites may receive heavy traffic, and for those seeking greater solitude in the park, they can simply venture out further than the large groups that will stick close to the road.⁹²

In part because of the accessibility of the parks, the concept of the “National Park Tour” has emerged as an important trip for American and international travelers. In my experience talking to visitors to Moab, many American families attempt this tour at some point, driving between many of the parks of the Southwest and stopping in Moab to visit Arches and Canyonlands. This is also a very popular trip with European tourists. From my observations, many families and young and retired couples travel to the area and rent a car or join an organized bus tour to travel to the many national parks in the Southwestern United States. Numerous tour companies including America West and Disney offer package tours that travel between the Southwestern parks and spend some amount of time in Moab.

⁸⁸ “Hotline: Too Many Tourists.” *High Country News*. Vol. 25 No. 16. September 6, 1993.

http://www.hcn.org/servlets/hcn.Article?article_id=2406

⁸⁹ NPS Stats – National Park Service Public Use Statistics Office. <http://www.nature.nps.gov/stats/>

⁹⁰ NPS Stats – National Park Service Public Use Statistics Office. <http://www.nature.nps.gov/stats/>

⁹¹ <http://www.nps.gov/arch/planyourvisit/driving.htm> <http://www.nps.gov/cany/planyourvisit/driving.htm>

⁹² These studies evaluated travel and recreation in the countryside of Scotland and Kingston upon Hull, UK, but I feel that these findings are relevant to discussion of American national parks as well. Stephen Page, “Transport and Tourism”, in *A Companion to Tourism*, ed. by Lew, Alan A, C. Michael Hall, and Allan M. Williams (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2004), 150.

MOAB'S APPEAL

Three members of the planning department of the City of Moab were interviewed for this study;⁹³ all three made the distinction between the appeal of Moab the town and the Moab area. Moab is a gateway town, meaning that the root of its appeal to tourists is that it serves as the gateway to the surrounding public land, most notably, Arches and Canyonlands National Parks, the Manti-La Sal National Forest, the Colorado River and the BLM-controlled land. Moab is a place that facilitates travel on the surrounding land, and is not itself a tourist destination as cities such as New York City or Las Vegas are. In the view of these members of the planning department, the town of Moab and the people in it do little to attract people to the area. One man said that the sooner Moab is recognized as a place to live rather than a place that is part of “the image”, the better off the town will be to address the problems on the surrounding land. Another planning department member used the example of some people protesting a Wal-Mart in Moab because it would hurt the “spirituality” of the place. But, he said, the spirituality is not in the town itself; it is in the valley and the riverbanks. The town is to serve practical purposes, and there is the practical concern of area families that are unable to buy affordable school clothing for their children in Moab.

Some Moab residents see it as problematic that the planners have adopted this viewpoint. In a March 6, 2008 letter to the editor in Moab's local newspaper, one resident states, “I have witnessed some of our own city leaders shrug off and dismiss that Moab has any character left to preserve – that we are already ruined, so why try?... I've exhausted my arguments of logic, of technical and factual point and counterpoint, all that remains is a prayer that this community will remain, as it always has – unique, self-actualized, courageously authentic, fiercely independent, and feeling like home.”⁹⁴ It may be accurate to say that the town is not the primary reason that people visit Moab, but it does have secondary importance. In my experience waiting tables in a popular Moab restaurant, I encountered several people who had made a tradition of going to this restaurant every time they came through town. If Moab offered different restaurant choices, these people would probably still come through town, but the many little amenities that are offered in Moab surely add to the primary appeal of the surrounding land.

⁹³Interview with Jeff Reinhart (Planning Director for the City of Moab), David Olsen (Community Development Director for the City of Moab) and Ken Davey (Admin Analyst/Economic Development Specialist for the City of Moab). Conducted in person on January 9, 2008. Because I did not have perfect transcripts of these interviews, the information gained from them is paraphrased and not specifically credited to one particular person.

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TOURISM IN MOAB AND GRAND COUNTY TODAY

According to the Grand County General Plan, as of 2006, it is estimated that 47.2% of all jobs are Tourism and Recreation industry related, including jobs in the Leisure and Hospitality (32.2%) and Retail Trade (nearly 15%.) categories.⁹⁵ In 1980, tourism directly and indirectly provided about 11% of all income received by Grand County residents.⁹⁶ It is also estimated that since 2001, the number of jobs in the Leisure and Hospitality sector has been stable. The average payroll wage for a worker in the Leisure and Hospitality sector in Grand County in 2006 was \$14,438. Trends are indicating improvements, as from 2000 to 2006, the average yearly payroll wage increased 34%, from \$18,308 to \$24,516. This is 24th of the 29 counties in Utah. However, average Household Adjusted Gross Income was \$40,918 in 2005, and 48.8% of households earned less than \$20,000 per year. Grand County had the second highest percentage of households earning less than \$20,000 per year of all of the counties in Utah.⁹⁷ According to the 2004 Grand County General Plan Update, “total tourism-related employment has expanded by approximately 20% since 1995, while tourism-related employment as a percentage of total employment has decreased from 53% of total employment in 1993 to 45% in 2000.

Grand County collects tourism-based revenues from transient room tax, restaurant tax, car rental tax and gross taxable retail sales. Tourism-based tax revenues totaled \$2,063,400 in 2000 slightly down from 1999 when such revenues totaled \$2,106,500. The transient room tax is a 3% tax for all overnight lodging not exceeding 30 consecutive days. The revenue from this tax supports tourism efforts in Grand County, such as the Moab Area Travel Council.⁹⁸

As a way to attract steady tourism, Moab is home to numerous events during the year including and monthly barrel racing throughout the winter, the Western Stars Cowboy Poetry Gathering, Annual Skinny Tire Festival, Annual Canyonlands Half Marathon and Five Mile Run, Moab Muni (Mountain Unicycling) Fest, the AdventureXstreme Series – Moab Adventure Race Series (A 12-hour Adventure Race), Moab Photography Symposium, Festival of Cultures Diversity Celebration (celebrating the diversity of cultures in the Four Corners area), the Canyonlands PRCA Rodeo in June, the Iron Horse Motorcycle Rally, Annual Labor Day Red Rock 4 Wheelers Campout, the Moab Arts Festival, the Annual Moab Music Festival, the Skydive Moab Festival, the Moab Century Tour (cycling), the Annual 24 Hours of Moab Mountain Bike Race, The Other Half half-marathon in October, the Annual Pumpkin Chuckin’ Festival, the Annual Moab Folk Music Festival, and the Moab Canyons Endurance Ride

⁹⁵ Grand County and City of Moab Housing Study and Initial Housing Plan. March 17, 2008. Sec. VI. Pg. 9-10.

⁹⁶ Grand County General Plan Update. April 13, 2004. Sec. 1.6. Pg. 33.

⁹⁷ Grand County and City of Moab Housing Study and Initial Housing Plan. March 17, 2008. Sec. VI. Pg. 9-10.

⁹⁸ Grand County General Plan Update. April 13, 2004. Sec. 1.2.10. Pg. 10

(horse riding).⁹⁹ Perhaps the two biggest events are the Annual April Action Car Show (Classic Car Show) and Annual Jeep Safari (over Easter weekend). These are the weekends when the town sees the biggest influx of tourists and tourist dollars.

Grand County is actively involved in promoting tourism through the Moab Area Travel Council, which operates under the mission statement that “The Moab Area Travel Council seeks to improve the local economy by promoting and supporting recreation, tourism, and conventions, in an environmentally-sensitive manner.” The Moab Information Center houses the Travel Council and is located in downtown Moab and owned by Grand County. It is staffed by a cooperative effort of the Travel Council and the federal land management agencies.¹⁰⁰

The Grand County General Plan Update of 2004 sums up Moab’s current situation:

Resource extraction as a way of life has now been effectively replaced by a service economy and, more specifically, by a tourism-based economy. Dependence on tourism is slowly beginning to decrease as evidenced by the fact that 53% of the workforce was employed in tourism-related jobs in 1993, that number has now dropped to 45%. There is community consensus that the economy needs to be further diversified beyond the tourism-related economy and that real human needs in the community must be met, particularly with respect to education and affordable housing. Equally important, rural character must be preserved and the high quality open space that dominates Grand County must be preserved. The challenge is to figure out how citizens with diverse viewpoints can work together to make a living in this place while achieving these goals and preserving these values.¹⁰¹

THE EXTRACTIVE NATURE OF TOURISM

Initially, some welcomed the lessening of agricultural and extractive industries as a positive change from the perceived destructive nature of grazing and mining. Many now believe that tourism is itself an extractive industry, and one that is possibly even more damaging. As Jim Stiles, author and long-time Moab resident, states, “to me, all of the extractive industries – mining, drilling, ranching, timber – constituted a threat to what remained of the pristine West. Somehow we environmentalists thought that if these kinds of threats were eliminated or reduced, *all* threats to the land would cease. It

⁹⁹ Discover Moab – Official Moab, Utah Calendar of Events. <http://www.discovermoab.com/calendar.htm>

¹⁰⁰ Grand County General Plan Update. April 13, 2004. Sec. 1.5.16. Pg. 31

¹⁰¹ From Sec. 1.6 “Changes in Base Economy and Future Challenges” in Grand County General Plan Update. (33)

never occurred to any of us that if these industries failed, something else would take their place.”¹⁰²

Tourism is what took their place.

The type of tourism that exists in Grand County and other gateway communities is a low-margin business, meaning that volume is essential for an area to be profitable. For the community to make any significant amount of money, there must be large numbers of people spending – mostly relatively small – amounts of money. A parallel can be drawn between tourism in the Moab area and tourism in Arizona, another Western state with a significant tourism presence. William L. Bryan, in his essay *Appropriate Cultural Tourism – Can it Exist?* states that, “traditional tourism success in Arizona has always been measured by the number of people who visit the Grand Canyon during a given year (over 4.9 million), the number of people who come to Arizona as tourists on an annual basis (over 30 million), and the rate of growth from year to year in those numbers.”¹⁰³ Though costs for gear or guiding and instruction can be high, access to the land in the Western United States is usually cheap or free.¹⁰⁴ This applies to fishing, hunting, hiking, horseback riding, kayaking, mountain biking, camping, and sightseeing and photographing national parks, among others. Visitors in the Western United States are used to recreating for free on publicly owned land, and feel entitled to it. This is not the same as staying at a luxury resort or hitting the museum circuit in a European country, where tourists expect to spend larger amounts of money. Large numbers of tourists in the Western United States are attempting to recreate as cheaply as possible, and often, these tourists do not focus on the environmental and community costs.¹⁰⁵ Some are likely unaware of their potential impact on the area, and others rightly or wrongly believe that their impact is not negative. Regardless, according to Bryan’s essay, this mindset produces recreational tourism that takes more than it gives to the human and natural resources utilized in this experience, and is thus, inherently extractive.¹⁰⁶

This creates a serious problem that must be addressed with planning and growth control. Negative impacts of tourism such as unsightly commercial strip development in scenic areas, lack of design uniformity, and concerns by residents about declining quality of life can arise and must be monitored and helped through long range planning. In her essay *Tourism Communities and Growth*

¹⁰² Jim Stiles, *Brave New West Morphing Moab at the Speed of Greed*, (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2007), 51.

¹⁰³ William L. Bryan. *Appropriate Cultural Tourism – Can It Exist? Searching for an Answer: Three Arizona Case Studies*. In Hal K. Rothman (Ed), *The Culture of Tourism, the Tourism of Culture*. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press. 2003), 141

¹⁰⁴ There is the notable exception of ski areas, but often, access to the *land* is free, as it is owned by the U.S. Forest Service, and using the privately owned lifts is where the ticket price comes from.

¹⁰⁵ William L. Bryan. *Appropriate Cultural Tourism – Can It Exist? Searching for an Answer: Three Arizona Case Studies*. In Hal K. Rothman (Ed), *The Culture of Tourism, the Tourism of Culture*. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press. 2003), 142

¹⁰⁶ William L. Bryan. *Appropriate Cultural Tourism – Can It Exist? Searching for an Answer: Three Arizona Case Studies*. In Hal K. Rothman (Ed), *The Culture of Tourism, the Tourism of Culture*. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press. 2003), 142.

Management, Alison Gill states that, if unchecked, the negative impacts will likely result in declining tourist visits and a down marketing of tourist products.¹⁰⁷

In Moab, the downside of tourism is often something that is experienced very personally. As one member of the planning commission said, some tourists come into the area only to treat it as their own personal Disneyland, and the people who live there as the Disneyland staff. The visitors are here to see things, but not to participate in the community. It is an often-heard complaint around town that some people – not all – who visit the area simply have no respect for the land or the people. Because most Moabites include the surrounding land in the connection they have with their home, disrespect for the land is a personal slap in the face. As a response to what is generally seen as a few bad apples causing disproportionate destruction, many grassroots and volunteer run groups have formed to address these problems. Two such organizations are The Solutions of Moab,¹⁰⁸ which cleans up trash and recycling from popular hiking and jeep trails and The Red Rock Four-Wheelers,¹⁰⁹ which goes to great effort to reduce jeep impacts and attempt to conduct the Moab Jeep Safari with a minimal amount of environmental damage.

In addition to disrespectful treatment of the land, many locals perceive serious disrespect toward the residents. As it was explained earlier in this paper, visitors come to Moab for the surrounding area, and not the town itself. Thus, many see little value in the town or the people who live in it. This mentality leads to the kind of disrespect that pushes the limits of the patience of many residents. I have seen plenty of demanding impatient people while working in the service industry in Moab. Many people act like spoiled children while on vacation, expecting the service workers to jump at their call, with no consideration of the fact that said worker might also be helping a few other people with that same attitude.

Many people hold the opinion that most visitors to the area are good; they bring in money, have a genuine interest in experiencing what the area has to offer, and most do not act in a destructive fashion. It is simply a small portion of these visitors that act irresponsibly, causing damage to the land, treating the residents badly, and giving all tourists a bad name. However, after too many negative encounters, some feel that the majority or all tourists fall into this category. A recent editorial in the local newspaper, *The Times-Independent*, expresses sentiment that is surely felt by many long-time Moab residents:

I also believe that all tourists are essentially the same. They hog the road, the ones on

¹⁰⁷ Alison Gill, "Tourism Communities and Growth Management," in *A Companion to Tourism*, ed. by Lew, Alan A, C. Michael Hall, and Allan M. Williams (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2004), 569.

¹⁰⁸ The Solutions of Moab can be found at <http://moab-solutions.org/index.html>

¹⁰⁹ Red Rock Four-Wheelers can be found at <http://www.rr4w.com/>

bicycles act as if they own the road, they sit through green lights, they insist on riding bikes, walking, and running where there is no room for them whatsoever, but almost none of them can use the facilities that are put there for them. They jaywalk, stand in a state highway simply to climb on the rocks, fail to use turn signals, attempt to read maps while driving, operate unlicensed (and probably uninsured) vehicles on the roads. Basically, if something can be done wrong they will do it wrong.

At the present rate everything will be destroyed by them within 10 years, and then they will stop coming here and all the millionaires who cater to them will be crying that local government isn't supporting their business any longer.

Needless to say, I am not nice to them in any way whatsoever, and I am starting to see others treating the tourists the same. I will have no sympathy whatsoever when a few of them die because they are so incredibly stupid.”¹¹⁰

Like it or not, tourism in Grand County is likely to stay. The Grand County General Plan Update states that, “during the 1970s and 1980s Moab became perhaps the most important center for river running, mountain biking, and four-wheel drive recreation in Utah. Moab is the gateway to Arches and Canyonlands National Parks, Dead Horse Point State Park, and the famous Slickrock Bike Trail. Tourism and recreation will likely remain important to the County for the foreseeable future.”¹¹¹ It is thus important to outline the various challenges that Moab and Grand County are facing and look for the best ways to handle the problems so that the area can be what the tourists want and what the residents need.

POSITIVE ASPECTS OF TOURISM

The fundamental advantage of tourism is that a tourism economy is simply much better than a depressed economy. Tourism did provide jobs for the residents of Grand County. Unemployment in the country went from a rate of 20% in the 1980s to the 5.5% as of February 2008.¹¹² Jobs are brought into the area, money is brought into the economy, and people are lifted out of poverty. This is positive for many residents, and the accessibility of such incredible natural treasures is positive for tourists who are looking to experience an area that is new or different.

¹¹⁰ Ricky L. Berry, “Careless Tourists,” *The Times-Independent*, April 17, 2008, Editorials/Columns: Letters From The People.

¹¹¹ From Grand County General Plan Update. April 13, 2004. Pg. 3

¹¹² NEED TO CITE 1980s NUMBER and Utah Department of Workforce Services. “Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rates.” <http://jobs.utah.gov/opencms/wi/pubs/une/season.pdf>

In one study of rural areas, it was shown that rural tourism can “make effective contributions to rural development”, but often do not deliver on income and employment expectations. This same study does claim, however, that tourism policy has had important beneficial impacts on the rural policy process by bringing in new attitudes and ideas and causing a reexamination of current, sometimes outdated, practices.¹¹³

Not all new visitors or residents in an area cause problems, and it can often be a welcome change to have some new faces in the town. As former Grand County council member Bill Hedden said, “lots of charming new people have come to town, and they have greatly enhanced cultural affairs and brought local planning and government into the 20th century.”¹¹⁴

¹¹³ (Ribeiro and Marques 2002: 218) Andrew Church, “Local and Regional Tourism Policy and Power”, in *A Companion to Tourism*, ed. by Lew, Alan A, C. Michael Hall, and Allan M. Williams (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2004), 561.

¹¹⁴ Bill Hedden, “Towns Angling for Tourism Should Beware of the Great White Shark,” *High Country News*, Sept. 5, 1994. Adapted from testimony given before the House Committee on Natural Resources, which met in Salt Lake City, Utah, April 7, 1994. http://www.hcn.org/servlets/hcn.Article?article_id=542

THREATS TO MOAB AND GRAND COUNTY'S SENSE OF PLACE

THE DEVELOPMENT PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES CREATED BY A RECREATIONAL TOURISM DOMINATED ECONOMY

Some of the negative aspects of tourism have already been outlined in this study. This section will further explore threats or perceived threats to the things that people, both residents and visitors, love about the area. These are threats to the qualities that make people want to visit or live in Moab and Grand County. In other words, things that threaten Moab's sense of place. According to Yan Xu's essay *Sense of Place and Identity*, sense of place can be defined as "one of many characteristics which displayed by people congruent with local identity... a sense of the beauty and the wealth of phenomena that comprise a particular place... a factor that makes an environment psychologically comfortable... [and] defining oneself in terms of a given piece of land."¹¹⁵ Based on the research done for this study, the two main qualities that make Grand County a desirable place to live are the rural character of the area and the scenic and recreational opportunities offered by the surrounding land. The latter being the main reason that people want to visit the area.

An extremely complicated relationship exists between the entire spectrum of individual interests, from one-time visitors to residents whose families have lived in the area for many generations. Tourism is the very thing that allows people to experience Moab, and it could also be the thing that destroys it. Too many tourists or new residents is a problem, but too few tourists or residents is an equally threatening problem.

In speaking with members of the planning committee of the City of Moab, they described Moab's sense of place as relative to the individual, that it is what people see and feel when they get into Moab. They spoke of the natural beauty and the way that it engages all of your senses, the enormous recreation opportunities, and the diversity of the physical aspects of the town.¹¹⁶ One member scoffed at the question slightly, saying that the hippie newcomers are the ones who talk about the "sense of place." He elaborated on this saying that new people come into the area and have a specific idea about the sense of place, and how it shouldn't change. However, these newcomers often come into the community with a vision of Moab that does not include concerns about the schools, the kids and the long time residents

¹¹⁵ Xu, Yan. "Sense of Place and Identity." East St. Louis Action Research Project. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. <http://www.eslarp.uiuc.edu/la/la437-f95/reports/yards/main.html>

¹¹⁶ Interview with Jeff Reinhart (Planning Director for the City of Moab), David Olsen (Community Development Director for the City of Moab) and Ken Davey (Admin Analyst/Economic Development Specialist for the City of Moab). Conducted in person on January 9, 2008.

of the town. These are people who talk about Moab's sense of place as a sacred place for them, but do not factor in the day to day issues of the people who actually live here and have families here. These are people who come to the area and insist that nothing change, but in doing this, they are actually changing what ought to be the natural course of progress toward a better city for working people.

Tourism can threaten the sense of place of the residents because it creates many more stakeholders, some with a much smaller connection to the land than the residents. The town becomes claimed by so many other stakeholders with different visions of what the town should be that the locals do not feel the same ownership of their community. Nativism is often a response to sharing a community with so many outsiders and tourists. Longevity is an important commodity in a tourist town because it is one that cannot be purchased. In the book *Devil's Bargains* by Hal Rothman, he uses the story of residents of the town of Aspen lining up annually on the rugby field next to the year that their family came to the area to have their pictures taken. It is a mark of pride to have been in an area for a longer time than the other people. In my experience in Moab, the actual locals, those whose families have lived in the area for generations, do not have this same nativist outlook. Many are happy to share their community with new people who will contribute and make Moab a better place, but are somewhat resistant to new residents with conflicting attitudes. The competition for who is "more local" is something that I see between people who have lived in Moab for anywhere from thirty to five years and the people who have lived here less than five years.

A lot has been written about how Moab "just isn't the same anymore." One frequent complaint is that there is greater crowding in popular recreation areas. Spots that people formerly considered secret or off the beaten path are now crowded or restricted. Another is about the number of new franchise developments, especially those that are highly symbolic of homogenization of an area such as a Starbucks built in 2007 and the possibility of the construction of a Wal-Mart. There are also complaints about the number of new businesses, specifically cappuccino shops, which are geared toward what is perceived as yuppie clientele. All of these complaints can be associated with either a threat to the integrity of the landscape or the rural character of the area.

This issue is further complicated by the fact that not everyone values the same things about Moab. One illustrative example is found in *Brave New West: Morphing Moab at the Speed of Greed*. The author laments the current lack of junk in people's yards. To him, part of the character of Moab is at least one rusted out car in each yard, and in an attempt to clean up the town for tourists and residents, this has been lost. Many other residents do not share this view. According to the key person interview

and citizen questionnaire conducted by Grand County, cleanup of junk in yards is a major concern that they wish would be further addressed by the county.¹¹⁷

COMPETING INTERESTS

Under the heading of “Special Challenges”, the City of Moab General Plan states:

Communities throughout the West struggle with two opposing views: those who want to keep the number of inhabitants of their town small and discourage growth and development, and those who are continually working to increase the population and promote growth and development. The same passion that fuels these groups also fires environmental issues, the need for roads, the desire to protect wilderness, individual property rights and the ability to develop private lands without restriction. The dramatically opposing views that exist in the West are alive and well in Moab and offer special challenges when it comes to planning.¹¹⁸

The two opposing views described above parallel the “natives” and “neonatives” that are described in Hal Rothman’s book *Devil’s Bargains: Tourism in the Twentieth-Century American West*. He describes natives as those who have inhabited an area for generations, or, have likely lived in the area before it became a tourist attraction. It is likely that the native resident’s entire livelihood is invested in the local economy and wishes for their town to grow and for tourism to bring in more money to support themselves and government services. Neonatives are relative newcomers to the area and have “found themselves embracing a fixed moment in time.”¹¹⁹ These are likely the people described in the Moab General Plan as those who want to keep the number of inhabitants small and discourage further growth and development. It is the neonatives that come to Moab and insist that nothing change. But, the neonatives are more likely to have connections to some sort of income that is outside of the Moab economy and are less likely to face the same types of problems as natives who may have less money and different concerns, such as those relating to the quality of the school district or the ability to purchase affordable household goods. In regards to land use, it is the natives who are more likely to want expanded access to public land for themselves, their bikes, horses and off-road vehicles, and for extractive industries that would bring more money and jobs in to the local economy and tax bas. It is the neonatives who are more likely to want access restricted in order to preserve the wild lands. These two groups often come into conflict and have trouble reaching consensus on development issues.

In a *High Country News* editorial, Greg Hanscom described the dichotomy is somewhat simpler

¹¹⁷ Grand County General Plan Update. April 13, 2002.

¹¹⁸ City of Moab General Plan. 2002. Pg. 4.

¹¹⁹ Rothman, Hal K. *Devil’s Bargains: Tourism in the Twentieth-Century American West*. Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 1998. 26.

terms: rednecks and hippies. He states that “rednecks are folks who can claim, ‘My great-granddad chased the Utes out of this valley’ — or who drive pickup trucks, drink Budweiser and vote Republican. Hippies are the folks who sport dreadlocks and smoke funny herbs — or else they’re newcomers like me, who may steer clear of the dreads and the herbs, and even drink an occasional Budweiser, but clearly hold political views that run counter to the conservative mainstream.”¹²⁰ Yet, as he states later in the editorial, everyone is living in the area for the same reasons; small-town living, scenic backdrops, and wants similar things; a more lively economy and more jobs for the residents.

Of course, these two opposing viewpoints are not absolute or static. Recently, I spoke with three men in their late twenties who had all grown up in Moab. One man had several generations of his family in the area. During our conversation, they expressed frustration that several hiking and off-road vehicle areas that they had been able to freely visit as children and teenagers were now closed to the public due to the environmental impact caused by overuse of the area. They all wished they could still access these places, but, also said that they understood why those areas had to be restricted, and supported the restriction.

Beyond these two basic groups, Moab has a large spectrum of stakeholders, all with slightly different priorities. There are environmental groups, both local and national, that have an interest in the Moab area. There are state and federal tourism interests, including federal and state landowners such as the National Park Service, National Forest Service and Federal Bureau of Land Management. There are corporate tourism interests such as Disney, which operates tours that go through Moab, and corporate chain hotels and restaurants that have a presence in Moab. There are also local tourism interests such as locally-owned restaurants, hotels, outdoor gear shops and guiding outfits. There are extractive industry interests because of the potential for resource mining and oil and gas drilling on the surrounding land. There are tourist interests from as close as neighboring Southeast Utah towns, and as far away as Europe and other international points. These are just some of the many, varied interests that Moab and Grand county have the unique challenge of incorporating into long-term development planning.

RAPID GROWTH OF THE RESIDENTIAL POPULATION

In her essay *Tourism Communities and Growth Management*, Alison Gill states that, “growth, in particular a rapid rate of growth together with uncontrolled development, has been demonstrated in numerous studies as a reason for negative host community attitudes towards tourism... In tourism communities, as elsewhere, local opposition to growth is grounded in a perceived decline in the quality

¹²⁰ Hanscom, Greg. “Rednecks and Hippies Unite!” *High Country News*. May 10, 2004.

of life caused by such factors as environmental degradation, traffic congestion, and increased cost of living.”¹²¹ The fear of too many new residents, too many new visitors, damage to environmental and scenic areas, and cost of living that increases faster than wages is present in Moab and Grand County.

There is a chapter in the book *Brave New West: Morphing Moab at the Speed of Greed* by Jim Stiles about the future of Moab where he outlines a doomsday scenario. In this scenario, the area has become so popular that the land has become completely overwhelmed by new residents and tourists. He fears the sprawl of new businesses and housing to accommodate the new residents and the strict control of wild areas to manage the tourist population. He says of Moab and areas like it, “perhaps the rural West’s future as a commercialized nature theme park, with controlled access and plenty of rules, is already cast.”¹²² Is it possible that so many people would want to move to and visit the area that the result would be extreme development sprawl and less land access for everyone?

As far as the actual numbers go, this scenario is not as likely as Stiles seems to believe. The population growth rate, though booming at one point, has actually leveled off somewhat and is now increasing at a much more manageable rate. In 1996, the projected annual population growth rate for Grand County was between 4% and 5%. The county’s population was expected to reach 9,000 by 2000 and 15,930 by 2020. This would be a growth rate of 134% in the thirty years between 1990 and 2020.¹²³ Since then, the growth rate has slowed, and as of 2006, the county population had just exceeded 9,000, with an estimated population of 9,024.¹²⁴ Population projections figured in 2002 represent a much more manageable growth rate of 33% from 1990 to 2020. According to the 2002 projections, by the year 2030, Grand County is expected to have 10,288 residents.¹²⁵ From 1990 to 2002, Grand County experienced a 28% increase in population, which is very close to the statewide population increase of 29.6% from 1990 to 2000. It is important to keep in mind that Utah is the fifth fastest growing state in the nation.¹²⁶ Through most of the 1990s, the average annual growth rate of Grand County was 3.6%, and was ranked the 5th fastest growing county in Utah. At the same time throughout Utah, the annual growth rate was 2.3%. After this initial population boom, growth slowed to 1.9% from 1998 to 1999 and 2002 projections indicate that the growth rate will increase annually less than 1% after 2002.¹²⁷

According to the Grand County General Plan Update of 2004, “Grand County population growth

¹²¹ Alison Gill, “Tourism Communities and Growth Management,” in *A Companion to Tourism*, ed. by Lew, Alan A, C. Michael Hall, and Allan M. Williams (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2004), 570.

¹²² Jim Stiles, *Brave New West: Morphing Moab at the Speed of Greed* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2007), 5.

¹²³ Grand County General Plan Update. April 13, 2004. Pg 3

¹²⁴ Grand County and City of Moab Housing Study and Initial Housing Plan. March 17, 2008 cited from US Census Bureau. Pg 9

¹²⁵ Grand County General Plan Update. April 13, 2004. Pg 3-4

¹²⁶ Bulkeley, Deborah. “Utah Growth Rate Soaring,” *Deseret News*, April 21, 2005. http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qn4188/is_20050421/ai_n14592785

¹²⁷ Grand County General Plan Update. April 13, 2004. Pg 4.

reflects a state-wide trend where net in-migration has decreased and the only counties facing significant growth pressures are those on the Wasatch Front on the outskirts of the Salt Lake City metropolitan area.”¹²⁸ Grand County has a very low population density, only about 2.3 persons per square mile over the 3,689 square miles in the county. This compares with a Utah statewide average of 27.2 persons per square mile.¹²⁹

The greatest amount of population growth in Grand County will take place in Moab and unincorporated areas, specifically, Spanish Valley, which is essentially a suburb to the south of Moab. Both Moab and the unincorporated areas are projected to experience an 11% population growth rate from 2000 to 2030. By 2030, Moab is expected to have a population of 5,719 (compared with 4,779 persons in 2000) and 4,035 (compared with 3,357 persons in 2000) in the unincorporated areas.¹³⁰ Population projections by age group indicate that between 2007 and 2012 the fastest growing groups will be ages 20 to 29 and ages 60 to 69.¹³¹

A significant number of new residents are not born in the area, but move to Grand County later in life. This level of new in-migration is significant, but has slowed in recent years.¹³² New migrants to the Moab area are often from urban areas and seeking an improved quality of life.¹³³ Baby boomers and retirees from urban areas are an important demographic segment of these new migrants. These are people who are looking for improved quality-of-life factors. As the City of Moab General Plan states, “They look for safer, more rural areas where the air is clear, crime rates low, traffic nonexistent and the scenery, beautiful... these immigrants to the area do not expect to sacrifice services or standards of service they were used to in larger metropolitan areas. The City is faced with the necessity of upgrading and expanding services without compromising the reasons people moved here in the first place.”¹³⁴

One member of the planning commission that I spoke with described Moab as an attraction of limited doses, and described a trend among second home owners. Many of these new residents move to Moab and love it initially, but, after about two years of dealing with 100 degree summers, slow, snowy winters, and lack of amenities found in bigger cities, they leave. For this reason, he says, the number of second homes built over that past twenty years is actually relatively small. As of the year 2000, only 2.3% of housing units were labeled as being for “seasonal, recreation, or occasional use.”¹³⁵ Second

¹²⁸ Grand County General Plan Update. April 13, 2004. Pg 4.

¹²⁹ Grand County General Plan Update. April 13, 2004. Pg 3.

¹³⁰ Grand County General Plan Update. April 13, 2004. Pg 4-5.

¹³¹ James A. Wood, Bureau of Economic and Business Research, Utah Association of Realtors cited in Grand County and City of Moab Housing Study and Initial Housing Plan. March 17, 2008. Pg. 9

¹³² Grand County and City of Moab Housing Study and Initial Housing Plan.

¹³³ City of Moab General Plan. 2002. Pg. 4.

¹³⁴ City of Moab General Plan. 2002. Pg. 5.

¹³⁵ Census information from Geographic Area: Moab. Obtained from www.census.gov.

homes built now will likely be sold in a couple of years when the initial builders move on. Second homeowners are people who would not be completely invested in the Moab economy, meaning that they full or partial sources of income from outside Grand County and do not support themselves fully by entering the Moab workforce.

In a recently published study of housing in Grand County, it was found that the level of new residential construction has remained relatively consistent over the past ten years, with about 100 new units added each year. Since 2000, 728 new housing units have been built in Grand County. Of these, nearly 50% have been mobile homes, 35% are single family homes, 3% are town/twin homes, and less than 2%, or only 14 units are apartments. The majority, or 65%, of new housing units were constructed in unincorporated areas of Grand County.¹³⁶ These numbers show that housing construction is not accelerating at an exponential rate. It is important to note that the majority of new units are being built in unincorporated areas, and may not be as carefully regulated.

There are also physical limits to how much the area can grow. One of the members of the Moab City Council told me that physically, Moab cannot grow beyond the valley boundaries. He said that limited residential construction, but not commercial could continue farther South, out of Grand County, and in to neighboring San Juan County. It is also important to consider the abilities of Moab and Grand County's infrastructure to accommodate development growth. There is only so much desire and budget for expansion of solid waste disposal, water and sewer lines, and law enforcement and emergency medical services, especially those that would extend outside of Grand County's boundaries.

The planners interviewed for this study do not see net population growth as a potentially threatening thing in Moab. In fact, they see a lack of population growth in some segments as potentially threatening to Moab's overall well being. Because of the lack of affordable housing, which *is* due in some part to second home development,¹³⁷ Moab is having trouble attracting middle-class professionals such as teachers, hospital workers and firefighters to the area.

RAPID GROWTH OF THE TOURIST POPULATION

Significantly less information exists on the number of people visiting Moab and the rates of growth over time. When researching for this study, a representative of the Moab Information Center, which is the headquarters of the Moab Area Travel Council, was contacted. She stated the Travel Council keeps no official records of tourist visitation rates to the city of Moab. However, the National Park Service does keep track of the number of recreational visitors in all of the national parks. After

¹³⁶ Grand County and City of Moab Housing Study and Initial Housing Plan. March 17, 2008.

¹³⁷ Grand County and City of Moab Housing Study and Initial Housing Plan. March 17, 2008.

reaching a peak number of visitors in 1999 (446,160 people), then a decline to a relative low number in 2001 (368,592 people), Canyonlands National Park has received a steadily increasing number of visitors from 2000 to 2007, with 417,560 visitors in 2007. Arches National Park followed a similar path. In 1999, arches had 869,980 recreational visitors; 754,026 in 2001 (though the relative low number of visitors for Arches was in 2004 with 733,131 visitors); and 860,181 visitors in 2007.¹³⁸ It is reasonable to assume that a significant number of visitors to both parks passed through the Moab area, many of them likely staying for some amount of time. This is especially true for the visitors to Arches National Park, because the main entrance is only two miles from the north end of Moab. These numbers do not indicate the full picture of tourist visitation in Moab. Many people visit the town of Moab to access the Colorado River or recreational opportunities on the BLM-controlled land and do not visit the parks.

The numbers of hotel rooms and campsites can offer some insight into the number of visitors that the area accommodates. Both hotel rooms and campsites are growing in number in Grand County. Between 1991 and 2001, the number of hotel rooms rose from just above 600 to just above 1,800. In that same time period, the number of total designated campsites rose from just above 1,000 to about 1,700.¹³⁹ The fact that the number of hotel rooms now exceeds the number of campsites could indicate that the type of tourist attracted to the area is changing.

The City of Moab General Plan indicates that an estimated 1 million people pass through Moab each year. This is a significant number of visitors to a town of only about 5,000. If park visitation rate and hotel room and campsite trends mirror Moab visitation trends, then this number is growing steadily. Though, as will be discussed later in this paper, there are a number of factors that could cause a slowing of tourist visitation rates.

If it were desirable to limit the number of visitors to the area, a new set of problems would arise. It is difficult to limit the number visitors to a popular area. In her essay *Tourism Communities and Growth Management*, Alison Gill uses the example of some mountain towns adopting restrictions on the number of hotel rooms that could be built in the town. She makes the point that establishing a (somewhat flexible) maximum limit for development is desirable in keeping with the town's image of as escape from the hassles of crowded, urban living. She details a specific provision in Whistler, British Columbia that allowed for increasing the hotel room limits when the local community expresses that preference, and allows employee housing units to exceed the development cap. It does not seem feasible that Moab could adopt such restrictions for a number of reasons. Firstly, there does not seem to be strong public support for such an ordinance. The nature of the area also comes in to play. In Moab, if

¹³⁸ NPS Stats – National Park Service Public Use Statistics Office. <http://www.nature.nps.gov/stats/>

¹³⁹ Grand County General Plan Update. April 13, 2003. Pg. 12.

hotel space was restricted, it might cause more people to camp out on the surrounding land. There would need to be increased regulation to ensure that people were not camping illegally in sensitive areas. This would all require more money than Grand County would likely want to spend on such enforcement, as well as clash with a general aversion to overregulation of business activity and public land access.

Another problem with limits on the number of visitors that an area will receive, and this not a problem to be overlooked, is simply that if fewer people are able to access the area, the people who do get access will likely be the wealthier or better connected people. A place like Moab is surrounded by public land – national park service, forest service and bureau of land management land – and it is very concerning to think about indirectly limiting access to these public lands by limiting access to Moab; the gateway community to these areas.

One suggestion is that the Moab Travel Council be disbanded, and further government-supported promotion of tourism in the area be stopped.¹⁴⁰ If fewer people were aware of the Moab and Grand County, fewer people would visit. This, too, presents some challenges. The most notable is that neither members of Moab and Grand County government or a critical mass of the overall population has expressed desire to try to decrease or limit the number of tourists. This may be changing. Moab is not as desperate for money and jobs as it was when it first started to promote tourism heavily. Tourism is very well established in the area, and there may come a point when the number of visitors starts to detract from the reason that some people wanted to visit the area in the first place, namely the ability to pursue recreation in a place free from the hassles of crowded urban life.

When considering local decisions about growth, it is also essential to realize that while, in theory, people may have certain visions about ideal growth and new development in an area, many people are in a situation where economic survival trumps these ideals. It is crucial that this reality be considered when evaluating the growth management decisions of an area. As one member of the city council said, “the more tourists, the better, since this is what we make our money from.”¹⁴¹

SPRAWL DEVELOPMENT AND ENCROACHMENT ON OPEN SPACE AND PUBLIC LAND

Sprawl development is the result of unmanaged growth. It is the expansion of development into formerly undeveloped or agricultural space in a way that is not taking long-term planning into adequate consideration. This is an important development problem in Moab because the scenic beauty of the area and the vast amount of open space and accessible public land is the cornerstone of the economic vitality

¹⁴⁰Jim Stiles, *Brave New West: Morphing Moab at the Speed of Greed* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2007), 32.

¹⁴¹ Interview with Jeff Davis. Conducted in person January 10, 2008.

of the community, and it must not be compromised. This is well recognized by the City of Moab, and is articulated in the general plan as “Visitor-oriented businesses and related growth and development may alter scenic and natural qualities that attracted visitors in the first place. A scenic community that protects its environment attracts more visitors and hence brings in more income. For that reason, the City of Moab is committed to preserving the scenic beauty of the area.”¹⁴²As mentioned earlier, the scenic beauty is also key to the sense of place that many residents feel toward Moab.

Moab is in an interesting geographical position. The actual city of Moab is encompassed in Grand County, but Spanish Valley, which is essentially a suburb of Moab, extends south of town into San Juan County. Members of the Moab city planning department pointed out that development is not uniformly regulated across counties, and restrictions made on development in Moab and Grand County may not apply just a few miles south in San Juan County. They gave the example of the newly developed Moab Business Park, which, ironically, is not actually in Moab. This is what they consider sprawl building. It was poorly planned and architecturally uninteresting. The ability for sprawl to occur in San Juan County can undermine some of the protective ordinances enacted by the city of Moab.

HOMOGENIZATION OF THE AREA THROUGH FRANCHISE DEVELOPMENT AND LOSS OF LOCAL BUSINESSES

As evidenced by the citizens questionnaire circulated and analyzed for the Grand County General Plan Update of 2002, corporate retail chains are a concern for residents.¹⁴³ This General Plan did not, however, clearly indicate if the concern was that there were too many corporate retail chains, or not enough to fulfill the needs of Grand County residents. It is a priority of both Moab and Grand County to encourage local business. The organization Local First Utah aims to educate the public about the benefits of a healthy local business sector and has a notable presence in Moab. A representative of Local First Utah said that based on her information, many consumers, residents and tourists alike, want local business because they want to preserve the unique character of the town.¹⁴⁴

Franchises and large corporate interests are attracted to Moab because these businesses would have access to both the tourist and resident market. Some residents and visitors lament what is perceived as the invasion of corporate franchise development because it is seen as a threat to the unique character of the town. This view is countered by the view of one of the Moab planners that I spoke with. He brought up the important point that, aside from some people’s preference for certain franchise

¹⁴² City of Moab General Plan. 2002. Pg. 5.

¹⁴³ Grand County General Plan Update. April 13, 2002. Sec. 2.2.2

¹⁴⁴ Interview with Alison Einerson, Executive Director of Local First Utah. Conducted by phone April 2008.

businesses, there is need in the community for certain things, such as children's clothing, that could be provided cheaply by a large corporate retailer. He also said that currently, many residents must make trips to Salt Lake City or Grand Junction, Colorado in order to do major shopping for certain items. This is fine for some, but it is a great obstacle for others who have limited ability to take time off of work and purchase gas and possibly lodging in order to shop for needed items.

There has been a lot of controversy in Moab lately about the possible development of a Wal-Mart or other big-box store. A moratorium was put on new development exceeding 75,000 sq feet for one year starting in 2007 and ending in early 2008 while the planning commission could come up with a recommended ordinance regarding large-scale commercial development. The planning commission came out with recommendations for limiting new business development to 75,000 sq feet and imposing other restrictions such as posting a demolition bond before starting construction to ensure that Moab would not be left with an empty Big-Box store to deal with if the company pulled out. The Moab City Council rejected the recommendations of the planning commission, and capped development at 200,000 sq feet. A major argument for rejection was that if Grand County enacted restrictions that were too strict, a big-box store could be built in neighboring San Juan County and cause the same negative effects as if it was built in Grand County, but without Grand County receiving any of the tax benefits. It is also a major concern that if an ordinance were too restrictive, a large-scale retailer would not locate in Moab, thus depriving the citizens of needed goods. There is much controversy surrounding this issue. Many people fear that a Wal-Mart Superstore would put the beloved local grocery store, and major Grand County employer, out of business. This store is itself a store owned by Kroger, a multinational corporation. It is also feared that the only place that a store of this size could be located is on the north end of town, which is the area that most visitors enter through. So, if a superstore were built, it would be the first thing that visitors saw upon arrival. Currently, when visitors enter town, the first thing they see is several hotels also owned by large multinational corporations and a locally owned company offering scenic river tours. Plans are currently underway by the City of Moab to create a more beautiful and distinctive northern gateway to town.¹⁴⁵

SHORTAGE OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The loss of affordable housing generally occurs when the area has been "discovered." At this point, more people want to move to the area, so existing affordable housing is taken up, and prices are driven up. Often, affordable homes are demolished to build luxury homes. As property values increase,

¹⁴⁵ City of Moab General Plan. 2002.

property taxes increase, causing some to be forced to sell their homes because of an inability to pay the higher property taxes. The concerns about a significant amount of second homes and real estate investment by non-residents focus on the harm done to the ability of the local population to purchase a home. This is especially problematic when it is perceived that local young families are unable to purchase property.¹⁴⁶ In Grand County, this is the situation that currently exists. Many young families as well as people holding traditional middle class jobs such as teachers, medical and government workers are unable to purchase family homes.

Like in many destination communities, Grand County is facing a serious shortage of affordable housing. In March of 2008, The Housing Authority of Southeastern Utah and the Rural Community Assistance Corporation produced a study entitled “Grand County and City of Moab Housing Study and Initial Housing Plan.” Essentially, this report finds that housing prices (rental and purchase) have increased at rates considerably faster than wages, decreasing the relative affordability of the housing market. Between 2000 and 2006, home prices increased 112%, rental price increased 74% and wages increased only 34%.¹⁴⁷ High housing costs are hurting the ability to recruit white collar and non-service sector employees to Grand County as people such as police officers, nurses and other medical workers, teachers, etc. cannot afford to buy a home in the area. Grand County is also dealing with the problem of the condition of the housing stock. There is a lot of housing in dilapidated or unacceptable condition (up to 35% of total housing stock)¹⁴⁸, which is lower priced, but is not eligible to be used with Section 8 or other government assistance grants. Dilapidated housing is also attractive to outside investors who want to tear down the existing structure and build new property. This study found that for the year 2006/2007, the rental housing gap¹⁴⁹ was 105 units, projected to be 135 by 2012, and the home ownership gap for 2006/2007 was 186 units, a projected 261 by 2012. It found that the total rental housing deficit, which is calculated based on the conditions included in finding the housing gap plus factoring in the fact that 30% of the rental housing stock is in unacceptable or dilapidated condition,¹⁵⁰ stands at 194 units as of 2006/2007, projected to be 224 by 2012. The total home ownership housing deficit is 313 units as of 2006/2007, projected to be 388 by 2012.¹⁵¹

Seasonal workers especially are in need of affordable housing, as seasonal work is generally not high paying and is without benefits. In my experience, seasonal workers crowd into apartments, trailers

¹⁴⁶ (Coppock 1977d; Gallent and Tewdwr-Jones 2000) Dieter K. Muller, “Mobility, Tourism and Second Homes”, in *A Companion to Tourism*, ed. by Lew, Alan A, C. Michael Hall, and Allan M. Williams (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2004), 393.

¹⁴⁷ Grand County and City of Moab Housing Study and Initial Housing Plan. March 17, 2008.

¹⁴⁸ Grand County and City of Moab Housing Study and Initial Housing Plan. March 17, 2008.

¹⁴⁹ The gap between the number of affordable housing units available and the number needed by the local population.

¹⁵⁰ Similar calculations are made for rental and ownership deficit.

¹⁵¹ Grand County and City of Moab Housing Study and Initial Housing Plan. March 17, 2008.

and houses, often housing twice as many people as are officially allowed to live there. For those that are unable to find a housing situation, or in the time between arrival in Moab and finding a place to live, many stay in housing situations that are already overcrowded or camp out on public land, either setting up tents or sleeping in the backs of trucks and cars. It is also important to note that much of the seasonal workforce spends much of the summer traveling, either on breaks from work or as part of a job such as a river guide, who may be out on multi-day river trips for much of the summer and not residing in their housing units. So, though units may be overcrowded, in many instances, the residents are not all consistently at the housing unit for the entire work season.

Moab is also home to a significant population of South and Central American immigrant workers, both seasonally and year-round. Very little information on these workers exists. From my experience, I assume that the majority of these workers are employed in the food service sector and living in similarly overcrowded housing units, but without the same benefit of jobs that require traveling, and thus, certain amounts of time spent away from the crowded home. I also assume, based on my experience, that the demographics of this population are different from other seasonal workers; they are often families instead of the young, the single workers that are attracted to work in the food service as well as retail and recreational guiding sectors. Crowding many people into one dwelling seems to be the preferred way to deal with the affordable housing shortage for all types of seasonal workers. One member of the Moab City Council agrees with this assumption. He said that in his experience owning a restaurant in the area for more than 20 years, he has seen many of his employees buy houses over time, but that for the lower wage workers such as dishwashers, they tend to crowd several families into one house to help with the rent. He also stressed that housing affordability was in reach for many people, but the key was finding a spouse so that with two incomes, or possibly three or four if people are able to work more than one job, the couple would eventually be able to purchase a home.

The Grand County and City of Moab Housing Study and Initial Housing Plan also finds that the local housing market is experiencing “increased external market demand for second/seasonal homes, retirement homes, and general investment properties.”¹⁵²¹⁵³ Outside buyers often have more money than people who work in Grand County, and can outbid local buyers when shopping for homes. Second home development is also a potential resource to help sustain rural environments due to the additional contributions that second homes make to the economy, such as the property taxes paid by these

¹⁵² Grand County and City of Moab Housing Study and Initial Housing Plan. March 17, 2008. Sec. VII – 3. Pg. 15.

¹⁵³ From here on out, when I refer to “second homes”, it includes “second/seasonal homes, retirement homes, and general investment properties.”

homeowners and the money that will be spent in the community when the occupants are in the area.¹⁵⁴ However, it is unclear whether or not second home development aids or harms the local population's tax base. One study conducted in Vermont indicates that second home development increases the tax burden for the local population,¹⁵⁵ while another states the opposite, arguing that costs are shared between more households.¹⁵⁶ Still another study finds that, "for the United States, it is estimated that second homes generate revenues that just cover the increased expenses of public services."¹⁵⁷

WORKFORCE CHALLENGES

Employment trends have a significant relationship to development trends. Simply put, the types of jobs and levels of income that people have will dictate the demand for different types of residential and commercial development.

As illustrated by the reduction in unemployment rates over time, tourism does provide jobs. However, these jobs are often low skill and low wage jobs, with little opportunity to advance. An examination of the personal and household income in Grand County illustrates this point. In 1999, per-capita personal income stood at \$21,106, this was an increase of 6.4% from the previous year, but still below the state average of \$23,288 per-capita.¹⁵⁸ And, according to the Grand County General Plan Update, this figure "may show that relatively few individuals earn a disproportionately large income while the vast majority earns a much lower income."¹⁵⁹ Average annual household income in 1999 was \$32,969, which was 65% of the state average of \$50,769 yearly. According to data from the 2000 census, 17.8% of Grand County residents live below the poverty line, compared with 10% of people statewide.¹⁶⁰ Unemployment and poverty levels are both higher in Grand County than statewide or nationally, though not as high as they have been in the past.¹⁶¹

Education levels in Grand County also lag behind state averages. Of persons over the age of 25, 79.9% of Grand County residents are high school graduates, and 85.1% of Utah residents are. There is also a significant gap between Grand County residents with a bachelor's degree (15.4%) and Utah

¹⁵⁴ (Clout 1972; Deller, Marcouiller, and Green 1997). Dieter K. Muller, "Mobility, Tourism and Second Homes", in *A Companion to Tourism*, ed. by Lew, Alan A, C. Michael Hall, and Allan M. Williams (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2004), 392.

¹⁵⁵ (Fritz 1982) Dieter K. Muller, "Mobility, Tourism and Second Homes", in *A Companion to Tourism*, ed. by Lew, Alan A, C. Michael Hall, and Allan M. Williams (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2004), 392.

¹⁵⁶ (Gartner 1987) Dieter K. Muller, "Mobility, Tourism and Second Homes", in *A Companion to Tourism*, ed. by Lew, Alan A, C. Michael Hall, and Allan M. Williams (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2004), 392.

¹⁵⁷ (Deller, Marcouiller, and Green 1997) Dieter K. Muller, "Mobility, Tourism and Second Homes", in *A Companion to Tourism*, ed. by Lew, Alan A, C. Michael Hall, and Allan M. Williams (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2004), 392.

¹⁵⁸ Grand County General Plan Update. April 13, 2004.

¹⁵⁹ Grand County General Plan Update. April 13, 2004.

¹⁶⁰ Grand County General Plan Update. April 13, 2004. Sec. 1.2.7. Pg. 9

¹⁶¹ Grand County General Plan Update. April 13, 2004.

residents (22.3%).¹⁶² There is little opportunity for higher education within Grand County. There is a small extension of Utah State University (USU) in Moab now. The USU campus shares offices in the Moab Higher Education Center, which also houses the USU Cooperative Extension Service office and seven classrooms. There is a move to bring a 4-year destination campus that is an extension of Central Utah University or Utah State University to Moab, which would help provide higher education access to more people who grow up in the area as well as draw new residents to the area and provide year-round employment. Residents and members of the City Council, County Council and city and county planning commissions have all expressed a desire for expansion of higher education facilities in Moab. The seasonality of the economy has been identified in the Moab and Grand County General Plans as being a major problem in the area. The wages made by working service sector jobs may be enough to support an individual or a family when the person is working full time or more, as they likely are during the busy tourist season, but it can pose real problems when that work stops during the winter. Once Moab city council member interviewed for this study indicated that as the tourist season has become longer in Moab, there have been significant wage increases as people are able to get in more working hours before the seasonal work slows.

The seasonality of employment produces a couple of worker outcomes. There is a group who resides in Moab all year, working a lot in the summer and working less and/or collecting unemployment in the winter. A few of my former restaurant co-workers have fit this description. Many, including most of the young seasonal workers I know with jobs in retail, restaurants or recreation, will work the summer season in Moab and spend the winter either in school or working similar jobs in a recreational community with winter seasonality. It is quite common for these workers to move up to Salt Lake City for the winter and work at one of the many ski resorts in close proximity to the town.

Some destination communities are able to have a strong union presence due to the immobile nature of the businesses in the area. Statistics for the number of unionized workers in Moab is not readily available, but it is likely a very low percentage. Utah is a “right to work” state, meaning that it is very difficult to build a strong union presence in any industry. One woman that I worked waiting tables with expressed extreme frustration at this. She said that it was very difficult to be a worker in Utah, because there are so few protections and employment is so low paying and precarious. She had friends and family in other states that were better able to make a living working restaurant jobs. She said that she and her husband had been seriously considering a move to Colorado or somewhere else where she believed it would be easier to make a living wage, though they are both long-time Moab residents and were extremely reluctant to leave their community.

¹⁶² Grand County General Plan Update. April 13, 2004. Sec. 1.2.8. Pg. 9

If people are able to make ends meet working in a seasonal economy, then the off-season can provide a welcome break from tourists and a chance for locals to reclaim the area. One long time Moab resident explains that, “Moab had been full of people who loved our town when it went dead in wintertime. We *wanted* to be part-timers. We looked forward to the prospect of unemployment and reduced responsibilities.”¹⁶³

There are advantages to conducting business in areas such as Grand County. A study of a similar area, in this case the areas surrounding Yellowstone National Park, indicated that many small business entrepreneurs are attracted to such areas because of “quality-of-life” variables.¹⁶⁴ An Australian study showed that many moved to areas in proximity to national parks because of “lifestyle motives alongside strong family-related goals.”¹⁶⁵ One of the planners interviewed for this study explained that when he and his wife recently moved to the area, many people told his wife of the exciting niche business opportunities that existed in Grand County due to an increase in residential and tourist population and the lack of many specific types of business.

POTENTIAL WIDESPREAD NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES IF TOURISM SLOWS

The potential that tourism could slow in the area is a development issue because of all of the abandoned buildings that would be left if tourism businesses went under, what types of new development (if any) would be happening, and how the development needs of the population would change as the economic base changed. Throughout its history, Moab and Grand County have often experienced a “boom and bust” model of economic growth. For example, Moab went through a period of economic depression when mining interests scaled down considerably. However, the “extractive industry pullout” model does not apply in the same way to tourism, as there is not one dominating company to pull out and cause mass unemployment. In mining, there is generally one major industry employer in the town, which can pull out completely and suddenly, leaving people jobless and the municipality without a significant portion of the tax base that it had been relying on. An area based on a single resort, such as some ski towns, might fit this mold, but Moab does not have one dominating corporate presence in the tourism arena.

¹⁶³ Jim Stiles, *Brave New West: Morphing Moab at the Speed of Greed* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2007), 112.

¹⁶⁴ “Gateways to Yellowstone: Protecting the Wild Heart of Our Region’s Thriving Economy.” National Parks Conservation Association. May 2006. http://www.npca.org/northernrockies/gateways_yellowstone/Gateways-To-Yellowstone.pdf.

¹⁶⁵ Gareth Shaw, “Entrepreneurial Cultures and Small Business Enterprises in Tourism,” in *A Companion to Tourism*, ed. by Lew, Alan A, C. Michael Hall, and Allan M. Williams (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2004), 125.

Even with the variety of businesses in the area, depending so heavily on tourism for an economic base is precarious. As described by Bill Hedden, former Grand County councilmember, “Once a town embarks on such a course, its ultimate destiny remains more dependent on national and global events than on the desires of the local people. International currency exchange rates or energy crises become determining factors, and a town that does try to seize control of its destiny will quickly learn that even governors are pawns in the hands of the travel and tourism industry.”¹⁶⁶

Currently, there are a few factors that could potentially result in a decline in Moab and Grand County tourism. For example, there may be fewer American travelers as gas prices rise and the United State economy slows, and there is the risk of Moab becoming so popular as to lose that special value that is associated with visiting a place that is seen as remote or adventurous. In speaking briefly with Dave Sakrisson, the mayor of Moab, he mentioned that the cost of a barrel of oil is expected to be double winter 2008 prices by winter of 2009, and this concerned him. This could potentially have serious effects on Moab’s economy. Increased gas prices could mean that fewer visitors will pass through the area, as arriving by car is almost the only way to get to Moab. Conversely, higher transportation costs could mean that travelers from Salt Lake City would choose Moab as a vacation destination rather than drive someplace further such as Lake Powell or recreation areas in other states. Moab also attracts a significant number of European tourists, and as the Euro continues to strengthen in comparison to the dollar, Moab may see increases in the number of European tourists. As soon as I arrived in Moab at the beginning of the summer of 2008, I noticed an increased European presence, though I could not find any data to back up this observation.

There is also the potential problem that Moab could become so popular that the special qualities of Moab would be degraded, and it could actually cause a decrease in tourist visitation. People who are attracted to the Moab area for solitude or unspoiled natural beauty could become turned off by the crowding of the area and the associated environmental impacts, and decide to live or travel elsewhere. People who come to the area to recreate may look elsewhere if hiking trails, mountain biking trails or sections of the Colorado River become undesirably crowded. In a report on Glacier National Park, it was found that, “many local residents believe that the valley is losing some of its special qualities, most notably its rural, small-town character, farmland, and open spaces. Returning visitors to Glacier National Park have noted declines in the condition of the natural environment, wildlife viewing opportunities, and

¹⁶⁶ Bill Hedden, “Towns Angling for Tourism Should Beware of the Great White Shark,” *High Country News*, Sept. 5, 1994. Adapted from testimony given before the House Committee on Natural Resources, which met in Salt Lake City, Utah, April 7, 1994. http://www.hcn.org/servlets/hcn.Article?article_id=542

the amount of open space.”¹⁶⁷ Destruction of the pristine natural land could cause some tourists to avoid the Moab area. This is illustrated by the issue of off-road vehicle (ORV) use in the Moab area. Moab is relatively open to ORV users, and the dominance of jeeps and ATVs in some areas has deterred hikers and other recreationalists. However, as other places in the Western United States become more restrictive to off-road vehicle use, more hikers may be attracted to those places, but the off-road vehicle users will flock to Moab where they still have numerous ORV recreational opportunities.

THE MISSING PRACTICAL ELEMENT IN TOURISM CRITIQUE

There is a significant amount of literature that describes the exploitive and ultimately destructive nature of tourism.¹⁶⁸ This is especially centered on mass tourism destinations, where the sheer numbers of visitors could pose a threat to the local environment and culture. Much of this literature makes the case that mass tourism is horrible for the destination community. It will eventually take over the area, destroy the natural environment, and erode away all of the things that made it possible or desirable for the original population to inhabit the area. There are some development solutions offered, such as limiting the expansion of paved roads or comfort stations in wild areas, or the limiting of the number of hotel rooms discussed earlier. But, these will not necessarily target the destructive tourists and keep them out. Restrictions on visitor numbers will likely target the tourists who have less money and fewer connections. As far as limiting the construction of new roads and comfort stations, these are often built in areas that people are using anyway. They are built as ways to help manage those people, by keeping them on the road and off of surrounding land and by providing toilets so that people do not simply pollute the area with human waste.

It is implied in much of this literature that there are those who act appropriately when visiting foreign locations, and there are those who do not; there are worthy and unworthy tourists. Some of this literature seems to imply that there is no ideal way to be a tourist or to run a tourist destination. This is especially problematic, because many people and cultures value travel and exploration is worthy pursuits, and that it is, in fact, a negative quality to remain in one place for a lifetime without ever experiencing the culture of others or seeing differing landscapes. None of the literature reviewed for this study addressed this fundamental contradiction.

¹⁶⁷ “Gateway to Glacier: The Emerging Economy of Flathead County.” National Parks Conservation Association/Healthy Parks, Healthy Communities. May 2003. <http://www.npca.org/northernrockies/gateway/gatewaytoglacier.pdf>

¹⁶⁸ In regards to the Southwestern United States, much of the literature focuses on the dynamic between native populations living in tourist centers and non-native visitors experiencing their culture in a very hollow and commercial way. This aspect does not strongly apply to the Moab area, as there is no significant cultural aspect that visitors want to “experience.”

What is also conspicuously lacking in this literature is any reasonable way to decide who is worthy of visiting or moving to a tourist area. There is no specific way to decide if a person possesses the qualities that make them a worthy or unworthy tourist or new resident. It requires a degree of self-righteousness to even suggest that such worthiness could be determined in other people. There are no workable solutions given for how to target the people who, for some reason, do not deserve to visit or move to the area. There is no actual way to screen out the people who do not respect the area properly and keep them out. There is no adequate explanation as to why someone whose great-great-grandparents were born in the tourist community has more of a right to live there than someone who was born elsewhere but sees the value of relocating to this place. The literature lists only the problems associated with new residents and larger numbers of tourists.

On an individual level, the literature advises people to look at themselves, to look at their own motives for traveling, and to try to do so with respect to the local environment and culture. This is important, and perhaps if enough people adopt this mentality, there will be a significant cultural shift, allowing for lessening of some of the problems associated with mass tourism. But, this is limited in its use in policy formation. A destination community is limited in what it can do to decide who visits, and how those visitors will treat the people and the area. This is especially complicated when that destination community must balance the practical needs of jobs and tax income with the desire to protect the land and the culture. There is no easy solution. To help moderate some of the problems associated with development in a tourism-dominated economy, the solution lies in careful planning of the development that is created for tourists as well as the development that is not specifically for tourists, but is related to the fact that tourism is the dominant industry in the area. Through articulation in the comprehensive plan of the area, the community can do a lot to direct development in keeping with the long-term growth and development vision held by the community, the planners and the government. Adoption of the following principles into the long-term vision for the community will not only help regulate the physical aspects of development associated with tourism, but will also help to preserve the crucial sense of place that is associated with the built environment. This sense of place also encompasses the emotional connections that the residents and tourists feel toward the community. In the Moab area, the two crucial aspects of the collective sense of place are the preservation of the natural landscape and the rural nature of the community.

CONCLUSION AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

This section outlines the smart growth concepts that are essential to adopt as part of the long-term planning process in order to mitigate some of the development issues arise in a tourism dominated economy such as Moab and Grand County and maintain the key aspects of the sense of place of the area that are most important to residents and visitors.

The concept of smart growth emerged in the 1990s and continues to gain momentum in state and local land use planning.¹⁶⁹ The idea was developed as an answer to the enduring problem of unplanned or poorly planned sprawling development and its many negative consequences. Smart growth is generally defined as a means to achieve a better, more equitable and more affordable built environment through adoption of a broad agenda of policies to use land more efficiently and to promote better planning.¹⁷⁰

The majority of smart growth literature centers on applications in urban and suburban areas. There is a notable lack of literature regarding smart growth in rural areas and small communities. This is especially true for the Western United States. The information that was available regarding rural and small communities was focused on primarily agricultural communities in the American Northeast and Midwest. These areas differ greatly from tourism based small communities in the Western United States in fundamental ways, and are faced with very different challenges. The amount of public land in places such as Grand County is a phenomenon that is seen almost exclusively in certain Western states and has serious policy implications. Moab, and other tourism based small communities are rural in many ways, but share many of the problems of urban communities. Among these problems are traffic congestion, a significant amount of the housing stock in unacceptable or dilapidated condition, wages that do not keep pace with rising housing costs, and challenges of rapid or steady new development over long periods of time. It does not make sense to make blanket applications of concepts that are directed at either rural-agricultural communities or metropolitan areas. There is a serious need for further study of smart growth principles as applicable in popular, small destination communities.

There are ten widely accepted smart growth principles used by, among others, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Smart Growth Network.¹⁷¹ These principles were adapted to suit the specific needs of the area and address the particular challenges that Moab and Grand County are

¹⁶⁹ Mary M. Edwards and Anna Haines, "Evaluating Smart Growth: Implications for Small Communities," *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, no. 27 (2007): 49, <http://jpe.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/27/1/49>

¹⁷⁰ Mary M. Edwards and Anna Haines, "Evaluating Smart Growth: Implications for Small Communities," *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, no. 27 (2007): 49, <http://jpe.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/27/1/49>

¹⁷¹ United States Environmental Protection Agency Website, "About Smart Growth" http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/about_sg.htm and Smart Growth Network Website "Principles of Smart Growth" <http://www.smartgrowth.org/about/principles/default.asp>.

faced with. The adaptations take into account the challenges that have been outlined thus far in the paper, with respect to the importance of tourism in the economy of Moab and Grand County, and the two aspects of collective sense of place; the surrounding natural landscape and the rural character of the town. The analysis will focus on how these principles should be adapted to fit Moab and Grand County's situation, how these principles are already evidenced in the General Plans of these areas and where there is need for improvement. The General Plan articulates the growth and development policies for the region, providing a consistent and fair basis from which all individual development proposals will be evaluated. If these principles are evident in the General Plan, they should be applied to all individual development decisions. The appendix of this paper includes a list of each principle with the specific wording of each document that directly and indirectly pertains to that principle. This paper concludes by outlining issues that are in need of further study.

CREATE A RANGE OF HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES AND CHOICES— Providing quality housing for people of all income levels is an integral component in any smart growth strategy.¹⁷² Affordable housing options are especially important in destination communities because of the need to house low and middle income workers in an area where land may become very desirable to outside investment, which drives up home prices.

In the Moab and Grand County area, a wide range of housing needs exist, including the need for year-round affordable housing, affordable housing for the seasonal workforce and the desire for luxury developments for full and part-time residents. In both the Moab and Grand County Plans, affordable housing is explicitly addressed with several plans for policy implementation. Both express a clear commitment to working toward the expansion of affordable housing options to meet the needs of the residents. Both include several strategies to increase affordable housing stock including to “explore options for non-traditional housing and adjunct housing such as live/work housing, garage or garden apartments, and caretaker units... assist homeowners and owners of rental properties in the renovation of existing units... encourage a salvage program for demolition materials of homes and commercial structures for recycling into affordable housing or renovation construction... encourage 25 percent of new housing units to be affordable...”¹⁷³, “support efforts to create affordable housing for residents, with first priority being given to the creation of affordable owner-occupied housing... [and] identify and

¹⁷² This principle and definition is taken from Smart Growth Online, “Principles of Smart Growth,” Smart Growth Network, <http://www.smartgrowth.org/about/principles/default.asp>, and is also used as one of the smart growth principles of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

¹⁷³ City of Moab General Plan Sec. 5. II.

eliminate any barriers to affordable housing in Land Use Code.”¹⁷⁴ This is especially crucial because, unlike in some areas, there is not the option to live outside of the area in a cheaper place and commute in for work. The recently released “Grand County and City of Moab Housing Study and Initial Housing Plan” outlines the state of affordable housing in much greater detail and offers numerous specific recommendations for meeting the affordable housing challenges of Grand County and Moab. The city government has expressed a sincere commitment to further investigating and implementing these options with public input.

There is nothing in either plan that explicitly addresses a guiding framework for luxury development. There is currently controversy over proposed large scale luxury development such as Cloudrock, which will be built atop a mesa and include more than 200 units, some of which will be affordable, but the majority of which will be marketed toward upscale clientele from outside of the Moab/Grand County area. It would be in the best interest of the region to articulate a clear vision regarding future luxury and subdivision development, as this is likely to be an issue that is encountered in the future. Further research could be done to investigate how and if other similar regions incorporate guidelines for luxury developments into long-term planning documents.

There is mention of encouraging, but not requiring employers to provide housing for employees, but the seasonal workforce is not explicitly addressed. Moab and Grand County should investigate adopting stronger rules for development of employee housing as linked to development of new business, and possibly a requirement that would affect established businesses.

ENCOURAGE REGIONAL, COMMUNITY, AND STAKEHOLDER

COLLABORATION – Growth can create great places to live, work and play – if it responds to a community’s own sense of how and where it wants to grow.¹⁷⁵ For this reason, community and stakeholder collaboration is essentially. But, it is also important to include regional intergovernmental collaboration in order to best address the needs of the Moab and Grand County population.

REGIONAL COLLABORATION – Requires communities – cities, counties, and unincorporated areas – within an extended area to work together to focus new development within existing developed areas; to establish guidelines for the location of new housing close to jobs, schools,

¹⁷⁴ Grand County General Plan. Sec 4.2.12

¹⁷⁵ This principle and definition is taken from Smart Growth Online, “Principles of Smart Growth,” Smart Growth Network, <http://www.smartgrowth.org/about/principles/default.asp>, and is also used as one of the smart growth principles of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

shopping, and services; to prevent shopping malls and big box retail locating outside city limits where they would destroy the city's economy and generate automobile traffic.¹⁷⁶

In Moab and Grand County, it is essential to collaborate with not only the private landowners, who collectively own only 4.3% of total land in the county, but also the other major land owners including the National Park Service (manages 3.2%), the National Forest Service, (1.2%), the U.S. Department of Defense (.08%), American Indian tribal land (4.4%), and the Bureau of Land Management, which manages the majority of county land at 66%. The Grand County and Moab Plans address collaboration with these agencies where appropriate, with the exclusion of any mention of collaboration with controllers of the American Indian tribal land. The Grand County and Moab Plans address collaboration with these agencies where appropriate. Both plans also repeatedly emphasize the importance of collaboration between Moab and Grand County on many development matters, and both include mention of collaboration with several different public and private agencies in certain circumstances. The Moab Plan outlines instances where it is desirable to collaborate with The Nature Conservancy, Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, Moab-based outdoor education programs, the Grand County School District, the Grand County Recreation Special Service District, Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT), and the Grand County Library. The Grand County Plan includes mention of collaboration with Utah's State Institutional and Trust Lands Administration (SITLA), Utah Department of Health, federal and state agencies as well as joint-management partnerships in regards to special management areas, existing organizations and agencies like the Grand Growers, the Canyonlands Winegrowers, the Castleland Resource Conservation and Development District and the Count Assessor's Office in regards to agricultural preservation, Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT), and Grand County Housing Authority.

Perhaps the most important aspect of regional collaboration is between Moab and Grand County and neighboring San Juan County. The area of Spanish Valley, which is an unincorporated suburb of Moab, is strongly tied to Grand County, but is located primarily in neighboring San Juan County. This proximity necessitates a degree of regional collaboration. Grand County agencies provide emergency services, meaning initial law enforcement response, ambulance and fire. San Juan county residents use the school, library, parks and other public facilities in Grand County. These residents of San Juan county are given the opportunity to give input in Grand County land use decisions, and vice versa, and are expected to make a fair contribution to the costs of the facilities and services that they use.¹⁷⁷ Grand County addresses this, as well as collaboration on issues of extending services such as water and sewer

¹⁷⁶ Crowhurst Lennard, Suzanne H. and Henry L. Lennard, "Principles of TRUE URBANISM," International Making Cities Livable. <http://www.livablecities.org/TrueUrbanism.htm>

¹⁷⁷ Grand County General Plan Update. April 13, 2004. Sec. 4.2.5 . Pg. 47.

lines and emergency and policy response into San Juan County in its General Plan. However, there is no mention of developing a shared long-term development vision with San Juan County. The Grand County General Plan Update states that it “[will] promote intergovernmental cooperation with the City of Moab, regional service providers and San Juan County... [will] encourage greater cooperation and coordination between local and Southeastern Utah governments, federal agencies, businesses, nonprofit organizations, and county residents... [and] may work with the San Juan County to plan for the development of the southern portion of Spanish Valley.”¹⁷⁸ But, it falls short of addressing larger development policy goals that could potentially come into conflict.

The Moab Plan does not ever address collaboration with San Juan County directly. The City of Moab General Plan includes the goal that Moab should “cooperate with Grand County in land use planning and management. Implementations: a. Develop binding, mutually beneficial intergovernmental agreements between the City of Moab and Grand County. Such agreements shall address the respective goals, objectives, responsibilities, jurisdictions, and long-term land use priorities of the city and county concerning development with the City and within proposed annexation areas.”¹⁷⁹ The City of Moab should consider adopting a similar goal with regards to San Juan County, because, as Spanish Valley expands, it will be more and more important for Moab and Grand County to cooperate with San Juan County.

A recent controversy over big-box retail development illustrates the importance of inter-county collaboration regarding long-term development vision. The planning commission proposed to place certain limitations on large-scale developments, but the city council chose not to adopt those recommendations. Among the reasons for the rejection of the development limitations was that if a big box store did want to locate in the general area, but the City of Moab was too restrictive, the stores might locate in San Juan County, creating similar disruption of established businesses, but without providing Grand County any of the tax revenue.¹⁸⁰ The Grand County, Moab and San Juan County Councils should be able to focus entirely on the actual advantages and disadvantages of limiting large-scale retail development and the will of the residents of the area instead of overlooking these concerns based on the assumption that if Moab does not accommodate a big-box store it would simply locate in San Juan County.

The members of the planning commission interviewed for this study also indicated that certain development ordinances, such as one restricting short-term home rental are undermined when they are not uniformly applied to unincorporated areas of Grand County or San Juan County. It is highly

¹⁷⁸ Grand County General Plan Update. Sec. 4.2.5.

¹⁷⁹ City of Moab General Plan. Sec 3. I.4.a.

¹⁸⁰ Smart, Christopher. “Divided Council Opens Moab for Big-Box Retail.” *The Salt Lake Tribune*. March 27, 2008.

recommended that Moab/Grand County make serious attempts and coming up with regional planning goals in collaboration with San Juan County.

COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER COLLABORATION – the community must be included in the development decisions that affect their lives directly and indirectly.

Community collaboration and participation in the planning process is crucial in an area like Moab/Grand County, where the economy is dependant on tourism. The sense of ownership felt towards ones community is affected by the ownership that visitors also feel of certain aspects of that community. Community and stakeholder participation in the formation of development goals and policies is one way for residents to reclaim the space that they inhabit and make sure that the residents themselves truly are shaping the future of their community.

Stakeholder collaboration has been addressed very thoroughly in both plans, with the notable exception of any direct mention of collaboration with seasonal workers. There are likely practical reasons for this, including the semi-resident status of seasonal workers, and indications that seasonal workers often choose not to be involved in such processes.¹⁸¹ It is discussed in greater detain in the “Areas for Further Study” section at the end of this paper, but essentially, Moab and Grand County have very little information about the seasonal population. There should be an explicit commitment to incorporating their participation when possible because it is important to understand their needs for affordable housing and community services. Especially as many seasonal residents return for several consecutive summers and develop a bond to the area.

For the 2004 update of the General Plan, Grand County included public participation as a significant element in the planning process. This was done by using a citizen questionnaire, conducting 21 Key Person Interviews and holding a series of three initial public meetings and three follow up meetings. All were facilitated by two independent planning consultants charged with preparing the Update.¹⁸² The citizen questionnaire was widely circulated in the community and printed in the local newspaper, *The Times-Independent*, netting over 300 responses.¹⁸³ At the public meetings, task forces of committed citizens were formed to address a variety of issues and make recommendations, indicating a high degree of stakeholder and community collaboration. The Moab plan also mentions the many ways that the draft plan is made available for review and comment by Moab’s citizens. It is clear that a serious

¹⁸¹ Alison Gill, “Tourism Communities and Growth Management,” in *A Companion to Tourism*, ed. by Lew, Alan A, C. Michael Hall, and Allan M. Williams (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2004), 576.

¹⁸² The meetings were facilitated y Maro Zagaros, Desired Outcomes, Inc., and Richard Grice, Four Corners Planning, Inc.

¹⁸³ The methodology is described in Grand County General Plan Update. April 13, 2004. Sec. 2.2, 35-36.

and sustained effort is being made by policy makers in the area to include a high degree of public participation.

Though public participation is incorporated into the plan in numerous ways, the problem of controlling for the influence of some groups over others is not directly addressed in either plan. The planners interviewed for this study strongly stated that certain groups have more ability to make their voices heard over others. They cited factors such as education level, ability to find the time required for public participation (taking time off of work or away from children), and the belief that their opinion is valid and deserves to be heard (contrasted with people who, “grew up in a double wide being told all of their lives that they were not smart enough to attend college”) in influencing who is able to engage in outlets for public participation. Those that end up participating less are often residents who work multiple jobs, have lower incomes, and might also have children. In speaking with these men and also the people in charge of soliciting public input for the “Grand County Housing Study and Initial Housing Plan,” it is clear that the individuals involved have a strong and sincere commitment to addressing the concerns of those people who are not as visible in the public participation process, but this is not articulated directly in either plan. Because the sentiment already exists, it would be wise to incorporate it into the official General Plans.

AVOID SPRAWL DEVELOPMENT WITH POLICY THAT WILL:

CREATE WALKABLE AND BIKEABLE NEIGHBORHOODS – Walkable and bikeable communities are desirable places to live, work, learn, worship and play, and therefore a key component of smart growth.¹⁸⁴

Both plans make direct commitments to creating and maintaining walkable and bikeable neighborhoods through sidewalk improvement, installation of traffic calming devices, adding bike and walking lanes to Highway 191 and 128, further development of non-motorized trails, further development of a central public plaza and gathering place, providing pedestrian corridors to parks, schools and other public facilities, encouragement of a more pedestrian-oriented business district, separate walking areas where bikes are not allowed, and indirectly through the encouragement of control of sprawl development. The ability to walk and bike everywhere is seen as an important component of the rural character of Moab, and the City of Moab and Grand County General Plans have done a very thorough job of addressing this need.

¹⁸⁴ I combined these four principles under the umbrella principle “Avoid Sprawl Development,” which was not one of the core principles of the Smart Growth Network or the Environmental Protection Agency. This principle and definition is taken from Smart Growth Online, “Principles of Smart Growth,” Smart Growth Network, <http://www.smartgrowth.org/about/principles/default.asp>.

MIX LAND USES – Smart growth supports the integration of mixed land uses into communities as a critical component of achieving better places to live.¹⁸⁵

This is less applicable in a place like Moab/Grand County than in metropolitan areas. Both plans emphasize a commitment to separation of residential and commercially zoned areas. One reason for this is likely that Moab residents want to be able to retreat from the busy tourist zones into their own quiet, residential neighborhoods. There is likely a market for mixed housing, especially considering the affordable housing shortage that Moab/Grand County currently faces. There are provisions in the Moab plan to encourage the development of mixed-use housing, combining affordable housing with commercial use and building affordable housing units above commercial ground floor units, and to explore non-traditional housing options such as live/work housing, garage or garden apartments and caretaker units.

STRENGTHEN AND DIRECT DEVELOPMENT TOWARD EXISTING COMMUNITIES AND TAKE ADVANTAGE OF COMPACT BUILDING

DESIGN – Smart growth directs development towards existing communities already served by infrastructure, seeking to utilize the resources that existing neighborhoods offer, and conserve open space and irreplaceable natural resources on the urban fringe. Compact building design can be utilized as an alternative to conventional, land consumptive development.¹⁸⁶

Both Plans make specific mention of exploring the possibility of infill development and/or clustering development in the region. The Grand County Plan emphasizes development clustering in numerous places, and the City of Moab plan includes mention of clustering commercial businesses, residences and public buildings. It is possible to further explore compact development in existing developed areas without losing the rural character of the area. Such tactics would be especially useful in limiting further sprawl into Spanish Valley and creating more affordable housing options

Grand County has a serious problem with the dilapidated and unacceptable housing. A recent study on affordable housing in Grand County estimates that 35% of the housing stock is in dilapidated or unacceptable condition.¹⁸⁷ Neither plan directly states a commitment to improving this housing stock as a way to strengthen existing communities. The Moab Plan does state a commitment to rehabilitation

¹⁸⁵ I combined these four principles under the umbrella principle “Avoid Sprawl Development,” which was not one of the core principles of the Smart Growth Network or the Environmental Protection Agency. This principle and definition is taken from Smart Growth Online, “Principles of Smart Growth,” Smart Growth Network, <http://www.smartgrowth.org/about/principles/default.asp>.

¹⁸⁶ I combined these four principles under the umbrella principle “Avoid Sprawl Development,” which was not one of the core principles of the Smart Growth Network or the Environmental Protection Agency. This principle and definition is taken from Smart Growth Online, “Principles of Smart Growth,” Smart Growth Network, <http://www.smartgrowth.org/about/principles/default.asp>.

¹⁸⁷ Grand County and City of Moab Housing Study and Initial Housing Plan. March 17, 2008.

of existing historic buildings, but it is unclear to how much of the housing stock this distinction would apply. If Moab and Grand County do not take the lead in this endeavor, it is possible that these homes will be demolished or remodeled by outside investors who are looking for second home or investment properties.

Both plans would do well to explicitly state a commitment to directing development toward existing communities whenever possible, especially working to rehabilitate dilapidated housing.

PRESERVE OPEN SPACE, FARMLAND, NATURAL BEAUTY AND CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL AREAS – Open space preservation supports smart growth goals by bolstering local economies, preserving critical environmental areas, improving our communities quality of life, and guiding new growth into existing communities.¹⁸⁸ In regards to Moab and Grand County, open space means not only the vast public lands that make up the majority of the land in the area, but also the parks established within Moab and Spanish Valley.

Open space, farmland and natural beauty are part the surrounding landscape and agricultural character of the region that is valued so highly by residents and visitors. Both plans include several mentions of the importance the preservation of these qualities, and each directly makes a strong commitment to the preservation of open space and farmland and the availability public parks. The City of Moab Plans includes several implementation strategies such as providing density bonuses as incentives for open space and preservation, provide incentives for agricultural preservation, considering adopting an ordinance that would require large-scale development projects to give land, or money in lieu of land, for public parks, and working with other agencies to protect wildlife habitats. The Grand County Plan found that the residents involved in the key person interviews seemed to agree that one of the best qualities of Grand County is the “public open space, ease of access, [and] recreational opportunities.” Perhaps because Grand County includes much more open space and critical environmental areas, the Grand County Plan includes much more in regards to wildland preservation. The Grand County Plan includes an entire section on the protection of sensitive lands and has made a commitment to considering sensitive lands in all development decisions. Undeveloped ridgelines are also highly valued by residents and visitors, and as such both plans include commitment to keeping ridgeline development to a minimum, the Moab plan requires a public comment period before any such development could be built within Moab limits. The Grand County Plan, which applies to many unincorporated areas, should also

¹⁸⁸ This principle and definition is taken from Smart Growth Online, “Principles of Smart Growth,” Smart Growth Network, <http://www.smartgrowth.org/about/principles/default.asp>, and is also used as one of the smart growth principles of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

include such a strong commitment to the creation and maintenance of public parks in the expanding neighborhoods.

Both plans strongly address the safety concerns regarding development in flood areas, and are committed to preventing dangerous development. The Moab plan include mention of providing incentives to developers to keep structures as far away from the flood channel as possible, such as allowing cluster housing or greater density in lieu of building close to the flood channel.

The Grand County Plan expresses a commitment to support several existing organizations and agencies that are committed to using agricultural land and protecting it from development. This plan states that “agriculture is a minor component of the Grand County economy, but plays a major role in the local sense of place and scenery. Sustaining local agriculture is also essentially for any community that values self-sufficiency.” This reinforces the point that agricultural land is an important component of the rural character that residents values so highly. The Moab plan includes provisions such as encouraging landowners to keep their land open or in agricultural use. This ideal should be linked with specific incentives that could be provided for landowners.

FOSTER DISTINCTIVE, ATTRACTIVE COMMUNITIES WITH A STRONG SENSE OF PLACE – Smart growth encourages communities to craft a vision and set standards for development and construction which respond to community values of architectural beauty and distinctiveness, as well as expanded choices in housing and transportation.¹⁸⁹ Basic elements of the collective sense of place in Moab are the surrounding public lands and the ability to access the land for recreational purposes, the beautiful landscape and the rural character of the area.

Both plans address this principle on a number of dimensions. Many of the aforementioned principles include aspects that are related to the distinct, attractive community of Moab and its strong sense of place. During the public participation process in crafting the Grand County General Plan Update, rural character was collectively defined to encompass many different aspects of development such as the need for a “continuum of housing sizes and style for people of modest means”, “low density, modest residential development, interspersed with farms (with farm animals) and fields”, and “mixture of modest, typical residential height and scale, homes made out of natural materials on a variety of parcel sizes ranging from 1 to 40 acres – avoid cookie cutter style homes and uniform postage stamp

¹⁸⁹ This principle and definition is taken from Smart Growth Online, “Principles of Smart Growth,” Smart Growth Network, <http://www.smartgrowth.org/about/principles/default.asp>, and is also used as one of the smart growth principles of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

lots.”¹⁹⁰ The importance of open space was expressed in a number of aspects of “rural character”, such as being “five minutes in any direction to the County’s vast, accessible open lands”, and having “protected view sheds to large open spaces, like a park – e.g. the LaSal Mountains.”¹⁹¹¹⁹² The Grand County Plan includes language in several places that encourages architectural design such that, “building design and color treatment should blend into the natural setting and avoid drawing undue visual attention.”¹⁹³ This illustrates a strong commitment on the part of Grand County to ensure that new building incorporate smoothly into the existing areas. The City of Moab Plan similarly includes extensive plans for how to maintain Moab’s rural character, access to unspoiled public land and protected viewsheds, including the protection of “the visual resources of Moab including ridgelines, mountain views, the night sky and other scenic assets”¹⁹⁴, using native and drought-resistant plants in Moab’s parks, planting strips and medians, developing a historical preservation ordinance and rehabilitating historical properties, and encouraging “the development and vitality of a central commercial district compatible with small-town living.”¹⁹⁵

It is important that both Plans have made very strong commitments to preserving the aspects of the town that make up the rural character and open space that is so highly valued by the community. It is important that these ideas are strongly worded in guiding policy such as the General Plans.

The rural character and distinctness of the area could be compromised by further corporate franchise development and residential subdivision development. The importance of the strong and distinct sense of place of Moab should be considered heavily against other concerns when making decisions regarding whether to allow such development, and should be clearly articulated in both plans.

DIVERSIFICATION OF ECONOMY AND PRESERVATION OF LOCAL

BUSINESS– This does not fit clearly into any one of the smart growth principles, but it is also essential to consider the how the long term goals of economic diversification are incorporated into the Moab and Grand County General Plan.

Economic diversity is cited as a major concern for many Grand County residents. As such, both plans have provisions that encourage diversity in new business in community (but with respect to

¹⁹⁰ Grand County General Plan Update. April 13, 2004. Sec. 3.1. Pg. 41.

¹⁹¹ Grand County General Plan Update. April 13, 2004. Sec. 3.1. Pg. 41.

¹⁹² “On February 23, 2002, participating citizens explored the meaning of the term ‘rural character’ and accepted by consensus that rural character in the Spanish Valley means different things to different people, including: (a) A continuum of housing sizes and style for people of modest means; (b) Low density, modest residential development, interspersed with farms (with farm animals) and fields...

¹⁹³ Grand County General Plan Update. April 13, 2004. Sec. 4.2.9. Pg 56.

¹⁹⁴ City of Moab General Plan. 2002. Sec 2. III. Goal.

¹⁹⁵ City of Moab General Plan. 2002. Sec 3. II.3)

maintaining the rural character), and encourage industries that will provide off-season employment. This is where Moab or Grand County could include provisions requiring or encouraging business development that would provide a living wage or some degree higher than the federal minimum wage to workers in the area. This should be seriously considered, as the region is plagued by low wage employment and rising housing costs. Local businesses are also part of what makes Moab/Grand County unique and distinct. Neither plan includes any direct provisions regarding local business preservation or encouragement. Both plans should consider adding provisions that would address this concern.

The Grand County Plan expressed not only the need for a strong, diversified, year-round economy, but identified several key industries to pursue; “tourism/conventions, film, 4-year destination college, health care, retirement/second home ownership and natural resource development.”¹⁹⁶ Of these, the Moab plan expressed commitment to encourage only further tourism and conventions, resource development and a college campus. The Moab planners should consider adding in provisions related to the film industry, health care, and/or retirement second home ownership if it is seen as desirable by the community. It is also important to consider at this stage some of the problems that have been previously outlined regarding increased second home development in an area and decide how to balance that with the growing need for affordable housing.

The Grand County Plan states that, “Grand County does support multiple use of public lands. In addition to the continued use of recreation the county supports oil and gas exploration and development. These uses not only create good paying jobs, but generate mineral lease revenues that can provide needed capital to help pay for infrastructure improvements needed to achieve economic diversity.”¹⁹⁷ The Moab plan does not include direct support for the possible expansion of resource extraction related industries. Moab and Grand County planning departments should come together to form a common vision related to this industry. The land that would be used for resource extraction would be in the county, but the workers associated with this business would likely locate in Moab.

The Moab General Plan includes a provision that states support for the development of a college campus in the Moab area, as does the Grand County General Plan. This is one aspect of economic diversification that seems to be universally agreed upon. One of the Moab City Councilmembers interviewed for this study blamed inexplicable reasoning and politics for a lack of enthusiasm from Central Utah University or Utah State University regarding expansion of college campuses into Moab. He believes that, in time, this will change so it is crucial that the goal of bringing a college campus to

¹⁹⁶ Grand County General Plan Update. April 13, 2004. Sec. 4.2.4.. Pg. 45.

¹⁹⁷ Grand County General Plan Update. April 13, 2004.

Moab is clearly articulated in each plan so that when political and personal conditions are more accommodating, the commitment will still be there.

AREAS FOR FURTHER STUDY

EVALUATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PRINCIPLES ARTICULATED IN THE GENERAL PLAN

An obvious area of further study would be to investigate how the goals of the General Plans have translated into actual policy, and the degree of success of those policies. Because of the problems that gateway communities such as Moab face, it is essential that these concepts are evident in the comprehensive growth and development plans of the area, but, it is an essential next step to go beyond simply what has been published as goals and research how these ideas are implemented in policy and to examine components of successful policies. When the planners interviewed for this study were asked about the success of the implementation of the City of Moab General Plan policies, they replied that the implementation was successful, because any policy that is articulated is only good if it is properly implemented.

COMPARISON TO SIMILAR COMMUNITIES

A sample of other communities could be found using criteria such as (a) national park gateway community status, (b) rural (not urban or suburban), (c) possible population limit or 10,000 or 20,000, (d) having a regional economy that would greatly diminish in size in the absence of tourism, and (e) having an economic history of grazing, farming and/or extractive industries. The general plan of each region could be evaluated on the same criteria that Moab and Grand County have been evaluated on in this study. The results would show how similar communities address similar problems and may provide valuable insight for ways that Moab and Grand County could improve their General Plans.

The General Plans of similar communities as well as those of Moab and Grand County could be evaluated in more of a systematic fashion. The 2007 study *Evaluating Smart Growth: Implications for Small Communities* by Mary M. Edwards and Anna Haines evaluated thirty local comprehensive plans in rural Wisconsin areas to determine how well local plan goals and policies promote smart growth principles.¹⁹⁸ Each policy was evaluated independently by two researchers that determined whether policies that fit into one of six smart growth goals were “present and action oriented”, “present and not action oriented”, and “not present.”

GREEN AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PROVISIONS

¹⁹⁸ Edwards, Mary M., and Anna Haines. “Evaluating Smart Growth: Implications for Small Communities.” *Journal of Planning Education and Research*: 27;49. (2007) <http://jpe.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/27/1/49>

David Sakrisson, Moab's mayor, has expressed strong interest in adding green and sustainable development principles into the General Plan the next time it is updated. Currently, neither the Moab nor the Grand County plan contains any direct provisions regarding green and/or sustainable development. Moab is already a leader in sustainable energy as it is the first EPA Green Power city in the nation. Starting in 2003, the city began purchasing wind power for 50% of the City Office building demand, and in starting 2006, at least 5% of Moab's electricity customers switched to purchasing pollution-free wind energy.¹⁹⁹ A study of other general plans could be undertaken to see how other rural, destination communities have adopted green and sustainable building in their long term and comprehensive plans.

GREATER WORKER PROTECTIONS

Worker protections may be outside of the scope of the general plan, which is primarily focused on articulating goals directly associated with the physical development of the area. However, the status of the workers has a direct relationship with development in that people who are making higher wages are able to make different housing and shopping choices than those making lower wages. It also works toward the preservation of the existing community if workers are able to have a stable financial situation and remain in the community. Grand County should investigate the possibility of strengthening worker protections to further help to meet the needs of low-income residents and service sector employees. This could take the form of a living wage ordinance or removal of some of the restrictions to unionization. At this time, neither one of these ideas would be easily feasible. Both present significant challenges for a variety of reasons, including (a) laws related to unionization in the workplace are regulated on the state level, (b) Utahns traditionally oppose what is perceived as too much regulation of business choices by government, and (c) the adoption of living wage laws or lowering of unionization hurdles would surely be met with strong public opposition by the business community. However, the immobile nature of tourism businesses in Grand County, does offer certain opportunities. It would be useful to research possible ways that worker wages and protections could be increased.

STUDY OF IMMIGRANT WORKERS

Based solely on my own perceptions over the last three summers I have spent in Moab, I have observed the number of immigrant workers – mainly South and Central American – is rising steadily. The community is getting closer to reaching a critical mass where Hispanic immigrants will have a very visible presence in the area. This anecdote helps to illustrate this point. In the three summers that I have

¹⁹⁹ City of Moab, Utah. "Green Power in Moab." Official Home Page for the City of Moab, Utah. <http://www.moabcity.org/feature.cfm?id=1152031362016>

spent in Moab, I have often visited a certain park in town. Starting in the summer of 2007, I noticed that every evening several Hispanic families would gather in the park, the adults would all sit together and cook or socialize, and the children all run around together playing in the park. This was not the case the first two summers I lived in Moab. I think that this is an illustration of the growing importance of the Hispanic community in the Moab area. Further study should be conducted to see if the specific needs of this community are being met in Moab, and if not, what should be done.

STUDY OF THE SEASONAL WORKFORCE

In researching for this study, I found no information on the seasonal workforce of Moab. I did not even find an estimated number of seasonal workers. The economy of Moab is highly dependant on the contributions of workers who reside in Moab for the summer season and work in retail, restaurants or recreation/guiding, but there is no information on this population. A study should be conducted to investigate (a) the demographic characteristics of the seasonal workforce, (b) what jobs are done by the seasonal workforce, (c) what attracts seasonal workers to the Moab area, (d) the housing characteristics of the seasonal workforce including where they are living, and ways in which they cope with affordable housing shortages including using employee housing, homelessness and living in alternative structures such as cars or tents, and crowding into existing units, (e) what these seasonal workers do in the off-season, if they stay in Moab or move to other regions, and what types of work they are doing, (f) the average length of involvement that seasonal workers have in the Moab area, including the amount who work only one summer and the amount who return for multiple summers, (g) how often seasonal workers become longer-term residents, (h) and if Moab and Grand County development plans adequately accommodate this sector of the workforce.

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APPENDIX

CITY OF MOAB GENERAL PLAN (2002), found at <http://www.moabcity.org/pdfs/FinalGeneralPlan2002complete.pdf>

And

GRAND COUNTY GENERAL PLAN UPDATE (2004), found at <http://www.grandcountyutah.net/pdf/planning/GeneralPlanUpdate-041304.pdf>

Each principle was evaluated for parts of the General Plans that addressed that principle either directly or indirectly and then analysed.

There is overlap, so some parts of the plans will be represented in more than one place. For example, “e. Support efforts to protect the beautiful scenery that surrounds the area.” (City of Moab General Plan Sec. 1. I.4.e) fits in both “Foster Distinctive, Attractive Communities with a Strong Sense of Place” and in “Preserve Open Space, Farmland, Natural Beauty and Critical Environmental Areas.” Some things, such as those relating to maintaining the vitality of the downtown area by using compact development relate both to people’s sense of place, as a central downtown area is key to the “rural character” as well as important for stopping sprawl development.

Walkable neighborhoods are part of “rural character”, and walkability in a region ties into green and sustainable building as well as open space preservation.

There are also things that would support the sense of place for some, but not for others. One example of this is “5. Encourage, initiate and support City beautification and cleanup efforts. a. Conduct and support City cleanup projects.” (City of Moab General Plan Sec 1. I.5.a) **Because, for some people part of the sense of place of Moab is the funk factor, which includes yards full of junk.**

This research could be expanded with more precise methodology and applied to a larger sample of general plans from other American West tourist and National Park gateway communities.

CREATE A RANGE OF HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES AND CHOICES:

CITY OF MOAB

DIRECT –

I. HOUSING - GENERAL

Goal: To follow a housing strategy that meets the needs of current residents, anticipates growth in housing needs, promotes a cohesive, small-town environment, supports a high quality of life, and addresses the problems of affordable housing.

Policies:

1. Encourage a mixed variety of housing types to attract economic development and maintain growth while meeting the needs of the community.
2. Maintain the integrity of residential areas with compatible types of housing and development.
3. Enforce health, welfare and safety laws so that properties are maintained and house values are enhanced.
4. Encourage residential homes to remain in residential use. (Sec. 5. I.Goal&1-4)

INDIRECT -

II. AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Goal: To provide or make available affordable housing for all Moab residents.

Policies:

1. Support the Grand County’s Housing Authority in its efforts to assist low- to moderate-income families and individuals in meeting their housing needs.
2. Explore options for non-traditional housing and adjunct housing such as live/work housing, garage or garden apartments, and caretaker units.

Implementation:

- a. Encourage and create incentives for developers to provide housing for employees.
 - b. Encourage employers in the City to assist in finding, and possibly providing, housing for temporary and seasonal workers.
3. Assist homeowners and owners of rental properties in the renovation of existing units.

Implementation:

- a. Encourage a salvage program for demolition materials of homes and commercial structures for recycling into affordable housing or renovation construction.
- 4. Support the development of affordable, small-scale residential housing which fits the character of the City and is interspersed with market-rate units.
- 5. Encourage 25 percent of new housing units to be affordable (as defined by HB-295) to area median income. At least 35 percent of the 25 percent goal shall be affordable rental housing targeting families at or below 50 percent of the area median income.
- 6. Encourage organizations and business to consider creative housing for their employees.
- 7. Identify key land parcels in and near the City which are suited for affordable housing.
Work with and encourage property owners to develop affordable housing on the lands identified appropriate for such use.
- 8. Encourage private/public partnerships for the development and management of affordable housing. Special considerations should be shown to non-profit sponsors of affordable housing and special use housing.
- 9. Encourage affordable housing to be dispersed throughout the community, consistent in scale and character with surrounding neighborhoods.
- 10. Encourage in-fill development of affordable housing.
- 11. Encourage the development of mixed-use housing, combining affordable housing with commercial use. Promote the building of affordable housing units above commercial ground floor units.
- 12. Consider the development of accessory dwelling units. (Sec. 5. II. Goal&1-2.a-b.3.a.4-12)

GRAND COUNTY

DIRECT

On February 23, 2002, participating citizens explored the meaning of the term “rural character” and accepted by consensus that rural character in the Spanish Valley means different things to different people, including:

- (a) A continuum of housing sizes and style for people of modest means;
 - (b) Low density, modest residential development, interspersed with farms (with farm animals) and fields;
 - (c) Mixture of modest, typical residential height and scale, homes made out of natural materials on a variety of parcel sizes ranging from 1 to 40 acres – avoid cookie cutter style homes and uniform postage stamp lots;
 - (e) Landscaped, natural, and/or agricultural open spaces create a “flow of nature” through rural neighborhoods and developments leaving room for birds and other wildlife;
 - (f) Community members living and working in the area, without long commutes to work;
 - (k) Perceptions of an agricultural base and housing costs proportionate to what people earn in the area;
- (Sec 3.1)

4.2.12 | Provide a Mix of Affordable Housing Opportunities for Low to Moderate Income Households
 Affordable Housing Policy 1. Grand County will support efforts to create affordable housing for its residents, with first priority being given to the creation of affordable owner- occupied housing. Grand County residents value the diversity of their community, and fear that it will be lost if affordable housing is not available. Affordable housing is more an investment in people and values than in bricks and mortar. Across the nation, communities that have been exporting their work force have exported their character and imported pollution and social problems too numerous to mention. Thus far, Grand County has avoided exporting its work force to outlying communities and desires to continue to see affordable housing provided as close to the heart of the community (Moab) as possible. Moab/Spanish Valley do not have nearby low-cost residential area to which below-median income households could

relocate to and afford to commute to/from jobs in Moab. The lack of affordable housing threatens the availability of an adequate labor pool for service- and tourist-industry employers, and handicaps recruitment of trained/credentialed teachers, law enforcement officers, and healthcare workers to the community. To the extent that this community wants to preserve its diversity, it will have to work together to provide opportunities for its workers to remain a permanent part of the social fabric. Competition for available housing by the short-term and second home markets is a significant factor in the price and adequacy of housing in Grand County. Affordable housing programs are needed to offset the influence of these factors on the available supply of housing. Every community has economic limitations, and Grand County is no exception. It is critical the County understand the nature and scope of the affordable housing problem so that it can prioritize its limited resources to address its most critical needs and priorities.

Implementation Actions

- (a) Cooperate with the City of Moab and regularly update the Affordable Housing Needs Assessment in order to understand the scope of its affordable housing problem and the size of the housing shortfall relative to the needs various household income groups.
- (b) Identify program alternatives available to address the community affordable housing needs and priorities; and subsequently implement the most appropriate programs.
- (c) Identify and eliminate any barriers to affordable housing in its Land Use Code, and consider rezoning to permit higher densities as an incentive for the construction of affordable housing where there is adequate infrastructure.
- (d) Encourage infill development within the existing urbanized area, such as close-in along Highway 191 South and adjacent to the City of Moab, to allow workers to live close to where they work.
- (e) Develop incentives for affordable housing development.
- (f) Encourage employers to provide affordable housing for their employees and others.
- (g) Encourage small scale resident housing that fits the character of established neighborhoods.
- (h) Consider allowing accessory dwelling units to single family dwellings where practical.
- (i) Continue to support the Grand County Housing Authority and private sector affordable housing projects.
- (j) The Affordable Housing Task Force will, with support from the County, the City of Moab, and other agencies and organization, like habitat for humanity:
 - (1) Investigate private sector financing options for construction of affordable housing.
 - (2) Identify appropriate sites and any zoning changes needed to accommodate the construction of affordable housing;
 - (3) Study ways in which employers can provide housing for their employees; and
 - (4) Communicate the findings of the investigations outlined in the goal above to the public and local officials.
- (k) Provide a site planning graphical examples to illustrate innovative, small lot housing types, clustered development and workable mixed use side development ideas.

INDIRECT

Identified from the Key Person Interviews:

- (c) Most Important Issues Facing Grand County
- Diversification, Infrastructure, Affordable Housing

(f) Common Vision:

- Enhance Community – Provide Affordable Housing and address problems of poverty (Sec 2.2.1)

Identified from the responses to the Citizen Questionnaire:

- (e) Affordable Housing, Ownership
- (f) Affordable Housing, Rentals
- (Sec 2.2.2)

Agreeing with the Key Person Interview results, participating citizens agreed on a vision that included... [the addition of] retirement services and affordable housing. (Sec 2.2.3)

ENCOURAGE REGIONAL, COMMUNITY, AND STAKEHOLDER COLLABORATION

REGIONAL COLLABORATION

CITY OF MOAB

DIRECT –

“Special Challenges.” Pg. 5 –

Although City services and administration stop at the City limits, we know that the reasons people are moving to the area or staying here are not limited to the City of Moab. Therefore, careful cross-agency planning should occur, along with appropriate inter-local agreements. It should be a priority for City and County planning bodies and City and County governing bodies to share compatible goals for the larger Moab area.

4. Cooperate with Grand County in land use planning and management.

Implementation:

a. Develop binding, mutually beneficial intergovernmental agreements between the City of Moab and Grand County. Such agreements shall address the respective goals, objectives, responsibilities, jurisdictions, and long-term land use priorities of the city and county concerning development within the City and within proposed annexation areas. (Sec. 3. I.4.a)

10. Support the establishment of a strong county-wide recreation district.

Implementation:

a. Include wildlife and wildlife habitat inventory and management goals in a parks and recreation master plan. Work with The Nature Conservancy, Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, and Bureau of Land Management, as well as Moab-based outdoor education programs. (Sec. 6. I.10.a)

4. Cooperate with the County, the School District and the Grand County Recreation Special Service District to expand and improve recreational programs. (Sec. 6. II.4)

g. Create inter-local agreements with Grand County to develop bicycle lanes and walking trails linking City roads and trails to county recreational features. (Sec. 7. II.3.g)

1. Support county and state agencies efforts to provide accessible, affordable and quality health care to the community, i.e. hospital, mental health, etc. (Sec. 9. III.1)

3. Cooperate with Grand County to locate future emergency and health care facilities outside flood and earthquake zones. Facilities should be built on suitable ground, in appropriate zones, with convenient access from arterials. (Sec. 9. III.3)

1. Encourage close cooperation between Moab City and Grand County School District, in terms of the relationship between school capacity and new development, the proper site development of new schools, and the ability to provide schools with needed services such as water for outside uses. (Sec. 9. V.1)

INDIRECT –

5. Coordinate with UDOT and conduct public meetings to address state highway requirements and community needs. Consider all alternatives to the issue of truck traffic, such as reduced speed limits, weigh station, increased enforcement, bypass, etc. to alleviate increased truck traffic through downtown. Require City approval before locating or constructing any truck by-pass. Require restricted access and environmentally sensitive construction for view shed, noise, erosion and natural hazards. (Sec. 7. IV.5)

10. Consider consolidating City and County road projects. (Sec. 7. IV.10)

a. Actively pursue the renovation of the old Grand County Middle School in partnership with the Grand County Library and Grand County, with the intent of relocating City Hall to that facility no later than the year 2005, thereby consolidating community services to the “Old Moab” area. (Sec. 9. I.1.a)

GRAND COUNTY

DIRECT

4.2.5 | Promote Intergovernmental Cooperation with the City of Moab, Regional Service Providers and San Juan County

Intergovernmental Policy 1. Encourage greater cooperation and coordination between local and Southeastern Utah governments, federal agencies, businesses, nonprofit organizations, and county residents.

Intergovernmental Policy 2. Grand County will work with the city of Moab and San Juan County to extend sewer service, but not water service, to the southern (San Juan County) portion of Spanish Valley, subject to the following conditions:

- (a) No service extensions to non-residential or multi-family development;
- (b) An inter-local agreement (between Grand and San Juan counties) to recapture the cost of service;
- (c) The agreement should provide for service only to residential uses at a density of 1 dwelling per acre on currently zoned land, and 1 dwelling unit per 10 acres on the un-zoned land;
- (d) All development to comply with the development standards of the Grand County Land Use Code; and
- (e) San Juan County Service Public Facilities and Service Area Boundary to be defined as valley floor (east and west toe of escarpment) and including the SITLA block of land boundary on the south.

A mass density study has documented the scale and nature of the potential problems associated with such development.

A public participation session held on January 18, 2002, focused citizen’s attention on the possible need for a Public Facilities and Services Area Boundary to serve as a guide regarding facility and services extensions.

Citizens identified and discussed the pros and cons of such a boundary relative to Grand County and San Juan County – consensus was reached that service area boundary issues within Grand County are best left up to the individual public facility and service providers.

Citizens identified and discussed the pros and cons of such a boundary relative to San Juan County in a public participation session held on January 18, 2002 -- consensus was reached that the County should only consider extending sewer service (not domestic water service) to San Juan County in order to protect the aquifer.

Implementation Actions

(a) Grand County may work with the San Juan County to plan for the development of the southern portion of Spanish Valley. Grand County may work with the City of Moab, local service providers and San Juan County to extend sewer service to southern Spanish Valley and to establish fee schedules for such development as necessary to ensure that development in San Juan County pays its fair share of the costs of services provided by the City of Moab, Grand County and local service providers.

(b) Several hundred acres of vacant land are zoned for residential and commercial development in the San Juan County portion of Spanish Valley. Grand County agencies provide emergency services -- initial law enforcement response, ambulance, and fire -- to this area. Also, San Juan County residents attend local schools and use the library, parks, and other public facilities in Grand County. Grand County and other local service providers cannot plan or function effectively without input to San Juan County’s land use decisions and ways to ensure that developers and residents in the southern portion of the Valley make a fair contribution to the cost of the facilities and services they use.

(c) Grand County and the City of Moab should adopt an agreement (and amend their development codes accordingly) to clarify the procedure for review of developments within the one-half mile surrounding the city limits where Moab has jurisdiction over “urban development.”

(d) Utah law (Utah Code 10-2-418) provides that, “Urban development shall not be approved or permitted within one-half mile of a municipality in the unincorporated territory which the municipality has proposed for annexation in its policy declaration, if a municipality is willing to annex the territory proposed for such development under the standards and requirements set forth in this section.

(e) Grand County will work with Utah Department of Health and San Juan County to implement the guidelines of the Mass Density Study to protect the aquifer from septic system contamination.

Grand County will be a cooperating agency with Federal and State land agencies. Federal law requires the Bureau of Land Management [43 C.F.R. § 1610.3-1 (e), Coordination of Planning Efforts] and the Forest Service [36 C.F.R. § 219.7(c), Plan Decisions] to conduct a consistency review with Grand County when formulating plans or making land-use decisions. It also provides authority for cooperation with other agencies, including the National Park Service. Grand County will work proactively to ensure that federal decision-makers are aware of, and carefully consider, the local impacts of their decisions. Federal and state land-management agencies are required to consult with Grand County prior to developing or amending land management plans. Any decision on the part of these public land management agencies that deviates from the policies set forth in this Plan must have a reasonable, detailed, and logical explanation from the agency making the decision. (Sec 4.2.6)

Public Lands Policy 4. Grand County supports the general retention of federal ownership of federal lands in Grand County. Any increase in federally managed lands, such as the expansion of the National Park System, should not be at the expense of County revenues and should offer a clear rationale for benefit to county citizens. The County shall be a collaborating agency in any consideration of National Park system expansion. (Sec 4.2.6)

National Park Service Coordination

Public Lands Policy 5. Grand County will obtain national park service input and involvement in zoning decisions and proposed developments that have the potential to degrade park resources or park visitors' experiences. Park visitation – and by extension the ecological health of the parks and integrity of vistas – is important to the economy of Grand County. (Sec 4.2.6)

Special Uses, Events and Activities

Public Lands Policy 13. Grand County will be involved with public land managers; with new and ongoing events and promote cooperation with the permitting process. Ongoing uses, events and activities should be required to mitigate adverse impacts. Restoration plans should be integrated into the permitting process for both new and old events and activities. (Sec 4.2.6)

Special Management Areas

High-use Areas

Public Lands Policy 14. Grand County promotes cooperation with federal and state agencies to identify and implement appropriate management of high-use and special-value areas, for example, Sand Flats, Mill Creek, Potato Salad Hill, the Highway 128 Corridor, the Kane Creek Corridor, and Moab Rim Trail. Such management should include vigorous education and enforcement efforts and could be created through congressional means (e.g. National Conservation Area), administrative designation (e.g. Special Recreation Management Area), or locally formed joint-management partnerships (e.g. the Mill Creek Partnership) (Sec 4.2.6)

Illegal Dumping

Public Lands Policy 15. Grand County promotes cooperation with federal and state agencies, and neighboring counties to implement special control measures on public lands where illegal dumping and littering are occurring. Such measures should include posting of “no dumping” signs by the appropriate agency, vigorous enforcement of existing littering laws, and ongoing public education. (See also Sec. 4.2.7) (Sec 4.2.6)

(a) Grand County will develop a Memorandum of Understanding with State and Federal agencies to achieve cooperating agency status.

(d) Encourage continued cooperation between the County, the community and federal agencies with respect to uniform enforcement of land use regulations on the public lands (e.g., Sand Flats model) (Implementation Actions – Sec 4.2.6)

(b) Several existing organizations and agencies, like the Grand Growers, the Canyonlands Winegrowers, the Castleland Resource Conservation and Development District, and the County Assessor's Office should be involved in this effort. Utah's Farmland Assessment Act (U.C.A. 59-2-502, et seq.) provides for agricultural land to be assessed at its value in use, rather than at its speculative value. (Implementation Actions – Sec 4.2.10)

Public Facilities Policy 6. Grand County will cooperate with the city of Moab in developing and operating an Animal Shelter. Site selection should carefully consider the impact and methods of mitigating the impact of such a shelter on surrounding land uses. (Sec 4.2.11)

(d) Grand County should cooperate with other governmental agency in exploring ways of reducing truck traffic through the City of Moab.

(e) Grand County should ask the Bureau of Land Management and Utah Trust Lands Administration to petition to annex any public lands that may be made available for exchange or sale into the Moab Valley Fire Protection District.

(f) Public lands that could ultimately be developed, but are not in the Moab Valley Fire Protection District include the NE 1/4 NE 1/4 and NW 1/4 NE 1/4 of Section 28, T. 26 S., R. 21 E., which the Grand Resource Area Resource Management Plan identifies as available for exchange or sale, and the state parcels near the Sand Flats Road.

(h) Grand County should enter into an inter-local agreement with San Juan County to provide for the regulation of development served by any allowed infrastructure service extension from GWSSA -- e.g., steep slopes, ridgelines, riparian areas, clustering to maintain rural character.

(i) Grand County should develop a multi-use trails plan for the Spanish Valley to inter-connect the City of Moab, County neighborhoods, parks, the Mill Creek Parkway and other existing trails to public lands via stream corridors, and historic and planned public accessways.

(l) Grand County should work with UDOT, as appropriate, develop segregated bike ways along all collector streets, and State Highways

(m) Grand County will consider working with the City of Moab to establish a jointly funded and operated Animal Shelter. (Implementation Actions - Sec 4.2.11)

(a) Cooperate with the City of Moab and regularly update the Affordable Housing Needs Assessment in order to understand the scope of its affordable housing problem and the size of the housing shortfall relative to the needs various household income groups.

(i) Continue to support the Grand County Housing Authority and private sector affordable housing projects.

(j) The Affordable Housing Task Force will, with support from the County, the City of Moab, and other agencies and organization, like habitat for humanity:

(1) Investigate private sector financing options for construction of affordable housing.

(2) Identify appropriate sites and any zoning changes needed to accommodate the construction of affordable housing;

(3) Study ways in which employers can provide housing for their employees; and

(4) Communicate the findings of the investigations outlined in the goal above to the public and local officials. (Implementation Actions – Sec 4.2.12)

ENCOURAGE COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER COLLABORATION CITY OF MOAB

DIRECT –

Pg. 10 Public Process

1. Draft Plan is made available to the public in written form, via email, or floppy disk at the City Hall Planning Department, the Grand County Public Library, and other appropriate locations and/or media which may

include publishing in the local newspaper.

2. The Planning Department/Planning Commission sponsors a public workshop.

The Draft Plan is revised pursuant to direction of Commission.

3. The Planning Commission holds a public hearing, followed by a comment period.

4. The Draft Plan is revised, pursuant to direction of Commission.

5. The Planning Commission adopts the General Plan and sends it to the Moab City Council for Request for Public Hearing.

6. The Moab City Council holds a Public Hearing followed by a two week comment period.

7. The Draft Plan is revised, pursuant to direction of City Council.

8. The Moab City Council adopts the General Plan.

5. Solicit public input on decisions regarding land use. (Sec. 2. I.5)

a. Facilitate neighborhood meetings with opportunity for public comment as a part of any neighborhood shopping area designation. (Sec. 3. II.11.a)

e. Invite and encourage community participation in neighborhood improvement projects. (Sec. 3. III.1.e)

b. Establish architectural and design guidelines for commercial and residential developments that maintain scale, rural character and sense of place in Moab. Encourage and invite participation of community in establishing these guidelines. (Sec. 4. I.1.b)

3. Encourage citizen participation in planning cultural arts and recreational activities to ensure that the needs of various areas and groups are addressed.

Implementation:

a. Actively seek community volunteers for cultural arts and recreation programs.

b. Encourage youth participation on the Moab Arts and Recreation Center Board. (Sec. 6. II.3.a-b)

INDIRECT –

4. Require that park sites and equipment in parks be safe and functional. The facilities should reflect the interest of Moab residents with special emphasis given to improvements to benefit the handicapped.

Implementation:

a. Determine what the interests are of those being served and plan facilities accordingly, for example, for senior citizens or young children. (Sec. 6. I.4.a)

GRAND COUNTY

DIRECT

Following each public participation meeting, the Consultant prepared a meeting summary report to create a public record of the meetings and to serve as a guide in the drafting of the General Plan Update. Each of those original reports was broadly distributed throughout the community and is available in the County Building Department for review. (Part II – The Planning Process)

2.2 | Public Participation in 2002

In preparation for the public participation meetings, the County Planning Commission, County Staff and Consultant prepared, distributed and tabulated the results of a citizen questionnaire; and the Staff and the Consultant conducted Key Person Interviews -- in all 21 persons were interviewed. The public participation process was broadly advertised, well attended and afforded numerous opportunities for citizen participation. The process is summarized below. (Sec 2.2)

2.2.1 | Key Person Interviews

A total of 21 persons were interviewed over a two day period – January 3rd and 4th, 2002. All

interviews were conducted in a casual setting. Responses are presented in a substantially unedited form, consistent with the casual conversational format in which they were presented. (Sec 2.2.1)

2.2.2 | Citizens Questionnaire

The citizen questionnaire was broadly circulated throughout the community and published in the local newspaper, The Times-Independent. The questionnaire, which was designed in an open fashion, provided the opportunity for citizens to identify individual concerns free of influence (by the questionnaire) and without giving the impression of voting.

2.2.3 | Initial Meetings

Initial meetings (3) in the public participation phase of the Grand County General Plan Update were held on January 17th and 18th, 2002, in the Grand County Community Center. The meetings were facilitated by Maro Zagaros, Desired Outcomes, Inc., and Richard Grice, Four Corners Planning, Inc.

2.2.4 | Follow-up Meetings

Follow-up public meetings on Community Vision and Land Use were held on Friday Afternoon and Friday Evening, February 22nd and on Saturday, February 23rd, respectively. Again, the meetings were facilitated by Maro Zagaros, Desired Outcomes, Inc., and Richard Grice, Four Corners Planning, Inc.

2.2.5 | Task Forces

Following the public participation meetings of January and February, 2002, it was clear that many citizens wanted a greater voice, and more active participation in the update of the General Plan. In response, the Grand County Planning Commission authorized the formation of citizen task forces to work on the following subjects identified through the public meetings:

- ◆ Four-year College (See Policy 4.2.4)
- ◆ Economic Diversification (See Policy 4.2.4)
- ◆ Junk Clean Up (See 4.2.7)
- ◆ Health Care (See Policy 4.2.4)
- ◆ Affordable Housing (See Policy 4.2.11)
- ◆ Sensitive Lands (See Policy 4.2.9)
- ◆ Public Lands Management (See Policy 4.2.6)
- ◆ Outdoor Lighting (See Policy 4.2.8)

Citizens “self-selected” for Task Force membership, and each Task Force had 45 days to submit a formal recommendation to the Commission regarding their respective subjects for consideration as part of the General Plan Update.

On April 30, 2002, the initial meeting of the Grand County General Plan Task Forces was held in Moab Civic Center. Approximately 75 interested citizens representing a cross-section of the Moab/Grand community gathered for the event. Participants represented diverse points of view including Real Estate Development, Backcountry

Vehicle Users, Backcountry Hikers, Wilderness Advocacy, Ranching, Mineral Exploration, and Local Business Interests. Following opening remarks, which included appropriate reminders regarding the rules of consensus, the respective Task Forces assembled at different locations throughout the meeting room and proceeded to select a chair and scribe, and to work through the following agenda:

- ◆ Establish the Goal – A broad statement of the ideal
- ◆ Identify Objectives – List things that can be done to achieve the goal
- ◆ Identify Obstacles – List things that hinder achievement of the goal
- ◆ Role of County – List appropriate County roles relative to the goal
- ◆ Other Comments -- Fact Finding or Research Assignments
- ◆ Future Meetings – Will the task force meet again; if so, when?

Each task force was given the option of continuing to meet, and having a long term advocacy role relative to their particular issue. By June 15, 2002, each task force, except for the Sensitive Lands Task

Force, submitted a consensus report to the Planning Commission for consideration in the General Plan Update. The specific recommendations made by the respective task forces are contained in whole or in part throughout this document.

3.2 | Vision Statement

The following vision statement, conceptualized and refined through public participation in early 2002, summarizes the community vision as articulated by Grand County citizens:

VISION STATEMENT

Grand County is known for its rural environment and the ease of access to high quality open space – preservation of these characteristics is a priority. It thrives on a strong sense of community characterized by a high level of respect shared among its diverse population, broad support of community institutions, the provision of quality services to all regardless of income, and by meeting real human needs with increased economic diversity, high quality education, health care and affordable housing.

4.2.1 | Involve the People of the County in a Continuing Planning Process Continued Planning Policy

1. Grand County will involve the people of the community in a continuing planning process, and implementation actions for which county government has responsibility, but the people of the county must also take responsibility for implementing many portions of this plan through existing or new civic organizations. This plan was produced by the participatory process described Part I. It can only be maintained and implemented in the same way. Nongovernmental entities need to take the lead in implementing many of the policies contained herein.

Implementation Actions

- (a) Grand County will comply with all requirements for open meetings, public notice, and public hearings established by Utah law.
- (b) Public notice and hearings are specifically required for amendments to this plan (U.C.A. 17-27-304), the zoning ordinance (U.C.A. 17-27-403), and the subdivision ordinance (U.C.A. 17-27-803). Public notice and hearings are also required for other actions, including, but not limited to, the vacation or amendment of subdivision plats (U.C.A. 17-27-809).
- (c) The Planning Commission will invite the community to join it in the conduct of an annual review of this General Plan with respect to progress on implementing ordinances and the need to adjust implementation plans and strategies.
- (d) The Planning Commission should continue its practice of reviewing the Plan annually to determine community concerns and whether the changes are needed.
- (e) The Grand County Council and Planning Commission will encourage the people of the county to be involved in implementing this Plan.

A public participation session held on January 18, 2002, focused citizen's attention on the possible need for a Public Facilities and Services Area Boundary to serve as a guide regarding facility and services extensions. Citizens identified and discussed the pros and cons of such a boundary relative to Grand County and San Juan County – consensus was reached that service area boundary issues within Grand County are best left up to the individual public facility and service providers.

Citizens identified and discussed the pros and cons of such a boundary relative to San Juan County in a public participation session held on January 18, 2002 -- consensus was reached that the County should only consider extending sewer service (not domestic water service) to San Juan County in order to protect the aquifer. (Sec 4.2.5)

(f) Solicit volunteers to achieve some of Grand County's goals and objectives for the management of public lands. (Implementation Actions – Sec 4.2.6)

(f) Hold community cleanup days – involve community organizations, like the boy scouts and girl scouts.

(g) Be responsive to citizen complaints. (Implementation Actions – Sec 4.2.7)

(a) Interested citizens should organize a group to promote and develop agricultural markets, including markets for value-added products. This group will also provide technical assistance and facilitate classification of agricultural lands for tax purposes.

(b) Several existing organizations and agencies, like the Grand Growers, the Canyonlands Winegrowers, the Castleland Resource Conservation and Development District, and the County Assessor's Office should be involved in this effort. Utah's Farmland Assessment Act (U.C.A. 59-2-502, et seq.) provides for agricultural land to be assessed at its value in use, rather than at its speculative value.

(c) The Grand County Planning Commission and other agencies, including local irrigation companies, should inventory the county's agricultural lands and water rights. The current land use map shows the general extent of irrigated lands in Spanish Valley, but a more precise inventory that is tied to the County Assessor's records is needed.

(d) Interested citizens should establish and generate support for a local land trust that can acquire conservation easements and promote the transfer of development rights to preserve agricultural lands. (The Sensitive Lands policy statement also calls for creation of a local land trust.) (Implementation Actions – Sec 4.2.10)

Education, Family and Arts Policy 1. Interested citizens and civic organizations will work to support community artists and cultural events in Grand County. Cultural events should be used to encourage a sense of community.

Education, Family and Arts Policy 2. The Grand County schools and interested citizens and civic organizations will work to provide increased educational, cultural, and civic opportunities that will help young people to help them understand and appreciate their role in the community and to prepare them for roles as community leaders. (Sec 4.2.13)

(a) Interested citizens and civic organizations will work with the Grand County School District to develop higher educational standards by updating the curriculum, redefining discipline standards, and encouraging increased opportunities for teachers.

(b) Interested citizens, service organizations (including the Arts Council, Chamber of Commerce, and Hotel and Restaurant Association) local government, and local businesses should encourage arts and cultural events in Grand County in order to enrich the quality of life and bring additional revenues to the community.

(c) Concerned citizens should work with state and local social services agencies to help establish prevention and intervention services that address drug abuse, alcoholism, teen pregnancy, day care, parent education, and recreational activities in the schools and in the community

(f) Encourage increased community funding and commitment to secondary education. (Implementation Actions – Sec 4.2.13)

Reasonable Regulations Policy 1. Grand County and other service providers should ensure that tourists and new residents contribute fairly to the cost of facilities and services. Achieving this goal may require that impact fees be used to help pay for additional infrastructure. (Sec 4.2.14)

(a) The Grand County Planning Commission will, upon adoption of this general plan update, initiate a process that brings landowners and residents of different parts of the county together to review this plan and adapt it to the local landscape and issues. (Implementation Actions – Sec 4.2.15)

INDIRECT

User Group Conflicts

Public Lands Policy 10. Grand County encourages the agencies to resolve conflicts between user groups, particularly where high impact users prevent low impact users from their legitimate use and enjoyment of the public lands for reasons such as noise, dangerous speeds, lasting damage to lands

and resources, etc. Such resolutions should bear in mind that all users have a right to enjoy use of the public lands and all users have an impact on the land. (Sec 4.2.6)

AVOID SPRAWL DEVELOPMENT WITH POLICY THAT WILL: CREATE WALKABLE AND BIKABLE NEIGHBORHOODS CITY OF MOAB

DIRECT –

1. Encourage the establishment and vitality of “walk-able” neighborhoods.

Implementation:

- a. Improve public streets and rights-of-way.
- b. Add and improve sidewalks.
- c. Add additional parks as needed.
- d. Install traffic-calming devices such as street medians and traffic circles planted with trees and native shrubs and by the narrowing of street widths.
- e. Invite and encourage community participation in neighborhood improvement projects.
- f. Encourage planned unit developments with supporting community facilities, parks, open spaces and complementary commercial and employment uses.
- g. Provide density bonuses as incentive for open space preservation.
- h. Provide for adequate and attractive buffers where needed.
- i. Provide incentives to preserve agricultural land. (Sec. 3. III.1.a-i)

5. Maintain and encourage a pedestrian environment for the historic neighborhoods and central business district.

Implementation:

- a. Complete sidewalks, plant trees and maintain City-dedicated planting strips.
- b. Develop a traffic circulation plan that is convenient for internal traffic movement, while discouraging through traffic in residential areas. (Sec. 3. IV.5.a-b)

a. Identify areas to acquire for use as a public plaza that will encourage foot traffic in the core commercial area, and serve as a public gathering place for residents and/or visitors. (Sec. 4. I.6.a)

6. Locate and acquire downtown property for a public plaza, gazebo, and public restrooms to promote pedestrian activity in the downtown area and to link off-Main Street areas to Main Street. (Sec. 6. I.6)

II. PEDESTRIAN

Goal: To achieve a pleasant, safe, efficient and complete pedestrian transportation network which provides a viable transportation alternative for daily circulation, activities and recreation.

Policies:

1. Provide for sidewalks of sufficient width and clear of obstructions or conflicts with other forms of transportation or land use.
2. Continue to develop the Mill Creek and Pack Creek Parkway system that includes a variety of urban walking experiences and provides for a throughway of non-motorized local access.

Implementation:

- a. Create a walkway/bikeway along Highway 191 from the Colorado River to approximately Bowling Alley Lane linking motels and other outlying services to the downtown district.
3. Provide pedestrian routes to parks, schools and other public facilities and through residential areas, separate from motor traffic.

Implementation:

- a. Replace deteriorated and unsafe sidewalks. Construct high quality sidewalks.
- b. Use buffering to separate incompatible uses. Separate walking traffic from bicycle traffic where possible.
- c. Enforce “no bicycles, skateboards, and roller blades” zones on sidewalks.
- d. Maintain clear views of intersections for safety.
- e. Provide safe crossing areas by defining crosswalks more distinctly (perhaps by elevating them or paving them

with bricks), particularly around schools and other high pedestrian/high traffic volume areas.

f. Develop walking tours and a variety of levels of walking experiences, including connections to hiking trails outside the City.

g. Create inter-local agreements with Grand County to develop bicycle lanes and walking trails linking City roads and trails to county recreational features.

h. Provide centralized, off-street city/public parking with easy, clear access to walking trails and business districts.

4. Encourage a more pedestrian-oriented business district.

Implementation:

a. Identify areas that could be designated “pedestrian only” streets and boulevards with median strips.

b. Cluster commercial businesses. Provide amenities such as plazas, sitting and gathering sites, shade and buffering.

c. Enforce “no bicycles, skateboards and roller blades” zones on sidewalks.

5. Make the City “access friendly” for persons with disabilities. (Sec. 7. II.Goal.1-2.a.3.a-h.4.a-c.5)

III. NON-MOTORIZED VEHICLES

Goal: To provide bike path systems of sufficient width and clear of obstructions or conflicts with other forms of transportation and land use; to provide transportation alternatives for daily activities and recreation.

Policies:

1. Consider a variety of urban bicycling experiences and provide for a throughway of local access on the Mill Creek and Pack Creek Parkway system.

2. Provide a pleasant, safe bicycle experience and encourage the development of bicycle-associated activities.

Implementation:

a. Develop more thoroughly the concept of a bicycle system with a variety of routes including connections to trails and routes outside the City.

b. Use buffering to separate incompatible uses. Separate bicycle traffic from walking and vehicular traffic where possible.

c. Maintain views near vehicle and pedestrian traffic areas for safety.

d. Provide safe bicycle lanes on roads and crossing areas by defining those spaces distinctly.

e. Provide sufficient parking at trailheads.

3. Encourage bicycle-user accommodations in the commercial business district in order to enhance shopping opportunities for the local community.

Implementation:

a. Cluster commercial businesses.

b. Provide safe and orderly access to pedestrian amenities such as plazas, sitting and gathering sites, and shade.

c. Provide bicycle racks. (Sec. 7. III.Goal.1-2.a-e.3.a-c)

INDIRECT –

a. Further develop a trail network and park system highlighting the Mill Creek and Pack Creek parkways. (Sec. 1. I.4.a)

2. Promote the use of alternative transportation that is non-polluting and reduces fossil fuel consumption. **Implementation:**

a. Develop and promote a pedestrian and bicycle system within the city, providing access to outlying Bureau of Land Management and other public trails. Form a team with county or federal agencies in the creation of such trails.

b. Promote the use of public transportation or support the private development of public transportation when it is deemed necessary.

(Sec. 2. IV.2.a-b)

11. Allow neighborhood shopping areas in order to provide convenience goods and services to neighborhoods. Such shopping areas will be located along collector or arterial intersections; will not exceed 5,000 square feet per lot; and serve a one-mile radius area. (Sec. 3. II.11)

a. Adopt community site design guidelines for streetscape activities such as roads, pedestrian walkways, bikeways, plazas and mini-parks. The components to be considered are signing, lighting, street furnishing, plantings, building to property line, shared access and parking, reduction of street widths, location of utilities and the proportionality of the various streetscape elements. (Sec. 4. I.1.a)

11. Consider the feasibility of a shuttle system serving downtown Moab. (Sec. 7. IV.11)

VI. SIDEWALKS & STREETS

Goals: To provide a safe, efficient and low cost sidewalk and street service to the community.

Policies:

1. Encourage the installation of sidewalks, curbs and gutters in deficient areas to insure proper street drainage, and to clean and beautify public streets to provide for safe pedestrian traffic. (Sec. 8. VI.Goals&1)

GRAND COUNTY

DIRECT

Trails are needed to serve the non-motorized transportation needs of residents and visitors alike. There are very few facilities such as toilets, water, signage or marked trailheads and parking facilities. Large numbers of bicyclists ride on roadways that do not have marked and designated bike routes or bike lanes. Many county road surfaces are poor with frequent potholes and debris. Additionally, bicyclists must share roadways with a multitude of transport trucks, motor homes and other visitors that may be more attentive to the scenery than to other road users. The Grand County Trail Mix Committee has a draft Non-motorized Trails Master Plan (Trails Master Plan) identifies corridors for potential bike and pedestrian paths to link outlying areas of Spanish Valley with Moab City, schools and recreation centers. (See Sec. 4.2.6, Public Facilities and Services Policies 5 and 6, which support development of a City- County Trails Plan.) (Sec 1.5.6)

Public Facilities Policy 4. Grand County will encourage the dedication of easements for multi-use trails and public sidewalks in conjunction with all development approvals, as appropriate. At a minimum, such pedestrian facilities should maintain historic access patterns and corridors, continue projections of the city of Moab's trail system, particularly along provided riparian corridors, and provide necessary connections through developed and developing areas to public lands.

Public Facilities Policy 5. Grand County will take necessary steps to ensure that trail installations are accomplished in an environmentally sensitive manner by minimizing negative impacts on riparian areas and other sensitive lands.

Multi-use trails are an important element in a multi-modal transportation system. A multi-use trail system, including segregated bikeways along major transportation corridors is needed to ensure safe and convenient access for all users from the city of Moab to public lands. (Sec 4.2.11)

(i) Grand County should develop a multi-use trails plan for the Spanish Valley to inter-connect the City of Moab, County neighborhoods, parks, the Mill Creek Parkway and other existing trails to public lands via stream corridors, and historic and planned public accessways. (Implementation Actions – Sec 4.2.11)

INDIRECT

On February 23, 2002, participating citizens explored the meaning of the term "rural character" and accepted by consensus that rural character in the Spanish Valley means different things to different people, including:

- (d) Two-lane roads, without urban-level traffic or traffic problems;
- (f) Community members living and working in the area, without long commutes to work;
- (j) Separated from mass population centers and with limited services, what we need but maybe not everything we want;

(n) Gravel roads and no curb preferred to asphalt; (Sec 3.1)

Non-motorized Travel

Public Lands Policy 9. Grand County will continue to participate in developing a plan that accommodates non-motorized users including hikers, backpackers, mountain bikers, horseback riders and road cyclists. Official trails will be identified by public land managers, county officials, businesses, and users in the above recreation groups. Trails will include both historically established and planned new trails. Signage, maps, and public education will be used to identify these trails on the ground. (Sec 4.2.6)

MIX LAND USES

CITY OF MOAB

DIRECT –

11. Encourage the development of mixed-use housing, combining affordable housing with commercial use. Promote the building of affordable housing units above commercial ground floor units. (Sec. 5. II.11)

INDIRECT –

2. Explore options for non-traditional housing and adjunct housing such as live/work housing, garage or garden apartments, and caretaker units. (Sec. 5. II.2)

12. Consider the development of accessory dwelling units. (Sec. 5. II.12)

GRAND COUNTY

DIRECT AND INDIRECT

On February 23, 2002, participating citizens explored the meaning of the term “rural character” and accepted by consensus that rural character in the Spanish Valley means different things to different people, including:

(a) A continuum of housing sizes and style for people of modest means;

(b) Low density, modest residential development, interspersed with farms (with farm animals) and fields;

(c) Mixture of modest, typical residential height and scale, homes made out of natural materials on a variety of parcel sizes ranging from 1 to 40 acres – avoid cookie cutter style homes and uniform postage stamp lots;

(e) Landscaped, natural, and/or agricultural open spaces create a “flow of nature” through rural neighborhoods and developments leaving room for birds and other wildlife;

(Sec 3.1)

The public lands of Grand County are also the foundation of the county’s economic prosperity, both in the short term and the long term. Economic benefit is derived from the management of public lands for multiple use including: livestock grazing, tourism, mineral exploration, recreation, watershed protection, hunting, the film industry and many others.

Through economic diversification and multiple use management, Grand County’s goal is to achieve a stable economic base while minimizing degradation of the economic, social, ecological, and cultural resources of the public lands. Protecting public lands resources is sound policy for the long term economic well being of Grand County. (Sec 4.2.6)

(n) Amend open space standards to permit use of open space areas for passive recreational facilities, such as trails and picnic facilities. (Implementation Actions – Sec 4.2.9)

STRENGTHEN AND DIRECT DEVELOPMENT TOWARD EXISTING COMMUNITIES

CITY OF MOAB

DIRECT –

3. Encourage the development and vitality of a central commercial district compatible with small-town living. (Sec. 3. II.3)

c. Explore an in-filling and redevelopment incentive. (Sec. 3. II.3.c)

4. Encourage the development of existing commercially zoned land prior to rezoning additional land. (Sec. 3. II.4)

1. Encourage preservation/rehabilitation of existing structures. (Sec. 3. IV.1)

(3) Rehabilitation of existing historic buildings. (Sec. 3. IV.3.e.(3))

6. Establish a central town focus to enhance the visual organization and attractiveness of the city. (Sec. 4. I.6)

3. Assist homeowners and owners of rental properties in the renovation of existing units. (Sec. 5. II.3)

10. Encourage in-fill development of affordable housing. (Sec. 5. II.10)

11. Encourage the development of mixed-use housing, combining affordable housing with commercial use. Promote the building of affordable housing units above commercial ground floor units. (Sec. 5. II.11)

12. Consider the development of accessory dwelling units. (Sec. 5. II.12)

INDIRECT –

1. Encourage the upgrading of existing facilities and services consistent with the above goal. (Sec. 2. I.1)

d. Encourage clustering of commercial enterprises. (Sec. 3. II.3.d)

a. Develop streetscape plans for Center Street from 100 West to 300 East. (Sec. 3. II.15.a)

4. Encourage residential homes to remain in residential use. (Sec. 5. I.4)

GRAND COUNTY

DIRECT

Citizens noted their concerns for respective portions of the county on a series of zoning maps. Major concerns included: areas for high density, multi-family housing; need for local retail; big box retail regulations; outback development regulations; building design/lighting; TDRs and affordable housing; development sprawl and public lands implications; junk clean-up; a college for Grand County and other economic diversification; health care and medical leaks; as well as many other important but less widely shared concerns. (Sec 2.2.3)

A 3rd meeting, January 18, 2002, focused citizen's attention on the possible need for a Public Facilities and Services Area Boundary to serve as a guide regarding facility and services extensions. Citizens identified and discussed the pros and cons of such a boundary relative to San Juan County -- consensus was reached that the county should only consider extending sewer service, but not domestic water service, to San Juan

County in order to protect the aquifer and subject to the following conditions:

- ◆ No service extensions to non-residential or multi-family development;
- ◆ An Inter-local Agreement (between Grand and San Juan Counties) to recapture the cost of service;
- ◆ The agreement should provide for service only to residential uses at a density of 1 dwelling per acre

on currently zoned land, and 1 dwelling unit per 10 acres on the un-zoned land;

◆ All development to comply with (all) the development standards of the Grand County Land Use Code;

◆ Provide water for emergency fire protection only; and

◆ San Juan County Service Public Facilities and Service Area Boundary to be defined as Valley Floor (east and west toe of escarpment) and including the SITLA block of land boundary on the South. (Sec 2.2.3)

Grand County is surrounded by public lands which enhance the rural character of the county. There is a variety of opinions regarding if and how this land should be developed. Both sides seem to agree that if development in such areas is to occur, the perceived existing condition should be substantially preserved through:

(b) Clustering of development – any allowed development should be required to preserve substantially open space, and (Sec 3.1)

(c) Identify and eliminate any barriers to affordable housing in its Land Use Code, and consider rezoning to permit higher densities as an incentive for the construction of affordable housing where there is adequate infrastructure.

(d) Encourage infill development within the existing urbanized area, such as close-in along Highway 191 South and adjacent to the City of Moab, to allow workers to live close to where they work.

(g) Encourage small scale resident housing that fits the character of established neighborhoods.

(h) Consider allowing accessory dwelling units to single family dwellings where practical.

(k) Provide a site planning graphical examples to illustrate innovative, small lot housing types, clustered development and workable mixed use side development ideas.

INDIRECT

(k) Promote development clustering to hold down the cost of public facilities, and services. (Implementation Actions – Sec 4.2.11)

(c) Grand County should review the zoning pattern in Spanish Valley and consider rezoning lands as necessary to correct historic spot zoning problem areas, or, alternatively, the County may chose to develop incentives such as increased clustering/open space requirements to mitigate potential problems. (Implementation Actions – Sec 4.2.14)

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF COMPACT BUILDING DESIGN CITY OF MOAB

DIRECT –

e. Consider limiting the square footage of new retail or wholesale commercial buildings. (Sec. 3. II.3.e)

f. Consider establishing design standards for commercial buildings larger than 10,000 sq. ft. Standards should address lengths and heights of uninterrupted building facades, building articulation, “build-to” lines, windows, pedestrian access and safety, landscaped frontage areas and landscaped parking lots or car parks. (Sec. 3. II.3.f)

g. Provide density bonuses as incentive for open space preservation. (Sec. 3. III.1.g)

4. Encourage cluster development and the setting aside of open space in new site design. (Sec. 4. I.4)

10. Encourage in-fill development of affordable housing. (Sec. 5. II.10)

11. Encourage the development of mixed-use housing, combining affordable housing with commercial use. Promote the building of affordable housing units above commercial ground floor units. (Sec. 5. II.11)

12. Consider the development of accessory dwelling units. (Sec. 5. II.12)

b. Cluster commercial businesses. Provide amenities such as plazas, sitting and gathering sites, shade and buffering. (Sec. 7. II.4.b)

a. Cluster commercial businesses. (Sec. 7. III.3.a)

4. Reduce traffic congestion and conflicts. Curb cuts shall be minimized where possible, especially those opening onto Main Street (Hwy 191). Businesses should be clustered and associated parking access should avoid Main Street where possible. Traffic studies should be required for major new developments. (Sec. 7. IV.4)

1. Public buildings should be grouped together to form a complex that conveniently serves the public and offers an inviting setting to conduct business. (Sec. 9. I.1)

INDIRECT –

4. Encourage a more pedestrian-oriented business district. (Sec. 7. II.4)

GRAND COUNTY

DIRECT

Citizens noted their concerns for respective portions of the county on a series of zoning maps. Major concerns included: areas for high density, multi-family housing; need for local retail; big box retail regulations; outback development regulations; building design/lighting; TDRs and affordable housing; development sprawl and public lands implications; junk clean-up; a college for Grand County and other economic diversification; health care and medical leaks; as well as many other important but less widely shared concerns. (Sec 2.2.3)

Grand County is surrounded by public lands which enhance the rural character of the county. There is a variety of opinions regarding if and how this land should be developed. Both sides seem to agree that if development in such areas is to occur, the perceived existing condition should be substantially preserved through:

(b) Clustering of development – any allowed development should be required to preserve substantially open space, and (Sec 3.1)

Sensitive Lands Policy 3. Preserve the rural character of the “outback”, as described in Section 3.1 , through careful site planning, development clustering, and use of indigenous architectural design and color treatment. (Sec 4.2.9)

(d) Consider expanding the development clustering requirements (PUD) to include incentives for the clustering/transfer of development rights from sensitive lands (between properties) and to protect views from the outback.

(e) Update the definition of “sensitive lands”.

(f) Create incentives for increased clustering of development to protect sensitive lands. (Implementation Actions – Sec 4.2.9)

(k) Promote development clustering to hold down the cost of public facilities, and services. (Implementation Actions – Sec 4.2.11)

(c) Identify and eliminate any barriers to affordable housing in its Land Use Code, and consider rezoning to permit higher densities as an incentive for the construction of affordable housing where there is adequate infrastructure.

(g) Encourage small scale resident housing that fits the character of established neighborhoods.

(h) Consider allowing accessory dwelling units to single family dwellings where practical.

(k) Provide a site planning graphical examples to illustrate innovative, small lot housing types, clustered development and workable mixed use side development ideas.
(Implementation Actions – Sec 4.2.12)

INDIRECT

Grand County residents value the diversity of their community, and fear that it will be lost if affordable housing is not available. Affordable housing is more an investment in people and values than in bricks and mortar. Across the nation, communities that have been exporting their work force have exported their character and imported pollution and social problems too numerous to mention. Thus far, Grand County has avoided exporting its work force to outlying communities and desires to continue to see affordable housing provided as close to the heart of the community (Moab) as possible. Moab/Spanish Valley do not have nearby low-cost residential area to which below-median income households could relocate to and afford to commute to/from jobs in Moab. The lack of affordable housing threatens the availability of an adequate labor pool for service- and tourist-industry employers, and handicaps recruitment of trained/credentialed teachers, law enforcement officers, and healthcare workers to the community. To the extent that this community wants to preserve its diversity, it will have to work together to provide opportunities for its workers to remain a permanent part of the social fabric. (Sec 4.2.12)

PRESERVE OPEN SPACE, FARMLAND, NATURAL BEAUTY AND CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL AREAS CITY OF MOAB

DIRECT –

- d. Create pocket parks or small parks throughout the City. (Sec. 1. I.4.d)
- e. Support efforts to protect the beautiful scenery that surrounds the area. (Sec. 1. I.4.e)

II. NATURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS

Goal: To prevent loss of life and property and public costs associated with development in hazardous areas, and to maintain the health of the area’s natural systems. These areas and systems include creeks, floodplains, hillsides, ridgelines, wetlands, and other areas susceptible to landslides, floods, and fire and other environmentally sensitive areas. (Sec. 2. II.Goal)

- c. Add additional parks as needed. (Sec. 3. III.1.c)
 - f. Encourage planned unit developments with supporting community facilities, parks, open spaces and complementary commercial and employment uses. (Sec. 3. III.1.f)
 - g. Provide density bonuses as incentive for open space preservation. (Sec. 3. III.1.g)
 - h. Provide for adequate and attractive buffers where needed. (Sec. 3. III.1.h)
 - i. Provide incentives to preserve agricultural land. (Sec. 3. III.1.h)
3. Provide for low-density residential uses (residential/agricultural zones) to encourage a rural, open setting. Development should be characterized by agricultural uses. (Sec. 3. III.3)

VI. AGRICULTURAL

Goal: To provide a location for agriculture where the raising of livestock, growing of orchards and/or vineyards, etc., can occur.

Implementation:

- a. Establish incentives and guidelines to encourage the preservation of agricultural lands. (Sec. 3. VI.Goal&a)

4. Encourage cluster development and the setting aside of open space in new site design. (Sec. 4. I.4)
- b. Encourage private development of land as public plazas or pocket parks. (Sec. 4. I.6.b)

I. PARKS AND RECREATION -- GENERAL

Goal : To provide park facilities, open space, green space and recreation areas for year-round use in Moab. (Sec. 6. I.Goal)

2. Provide new and traditional park and recreation experiences for present and future residents by establishing different types of park space within the Moab parks system. Park space shall be dispersed to provide the opportunity for recreation and park use by all of the community.

Implementation:

a. Park space should include children and family playgrounds, picnic grounds with shelters and barbecue facilities, recreational parks for sports such as basketball, baseball, soccer, volleyball, Frisbee, skateboarding, rollerblading, etc., green space and/or open space with quiet, secluded areas, and parks or designated sections of parks where dogs are allowed. (Sec. 6. I.2.a)

3. Provide additional parks as needed.

Implementation:

- a. Promote creation of pocket parks in neighborhoods through City acquisition of property or creative partnerships with private owners.
- b. Create a citizens' group to assist the City in locating sites for pocket parks. (Sec. 6. I.3.a-b)

5. Provide adequate open space within the City of Moab by encouraging the preservation of open lands and by supporting the development of private parks and open areas.

Implementation:

- a. Encourage landowners to keep their land open or in agricultural use.
- b. Consider acquiring open space lands along the creeks and hillsides.
6. Locate and acquire downtown property for a public plaza, gazebo, and public restrooms to promote pedestrian activity in the downtown area and to link off-Main Street areas to Main Street.
7. Continue to plan and implement the Mill Creek Flood Control and Parkway Project as a major element in the recreation system of the City.

Implementation:

- a. Continue to plan, design and implement the Mill Creek Flood Control and Parkway Project to insure success of the City's goals.
- b. Identify areas to acquire for the Mill Creek and Pack Creek Parkway.
- c. Develop a land acquisition program based on the approved Mill Creek Flood Control and Parkway Project Master Plan.

8. Promote the equitable means of funding park development, especially in terms of the impact of new developments.

Implementation:

- a. Consider adopting an ordinance requiring large-scale development projects to give land, or money in lieu of land, for public parks.
- b. Provide incentives to developers to keep structures as far away from the flood channel as possible, especially, in areas within 150 feet of both sides of the flood channel.
- c. Support the PUD ordinance that allows developers to develop cluster housing or denser buildings than current zones allow if they provide for large open spaces near the creeks or flood channels.
- d. Purchase scenic easements along creeks and hillsides.
9. Manage wildlife population levels within the appropriateness of a parks and recreation environment.
10. Support the establishment of a strong county-wide recreation district.

Implementation:

- a. Include wildlife and wildlife habitat inventory and management goals in a parks and recreation master plan.

Work with The Nature Conservancy, Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, and Bureau of Land Management, as well as Moab-based outdoor education programs. (Sec. 6. I.5.a-b.6-7.a-c.8.a-d.9-10.a)

INDIRECT –

SEC 1 – Economic Development

4. Enhance City services and protect the scenic assets of the community and its surrounds.
- e. Support efforts to protect the beautiful scenery that surrounds the area.

1. Restrict development in areas that present natural hazards to human life, property, and natural resources.

Implementation:

- a. Enforce hillside ordinance to ensure that wastewater disposal, erosion, drainage and hazardous rock fall problems are mitigated.
- b. Implement special zoning and development permitting methods for environmentally-sensitive areas including floodways, wet soils and steep hillsides and ridges.
- c. Identify and tag geologic hazards such as prehistoric landslides, steep slopes and ridgelines and prohibit building in these areas. Adopt ordinance to restrict development on ridgelines and slopes greater than 15 percent.
- d. Amend the City's existing floodway and/or flood channel ordinance requiring property owners in floodways to maintain the floodway and keep it clear of garbage, dead limbs, structures and inoperable vehicles.
- e. Protect vegetated areas near stream banks and hillsides; keep stream banks and hillsides vegetated to protect against erosion and aid in infiltration/absorption of water.
- f. Restrict development within identified riparian zones or critical wildlife habitat areas to preserve natural values.
- g. Preserve and use natural drainage ways wherever possible for storm water.
- h. Ensure that the quality and quantity of storm water runoff that reaches surface waters during and after development does not alter from predevelopment conditions. (Sec 2. II.1.a-h)²⁰⁰

VI. FLOOD CHANNEL

Goal: To facilitate the protection of life and property from damage due to floods while protecting wildlife habitat and indigenous plant life along the creeks; and to provide paths linking residential areas to one another, and to nearby parks or public lands in collaboration with a flood hazard reduction plan.

Policies:

1. Maintain the character of open land free of structures that may be damaged or may cause damage to other property during recurring floods.

Implementation:

- a. Identify areas where the City could purchase lands for flood hazard reduction.
2. Maintain the integrity of water courses for riparian values and protect wildlife habitat and indigenous plant life along the creeks.

Implementation:

- a. Add provisions to the flood damage reduction ordinance to protect wildlife habitat and indigenous plant life along the creeks.
- b. Remove vegetation along the creeks should consider impact on existing habitat.
- c. Plant native cottonwoods and willows in riparian areas where appropriate.
- d. Acquire water rights for in-stream flow for recreation and wildlife habitat.
- e. Maintain natural channel meanders and don't dredge or straighten channel.
- f. Explore eradication of Russian olives and other exotic weeds by controlled cutting and/or herbicides.
- g. Control tamarisk by cutting, using herbicide and controlling spread.
3. Require new development to re-vegetate with native trees and shrubs (where appropriate) and stabilize banks without channelizing or further constraining floodways in areas in or immediately adjacent to the FC-1 zone. (Sec. 3. VI.Goal&1-2.a-g.3)

²⁰⁰ This all deals with critical environmental areas because of the danger or foolishness of building in these precarious areas.

2. Purchase land along the proposed Mill Creek Parkway and other areas for flood hazard reduction, recreation, and pocket parks.

Implementation:

a. Work out agreements with land owners for easements or outright purchase of necessary lands. (Sec. 9. I.2.a)

GRAND COUNTY

DIRECT

Equally important, rural character must be preserved and the high quality open space that dominates Grand County must be preserved. (Sec 1.6)

Identified from the Key Person Interviews, Grand County residents identified:

(a) Best Characteristics

- Public Open Space, Ease of Access, Recreational Opportunities

(f) Common Vision:

- Improve Trails and Linkages to Open Space (Sec 2.2.1)

Identified from the responses to the Citizen Questionnaire:

(h) Open Space Protection

(i) Agricultural Preservation

(j) Rural Character

(Sec 2.2.2)

The 5 meeting was a long one – 5 hours – with an ambitious agenda, which had to be completed at a subsequent meeting. The agenda included the following issues:

- ◆ Define Sensitive Lands and Ways to Protect Such Lands

- ◆ Decide on Limiting the Scale of Development, Building Design, or Both in the Outback

- ◆ Decide on Building and Site Standards for Ridgeline Development

(Sec 2.2.4)

Grand County is surrounded by public lands which enhance the rural character of the county. There is a variety of opinions regarding if and how this land should be developed. Both sides seem to agree that if development in such areas is to occur, the perceived existing condition should be substantially preserved through:

(b) Clustering of development – any allowed development should be required to preserve substantially open space, and (Sec 3.1)

Watershed Management

Public Lands Policy 2. Grand County will work to protect watersheds from activities and uses that are injurious to them. Public agencies are encouraged to adopt policies that enhance or restore watersheds for Moab, Spanish Valley and Castle Valley. Grand County will support classification of the aquifers for these valleys at the highest possible quality standard. The County encourages the agencies managing the public land in the EPA's sole source aquifer recharge areas for Moab, Spanish Valley and Castle Valley to define "proper functioning condition" to include capturing rainfall into the groundwater aquifer at non- degraded rates. (Sec 4.2.6)

Unaltered Vegetation Areas

Public Lands Policy 12. Grand County contains a number of areas with significant examples of plant communities and soils that are relatively unaltered by historic human activities. These areas comprise less than 5 percent of the public lands in Grand County. Grand County encourages the federal agencies to identify and conserve such areas through administrative designations such as Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) and Research Natural Area (RNA). These areas represent a significant scientific benchmark for research and understanding of ecological changes. The County will

be a participant in the evaluation of candidate areas and the identification of management decisions offering the greatest benefit to the local community. (Sec 4.2.6)

Special Uses, Events and Activities

Public Lands Policy 13. Grand County will be involved with public land managers; with new and ongoing events and promote cooperation with the permitting process. Ongoing uses, events and activities should be required to mitigate adverse impacts. Restoration plans should be integrated into the permitting process for both new and old events and activities. (Sec 4.2.6)

Wilderness

Public Lands Policy 18. Grand County continues to support the recommendation for wilderness adopted by the Grand County Council in 1995 after extensive public hearings in which all interests were represented. (See Section 7.1.4, Wilderness Plan) Grand County will follow the State of Utah's recommendation concerning wilderness designation where consistent with the interests of the people of Grand County. (Sec 4.2.6)

Wild and Scenic Rivers

Public Lands Policy 19. Grand County will participate and promote cooperation with the administering Federal agency for any proposed or designated wild, scenic or recreational river components to the national wild and scenic river system for planning and administrative purposes. Management plans for any component added to this system shall be established to accommodate the component's special attributes and existing regular uses. This designation should not interfere with the current B and D road map developed by the County, unless the County agrees to vacate those rights-of-way. [Code 16 U.S.C. § 1279, Withdrawal Of Public Lands From Entry, Sale, Or Other Disposition Under Public Land Laws, and more specifically, (b) Lands Constituting Bed or Bank of River; Lands Within Bank Area] or with any valid existing water right (Code 16 U.S.C. § 1284, Existing State jurisdiction and responsibilities, and more specifically, (b) Compensation for water rights]. (Sec 4.2.6)

(e) To obtain funding and the authority necessary to better protect intensively used areas and special-value areas, initiate community dialog to consider land designations such as ACEC (Area of Critical Environmental Concern), NCA (National Conservation Area), RNA (Research Natural Area), or NRA (National Recreation Area). (Implementation Actions – Sec 4.2.6)

.2.9 | Protect Sensitive Lands

Sensitive Lands Policy 1. Grand County will make reasonable efforts to protect sensitive lands, open space, and scenic views, while respecting private property rights. These goals raise a difficult question: What are "sensitive" lands? The Sensitive Lands are defined by the Grand County Land Use Code to include: public drinking water supply watersheds (recharge areas for the aquifer in the Glen Canyon Formation); floodplains and riparian habitats; seen areas of elevated benches, mesas, ridges, and slopes; and significant geological, biological, and archeological sites. These areas have not (with the exception of the flood-prone areas) been mapped and must either be better defined, or addressed on a site-by-site basis during development review. It is also important to understand the relationship of sensitive lands and the natural hazards described in Part 1.4 of this plan. Not all hazardous lands are sensitive, but there is considerable overlap. For example, riparian corridors along the valley's streams are both hazardous -- due to flooding -- and highly sensitive. The comparatively humid, well-vegetated oasis along the creeks occupies a small fraction of Spanish Valley, but provides important wildlife habitat and visual and microclimatic relief from the sere colors and heat of the surrounding desert. All that is necessary to enjoy these benefits is to leave riparian areas undisturbed, except for low impact recreational facilities, such as trails and related facilities. The same is true of other sensitive lands. Dedicating them to open space use makes adjacent lands more valuable and well-planned development on such sites more marketable.

Sensitive Lands Policy 2. Preserve scenic quality and protect the socio-economic value of critical view sheds both in and outside of developed areas (e.g., Spanish Valley,

Thompson, Cisco) from primary public corridors, including: I-70, US191, and SH313, SH128, Spanish Valley Drive, Murphy Lane, Potash Road and Kane Creek Road, as well as their value to the community as a public amenity.

Sensitive Lands Policy 3. Preserve the rural character of the “outback”, as described in Section 3.1 , through careful site planning, development clustering, and use of indigenous architectural design and color treatment.

Sensitive Lands Policy 4. Grand County will require verification of compliance with ridgeline standards compliance prior to federal and state land trade, disposal or development.

Implementation actions

(a) Grand County will consider sensitive lands in all development reviews.

(b) Interested citizens should create a land trust to acquire land and development rights from willing sellers or donors and manage easements.

(c) Protect riparian corridors and recharge areas for public water supplies from incompatible uses.

(d) Consider expanding the development clustering requirements (PUD) to include incentives for the clustering/transfer of development rights from sensitive lands (between properties) and to protect views from the outback.

(e) Update the definition of “sensitive lands”.

(f) Create incentives for increased clustering of development to protect sensitive lands.

(g) Preserve sensitive lands as “common open space” to be owned and maintained by homeowners’ associations benefiting from such open space.

(h) Evaluate County Ridgeline Standards to:

- Development that creates a silhouette against the sky;
- Require use of non-reflective roofing materials requirement;
- Add performance standards requiring that development repeat predominant landscape lines in immediate area; and
- Restrict color as necessary to blend with the site.

(i) Ask developers to show how projects in visually sensitive areas will minimize contrast with the natural setting. Contrast can be evaluated using the criteria of form, line, color, and texture.

(j) Ask developers to demonstrate how projects are hidden from view from visually sensitive areas. Use of indigenous architectural design and color treatment – building design and color treatment should blend into the natural setting and avoid drawing undue visual attention.

(k) Grand County, the City of Moab, and interested citizens, including the Sensitive Lands Task Force, will investigate a variety of options and incentives to protect sensitive lands in ways that benefit both the community and the landowner.

(l) Explore opportunities for land swaps with public agencies and the purchase of land or development rights funded by open space impact fees and similar funding sources.

(m) Encourage responsible revegetation, preservation of existing native plant communities and control of noxious weeds.

(n) Amend open space standards to permit use of open space areas for passive recreational facilities, such as trails and picnic facilities.

Public Facilities Policy 4. Grand County will encourage the dedication of easements for multi-use trails and public sidewalks in conjunction with all development approvals, as appropriate. At a minimum, such pedestrian facilities should maintain historic access patterns and corridors, continue projections of the city of Moab’s trail system, particularly along provided riparian corridors, and provide necessary connections through developed and developing areas to public lands.

Public Facilities Policy 5. Grand County will take necessary steps to ensure that trail installations are accomplished in an environmentally sensitive manner by minimizing negative impacts on riparian areas and other sensitive lands.

Multi-use trails are an important element in a multi-modal transportation system. A multi-use trail system, including segregated bikeways along major transportation corridors is needed to ensure safe and convenient access for all users from the city of Moab to public lands. (Sec 4.2.11)

Reasonable Regulations Policy 4. Grand County will review the zoning pattern in the Spanish Valley, identify any potential zoning compatibility issues and historic spot zoning areas, and amend it's zoning as necessary to mitigate potential compatibility problems and negative impacts on to sensitive lands. Particular attention should be given to potential development of hillsides, and steep-slope and exposed sandstone areas. (Sec 4.2.14)

(f) Establish open space standards that ensure contiguity of such areas within each development and to adjacent any off-site open space areas. (Implementation Actions – Sec 4.2.14)

INDIRECT

On February 23, 2002, participating citizens explored the meaning of the term “rural character” and accepted by consensus that rural character in the Spanish Valley means different things to different people, including:

- (e) Landscaped, natural, and/or agricultural open spaces create a “flow of nature” through rural neighborhoods and developments leaving room for birds and other wildlife;
- (h) Protected view sheds to large open spaces, like a park – e.g. the LaSal Mountains;
- (p) Beautiful and well-kept.

4.2.6 | Promote Management of Public Lands for the Benefit and Enjoyment of the People of Grand County and the Nation

Preamble

The public lands of Grand County have immense social, ecological, cultural, and economic value and are of worldwide significance. The public lands of Grand County should be managed for the enjoyment and benefit of people of Grand County and the nation so as to maintain the integrity and value of natural and cultural resources. (Public lands are defined as those lands in Grand County that are not privately owned.)

The public lands of Grand County are also the foundation of the county’s economic prosperity, both in the short term and the long term. Economic benefit is derived from the management of public lands for multiple use including: livestock grazing, tourism, mineral exploration, recreation, watershed protection, hunting, the film industry and many others.

Through economic diversification and multiple use management, Grand County’s goal is to achieve a stable economic base while minimizing degradation of the economic, social, ecological, and cultural resources of the public lands. Protecting public lands resources is sound policy for the long term economic well being of Grand County.

Economic Use of Public Lands

Public Lands Policy 1. Grand County encourages the expeditious processing of use permits for economic uses of public lands consistent with the policies of this Plan, and specifically, film, mineral extraction and recreation, for the benefit of Grand County. To this end, the County encourages the completion of base environmental studies necessary to process applications expeditiously. (Sec 4.2.6)

Motorized and Mechanized Travel

Public Lands Policy 7. Grand County recognizes that allowing open, cross-country travel by mechanized vehicles is no longer an appropriate public land management practice. The County therefore encourages the agencies to reclassify most areas currently classified as “open to mechanized travel” to a more restrictive travel designation such as “mechanized travel limited to designated roads and trails.” This will protect resource values while still maintaining reasonable access for the public.”

Public Lands Policy 8. Grand County strongly encourages the agencies to implement an immediate “No New Tracks” policy, limiting mechanized vehicle use to existing roads and trails, except where otherwise specifically designated. The basis of the no new tracks policy will be the “present tracks” as reflected by the map prepared by the Grand County Road Department, titled “Grand County Class B Roads,

April 2002”, and including all identified Grand County B roads and “other roads.” Motor vehicle use off

of those "present tracks" should be limited to the following:

- ◆ Areas identified by public land managers as "motor vehicle open areas," where motor vehicles are free to go anywhere.
- ◆ Historically established and specifically identified motorcycle and bicycle trails.
- ◆ Areas in which public land managers specifically and individually grant permission for additional "temporary tracks" or "new tracks" such as for mineral exploration or other approved new roadways. (Sec 4.2.6)

Illegal Dumping

Public Lands Policy 15. Grand County promotes cooperation with federal and state agencies, and neighboring counties to implement special control measures on public lands where illegal dumping and littering are occurring. Such measures should include posting of "no dumping" signs by the appropriate agency, vigorous enforcement of existing littering laws, and ongoing public education. (See also Sec. 4.2.7) (Sec 4.2.6)

Reintroduction of Species to Grand County

Public Lands Policy 20. When reintroduction of animal species to the public lands in the County is considered, Grand County should be a participating agency in evaluating the feasibility and advisability of such reintroduction. The County is particularly interested in evaluating the possible economic impacts of reintroduced species, land use restrictions to protect their habitat, and arrangements to protect or compensate affected land users. (Sec 4.2.6)

(j) Access to recreational open spaces such as recreational trails or public lands should be an integral part of new development. (Implementation Actions – Sec 4.2.11)

FOSTER DISTINCTIVE, ATTRACTIVE COMMUNITIES WITH A STRONG SENSE OF PLACE

CITY OF MOAB

LANDSCAPE

DIRECT –

4. Enhance City services and protect the scenic assets of the community and its surrounds. (Sec 1. I.4)

e. Support efforts to protect the beautiful scenery that surrounds the area. (Sec. 1. I.4.e)

f. Encourage use of native and low-water plants to maintain a regional sense of place and to conserve water. (Sec 1. I.5.f)

Views in and around the City of Moab are spectacular and contribute substantially to the quality of life and economic viability of Moab. Views of the ridgelines, hillsides, and mountains are an important value to the community, both emotionally and economically.

Goal: To protect the visual resources of Moab including ridgelines, mountain views, the night sky and other scenic assets. (Sec. 2. III.Goal)

Protect ridgelines, hillsides and mountains in the City and endeavor to protect similar sensitive areas surrounding Moab. New structures should not be placed on any ridgeline in a manner that silhouettes the structure against the natural skyline when viewed from the central part of town or the valley. Development located on hillsides should be located, screened by vegetation or topography, and/or colored to minimize visibility from the central part of town or the valley.

Implementation.

a. Adopt ridgeline development ordinance.

b. Protect ridgelines located outside the City limits that impact City residents and businesses by addressing this concern in joint planning agreements or other intergovernmental agreements between the City of Moab and Grand

County.

c. Require applicants for new development to use story poles or other methods to portray roofline and structure impacts near ridges for purposes of assessing visual impacts before development occurs. Setbacks, designation of maximum roofline heights and lot relocation in these areas are some of the tools that should be used to eliminate the visual impact of structures.

d. Require development that occurs, as permitted by ordinance, on hillsides or ridgelines to use existing vegetation and topography for visual screening and require other visual mitigation methods such as paint, cutoff light fixtures, etc.

(Sec. 2. III.1.a-d)

2. Protect scenic views and night skies when viewed from the rims surrounding Spanish Valley, from the LaSal Mountains, from Arches National Parks and as well as from other public lands, and seek to minimize light pollution within the City and in surrounding areas..

Implementation.

a. Adopt a light ordinance that considers intensity, type, and quantity of light for streets, buildings, signs, parking lots and for other uses of exterior lighting.

b. Provide resources that help educate residences on using more efficient and effective methods of lighting.

c. Demonstrate the use of efficient and effective lighting on City property and right of ways. (Sec. 2. III.2.a-c)

I. LAND USE -- GENERAL

Goal: To encourage a balanced mix and rational organization of land uses that enhances Moab's distinctive small-town character, economic health, and natural environment, allows economic provision of public services, and meets the needs of residents.

Policies

1. Require that all new zone changes conform with the General Plan.

2. Adopt new zones as necessary to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the community and work to preserve the natural environment and character of a small-town community.

3. Encourage the elimination of nonconforming uses. (Sec. 3. I.Goal.1-3)

II. STREET TREES AND CITY LANDSCAPING

Goal: To create a calm, inviting atmosphere and a sense of place by planting native or drought-resistant trees, shrubs, flowers and grasses on Moab's streets, parks, planting strips and medians.

Policies:

1. Improve the overall visual quality and protect the environmental resources of the community.

Implementation:

a. Establish and enforce the landscape requirements for parking areas and planting strips.

2. Encourage the preservation and enhancement of existing landscape resources.

Implementation:

a. Continue to support the planning and development of the Mill Creek/Pack Creek Parkway in conjunction with flood hazard reduction measures on those creeks.

b. Support local grass roots community efforts to beautify derelict or unsightly public spaces with native and adaptive trees, shrubs and ground covers that require low maintenance and low water.

3. Support and cooperate on City projects with groups or organizations dedicated to beautification projects.

4. Encourage appropriate plant selection and site design of public spaces to minimize maintenance and water usage.

Implementation:

a. Develop landscape design guidelines along with comprehensive list of low-water trees, shrubs, and flowers suitable for planting.

b. Discourage use of noxious and other invasive weed species in landscaping. (See Appendix A, R68-09 Rule Pertaining to the Utah Noxious Weed Act)

4. Improve the visual quality of the highway landscapes at the entrances to the City.²⁰¹

Implementation:

- a. Create welcoming “gateways” into Moab at each end of town that speak to a sense of place that include the use of native trees, shrubs, flowers, rock and/or historic building materials.
6. Encourage new development to minimize the removal of existing native trees and vegetation.
7. Support the goals of the Shade Tree Commission to develop an effective, diverse community forestry program. (Sec. 4. II.Goal&1-2.a-b.3-4.a-b.4.a.6-7)

INDIRECT –

4. Enhance City services and protect the scenic assets of the community and its surrounds. (Sec. 1. I.4)

6. Work with organizations to promote diverse year-round community activities.

Implementation:

- a. Encourage activities and businesses that provide evening entertainment.
- b. Continue to support organizations that promote events for the community.
- c. Encourage new special community events for the winter season.
- d. Support efforts to solicit conventions, seminars, reunions and other gatherings.
- e. Encourage industries that provide off-season employment. (Sec 1. I.6.a-e)

9. Encourage developers to use existing topography and tree cover when determining road layout, location and buffering of different land uses, storm water management systems, and utility lines. (Sec. 2. I.9)

V. PRIVATE UTILITIES

Goal: Cooperate with private utilities to provide dependable, low cost, and efficient utilities for present and future needs. Utilities should be designed and located to maintain the visual integrity of the community. (Sec. 8. V.Goal)

RURAL CHARACTER –

DIRECT -

3. Encourage the development and vitality of a central commercial district compatible with small-town living. (Sec. 3. II.3)

III. RESIDENTIAL ZONES

Goal: To achieve attractive, stable, and safe residential areas, and to achieve a balanced mixture of residential uses and densities. (Sec. 3. III.Goal)

3. Provide for low-density residential uses (residential/agricultural zones) to encourage a rural, open setting. Development should be characterized by agricultural uses. (Sec. 3. III.3)

IV. HISTORIC DISTRICTS/HISTORIC CONSERVATION AREAS

Goal: To preserve and enhance the historic quality and character of Moab and surrounding area, and to recognize and maintain the attractiveness of older residential neighborhoods and of the central business district that presents a “sense of place” unique to Moab.

Policies:

1. Encourage preservation/rehabilitation of existing structures.
2. Encourage new development in historic areas to be compatible with the historic character and integrity of those areas.
3. Encourage and support preservation efforts by nonprofit organizations and individuals.

Implementation:

- a. Identify historic properties.
- b. Assess properties for historic significance and National Register eligibility.

²⁰¹ There are two number 4s in this section. I assume the second is a typo and should really be number 5.

- c. Delineate and define the historic character of potential historic districts, including the “Old Town” area.
- d. Evaluate current zoning ordinance for consistency with existing historic properties (setbacks, lot sizes, parking, street widths etc.) and revise if necessary.
- e. Develop a historic preservation ordinance, addressing:
 - (1) Establishment of a historic district;
 - (2) Design guidelines (voluntary or mandatory) for new construction in historic districts, based on existing historic properties with elements that include size, bulk/scale, height, and site setbacks of structures;
 - (3) Rehabilitation of existing historic buildings.
- f. Seek technical and financial assistance:
 - (1) Grand County Certified Local Government Program/State Historic Preservation Office/National Park Service
 - (2) Main Street Program.
- g. Establish and promote incentives for historic preservation:
 - (1) Reduced parking requirements.
- 4. Restrict commercial development in historic residential areas to home occupations and bed/breakfast establishments.
- 5. Maintain and encourage a pedestrian environment for the historic neighborhoods and central business district.

Implementation:

- a. Complete sidewalks, plant trees and maintain City-dedicated planting strips.
- b. Develop a traffic circulation plan that is convenient for internal traffic movement, while discouraging through traffic in residential areas. (Sec. 3. IV.Goal&1-3.a-g.4-5.a-b))

VI. AGRICULTURAL

Goal: To provide a location for agriculture where the raising of livestock, growing of orchards and/or vineyards, etc., can occur.

Implementation:

- a. Establish incentives and guidelines to encourage the preservation of agricultural lands. (Sec. 3. VI.Goal&a)

I. URBAN DESIGN AND VISUAL QUALITY

Goal: Achieve a unified, aesthetically pleasing and welcoming setting for the City of Moab compatible with the history and culture of the area that complements the surrounding landscape and rural sense of place. Moab shall strive toward an inviting, hometown appeal that preserves its rural character and will attract businesses that will improve long-term economic stability of the community. (Sec. 4. I.Goal)

- a. Adopt community site design guidelines for streetscape activities such as roads, pedestrian walkways, bikeways, plazas and mini-parks. The components to be considered are signing, lighting, street furnishing, plantings, building to property line, shared access and parking, reduction of street widths, location of utilities and the proportionality of the various streetscape elements. (Sec. 4. I.1.a)
 - b. Establish architectural and design guidelines for commercial and residential developments that maintain scale, rural character and sense of place in Moab. Encourage and invite participation of community in establishing these guidelines. (Sec. 4. I.1.b)
- 2. Discourage potentially dated design, or design that threatens the rural sense of place of the community. (Sec. 4. I.2)
 - 5. Encourage new and remodeled construction to be in keeping with the local natural setting and small-town character. (Sec. 4. 1.5)
 - 6. Establish a central town focus to enhance the visual organization and attractiveness of the city. (Sec. 4. I.6)
 - 7. Enforce the sign ordinance to prevent visual clutter, protect the aesthetic value and character of the community, and protect residential areas from intrusive lighting.

Implementation:

a. Enforce and periodically review and update the sign ordinance to reflect new technology, advancement in the sign industry, or neighborhood concerns. (Sec. 4. I.7.a)

a. Encourage landowners to keep their land open or in agricultural use. (Sec. 6. I.5.a)

2. Encourage the aesthetic lighting of streets to insure safety and reduce crime. To maintain rural character and prevent light pollution, lighting should be controlled in height and intensity and require shielding. (Sec. 8. V.2)

INDIRECT -

Commercial and residential growth also impacts the rural and historic character of Moab, especially in the downtown and “Old Moab” areas. This requires special attention to building size, construction materials, lighting, landscaping and traffic flow. (Moab GP – “Special Challenges” Pg. 5)

3. Protect historic structures and the historic character of Moab, including structures in commercial zones. (Sec. 2. I.3)

4. Identify sites, features, buildings, trees, etc. that symbolize traditions, history or have cultural significance to the community. (Sec. 2. I.4)

a. Establish ordinances that protect “meaningful” or historic sites, structures, features, trees, etc. (Sec. 2. I.4.a)

a. Require appropriate visual, light, and sound buffers on new commercial developments that impact residential lots. (Sec. 2. I.7.a)

a. Minimize the number of accesses (curb cuts). Attractive buffers, including appropriate plantings of trees and other natural material, will be required when commercial developments locate near residences.

b. Plant street trees and encourage maintenance of City planting strips between street and sidewalks.

c. Explore an in-filling and redevelopment incentive.

d. Encourage clustering of commercial enterprises.

e. Consider limiting the square footage of new retail or wholesale commercial buildings.

f. Consider establishing design standards for commercial buildings larger than 10,000 sq. ft. Standards should address lengths and heights of uninterrupted building facades, building articulation, “build-to” lines, windows, pedestrian access and safety, landscaped frontage areas and landscaped parking lots or car parks. (Sec. 3. II.3.a-f)

5. Permit expansion of commercial uses into or within residential areas only if such development maintains the residential desirability of the affected neighborhoods and the “character” of the structure and signs, “fits in” with other existing structure. (Sec. 3. II.5)

9. Encourage shady, landscaped sitting areas in new commercial development to break up large expanses of asphalt. (Sec. 3. II.9)

a. Adopt guidelines for developers to implement shade trees, sitting areas, and other landscaping in and around parking areas. (Sec. 3. II.10.a)

10. Require buffering of residential zones from heavy traffic commercial areas to ensure safety.

Implementation:

a. Require traffic studies for any major commercial development.

b. Consider traffic-calming devices such as street narrowing, bulb-outs, planting strips, medians, street trees and/or traffic circles. (Sec. 3. II.10.a-b)²⁰²

²⁰² There are two number 10s in this section, this is the second one listed, I assume this is a typo.

12. Encourage upgrade in the appearance of commercial areas along Main Street and ensure that building design enhances existing town scale and character.

Implementation:

- a. Adopt guidelines that ensure architectural compatibility of new buildings with the height and mass of existing structures.
- b. Adopt design guidelines for new structures, or for the modification of existing structures, to ensure compatibility and harmony of architecture and reduce light pollution.
- c. Adopt guidelines for landscaping suggesting a list of appropriate, low water plantings.
- d. Review commercial development regulations in partnership with the business community, and community-at-large, to determine if those regulations can be modified to improve business climate. (Sec. 3. II.12.a-d)

14. Require that residential uses be buffered from general commercial uses.

Implementation:

- a. Provide landscape guidelines for developers to ensure adequate landscaping and attractive fencing and open space to accomplish buffering commercial and residential uses. (Sec. 3. II.14.a)

15. Create development strategies to reflect the different commercial areas of Moab that include streetscape, parking, lighting, landscape and architectural design elements.

Implementation:

- a. Develop streetscape plans for Center Street from 100 West to 300 East. (Sec. 3. II.15.a)

5. Restrict commercial development in residential zones. (Sec. 3. III.5)

4. Support the development of affordable, small-scale residential housing which fits the character of the City and is interspersed with market-rate units.

5. Encourage 25 percent of new housing units to be affordable (as defined by HB-295) to area median income. At least 35 percent of the 25 percent goal shall be affordable rental housing targeting families at or below 50 percent of the area median income. (Sec. 5. II.4-5)²⁰³

9. Encourage affordable housing to be dispersed throughout the community, consistent in scale and character with surrounding neighborhoods. (Sec. 5. II.9)

3. Prevent major arterials or through traffic from splitting residential neighborhoods. The City shall plan collector streets so they provide adequate access from residential neighborhoods to major arterials and other adjoining areas of concentration. (Sec. 7. IV.3)

GRAND COUNTY

There is community consensus that the economy needs to be further diversified beyond the tourism-related economy and that real human needs in the community must be met, particularly with respect to education and affordable housing. Equally important, rural character must be preserved and the high quality open space that dominates Grand County must be preserved. (Sec 1.6)

Identified from the Key Person Interviews, Grand County residents identified:

(a) Best Characteristics

- Small Town Lifestyle & the People
- Public Open Space, Ease of Access, Recreational Opportunities

(c) Most Important Issues Facing Grand County

- Preserving Rural Character/Development Scale

²⁰³ I believe that a crucial part of maintaining sense of place is maintaining the population base, much of which is in need of greater affordable housing options.

(d) Community Changes Most Like to See:

- Community Preservation/ Enhancement

(f) Common Vision:

- Like Grand County the Way It Is -- Small Town Qualities & Open Space
- Improve Trails and Linkages to Open Space

(Sec 2.2.1)

Identified from the responses to the Citizen Questionnaire:

(h) Open Space Protection

(i) Agricultural Preservation

(j) Rural Character

(Sec 2.2.2)

Agreeing with the Key Person Interview results, participating citizens agreed on a vision that included preservation of the Spanish Valley's rural character and the high quality open space that surrounds the Valley. (Sec 2.2.3)

VISION STATEMENT

Grand County is known for its rural environment and the ease of access to high quality open space – preservation of these characteristics is a priority. It thrives on a strong sense of community characterized by a high level of respect shared among its diverse population, broad support of community institutions, the provision of quality services to all regardless of income, and by meeting real human needs with increased economic diversity, high quality education, health care and affordable housing.

4.2.13 | Support Education, Families and the Arts

Education, Family and Arts Policy 1. Interested citizens and civic organizations will work to support community artists and cultural events in Grand County. Cultural events should be used to encourage a sense of community.

Education, Family and Arts Policy 2. The Grand County schools and interested citizens and civic organizations will work to provide increased educational, cultural, and civic opportunities that will help young people to help them understand and appreciate their role in the community and to prepare them for roles as community leaders.

This education, families, and arts policy statement reflects a mixture of concerns about the quality of the community's life, and especially about opportunities for young people. Citizens believe that arts and cultural events can foster pride in the community and hope in individual lives.

Quality education, or the lack thereof, is a critical factor in future economic development and diversification of Grand County. If the County to benefit from the current national trend and preference for the quality of life offered by relatively small, amenity-rich communities, it must be able to provide high quality education opportunities for its current and future residents.

(d) Add other amendments needed to ensure that development complements the natural assets that are an important economic resource and the basis for many aspects of the local quality of life.

(Implementation Actions - Sec 4.2.14)

LANDSCAPE –

DIRECT

The 5 meeting was a long one – 5 hours – with an ambitious agenda, which had to be completed at a subsequent meeting. The agenda included the following issues:

- ◆ Define Sensitive Lands and Ways to Protect Such Lands
- ◆ Decide on Limiting the Scale of Development, Building Design, or Both in the Outback

◆ Decide on Building and Site Standards for Ridgeline Development
(Sec 2.2.4)

Dark Night Skies

Public Lands Policy 23. Grand County will work with public land agencies to ensure that dark skies are not compromised on public lands.

Natural Quiet

Public Lands Policy 24. Grand County encourages the public agencies to implement measures to ensure that this resource is not degraded. (Sec 4.2.6)

Reasonable Regulations Policy 3. Grand County will require public right-of-way dedication in conjunction with development approvals as necessary to maintain all historic accesses (pedestrian and/or vehicular) from and through private lands to public lands.

Over 95% of Grand County lands are public lands. Citizen questionnaire and interview results indicate that most county citizens chose to live in Grand County because of the small town atmosphere and ready access to high quality open space. (Sec 4.2.14)

INDIRECT

**RURAL CHARACTER –
DIRECT**

3.1 | Rural Character

The importance of “rural character” to Grand County residents can hardly be over-stated. Rural character, its meaning, and what must be done to preserve it frequently dominates public meetings in Grand County. The issue emerged as a primary community value in the General Plan Update, beginning with the Key Person Interviews, Citizen Questionnaire, and continuing to throughout the public meeting participation process. While rural character means different things to different people, but everyone agrees that is valuable and should be preserved.

On February 23, 2002, participating citizens explored the meaning of the term “rural character” and accepted by consensus that rural character in the Spanish Valley means different things to different people, including:

- (a) A continuum of housing sizes and style for people of modest means;
- (b) Low density, modest residential development, interspersed with farms (with farm animals) and fields;
- (c) Mixture of modest, typical residential height and scale, homes made out of natural materials on a variety of parcel sizes ranging from 1 to 40 acres – avoid cookie cutter style homes and uniform postage stamp lots;
- (d) Two-lane roads, without urban-level traffic or traffic problems;
- (e) Landscaped, natural, and/or agricultural open spaces create a “flow of nature” through rural neighborhoods and developments leaving room for birds and other wildlife;
- (f) Community members living and working in the area, without long commutes to work;
- (g) No bright, unshielded, 360° outdoor lighting;
- (h) Protected view sheds to large open spaces, like a park – e.g. the LaSal Mountains;
- (i) Relatively low population levels, crime and traffic, and no parking problems -- out-of-town;
- (j) Separated from mass population centers and with limited services, what we need but maybe not everything we want;
- (k) Perceptions of an agricultural base and housing costs proportionate to what people earn in the area;
- (l) Five (5) minutes in any direction to the County’s vast, accessible open lands (95% of the County is public land);
- (m) A viable community prospering, with good planned growth;
- (n) Gravel roads and no curb preferred to asphalt;
- (o) Less rules are needed due to the population levels and dispersal; and

(p) Beautiful and well-kept.

Grand County is surrounded by public lands which enhance the rural character of the county. There is a variety of opinions regarding if and how this land should be developed. Both sides seem to agree that if development in such areas is to occur, the perceived existing condition should be substantially preserved through:

- (a) Careful site planning – such development should be substantially hidden from view,
- (b) Clustering of development – any allowed development should be required to preserve substantially open space, and
- (c) Use of indigenous architectural design and color treatment – building design and color treatment should blend into the natural setting and avoid drawing undue visual attention.

(Sec 3.1)

Grand County supports and seeks to balance the interests of residents and businesses that choose to light their property and those who prefer to retain darkness. In the interest of maintaining the perception of what is rural and protecting all citizens' rights to enjoy their property, illuminated or not, as they choose, Grand County will provide leadership and guidance in the area of quality outdoor lighting. (Sec 4.2.8)

Sensitive Lands Policy 3. Preserve the rural character of the “outback”, as described in Section 3.1 , through careful site planning, development clustering, and use of indigenous architectural design and color treatment. (Sec 4.2.9)

4.2.10 | Sustain Local Agriculture – Conserve and Protect Other Resources Sustainable Agriculture Policy 1. Grand County and interested citizens will work to protect the land and water resource base needed to sustain local agriculture. Agriculture is a minor component of the Grand County economy, but plays a major role in the local sense of place and scenery. Sustaining local agriculture is also essential for any community that values self-sufficiency.

Implementation Actions

- (a) Interested citizens should organize a group to promote and develop agricultural markets, including markets for value-added products. This group will also provide technical assistance and facilitate classification of agricultural lands for tax purposes.
- (b) Several existing organizations and agencies, like the Grand Growers, the Canyonlands Winegrowers, the Castleland Resource Conservation and Development District, and the County Assessor's Office should be involved in this effort. Utah's Farmland Assessment Act (U.C.A. 59-2-502, et seq.) provides for agricultural land to be assessed at its value in use, rather than at its speculative value.
- (c) The Grand County Planning Commission and other agencies, including local irrigation companies, should inventory the county's agricultural lands and water rights. The current land use map shows the general extent of irrigated lands in Spanish Valley, but a more precise inventory that is tied to the County Assessor's records is needed.
- (d) Interested citizens should establish and generate support for a local land trust that can acquire conservation easements and promote the transfer of development rights to preserve agricultural lands. (The Sensitive Lands policy statement also calls for creation of a local land trust.)

INDIRECT

(b) In addition to the “Issues for Consideration” established by the Grand County Land Use Code, Sec. 6.2.6., the County will take into consideration the effect of any proposed rezoning applications upon the character of established neighborhoods and quality of life. (Implementation Actions – Sec 4.2.12)

DIVERSIFICATION OF ECONOMY AND PRESERVATION OF LOCAL BUSINESS

CITY OF MOAB

DIRECT –

8. Support the development of agricultural products and businesses. (Sec. 1. I.8)
11. Encourage the development of a strong arts community. (Sec. 1. I.11)
12. Support the development of a college campus in the Moab area. (Sec. 1. I.12)
5. Support the expansion of educational opportunities offered by Utah State University and the College of Eastern Utah. (Sec. 9. V.5)

INDIRECT –

I. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Goal: To encourage development that increases the City tax base, reduces unemployment, creates higher wages and/or improves the standard of living and provide services and stated policies related to growth. (Sec. 1. I)

2. Encourage diversity in new businesses and seek to attract business that will strengthen the economy, enhance the rural character of the community, and provide year-round employment without compromising the natural environment. (Sec. I. 2.)

e. Encourage industries that provide off-season employment. (Sec. 1. I.6.e)

9. Encourage and support the development of convention facilities. (Sec. 1. I.9)²⁰⁴

a. Protect the economic base of Moab by identifying areas where desired and appropriate growth can occur and emphasizing diversity in growth. (Sec. 2. I.5.a)

6. Encourage variety in new commercial developments and businesses. (Sec. 3. II.6)

V. INDUSTRIAL

Goal: To provide for varied, viable, and small, attractive light industrial districts. (Sec. 3. V.Goal)

GRAND COUNTY

Identified from the Key Person Interviews, Grand County residents identified:

(b) Worst Characteristics

- Seasonal Economy, Cost of Living Relative to Earnings

(c) Most Important Issues Facing Grand County

- Diversification, Infrastructure, Affordable Housing

- Preserving Rural Character/Development Scale

(d) Community Changes Most Like to See:

- College Campus

- Community Preservation/ Enhancement

- Economic Diversity

(f) Common Vision:

- Diversify the Economy -- Add a College (Sec 2.2.1)

Identified from the responses to the Citizen Questionnaire:

(a) Economic Diversification

(c) Higher Education

²⁰⁴ Convention facilities are still tourism related, but are a slight departure from the highly seasonal recreation based tourism that exists in Moab currently.

- (g) No Corporate Retail Chains
 - (i) Agricultural Preservation
- (Sec 2.2.2)

DIRECT

There is community consensus that the economy needs to be further diversified beyond the tourism-related economy and that real human needs in the community must be met, particularly with respect to education and affordable housing. (Sec 1.6)

Citizens noted their concerns for respective portions of the county on a series of zoning maps. Major concerns included: areas for high density, multi-family housing; need for local retail; big box retail regulations; outback development regulations; building design/lighting; TDRs and affordable housing; development sprawl and public lands implications; junk clean-up; a college for Grand County and other economic diversification; health care and medical leaks; as well as many other important but less widely shared concerns. (Sec 2.2.3)

Agreeing with the Key Person Interview results, participating citizens agreed on a vision that included preservation of the Spanish Valley's rural character and the high quality open space that surrounds the Valley. They also agreed that economic diversification is long overdue and is best accomplished with the addition of a college, conference center, retirement services and affordable housing. (Sec 2.2.3)

4.2.4 | Build Community with a Strong, Diversified, Year-round Economy

The community's participation in the General Plan Update process indicated a strong expectation that this update address economic development and diversity issues. At the current time, Grand County's economy is driven by seasonal tourism. It's important that we continue to invest in and develop that part of our economy.

It is equally important to develop compatible industries that fit well with the community, and create year round employment opportunities as well as increase the tax base.

This planning process has identified the following industries as diversity opportunities. As our economic planning goes forward we will include the following elements: tourism/ conventions, film, 4-year destination college, health care, retirement/second home ownership and natural resource development. It's time for Grand County to take a more active role in our local economy and as such the following strategies and action steps are suggested to help us reach our diversity goals.

Implementation Actions, Support of Tourism

- (a) Council will review the structure of the current economic development committee.
- (b) The economic development committee or board will adopt the concept of a long range approach to economic development, and create a 5-year detailed plan that will be added to the General Plan. This plan will be reviewed and updated yearly. This plan will address Grand County goals, but, should meet the goals of Moab City as well. A plan that's bridges the interests of the county and the city will have an increased chance of success.
- (c) Grand County does support multiple use of public lands. In addition to the continued use of recreation the county supports oil and gas exploration and development. These uses not only create good paying jobs, but generate mineral lease revenues that can provide needed capital to help pay for infrastructure improvements needed to achieve economic diversity.
- (d) Grand County will investigate and develop incentives that will encourage businesses and developers of projects that will meet our goals.
- (e) Grand County will encourage the Planning Commission to review and update this plan, and the Land Use Code with ways to protect the interests of the community as well as simplification of the development process.
- (f) Grand County will re-establish a County-sponsored Film Commission. It will develop a long range plan to revitalize our lost film industry.
- (g) Grand County will continue to support the MAPS project, new hospital and other related activities to improving health care services and job opportunities in the county.

- (h) Grand County supports the development of a 4-year destination college.
- (i) Grand County will work to develop a convention center. This project could and should be a joint city/county and business collaboration.
- (j) Grand County will continue to support the growth of local business.
- (k) Encourage support for local businesses.
- (l) Support the placement of signs by the Travel Council along SH128 and I-70 advertising and otherwise promoting Moab.

INDIRECT

The Moab Area Travel Council seeks to improve the local economy by promoting and supporting recreation, tourism, and conventions, in an environmentally-sensitive manner. (Sec 1.5.16)

Economic Use of Public Lands

Public Lands Policy 1. Grand County encourages the expeditious processing of use permits for economic uses of public lands consistent with the policies of this Plan, and specifically, film, mineral extraction and recreation, for the benefit of Grand County. To this end, the County encourages the completion of base environmental studies necessary to process applications expeditiously.