



FRUITA
COLORADO

AT HOME IN FRUITA

HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT
& HOUSING ACTION PLAN



DECEMBER 2025



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Executive Summary

Along the western end of the Grand Valley, leaders in the City of Fruita have started taking action to address the community's varied housing challenges. After identifying housing as a need in their most recent comprehensive plan, a flurry of land use policy changes and affordable housing projects were launched. The City established a local housing authority, eliminated maximum density standards in the core of downtown, created a density bonus provision in their largest residential district, and more. Time will tell the full impact but these actions have already led to several positive outcomes.

Housing Situation: Predominantly Single-Family Stock with Some Recent Variation

Around 790 new housing units are expected in Fruita over the next several years, primarily single-family home developments, with some utilizing the City's density bonus. New apartment complexes and townhomes are in process as well. The City recently supported an affordable housing project, Fruita Mews, and is partnering in a workforce redevelopment project (The Oaks) at the time this assessment was completed.

Single-family units will likely remain the predominant form of housing in Fruita, but some diversification on this front could avail more households

opportunities to contribute to the economy and community. Currently, **about 85% of housing units in Fruita are one-unit structures** (attached and detached). The rate of homeownership is high at 81%, compared to the state (66%) and the nation (65%). Additionally, both the number and share of renter-occupied housing units have decreased since 2018. The trend has started to shift in the past seven years, but still **75% of units permitted from 2020 through July 2025 are single-family dwellings**.

Housing Costs: Rising & Burdensome

The post-pandemic demand shock exacerbated home prices that were already increasing. The value of a typical home in Fruita was relatively consistent from 2000 through 2016 (in the range of \$200,000 to \$300,000). Over the last five years, however, **the value of a typical home has increased roughly 8% every year**. As of summer 2025, the median home sold on the market reached \$594,000.

Increased housing costs are now leading to affordability challenges in the community. **About 36% of renters in Fruita are cost-burdened** (spending 30% or more of their income on housing), significantly restricting budgets. More renters are cost-burdened in Colorado (50%) and the U.S. (47%), but the City is at risk of quickly catching up to these undesirable averages. At the time of our

assessment, the cost-burden rate is concentrated in low-income groups, 70% of which classify as cost-burdened. Additionally, **of those who have not yet purchased a home, 87% could not afford the mortgage on the median home sold on the market.** A home in Fruita currently requires five years' worth of income to purchase, higher than the national average.

Demographics: Steady & Stable Growth

Fruita's population has grown roughly 6% in the last decade. This is slightly slower than Mesa County at 8%, but half as fast as Colorado at 12%. In-migration is the primary reason for recent growth. Looking forward, the State Demography Office forecasts Mesa County's population to pick up the speed around 2030, though still at a slower pace than Colorado overall.

Age plays a key role in housing needs, as older populations typically require more space per person than younger populations. Younger households often compromise on unit size, lot size, or even homeownership due to budget constraints. Fruita's population remains relatively balanced. To be specific, **32% of residents are 24 or younger, 37% are in the prime working age category (25 to 54), and 31% are 55 or older.**

Comparatively, Fruita's population is younger than both Colorado and the U.S. which is a good sign for community sustainability and shows signs of a strong workforce able to support a growing elderly population.

Economy: Largely Middle-Income Roles

The regional economy in Mesa County has grown steadily over the last decade. Since 2014, Mesa County has seen 14% employment growth, on par with the U.S. (+16%) but slower than Colorado (+24%). The state projects the County will add around 21,000 jobs between 2025 and 2045, a 25% growth rate. Business establishment growth slowed in 2024 in Mesa County. However, wages have seen strong growth, with total wages increasing 65% in the last decade.

Top industries by employment in Fruita are Healthcare and Social Assistance (19%), Construction (11%), Retail Trade (10%), and Educational Services (9%). These leading industries by employment largely mirror Mesa County. Although the oil boom of the 1980s in the Grand Valley has since ended, employment in related industries is still important in Fruita. For example, mining, quarrying oil, and gas employment is six times more concentrated than at the national level.

Housing trends are impacting the regional workforce as well. Over 4,800 workers out-commute from Fruita and over 2,000 workers commute into Fruita. These figures relate to **just 31% of the Fruita workforce living in the City and only 16% of Fruita residents working in the City.** This shows challenges for both housing and the availability of primary jobs in the community as very few residents both work and live in the area.

<p><30% AMI Very Low Income</p>  <p>Fast Food Workers Bartenders Restaurant Hosts Dishwashers School Bus Drivers</p>	<p>30-50% AMI Low Income</p>  <p>Retail Salespersons Customer Service Reps Personal Care Aides Secretaries Janitors</p>
<p>50-80% AMI Low-Mid Income</p>  <p>Office Clerks Retail Supervisors Truck Drivers Teachers Sales Reps</p>	<p>80-100% AMI Middle Income</p>  <p>Accountants Civil Engineers Police Officer Project Managers Mechanical Engineers</p>
<p>100-120% AMI Mid-High Income</p>  <p>Registered Nurses Construction Managers Physical Therapists Dental Hygienists Speech Pathologists</p>	<p>>120% AMI High Income</p>  <p>Occupational Therapists Lawyers Software Developers General Managers Data Scientists</p>

Land Capacity Analysis: More than Enough Room for Infill

To accompany needs of workforce housing, our team identified land available for development. Our analysis of land capacity indicates that **the City could accommodate about 660 new housing units**. The majority of available land is in the Community Residential district. Meanwhile, the Commercial-1

district provides the next greatest potential for housing units.

Some land is also available for redevelopment. The South Fruita Residential and Community Residential districts have 45 acres each of underdeveloped land (properties where land value exceeds improvement value). The Downtown Mixed-Use district also has 52 underdeveloped parcels, and the Commercial-1 district has 31 acres of underdeveloped land.

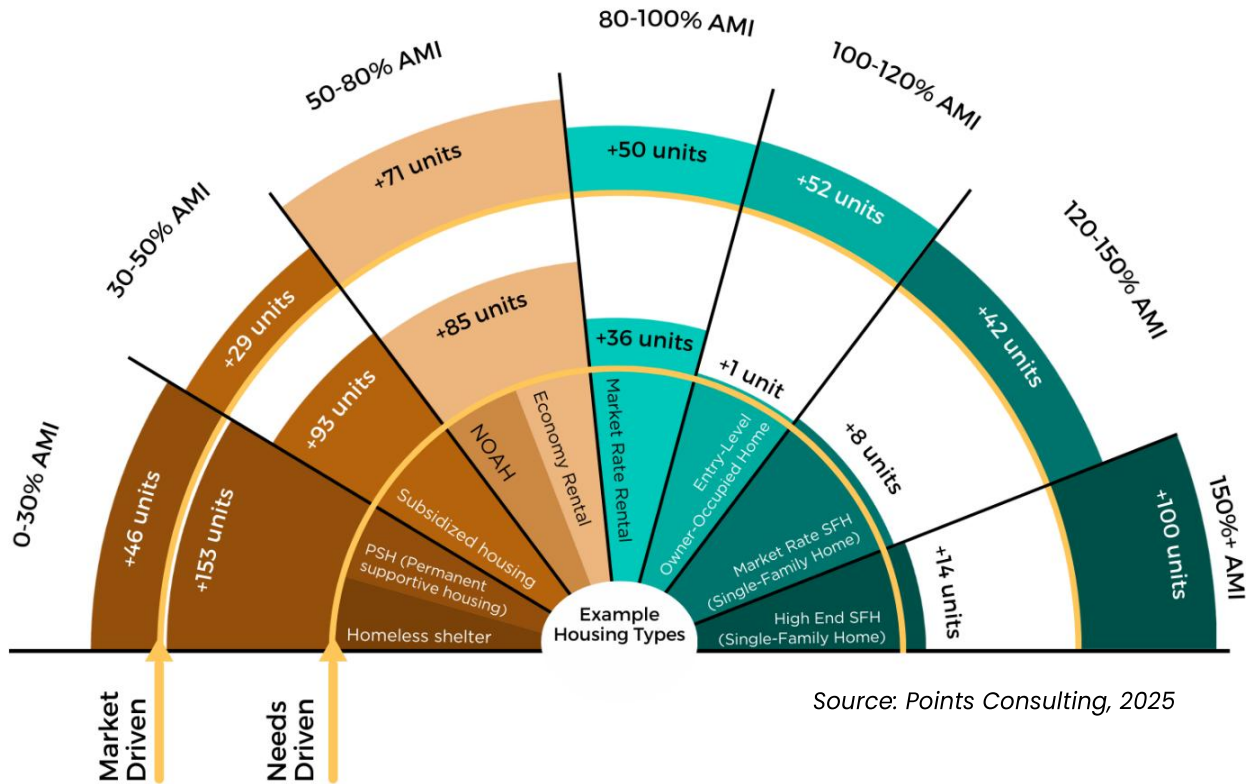
Population & Housing Needs Forecast

The population and housing needs forecast for the City of Fruita includes two growth scenarios: Potential and Expected. **According to our estimates, Fruita could see between 7% and 15% population growth over the next 20 years** (amounting to between +920 and +2,000 residents). In-migration and favorable age demographics are likely to be the main driving factors.

Regarding housing needs, the Potential Growth scenario projects **demand for 390 new housing units over the next 10 years**, while the Expected growth scenario projects a demand of 190 new housing units. With somewhat limited land capacity, infill development and redevelopment should complement new residential development to meet diverse housing needs.

It is also important for housing to be affordable to all households across the income distribution. Affordable housing at all income levels is important to allow workers of many occupations and

Figure 1.1: Housing Needs Forecast by AMI Level, City of Fruita



industries to be able to live in the City and ensure a balanced economy. Following our housing needs forecast, we also estimated the number of housing units needed by AMI level (Figure 1.1).

Housing Action Plan

To assist the City of Fruita in taking the next step to address housing needs, our team has identified goals and recommended strategies for the Housing Action Plan (HAP) in compliance with the Department of Local Affairs' guidelines, per SB24-174. These goals and strategies are meant to address gaps in the

housing market along with identified needs in our Housing Needs Assessment (HNA). Our goals support needs identified by quantitative data, community input and engagement, and affordable housing across the income distribution. Full details on goals and strategies are detailed in the report. The goals for the City of Fruita's Housing Action Plan are:

- **Goal 1:** Encourage Housing Diversity
- **Goal 2:** Incentivize Infill & Redevelopment
- **Goal 3:** Support Affordable & Workforce Housing

Table 1.1: City of Fruita HAP Implementation Approach

#	Required Actions	Potential Actors/Partners	Success Metrics Legend:			Phase Timeline
			Housing Production	Regulatory/ Zoning change	Process Change	
Goal 1: Encourage Housing Diversity						
1.1	Decide exact program, Workshop program, Draft ordinance, Public hearing, Council adoption	Planning Department, Housing Authority, City Council	ADU permits approved; Number ADU permits using pre-approved plans			1-2 Years →
1.2	Choose Extent, Draft ordinance, Public hearing, Council adoption	Planning Department	Number of developments using new density bonus			1-2 Years →
1.3	Draft ordinance, Public hearing, Council adoption	Planning Department, City Council	Number of non-SFH dwellings approved			1-2 Years →
1.4	Choose extent, Workshop with developers, Draft ordinance, Public hearing, Council adoption	Planning Department, Private Developers, City Council	Number of identified underdeveloped parcels redeveloped in overlay zone			3-4 Years →
1.5	Outline program, Choose dates for events, Workshop material, Conduct engagement	Planning Department, Housing Authority	Number of attendees at public events, Percent increase in survey response			3-4 Years →
Goal 2: Incentivize Infill						
2.1	Choose method (traditional, DDA, or URA), Workshop program, Draft ordinance, Public hearing, Council adoption	Planning Department, Housing Authority, Private Developers, City Council	Number of properties redeveloped in specified zone(s), Number of housing units approved on infill properties			3-4 Years →
			Amount of gap funding provided			
2.2	Preliminary discussions, Potential grant identification, Conduct feasibility study, Determine next steps	Planning Department, Private Partners, Housing Authority, Private Consultant	Feasibility study recommendation (go or no go)			5-6 Years →
Goal 3: Support Affordable Housing Projects						
3.1	Decide on existing or new source, Study potential amounts of funding, Workshop/gauge interest on projects, Draft ballot measure	Planning Department, City Manager, City Council, Private Partners	Significance of potential gap funding amounts, Potential number of housing units to be funded			3-4 Years →
3.2	Draft ordinance, Public hearing, Council adoption	Planning Department, Housing Authority, City Council	Number of housing units 120% AMI or below permitted			1-2 Years →
3.3	Find regional partner, Discuss partnership, Workshop programs	Planning Department, Private Partners, Housing Authority, City Council	Number of CLT ownership properties developed and sold			5-6 Years →

Source: Points Consulting, 2025