



**FRUITA**  
COLORADO

## AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

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**TO:** FRUITA CITY COUNCIL AND MAYOR

**FROM:** PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

**DATE:** MAY 6, 2025

**AGENDA TEXT:** PRESENTATION – Community Development Update and Report – Planning and Development Director Dan Caris and City Engineer John Boulden

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### BACKGROUND

To help prepare for upcoming budget preparation, our Community Development Department will provide an overview of current projects throughout the City of Fruita and also answer questions that the Council asked in a prior meeting. The City Council asked that these questions be answered in a presentation at the April 1, 2025 meeting:

**Q: What is an Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) and how is it determined?**

The City of Fruita's *Comprehensive Plan* serves as a strategic guide for future growth, development, and infrastructure planning. A key component of this plan is its coordination with annexation policies, roadway and utility improvements, and the delineation of the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB).

The UGB is a planning tool used by the City to manage and direct growth in a sustainable and orderly manner, ensuring that expansion occurs in areas where urban services—such as roads, utilities, and public facilities—can be efficiently extended.

In terms of annexations, the *Comprehensive Plan* outlines criteria for evaluating whether potential annexations align with the City's long-term vision. This includes:

- Consistency with land use designations
- Environmental considerations
- Feasibility of providing municipal services

Annexations must comply with Colorado Revised Statutes (C.R.S.) § 31-12-101 et seq., which govern procedures and requirements for annexing land into a municipality.

The *Comprehensive Plan*, as mandated by C.R.S. § 30-28-106, provides the overarching land use framework, including goals for transportation and infrastructure. This allows Fruita to coordinate improvements like roadway widening and capacity upgrades with anticipated growth, ensuring development does not outpace the City's ability to provide necessary services.

The Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) notes that:

*“Municipalities and counties are authorized to prepare comprehensive plans as a long-range guiding document for a community to achieve its vision and goals... A comprehensive plan promotes the community's vision, goals, objectives, and policies, establishes a process for orderly growth and development, addresses both current and long-term needs, and provides for a balance between the natural and built environment.”*

*(See Colorado Revised Statute 30-28-106 and 31-23-206)*

Required elements of a *Comprehensive Plan* include:

- Narrative of the plan’s development and adoption process
- Housing action plan
- Recreation and tourism
- Strategic growth
- Three-mile plan
- Water supply

Other common elements:

- Transportation
- Land use
- Economic development
- Affordable housing
- Environment
- Parks and open space
- Cultural and natural resources
- Hazards
- Capital improvements
- Energy
- Urban design
- Sustainability
- Efficiency in government

The City of Fruita uses its UGB to:

- Manage growth deliberately
- Encourage infill development
- Prevent unplanned urban sprawl
- Preserve agricultural and open lands
- Coordinate regional planning with Mesa County
- Align with the *Comprehensive Plan*

The UGB is illustrated on the City’s *Future Land Use Map (FLUM)*. Regarding the city’s planned edge, the *Comprehensive Plan* states:

*“An urban-rural edge defines Fruita as a freestanding community separate from Grand Junction. Edges discourage sprawling growth, encourage the preservation of rural areas, and allow for a more efficient*

*use of infrastructure and urban services. Undeveloped parcels within the edge are encouraged to develop at higher densities than beyond the edge where rural densities are desired. An UGB depicts where moderate density development ends and rural density development starts.”*  
(Page 26, *Fruita In Motion: Plan Like a Local Comprehensive Plan*)

A primary goal from Chapter 3 *Land Use and Growth*:

*“Remain a ‘freestanding’ community within Mesa County, with distinct municipal borders and a clear separation from other communities in the Grand Valley.”*  
(Page 36, *Fruita In Motion: Plan Like a Local Comprehensive Plan*)

**Q: What are the implications of being inside vs. outside the UGB in terms of planning, infrastructure, and city services?**

- **Inside the UGB:** Properties are planned to be served with City services such as sanitary sewer, police, and trash service.
- **Outside the UGB:** Properties follow Mesa County’s Master Plan and are subject to County regulations.

For areas just outside the UGB, coordination occurs between the City of Fruita and Mesa County to ensure policies are aligned.

**Q: If a property is within the UGB but outside city limits, what entity controls land use and zoning?**

The City and Mesa County coordinate most land development applications in this area. The City of Fruita participates in the review of applications such as:

- Accessory Dwelling Units
- Conditional Use Permits
- Special Use Permits
- Site Plans

This collaboration ensures development is consistent with the City's vision, even outside the city limits but within the UGB. Any decision making on land-use relies with the County if not inside City limits, or not annexed in.

**Q: How does the City of Fruita determine when a roadway should be expanded?**

Roadway expansion needs are identified during the development application process. The City uses several tools:

- **Comprehensive Plan:** Keeps the desires of the community in mind.
- **Circulation Plan:** Helps determine the need for roadway expansion.
- **Fruita Land Use Code (Section 17.21.090):** States that “*subdivision improvements shall be constructed at the sole expense of the subdivider...*” and references standards from the City’s Design Criteria and CDOT specifications.
- **Traffic Studies and Growth Projections:** Current traffic counts are used to evaluate the current Level of Service (LOS) and anticipate and plan for future transportation needs. Level of Service

is a qualitative measure used to rate the quality of vehicular traffic. It is rated on an A through F scale, with A being free flowing and F being stop and go traffic. Intersections are also evaluated based upon project wait times. Traffic studies for known developments are utilized to project future LOS.

- **Federal Highway Administration's Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices:** Provides a standardized method for evaluation of roadway configuration and signage.
- **AASHTO Geometric Design of Highways and Streets:** Provides design guidance for the dimensions and layout of roadways and associated elements.

Using the tools listed above, the City can plan for infrastructure in advance of development. Roadway projects are disruptive to adjacent property owners and the traveling public. If the LOS of a roadway is allowed to decrease to an unacceptable level, a roadway expansion project will be a larger burden upon the public than if it is planned in advance. In addition to vehicular traffic, development increases all modes of transportation. These include pedestrians and bicycles. Providing for multimodal transportation reduces the amount of vehicular traffic.

This approach ensures that transportation systems are:

- Safe and efficient
- Adequately serve new development
- Able to provide a LOS that is acceptable
- Aligned with available financial resources

#### **Q: Which Laws and Regulations Govern Roadway Expansions?**

The legal authority for the City of Fruita is contained in Section 17.41.010 of the Fruita Municipal Code.

- A. *Legislative Authority. The City Council is authorized to regulate vehicular access to or from any public street within the City in order to protect the public health, safety and welfare, to maintain efficient traffic flow, to maintain proper street right-of-way drainage and to protect the functional levels of public streets. The City Council is also authorized to prohibit anyone from causing or permitting a street to become obstructed or damaged in any way, or permitting water, waste water or other substance from any ditch, lateral, canal, reservoir, rain or flume or other artificial course to flow across such a street.*
- B. *Design Specifications. All streets within the City shall be constructed in accordance with the latest version of the City of Fruita Design Criteria and Construction Specifications Manual.*
- C. *Roadway Classifications. The public street systems within the City consist of four (4) roadway classifications as defined in the Fruita Area Street Classifications & Traffic Control Plan document. These four (4) roadway classifications include arterial, major collector, minor collector, and local street designations. Alternate street sections for minor collector and local streets internal to a subdivision will be considered but should meet the minimum lane widths identified in the City of Fruita Design Criteria and Construction Specifications Manual.*

#### **Conclusion**

The City of Fruita's *Comprehensive Plan* offers a thoughtful, proactive framework for managing growth. With the UGB, coordinated annexation policies, and robust infrastructure planning, Fruita:

- Directs growth to appropriate areas
- Preserves rural lands and community identity
- Coordinates regional planning
- Ensures long-term sustainability and high quality of life

This plan positions Fruita to grow responsibly while maintaining its character as a distinct and freestanding community within Mesa County.