

**Climate and Environment Commission
New Castle, Colorado
Strategic Plan 2026 – 2028**

Mission

The CEC advances sustainable practices for our community to live harmoniously with nature and improve environmental resilience for future generations.

CEC 2026 - 2028 Goals

GOAL 1: Engage the community in environmental stewardship

GOAL 2: Advise and inform local **decision-makers**

GOAL 3: Collaborate for broader impact

GOAL 4: Develop New Castle's Environmental Leadership

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

GOAL 1: Engage the community in environmental stewardship

OBJECTIVES

- Raise public awareness by educating residents and businesses about environmental issues, sustainable practices, and opportunities for involvement.
- Promote environmental stewardship among residents, businesses, and organizations through events, promotional campaigns, social media, **online resources**, and other initiatives.
- Encourage responsible management and care for the local environment and its resources, such as water, air, land, and biodiversity via grants, recognition, **volunteer opportunities**, and other methods.
- **ADDED-** Inspire a deep appreciation by the community to develop a lifelong commitment by our children to protect our natural environment.

GOAL 2: Advise and inform local entities

OBJECTIVES

- Provide **information**, research, and recommendations to the Town Council and other **community** leaders to inform environmental issues and policies.
- **Promote** environmentally responsible development and maintenance practices that minimize negative impacts on the local environment, natural resources, and wildlife.

GOAL 3: Collaborate for broader impact

OBJECTIVES

- Work with individuals, community groups, businesses, and other organizations to achieve shared environmental goals.
- Convene and participate in relevant events to promote sustainable environmental practices locally and regionally, **collaborating with other Garfield County environmental groups and regional partners to share and leverage resources.**
- **ADDED** - Support Garfield Clean Energy.

GOAL 4: Develop New Castle's Environmental Leadership

OBJECTIVES

- Build the Climate and Environment Commissioner's knowledge and capacity for effectiveness in achieving other goals.
- Attend relevant events to gain knowledge, share expertise, and build partnerships.
- **ADDED** - Identify and facilitate local expert engagement to achieve shared environmental goals.
- **ADDED** - Establish citizen leadership group, Guardians of Nature, to help further the CEC's mission.
- **ADDED** - Locate and acquire additional funding sources to achieve CEC goals and objectives.

Let's also consider a brief statement summarizing our commission.

The CEC acts as New Castle's local advocate for the environment, works to integrate environmental considerations into New Castle decision-making, engages the community toward environmental stewardship, and develops environmental civic leadership. Keeping New Castle Authentically Colorado.

Commission Activities

- Develop an annual calendar plan with educational and outreach activities.
- Host an annual environmental film and panel of experts
- Focus the community on sustainable use of natural resources (water, air, native plants, wildlife, etc.) through a “Guardians of Nature” campaign, sustainable business recognition, and other public awareness initiatives.
- Use bag fee funding to support initiatives to reduce plastic use, encourage reuse, recycling, composting, upcycling, and other waste reduction strategies.
- Provide town council with recommendations when relevant.
- Support town departments with their sustainability efforts.
- Host annual Earth Day events with partner participation.
- Engage with town and civic events, such as Chamber events, Burning Mountain Parade, Chili Cook-Off clean up, etc.
- Conduct town, trail, and stream bank cleanups and partner with others on these events.
- Manage funding for environmental initiatives.
- Gain public input on commission initiatives.
- Collaborate with other municipal and/or regional environmental commissions.
- Maintain public transparency with meetings, regular online updates (town newsletter, website, social media), reports, and well-promoted activities.
- Stay current with environmental issues through speakers at meetings, attendance at conferences, and other educational development.
- **ADDED** - Raise public awareness through social media.
- **ADDED**- Host community awareness event at Down Valley Brewing.

2026 Calendar of Events & Projects

- Monthly meetings on 3rd Thursday at 4:00 pm
- Ongoing updates to website & social media with events & news
- Host a joint meeting of climate and environmental groups from the region to share ideas, coordinate, and collaborate for regional impact.

January

Submit 2025 CEC Annual Report to Town Council
Elect Officers (Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary)
2nd Round Business Grants Launched
Attend Chamber Business After Hours – January 28
Promote grants at Chamber event, flyers to businesses

February

2nd Annual Film – Water Conservation Theme? – **Weds, Feb 11th, 6pm** (partner with library)
Prepare for Earth Day event

March

March 19 Meeting - Select Business Grants
March 19 Meeting - Identify Nature & Environment Champion - Business of the Year

April

Attend Energy Conference (regional, per Dave Reynolds) **April 25** - New Castle
Earth Day in Burning Mountain Park – CEC Hosts; Ceremony to award Business Nature & Environment Champion for **2025**; swag, etc.

April or May

Trail project – remove invasive plants, seed native plants with partners

June

Chamber event in the park – Promote Waterwise, Firewise

July – August

Campaign for **CEC at Down Valley Brewery**

September

Parade (Theme, logistics, give aways TBD)
Half day planning for 2027, submit budget request for 2027 town budget

October

Oct 9 or 10? Clean Up New Castle – Trash & Recycling Pick Up (joint with town)

November & December

Spend down any extra 2026 funds, prepare 2026 report for town council
Edits and updates to the web presence