



**CITY COUNCIL
AND
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
JOINT WORKSHOP MEETING AGENDA**

June 30, 2026
5:30 PM
202 Railroad Avenue Rifle, CO 81650

5:30 PM - Appetizers & Discussion

- a. Form-Based Code Discussion

6:00 PM - Workshop Meeting

Discussion and Review

- a. Comprehensive Plan Reconfirmation Discussion with SE Group

ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

The City of Rifle values full inclusion and access for all of our facilities, programs, activities and services. We are pleased to provide meaningful accommodations to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and reasonably provide translation, interpretation, modifications, accommodations, alternative formats, auxiliary aids, and services. To request special assistance, call City Clerk Alexis Ramirez at 970-665-6405 or email our ADA Team at ADATeam@rifleco.org. Please allow 48 hours for your requests to be met.

La Ciudad de Rifle valora la plena inclusión y acceso para todas nuestras instalaciones, programas, actividades y servicios. Nos complace proporcionar alojamientos significativos para cumplir con la Ley de Estados Unidos con Discapacidades (ADA) y proporcionar razonablemente traducciones, interpretaciones, modificaciones, adaptaciones, formatos alternativos, ayudas auxiliares y servicios. Para solicitar asistencia especial, llame a la City Clerk Alexis Ramírez al 970-665-6405 o envíe un correo electrónico a el equipo ADA a ADATeam@rifleco.org. Por favor, permita 48 horas para que se atiendan sus solicitudes.



Agenda Item #a.

Agenda Item Name:

Form-Based Code Discussion

Presenter:

Rick Steffen

Item Description:

Form-Based Code Discussion

Recommended Action:

No Action - Discussion Only.

Fiscal Impact:

Discussion Only

Operational Impact:

Discussion Only

Prior Board Motions:

N/A

Background Information:

Planning & Zoning Commission member Rick Steffen provided information on 06/09/2026 to be shared with Council and P&Z Commission Members.

Executive Summary:

The briefing provides context on Form Based Code, how it relates to the Comprehensive Plan reconfirmation process, and the Future Land Use Map.

Notification Requirements:

N/A

Prepared By:

Alexis Ramirez, City Clerk

Attachments:

1. Rifle_FBC_Council_Briefing_June10_2

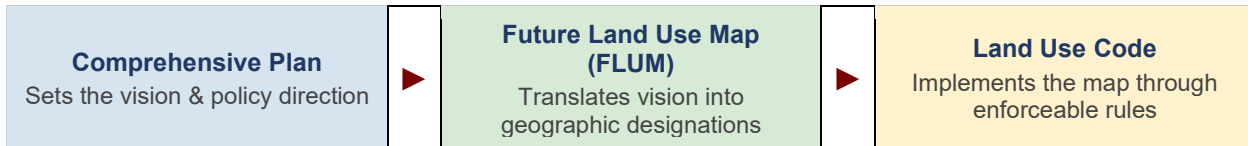
Understanding Form Based Code

A Briefing for City Council & Planning Commission

City of Rifle, Colorado | June 10, 2026

The Chain That Connects Tonight's Meeting to Future Regulation

Before discussing Form Based Code, it is important to understand how the Comprehensive Plan, the Future Land Use Map, and the land use code relate to each other. These three documents form a chain. Each one depends on and constrains the one that follows.



Tonight's meeting is focused on the Comprehensive Plan Reconfirmation. But embedded within that reconfirmation is a new Future Land Use Map. The structure and categories of that map are not a neutral technical decision, they determine which type of land use code can implement them. This is the connection that deserves explicit discussion before the August 15 draft is finalized.

What the 2019 Comprehensive Plan's FLUM Looks Like Today

Rifle's existing Future Land Use Map, adopted as part of the 2019 Comprehensive Plan, uses conventional land use categories that correspond directly to the City's current zone districts. The residential designations include:

- High Density Residential
- Moderate Density Residential
- Suburban Residential
- Rural Residential

The commercial and industrial designations include:

- Neighborhood Commercial
- Community Commercial
- Regional Commercial
- Light Industrial
- Industrial

These categories work with Rifle's current zoning code because they were designed for it. A property designated "Community Commercial" on the FLUM can be evaluated against the Community Commercial zone district standards. The map and the code speak the same language.

Why This Matters:

The 2019 FLUM was built for conventional zoning. If the reconfirmed FLUM is rebuilt using different categories , specifically Form Based Code transect categories , it will no longer be compatible with the existing code. The map and the code will speak different languages, and a full code replacement becomes not just desirable but practically unavoidable.

What Form Based Code Is and How It Changes the FLUM

How Rifle's Current Zoning Works

Rifle's existing code is a conventional zoning system. It organizes land into use-based districts and within each district specifies what activities are allowed, minimum lot sizes and setbacks, maximum building heights, and parking minimums. The primary organizing question is: what happens inside the building?

What Form Based Code Does Differently

Form Based Code reorganizes land regulation around physical form rather than use. The primary question becomes: what should this place look and feel like? FBC uses a "transect" , a spectrum from rural to urban , to define character zones:

- T1 , Natural (open land, no development)
- T2 , Rural (agricultural, very low density)
- T3 , Sub-Urban (residential neighborhoods, large lots)
- T4 , General Urban (mixed neighborhoods, moderate density)
- T5 , Urban Center (active mixed-use, storefronts, walkable)
- T6 , Urban Core (highest intensity, downtown)

Within each transect zone, the code specifies build-to lines, frontage types, building heights, and massing standards. Uses become secondary , many uses are permitted across zones with few prohibitions.

The Key Difference in Plain Language:

Conventional zoning asks: "What goes here?" Form Based Code asks: "What should this place feel like?" Both can allow a coffee shop downtown , but FBC also prescribes exactly where the door must face, how far the building sits from the sidewalk, and what the windows must look like. Conventional code generally does not.

How FBC Changes the Future Land Use Map

A FBC-compatible FLUM replaces conventional categories like "Community Commercial" with transect-based designations like "Urban Center" or "General Urban." These categories do not map onto Rifle's current zone districts. They require a new code structure to implement them.

This is the critical linkage: the moment the FLUM is drafted in FBC transect language, the following consequences are effectively set in motion:

- The existing zone districts **cannot implement the new map**. A full code replacement becomes functionally necessary.
- Future land use decisions must be evaluated against transect categories **that have no equivalent in current Rifle code**.
- Reversing course **requires reopening the Comprehensive Plan** , a lengthy, costly public process.
- Developers and property owners begin making investment decisions **based on FBC expectations before the code is adopted**.

The FLUM is not a neutral document. Its category structure is a policy decision, and it is a decision that should be made explicitly by Council and the Commission , not embedded quietly in a consultant’s draft.

Weighing Form Based Code for a City of Rifle’s Size

POTENTIAL ADVANTAGES	POTENTIAL CONCERNS FOR RIFLE
Produces more consistent streetscapes and walkable environments in areas like Downtown and Centennial Pkwy , goals already identified in the 2019 plan.	Requires planners with specialized FBC expertise to administer. Rifle’s planning department is small.
Reduces use-by-use battles at the Planning Commission , more predictability for developers who meet form standards.	Full FBC adoption for a community Rifle’s size typically costs \$400,000,\$800,000+ in consultant and staff time.
Supports the housing diversity goals identified in stakeholder engagement: ADUs, cottage courts, townhomes, and smaller-lot homes are easier to permit by right.	Colorado’s land use statutes were written for conventional zoning. FBC-based decisions face a less settled legal framework.
Aligns with what residents say they want: walkability, varied housing, and active streetscapes.	FBC’s benefits are strongest under high, consistent development pressure. Rifle’s development pace is moderate.
Can consolidate multiple overlays and special districts into a cleaner, more readable code over time.	Very few Colorado communities of 10,000,15,000 people have implemented full system-wide FBC successfully.
Better suited for mixed-use and transit-oriented development , relevant if RFTA transit expansion reaches Rifle.	Consistent FBC administration requires trained, stable staff. Turnover in a small department creates ongoing vulnerability.

The Colorado Context: Are There Comparable Examples?

Form Based Code has been adopted in Colorado, but primarily in larger cities or in specific districts within them , not city-wide in communities of Rifle's size. Relevant nearby examples include:

- Glenwood Springs , form-based elements in the downtown zone, but with significantly higher development pressure, stronger tourism economy, and more staff capacity than Rifle.
- Salida , hybrid approach with form-based principles applied to the downtown core only, not city-wide replacement of the conventional code.
- Buena Vista , limited form-based elements as a hybrid, not a wholesale code replacement.

There is no clear Colorado example of a community of 10,000,15,000 people that has adopted full, system-wide FBC and can be cited as a straightforward success. This does not disqualify FBC for Rifle , but it means the case for it should be made explicitly and evaluated honestly, not assumed.

A Practical Middle Path: Targeted Form Standards

The choice is not strictly “full FBC system-wide” or “status quo.” A targeted hybrid approach is used successfully by many communities and is worth serious consideration for Rifle:

- Keep a conventional base code for the majority of Rifle's land area , existing residential neighborhoods, industrial areas, and rural fringe. The 2019 FLUM categories largely work for these areas already.
- Apply form-based overlay standards in specific districts where character and streetscape consistency matter most: Downtown, the Centennial Parkway corridor, and potentially South Rifle if it develops as a walkable mixed-use area.
- Add by-right housing diversity standards , ADUs, cottage courts, townhomes, smaller lots , to the base code without requiring full FBC system-wide.

Critically, a hybrid approach keeps the 2019 FLUM's conventional categories largely intact for most of the city, with form-based overlay areas added where needed. This means the FLUM and the code continue to speak the same language for most of Rifle's land area, while capturing FBC's benefits in the districts that would most benefit from them.

This approach is less expensive, easier to administer with existing staff, legally more straightforward to defend, and preserves the City's flexibility to pursue full FBC in the future if Rifle grows and staff capacity allows.

Questions for Tonight's Discussion

Given the direct connection between the Comprehensive Plan reconfirmation, the Future Land Use Map, and the type of code the City will implement, the following questions deserve direct answers before the August 15 draft is finalized:

1. FLUM Category Structure

Is SE Group designing the new Future Land Use Map with conventional categories , compatible with Rifle's existing zone districts , or with Form Based Code transect categories that would require a new code structure? This is the most consequential technical question on the table tonight.

2. The Code Decision: Who Makes It and When?

The type of land use code Rifle adopts is a major policy decision that belongs to the City Council. Has Council formally directed staff to pursue Form Based Code? If not, the FLUM should be designed to preserve flexibility until that decision is made explicitly.

3. Consistency with the 2019 Plan's Framework

The 2019 Comprehensive Plan's Growth Principles and Tiered Growth System are staying in the reconfirmed plan. Were those principles written with FBC or conventional zoning in mind? Does a FBC-structured FLUM support or complicate the Tiered Growth System Rifle already relies on?

4. Community Engagement Transparency

Was Form Based Code presented to the public as the intended regulatory direction during stakeholder interviews, focus groups, or the community survey? Did residents evaluate FBC specifically, or only the outcomes , walkability, housing diversity, downtown activation , that FBC is one of several tools to achieve?

5. Cost and Staff Capacity

Has staff or SE Group prepared an estimate of what full FBC adoption would cost in consultant fees, staff time, training, and ongoing administration? How does that compare to a targeted hybrid approach that achieves similar outcomes in priority districts?

6. Colorado Comparables

Can SE Group identify Colorado communities of comparable size that have successfully implemented full FBC, and describe what their experience looked like in terms of cost, staff capacity, timeline, and implementation challenges?

Bottom Line

The Comprehensive Plan reconfirmation is the right process at the right time. The 2019 plan's core framework , Growth Principles, Tiered Growth System, infrastructure-coordinated development , remains sound and should be preserved.

The question raised here is not whether the plan should be reconfirmed, or whether Form Based Code has merit as a planning tool. The question is whether the Future Land Use Map , the bridge between the plan and the code , is being structured in a way that pre-decides a major regulatory direction before Council has weighed in on it.

If the FLUM is drafted in FBC transect language, it will effectively require a full code replacement regardless of what Council ultimately decides. That is too significant a commitment to make implicitly through a map category choice.

The right sequence is: Council and the Commission agree on the vision in the Comprehensive Plan. The FLUM reflects that vision using categories that preserve regulatory options. Council then explicitly decides what code structure best implements the plan , conventional, FBC, or a targeted hybrid , with full information, proper cost analysis, and a clear public mandate.

Tonight's joint workshop is the right moment to ensure that sequence is being followed.



Agenda Item #a.

Agenda Item Name:

Comprehensive Plan Reconfirmation Discussion with SE Group

Presenter:

Zach Higgins, Community Development Director

Item Description:

Discussion with Planning Commission and City Council regarding current status of the Comprehensive Plan Reconfirmation. Survey results and Stakeholder feedback will be made available to inform the conversation.

Recommended Action:

No action required. General direction on the last few steps before drafting the new Comp Plan.

Fiscal Impact:

None at this time.

Operational Impact:

None at this time.

Prior Board Motions:

N/A

Background Information:

Staff has been working with SE Group over the last six months to gather feedback from stakeholders and the general public. This has happened through one on one conversations, stakeholder group meetings, and surveys.

Executive Summary:

See presentation attachment for more specific discussion content.

Notification Requirements:

N/A

Prepared By:

Alexis Ramirez, City Clerk

Attachments:

1. Rifle Plan Reconfirmation Update 6.10.26
2. High School Student Survey Analysis_2026
3. Community Survey Results



City of Rifle Comprehensive Plan Reconfirmation Update

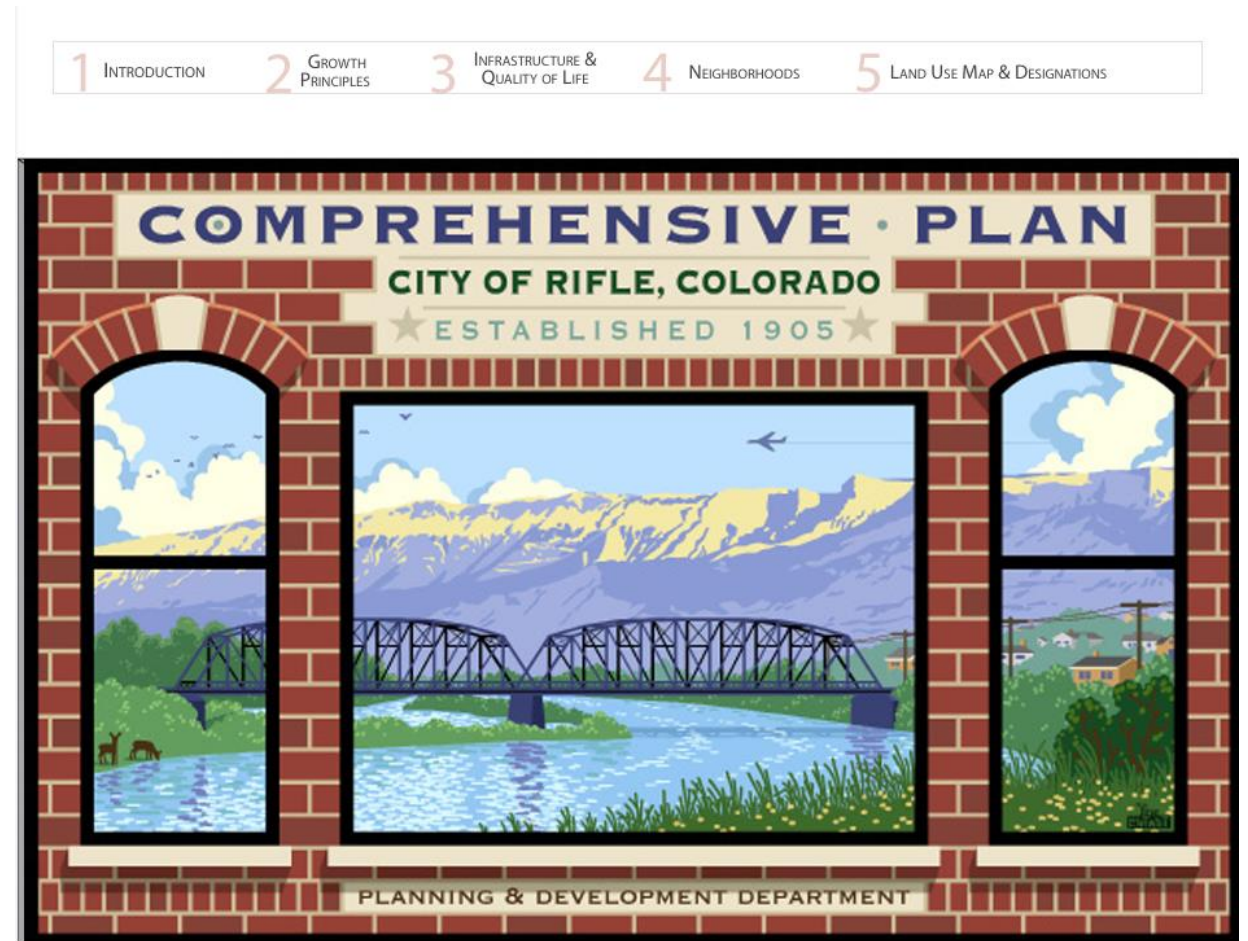
City of Rifle Planning Commission

6/30/26

About the Rifle Comprehensive Plan

- Sets the long-term vision for growth in the city
- Guides decisions on housing, transportation, economy, and more
- 20-year timeframe, last one was adopted in 2019 but needs updating

We're **updating** and **reconfirming** this plan.



Why Reconfirm the Plan?

- Since 2019, several important plans and initiatives have been completed, including:
 - Housing Study & Action Plan
 - Energy & Resilience Action Plan (ERAP)
 - Safe Streets & Roads for All Plan
 - Strategic Plan
 - Existing Conditions Assessment
- The reconfirmation process is intended to confirm what still works, identify what needs refinement, and address new issues and opportunities.

What the Existing Plan & Initial Conversations Told Us

- Housing affordability and availability remain the community's biggest housing challenges.
- Many people who live in Rifle don't work here, and many who work in Rifle don't live here.
- Rifle's small-town feel and access to recreation are some of the most beloved features of the community.
- Strong emphasis on fiscal responsibility, especially related to infrastructure development.

Today's Presentation

- Review work completed to date
- Summarize findings from recent plans and community engagement
- Discuss the proposed approach to updating the Comprehensive Plan
- Confirm that the project is focused on the right priorities

Our Goal: The reconfirmed plan will reflect current conditions, recent planning efforts, community priorities, and future implementation needs. It will set the City up for a successful and coordinated land use code update.

Project Status & Schedule

Completed

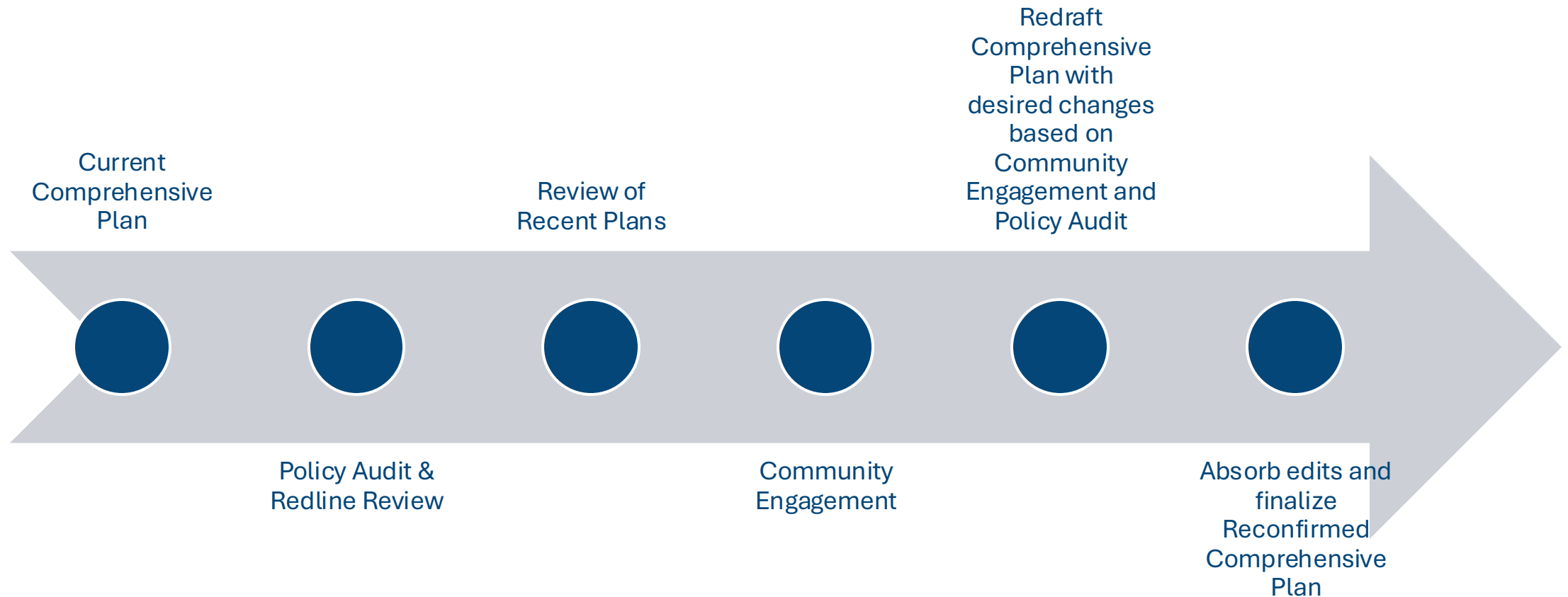
- Existing Conditions Assessment and Consultant Site Visit
- Comprehensive Plan Policy Audit
- Review of Recent Plans
- Stakeholder Interviews
- Housing & Development Focus Group
- Economic Development Focus Group
- Hispanic Community Focus Group
- Senior Focus Group
- High School Workshop & Survey
- Educational Content and Outreach
- Community Survey

Upcoming

- Draft Plan Framework
- Draft Comprehensive Plan
- Staff Review
- Public Review Draft
- Adoption Process

Key Milestone: Draft Comprehensive Plan Target – August 15, 2026

How We Are Updating the Plan



As of Now: How the Plan Is Expected to Change

What Will Likely Stay the Same

- Growth Principles
- Tiered Growth System
- Overall plan framework

What Will Be Added/Adjusted

- Housing Chapter
- Transportation Chapter
- South Rifle-specific guidance
- Expanded implementation framework
- Goals, Policies & Actions structure
- Future Land Use Map that sets the stage for the Code Update
- Water and Strategic Growth Elements

Emerging Plan Priorities

- **Housing Choice & Affordability**
- Transportation & Connectivity
- Economic Vitality
- Infrastructure, Core Services, & Managing Growth
- South Rifle
- Quality of Life & Community Amenities
- Energy & Resilience

These priorities are emerging consistently across recent plans and community engagement.

Housing & Development Focus Group

Takeaways

- Housing affordability and availability remain the community's biggest housing challenges.
- Support for a wider variety of housing options, including ADUs, cottage courts, townhomes, multifamily housing, and smaller-lot homes.
- Growth should be coordinated with infrastructure capacity and long-term maintenance considerations.
- South Rifle is viewed as a major opportunity area for future housing and workforce housing.

What this means for the plan:

Strengthen housing affordability policies, support housing diversity, clarify growth and infrastructure priorities, and develop a South Rifle vision. Consider encouraging minimum density regulations.

Economic Development Focus Group

Takeaways

- Rifle's economy is shifting toward construction, recreation, service industries, and entrepreneurship.
- Workforce development, trades training, and business succession planning are major priorities.
- Housing affordability and availability are affecting workforce attraction and business growth.
- Downtown remains a key asset but needs more activity, restaurants, gathering spaces, and identity.

What this means for the plan:

Support diversification, strengthen downtown activation, improve recreation connections, and recognize housing as an economic development issue.

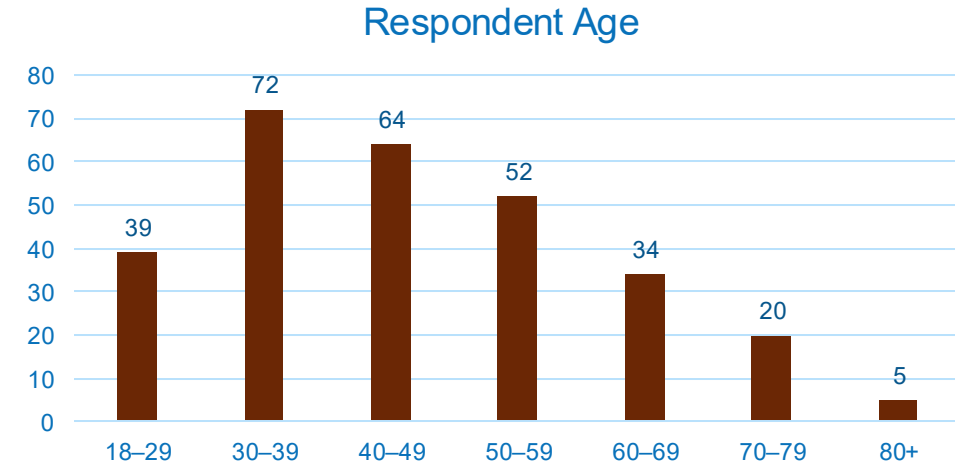
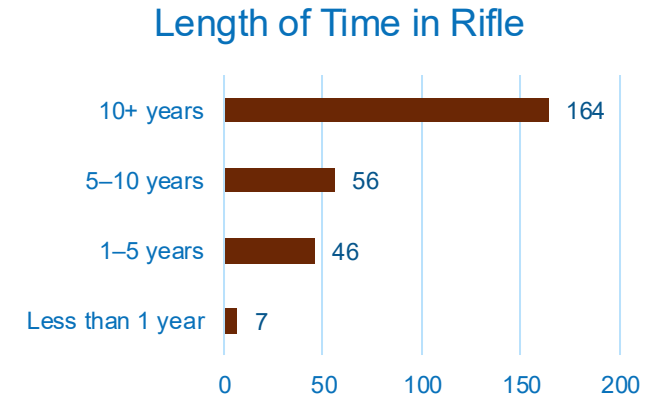
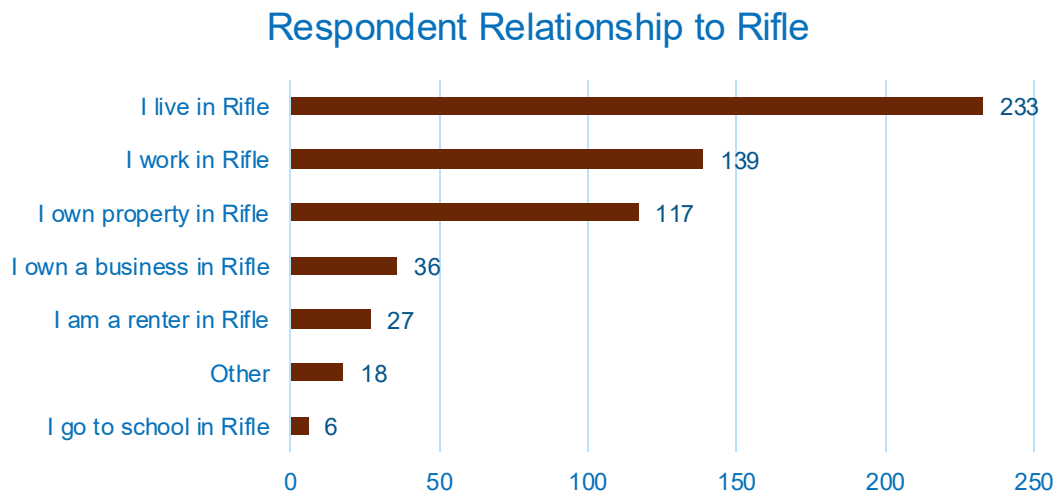
Hispanic Focus Group Takeaways

- Focus remains on affordability and transportation concerns
- Local mobility options and regional transit options
- Safety concerns around walking throughout the City
 - Crosswalks, lighting, sidewalks(heaving)
- Housing affordability for both rental options and ownership options
- Desire for more consistent Hispanic focused outreach
- Appreciative of the Recreation offerings in and around the City
- Would like more youth focused amenities

Preliminary Community Survey Results

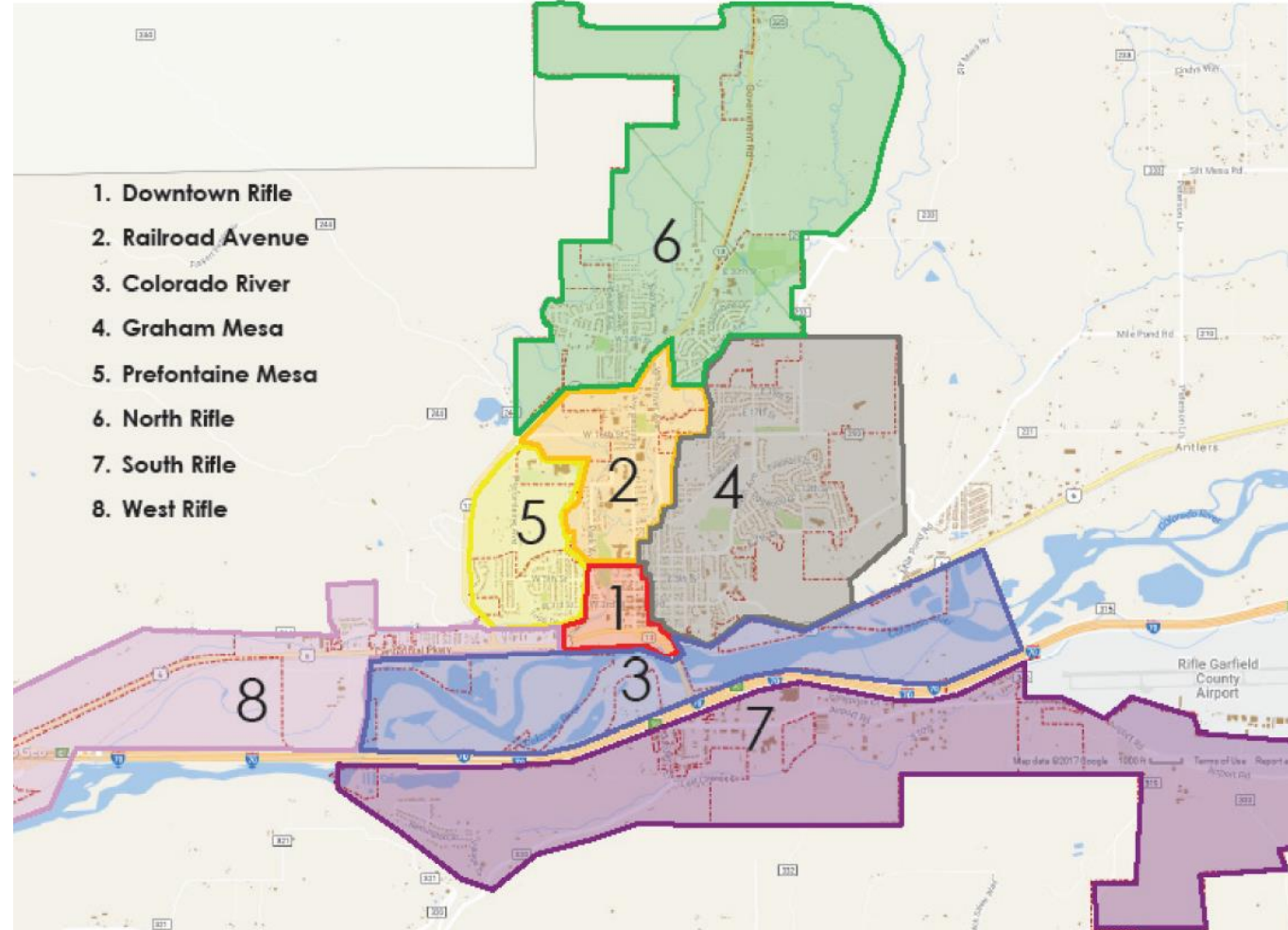
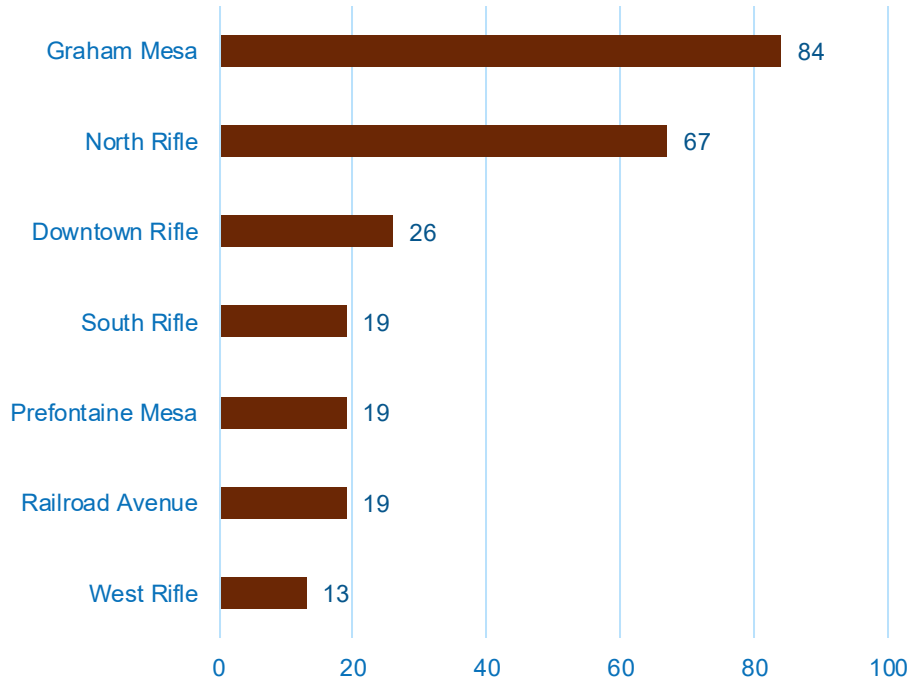
229 complete and 105 partial survey responses
320 English, 14 Spanish

Who we heard from:



Who we heard from:

Respondent Home or Property Location

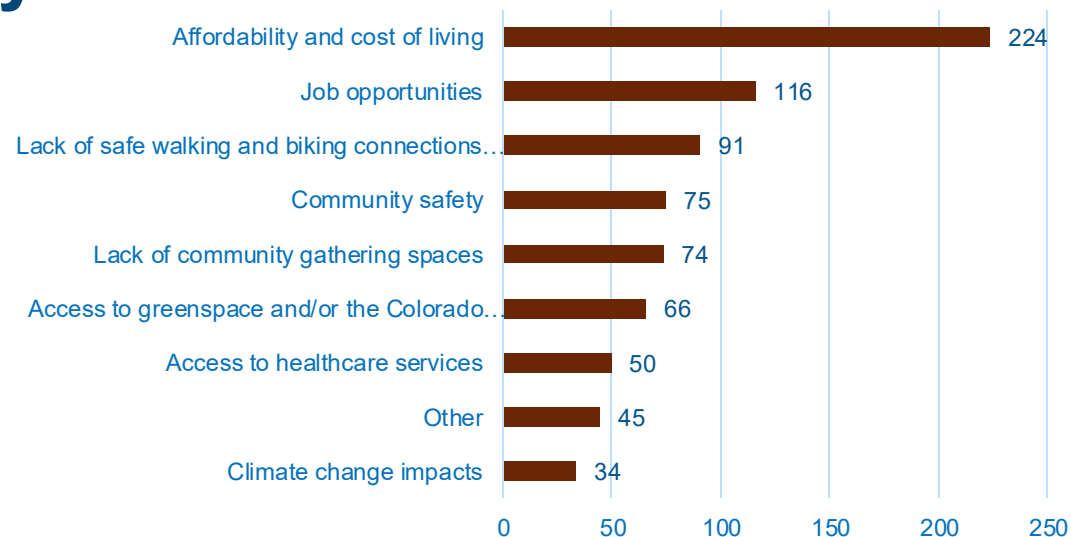


Cost of living and job availability are the dominant concern shaping growth decisions.

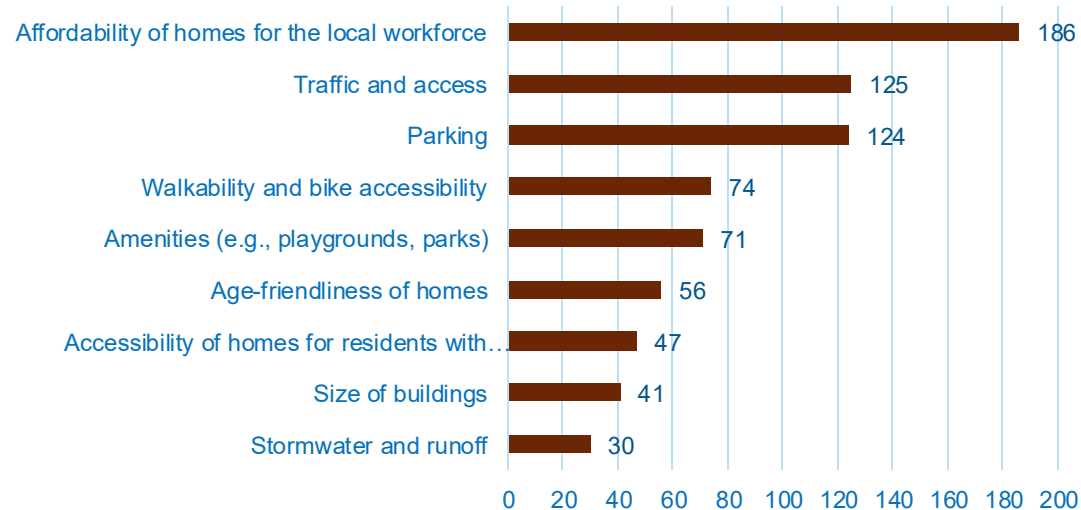
Affordability and cost of living were identified as a major challenge by 85% of respondents, followed by job opportunities (44%).

74% said housing affordability should be a top factor in permitting new housing.

Rifle's Greatest Challenges



Important Features of New Housing

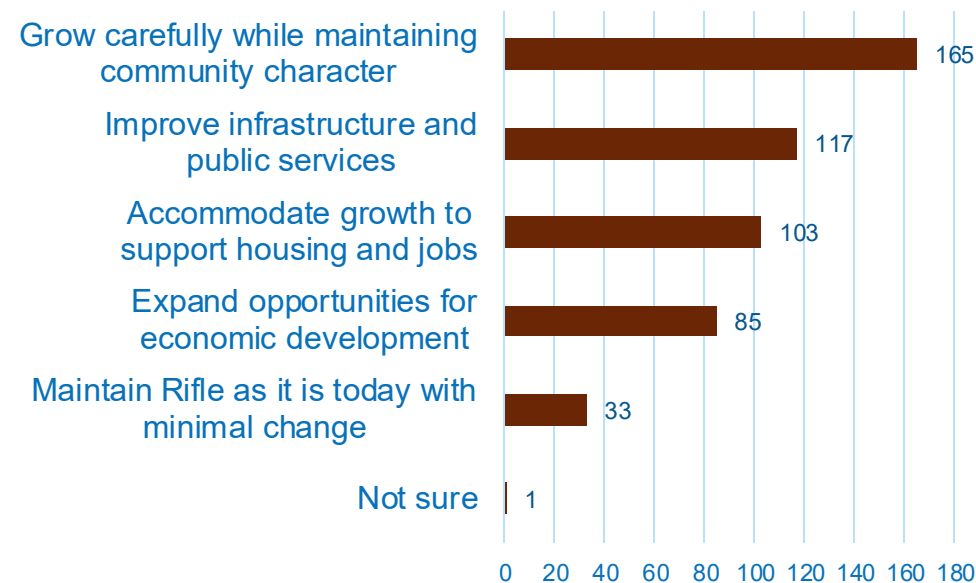


Residents support growth, but strongly prefer it to be carefully managed.

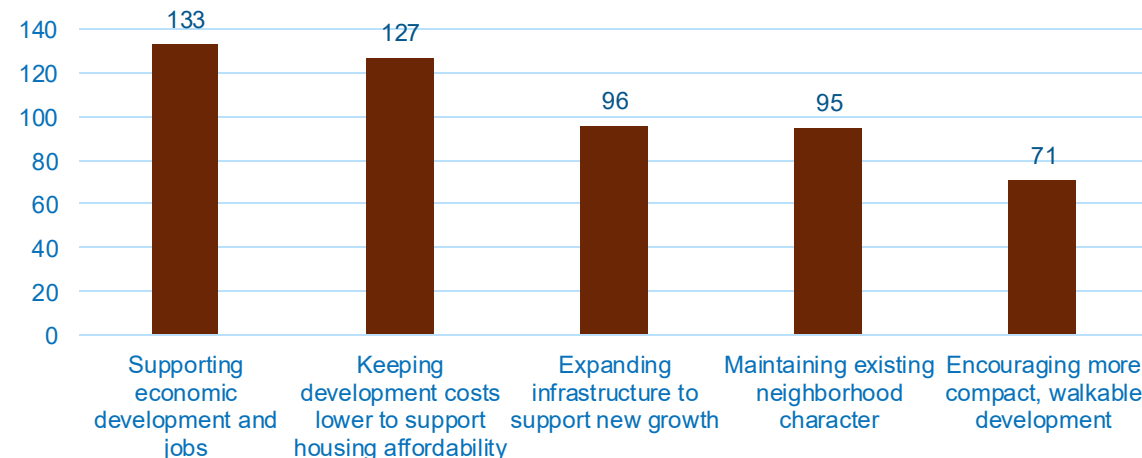
A clear majority (75%) of respondents favor “growing carefully while maintaining community character,” while only 15% prefer maintaining Rifle as-is.

Economic development and housing affordability were the two most important growth priorities.

Overall City Direction



Growth Priorities

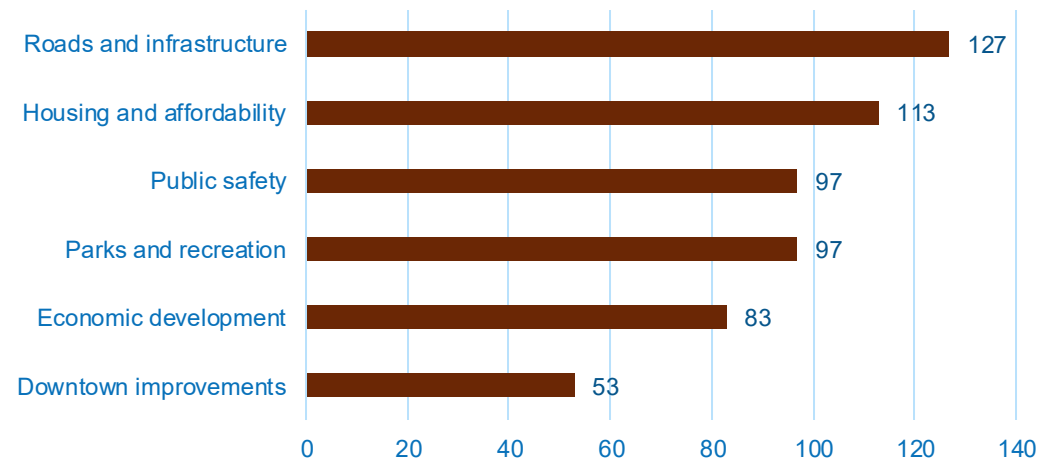


Infrastructure & transportation improvements are top priorities.

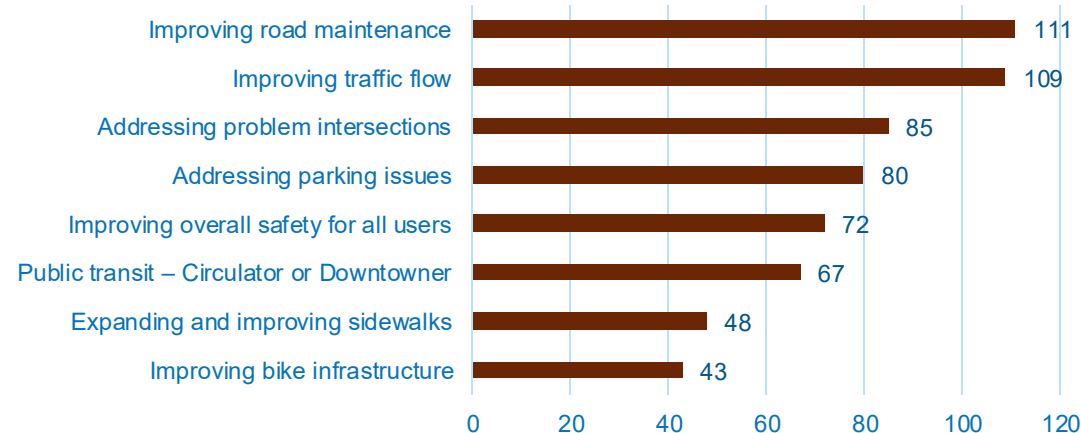
Infrastructure is the most urgent investment need, with 57% prioritizing roads and infrastructure.

Key transportation priorities include road maintenance (47%) and traffic flow (46%), alongside concerns about walkability and connectivity.

Investment Priorities



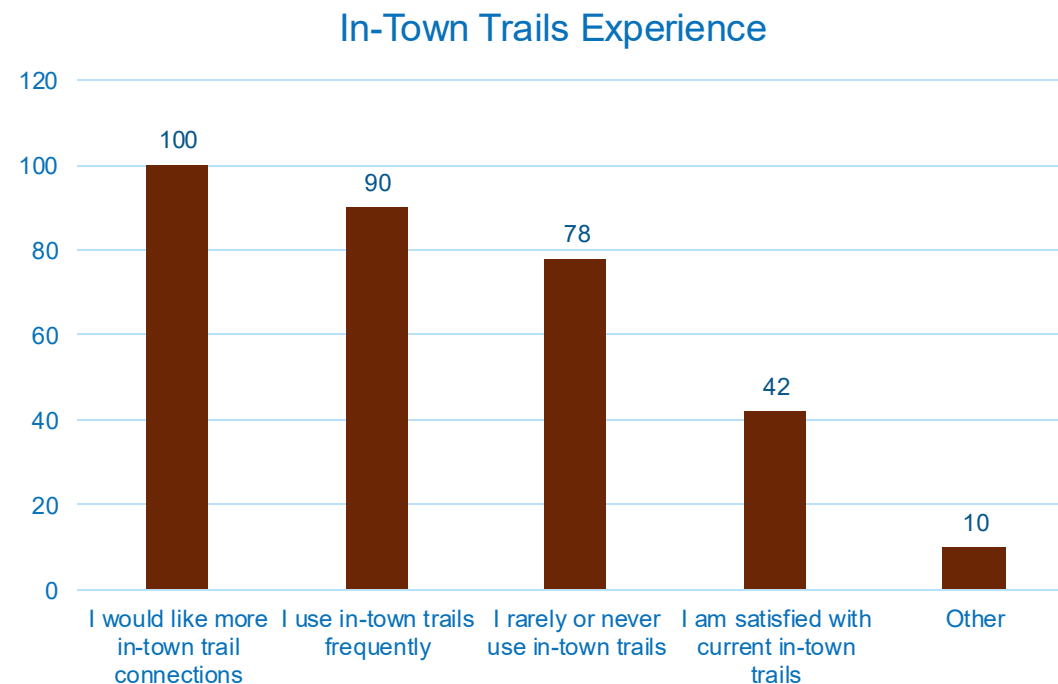
Transportation Priorities



Walkability, safety, and connectivity gaps are major quality-of-life issues.

A lack of safe walking and biking connections was selected by 35% of respondents as a major challenge (3rd highest), while open-ended responses emphasized the need for sidewalks (30%), lighting (18%), and safety concerns (17%).

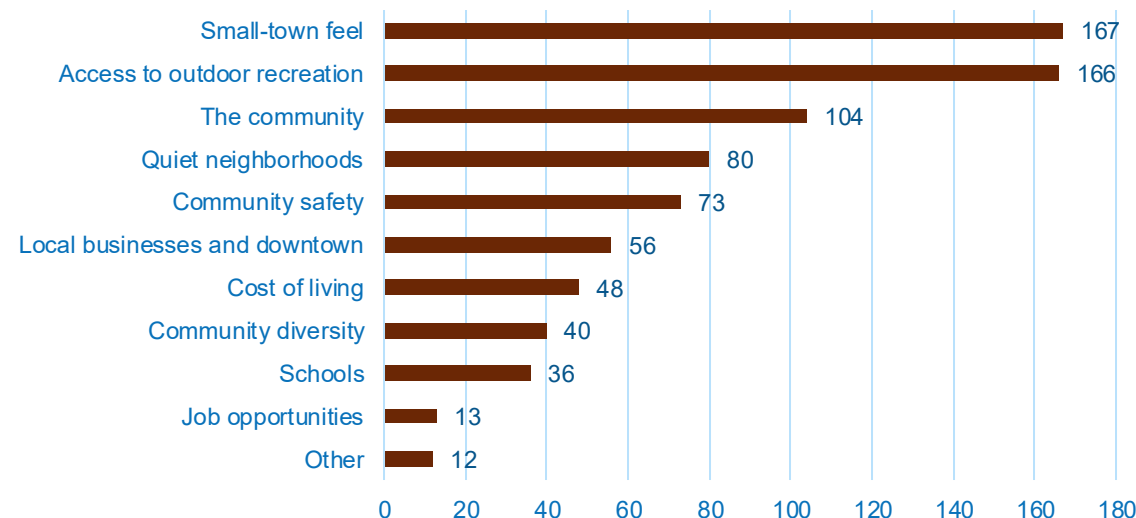
43% of respondents indicated that they would like more in-town trail connections and 39% say they use in-town trails frequently.



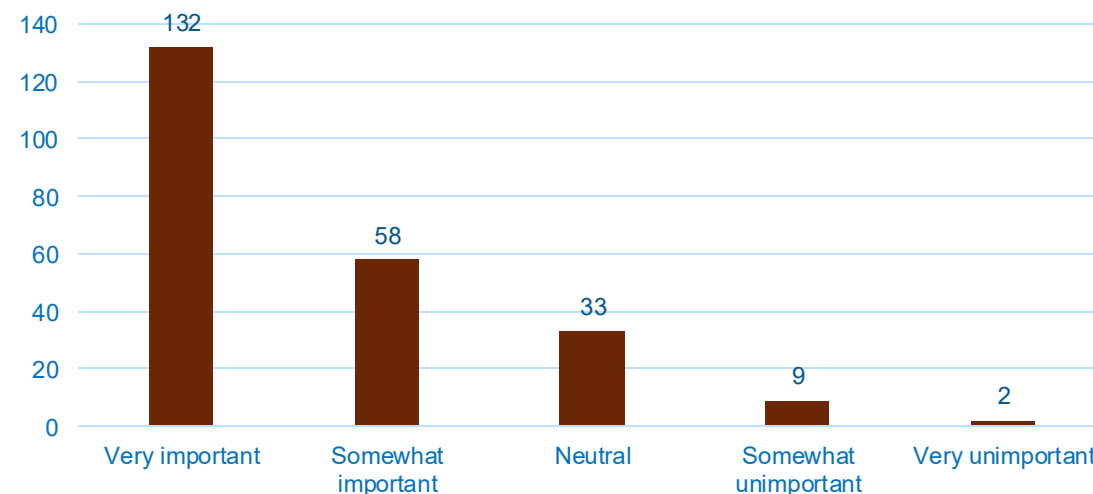
Outdoor recreation and open space are central to community identity.

Rifle's top community values include small-town feel (65%) and access to outdoor recreation (64%), while 81% of respondents view preserving open space as “very” or “somewhat” important.

Most Valued Things About Rifle



Open Space Preservation Amid Development

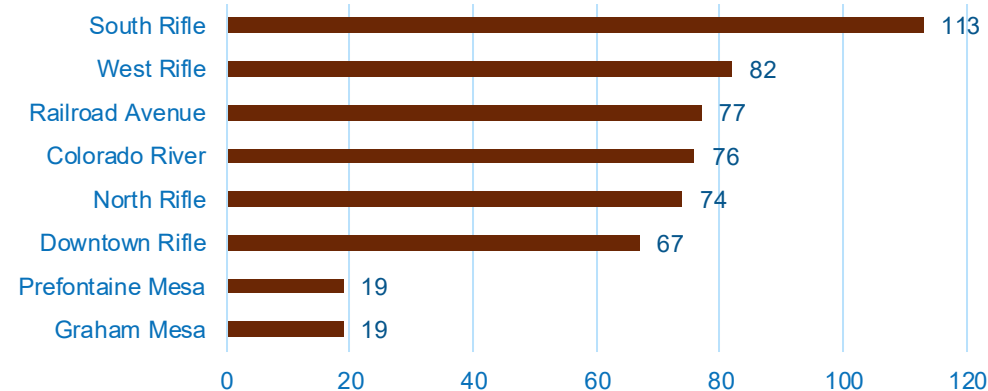


South Rifle is an emerging opportunity area

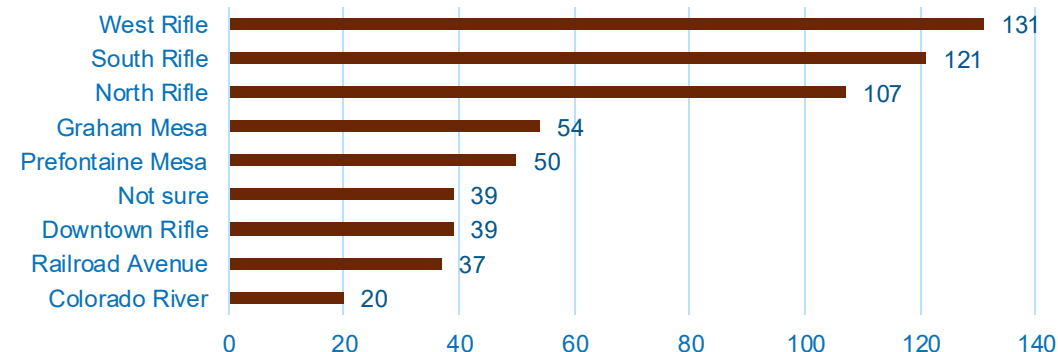
South Rifle was identified by survey respondents as an area with highest need for future investment and improvement, as well as one of the preferred locations for high-density housing.

Respondents want to see parks, trails, and open space, mixed use, and retail and services developed in South Rifle.

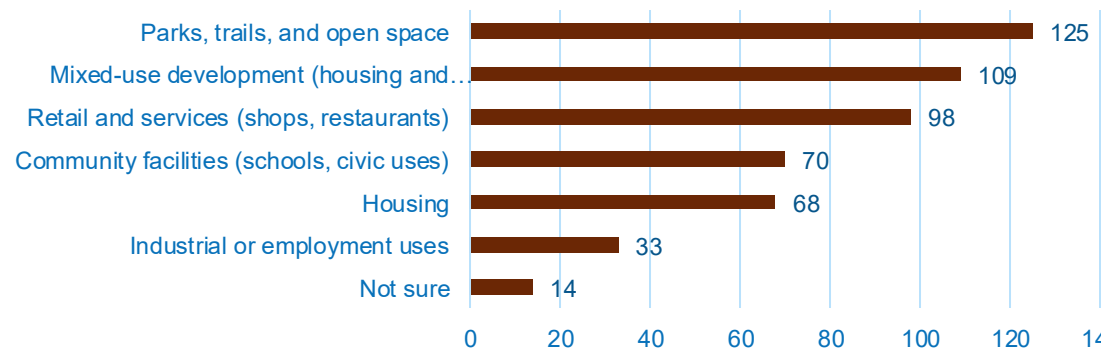
Areas for Future Investment and Improvement



Locations for Higher-Density Housing



Desired Development in South Rifle



Preliminary Community Survey Takeaways

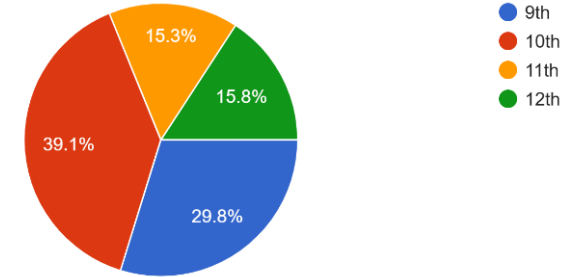
- Residents value outdoor recreation, small-town character, and the sense of community.
- Affordability and cost of living are the dominant concerns.
- Top investment priorities include roads, parks, trails, streetscape improvements, and gathering spaces.

What this means for the Plan:

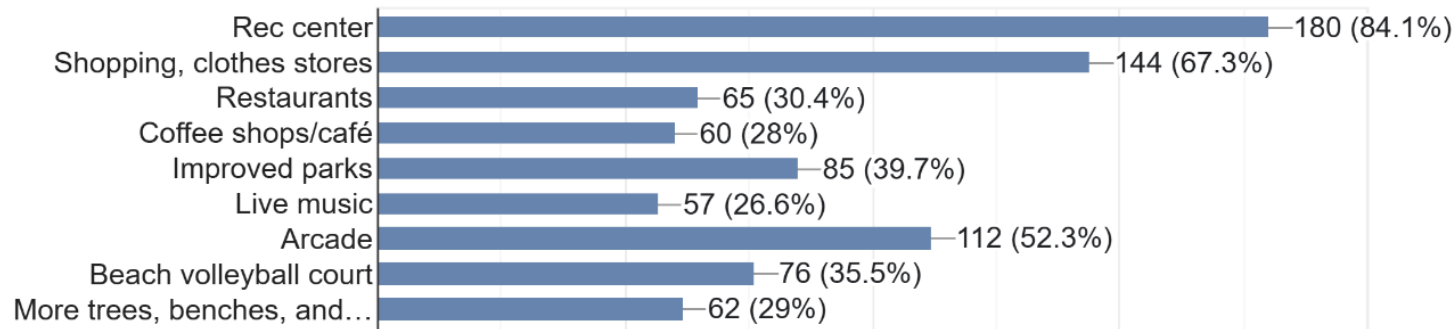
Prioritize housing affordability, quality-of-life investments, transportation improvements, focus on South Rifle recommendations, and strategic growth management.

Student Survey Results

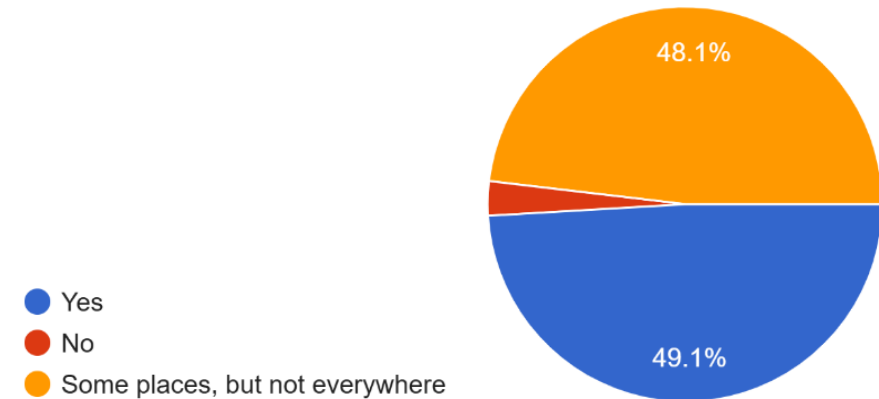
What grade are you in?
215 responses



What additional places or activities would make Rifle a more fun place to live? (select all that apply)
214 responses

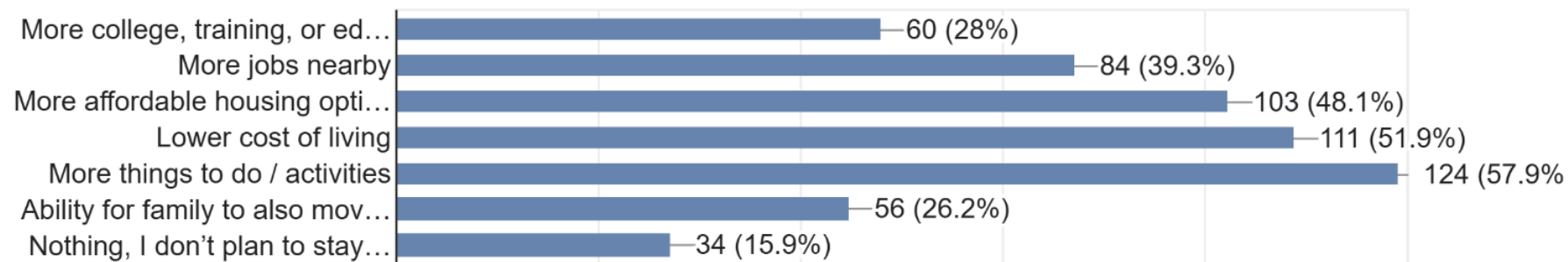


Do you feel safe walking or biking around Rifle?
214 responses



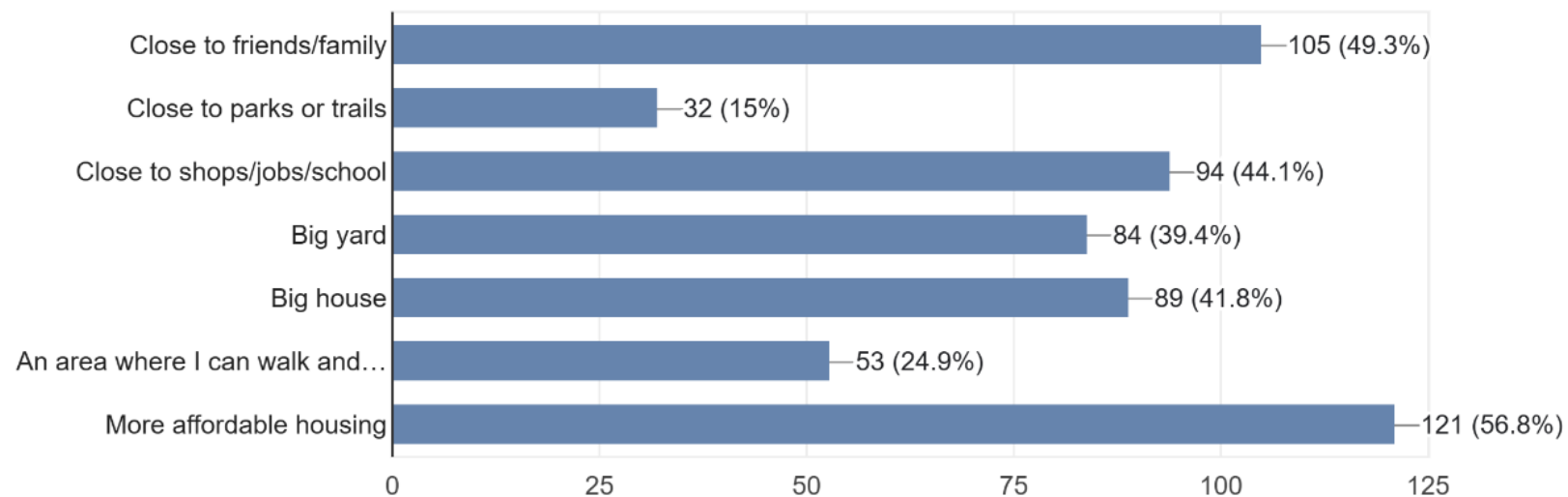
What would make you more likely to want to stay in Rifle? (select all that apply)

214 responses



If you were to move to a new house, what would be most important for you? (select up to 3)

213 responses



Student Survey Key Takeaways

- Students identified a lack of activities, entertainment, and places to spend time as the biggest challenge facing youth in Rifle.
- Affordability, housing costs, and the overall cost of living were major concerns, even among high school students.
- A recreation center was the single most requested improvement, along with additional gathering spaces, restaurants, shopping, and activities.
- Students also emphasized sidewalks, trails, biking, transportation options, and safe ways to travel independently.

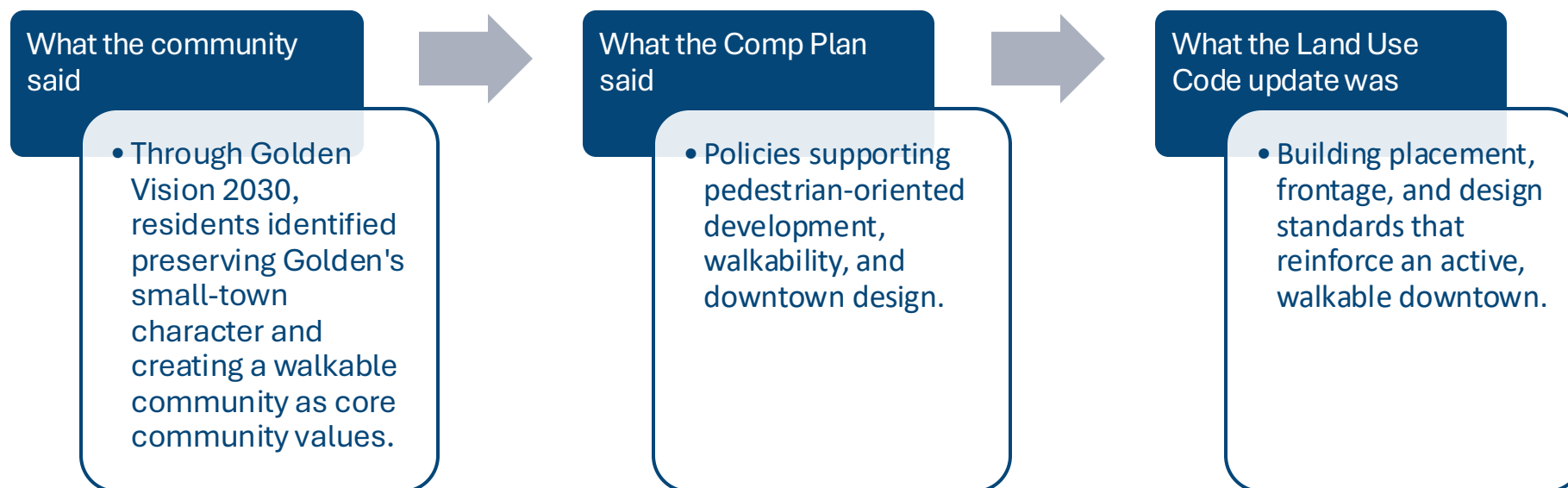
What this means for the plan:

Support youth-oriented recreation and gathering spaces, improve mobility options, address affordability concerns, and maintain the small-town character students value.

From Vision to Law: How Comprehensive Plans Shape Future Development

Community Vision → Comprehensive Plan → Land Use Code

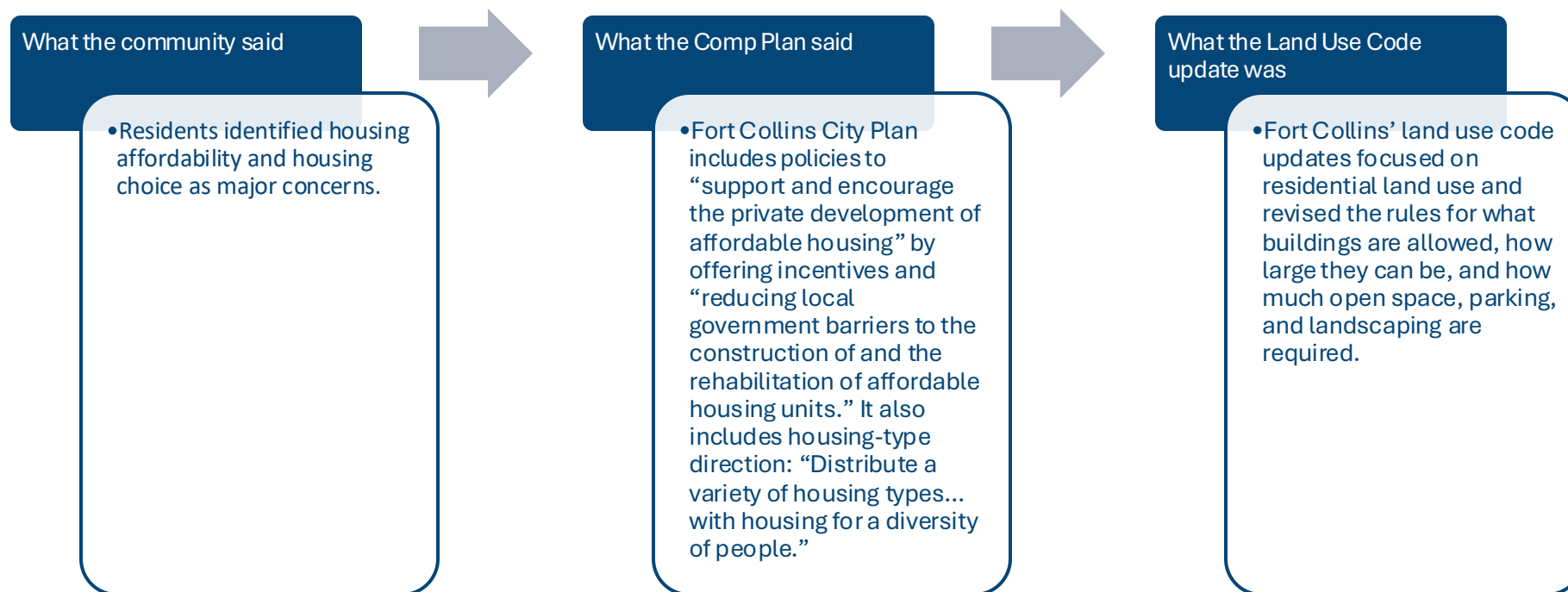
Golden, CO:



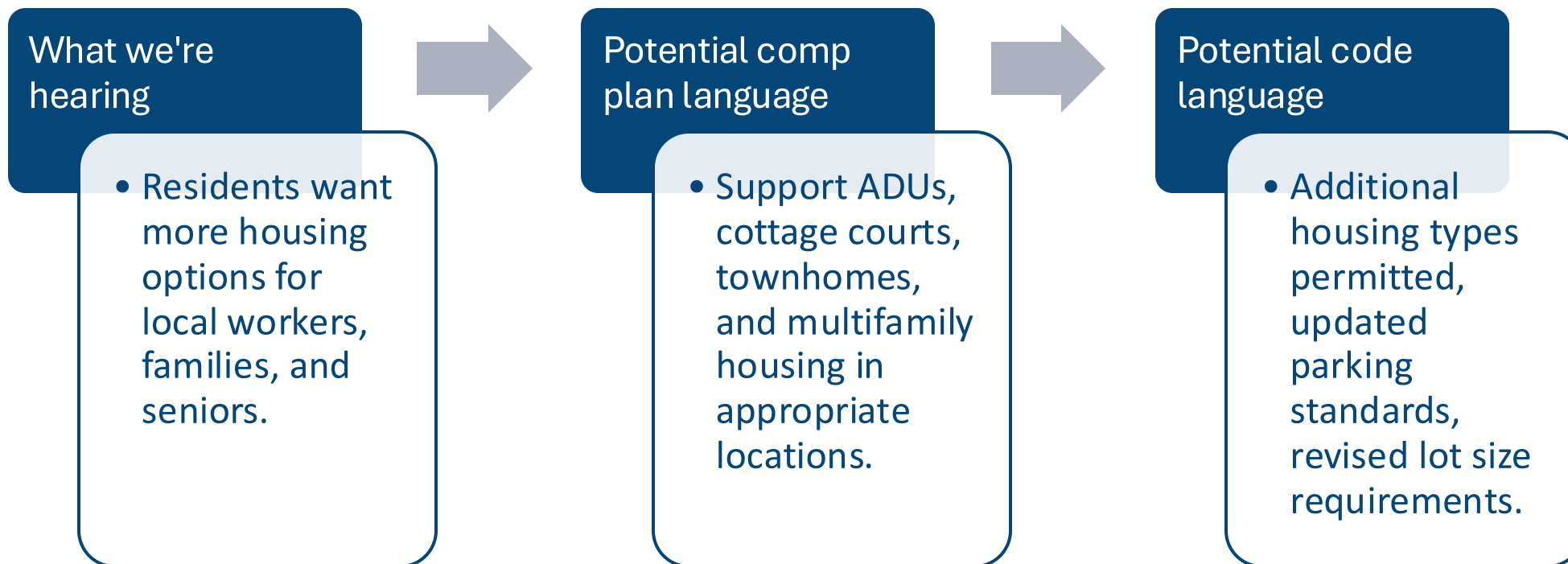
From Vision to Law: How Comprehensive Plans Shape Future Development

Community Vision → Comprehensive Plan → Land Use Code

Fort Collins, CO:



What Could This Look Like in Rifle?



The Comprehensive Plan serves as the bridge between community vision and future development regulations.

Vision Statement Update: What's Changing

2019 Version

In 2040, Rifle seeks to be a community with a high quality of life, efficient infrastructure, and affordability for its residents.

2026 Draft Version

In 2050, 40 Rifle seeks to be a community with a high quality of life, efficient and resilient infrastructure, and affordability and housing choices, a strong and diverse economy, and exceptional access to parks, trails, recreation, and community amenities. Rifle will grow in a manner that strengthens neighborhoods, supports local businesses and workforce opportunities, delivers on public investments, and preserves the qualities that make Rifle a vibrant community. for its residents.

Feedback

- Do these updates accurately reflect how Rifle's vision for community development has evolved since 2019?
- Are there additional themes that should be elevated before we continue with detailed revisions to plan chapters?

Growth Principles Update — What We Heard

- Engagement reaffirmed Growth Principles:
 - Growth where infrastructure exists
 - Growth should pay its own way
 - Compact, connected development
 - Infill and redevelopment remain priorities
- Additional Direction
 - Further emphasis on housing affordability and diversity of housing types
 - More emphasis on opportunities for workforce development
 - Highlighting the need to address transportation safety, trails, recreation and connectivity in growth decisions
- Discussion:
 - Do these reflect how priorities have evolved since 2019?
 - Are we moving in the right direction before detailed chapter revisions continue?

Questions?



High School Student Survey Analysis

Introduction

On April 20, 2026, the Rifle Comprehensive Plan team held a workshop with 16 members of the Rifle High School Student Council to discuss student perspectives and priorities as they relate to the Comprehensive Plan update, and to create a survey for their peers to solicit broad feedback to inform the Comprehensive Plan. Student groups helped to draft survey questions, which were collected by the project team and combined to create a Google Form survey, which was uploaded onto the high school student body's Google Classrooms to complete. Time was given during the school day for students to fill out the survey, and eight prizes were randomly drawn for complete responses to encourage participation. The survey was open for one week and received 215 responses.

Key Takeaways & Themes

Rifle students want more things to do, especially for teens. The clearest theme across the survey is that students feel Rifle needs more activities, entertainment, and places to spend time. "Not enough interesting things to do" was the top barrier to going places in Rifle, selected by 69% of respondents, and "nowhere to hang out" was selected by 59%. Similarly, 62% said not enough things to do would make them want to move away, while 58% said more things to do would make them more likely to stay. This theme points to a need for more youth-friendly "third places," including indoor and outdoor recreation, affordable activities, hangout spaces, entertainment, and community gathering places.

Affordability and housing costs matter to young people. Students are already aware of Rifle's housing and cost-of-living challenges. 57% said affordability would be important if they moved to a new house – the most important feature of all listed in the question. 43% said limited or expensive housing would make them want to move away, as would the high cost of living. In open-ended responses, more than 30 students mentioned lowering the cost of living or increasing housing affordability as the one thing they'd like to change about Rifle. It is notable that high school students, who typically do not bear the burden of paying housing costs, see housing affordability as such a pressing concern.

A recreation center is a major student priority. A recreation center was one of the most specific and repeated ideas in the survey. When asked what would make Rifle more fun, 84% of students selected a rec center. In open-ended responses, more than 25 students specifically mentioned wanting a rec center, often describing indoor basketball courts, a gym, indoor track, pool, or other recreation options.

Students value Rifle's small-town character, convenience, and natural setting. Students consistently described Rifle's small-town feel as one of its biggest strengths. They like that it is not too big, that people know each other, that friends and family are nearby, and that many places are close together. Students also mentioned parks, trails, mountains, the river, Rifle Falls, and outdoor access as things they appreciate.

Transportation, walkability, and safe mobility are important for youth independence.

Because many students do not have consistent access to cars, safe walking, biking, and local transportation are important. 48% said they feel safe walking or biking in some places but not everywhere. Students also showed support for additional mobility options, including electric scooters, selected by 53%, more paved paths by 44%, city bus service by 27%, and bike lanes by 26%.

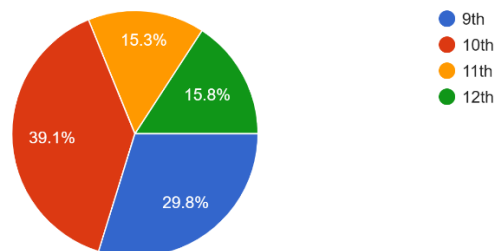
Students want stronger pathways to jobs, education, and careers. Many students are already working, with 43% employed during the school year and about two-thirds having current or past job experience. However, students rated finding employment in Rifle as somewhat difficult, with an average score of 2.6 out of 5, skewing toward “hard.” They also identified healthcare, trades, business, and entrepreneurship as top career interests, while 56% said more college, training, or education opportunities elsewhere could make them want to leave Rifle, although only 26% said that more college, training, or education in Rifle would encourage them to stay.

Question Responses & Analysis

1. What grade are you in?

The highest proportion of student responses came from students in 10th grade (84 responses), followed by 9th grade (64 responses). 11th and 12th grade each had 33 and 34 responses, respectively.

What grade are you in?
215 responses

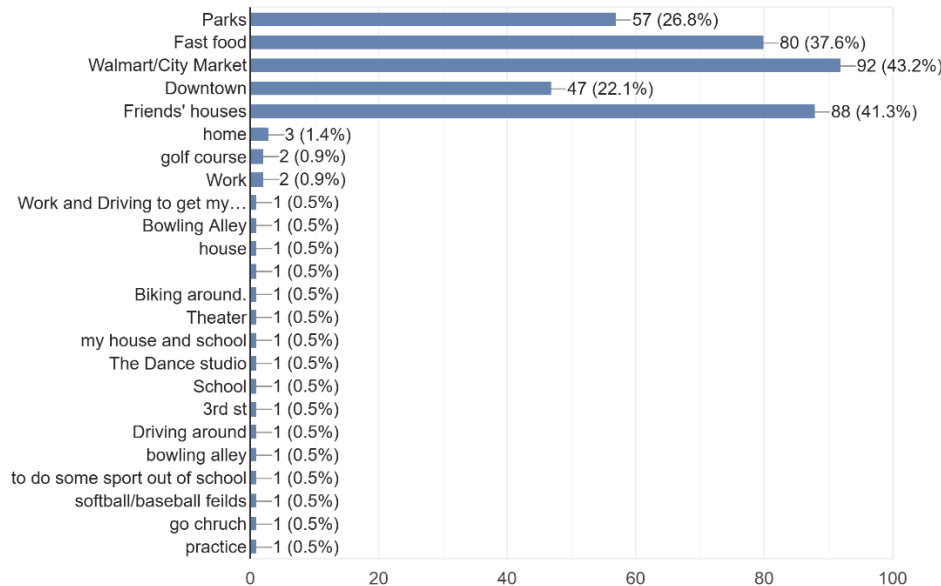


2. Where do you spend the most time in Rifle, other than school and home? (Select top 2)

Students reported spending the most time at Walmart/City Market (43%), followed by friends' houses (41%), and Fast food (38%). Parks received approximately one quarter of responses (27%), and downtown was the least popular among the options, with 22% of respondents. Written responses provided a range of locations, including the golf course, work, the bowling alley, driving or biking around, the theater, sports, and church.

Where do you spend the most time in Rifle, other than school and home? (Select top 2)

213 responses

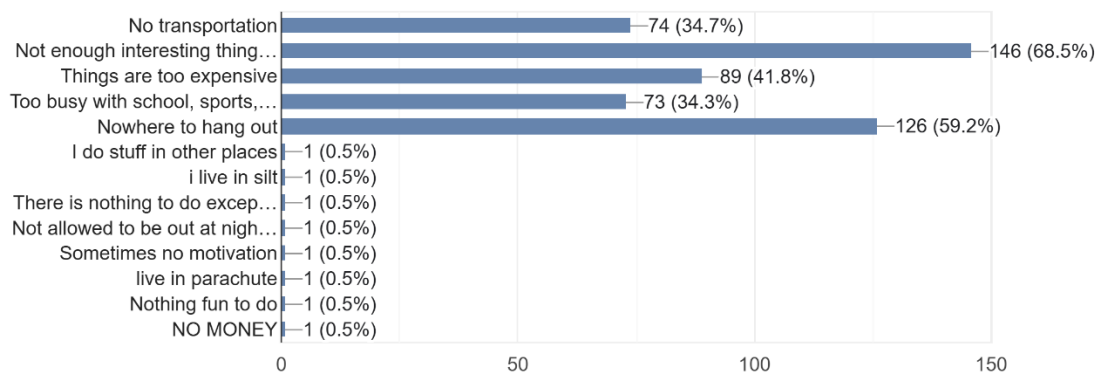


3. What prevents you from going places in Rifle? (select all that apply)

The biggest barrier to going places in Rifle was “not enough interesting things to do” (69%), followed “nowhere to hang out” (59%). “Things are too expensive” was a barrier to 42% of respondents, “no transportation” for 35% of respondents, and “too busy with school, sports, work” for 34% of respondents.

What prevents you from going places in Rifle? (select all that apply)

213 responses

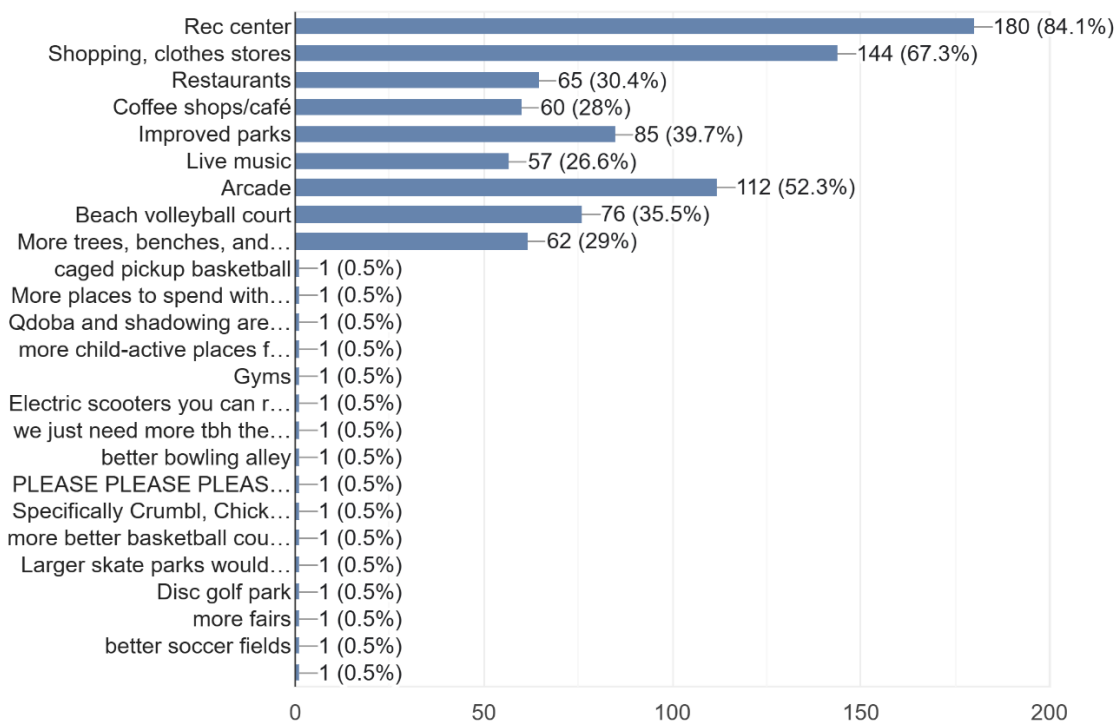


4. What additional places or activities would make Rifle a more fun place to live? (select all that apply)

The majority of respondents students (84%) selected a rec center as a priority for making Rifle a more fun place to live. This was followed by shopping and clothes stores (67%), and an arcade (52%). Written comments included improved outdoor and recreation areas, such as a larger skate park, a dedicated bike park, and a disc golf park.

What additional places or activities would make Rifle a more fun place to live? (select all that apply)

214 responses

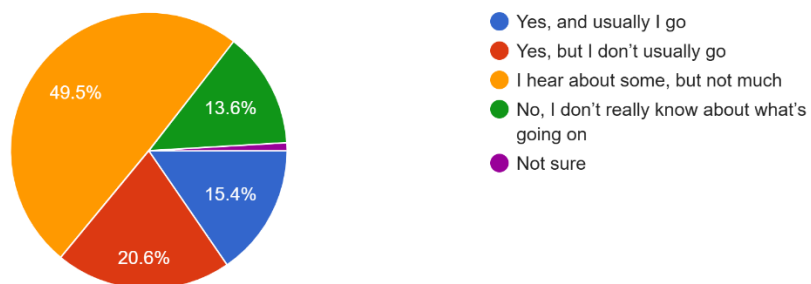


5. Do you usually know about events happening in Rifle?

Students reported being somewhat uninformed about events happening in town, with 50% selecting “I hear about some, but not much,” and an additional 14% reported “no, I don’t really know what’s going on.” A fifth of students (21%) reported “yes, but I don’t usually go,” while 15% reported “yes, and I usually go.”

Do you usually know about events happening in Rifle?

214 responses

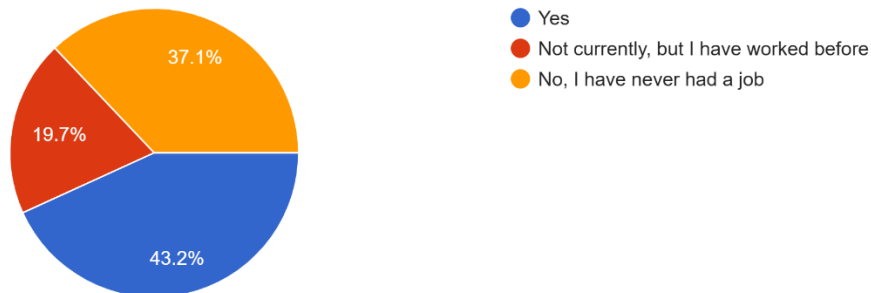


6. Do you currently have a job?

Approximately two thirds of students who responded to the survey currently or in the past have had a job. Notably, 43% of students (92 students) currently had a job during the school year.

Do you currently have a job?

213 responses



7. Where do, or did, you work?

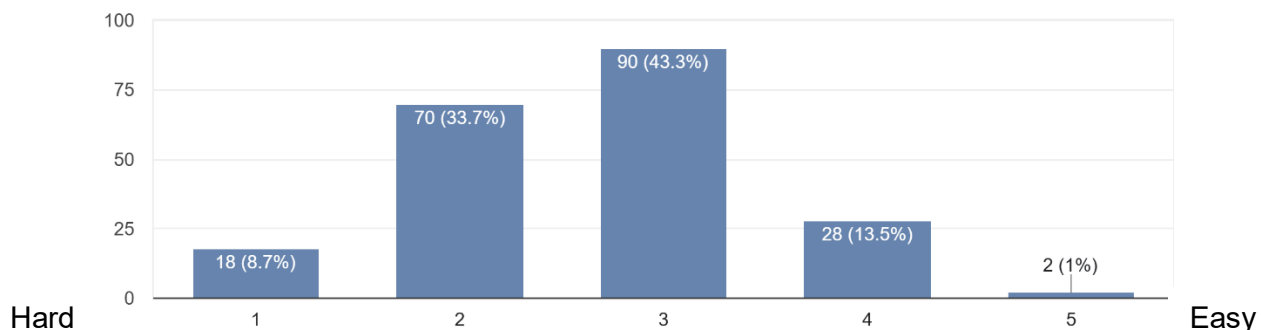
This question was asked of the 133 students who selected “yes” or “not currently, but I have worked before.” The most common places of employment were the Rifle Pool (17 responses), working for a family business or parents (13), Walmart (7), Culver’s (6), construction-related work (6). Other places mentioned by multiple students were the movie theater, City of Rifle, Taco Bell, Bowling Alley, Wendy’s Sonic, Little Caesars, Highwater Farm, Hotel Colorado, City Market, Glenwood Hot Springs, and La Michoacana. The most common job sector was food service/restaurants/fast food, with 29 responses, followed by recreation/parks/sports (21), construction/trades (17), and retail/stores (17). Some students only listed locations; these included Glenwood (10), Aspen (4), Carbondale (3), New Castle (2), Silt (2), Meeker (1), and Basalt (2).

8. How hard is it to find employment in Rifle?

On a 5-point scale of 1 as hard and 5 as easy, students reported an average of 2.6, skewing towards “hard.”

How hard is it to find employment in Rifle?

208 responses



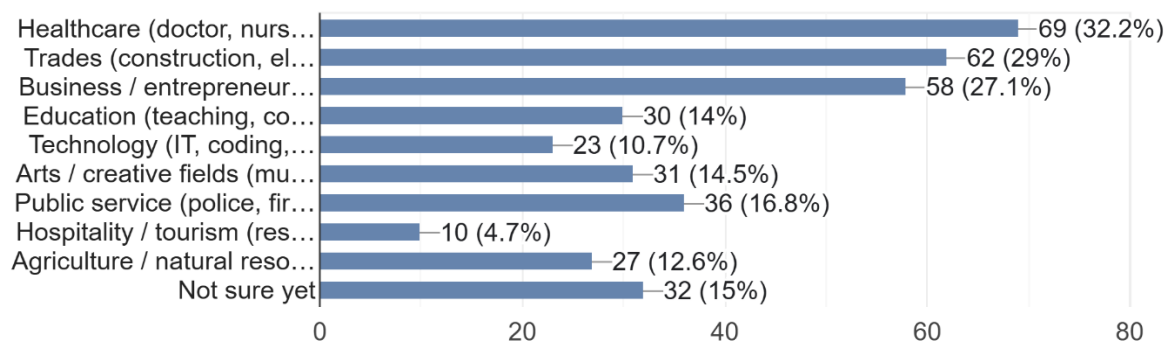
9. What career field are you interested in after high school? (Select up to 3)

The most common career field was healthcare (32%), followed by trades (29%), and business/entrepreneur (27%). 42 students wrote in “other” career fields, many of which were more specific jobs within selected career fields, such as psychology, electrician, mechanic, photography, military, ultrasound tech, cosmetology

Additional jobs mentioned included law, geology, veterinarian, architecture, biology, aviation, real estate, social work, sports, wildland firefighting, journalism, criminology, and barber.

What career field are you interested in after high school? (Select up to 3)

214 responses

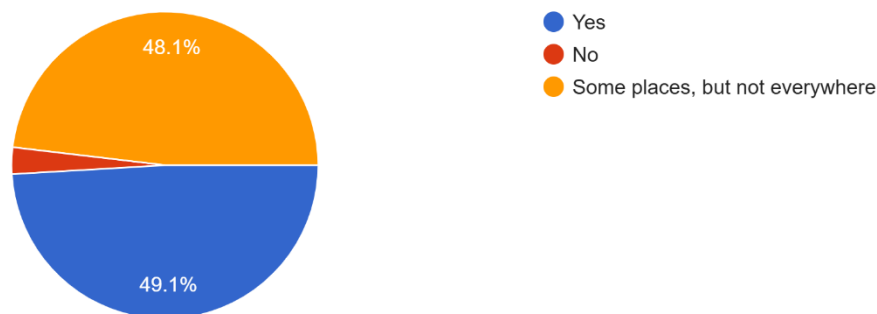


10. Do you feel safe walking or biking around Rifle?

Just under half of all students reported that they do feel safe walking or biking around Rifle, while 48% said “some places, but not everywhere,” and 3% reported not feeling safe at all. Students are typically a population with some of the most inconsistent access to personal cars, and most likely to be walking and biking.

Do you feel safe walking or biking around Rifle?

214 responses

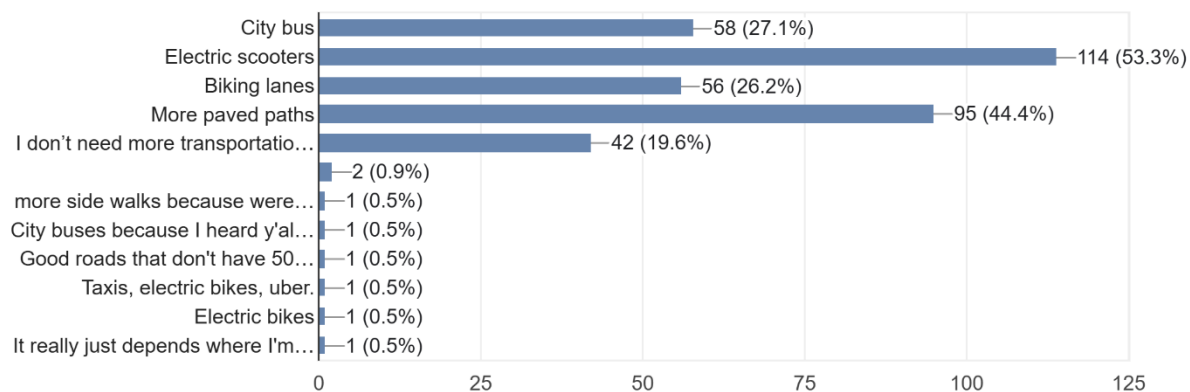


11. What additional methods of transportation would you like to have in town? (select all that apply)

The majority of students (53%) were supportive of electric scooters, followed by more paved paths (44%). City bus (27%) and biking lanes (26%) were each supported by approximately a quarter of respondents. Only 20% of respondent students indicated that they don't need more transportation options.

What additional methods of transportation would you like to have in town? (select all that apply)

214 responses

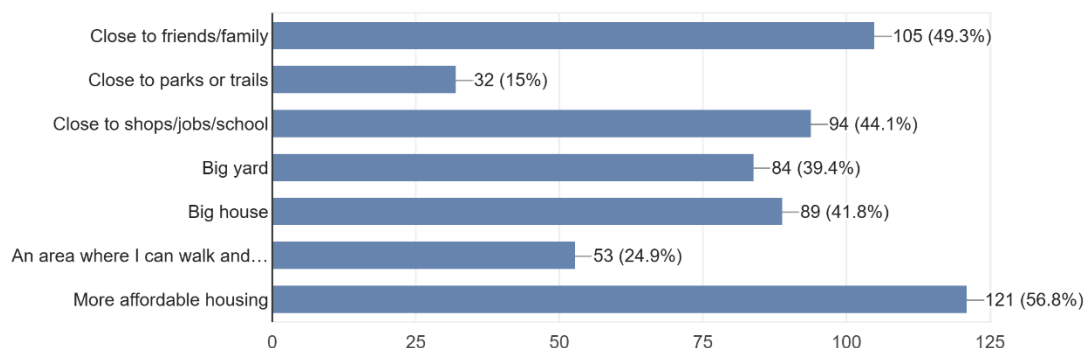


12. If you were to move to a new house, what would be most important for you? (select up to 3)

Students were most concerned with the affordability of housing (57%), followed by “close to friends/family” (49%), and “close to shops/jobs/schools” (44%). A “big house” received several more responses than “a big yard,” (42% and 39%, respectively). Notably, “close to parks or trails” and “an area where I can walk and bike comfortably” received the two least responses (15% and 25%, respectively).

If you were to move to a new house, what would be most important for you? (select up to 3)

213 responses

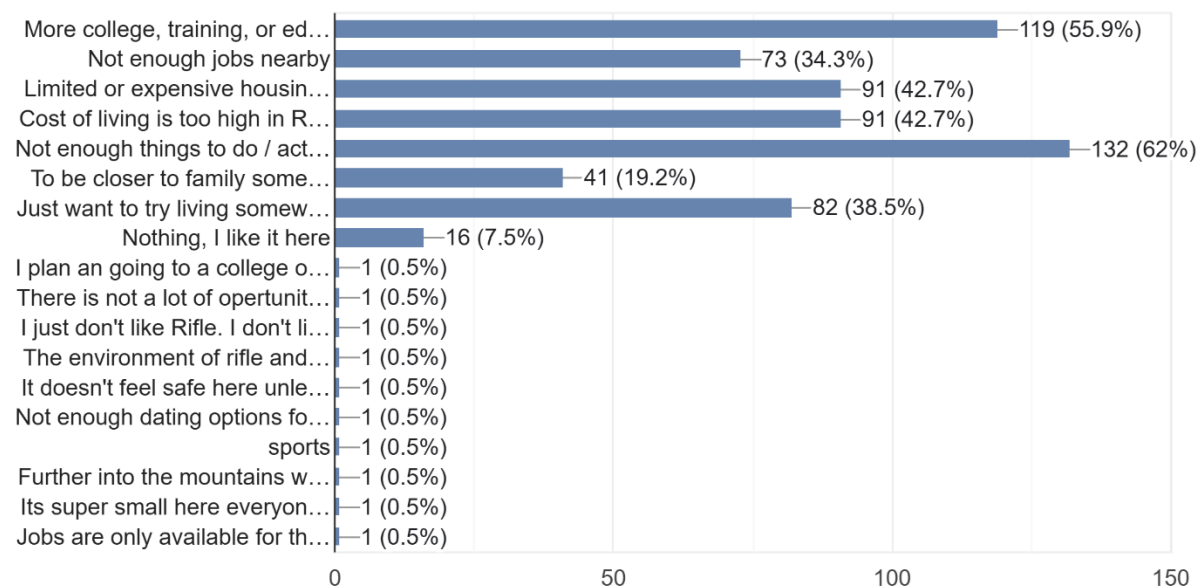


13. What would make you want to move away from Rifle? (select all that apply)

“Not enough things to do / activities in Rifle” was the most common reason (62%), followed by “more college, training, or education” (56%). “Limited or expensive housing in Rifle” and “cost of living is too high in Rifle” each received 43% of responses. “Just want to try living somewhere new” was selected by 39% of students. A lack of job opportunities was a reason for 34% of respondents, while several “other” write in responses spoke to this issue. Additional written comments referenced being closer to recreation, concerns about safety and opportunities for minority populations, and not liking how small of a community Rifle is.

What would make you want to move away from Rifle? (select all that apply)

213 responses

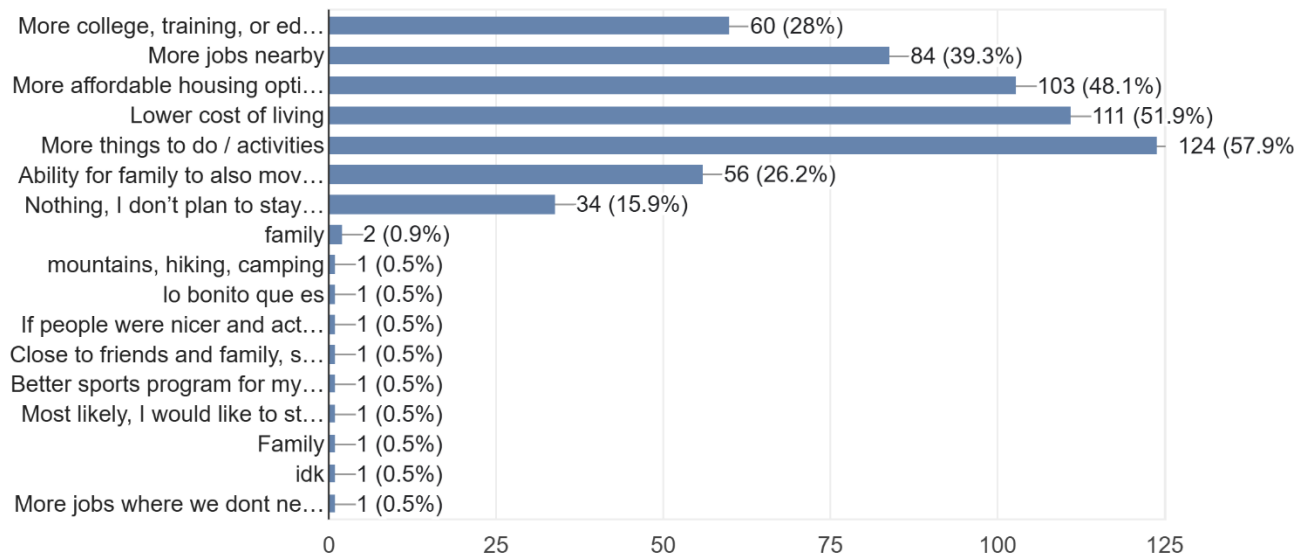


14. What would make you more likely to want to stay in Rifle? (select all that apply)

The most common response was more things to do/activities in rifle (58%), followed by lower cost of living (52%), and more affordable housing options (48%). Notably, “more college, training, or education opportunities” only made difference to 28% of respondent students, despite being the second highest reason for leaving.

What would make you more likely to want to stay in Rifle? (select all that apply)

214 responses



15. What do you like most about Rifle? (open response)

Over 200 students wrote in responses to this question. The most common theme that students reported liking was Rifle's small-town character. They like that it is not too big, not too crowded, and that people tend to know each other. Many students also valued the convenience of Rifle, being close to friends, family, stores, restaurants, parks, and school. Students also strongly appreciated the parks, trails, natural scenery, and outdoor access in Rifle. Some students voiced dissatisfaction with Rifle and its community.

A few responses:

"We have mountains, trails, the river, and its one of those places where everybody knows everybody. Its less hectic than huge cities."

"I like how everything is nearby and don't have to go 30 min just to go to a grocery store and the trip is usually 10-15 which is a short distance."

"I like how it is a small town and most places are walking distance."

"My family is here and I like to going up in the mountains."

"I like the feeling of the mountains around me and being in a small town but once its been your whole life you want to see something new"

"I honestly don't know, its pretty boring here."

16. If you had a magic wand and could change one thing about Rifle, what would it be? (open response)

The most common theme among the 213 responses was more things to do, mentioned by over 65 responses. Many respondents listed specific activities or businesses that they'd like to see, including shopping and restaurants. Over 30 students made comments referring to lowering the cost of living and increasing housing affordability. Over 25 students mentioned a recreation center specifically.

Some students want Rifle to be kinder, safer, more inclusive, and more community-oriented. Finally, students asked for practical improvements: better sidewalks, roads, transportation, parks, schools, and job opportunities. While many responses focus on entertainment, there is also a clear desire for Rifle to function better day-to-day for young people.

A few responses:

"make a walkable park by Walmart the fast food area of town with lots of trees."

"I would change how expensive the housing is. Most struggle being able to pay rent and other expenses. Most do not earn enough in a month if they get paid minimum wage. Everyone deserves to have a nice home and nice resources like food and clothes."

"I will add more sidewalks to certain part of Rifle or add like a mall closer so we don't have to travel into Glenwood springs or Grand Junction."

"I would build a huge rec center with an indoor track, swimming pool, and basketball court."

"bus options around all town."

"I would make it so that rifle has more things to do for free or very cheap."

"i would change the size of everything i feel like rifle is to close together."

"I would add a central common area where it's easy to hang out with a good view"

"I think that I would get rid of the tourist esthetic and add more things that would make us more like a town, and more cafes, and places for teenagers to be able to hangout with out getting rid of the esthetic. I would also love to make not only the parks but the whole town more disable friendly allowing those with disabilities to enjoy the town in its full essence."

"More stores, more things to do, Fun places to hang out at, better food places."



Rifle Community Survey Summary

Introduction

The Rifle community survey was available online to the public from May 1st, 2026 – June 20th, 2026, in both English and Spanish formats. Several outreach efforts publicized this survey, included paid social media advertising, printed flyers, tabling at community events, outreach to particular demographics (seniors, Spanish-speaking residents), emails, and advertising on project and city websites. 225 complete and 95 partial English surveys were collected, and 4 complete and 10 partial Spanish surveys were collected. All survey responses, regardless of completion status were analyzed in this summary, and the total number of respondents is listed for each question.

Key Takeaways

- 1. Affordability is the dominant concern shaping growth decisions.**
Affordability and cost of living were identified as a major challenge by 85% of respondents, and 74% said housing affordability should be a top factor in permitting new housing. Together, these results show that housing cost pressures are the most critical issue influencing community priorities.
- 2. Residents support growth, but strongly prefer it to be carefully managed.** A clear majority (75%) of respondents favor “growing carefully while maintaining community character,” while only 15% prefer maintaining Rifle as-is. This indicates broad support for growth, but with strong expectations for thoughtful planning and preservation of community identity.
- 3. Infrastructure and transportation improvements are top priorities.**
Infrastructure is the most urgent investment needed, with 57% prioritizing roads and infrastructure. Key transportation priorities include road maintenance (47%) and traffic flow (46%), alongside concerns about walkability and connectivity.
- 4. Walkability, safety, and connectivity gaps are major quality-of-life issues.** A lack of safe walking and biking connections was selected by 35% of respondents as a major challenge, while open-ended responses emphasize sidewalks (30%), lighting (18%), and safety concerns (17%). These findings highlight significant gaps in the pedestrian and bike network that affect everyday mobility.
- 5. Outdoor recreation, open space preservation, and community amenities are central to identity and future investment.** Rifle’s top community values include small-town feel (65%) and access to outdoor recreation (64%), while 81%

of respondents view preserving open space as “somewhat” or “very” important. At the same time, the most desired neighborhood improvements include parks and trails (52%), streetscaping (49%), and gathering spaces (40%), and a recreation center was frequently mentioned. Together, these findings show that recreation, open space, and community-serving amenities should be central to land use, investment, and growth decisions.

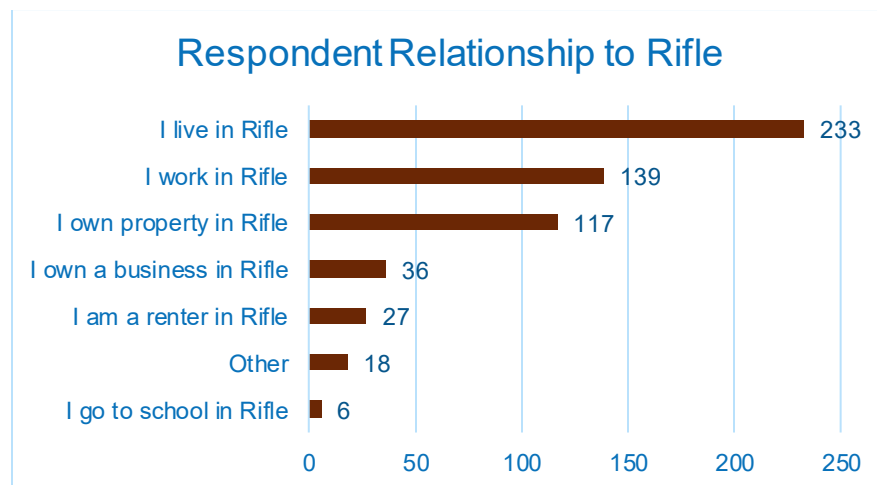
6. **South Rifle is an emerging opportunity area.** South Rifle was identified by 53% of survey respondents as an area for future investment and improvement, as well as the second most preferred location for higher-density housing (48%). When asked about development in South Rifle, 55% of respondents want to see parks, trails, and open space, followed by mixed-use development (48%) and retail and services (43%).

Question Breakdown

Demographics

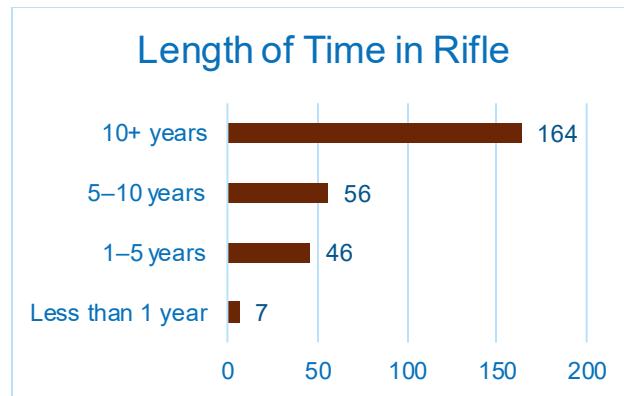
1. Which of the following apply to you? (n = 287)

The largest share of survey respondents live in Rifle (81%), followed by working in Rifle (48%), and owning property in Rifle (41%). Write-in responses generally included comments about being part of the Rifle community but living outside of City boundaries, or having students in the Rifle school system.



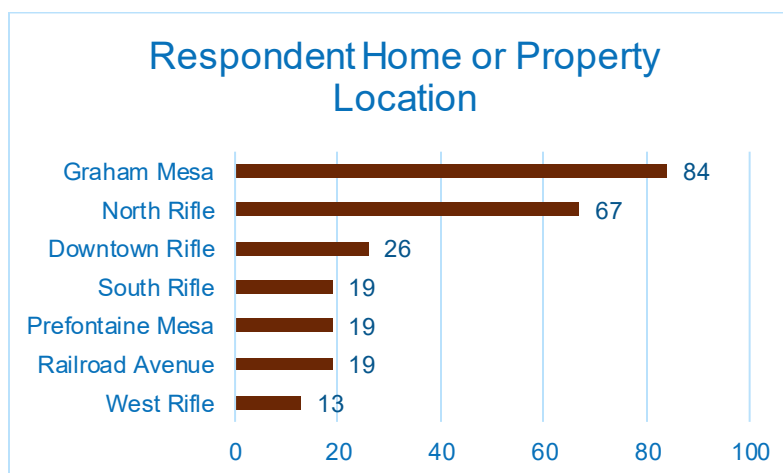
2. How long have you lived, gone to school, or worked in Rifle? (n = 273)

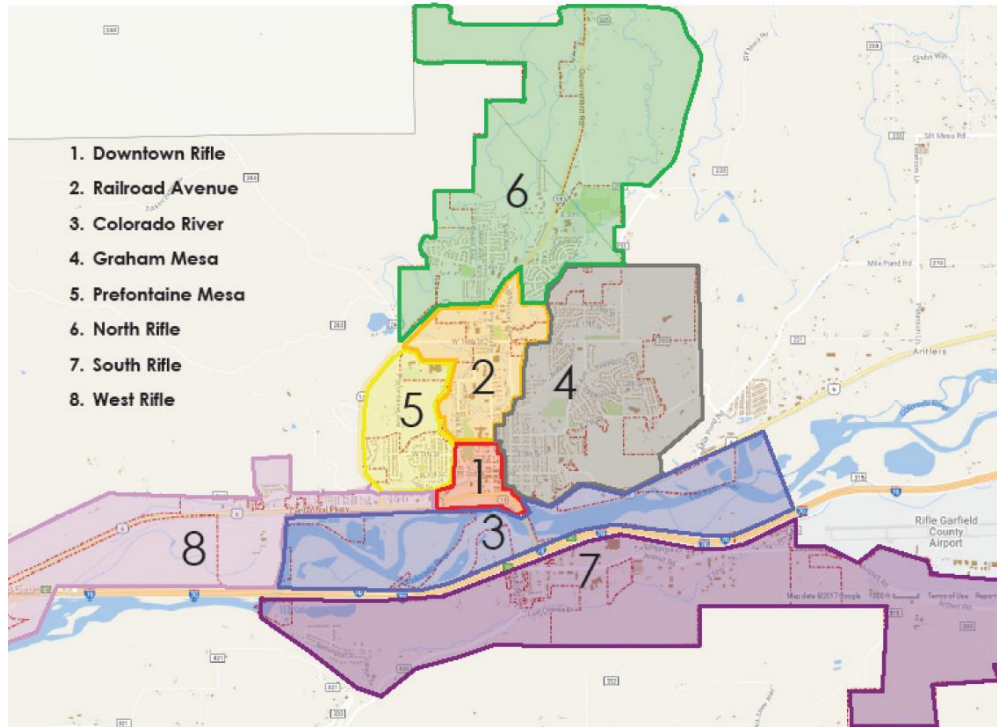
The majority of survey respondents have spent more than 10 years in Rifle (60%), followed by 5-10 years (21%), and 1-5 years (17%). Only 3% of respondents have lived in Rifle for less than one year.



3. Where do you live or own property in Rifle? Select all that apply. (n = 232)

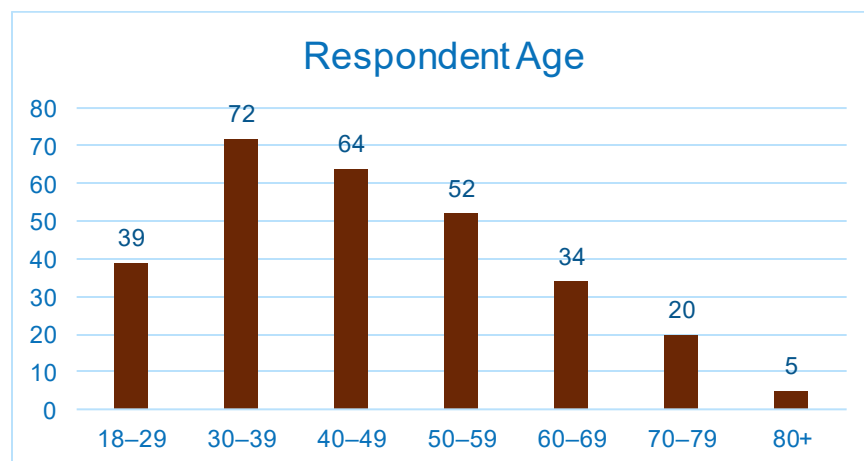
The largest share of respondents live or own property in Graham Mesa (36%), followed by North Rifle (29%). Notably, only 8% of respondents reported living in or owning property in Prefontaine Mesa, which is a dense residential area.





4. What is your approximate age range? (n = 286)

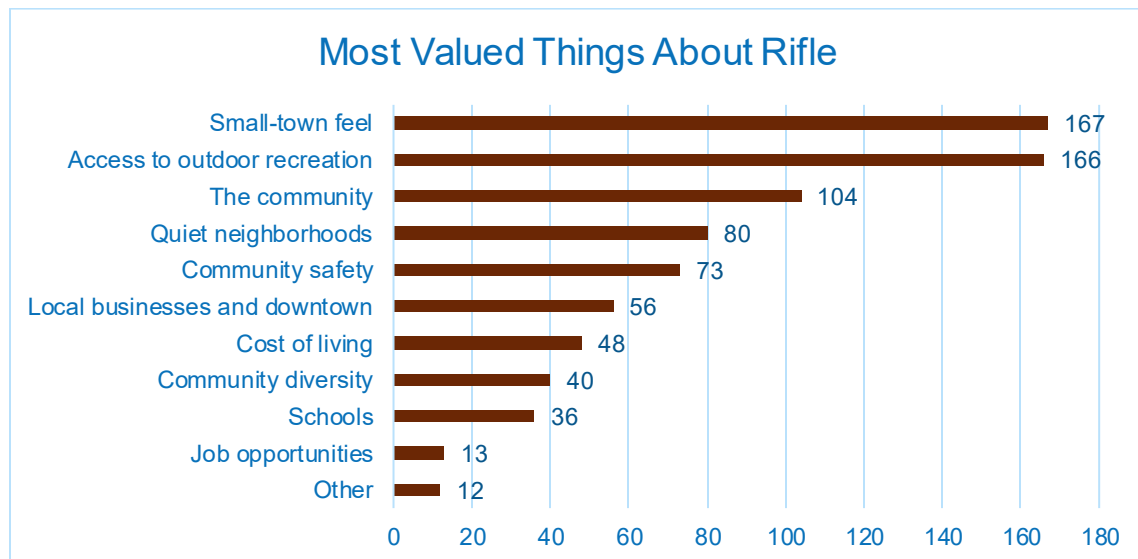
The most common age range of respondents was 30-39 (25%), followed by 40-49 (22%), 50-59 (15%), 18-29 (14%), and 60-69 (12%). There were no responses from people under the age of 18, and limited responses from those over the age of 70 (9%). Youth and student voices were largely captured in the Rifle High School Student Survey, which is summarized in a separate report.



5. What do you value most about Rifle today? (Select up to 5) (n = 258)

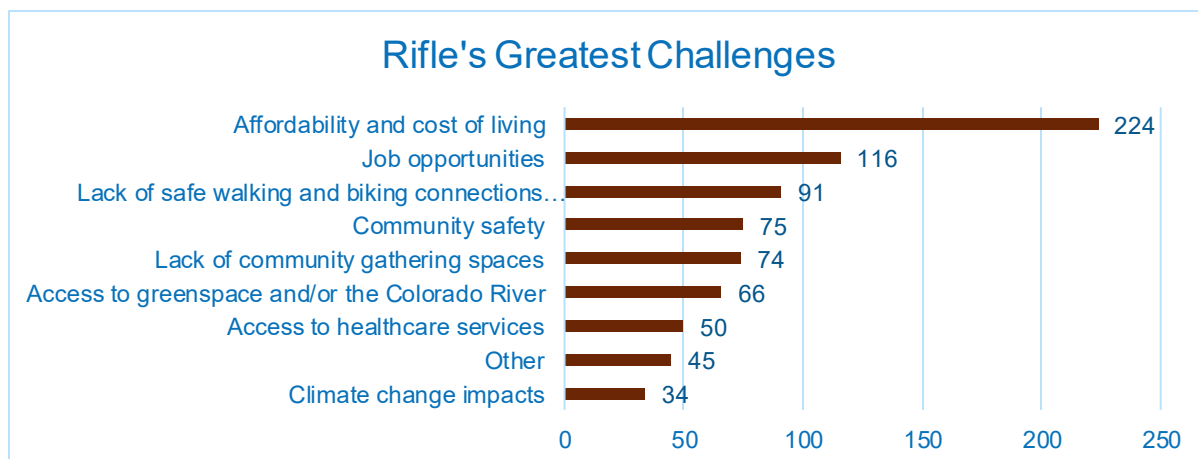
The two most valued aspects of Rifle are its “small town feel” (65%) and its “access to outdoor recreation” (64%). Notably, “job opportunities” was the least selected option, at

5%. Written responses mentioned walkability, the community's history, local parks, family and friends, politics, the Ute Theater, and several comments saying "none."



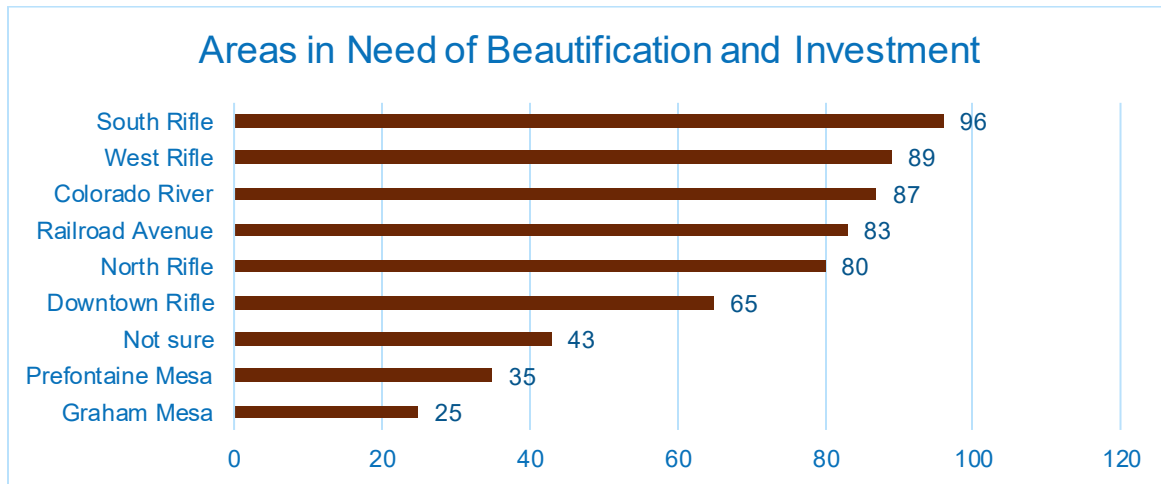
6. What are Rifle's greatest challenges today? (Select up to 5) (n = 265)

The most common answer was "affordability and cost of living" (85%). "Job opportunities" were selected by 44% of respondents, followed by "lack of safe walking and biking connections between destinations" (35%). "Other" write-in responses were submitted by 45 respondents, with the most common comments related to the need for a recreation center (10), transportation-related challenges (9), and the need for more local businesses and jobs (8).



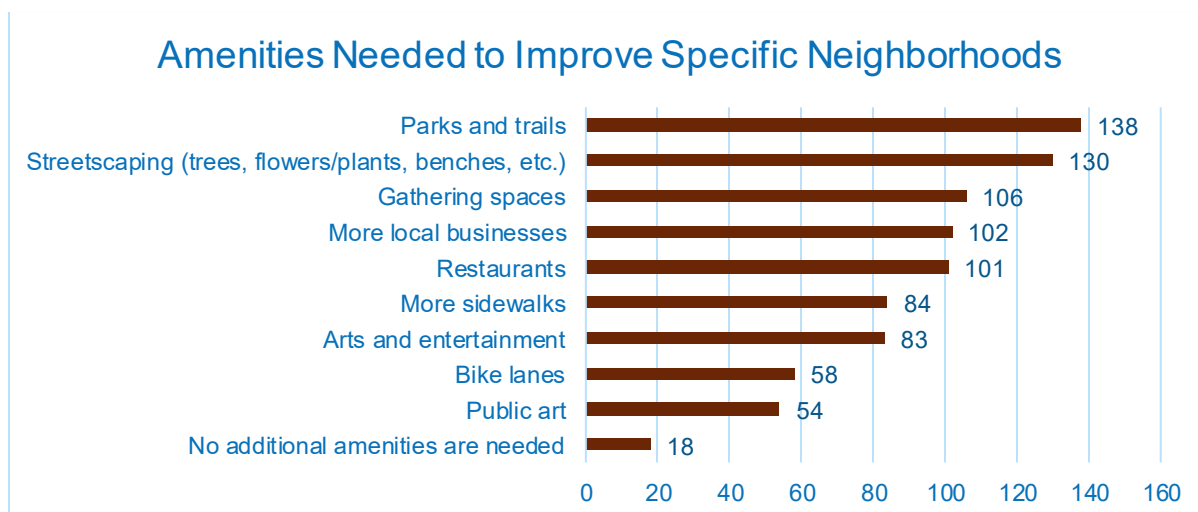
7. Which areas of Rifle are in the greatest need of beautification and investment? (Select all that apply) (n = 262)

South Rifle was chosen as the area with the highest need for beautification and investment by 37% of respondents, followed by West Rifle (34%), Colorado River (33%), Railroad Avenue (32%), and North Rifle (31%). Downtown Rifle only received 25% of responses, while Prefontaine Mesa received 13% and Graham Mesa received only 10%.



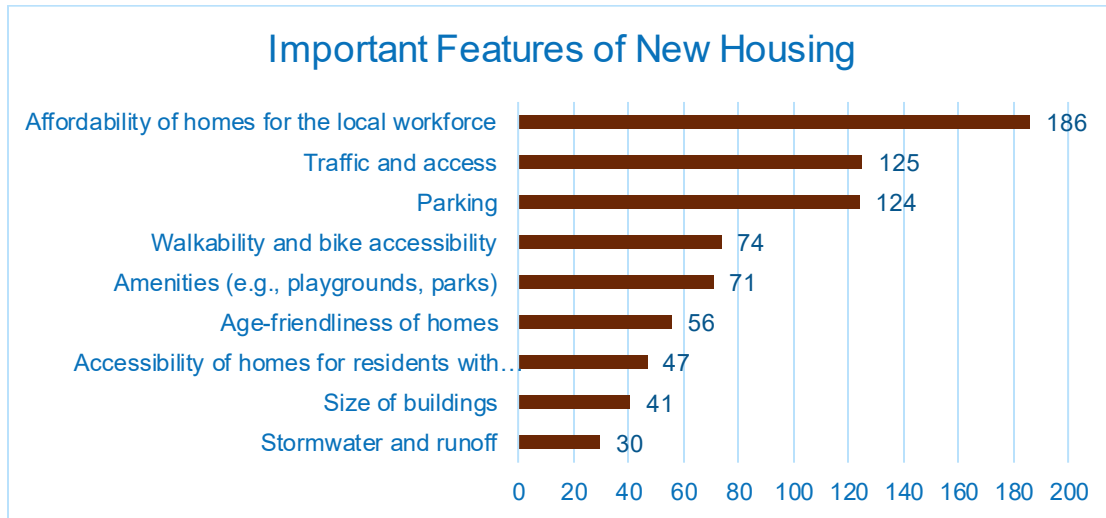
8. What types of amenities would make these areas better places to live and visit? (Select all that apply) (266)

Parks and trails were the most commonly selected amenities needed to improve the neighborhoods mentioned in question 7 (52%), followed by streetscaping (49%), gathering spaces (40%), more local businesses (38%), and restaurants (38%).

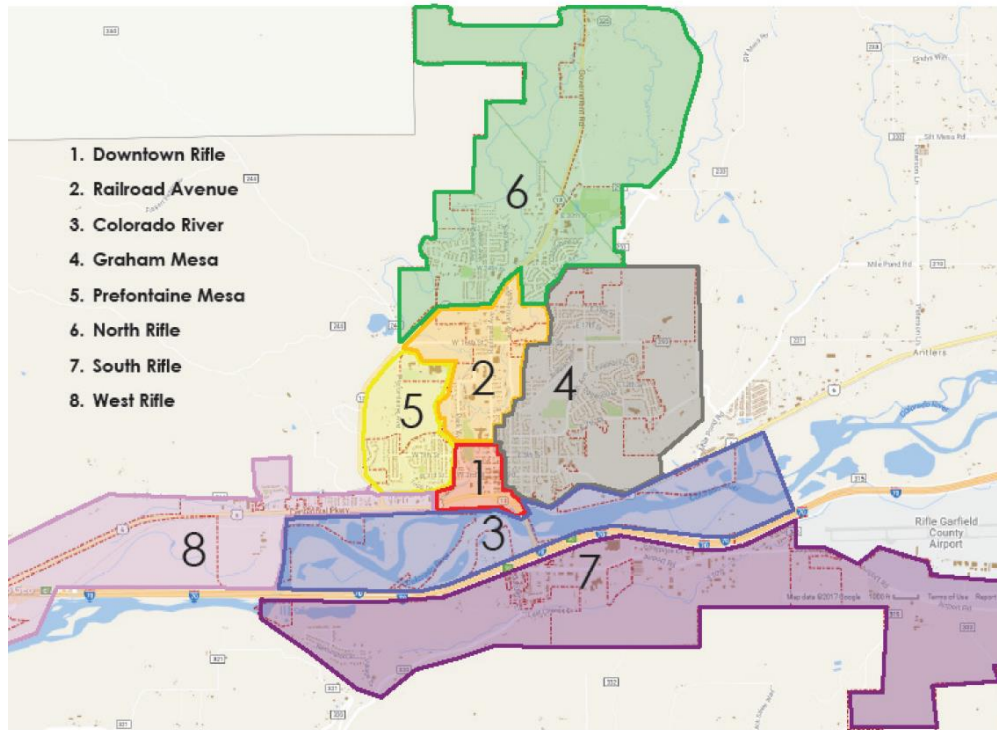


9. What factors should the City consider most when permitting new housing types? (Select up to 4) (n = 253)

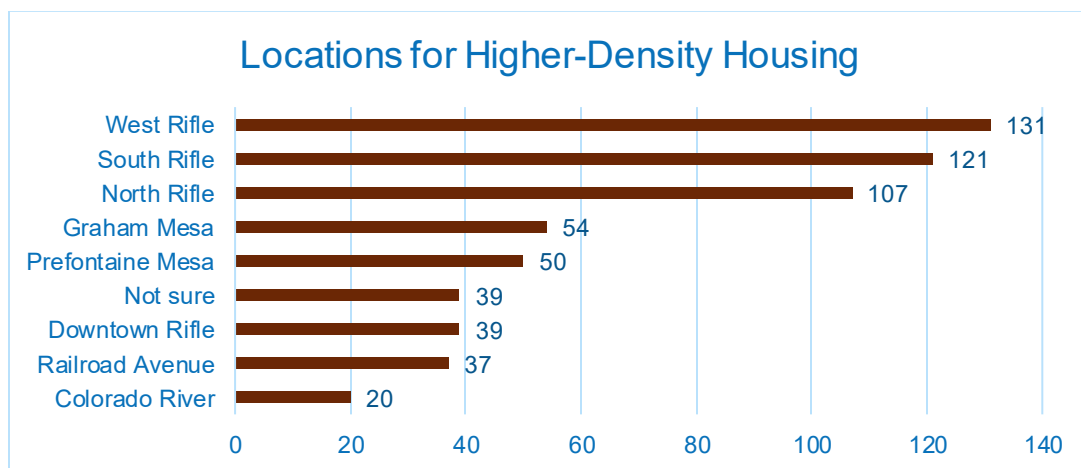
Affordability of homes for the local workforce was the most important factor, selected by 74% of respondents, followed by traffic and access (49%), and parking (49%).



10. The 2025 City of Rifle Housing Study and Action Plan highlights a need to expand housing options, including higher-density housing such as apartments, townhomes, and multi-family housing, to meet future demand and improve affordability. Where should these types of housing go? (Select all that apply) (n = 250)

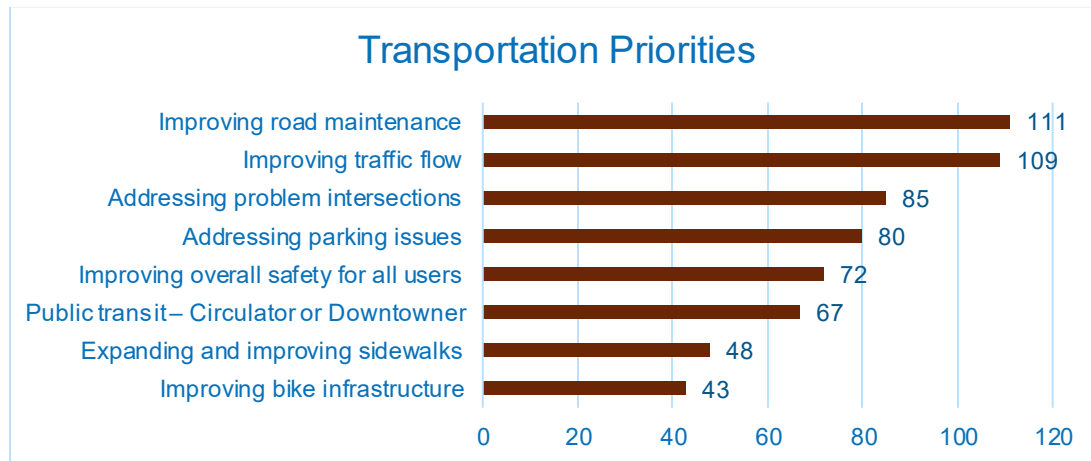


More than half of all respondents selected West Rifle for additional higher-density housing (52%), followed by South Rifle (48%), and North Rifle (43%).



11. What should the top transportation priorities be in Rifle? (Select up to 3) (n = 237)

Improving road maintenance received the most support, with 47% of respondents, followed by improving traffic flow (46%), addressing problem intersections (36%), and addressing parking issues (34%).



12. Please rank the following areas of Rifle based on how comfortable you are walking to destinations in those areas.

Respondents reported feeling most comfortable walking in Downtown Rifle, Railroad Avenue, and Graham Mesa. Prefontaine Mesa and North Rifle were ranked in the middle, while the Colorado River, South Rifle, and West Rifle were all the least comfortable for walking.

12. Please rank the following areas of Rifle based on how comfortable you are walking to destinations in those areas.

Item	Overall Rank	Rank Distribution	Score	No. of Rankings
Downtown Rifle	1		1,452	195
Railroad Avenue	2		1,194	184
Graham Mesa	3		1,000	173
Prefontaine Mesa	4		791	166
North Rifle	5		672	170
Colorado River	6		565	170
South Rifle	7		485	163
West Rifle	8		330	162

Lowest Rank Highest Rank

13. In general, what would make you feel safer while walking in Rifle?

Approximately 164 respondents wrote open responses comments to this question. The most common response themes are included below:

- **Sidewalks, crosswalks, and basic pedestrian infrastructure:** approximately 49 comments, 30%. This was the most common theme by a clear margin. Many respondents asked for more sidewalks, wider sidewalks, better sidewalk maintenance, ADA access, and more visible or better-marked crosswalks. Several comments pointed to gaps in the sidewalk network, especially in North, South, and West Rifle.
- **Lighting and visibility:** approximately 30 comments, 18%. A large share of respondents said they would feel safer with more street lighting, especially in neighborhoods, along walking routes, and at night. Some also linked lighting to better visibility at crossings and intersections.
- **Public safety, police presence, crime, and homelessness:** approximately 28 comments, 17%. Another major theme was visible enforcement and public safety presence. Respondents repeatedly called for more police patrols, attention to drug activity, and action on homelessness, disorder, and crime. This theme often appeared alongside infrastructure requests.
- **Traffic speed, driver behavior, and enforcement:** approximately 26 comments, 16%. Many comments focused on speeding, reckless driving, and the need for traffic enforcement. Respondents mentioned speed cameras, speed bumps, ticketing, and the need for drivers to pay more attention to pedestrians.
- **Trails, connectivity, and walking routes separated from traffic:** approximately 25 comments, 15%. A substantial group of responses emphasized off-street trails, better connections between neighborhoods, and walking routes separated from traffic. This often showed up as a desire for safer access across major barriers like Highway 13, Railroad, or South Rifle.

14. In general, what would make you feel safer while biking in Rifle?

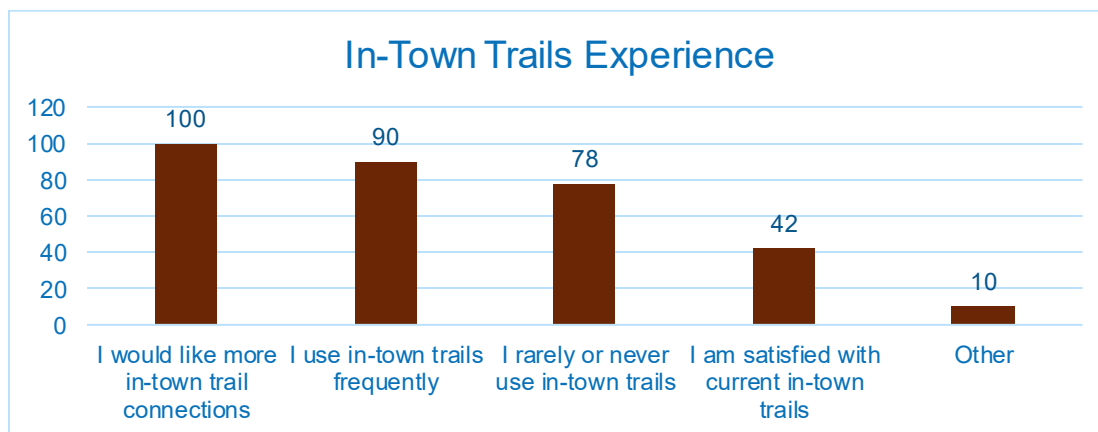
Approximately 145 respondents provided open response comments to this question. The most common response themes are included below:

- **Dedicated bike lanes and protected facilities:** approximately 46 responses (32%). The most common theme is the need for clearly defined bike lanes, especially protected or separated lanes. Many respondents said painted lanes are not sufficient for safety.

- **Trails and off-street bike paths:** approximately 36 responses (25%). Many respondents emphasized the need for off-street trails and multi-use paths, especially those that are connected across town and separated from vehicles.
- **Traffic safety and driver behavior:** approximately 28 responses (19%). A major barrier to biking is unsafe driver behavior, including speeding, distraction, and lack of awareness of cyclists.
- **Connectivity and access across town:** approximately 20 responses (14%). Respondents frequently noted that biking is difficult because routes are disconnected, especially across Highway 13, the railroad, and between North/South Rifle.
- **Low biking participation or opposition:** approximately 15 responses (10%). A noticeable minority said they do not bike, view biking as unsafe regardless of improvements, or do not support investment in biking infrastructure.

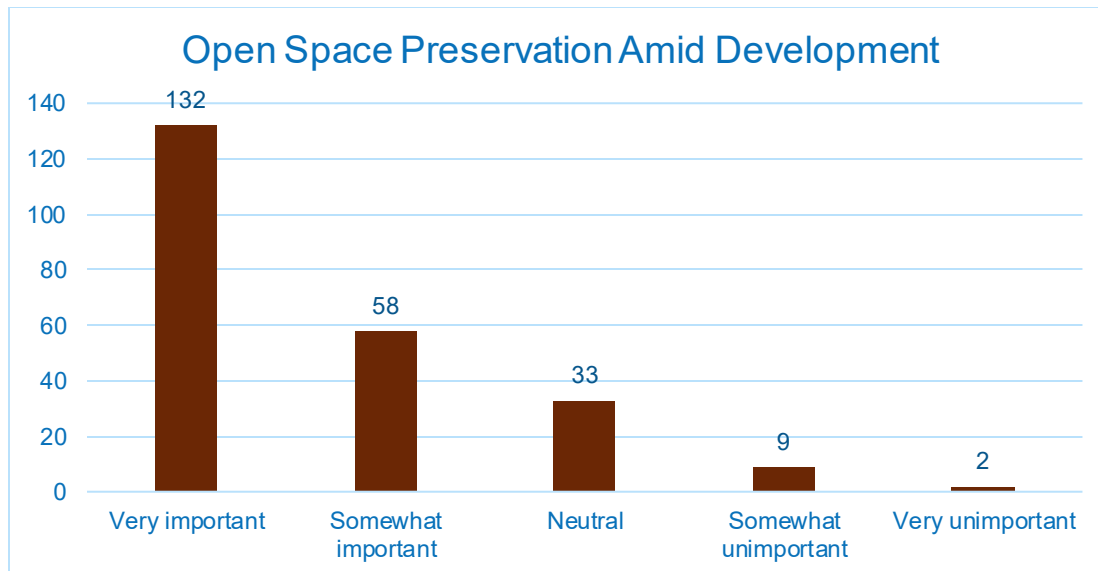
15. Please indicate your experience with in-town trails. (Select all that apply) (n = 230)

The highest proportion of respondents indicated that they would like more in-town trail connections (43%), followed by reporting that they use in-town trails frequently (39%). Approximately 34% reporting rarely or never using in-town trails, and only 18% reported being satisfied with the current in-town trails. Several written comments mentioned concerns over safety and trash, as well as desires for expanded trail systems.



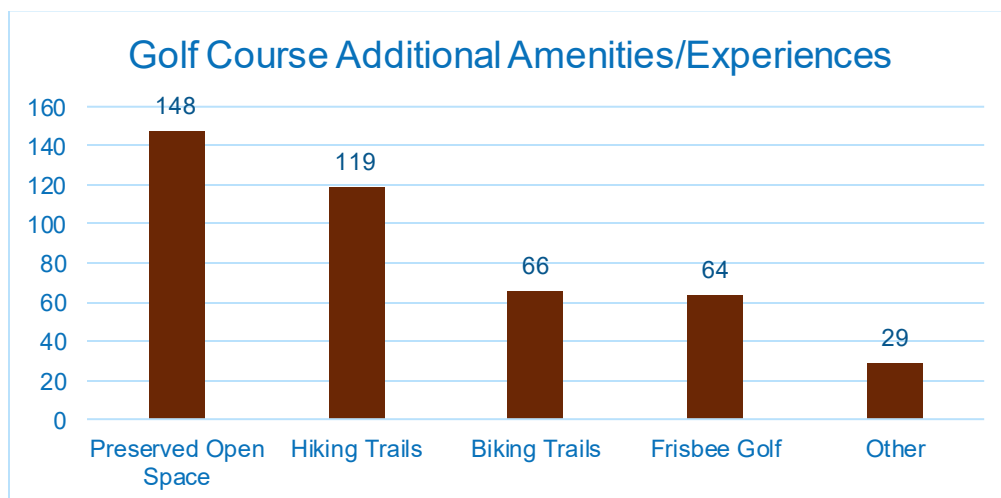
16. When new development is proposed in Rifle, open space can decrease. How important is it to preserve current open space within Rifle? (n = 234)

81% of all respondents indicated that open space preservation was “very important” or “somewhat important” when thinking about new development, and more than half of all respondents indicated that it was “very important” (56%). Only 5% of respondents reported that open space preservation was “somewhat” or “very” unimportant.



17. The City of Rifle recently acquired the Rifle Creek Golf Course. What additional amenities and experiences do you want to see at the golf course? (n = 225)

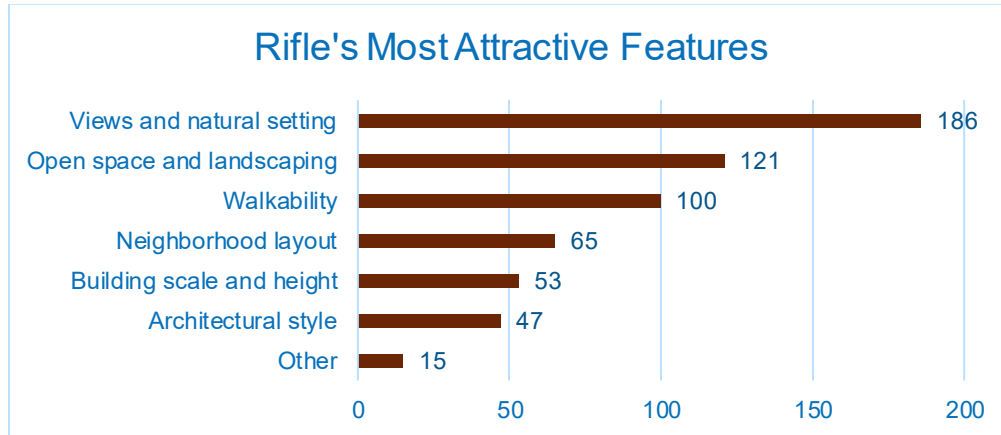
The majority of respondents selected preserved open space (66%) and hiking trails (53%). Biking trails were selected by 29% of respondents, followed by frisbee golf (28%). Written responses included additional ideas such as outdoor event space (3), rock climbing (2), a community/recreation center (3), camping (3), wildlife habitat (3), and several comments encouraging the space to be used only for golf (2).



18. What are the most attractive features of Rifle? (Select all that apply) (n = 221)

Views and natural setting was the most common response (84%), followed by open space and landscaping (55%) and walkability (45%). Built form of the city was less

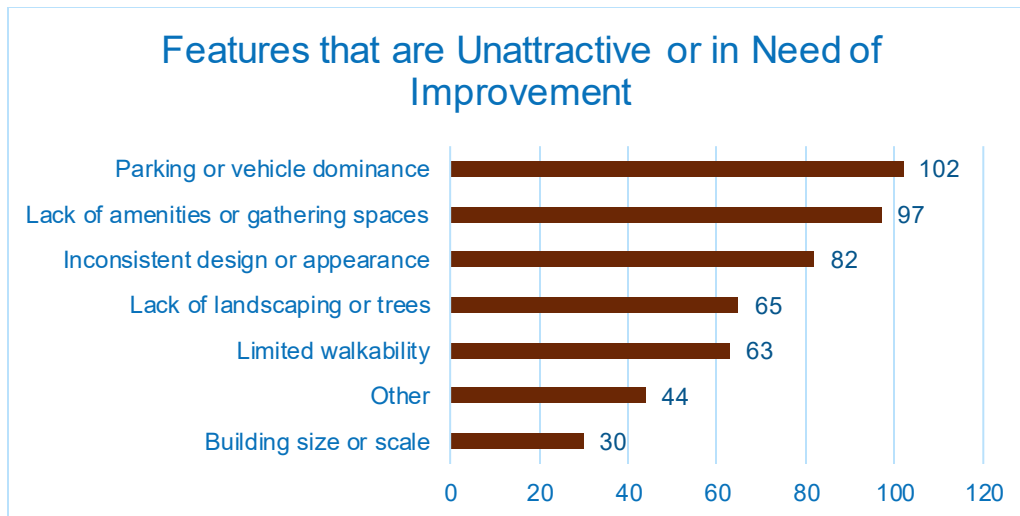
important or attractive, including the neighborhood layout (29%), the building scale and height (24%), and the architectural style (21%). Written responses included comments about access to parks and outdoor recreation (4), as well as several comments requesting specific improvements.



19. What makes Rifle less attractive or in need of improvement? (Select all that apply) (n = 217)

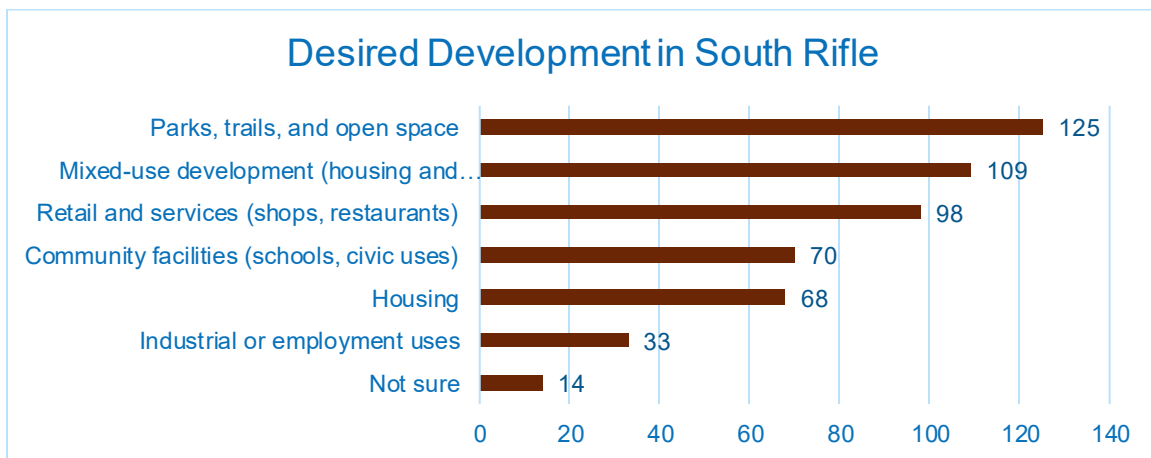
Parking or vehicle dominance was the most common answer (47%), followed by a lack of amenities or gathering spaces (45%) and inconsistent design or appearance (38%). Building size or scale were notably only a concern to 14% of respondents. Written responses included the following themes:

- Property maintenance / blight (vehicles, trash, rundown homes, code enforcement) (10)
- Growth, overcrowding & housing concerns (6)
- Need for recreation center & lack of gathering spaces (5)
- Dining variety (too much fast food/Mexican, want more options) (5)
- Aesthetics & town character (ugly, no charm, design issues, yards) (4)
- Transportation & infrastructure (traffic, bike lanes, trails) (3)
- Safety (crime, drugs, homelessness, lighting) (3)
- Downtown/business vitality (empty stores, signage, lack of retail) (3)
- Cleanliness (trash, lack of garbage cans, creek upkeep) (2)
- General economic/business concerns (local services, development costs) (2)



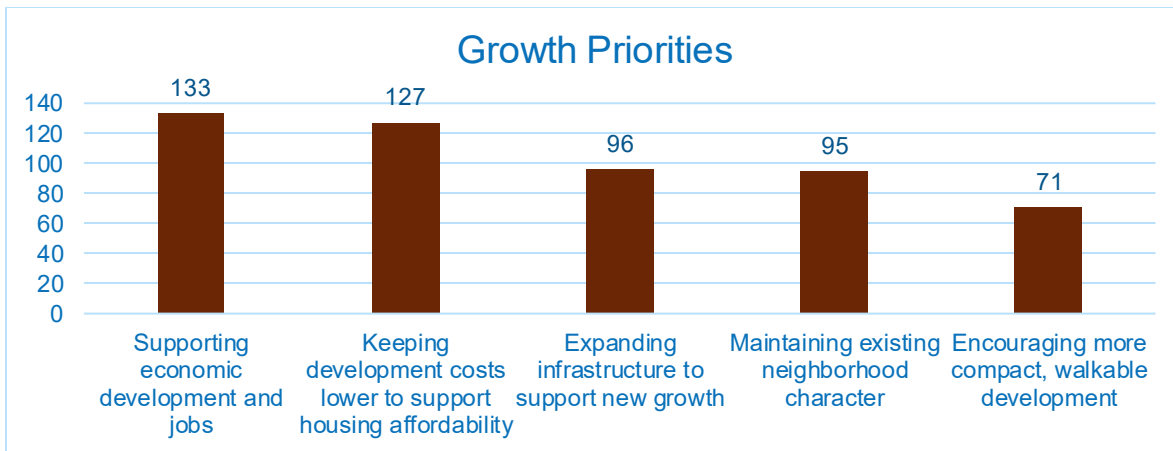
20. What types of development would you like to see in South Rifle? (Select up to 3) (n = 227)

The most common response was parks, trails, and open space (55%), followed by mixed-use development (48%) and retail and services (43%). Notably, industrial or employment uses was the least common response, with 15% of responses.



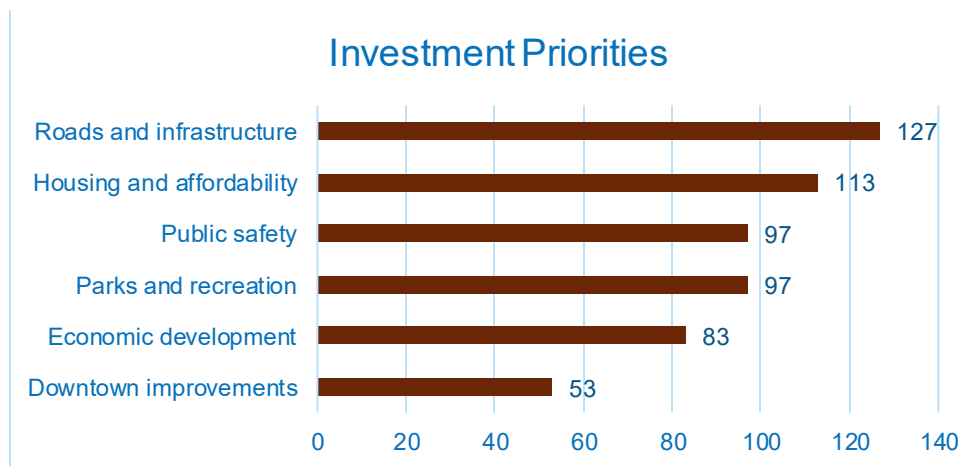
21. When planning for growth, what should the City prioritize? (Select up to 3) (n = 222)

Supporting economic development and jobs was the most common response (60%), followed by keeping development costs lower to support housing affordability (57%). Expanding infrastructure to support new growth and maintaining existing neighborhood character each received 43% of responses, while encouraging more compact, walkable development received the least responses (32%).



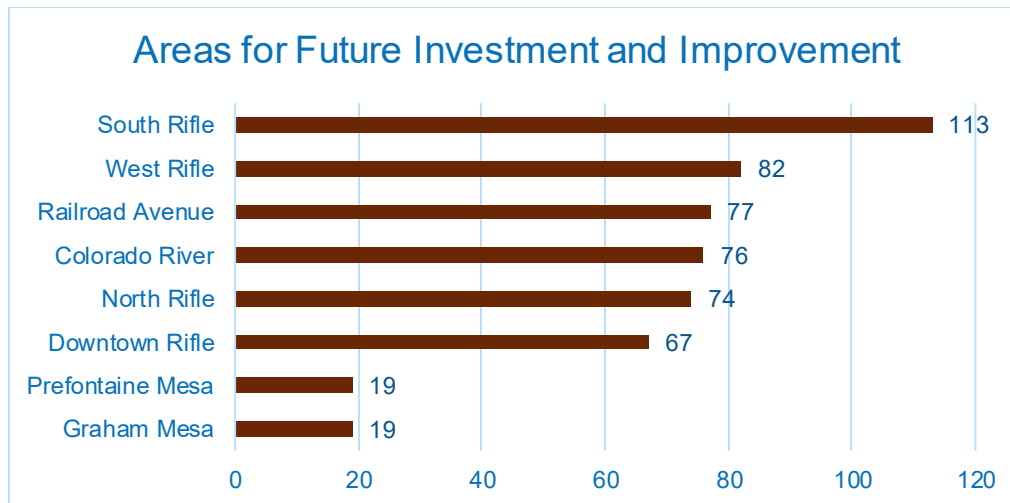
22. Where should the City focus the most investment? (Select up to 3) (n = 222)

Roads and infrastructure was the most commonly selected investment priority (57%), followed by housing and affordability (51%). Public safety and parks and recreation each received 44% of responses, while economic development received 37% of responses and downtown improvements received the least, with 24%.



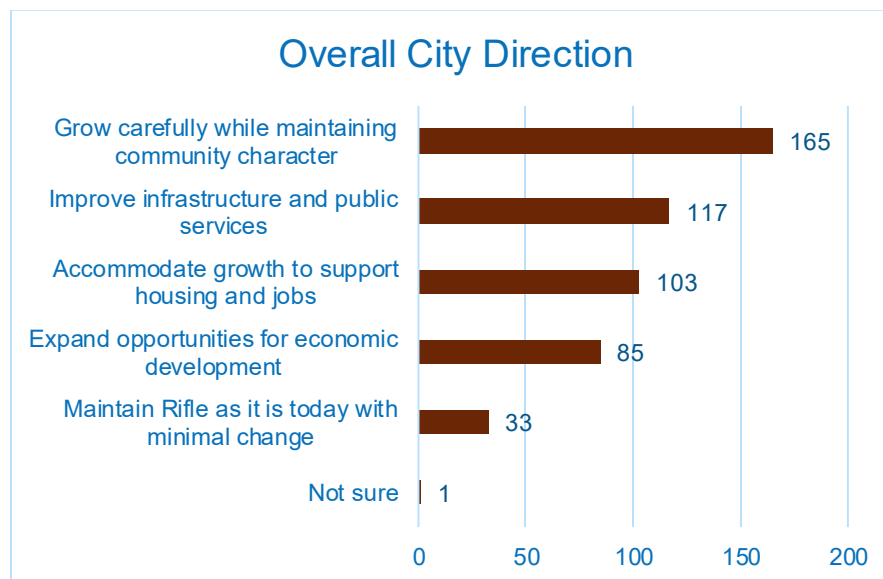
23. Which areas of Rifle should be prioritized for future investment and improvements? (Select up to 3) (n = 213)

South Rifle received the most responses for area to be prioritized for future investment and improvements (53%), followed by West Rifle (38%), Railroad Avenue (36%), Colorado River (36%), and North Rifle (35%). Downtown Rifle received 31% of responses, while Prefontaine Mesa and Graham Mesa both received only 9% each.



24. Thinking about the future of Rifle, what overall direction should the City take? (Select all that apply) (n = 221)

Growing carefully while maintaining community character received the highest number of responses (75%), followed by improve infrastructure and public services (53%), and accommodate growth to support housing and jobs (47%). Expanding opportunities for economic development received 38% of responses, while “maintain Rifle as it is today with minimal change” only received 15%.



25. Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share?

Approximately 100 respondents provided additional comments, addressing a range of topics. The most common themes are described below:

1. Recreation center and community facilities: 32 responses (32%)

The most common theme is a strong and repeated call for an indoor recreation center or community gathering space. Many respondents emphasized the lack of year-round activities and a need for facilities serving youth, families, and seniors.

- “Rifle needs an indoor rec center!!!”
- “We need a recreation center with a lap pool. URGENTLY.”
- “A recreation center would be beyond beneficial.”
- “This community desperately needs a real recreation center... Build a recreation center.”

2. Growth, housing, and affordability concerns: 22 responses (22%)

Many comments focus on rapid growth, housing prices, and development patterns. Respondents expressed mixed views, but common concerns included affordability, overdevelopment, and the type of housing being built.

- “We need dense housing, not luxury housing.”
- “Stop letting developers building 600+ houses.”
- “Overpopulated, too many new builds.”
- “Prioritize maintaining the city of rifle as an affordable place to live.”

3. Public safety, crime, and homelessness: 18 responses (18%)

A significant portion of responses raised concerns about crime, drug activity, and homelessness, often tied to perceptions of safety and overall quality of life.

- “Allowing the police to clean up the drugs throughout.”
- “Homeless population and sketchy neighborhood reduction.”
- “Too many homeless people hang around certain areas.”
- “Public safety! I used to feel comfortable running and walking in this town... not anymore.”

4. Economic development and local amenities: 15 responses (15%)

Many respondents want more jobs, retail, and services in Rifle, noting that limited options require frequent travel to other communities.

- “Rifle is in need of more stores... Walmart is packed 24/7.”
- “We need more retail here.”
- “It would be nice to see some small commercial centers in the North Rifle Area.”
- “Make it easier for new businesses to come here.”

5. Community character, cleanliness, and maintenance: 13 responses (13%)

A smaller but consistent theme focuses on community appearance, upkeep, and maintaining character, including concerns about trash, property conditions, and preserving Rifle's identity.

- "We have a lot of trash all over town... let's beautify and maintain what we have."
- "Clean up the trash and cars in neighborhoods."
- "There are a lot of low-income homes that are not maintained... making the city look poor."
- "Preservation of character and open spaces are important."