



Special Workshop
Economic Opportunity Advisory Board
Held at the Grand County Commissioner's Meeting
Room
125 E Center Street
Moab, Utah 84532

AGENDA
January 15, 2025

Zoom And Youtube Meeting Information

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://Us02web.zoom.us/j/84013922560?Pwd=Qbxjbarkaa0wjtygndb9won3nd7j4.1>

Meeting ID: 840 1392 2560

Passcode: 135246

Call To Order

Citizens To Be Heard

Opening Items

- Welcome
- Introductions
- Conflicts Of Interest, Disclosures, Ex-Parte Communication
- Citizens To Be Heard
- Presentations, If Any

Discussion And Action Items

Presentation Of Draft "GC General Plan_ Strong And Resilient Economy Chapter W Redlines" Document

- Chris Wilson

Workshop: Collect Feedback From Board Members On Key Questions, Including:

- 1. Setup: Do The Opening Paragraphs Adequately Summarize The Context, Challenges And Opportunities In The Grand County Economy?**
- 2. Structure: Do The Three Main Sections—The Visitor Economy, Addressing Fundamentals,**

And Supporting Local Businesses—Make Sense? How About The Sub-Headings?

Development And Prioritization Of Policy Recommendations: Board To Be Led In Review Of Draft Plan Sections, Asked For Ideas, And Assigned Related Tasks And Deliverables

Determination Of Continued Process: Board Members To Offer Guidance On Process And Propose A Timeline And Due Dates

Update On Rural County Grant FY25 Award

Adjourn

NOTICE OF SPECIAL ACCOMMODATION DURING PUBLIC MEETINGS. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, individuals with special needs requests wishing to attend Grand County Commission meetings/hearings and other Grand County Boards, Commissions, or Committees are encouraged to contact the County two (2) business days in advance of these events. Specific accommodations necessary to allow participation of disabled persons will be provided to the maximum extent possible. T.D.D. (Telecommunication Device for the Deaf) calls can be answered at: (435) 259-1346. Individuals with speech and/or hearing impairments may also call the Relay Utah by dialing 711. Spanish Relay Utah: 1 (888) 346-3162

It is hereby the policy of Grand County that elected and appointed representatives, staff and members of the Grand County Commission meetings/hearings and other Grand County Boards, Commissions, or Committees may participate in meetings through electronic means. Any form of telecommunication may be used, as long as it allows for real time interaction in the way of discussions, questions and answers, and voting.

At the Grand County Commission meetings/hearings and other Grand County Boards, Commissions, or Committees any citizen, property owner, or public official may be heard on any agenda subject. The number of persons heard and the time allowed for each individual maybe limited at the sole discretion of the Chair. On matters set for public hearings there is a three-minute time limit per person to allow maximum public participation. Upon being recognized by the Chair, please advance to the microphone, state your full name and address, whom you represent, and the subject matter. No person shall interrupt legislative proceedings.

Requests for inclusion on an agenda and supporting documentation must be received by 5:00 PM on the Wednesday prior to a regular Commission Meeting and forty-eight (48) hours prior to any Special Commission Meeting. **Information relative to these meetings/hearings may be obtained at the GrandCounty Commission's Office, 125 East Center Street, Moab, Utah; (435)259-1346.**

Section ####: Strong and Resilient Economy

OVERVIEW

*~~“As For~~ one of the most beautiful places on the planet, Grand County has the opportunity to
also be among the best places to live, play, work, and do business.”*

Grand County seeks to facilitate the development of a strong and resilient economy, one that supports good jobs and a high quality of life for all residents. The foundation of the Grand County economy is in its world-class public lands, which draw visitors from around the region and world to adventure and sightsee. Millions of visitors come to Grand County each year to experience the beauty of our National and State Parks and to adventure on our public lands, which are home to world-class rafting, off-roading, biking, hiking, climbing, and many other outdoor activities. Through direct, indirect, and induced means, Grand County’s visitation economy supports the vast majority of jobs across the county and helps to sustain services—from medical to dining and retail—that would not otherwise be available in a small, rural community. Visitation by guests that come to fall in love with and help us steward Grand County’s public lands is valuable and encouraged. While visitation drives Grand County’s economy, it also strains the county’s housing market, public lands, and other local resources that must be actively managed to ensure economic and environmental sustainability.

Grand County’s economic development strategy, therefore, must be to keep the visitation and outdoor recreation sectors-motors of the economy running at a world class level smoothly while mitigating the stresses that high levels of visitation place on the local economy and quality of life.

In 2023-2024, the County undertook an extensive community engagement and planning exercise, leading to the creation of the *Trail to Tomorrow: A 5-year strategic plan for sustainable tourism*,

economic diversification, and asset-based community economic development in Grand County, Utah,
which informs this section of the General Plan and is included as an annex to this chapter.

The Visitor Economy

- a. Strengthen: Tap into the strength of our brand to attract all visitors ~~who~~^{that} seek genuine connection to our public lands and will care for them during their visit.
- b. Add Resiliency: The visitor economy experiences ups and downs, whether seasonal or based on longer-term economic trends. Grand County seeks especially to disburse its visitation peaks across early spring and late fall periods and prepare for macro-economic trends.
- c. Protect: Our economy is driven by visitation to regional public lands. Grand County will proactively work with visitors and land managers to ensure the sustainability of those resources for generations to come.
 - i. More than 95% of land in Grand County is controlled by federal, state, or tribal managers.
- d. Specific Strategies for each of the above sections.
 - i. Strengthen
 1. Use a modern and targeted approach to communicate with potential visitors that is integrated with efforts to build resources/infrastructure/trails for them.
 - a. Specific strategies for sightseers and each different type of adventurer
 - i. Sight-seers
 1. More easily accessible outdoor experiences
that require no gear or training

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ii. Hikers

iii. Off-Road

1. More named trails and suggested routes needed.

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iii. Off-road

1. Jeep

2. OHV

iv. Biking

1. MTB, road, e-bike

v. River

vi. Climbing

vii. Canyoneering

viii. High-lining

ix. Base-jumping

1. Utilize and maintain best practices for managing each of the above user groups

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b. Managing public lands

i. Work with land managers

ii. Advocate to protect public lands

1. Utilizing best practices in both visitor management and conservation to And for reasonable access to support the local economy while protecting the economic and environmental sustainability of those resources.

2. Cultural Activities

- a. Music
- b. Art
- c. Film

3. Connectivity

a. Air

i. maintain consistent viable air service supplier contracts

ii. support new routes with visitor marketing in relevant geographic areas

iii. support infrastructure improvements at the CNY

b. Regional roadways

c. Railway

4. Downtown Moab

a. Encourage local businesses to meet changing economic needs through federal and state programs

5. Thompson Springs and the I-70 corridor

5.

ii. Resiliency

1. Work to prepare for inevitable ebbs and flows in revenue due to macro economic changes

a. adjust marketing campaigns to focus in key markets ie. more regionally when events constrain international travel and visa versa when international markets are in a growth cycle

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Commented [1]: Do we need to add some macro level suggestions for improving and maintaining these places?

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b. identify federal and state programs promptly when a downturn is predicted

#c. encourage right size infrastructure development to avoid over or under supply of key visitor services

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2.

1.3. Film might fit here better. *Need to list Film as an industry somewhere*

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2.4. Weddings here or under small business? Yes list Weddings as an SB

iii. Protect

1. Support and connect visitors with relevant conservation and education efforts.

a. Support aAgro-tourism and voluntourism could fit here

a-b. Support outdoor education in all sectors

Addressing Fundamentals

Work Eliminating bottlenecks to economic development and working to ensure all residents have a place in the Grand County economy.

e. Workforce

i. The housing shortage for our local workforce is perhaps the biggest obstacle to strengthening the Grand County economy. The county has facilitated and made significant investment in addressing this challenge in recent years (add some numbers). Still, 45% of homeowners have mortgages exceeding 30% of their income, and resident surveys have found housing affordability tops the list of economic concerns.

1. Ask Kaitlin and others for help with a few paragraphs here

2. Priority Strategies: Supporting the land use plan update to encourage housing creation;

3. ~~Develop temporary services to accomodate~~ensuring local workers living out of vehicles ~~to provide~~have access to safe and sanitary living conditions; while more permanent solutions are found

2-a. ~~Consider purchasing a hotel from a willing seller for this~~
purpose-???!-

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3.4. List of grant opportunities and reliable funding sources, econ dev related plugins that should always be on GC's radar so that EDD continues to support housing even if only through funding means

ii. Attract workers for the high quality of life Grand County offers

f. Education

i. ~~Facilitate connections between local businesses and the~~While this is primarily a function of the GCSD and USU, to better prepare all residents for local job opportunities. ~~A~~ strong education system is vital to local economic health and should therefore be supported by local economic development organizations and local businesses ~~whenever possible.~~

1. Emphasis on vocational training related to needs in local industries.

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2. Emphasis on vocational training related to natural resources management.

g. Childcare

i. Essential to workforce

ii. Ask Rob Walker to help write a short paragraph here

h. Buildable Land (Ask Amy for some language for this short section)

i. Land use policy update

ii. Review land ownership near existing infrastructure to identify possible buildable land opportunities with willing owners in all categories

i. Noise and Traffic Mitigation

i. Noise - strengthen partnerships with businesses that contribute (rental outfitters, short term rental operators)

1. Explore rerouting certain types of traffic in ways that could benefit both locals and visitors

ii. Traffic mitigation - work with city of Moab and UDOT

j. Supporting local non-profits that support vulnerable residents of Grand County and fill gaps in public services

i. Create a mandate to provide ongoing support to the public services ecosystem that is supported by nonprofits?

ii. Maintain a current database of federal, state, and private foundation funders focused on supporting vulnerable foundations

Supporting Local Businesses and Entrepreneurs

k. Encourage and support local entrepreneurs at all levels to fill local and visitor needs with local resources to keep revenues local whenever possible. We have tons of entrepreneurs but not nearly enough support for them

i. Work with state offices to ensure state-funded programs are working at peak performance for Grand County businesses

ii. Create additional support structures for local businesses

1. Support a process to assess viability and seek potential federal and/or state funding for a business Incubator/accelerator

2. Chamber supported clearinghouse for support?

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Commented [2]: The point above might be a little to close to government picking winners and losers--but meanwhile connecting local businesses to good advice is critical and the Chamber is interested in doing this work

3. Reach out to munis and businesses with better support for their entrepreneurs, ask what it took and understand success cases
4. Define common buzzwords and standard industry implements - maker space, incubator, microload, rotating loan, etc - and suggest how GC could be an effective facilitator in these spaces
5. RURAL BROADBAND

Commented [3]: There are some places where the collapse of an industry posed an existential threat and they pulled together to save themselves. Think Leavenworth WA when the timber industry left, but in general remote communities have a hard time getting to critical mass on economic ecosystems but I agree we should research this

Commented [4]: this might be a better assignment for the Chamber as this doc wants to stay a bit more macro--maybe??

iii. Policies to support Entrepreneurs and Small Business

1. Support local entrepreneurs as they navigate licensing, especially for home-based businesses, which are key to economic development in Grand County due to limited availability and affordability of commercial real estate.
- l. Target "tourism-adjacent" / public land related / rural focused industries to broaden our economic base while taking advantage of local economic assets, our rural setting and our public lands.
 1. Weddings and conferences
 - a. Weddings in particular are already a growing industry. With support
 2. Food—beverage—agriculture ecosystem
 - a. Grand County has developed a strong hospitality industry to serve visitors. It also has a strong history of ranching and agriculture. Opportunities for growth include agro-tourism, food production (small-scale food manufacturing), support for catering and restaurant startups,
 - b. Support a process to assess viability and seek potential federal and/or state funding for a multi-user commercial kitchen to

support local food-industry startups and small businesses.
Assess the viability of a long-term County role in supporting
such a facility.

3. Search and Rescue and outdoor recreation guiding education

- a. Grand County has exceptional SAR and guiding services. The concentration of knowledge in these sectors can be leveraged to make Grand County a center for instruction and the development of best practices.

- i. Could tie into Addressing Fundamentals > Education

4. Creative Economy

- a. Film: Ask Bega for a short paragraph on impact and strategy for growth
- b. Art
- c. Artisans

5. Natural Resources

5-a. Take a pro-active approach to resource extraction that does not rely on speculative investors, but rather focuses on economically viable natural resources that could be sustainably sourced using pre-planned restoration techniques

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% of grand county that is federal land (need to work with land managers to utilize and protect this resource)

KEYWORDS FOR WRITERS

- Stewardship
- Visitation, visitation economy
- Guest
- Balance

DRAFT