



PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION WILL MEET FOR A REGULAR MEETING IN THE

Grand County Commission Chambers 125 East Center Street, Moab, Utah
June 22, 2026 - 5:30 PM

Call To Order

[Youtube Link](#)

Join Zoom Meeting

[Zoom Link](#)

Meeting ID: 420 993 8173

Find Your Local Number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/kenwhyag3>

Citizens To Be Heard

We are receiving public comments by phone and online through Zoom. Dial: (669) 900 - 6833 Meeting ID: 420 993 8173 Planning Commission Zoom Link When joining the meeting, you will be placed in a waiting room and be added to the meeting by the moderator. Your comments will be recorded and on YouTube. (Unmute for public comment: *6)

Public Comments Received Via Email

Andrew Jackson, Planning and Zoning Director

Ex Parte Communications And Disclosures

Approval Of Meeting Minutes

May 26, 2026

June 8, 2026

Presentations (15 Min)

County Commission Update

Public Hearings

1. Water Use & Preservation Element

Andrew Jackson, Planning and Zoning Director

General Business - Action Items - Discussion And Consideration Of Approval

Discussion Items

2. July 2026 Planning Commission Meeting Schedule

Andrew Jackson, Planning and Zoning Director

Future Considerations

Amended Bylaws

Andrew Jackson, Planning and Zoning Director

Non-Motorized Trails

Andrew Jackson, Planning and Zoning Director

Future Land Use Plan

Andrew Jackson, Planning and Zoning Director

Agriculture Preservation

Andrew Jackson, Planning and Zoning Director

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 Tuesday 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.**

MINUTES OF THE GRAND COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
Monday, May 26, 2026 at 5:30 p.m. – 125 E. Center St., Moab, UT 84532

The Grand County Planning Commission held its regular meeting on the above date, with attendees participating in person and remotely via Zoom, <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4209938173>
Meeting ID: 420 993 8173

YouTube recording of the meeting can be viewed at
<https://www.youtube.com/@GrandCountyUtahGovernment>
Previous recordings archived at www.grandcountyutah.gov/AgendaCenter

Members Present:

Megan Schafer, Vice Chair
Mary Hofhine
Aaron Lindberg
Robert O'Brien
Randy Day
Sara Kimmerle

Members Absent:

Jerry Klaes, Chair

Staff Present:

Andrew Jackson, P&Z Director
Lisa Ceniceros
Trish Hedin, Commission Liaison
Brian Martinez, Commission Liaison

Call to Order 5:31 p.m.

Planning Commission Vice Chair Schafer called the meeting to order.

Citizen Comments 5:32 p.m.

Mike Wolfe spoke regarding Data Centers and urged the Planning Commission to recommend a moratorium to the County Commission; he also noted that water is very important.

Ex Parte Communications and Disclosures 5:34 p.m.

None; there was some discussion regarding Ex Parte communications and disclosures.

Approval Of Meeting Minutes 5:45 p.m.

None.

Presentations (15 min.) 5:46 p.m.

None.

County Commission Update 5:46 p.m.

County Commission Liaisons Hedin and Martinez provided updates on items recently heard by the County Commission and other items of interest.

Public Hearings 5:49 p.m.

None.

General Business – Action Items - Discussion and Consideration of Approval 5:49 p.m.

None.

Discussion Items 5:49 p.m.

1. Water Use & Preservation Element of the General Plan

Andrew Jackson, Planning & Zoning Director, presented. There was discussion.

- 2. Data Center Staff Report 7:47 p.m.**
Andrew Jackson presented. There was discussion.

Future Considerations

Public Comments, Public Hearing for the Water Use & Preservation Element, and Data Center water use.

Adjourn 7:57 p.m.

Motion: R. Day moved to adjourn; A. Lindberg provided the second. The motion passed with a vote of 6-0-0.

Yeas – 7

M. Schafer
A. Lindberg
R. Day
S. Kimmerle
M. Hofhine
R. O'Brien

Nays - 0

Abs - 0

DRAFT

MINUTES OF THE GRAND COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
Monday, June 8, 2026 at 5:30 p.m. – 125 E. Center St., Moab, UT 84532

The Grand County Planning Commission held its regular meeting on the above date, with attendees participating in person and remotely via Zoom, <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4209938173>
Meeting ID: 420 993 8173

YouTube recording of the meeting can be viewed at
<https://www.youtube.com/@GrandCountyUtahGovernment>
Previous recordings archived at www.grandcountyutah.gov/AgendaCenter
Sara Kimmerle

Members Present:

Jerry Klaes, Chair
Megan Schafer, Vice Chair
Mary Hofhine
Aaron Lindberg
Robert O'Brien
Randy Day

Members Absent:

Staff Present:

Andrew Jackson, P&Z Director
Lisa Cenicerros
Brian Martinez, Commission Liaison

Call to Order 5:30 p.m.
Planning Commission Chair Klaes called the meeting to order.

Residents To Be Heard 5:30 p.m.
None

Ex Parte Communications and Disclosures 5:31 p.m.
None; there was some discussion regarding Ex Parte communications and disclosures.

Approval Of Meeting Minutes 5:31 p.m.

April 6, 2026

Motion: M. Schafer moved to approve the April 6, 2026 minutes; S. Kimmerle provided the second. The motion passed 6-0-1.

Yeas – 6

M. Schafer
A. Lindberg
R. Day
S. Kimmerle
J. Klaes
R. O'Brien

Nays - 0

Abs - 1

M. Hofhine

April 27, 2026

Motion: R. Day moved to approve the April 27, 2026 minutes; R. O'Brien provided the second. The motion passed 7-0-0.

Yeas – 7

J. Klaes
M. Schafer

A. Lindberg
R. Day
S. Kimmerle
M. Hofhine
R. O'Brien
Nays - 0

Abs - 0

May 11, 2026

Motion: R. Day moved to approve the May 11, 2026 minutes; M. Schafer provided the second. The motion passed 6-0-1.

Yeas – 6

M. Schafer
A. Lindberg
R. Day
S. Kimmerle
J. Klaes
R. O'Brien

Nays - 0

Abs - 1

M. Hofhine

Presentations (15 min.)

Discussion on Public Comment and The Public Comment Portal 5:33 p.m.

A. Jackson presented; there was discussion.

County Commission Update 5:52 p.m.

County Commission Liaison Martinez provided updates on items recently heard by the County Commission and other items of interest.

General Business – Action Items - Discussion and Consideration of Approval

Discussion Items

Data Centers Discussion 5:54 p.m.

A. Jackson presented; there was discussion.

Public Hearings 6:19 p.m.

1. Burr Oaks Zoning Map Amendment Rural Residential to Large Lot Residential 6:22 p.m.

A. Jackson presented; there was discussion.

Motion: R. Day moved to open the public hearing; R. O'Brien provided the second. The motion passed 7-0-0.

Yeas – 7

J. Klaes
M. Schafer
A. Lindberg
R. Day
S. Kimmerle
J. Klaes
R. O'Brien

Nays - 0

Abs - 0

Ryon Jones spoke on behalf of himself and his co-applicants.

6: 26 p.m. Gary Bennett spoke on behalf of Teryl Dickerson regarding the proposed rezone.

Motion: R. O'Brien moved to send a favorable recommendation to the County Commission to approve the rezone, finding that the rezone fits the Land Use Map and Spanish Valley density is appropriate in this case, section 9.2.5 of the Land Use Code, density intensity; R. Day provided the second. The motion passed 7-0-0.
6:42 p.m.

Yeas – 7

J. Klaes
M. Schafer
A. Lindberg
R. Day
S. Kimmerle
J. Klaes
R. O'Brien

Nays - 0

Abs - 0

Future Considerations 6:42 p.m.

Summary of Data Centers, amended Bylaws, Sunrise Engineering will present a Land Use Code audit to the Planning Commission on July 13, 2026, and discuss the July 2026 Planning Commission meeting schedule at the next meeting on June 22, 2026.

Adjourn 6:47 p.m.

Motion: R. O'Brien moved to adjourn; S. Kimmerle provided the second. The motion passed with a vote of 7-0-0.

Yeas - 7

J. Klaes
M. Schafer
A. Lindberg
R. Day
S. Kimmerle
M. Hofhine
R. O'Brien

Nays - 0

Abs - 0

DRAFT



AGENDA SUMMARY

Planning Commission Meeting

Date: June 22, 2026

Title: Water Use & Preservation Element

Fiscal Impact:

If this submission is from the general public you will need a commission sponsor, feel free to contact the Commission Administrators Office with any questions commadmin@grandcountyutah.net (435) 259-1342 or contact the Commissioners directly at commission@grandcountyutah.net

Presenter(s): Andrew Jackson, Planning and Zoning Director

Department: Planning and Zoning

Legal Review:

Approved and within budget? Not Applicable

Budget Number:

Recommended Motion:

I move to send a favorable recommendation for the Water Use & Preservation Element to the Grand County Commission.

Background:

Attachments:

1. Grand_County_Water_Element_Public_Hearing_Notice final
2. Grand_County_Water_Element_Staff_Report final 6-5-26
3. Grand_County_Water_Use_Preservation_Element_Simplified 6-1-26
4. Grand_County_Water_Element_Adoption_Ordinance final 6-5-26

**PUBLIC NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
GRAND COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
June 22, 2026, 6:00 P.M. or Later**

Description/Agenda

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Grand County Planning Commission will hold a Public Hearing at its Regular Meeting on Monday, June 22, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. or later. The hearing will be held in person at the Grand County Commission Chambers, 125 E. Center Street, Moab, Utah 84532, and virtually via Zoom.

All interested parties are encouraged to attend in person or via electronic means. Instructions for participating via Zoom will be included in the meeting agenda, which will be posted on the County's website at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.

PURPOSE OF HEARING

The purpose of this hearing is to solicit public input and consider a recommendation to the Grand County Commission regarding the proposed adoption of the **Water Use and Preservation Element** of the Grand County General Plan (06-01-26 Edition), an amendment to the Grand County General Plan.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED AMENDMENT

The County proposes to adopt the Water Use and Preservation Element as a component of the Grand County General Plan, as required by Utah Code §17-79-403, as amended by Senate Bill 110 (2022) and Senate Bill 76 (2023). The Element applies countywide within the unincorporated areas of Grand County and addresses the effects of development on water demand and infrastructure; methods to reduce water demand for existing and future development; and opportunities for the County to reduce water waste in its own operations. The Element was prepared in cooperation with the Grand Water and Sewer Service Agency, the Thompson Special Service Water District, and the Arches Special Service District.

SUMMARY OF THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT

Plain English Summary:

This proposed amendment adds the Water Use and Preservation Element (06-01-26 Edition) to the Grand County General Plan. State law requires the County's general plan to include a water element like this one. The Element is a planning guide, not a regulation. It looks at how growth affects water use and systems, and identifies ways to use less water in new and existing development and in the County's own operations. It does not regulate private property, grant water rights, or guarantee water service. Those matters remain governed by state law and the local water providers.

A complete copy of the proposed Element is available for public review during regular business hours at the Grand County Planning Department, 59 North 200 East, Moab, Utah, and is available on the Grand County Planning and Zoning Department Website.

NOTICE OF POSTING

Notice was posted within Grand County on June 12, 2026, at the Grand County Courthouse, the Grand County Public Library, the Utah Public Notice Website (www.utah.gov/pmnm), and the Grand County website (www.grandcountyutah.gov). This notice is provided as a Class A notice under Utah Code §63G-30-102 and in accordance with Utah Code §17-79-204.

NOTICE OF SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS (ADA)

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, individuals needing special accommodations, including auxiliary communicative aids and services, should notify Grand County at least two (2) business days prior to the meeting.

T.D.D.: 435-259-1346

Relay Utah: 711

Spanish Relay Utah: 1-888-346-3162

NOTICE OF ELECTRONIC PARTICIPATION

Grand County allows electronic participation in meetings, including the ability to provide testimony through telecommunications technology. Instructions for electronic participation will be included with the meeting agenda.

PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

*Recommend the adoption of the
Water Use & Preservation Element of the Grand County General Plan*

TO: Grand County Planning Commission
FROM: Andrew K. Jackson, AICP, CTP — County Planner
DATE: June 1, 2026
HEARING: June 22, 2026
RE: Water Use & Preservation Element of the Grand County General Plan (06-01-26 Edition)

Request

Staff requests that the Planning Commission hold a public hearing and forward a recommendation to the Grand County Commission to adopt the Water Use & Preservation Element (the “Element”) as a component of the Grand County General Plan. The Element was prepared in cooperation with the Grand Water and Sewer Service Agency (GWSSA), the Thompson Special Service Water District (TSSWD), and the Arches Special Service District (ASSD).

Statutory Authority & Compliance

Utah Code §17-79-403(2)(v), as amended by Senate Bill 110 (2022) and Senate Bill 76 (2023), directs the County to incorporate a water use and preservation element into its general plan. The statute requires the element to address four subjects. The Element responds to each, as summarized below:

Statutory requirement	Where addressed
(A) Effect of permitted development and land use patterns on water demand and infrastructure	Section 5
(B) Methods of reducing water demand for future development	Section 6
(C) Methods of reducing water demand for existing development	Section 7
(D) Opportunities for the County to modify operations to eliminate water waste	Section 8

Because the Element amends the General Plan, adoption follows the General Plan amendment process under Utah Code Title 17, Chapter 79, including Planning Commission review and a public hearing, a recommendation to the County Commission, and adoption by the County Commission after its own public hearing.

Nature of the Document

The Element is a policy and coordination tool, not a regulatory ordinance or capital commitment. As stated in its disclaimer, it does not guarantee water availability, allocate or administer water rights (a function of the Utah Division of Water Rights), or obligate any provider to serve. The County does not own or operate public water systems; its role is to align land-use decisions with provider capabilities and to require will-serve confirmation before approval.

Key Findings

- **Setting:** Grand County is an arid, groundwater-dependent county; recharge relies on La Sal Mountain snowpack and cannot be assumed to expand with growth.
- **Growth:** Population is projected to rise from roughly 10,000 (2025) to about 14,300 (2065), with substantial seasonal tourism demand on top of the resident baseline.
- **Current demand:** Total system demand is approximately 2,400–2,500 acre-feet/year — about 988 AF culinary and about 1,490 AF irrigation/secondary.
- **Per capita use:** System-wide use is about 184 GPCD, currently within the State’s regional conservation target.
- **Primary lever:** Outdoor culinary irrigation is the largest and most controllable component of demand and the chief driver of peak system stress.
- **System loss:** Distribution losses run about 7–8% of culinary production (roughly 80–90 AF/year).
- **Savings potential:** Combined conservation and infrastructure measures can reduce demand by an estimated 800–1,500+ AF/year — enough to offset projected growth and hold total demand near current levels.
- **Constrained areas:** Crescent Junction and Thompson Springs remain water-constrained following the UMTRA cleanup and require demonstrated water rights and new infrastructure before significant development.

Principal Policy Direction

- Align growth with water availability and verified infrastructure capacity (water-rights documentation, provider will-serve, and peak-demand capacity at development review).
- Reserve treated drinking water for indoor use and shift outdoor irrigation to non-potable sources or secondary water, requiring connection where GWSSA secondary infrastructure exists and evaluating feasibility elsewhere.
- Reduce outdoor demand through landscape and irrigation standards (limit non-functional turf, drought-tolerant planting, drip and smart controllers).
- Reduce demand in existing development through turf-conversion incentives, retrofits, provider pricing/demand management, and leak reduction.
- Lead by example through County facility and landscape efficiency improvements.
- Strengthen regional coordination and pursue funding, primarily through the Permanent Community Impact Board (PCIB).

General Plan Consistency

The Element is consistent with and advances the goals of the Grand County General Plan. It provides a framework for evaluating the relationship among development, water demand, and infrastructure, and it outlines the development-review criteria, goals, policies, and a 2026–2040+ phasing strategy needed to implement it. It does not conflict with other adopted plans; in the event of conflict, state law and water-rights administration control, and provider service determinations prevail.

Public Process

- Notice of public hearing published and posted per Utah Code requirements.
- Coordination with GWSSA, TSSWD, and ASSD during preparation.
- Public comment received at the hearing and incorporated as appropriate.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission forward a **positive recommendation** to the Grand County Commission to adopt the Water Use & Preservation Element (06-01-26 Edition) as a component of the Grand County General Plan.

Suggested Motion

"I move that the Planning Commission recommend that the Grand County Commission adopt the Water Use & Preservation Element of the Grand County General Plan (06-01-26 Edition), based on the findings and analysis in the staff report and the public record."

Attachments

- Water Use & Preservation Element of the Grand County General Plan (06-01-26 Edition)
- Public hearing notice

WATER USE & PRESERVATION ELEMENT

Of the Grand County General Plan

JUNE 2026

06-01-26 Edition



GRAND COUNTY
— U T A H —

In cooperation with the Grand Water and Sewer Service Agency, the Thompson Special Service Water District, and the Arches Special Service District.

DISCLAIMER

This Water Use and Preservation Element is part of the Grand County General Plan and serves as a planning and policy document. It guides land-use decision-making and establishes a framework for evaluating the relationships among development, water demand, and available infrastructure. It does not constitute a regulatory document, a capital improvement commitment, or a guarantee of water availability.

1. No Guarantee of Water Availability or Service

Nothing in this Element shall be interpreted as:

- A guarantee of water availability for any property, project, or use;
- An assurance of water service by any water provider; or
- A commitment by Grand County or any other entity to construct, finance, or maintain water infrastructure.

All development proposals are subject to independent verification of water availability by the applicable provider.

2. No Allocation or Control of Water Rights

Grand County does not allocate or administer water rights. Authority over water rights is vested in the Utah Division of Water Rights, governed by state law. This Element does not allocate, modify, or create any entitlement to water use.

3. Planning Assumptions and Projections

Analyses, projections, and estimates are based on the best available data at the time of adoption and are intended for planning purposes only. They are subject to change and should not be relied upon as precise forecasts for specific projects or investments.

4. Infrastructure and Funding Uncertainty

Infrastructure projects identified in this Element are conceptual and subject to engineering feasibility assessments, environmental reviews, funding availability, and interagency coordination. Inclusion of a project does not constitute a commitment to construct or fund it.

5. Third-Party Systems and Operations

Water systems in Grand County are owned and operated by independent entities. The County does not control system operations, maintenance, or service decisions. County development approvals do not obligate providers to deliver water service; rather, the County does not approve developments without will-serve letters from the appropriate water provider.

6. No Creation of Vested Rights or Entitlements

This Element does not create vested development rights, entitlements to water service, or legal claims against the County or any water provider. All land use decisions remain subject to applicable laws, regulations, and approval processes.

7. Relationship to Other Plans and Regulations

In the event of conflict, state law and water rights administration shall control; water provider determinations regarding their capacity and service shall prevail. This Element shall be interpreted as a policy guide rather than a controlling regulatory document.

8. Limitation of Liability

Grand County shall not be liable for decisions made by third-party water providers, changes in water availability or system capacity, or reliance on planning-level projections contained in this Element.

This Element provides a framework for planning and coordination, not a guarantee of water service. All development decisions must be supported by independent verification of water availability, infrastructure capacity, and regulatory compliance.

8. Focus is Water Use and Water Demand

The focus of this element is water use and water demand. For individuals, water use is often expressed as gallons per capita. The water demand is the number of gallons of water used per capita times the number of people using the water. In this Element, water demand is typically measured in acre-feet. This Element does not address the issue of water supply.

DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

This Element is based on a review of planning documents, water system data, state guidance materials, and technical resources relevant to water demand and land use in Grand County.

1. Grand County Planning Documents

- Grand County General Plan (current adopted version)
- Spanish Valley Future Land Use Plan
- Grand County Land Use and Development Management Code
- Previous planning studies and policy documents related to land use, growth, and infrastructure

2. Water Provider Plans and System Data

- Grand Water & Sewer Service Agency (GWSSA) planning documents and system data
- Arches Special Service District (ASSD) system information and operational data
- Thompson Special Service Water District (TSSWD) system information
- Moab City Water Conservation Plan Update
- Castle Valley Water Management Plan

3. State Planning Guidance and Technical Resources

- Utah Division of Water Resources – State Water Plan and regional planning documents
- Utah Division of Water Resources – Water conservation guidance and per capita use targets
- Utah Division of Water Rights – water rights administration and regulatory information
- Relevant provisions of Utah Code §17-79-403(2)(v), including amendments under Senate Bill 110 (2022) and Senate Bill 76 (2023)

4. Local and Project-Specific Information

- Data related to the Uranium Mill Tailings Remedial Action (UMTRA) project in Crescent Junction and Thompson Springs
- Local water use estimates, including culinary and irrigation demand
- Population projections and demographic data used for demand modeling

5. Funding and Implementation Resources

- Guidance materials and program information for the Permanent Community Impact Board (PCIB)
- State and federal funding program information relevant to water infrastructure and conservation

SECTION 1. INTRODUCTION

Grand County, Utah, lies in an arid high-desert environment where water availability is limited and variable. Precipitation is low, evapotranspiration rates are high, and groundwater recharge depends on the snowpack in the La Sal Mountains. These conditions create a constrained water supply that does not inherently expand with population growth or development.

The County's primary water sources include groundwater from the Glen Canyon, Castle Valley, and Valley Fill Aquifers, supplemented by surface water stored at Ken's Lake Reservoir and by limited spring-fed systems. These sources support culinary and irrigation uses throughout the County but are subject to physical and operational limitations. Culinary water is derived only from the Glen Canyon and Castle Valley Aquifers. Ken's Lake and the Valley Fill Aquifer are the sources of secondary water.

Grand County continues to experience steady population growth and significant seasonal fluctuations driven by tourism and recreation. These factors increase both baseline and peak water demand, placing additional pressure on water systems, storage capacity, and distribution infrastructure.

This Water Use and Preservation Element is adopted in accordance with Utah Code §17-79-403(2)(v), as amended by Senate Bill 110 (2022) and Senate Bill 76 (2023). This Element addresses:

- The effect of permitted development and land use patterns on water demand and infrastructure;
- Methods of reducing water demand and per capita consumption for future development;
- Methods of reducing water demand and per capita consumption for existing development; and
- Opportunities for the County to modify its operations to eliminate practices or conditions that waste water.

The purpose of this Element is to integrate water-demand considerations into land-use planning and decision-making. A central premise is that water availability is a limiting constraint on development, not a condition that can be assumed to expand with growth.

The County does not operate public water systems. Independent entities, including the GWSSA, the ASSD, the TSSWD, and other providers, provide water service. This Element serves as a policy and coordination tool to align land-use decisions with water conditions and to support coordination between the County and water providers.

The GWSSA provides drinking and agricultural irrigation water to Spanish Valley and nearby unincorporated areas. The system includes four production wells that draw from the Glen Canyon Aquifer, an EPA-designated Sole Source Aquifer. It diverts surface water from Mill Creek through the Sheley Tunnel into Ken's Lake Reservoir. It maintains about 4.5 million gallons of

drinking water storage and supplies about 3,631 acre-feet of drinking water rights and 7,823 acre-feet of irrigation or secondary water rights annually.

The ASSD provides sanitary sewer service within its service area. Culinary water is sourced from private shares of Colorado River Water, serving two hotel properties and the Canyonlands by Night and Day tour company.

The TSSWD serves a small community and relies on two springs in Thompson Canyon for its drinking water. System reliability depends on the continuous operation of production, storage, and distribution components, as well as the district's ability to prevent and repair leaks.

The County also recognizes the unique conditions associated with the completion of the UMTRA project at Crescent Junction and Thompson Springs. Although legacy contamination has been removed, these areas remain constrained by limited water infrastructure. Future development will require demonstrated water rights and long-term infrastructure reliability.

Implementing this Element will require coordination, investment, and funding. Grand County will seek financial support through programs such as the Permanent Community Impact Board (PCIB) to advance infrastructure projects and support system improvements in water-constrained areas.

SECTION 2. POPULATION GROWTH AND DEMAND DRIVERS

Population growth is the primary long-term driver of water demand in Grand County and provides the analytical foundation for evaluating future water demand. This section establishes the relationship among projected population trends, seasonal demand variability, and land use patterns.

Grand County is expected to grow from approximately 10,000 residents in 2025 to approximately 14,300 by 2065. Although moderate in rate, this growth reflects a sustained increase in baseline demand that must be accounted for in long-term water planning.

2.1 Seasonal Demand

In addition to permanent residents, Grand County experiences substantial seasonal fluctuations associated with tourism and recreation. These increases have important implications:

- **Peak Demand:** Visitor activity increases short-term water demand about one and a half times the demand associated with permanent residents. Outdoor watering during the summer months increases demand by about four times that of winter demand;
- **Infrastructure Sizing:** Water systems must be designed to accommodate peak rather than average demand; and
- **Operational Stress:** Wells, storage tanks, and distribution systems experience increased stress during high-use periods.

2.2 Land Use Patterns and Demand

The manner in which growth occurs — particularly land use patterns and development design — has a direct effect on per capita water use:

- **Low-Density Development:** Larger lots with large irrigated landscapes increase outdoor water demand and should be located in areas with water rights;
- **Higher-Density Development:** Compact development may reduce irrigated area and lower per capita use;
- **Landscape Design:** Turf-intensive landscaping significantly increases demand, while drought-tolerant landscaping reduces it; and
- Large lot residential is more appropriate in areas where secondary water is available.

2.3 Spatial Distribution of Growth

Growth is expected in Spanish Valley and GWSSA-served areas, in unincorporated areas with limited infrastructure, and in Crescent Junction and Thompson Springs (post-UMTRA). In water-constrained areas, development must be evaluated based on demonstrated water rights, infrastructure feasibility, and long-term reliability.

2.4 Key Findings

- Grand County will continue to experience population growth over the planning horizon;
- Population growth will increase baseline water demand in the absence of conservation measures;
- Seasonal tourism slightly increases peak demand;
- Land use patterns and development design are critical determinants of per capita water use, especially in areas with large outdoor turf areas; and
- The spatial distribution of growth affects infrastructure needs and system capacity.

SECTION 3. GRAND COUNTY WATER PROFILE

This section describes the physical water systems, infrastructure conditions, and institutional framework that define water availability in Grand County.

3.1 Water Sources

Groundwater

Groundwater is the primary culinary water source in the County. The principal aquifers include:

- Glen Canyon Aquifer, designated as a Sole Source Aquifer by the EPA;
- Valley Fill Aquifer, which provides a localized supply in developed areas.

Recharge occurs slowly and largely depends on the snowpack in the La Sal Mountains. These systems must be managed conservatively to maintain long-term sustainability.

Surface Water and Storage

Ken's Lake Reservoir stores diverted water and supports agricultural irrigation and secondary water systems in Spanish Valley. Surface water availability varies with hydrologic conditions and cannot be relied on as a fully stable source without careful management.

Spring Systems

Spring-fed systems supply water in localized areas, particularly in Thompson Springs. These systems have limited capacity and minimal redundancy, making them sensitive to demand increases and fluctuations.

Non-Potable Colorado River Water for Irrigation

Colorado River water represents a significant opportunity to reduce pressure on drinking water systems by serving outdoor irrigation demand with non-potable water. Grand County and GWSSA hold Colorado River water rights that are not currently developed for large-scale use, but which could be applied to irrigation and landscape watering in areas where infrastructure allows.

The core principle is straightforward: drinking water — drawn from the Glen Canyon Aquifer and treated to culinary standards — is a finite and carefully managed resource. It should be reserved for indoor uses where water quality is essential: drinking, cooking, and sanitation. Outdoor irrigation, which accounts for the majority of total water demand in the summer months, does not require that level of treatment. Supplying it with non-potable Colorado River water frees up drinking water capacity and reduces the burden on groundwater systems.

GWSSA currently operates a secondary water system in Spanish Valley that delivers non-potable irrigation water from Ken's Lake, separate from its culinary supply. This dual-system model forms the foundation for expanding non-potable use. Where secondary water infrastructure is available or can be extended, new development should be required to use it for all outdoor irrigation rather than drawing from the culinary system. Support should be given to local water providers in their efforts to secure new water sources.

In areas where secondary infrastructure does not yet exist, the County will coordinate with GWSSA and other providers to evaluate the feasibility of extension. Development in those areas may be contingent on participation in future expansion of the secondary system, particularly for higher-intensity uses with significant irrigation demand.

Use of non-potable Colorado River water for irrigation is subject to state water rights administration and must comply with applicable diversion and use requirements. The County will coordinate with the Utah Division of Water Rights and relevant providers to ensure that expanded non-potable irrigation use is consistent with existing rights and approvals.

3.2 Infrastructure Systems and Service Areas

Multiple independent entities, including GWSSA, ASSD, and TSSWD, provide water service. These systems include production wells, storage tanks, pumping facilities, and distribution networks. Infrastructure capacity varies significantly across the County. The County neither owns nor operates these systems, nor does it control water rights; its role is to align land use decisions with these providers' capabilities.

3.3 System Constraints

- Groundwater recharge is slow; water availability cannot be assumed to increase with demand;
- Well production rates, storage volume, and distribution network limitations limit system capacity;
- Peak demand during the irrigation season can strain system capacity; and
- Smaller rural systems have limited redundancy, increasing vulnerability to supply interruptions.

3.4 Crescent Junction and Thompson Springs

These areas remain water-constrained despite completion of the UMTRA project.

- Crescent Junction lacks a centralized culinary water system and requires well, storage, and distribution infrastructure before significant growth can occur; and
- Thompson Springs relies on limited spring-fed systems with minimal redundancy and requires upgrades to support reliability.

Development in these areas must be evaluated based on demonstrated water rights, infrastructure feasibility, and long-term reliability.

3.5 Funding and Implementation Context

The development of water infrastructure requires substantial financial investment. Grand County will pursue funding through the Permanent Community Impact Board (PCIB) and other state and federal programs to support rural system improvements, expansion of storage and distribution systems, and conservation and efficiency programs.

3.6 Key Findings

- Natural and infrastructure conditions constrain culinary water availability in Grand County;
- Groundwater systems provide the primary water source, but recharge slowly;
- Infrastructure capacity varies significantly and limits development potential in certain areas;
- Crescent Junction and Thompson Springs remain water-constrained;
- Long-term water planning depends on coordination, funding, and infrastructure development;
- The Grand County Land Use Code should address development within sole-source aquifer areas; and
- Property owners with septic tanks/systems are encouraged to regularly maintain their systems and, where practical, upgrade them to newer technologies.

SECTION 4. WATER USE CONDITIONS

This section describes existing water use patterns, including total demand, per capita consumption, outdoor irrigation, system efficiency, and seasonal variability. These conditions establish the baseline against which future demand projections and conservation strategies are evaluated.

4.1 Total Water Demand

Based on available provider data, total system demand is approximately:

- Culinary Demand: ~988 acre-feet per year;
- Irrigation and Secondary Demand: ~1,490 acre-feet per year; and
- Total System Demand: ~2,400–2,500 acre-feet per year

Culinary demand is relatively stable and predictable. Irrigation demand varies significantly based on weather conditions, landscape design, and seasonal occupancy.

4.2 Per Capita Water Use

Average system-wide water use is estimated at 184 gallons per capita per day (GPCD), which is currently within the regional conservation target established by the Utah Division of Water Resources. Reducing per capita water use over time is necessary to offset the effects of population growth.

4.3 Culinary Outdoor Water Use and Irrigation

Culinary outdoor irrigation is the largest discretionary component of water demand and the most significant opportunity for long-term reduction. In peak months, outdoor use significantly exceeds indoor demand, making it the primary driver of both total demand and peak system stress.

4.4 Seasonal Demand and Peak Conditions

Peak demand typically occurs during spring and summer irrigation seasons. Infrastructure must be sized to meet peak demand, not average demand. Managing peak demand is essential to avoiding costly infrastructure expansion.

4.5 System Efficiency and Water Loss

Current system losses are estimated at approximately 7–8 percent of total culinary production, or roughly 80–90 acre-feet per year. Sources of loss include distribution system leaks, meter inaccuracies, and system flushing. Reducing system losses effectively increases available water without the need to develop new infrastructure.

4.6 Key Findings

- Outdoor irrigation represents the largest and most controllable component of water demand;
- Total water demand is driven more by irrigation and seasonal factors than by indoor use;
- Per capita water use is within regional targets but should continue to decline to offset growth;
- Peak demand is the primary driver of infrastructure requirements; and
- System losses present opportunities for improvement.

SECTION 5. EFFECT OF DEVELOPMENT ON WATER DEMAND (§17-79-403(2)(v)(A))

This section evaluates the relationship between projected development patterns and future water demand, and assesses the implications on existing and planned water infrastructure. The analysis is based on population projections from Section 2 and current water use patterns from Section 4.

5.1 Demand Management

Water demand in Grand County is not solely a function of population growth. It is shaped by how development is designed, how landscapes are managed, and what conservation standards are applied. Without intervention, continued growth will increase total demand and place additional pressure on infrastructure. However, achievable conservation measures — such as limiting non-functional turf, requiring efficient irrigation systems, and expanding use of non-potable water for outdoor uses, and some indoor uses — can offset growth-related increases and keep total demand at or near current levels. More aggressive measures can reduce demand below current levels even as the population grows.

5.2 Interpretation of Demand Scenarios

- Under the Baseline Scenario, total demand increases through 2060;
- Under the 20% Moderate Conservation Scenario, total demand increases more slowly than in current conditions;
- Under the 30% High Conservation Scenario, total demand increases significantly less than current levels.

These results establish that water demand is not solely a function of growth, but is strongly influenced by policy, design, and management decisions.

5.3 Infrastructure Implications

Without conservation, continued growth would necessitate significant capital investment in system expansion. Peak demand conditions represent the most critical constraint on infrastructure, as they can exceed pumping capacity, deplete storage reserves, and increase the risk of service interruptions.

Development in areas with limited infrastructure — such as Crescent Junction and Thompson Springs — may require new water sources, infrastructure construction, and demonstrated long-term reliability before proceeding.

5.4 Key Findings

- Population growth will increase baseline water demand in the absence of conservation measures;
- Outdoor irrigation is the primary driver of increased demand associated with development;
- Moderate conservation measures can offset the additional demand associated with projected growth;
- Peak seasonal demand is the primary constraint on infrastructure capacity; and
- Development design and land use policy are the primary determinants of water demand.

SECTION 6. METHODS OF REDUCING WATER DEMAND FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT (§17-79-403(2)(v)(B))

This section identifies methods to reduce water demand associated with future development. The most effective demand-reduction strategies are those embedded in land use regulations, development standards, and infrastructure requirements.

6.1 Land Use and Development Pattern Controls

- Encourage compact and clustered development to reduce irrigated areas;
- Discourage large-lot, water-intensive development in areas with limited infrastructure or water rights;
- Align zoning and future land use designations with long-term water availability; and
- Limit development intensity in areas where infrastructure capacity is constrained.

6.2 Landscape Design Standards

The County will require:

- Limitation or prohibition of non-functional turf;
- Use of drought-tolerant and climate-adapted plant materials;
- Hydro zoning to group plants with similar water needs; and
- Reduction of irrigated areas to those that serve a functional purpose.

6.3 Irrigation System Requirements

The County will require:

- Installation of drip irrigation systems or equivalent high-efficiency technology;
- Encourage the use of secondary water, including permanent year-round secondary water infrastructure;
- Use of smart irrigation controllers that adjust watering based on weather conditions; and
- Design standards that minimize overspray, runoff, and evaporation losses.

6.4 Water-Efficient Building Design

The County will require or encourage the installation of high-efficiency plumbing fixtures and water-efficient appliances in new construction. The County may also encourage the use of non-potable water for certain indoor uses.

6.5 Development Review Requirements

All development proposals must demonstrate:

- Availability of legally recognized water rights;
- Confirmation of system capacity from the applicable water provider; and
- Ability to deliver water under both average and peak demand conditions.

Development reliant on new or expanded water infrastructure must demonstrate a credible funding strategy. Development shall not rely on speculative or unproven water availability.

6.6 Water-Constrained Areas

In Crescent Junction, Thompson Springs, and similar areas:

- Development shall be limited by demonstrated water availability;
- New infrastructure must be constructed before or concurrent with development; and
- Development intensity may be restricted based on system capacity.

6.7 Key Findings

- Water demand associated with future development can be significantly reduced through design and regulatory standards;
- Outdoor irrigation is the primary controllable component of demand;
- Development review processes provide an effective mechanism for implementing demand reduction; and
- Water-constrained areas require stricter controls to ensure long-term reliability.

SECTION 7. METHODS OF REDUCING WATER DEMAND FOR EXISTING DEVELOPMENT (§17-79-403(2)(v)(C))

Where Grand County's built environment is already in place, reducing water use in existing development offers the most immediate opportunity to improve system efficiency and reduce total demand.

7.1 Landscape Conversion and Outdoor Water Use Reduction

The County will support and coordinate programs that:

- Provide incentives for removal of non-functional turf;
- Prioritize high-water-use properties; and
- Encourage replacement with drought-tolerant, climate-adapted landscaping.

7.2 Irrigation System Retrofits

The County will support programs that encourage:

- Installation of smart irrigation controllers;
- Conversion to drip irrigation systems or other high-efficiency technologies; and
- Repair or replacement of inefficient or outdated irrigation systems.

7.3 Pricing and Demand Management

The County will support providers' efforts to maintain or expand tiered pricing structures that increase rates for high-volume use, and to implement seasonal watering restrictions and drought response measures.

7.4 System Efficiency and Water Loss Reduction

The County will support providers' efforts to conduct system-wide leak-detection programs, implement advanced metering infrastructure, and reduce system losses.

7.5 Public Education and Outreach

The County will support public education campaigns focused on water-wise landscaping and irrigation practices, as well as partnerships with water providers, schools, and community organizations.

7.6 Targeted Regulatory Measures

Where voluntary measures are insufficient, the County may implement ordinances that address water waste, require landscape upgrades during major redevelopment, and limit the irrigation of non-functional turf.

7.7 Key Findings

- Existing development represents the largest opportunity for near-term water demand reduction;
- Outdoor irrigation is the primary driver of discretionary water use;
- Incentive programs and irrigation retrofits can produce significant and measurable savings;
- Pricing and demand management strategies are effective tools for influencing behavior; and
- Targeted regulatory measures may be necessary to achieve long-term conservation goals.

SECTION 8. COUNTY OPERATIONAL IMPROVEMENTS TO ELIMINATE WATER WASTE (§17-79-403(2)(v)(D))

Although the County does not operate public water systems, it owns and manages water rights, facilities, parks, landscapes, and infrastructure that contribute to overall water demand. These assets provide an opportunity to achieve direct reductions while demonstrating best practices for the community.

8.1 County Facilities and Indoor Water Use

Subject to funding availability, the County will retrofit facilities with high-efficiency plumbing fixtures, replace outdated equipment with water-efficient systems, and incorporate water-efficient design into all new County facilities. Protocols for prompt leak detection and repair will be established.

8.2 County Landscapes and Outdoor Water Use

Within approved budgets, the County will:

- Replace non-functional turf with drought-tolerant, climate-adapted landscaping;
- Retrofit irrigation systems with drip irrigation or equivalent high-efficiency technology;
- Install smart irrigation controllers that respond to weather conditions; and
- Eliminate overspray, runoff, and unnecessary watering.

8.3 Operational Policies

The County will establish policies requiring timely repair of leaks and irrigation failures, limit irrigation during peak daytime hours to reduce evaporation, and incorporate water efficiency into procurement and operational decisions.

8.4 Monitoring and Performance Tracking

The County will regularly track water use at County facilities, establish baseline usage levels, evaluate the effectiveness of conservation measures over time, and incorporate water use data into broader planning and reporting efforts.

8.5 Key Findings

- County operations represent a controllable source of water demand;
- Outdoor irrigation at County facilities is the largest contributor to operational water use;
- Facility upgrades and irrigation improvements can significantly reduce consumption; and
- The County can influence broader community behavior through demonstration and leadership.

SECTION 9. REGIONAL COLLABORATION

Long-term water reliability in Grand County depends on coordination among multiple jurisdictions, water providers, and regulatory agencies. Water resources, infrastructure systems, and demand patterns extend beyond jurisdictional boundaries, and no single entity has comprehensive authority over all aspects of water management.

9.1 Institutional Context

Water management involves multiple independent entities:

- Grand County – responsible for land use planning, zoning, and development approvals;
- Water Providers – GWSSA, ASSD, and TSSWD, responsible for water rights, system operations, and infrastructure;
- Municipalities and Neighboring Jurisdictions – including Moab City, Castle Valley, and San Juan County; and
- State Agencies – Utah Division of Water Resources and Division of Water Rights.

9.2 Coordination Objectives

Grand County will pursue regional collaboration to:

- Align land use decisions with available water and infrastructure capacity;
- Ensure growth occurs within long-term resource constraints;
- Improve the effectiveness of conservation and demand management; and
- Maintain compliance with state and interstate water policies.

9.3 Coordination Mechanisms

- Maintain regular communication with water providers regarding system capacity and infrastructure planning;
- Require consultation with water providers during review of development proposals;
- Utilize data from water provider master plans, conservation plans, and state resources; and
- Participate in regional initiatives related to water infrastructure development.

9.4 UMTRA Transition Coordination

The County will coordinate with state agencies and water providers to evaluate infrastructure needs at the UMTRA site, in Crescent Junction, and in Thompson Springs, and to ensure that post-remediation development does not exceed available resources.

9.5 Funding Coordination

Grand County will collaborate with partners on applications to the Permanent Community Impact Board (PCIB), prioritize projects that reduce water demand, and align funding applications with regional planning efforts.

9.6 Key Findings

- Effective water planning requires coordination across jurisdictional and institutional boundaries;
- Accurate data from water providers must inform land use decisions;
- Regional collaboration is necessary to develop long-term infrastructure solutions; and
- Coordinated funding strategies are essential to implementing priority projects.

SECTION 10. GOALS, POLICIES, AND IMPLEMENTATION

This section establishes the goals, policies, and implementation measures necessary to manage water demand and to align land-use decisions with available resources. The policies are implemented through land use regulation, development review, interagency coordination, and capital planning.

Goal 1: Align Growth with Water Availability and Infrastructure Capacity

Policy 1.1 – Water Availability Verification

All development proposals shall demonstrate the availability of a reliable water supply before approval.

- Require documentation of legally recognized water rights or service commitment from a provider;
- Require verification of system capacity, including peak demand conditions; and
- Coordinate with water providers during development review.

Policy 1.2 – Infrastructure Capacity and Phasing

Development shall be limited by the capacity of existing and planned water infrastructure.

- Condition approvals on necessary infrastructure improvements;
- Require phasing of development based on system capacity; and
- Align development intensity with service area capabilities.

Goal 2: Reduce Per Capita and Total Water Demand

Policy 2.1 – Demand Reduction Targets

- Support conservation programs and provider initiatives;
- Track system-wide water use and performance metrics; and
- Integrate demand reduction goals into planning decisions.

Policy 2.2 – Peak Demand Management

- Promote irrigation efficiency and landscape standards;
- Support provider efforts to implement seasonal demand controls; and
- Align infrastructure planning with peak demand conditions.

Goal 3: Reduce Outdoor Water Use

Policy 3.1 – Landscape Efficiency Standards

- Limit or prohibit non-functional turf;
- Require drought-tolerant landscaping; and
- Encourage hydro zoning and efficient design.

Policy 3.2 – Irrigation System Efficiency

- Require drip irrigation or equivalent systems;
- Require smart irrigation controllers; and
- Prohibit inefficient irrigation practices.

Policy 3.3 – Non-Potable Water for Outdoor Irrigation

Grand County shall prioritize the use of non-potable Colorado River water for outdoor irrigation to preserve treated drinking water for indoor use.

- New development where GWSSA secondary water infrastructure is available shall connect to the secondary system for all outdoor irrigation and shall not use the culinary system for landscape watering;
- New development in areas without existing secondary infrastructure shall be evaluated for the feasibility of connection or participation in future system expansion, and approvals may be conditioned accordingly;
- The County shall coordinate with GWSSA and other providers to identify priority areas for secondary system extension and to align capital planning with development patterns;
- Existing development is encouraged to convert outdoor irrigation to secondary water where connections are available; and
- The County shall not approve development that proposes to use culinary water for large-scale irrigation where a non-potable alternative exists or can feasibly be made available.

Goal 4: Improve System Efficiency and Reduce Water Loss

Policy 4.1 – System Efficiency

- Support leak detection and repair programs;
- Encourage advanced metering infrastructure; and
- Coordinate with providers on system performance improvements.

Goal 5: Address Water Constraints in Rural Areas

Policy 5.1 – Crescent Junction and Thompson Springs

- Require verification of water rights and infrastructure capacity;
- Condition development on the construction of necessary infrastructure; and
- Limit intensity of development based on system capability.

Goal 6: Support Conservation in Existing Development

Policy 6.1 – Existing Development Programs

- Support turf conversion and irrigation retrofit programs;
- Encourage provider-led pricing and demand management strategies; and
- Promote public education and outreach.

Goal 7: Improve County Operations

Policy 7.1 – County Water Use Reduction

- Retrofit County facilities with efficient fixtures;
- Convert landscapes to drought-tolerant designs; and
- Monitor and track water use at County properties.

Goal 8: Strengthen Regional Coordination

Policy 8.1 – Interagency Coordination

- Maintain regular communication with providers;
- Integrate provider data into planning decisions; and
- Participate in regional water planning efforts.

Goal 9: Pursue Funding for Infrastructure and Conservation

Policy 9.1 – Funding Strategy

- Pursue funding through the Permanent Community Impact Board (PCIB);
- Coordinate regional funding applications; and
- Align capital planning with funding opportunities.

Phasing Strategy

Phase 1: 2026–2030 (Immediate Impact)

Focus: Rapid demand reduction, system efficiency improvements, and rural system stabilization.

- Leak detection and Advanced Metering Infrastructure
- Turf conversion programs
- Thompson Springs system upgrades

Phase 2: 2030–2040 (System Expansion)

Focus: Infrastructure expansion and demand offset through improvements to irrigation systems.

- Secondary irrigation system expansion
- Storage improvements

Phase 3: 2040+ (Long-Term Reliability)

Focus: System optimization and regional integration.

SECTION 11. CONCLUSION

This Water Use and Preservation Element establishes a comprehensive framework for integrating water resource considerations into land use planning and decision-making in Grand County. The Element demonstrates that limited groundwater recharge, variable surface water conditions, and finite infrastructure capacity constrain water availability. These constraints must be recognized as governing factors in future growth and development.

Projected population growth and seasonal demand will increase baseline and peak water demand over time. However, as shown in Section 5, water demand can be stabilized or reduced through conservation measures, efficient development design, and coordinated infrastructure planning. Additionally, opportunities for recharge need to be pursued.

A central conclusion of this Element is that policy choices determine water demand. Land use patterns, landscape standards, irrigation practices, and system management collectively define the relationship between growth and water use. This Element establishes a framework in which development is aligned with available water resources rather than assuming that resources will expand to meet demand.

This Element also recognizes the institutional structure of water management in Grand County. Water providers retain authority over water rights, system operations, and service delivery, while the County is responsible for land use planning and development approvals. Effective water management depends on ongoing coordination among these entities and with state agencies.

The Element also addresses the unique conditions associated with Crescent Junction and Thompson Springs following completion of the UMTRA project. While environmental constraints have been reduced, water infrastructure limitations remain. Development in these areas must be supported by demonstrated water rights, infrastructure investment, and long-term reliability.

Implementation of this Element will require sustained coordination, investment, and funding. Grand County will pursue financial support through programs such as the PCIB to advance infrastructure improvements and support conservation initiatives.

Through the goals, policies, and implementation measures established in this Element, Grand County commits to:

- Treating water availability as a governing constraint on development;
- Reducing per capita and total water demand through conservation and efficiency;
- Promoting land use patterns and development practices that minimize water use;
- Improving system efficiency and reducing water waste; and
- Coordinating with water providers, regional partners, and state agencies to ensure long-term sustainability.

By adopting this Element, Grand County affirms its commitment to managing growth in a manner that protects limited water resources, maintains system reliability, and supports the long-term health, safety, and welfare of its residents, businesses, and visitors.

APPENDIX

A.1 Demand Reduction Summary

Combined implementation of conservation and infrastructure projects can achieve an estimated total reduction of 800–1,500+ acre-feet per year. The primary source of savings is reduced outdoor irrigation, with secondary benefits including reduced peak demand and improved system reliability. This reduction is sufficient to offset projected growth-related increases in demand and maintain total system demand at or near current levels.

A.2 Funding Strategy

Grand County and its partners will pursue funding through:

- The Permanent Community Impact Board (PCIB) – primary funding source;
- State water infrastructure and conservation programs;
- Federal funding where applicable; and
- Local funding and partnerships.

PCIB funding is particularly critical for rural system development, infrastructure improvements, and the implementation of conservation programs.

GRAND COUNTY, UTAH ORDINANCE NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE OF GRAND COUNTY, UTAH, ADOPTING THE WATER USE AND PRESERVATION ELEMENT OF THE GRAND COUNTY GENERAL PLAN; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, Grand County (the “County”) is authorized to engage in land use planning and to adopt and amend a general plan under the County Land Use, Development, and Management Act, Utah Code Title 17, Chapter 79; and

WHEREAS, Utah Code §17-79-403, as amended by Senate Bill 110 (2022) and Senate Bill 76 (2023), requires a county general plan to include a water use and preservation element, and Utah Code §17-79-401(6) directs a county whose general plan does not include a compliant water use and preservation element to amend its general plan to comply with Section 17-79-403; and

WHEREAS, the County does not own or operate public water systems, and the Water Use and Preservation Element (the “Element”) was prepared in cooperation with the Grand Water and Sewer Service Agency, the Thompson Special Service Water District, and the Arches Special Service District; and

WHEREAS, the Grand County Planning Commission held a duly advertised and noticed public hearing on the proposed Element on June 22, 2026, reviewed the Element, the staff report, and public comment, and voted to forward the Element to the Grand County Commission with a recommendation for approval; and

WHEREAS, the Grand County Commission held a duly advertised and noticed public hearing on the proposed Element on _____, 2026, and after reviewing the full record, including the Planning Commission recommendation, the staff report, the Element, and public testimony, finds that adoption of the Element:

- Complies with Utah Code §17-79-403;
- Is consistent with the Grand County General Plan;
- Aligns land use decisions with available water resources; and
- Is in the best interest of the public health, safety, and welfare.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNTY COMMISSION OF GRAND COUNTY, UTAH, AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1: PLAIN ENGLISH SUMMARY

This ordinance adds the Water Use and Preservation Element (06-01-26 Edition) to the Grand County General Plan. State law requires the County's general plan to include a water element like this one. The Element is a planning guide, not a regulation. It looks at how growth affects water use and systems and identifies ways to use less water in new and existing development, as well as in the County's own operations. It does not regulate private property, grant water

rights, or guarantee water service. Those matters remain governed by state law and the local water providers.

SECTION 2: FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS

Based upon the Element, the staff report, the record of proceedings before the Planning Commission and County Commission, and the evidence and testimony presented at duly noticed public hearings, the Grand County Commission hereby adopts the following Findings of Fact and Conclusions:

A. STATUTORY AUTHORITY AND REQUIREMENT

1. Grand County is authorized to engage in land use planning and to adopt and amend a general plan under Utah Code Title 17, Chapter 79.
2. Utah Code §17-79-403 requires a county general plan to include a water use and preservation element.
3. Utah Code §17-79-401(6) directs a county whose general plan does not include a compliant water use and preservation element to amend its general plan to comply with Section 17-79-403.
4. The Element addresses each matter required by Utah Code §17-79-403, including:
 - The effect of permitted development and patterns of development on water demand and water infrastructure;
 - Methods of reducing water demand and per capita consumption for future development;
 - Methods of reducing water demand and per capita consumption for existing development; and
 - Opportunities for the County to modify its operations to eliminate practices or conditions that waste water.

B. PREPARATION AND COORDINATION

5. The County does not own or operate public water systems.
6. The Element was prepared in cooperation with the Grand Water and Sewer Service Agency, the Thompson Special Service Water District, and the Arches Special Service District.
7. The Element is based on a review of County planning documents, water provider system data, state planning guidance, and other technical resources.

C. EXISTING CONDITIONS

8. Grand County lies in an arid high-desert environment where water availability is limited and depends largely on groundwater recharged by snowpack in the La Sal Mountains.
9. The County experiences steady population growth and significant seasonal demand associated with tourism and recreation, both of which increase water demand.

10. Outdoor irrigation with culinary water is the largest and most controllable component of water demand and the primary driver of peak system stress.

D. NATURE AND EFFECT OF THE ELEMENT

11. The Element is a policy and coordination document intended to guide land use planning, development review, interagency coordination, and capital planning and is not a regulatory ordinance.
12. The Element does not allocate or administer water rights, authority over which is vested in the Utah Division of Water Rights.
13. The Element does not guarantee water availability or service, create vested development rights or entitlements, or obligate any water provider to deliver service.

E. GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY

14. The Element is consistent with and implements the Grand County General Plan.
15. The Element provides a framework for aligning development with available water resources, together with goals, policies, and a phased implementation strategy.
16. The Element advances General Plan goals related to responsible growth, resource protection, and infrastructure reliability.

F. PUBLIC HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELFARE

17. Adoption of the Element promotes the public health, safety, and welfare by aligning land use decisions with available water resources and by promoting the conservation and efficient use of a limited resource.

G. PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

18. The Grand County Planning Commission held a duly noticed public hearing on June 22, 2026.
19. After considering the Element, the staff report, and public comment, the Planning Commission recommended approval of the Element to the Grand County Commission.

H. PUBLIC PROCESS

20. The Grand County Commission held a duly noticed public hearing on _____, 2026.
21. All required notice and hearing procedures under Utah Code Title 17, Chapter 79 — including the class A notice requirement of Utah Code §63G-30-102 — and County ordinance were followed.
22. The Commission considered all written and oral testimony presented in the record.

I. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the foregoing Findings of Fact, the Grand County Commission concludes that:

1. The Element complies with Utah Code §17-79-403 and satisfies the requirement of Utah Code §17-79-401(6).

2. The Element is consistent with the Grand County General Plan.
3. The Element promotes logical, efficient, and orderly land use and the conservation of limited water resources.
4. The Element is not detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare.
5. Adoption of the Element is in the best interest of Grand County.

SECTION 3: ADOPTION OF THE WATER USE AND PRESERVATION ELEMENT

The Water Use and Preservation Element of the Grand County General Plan (06-01-26 Edition), attached hereto as Exhibit A and incorporated herein by reference, is hereby adopted as a component of the Grand County General Plan.

SECTION 4: EFFECT AND INTERPRETATION

The Element shall be interpreted and applied as a policy guide for land use planning, development review, interagency coordination, and capital planning, and not as a regulatory ordinance. Nothing in the Element or this ordinance creates vested development rights, an entitlement to water service, or a guarantee of water availability; allocates or administers water rights; or obligates any water provider to deliver service. In the event of a conflict, state law and water rights administration shall control, and a water provider’s determination regarding its capacity and service shall prevail. The Element does not amend the Grand County Land Use Code; any amendments to the Land Use Code to implement the Element shall be adopted separately in accordance with applicable law.

SECTION 5: SEVERABILITY

If any provision of this ordinance is held invalid or unconstitutional, such invalidity shall not affect the remaining provisions, which shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 6: EFFECTIVE DATE

This ordinance shall take effect fifteen (15) days after publication, as provided by Utah Code §17-53-208.

ADOPTED by the Grand County Commission in public meeting this _____ day of _____, 2026, by the following vote:

That voted aye: _____

That voted nay: _____

Absent: _____

GRAND COUNTY COMMISSION

Melodie McCandless, Chair

ATTEST:

Gabriel Woytek, Clerk/Auditor

Exhibit A: Water Use and Preservation Element of the Grand County General Plan (06-01-26 Edition).



AGENDA SUMMARY

Planning Commission Meeting

Date: June 22, 2026

Title: July 2026 Planning Commission Meeting
Schedule

If this submission is from the general public you will need a commission sponsor, feel free to contact the Commission Administrators Office with any questions commadmin@grandcountyutah.net (435) 259-1342 or contact the Commissioners directly at commission@grandcountyutah.net

Fiscal Impact:

Presenter(s): Andrew Jackson, Planning and Zoning
Director

Department: Planning and Zoning

Legal Review: Not Applicable

Approved and within budget? Not Applicable

Budget Number:

Recommended Motion:

Background:

Attachments:

None