



# Tropic General Plan 2020

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# INTRODUCTION

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## State Law and the Comprehensive Plan

The Land Use Development and Management Act (LUDMA) of the State of Utah provides each town the opportunity to establish a planning process to guide future growth in accordance with a framework of officially adopted goals and policies directed to land use, transportation, housing, environmental quality, wise use and conservation of resources, safety, and other relevant physical, social, and economic factors. To carry this out, Title 10 Chapter 9a of the Utah Code directs the Planning Commission to prepare and recommend, and the legislative body adopts a comprehensive, long term, General Plan for the town and any land outside its boundaries, which in the Planning Commission's judgement, bears relationship to its planning.

## Role of the General Plan

The purpose of the general plan is to provide a set of defined community visions or goals for a community to focus on for the years that follow final acceptance of the plan. The intent is that development that is in harmony with the General Plan should be encouraged; development that is not should be modified so that it is in harmony or should be rejected. Following this process, the Plan is transformed from paper to reality.

It is strongly recommended that this document become a working tool of the municipality, that it is referenced often and that it continues to evolve as the community vision and goals change over the next ten (10) years.

## Development of this Plan

This plan was developed as an update to the version that was previously adopted in 2010. A series of workshops were held with the Planning Commission and Town Council in order to discuss the content of the previous plan and to develop ideas to address new issues.

The Town worked with several groups to undertake a series of limited planning studies between 2016 and 2018 (i.e. Community Analysis, Strategic Planning Study). The public was involved directly in these efforts through surveys and open house meetings. The findings of these efforts were reviewed against the previous general plan, and an update was proposed. The Planning Commission and Town Board worked closely with a consultant to refine the draft. Once the draft update was created, it was advertised publicly and adopted according to the process outlined in state statute.

## Amending the General Plan

The General Plan is not intended to be a static document. Rather, it is intended to be used regularly by local officials and residents to identify and direct where various activities will be located, which strategies the town will encourage and requirements necessitate their establishment, to identify priorities for town actions, and resource allocation decisions, and to identify the provisions of required services and their adopted standards. In order to provide responsible and well formulated public policy direction to community decisions, this document is intended to be reviewed at least annually, and updated as the need arises.

When necessary, the process for amending the plan, as outlined in Utah state law and local ordinances, requires adequately noticed public hearings, and formal action by the Planning Commission and Town Council.

## Related Plans and Programs

Though the Land Use Element is largely governed by the Utah Code and the local legislative body, there are several other plans and programs that also are considered in the formulation of land use policy.

1. **Tropic Town Zoning Ordinance**-The zoning ordinance will serve as the primary implementation tool for the Land Use Element and the goals and policies contained herein. The zoning map should be consistent with the land use map contained in the General Plan. The land use designations contained in this element and the areas designated for each category corresponds to one or more zoning districts.
2. **Tropic Town Subdivision Ordinance**-The subdivision ordinance is another main tool in reaching the goals as stated in the General Plan. This ordinance should be used to see to it that infrastructure is developed within town subdivisions which will help satisfy public service goals of the general plan and that neighborhoods accomplish a main goal of retaining as much as possible a country type setting in Tropic Town.
3. **Tropic Town Nuisance Ordinance**-The nuisance ordinance can serve to upgrade deteriorating or blighted areas of town which have a negative impact on Tropic Town's reputation and marketability. This ordinance can, among other things, enhance the desirable qualities found in existing neighborhoods.

## Relationship to the Zoning Map

The Zoning Ordinance is one of the primary tools used in implementing the General Plan. Like the General Plan, the Zoning Ordinance has an accompanying map, which identifies classifications for each portion of land within town. These two maps should correspond in relationship to compatibility of land use and zoning designation.



# COMMUNITY CONTEXT + VISION

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## Historical Background

The Town of Tropic, located in the valley below the Paunsaugunt Plateau, was founded by early Mormon settlers, many of whom had previously lived in Cannonville. These settlers realized that there was a need for more water if they were to be able to irrigate crops and sustain themselves in this area. There had been talk of the possibility of diverting water from the East Fork of the Sevier River to the Bryce Valley area. In 1878 Ebenezer Bryce, for whom Bryce Canyon is named, surveyed a possible route for a fifteen-mile canal, which would be necessary if the diversion were to take place. The canal was not built at that time, but Bryce did construct a home, complete an irrigation ditch two miles long from Paria Creek, and built a road into the Bryce Canyon area to acquire timber and firewood. This road ended at what is commonly called the amphitheater, and local people who use it called it Bryce's Canyon.

In 1889 William Lewman, a surveyor and teacher, again presented the idea of the East Fork water diversion to the people of the Bryce Valley area, and another prominent settler, Andrew J. Hansen<sup>1</sup>, suggested forming the East Fork Irrigation Company as a means of financing the project. Mr. Hansen also bought the Bryce Canyon water (now called Spring Creek) from John Hatch for \$350.00. This water was to be used for the new town of Tropic.

A final survey of the canal route was done, and in September 1889, work began in earnest on the 14 mile long canal which resulted in diverting the water that normally drained into the Great Basin into the Colorado Basin. This was a great feat and one that has never been duplicated.

The canal project was finally finished after more than two years work and on May 23, 1892, at 4p.m. the water entered what is now the Town of Tropic near Andrew J. Hansen's home. That was the day the "birth" of Tropic and is celebrated as such today.

The new town of Tropic was surveyed by Mr. William Lewman, according to the history of A. J. Hansen. Sixteen blocks were laid off and divided into 64 lots of 1½ acres each. The Bryce Canyon Water was also divided into 64 shares. The lots and one share of water were then placed on the market for the price of \$7.50.

The name of the town was a matter of much discussion. The names of Ur, Hansen, and Erastus were suggested, then rejected. Mr. Hansen suggested the name of Tropic because the area was the first indication of a mild climate after the very high, cold country of the plateau and could produce fruits and vegetables not grown in the surrounding areas. This suggestion was accepted by the people of the community; thus the town was named Tropic.

<sup>1</sup> *Autobiography of Andrew Janus Hansen, published by the A.J. Hansen Family organization, copyright 1969 by Victor Milo Hansen, published by J.Grant Stenson, 230 West 1230 North, Provo UT 84601*

## Community Vision

In order to determine goals, with which future growth and development may be directed, a community must first determine the overall purpose or vision of the general plan. At the outset of the general plan process, a "Vision Statement" was drafted to define that purpose. During the drafting of the "Vision Statement" as shown below, attention was paid to strong and weak points of Tropic Town as well as

traditional values, customs and culture, future economic realities and current issues which the town faces. After careful consideration, the community of Tropic Town resolves:

**“To maintain a clean, economically diverse community with a country atmosphere, which provides for all community needs through strong planning efforts, while drawing upon the historical significance of the area.”**



## Community Core Values

Core values of a community are specific statements that illustrate the resident’s desires and necessities for their community. These values support and prescribe the future of the community, while remaining adaptable to the ever-changing nature of a municipality. These values as highlighted in the current general plan are:

- Retain the feel and atmosphere of a rural community.
- Encourage community pride.
- Balance our support for commercial development with a principle that new development should “pay its own way” for infrastructure services.
- Offer quality-of-life amenities and services for residents, regardless of age or socioeconomic status.
- Support affordable housing options for all individuals/families that meet the local needs and economic status.

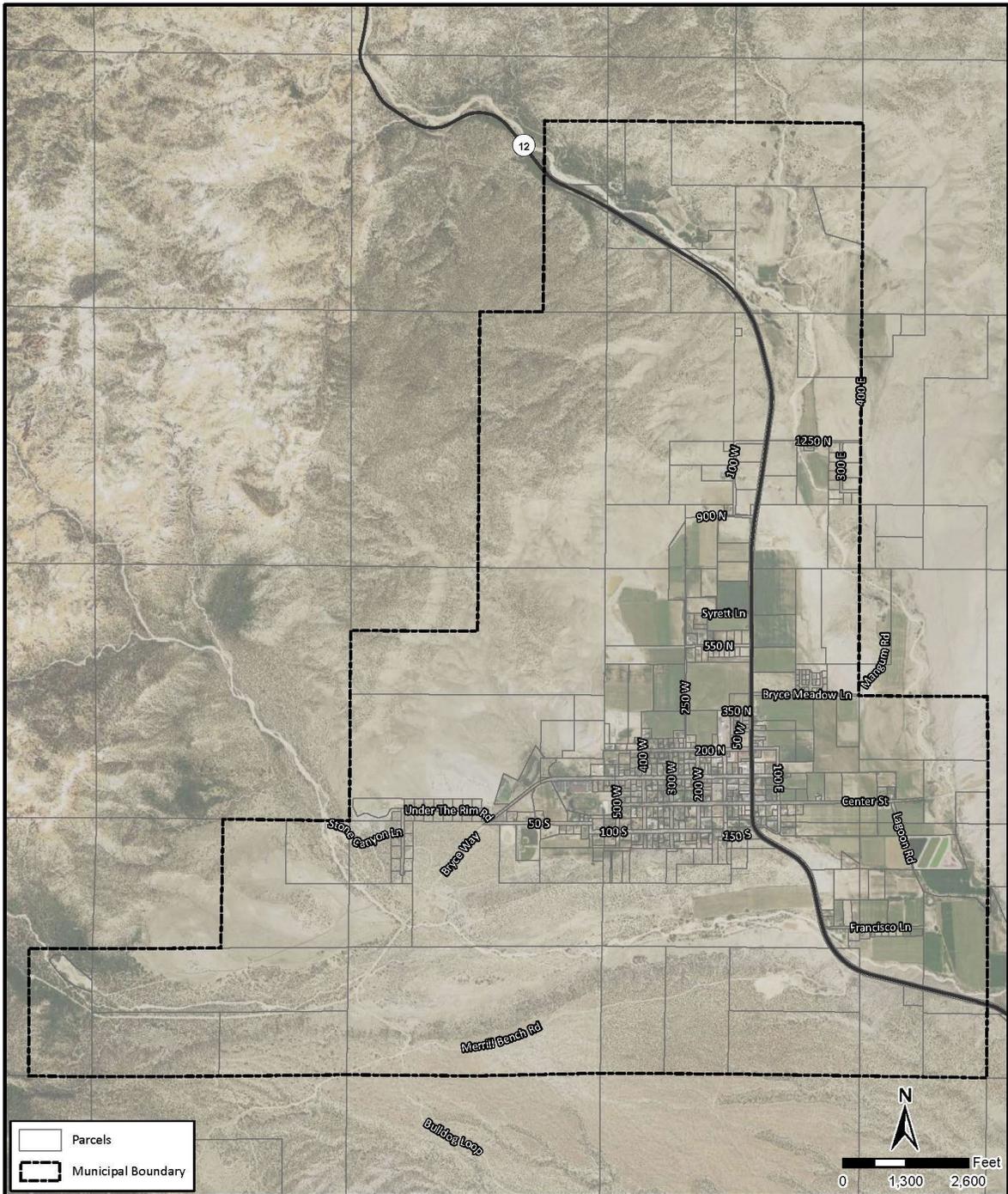
## Anticipated Changes

- Tropic Town is projected to experience slow, but steady growth over the time period of this General Plan. The community expects further resort-related commercial development (i.e. hotel, restaurant) along the main transportation corridor.
- Economic data shows that in recent decades, the services sector has seen the greatest increase and manufacturing has seen the greatest decrease as percentage employed. This trend is expected to continue.
- It is estimated that most developed land within Tropic Town boundaries is currently in single family residential use (excluding right-of-way). It is expected that the demand for short term rental use of properties in these areas will continue to grow.
- The land outside of the town core is open space or agriculturally-oriented, and many residential lots within town boundaries incorporate pasture or agricultural facilities. It is expected that agricultural activity within town will follow trends found in other communities, which has been a slow decline.

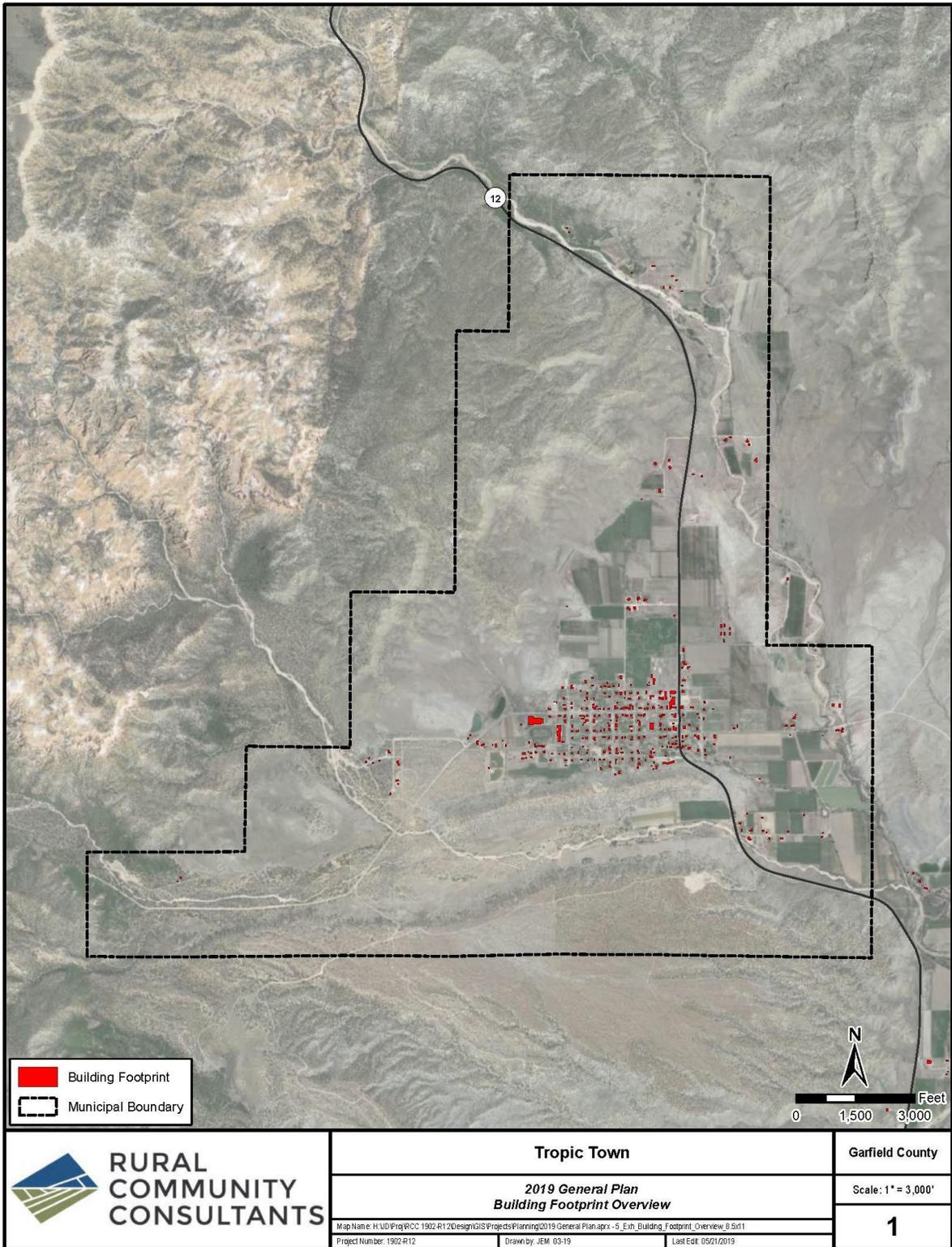


## Land Capacity Analysis

The health, safety, and welfare of citizens is the priority of the Town. Special consideration should be given to the built environment and infrastructure that are readily available within the municipality, specifically areas with potentially problematic slopes, soils, or drainage. All proposed uses should be properly vetted to ensure that they meet the future land use and density regulations. Infrastructure restrictions are the main factors limiting development and future growth of residential and commercial uses.



<b>Tropic Town</b>		Garfield County
<i>2019 General Plan Municipal Area Overview</i>		Scale: 1" = 2,600'
<small>Map Name: H:\UD\Proj\RCC 1902-R1\20design\GIS\Projects\Planning\2019 General Plan\aprx -1_Enh_Area_Map_05x11</small>		<b>1</b>
<small>Project Number: 1902-R12</small>	<small>Drawn by: JEM 05-19</small>	<small>Last Edit: 05/21/2019</small>



	Building Footprint
	Municipal Boundary

N

Feet

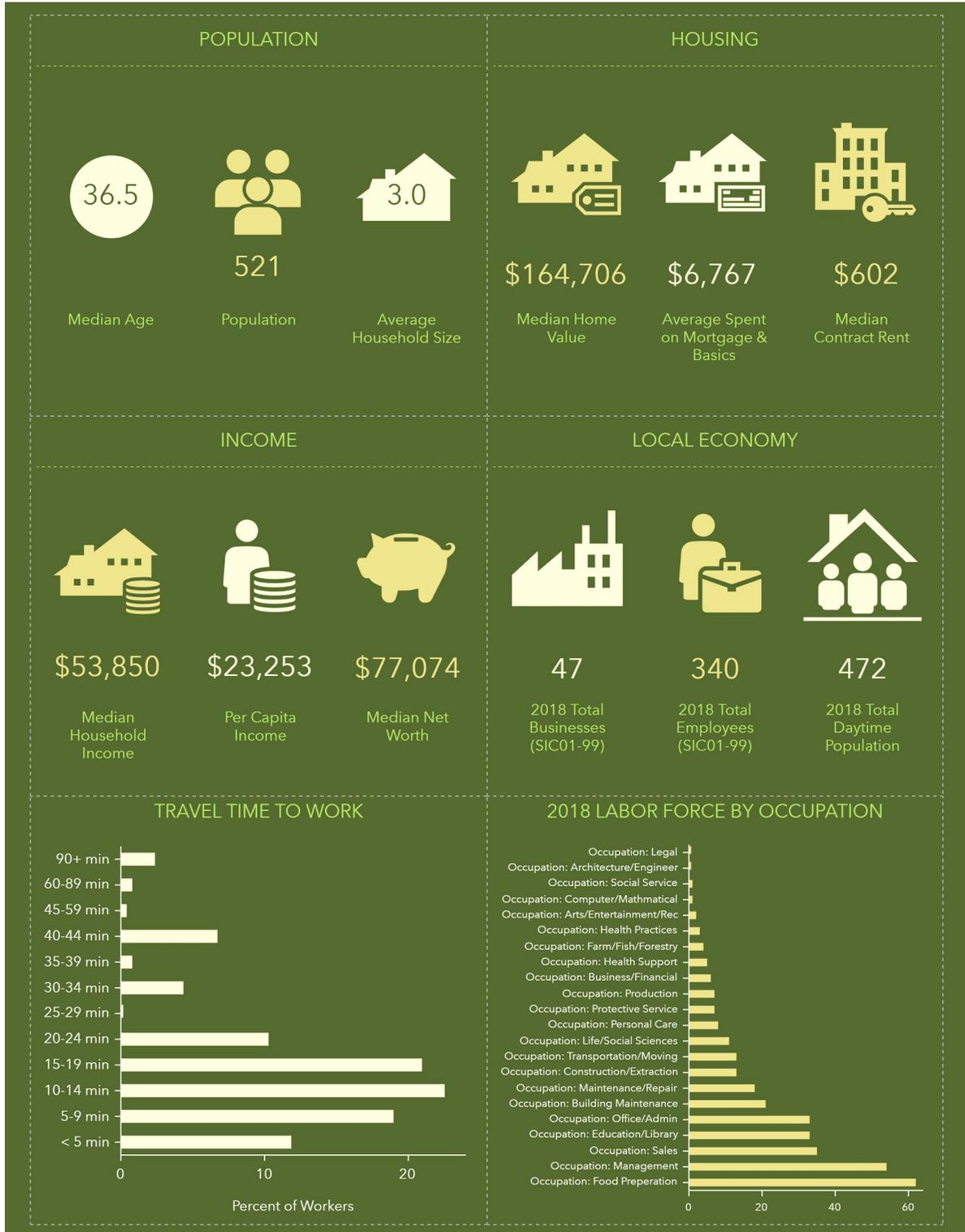
0    1,500    3,000

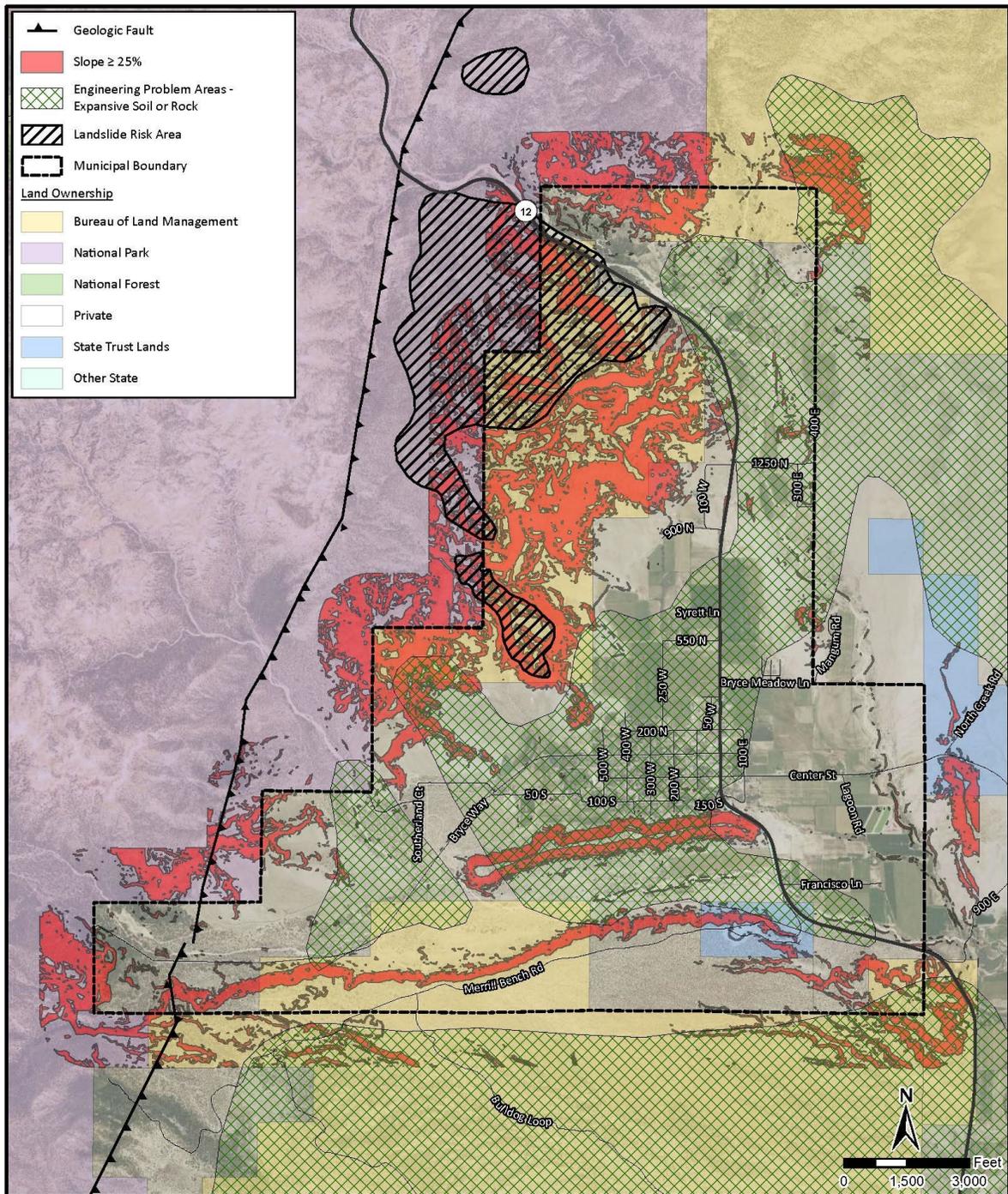


<b>Tropic Town</b>	
<i>2019 General Plan Building Footprint Overview</i>	
Map Name: H:\UD\Proj\RCC 1902-R1\20design\GIS\Projects\Planning\2019 General Plan\apr-5_Enh_Building_Footprint_Overview_S&I1	
Project Number: 1902-R12	Drawn by: JEM 03-19
Last Edit: 05/21/2019	

Garfield County
Scale: 1" = 3,000'
<b>1</b>

# Socioeconomic Drivers





 <b>RURAL COMMUNITY CONSULTANTS</b>	<b>Tropic Town</b>	<b>Garfield County</b>
	<b>2019 General Plan Development Suitability Overview</b>	
	<small>Map Name: H:\UD\Proj\RCC\1902-R1\20design\GIS\Projects\Planning\2019 General Plan.aprx - 4_Enh_Development_Suitability_8.5x11</small>	
	<small>Project Number: 1902-R12</small>	<small>Drawn by: JEM 05-19</small>
<b>1</b>		<small>Scale: 1" = 3,000'</small>

# LAND USE

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## Introduction

The Land Use Element is designed to promote sound land use decisions throughout town. The pattern of land uses—their location, mix, and density are a critical component of any planning area. The Land Use Element is organized to:

1. plan enough land for residential, commercial, industrial, and public uses;
2. locate these uses appropriately to enhance community character;
3. preserve important natural resources; and
4. enable Tropic Town to efficiently insure adequate public services are provided for Town residents.

## Land Use Designations

- **Critical/Sensitive Lands (P).** Areas where development is discouraged due to steep hillsides (over 30%), high value wetlands, ridgelines, and floodplains. Agriculture and livestock grazing are permitted. Recreation amenities such as equestrian activities, trails and public open space are encouraged. *The Town's typical and traditional zoning designations include the "P" (Pristine) zone.*
- **Agriculture (A).** The agriculture category created to ensure preservation and continuation of existing agricultural farming and ranching used within the town limits. Development in this category would be limited to one single-family home per legal lot and associated farm labor housing under appropriate permits. Lot sizes are intended to be in large acreage within minimum sizes of five acres. Contiguous family-owned land holding may be considered in determining lot sizes for agricultural operations within this designation. The uses expected in this category are expected to include farming, commercial raising of animals, agricultural intensive operations, repair and maintenance of farm equipment, storage of agricultural products and other similar uses related to the operation of a farm or ranch. The purpose of this designation will be to stimulate agricultural uses in these districts and make available agricultural use incentives such as preferential assessment or taxation and preferential densities, and to protect the property from encroaching by nuisance uses. *The Town's typical and traditional zoning designations for these areas include the "A" (Agriculture) zone.*
- **Residential Estates (RE).** Residential Estate is a category created to ensure the continuation of existing agricultural farming and ranching activities and to ensure the rural character of the planning area is maintained. The density of any development adjacent to agricultural zoning districts should be maintained with larger lot sizes of five acres. The keeping of large animals is intended to be allowed in this category. The density of proposed residential development is expected to be in large custom single-family homes on uniquely configured lots which have been designed to be sensitive to topographic and environmental considerations. *The Town's typical and traditional zoning designations for these areas include the "R-1-40" (Residential 40,000 sqft lots) and "RRC" (Residential Recreation Commercial) zones.*
- **Residential Low (RL).** Residential Low is a single family detached category with a density range of 0-2 units per acre. Development is single family detached category to encourage moderate

category corresponds to small groups. *The Town's typical and traditional zoning designations for these areas include the "R-1-20" (Residential 20,000 sqft lots) zone.*

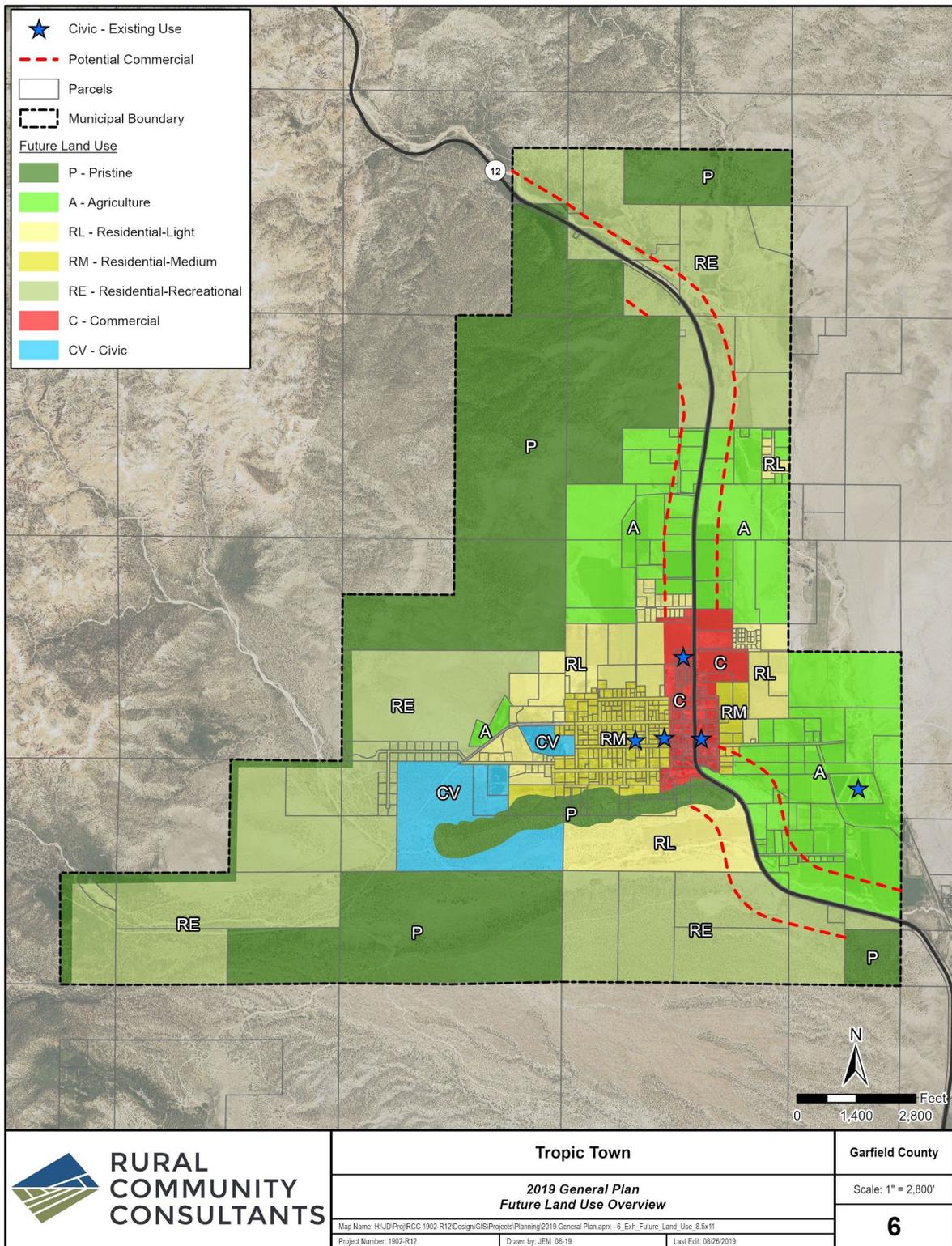
- **Medium Density Residential (RM).** The base density of this designation is 2-6 unit/acre. This area allows a variety of housing types, with proximity to schools, shopping areas, and major recreational facilities. The intent is for clustered, master planned developments are encouraged in the district. Interconnected open space amenities through development of this type assist to connect available resources, as well as development of a Tropic Town trail system. *The Town's typical and traditional zoning designations for these areas include the "R-1-8" (Residential 8,000 sqft lots) zone.*
- **Commercial Uses (C).** Most, if not all commercial uses are intended to be located along the main highway. Depending upon the location in that over all area commercial uses will be suited for highway service commercial, community or general commercial and neighborhood commercial. It is not the intent of this plan to designate specific areas, within the overall commercial boundaries, for these various uses. *The Town's typical and traditional zoning designations for these areas include the "GC" (General Commercial) and the "CC" (Community Commercial) zones.*
- **Industrial Uses (I).** Light Industrial uses shall include research and development, light industries, manufacturing, food production, distribution, storage, fabrication, assembly and servicing which will not create traffic hazards, noise, dust, fumes, odors, smoke, vapor, vibration, glare or industrial waste disposal problems. *The Town has not typically applied an industrial zone within Town because of infrastructure capacity concerns.*
- **Civic (CV).** This district is reserved for schools, churches, libraries, fire stations or similar public facilities. Industrially-oriented infrastructure facilities (i.e. sewer lagoons) can be located in this zone. *The Town has not traditionally applied a specific zone to civic parcels because there hasn't been a need or contiguous pattern.*

## Future Land Use Map

The general plan's Future Land Use Map illustrates the community's preferences for the future distribution of the land uses within the Town. The land use designation for a property, as shown on the Land Use Map, is to be the primary consideration in determining whether the zoning of that property follows the general plan.

Flexibility in how specific lands may be zoned is provided in the design of the Land Use Map. Rezone requests that exceed the flexibility provided in the map, as described below, are not to be approved without first amending the general plan Land Use Map.

The Land Use Map is to be interpreted in the following manner. Each parcel that is colored to represent a specific land use designation may be zoned in a manner that implements the category of land use indicated. The white/uncolored areas located between two or more different land use designations (colors) indicate an imprecise or flexible boundary between the land use designations indicated. Where a white area separates two or more colored areas, the Town may authorize zoning that is compatible with the designation on one side of the white or unshaded area to extend across the area and into the opposing land use designation up to the extent of encompassing an entire parcel, and still be considered in compliance with the Land Use Map.



## Special Protection Areas

State statute requires that general plans “identify and consider each agriculture protection area” Utah Code §10-9a-403(2)(c). Statute also requires the plan to recognize industrial and/or critical infrastructure materials protection areas. These protection areas are a section of land that has a protected, vested use of an agriculture, mining, or industrial nature for a period of 20 years. Under state statute, a county must appoint an advisory board that reviews requests from private property owners that want to establish a protection area. A final decision is then made by the legislative body, and it is registered with the Utah Division of Agriculture and Food (UDAF) is notified. During the 20 year period, the land and use is protected from rezoning, eminent domain, nuisance claims, and state development.

The Town consulted with Garfield County during the development of this plan, and the County reported that they were not aware of any parcels that have been formally designed as agriculture, industrial, or critical infrastructure protection areas. The Town is interested in working with property owners that are considering the need for these designations before the process is formally initiated.

## Annexation

Annexation is the process through which properties outside the Town's boundaries are incorporated as part of the Town. This process includes an application by property owners to the Town and a public hearing process where stakeholders can discuss the issue. Petitions for property to be annexed into the Town are initiated by property owners and are often started with the intent of receiving services.

Currently Tropic Town provides emergency services, but not infrastructure services, to areas lying outside and abutting current developed portions of Town. Because of this and because Tropic Town desires input into areas surrounding traditional town boundaries, an area of roughly 5,000 acres are included by annexation within town boundaries. The area included within this annexation must then be included in the general planning efforts so that development in the area conforms to specific goals of the community.

## Goals + Policies: Land Use

**Goal 1 - Maintain Community Character.** Tropic seeks to ensure that new development supports and enhances the consistency of an overall community character and that it contributes in a positive way toward the Town's image.

1. Maintain the character of neighborhoods in the Town by encouraging comparable uses and densities to existing neighborhoods and development patterns.
2. Protect areas of agricultural uses in the future land use pattern of the Town, ensuring that adequate resources remain available to retain this community characteristic.
3. Preserve the quality and quantity of open space which gives the town its unique character. Establish trails and recreation areas that are integrated with open space.

**Goal 2 - Manage Projected Population Trends.** Tropic intends to preserve the integrity of its infrastructure systems by permitting orderly growth that synchronizes development with the availability of public facilities such as road, sewer, and water service needed to support it.

1. Maintain an annual Capital Improvement Program.
2. Annexations should provide a real and measurable benefit to the Town. Measurable benefits may be in the form of qualitative (civic pride, community health, etc) or quantitative (tax base

generation, recreational land acquisition, etc). The Town may require an “annexation impact statement” with all annexations of 5 acres or larger.

**Goal 3 - Develop and implement ways that requires adequate infrastructure exist or be planned for as part of the subdivision approval process.**

1. Implement and routinely assess a thorough program of development impact fees to provide adequate public facilities and services in a timely manner.
2. As a priority the Town will make infrastructure and service investment decisions that meet the needs of existing residents, while balancing the need for growth to provide adequate tax base for future community needs.
3. Future residential development will need to cover all the costs of building within the town as to not place additional financial burdens on existing residents.



# COMMUNITY DESIGN

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## Community Character

The character of a community is the image that residents and visitors experience when utilizing community spaces. It is through this “image” that people make their impressions of a community, lasting or temporary.

## Beautification + Nuisances

Community beautification issues focus on the visual appearance of the town (residential and municipal uses) as well as preserving historic assets. Community design shapes, and is shaped by, other facets of planning (such as transportation, housing, and recreation). It is through this unique form meets function process that the Town will be able to create, market and retain their unique character and appearance.

Well-planned community design improves both the visual and functional characteristics of the town. It can make the town more aesthetically pleasing while enhancing the flow of goods and people. The term “nuisances” refer to conduct or use of land that interferes with another’s ability to enjoy and use their property. They can negatively impact area property values. Typical property nuisances in rural communities are as follows:

- Light pollution
- Non-conforming land uses
- Inappropriate use of ROW property

There are opportunities in Tropic for reinvestment in community design, specifically within the areas of community unification and integration, such as:

- Community signage
- Community gathering places
- Downtown corridor enhancements
- Gateway and entrance signage
- Conforming land uses
- Streetscape and building setbacks along main corridors
- Expanding their Main Street project boundaries

## Gateway Issues

One of the priorities of the Town is to define and preserve its mainly northern and southern gateway areas so that future development of these areas provides this impression and does not detract from the current viewshed opportunities. A part of this can be done by focusing on the development of the entrances to the town is done in harmony with the natural environment of the area.

## Historic Preservation

There is a Scout House and Bowery located in the Town's park block. The Scout House was constructed in 1939 and is made of logs. Tropic considers this to be a community asset but has learned that it isn't eligible to be listed as a historical building formally.



## Street Design + Setbacks

Streets act as edges and can help define boundaries of districts and create visual changes. These visual changes that happen at edges often are the most impactful. Those visiting the Town will be more likely to stay if they feel safe and welcomed. Business will be more likely to locate if they feel the area will attract visitors.

Tropic's roadways in the Town Core should be designed in a way that complements a "small town main street" and a sense of destination. In order to accomplish this, the Town is supportive of development that prioritizes active transportation improvements (i.e. pedestrian, biking).

In the core area, Tropic can create visual interest with building materials, and can enhance visual diversity with setbacks, massing, and architectural detail variations.

The streetscape realm throughout town vary in status and conditions. Streetscape are where the residents interact with the community and it is important that these areas be designed and maintained appropriately.

## Nonconforming Uses

A nonconforming use is one that legally existed under a previous land use regulation, but that does not meet current requirements. Under Utah State law, this use has the right to continue if the use does not change (ownership can change).

Like nonconforming uses, non-complying structures are those that no longer meet current regulations (such as setback or height). These structures also have the right to continue, but the Town is legally permitted to set local rules about how these structures can be modified and/or brought up to safety standards.

## Goals + Policies: Community Design

**Goal 1. Create a more pedestrian-friendly community.** As new development is proposed, and/or as resources become available to the Town, invest in things that promote an active lifestyle.

1. In the town's core area, support developments that incorporate shade trees, a landscaped buffer from traffic, ornamental plantings with year-round appeal, public art, site furniture, and pedestrian lighting.
2. Construct maintained pathways of adequate widths on streets in high density areas that currently do not have paths for other types of transportation other than driving.

**Goal 2. Retain small town charm.** The small town way of life is an attractor for residents and visitors. It is critical that the rural charm be retained.

1. Personify and encourage small town form factor buildings within the community.
2. Create safe and inviting civic spaces within the community.
3. Properly manage and promote events that enhance the small town charm.
4. As resources permit, pursue the development of a senior center.

**Goal 3. Preserve the natural environment.** Critical to the small town charm is the ease of access to the natural assets surrounding the community.

1. Strive for a balance system of open lands, natural areas, recreation spaces, and parks, including trails and streetscapes.
2. Preserve and protect important natural areas within the Town, as practicable.
3. Acquire and manage land and water to preserve, protect, and enhance important natural areas.

**Goal 4. Prepare the built environment to personify the community's vision.** Ensure that the buildings and built environment are of adequate form to meet the community goals will ensure that the community maintains character.

1. Prepare and implement necessary infrastructure upgrades to meet the current and future demand.
2. Review and amend zoning ordinances to promote adequate infill development and discourage sprawl.
3. Design and monitor development within the community to ensure that traffic, noise, pollution and crime are kept to a minimum.

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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## Current Conditions

Since its founding, Tropic Town has relied heavily on the agriculture endeavors prevalent within the community. With the improvements and popularity of Highway 12 possibilities of additional kinds of revenues and employment have arisen. Increased traffic along Highway 12 has enticed many new motel/hotel facilities into the area to accompany other tourist activities growing in popularity.

## Areas of Potential

The past general plan mentioned of the desire to increase the ability of residents to operate businesses from communities such as Tropic through advancements in computer technologies. There also included a desire within the community for a museum, taking advantage of the tourism so prevalent in the region. Job availability for the youth in the community and promoting the development of “home-grown” businesses were identified as needs in the community for economic development.

It is critical to note that any new commercial development will need to provide their own water for use of the facility.

## Goals + Policies: Economic Development

### Goal 1 - **Encourage job growth in the local area.**

1. Collect and distribute information relative to the availability of small business loans.
2. Promote the development of “home-grown” business through information sharing and expedited permitting.
3. Encourage the school district to provide a curriculum which supports the educational needs of employment in the local business community.

### Goal 2 - **Utilize tourism attracted to the area from National Parks.**

1. Promote historically significant areas in the community.
2. Insure proper maintenance and attractiveness of historic monuments.
3. Pursue grants for development of historic attractions.
4. Partner with local historic groups to showcase the area.

# TRANSPORTATION

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## Current Conditions

It is essential to analyze and recommend roadway improvements based on an understanding of the historical land use patterns within Tropic. Land use develops along transportation corridors and typically shapes and follows the future land use plans identified by the Town.

Along Highway 12 is considered the Town's Main Street, currently a pathway to three national parks. This area is experiencing increased traffic, especially compared to other streets within town. Several arterial streets within Tropic although not as busy as Main Street receives most of the travel. The local streets meeting this criterion are Bryce Way and Center Street.

## Impact Fees + Traffic Impact Studies

Tropic currently does not have a street impact fee for transportation improvements. The impact fees can assist in building the necessary roadway improvements to handle the increased growth and mitigate congestion that is currently being realized on the roadways in the Town. Proposed roads on the future roadways map and maintenance of existing roads can be funded by these fees.

As part of furthering this plan and deciding how to use funds wisely, Tropic may consider requiring an impact fee after completing a fee study for any new development and for larger developments a Traffic Impact Study (TIS). A TIS is a specialized study of the impacts that a certain type and size of development will have on the surrounding transportation system. It is specifically concerned with the generation, distribution, and assignment of traffic to and from a new development. Since residential and private roads are not part of the Future Roadway map, TIS reports allow the Town flexibility when deciding these smaller roads locations.

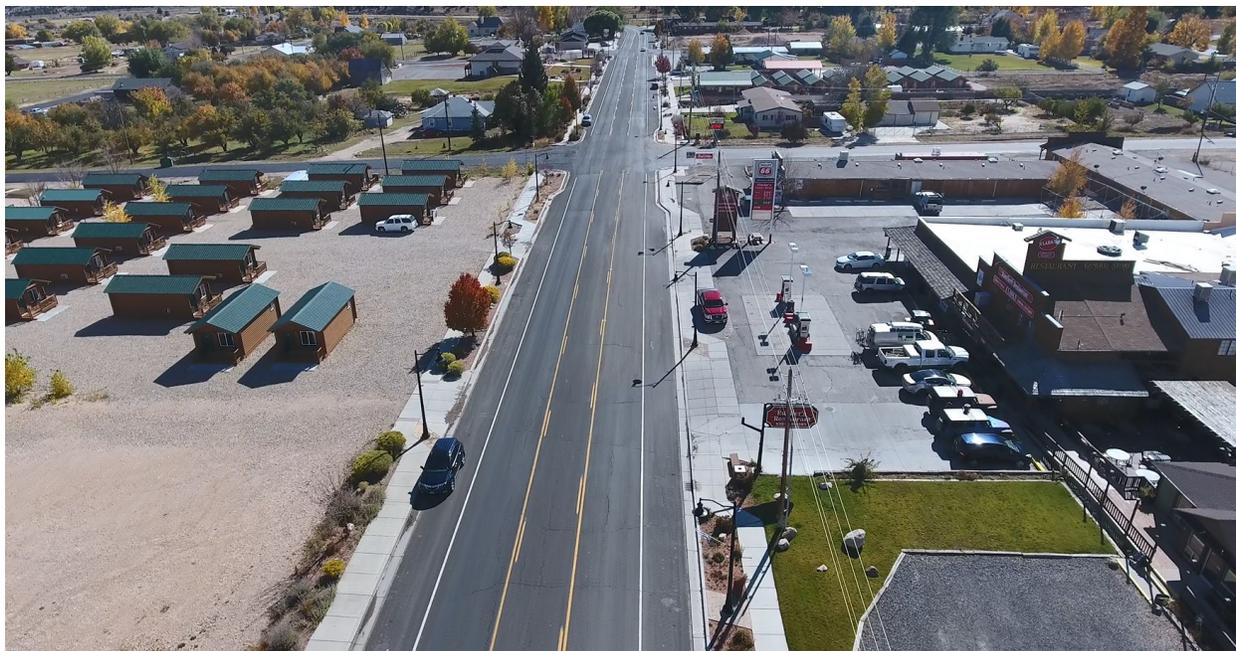
## Roadway Design + Access Management

A safe transportation system is one of the top priorities of Tropic. New roads should be designed to give proper access to emergency vehicles and should be well maintained. Also, roadways and walkways should be designed in a way that all people can equally access and use the transportation system.

A critical factor to the safety and function of the transportation system is access management. Access management is the practice of coordinating the location, number, spacing and design of access points to minimize site access conflicts and maximize the traffic capacity of a roadway. Techniques include signal spacing, street spacing, access spacing, and interchange to crossroad access spacing.

Since the main road through the Town is a state highway the Town cannot control access on it, but on local collectors the Town can focus on more access to slow down traffic and minimize cut through traffic as the state highway becomes more congested.

Future commercial and high-density residential development along Main Street should anticipate access management requirements from UDOT.



## Off-Highway Vehicles (OHV)

In response to concerns raised by Tropic Town residents, and ordinance related to OHV use within Town-limits was adopted in 1998. The Town's policy was to support OHV use, particularly related to agricultural use, adopt definitions found in state statute, and to restrict OHV routes and hours of operation in Town.

## Public Transportation

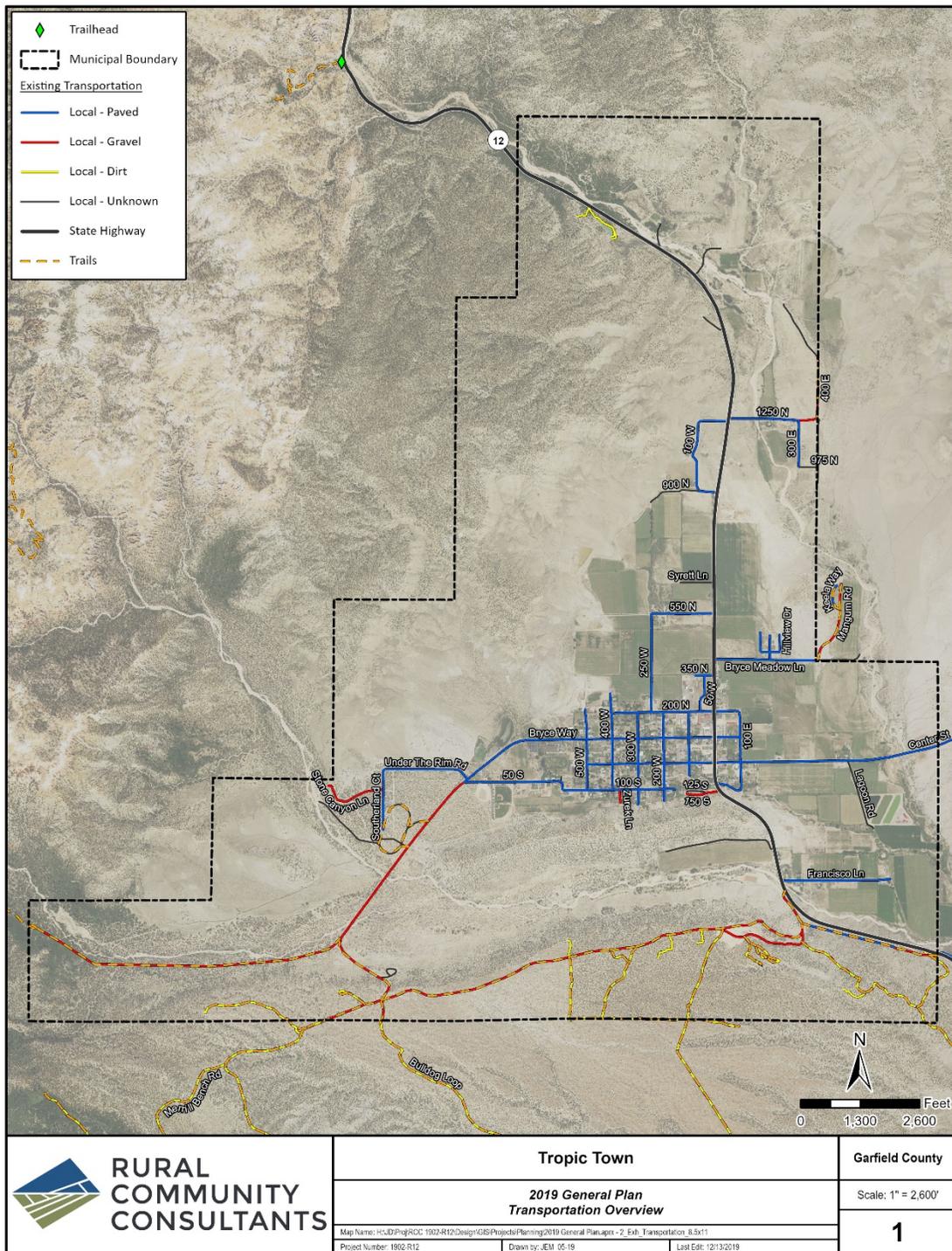
Private providers are currently meeting the need for public transportation to neighboring communities.

## Potential Improvement Opportunities

The Town doesn't envision the need for any roadway projects that would improve vehicle traffic. However, there is a specific need for a bicycle/pedestrian path that provides a safe option within the Bryce Valley.

A path currently exists along SR-12 in the Red Canyon area over to Bryce Canyon Town. Tropic supports projects that would extend that path from the Park boundary (about a mile north of the limits of Tropic) to Cannonville's Main Street. Once constructed, this path will serve as the backbone of a network of trails in the area and will tie the local visitor centers together.

# Future Transportation Map



## Goals + Policies: Transportation

**Goal 1 - Provide for the existing and future transportation needs.** Develop and maintain transportation systems of adequate size and capacity to serve the population in all areas of the town.

1. The Town will require necessary transportation improvements, including adequate right-of-way dedications, and other transportation facility enhancements, concurrent with development approvals.
2. Street paving and pedestrian surfacing materials should be economical, serviceable, permeable where practicable, easy to repair, and the variety of surfacing materials should be kept to a minimum.
3. The parking policy shall be to require on-site parking sufficient to meet the anticipated parking demand of proposed development or a "payment in lieu of parking."

**Goal 2 - Connect local transportation facilities with regional transportation systems.**

1. Maintain close relationships and cooperation with organizations that have transportation implementation/planning responsibilities in order to stay informed of planned future transportation developments and communicate the needs of the community.
2. Maintain the ability to provide fire and ambulance protection, delivery and public transportation service in all areas of the town.

**Goal 3 - Support a multi-user transportation model including legal and orderly OHV usage.**

1. Allow OHVs to use designated town roads and provide OHV trail access to public land and county OHV trail systems.
2. As resources are available, educate and inform OHV users to avoid conflicts between motorized and non-motorized users.



# HOUSING

## Existing Conditions

Quality housing at an affordable cost is the foundation of a strong and vibrant community. The condition and character of houses and public spaces reflect and contribute to local identity, pride in community, and the long-term viability of the Town as a whole. The availability of good and affordable housing for people of various family styles, ages, sizes, professions, health, and incomes contributes to the Town's vibrancy and economic success.

Tropic allows for the uses of single family housing, multi-family dwellings, and mobile homes as allowed under current Town Code.



## Moderate Income Housing

The new state model for moderate income housing was also applied to this current plan update. The following is a representation of those findings.

- The housing profile for the total population of Tropic is roughly 81% in owner occupied units, and 19% in rental housing units.

- The overall population is expected to largely remain the same by the year 2024. People living in owner-occupied housing is predicted to decrease 17%. Those living rental units are expected to increase by 17%.
- With projected decreases in the population living in owner-occupied housing, the number of households that own their housing without a mortgage is also expected to decline.
- Median housing costs for owner occupied housing are currently (2017) estimated to be \$900 and median gross rents are \$779 per month.
- The median household income for residents is estimated to be \$56,458. Those in owner-occupied units are reporting \$61,667, the rental units population reported \$36,705.
- Utah Statute requires cities to evaluate their housing opportunities for those earning 80% of the “area median income”. Garfield County’s household AMI is approximately \$60,224 for households that are between 3-4 people, 80% of this amount is \$48,180. Under the assumption that appropriate housing costs should not exceed 30% of a household budget, then the Town should look for ways to support housing development that is as or more affordable than what is in the market currently.

## Future Demand

Based on future projections and the current state of housing in Tropic, the need for rental units is expected to rise as the demand and popularity increases. It is recommended that affordable housing be reviewed, and adequate options be provided for all individuals or families. It is also recommended that the future demand be matched with the community housing forecast and a preference be placed on affordable housing alternatives.

## Goals + Policies: Housing

**Goal 1 - Moderate Income Housing.** Tropic seeks to equitably provide housing opportunities for its residents.

1. Tropic will continue to monitor the supply and demand of the local housing market to ensure that the needs of residents are met, and that housing stays affordable.
2. Continually evaluate the land use regulations of the Town to ensure they work to achieve the purposes of this Plan.
3. The Town will work to provide opportunities to live in safe, habitable and affordable housing.
4. Work with other agencies to provide moderate income housing for residents [*as per UCA 10-9a-403(2)(b)(iii)(P-U)*].
5. Encourage the preservation of existing housing to provide opportunities for moderate income housing [*as per UCA 10-9a-403(2)(b)(iii)(L)*].

**Goal 2 - Housing Stock.** Tropic seeks to develop a variety of housing opportunities.

1. Support the development of single-family dwellings, multi-family dwellings, and retirement housing.
2. Encourage a variety of housing and residential opportunities by establishing and providing a range of allowed residential densities and lot sizes [*as per UCA 10-9a-403(2)(b)(iii)(A)*].

**Goal 3 - Quality Housing.** Tropic should approve development proposals that meet the high expectations of residents.

1. Support housing developments that are constructed out of high quality materials and are intended for owner occupancy, even in the case of multi-family developments.
2. All new residential developments, through appropriate subdivision design, development standards, and the provision of required amenities and facilities; as well as be compatible with neighboring development and planned urban developments.



# RECREATION + OPEN SPACE

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## Existing Conditions

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) has developed standards for parks, recreation and open space development that are intended to guide communities in establishing a hierarchy of park areas. The general standard established by the NRPA for park acreage per 1,000 people is between 15 and 17 acres, or 1.5 to 1.7 acres for every 100 people. Future park planning should involve an analysis of total acres as well as activity amenities (i.e. pickleball, playgrounds, etc).

The current Tropic Town Park and Pavilion is home to many community and local celebrations. A popular gathering place for celebrated occasions, the park is equipped with swings, a slide, and a merry-go-round. A horseshoe pit, volleyball, and frisbee facilities also are available to provide great entertainment and competition.

## Potential Improvement Opportunities

Ensuring that the community develops and retains the recreational assets that will draw users to the site is of vital importance. To improve the amenities that are available, it is recommended to provide the following elements:

1. Develop a town-wide parks and recreation plan and incorporate the priority projects into the town's capital budgeting process. This plan should also include an inventory of property that is currently owned by the town.
2. Interconnected recreational opportunities - specifically trail linkages.
3. Local neighborhood park renovations.

## Goals + Policies: Recreation and Open Space

**Goal 1 - Encourage the development and maintenance of parks with quality recreational facilities dispersed throughout the planning area.**

1. Develop a variety of park type and sizes (regional, community, neighborhood) which are distributed adequately to serve all area residents and to prevent overcrowding and overuse.
2. Provide programs for a variety of passive and active recreational opportunities for all area residents.
3. Establish a master map of parks and recreational facilities.
4. Use every opportunity to obtain land and facilities, as it becomes available and/or ahead of need and hold, or land bank, for subsequent improvement to meet future Park and recreational needs.
5. Develop standards for park acquisition concerning the location, size, service radius, configuration, slope evaluation, access, and infrastructure.

**Goal 2 - Maintain parks and recreational facilities as resources permit.**

1. Establish a park funding program to ensure that the funds are available to improve and maintain dedicated parkland or acquired park acreage.
2. Promote the establishment of citizen volunteer programs for park maintenance.

**Goal 3 - Develop community centers, which provide multiple-use opportunities for the residents of the planning area on locations deemed appropriate.**

1. Develop standards for and promote the development of community centers.
2. Develop mechanisms to provide and support community cultural arts facilities and programs.

**Goal 4 - Encourage a system of parks and recreational facilities and programs, which provide recreational opportunities for all segments of the community.**

1. Establish a diverse year-round entertainment program, including concerts, performing arts, and other programs.
2. Promote the establishment of community-based organizations and develop community gathering areas, which promote a variety of cultural activities in the planning area.
3. Preserve and enhance designated significant historic assets and other structures and amenities, which provide community focal points, and which preserve and broaden the cultural and preservation opportunities within the town.
4. Promote community-wide cultural programs for all ages such as cultural education programs and art programs and classes in schools.

**Goal 5 - To promote public/private cooperation in developing park improvements, recreational services, and facilities.**

1. Promote the expansion of joint-use agreements with the school district to provide recreational programs and facilities in existing and future residential neighborhoods.
2. Encourage developers to improve and/or construct parks and recreational facilities in lieu of paying fees and partial fulfillment of park and recreational requirements.

# PUBLIC SERVICES + FACILITIES

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## Introduction

The Town of Tropic recognizes the need to provide capital facilities within the Town to protect the health, safety, and property of the Town and its citizens by maintaining the level of service for future generations which Tropic residents, industries, and businesses have enjoyed.

The purpose of the public facilities chapter is to explain the various public services and facilities within the Town. These services represent the public's investment in the development and operation of Tropic Town. The public facilities chapter should be reviewed periodically and updated as necessary in order to meet the evolving needs of the Town.

## Culinary Water

Tropic Town provides culinary water connections as part of their utility system. While the Town wants to encourage new residential development to address its housing supply, it struggles with the limited availability of culinary water in the Paria River Drainage Basin. Therefore, the Town has established a policy that it can provide services to new single-family and multi-family residential uses, but that utility connections for commercial use will only be available for purchase from the Town if the commercial developer can first obtain satisfactory water rights for their development from the Spring Creek source.

Water connections for residential developments within the Town are available currently without restrictions. Commercial uses will need to provide sufficient water rights before connection.

## Secondary Water

The Tropic & East Fork Irrigation Company provides secondary water. This source also serves as the Town's back-up source for emergencies but was not developed for the purpose of growth and expansion.

## Sewer System

Tropic Town provides sewer connections upon purchase as part of their utility system. Residential development is currently available for connection, while future commercial developments will need to provide enough water rights for water usage before the development can connect to the Town's sewer system.

Tropic reserves the right to consider the potential implementation of septic systems and/or localized treatment facilities in outlying areas. These will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

## Utility Services

Garkane Energy currently provides electric services to the Town.

South Central Communications Provides telephone and data services.

## Cemetery

Currently, the Tropic area cemetery is owned and operated by the Town.

## Sanitation

The sanitation needs for the town are contracted out through Hughes Waste Services.

## Schools

Tropic recognizes that it doesn't have statutory authority over the location and design of public schools. However, the Town wants to continue to work with the Garfield County School District to identify preferred areas for new facilities.

## Emergency Services, Preparedness, and Resilience

The Town recognizes that it faces several potential hazards and threats that may cause disruption, damage, or destruction of public and private assets with Tropic. They regularly maintain an Emergency Operations Plan, they encourage CERT certification of residents, and they work with Garfield County to coordinate emergency planning strategies.

Law enforcement is currently contracted through the Garfield County Sheriff's Department, and EMS services are also provided by the County. Fire and Search and Rescue services are provided by the Town's volunteer department.

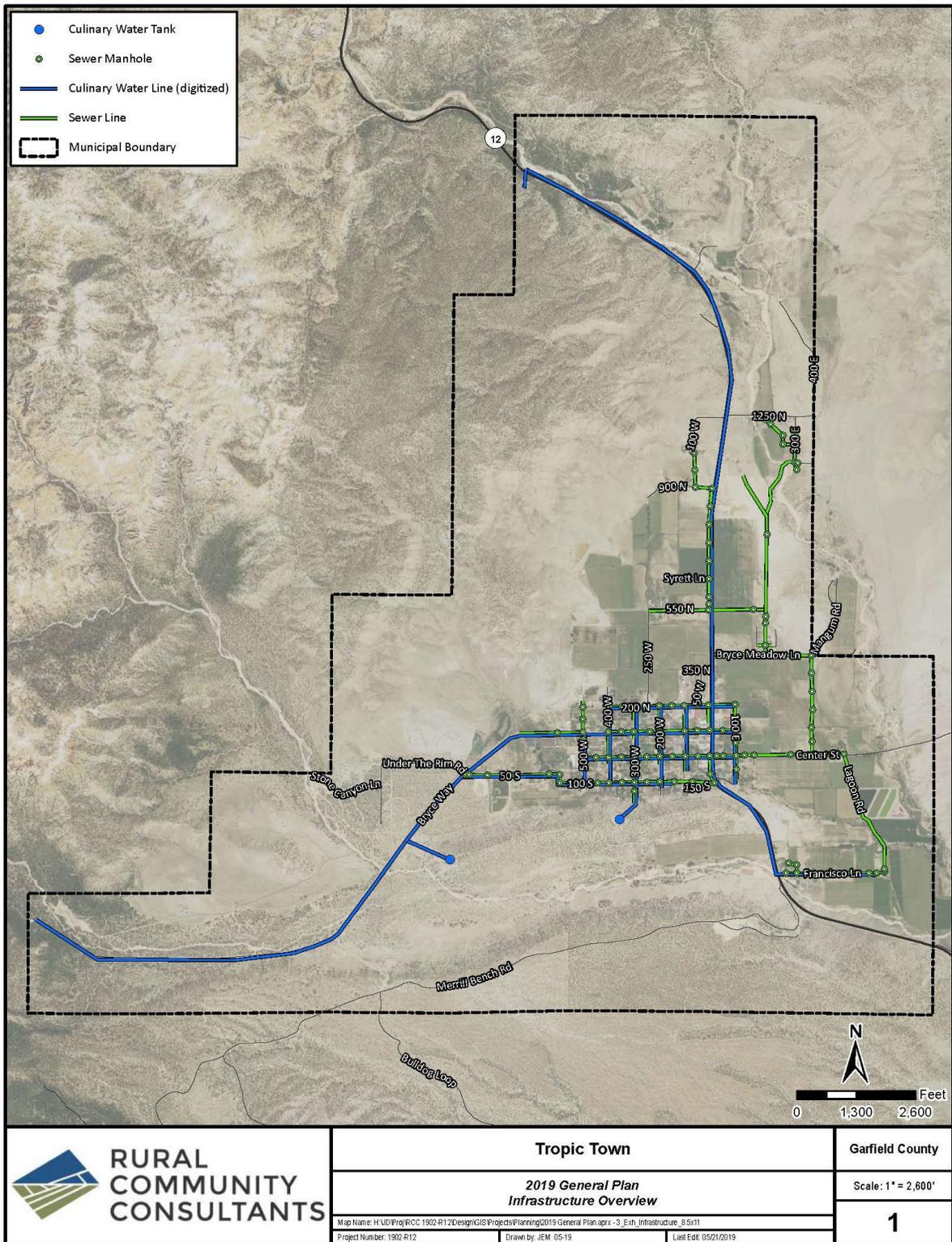
The Town appreciates and wants to continue the good working relationship on emergency preparedness.



## Potential Improvement Opportunities

1. Create a set of recommended and desired amenities within the community and work towards acquiring or creating the necessary infrastructure for such assets.
2. Provide an “infrastructure roadmap” for the next ten (10) years of the municipality, focusing on:
  - a. Prioritized capital improvements projects.
  - b. Sidewalk and roadway improvements projects.
  - c. Recreational amenity creation within ½ of a mile of each residential structure.
3. Explore transportation options for critical corridors within the community, increasing transportation options.





## Goals + Policies: Public Services and Facilities

Goal 1 - As resources permit, develop and maintain the levels-of-service in the following table:

FACILITY / SERVICE	UNIT OF DEMAND / OPERATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS	LEVEL OF SERVICE GOAL
State roads	Operational characteristics as defined in the Transportation Research Board. Highway Capacity Manual (Special Report 209, 1985)	Level of Service “D”
Town roads and intersections	Operational characteristics as defined in the Transportation Research Board. Highway Capacity Manual (Special Report 209, 1985)	Level of Service “C”
Water transmission and distribution	Pressure measured in pounds per sq. inch (psi) for peak instantaneous flow	The distribution system must be sized to accommodate peak instantaneous flows with a minimum of 20 psi pressure existing in the system at all points, as measured by the equation set forth in Utah Administrative Code Rule 309-105-1, and shall comply with the fire flow standards set forth in Utah Administrative Code Rule 309-105-3
Water quality	Biological Oxygen Demand (BOD) and Total Suspended Solids (TSS)	Pollutant contributed per Equivalent Residential Unit (ERU) is 200 ppm 5 day 20 centigrade BOD: 250 ppm TSS
Sanitary sewer treatment facilities	Gallons per equivalent residential unit per day (derived from gallons per capita per day)	320 gallons per day per dwelling unit or equivalent ERU
Sanitary sewer	Gallons per equivalent residential unit per day (derived from gallons per capita per day)	1,280 gallons per ERU. Mandatory hookup is required where a structure is located within 300’ of a sewer line
Fire protection	Response time measured from dispatch of emergency vehicles to arrive at the scene of the fire	The Tropic Town Fire Service District shall be capable of providing an adequate response time as follows: For development proposals in the Urbanizing Area, Planned Urbanizing Area and Future Urbanizing Area, a maximum response time of 3 minutes and an average response time of 5 minutes. For development proposals in the Rural Area, a response time of 3 minutes.
Fire protection water capacity and pressure	Gallons per minute (GPM), as measured by the Insurance Service Office, Fire Suppression Rating Schedule over an established duration (measured in hours)	Water systems shall be interconnected wherever possible in order to insure adequate fire protection. Water systems serving a proposed development shall be adequately sized and have enough pressure to provide needed fire flow as determined by the methodology set forth in the Fire Suppression Rating Schedule

# APPENDICES + IMPLEMENTATION

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## Potential Action Steps

The following strategy suggestions were developed as part of the planning process and should be considered as resources become available. They don't represent formal policy statements of the Town.

### Implementation of the Economic Element Goals

The primary tools with which the town should undertake to implement the Economic Development and Community Revitalization Element of the plan include:

- A comprehensive marketing plan.
- Specific area and/or industry strategies.
- Development agreements.
- Redevelopment and revitalization programs.
- Industrial Development Bonds.

### Implementation of the Transportation Goals

- Investigate the feasibility of conducting an updated impact fee study and establishing a fee for new development.
- Adopt a program of street and highway landscaping (i.e. street trees) to enhance the appearance of the Town's circulation system.
- Consider requiring a Traffic Impact Study for any new, significant developments that are not residential infill.

### Implementation of the Recreation and Open Space Goals

- Develop a parkland dedication ordinance.
- Include requirements for onsite recreational opportunities in residential as well as commercial and industrial categories.
- Pursue park bonds and state grants.
- Identify areas for potential parks and recreation areas within the Town that are a benefit to residents and neighboring areas.
- Seek-out state funds for recreation programs and facilities.
- Create a volunteer committee for park maintenance and outdoor recreational activities to host at the park when wanted.

## Moderate Income Housing Appendix

The Legislature has determined that all cities with 10,000 or more residents are required to review the implementation of the 5-year moderate-income housing element of their general plan and annually report the findings of that review to the Utah Housing and Community Development Division. (**Towns are also 'encouraged' to do the same**).

- [Tropic Five-Year Housing Projections](#)
- [SB 34 Town/State Policy Alignment Memo](#)

## Physical Characteristics + Regional Setting

### Geology

Tropic lies in the center of the High Plateau Section of the Colorado Plateau Province. Part of this section, the Claron Formation, started forming 60 million years ago when large shallow lakes covered much of central and southwestern Utah. The lakes were probably brackish, muddy and void of most life forms. Deposition occurred for approximately 25 million years and the formation is 500 to 2,000 feet thick.

Approximately 28 million years ago, the High Plateau Section experienced extensive volcanic activity and remnants of this activity can be seen in the nearby Black and Boulder Mountains.

About 15 million years ago, the entire Colorado Plateau was elevated, which resulted in massive faulting on the western edge of the High Plateau Section. This section was broken along faults into large blocks or plateaus that include the nearby Markagunt, Paunsaugunt, Sevier and Aquarius Plateaus.

Tropic lies on the up-thrown edge of the Paunsaugunt fault at the base of the Paunsaugunt Plateau. Interestingly, Tropic is several hundred feet lower than the top of the down-thrown side of the fault. This is a result of the Paria River carving out a huge amphitheater. Bryce Canyon and the Table Cliffs form the sides of the amphitheater. Cutting nature of the Paria has exposed formations that cover 120 million years of geologic history. These formations include: Wahweap Formation, Straight Cliffs Formation, Tropic Shale, Nautrita Formation, Entrada Formation, and Carmel Formation. Other nearby formations that can be seen from Tropic includes the Kaiparowits and the Claron formations.

### Climate

Compared to most areas of Garfield County, Tropic is relatively mild. The last frost usually occurs in the latter part of April and begins freezing in Mid-October. On average, Tropic receives 12.30 inches of precipitation each year.

### High Water Table

Some areas of Tropic have a high water table, particularly during the early spring. Complications associated with this include seepage into basements and crop failure in affected parcels of land.

### Soils

Properties, including drainage quality, slope and structural make-up of the soils and how those soils can be used is vital in the planning process. Soils and their properties are an important factor in determining the proper location of specific land uses and buildings. For example, many communities are restricting development in hillside areas which may be subject to landslides or in areas which may be prone to flooding or slow runoff.

Tropic Town has some areas, which, because of soil conditions, are difficult to develop. Unfortunately, soils information for the town is not available. However, Tropic Town is committed to the safety of its citizens and will acquire pertinent soils information on a case by case basis from the developer. Through this information the Tropic Town will determine the type and intensity of development on any parcel.

### Liquefaction/Subsidence

Liquefaction refers to a phenomenon where the surface soils, generally alluvial soils, become saturated with water. Ground shaking packs the sand grains closer together so that there is less pore space within the alluvium. These soils, therefore, become very wet and mobile causing foundations of structures to move, leading to varying degrees of structural damage. Generally, this phenomenon occurs only below the water table; however, after liquefaction has developed, it can move upward. Liquefaction susceptibility decreases with the depth of the water table, and the age, cementation, and compactness of the sediments.

Subsidence may also be a problem in certain areas. Subsidence can be a serious side effect of excessive groundwater or petroleum withdrawal where the ground surface sinks.

### Seismic Effects

The major cause of structural damage from earthquakes is ground shaking and liquefaction. The amount of ground motion expected at a building site can vary from none to forceful depending upon (1) the distance to the fault, (2) the magnitude of the earthquake, and (3) the local geology. Greater movement can be expected at sites located on poorly consolidated material such as alluvium located near the source of the earthquake (epicenter) or in response to an earthquake of great magnitude. Strong ground shaking can damage large freeway overpasses and unreinforced masonry buildings. It can also trigger a variety of secondary hazards such as liquefaction, landslides, fire and dam failure.

The town is located in a seismically dynamic region, known as the Intermountain Seismic Belt which extends from northern Arizona through Montana, which has experienced earthquakes since 1953 of 5 or higher on the Richter Scale. However, Tropic Town lies in an area categorized as moderate when evaluating ground shaking effects. The State of Utah considers a fault to be active if it has caused soil and strata displacement in the last 11,000 years.

### Hillside Stability

Landslides are often associated with earthquakes, though there are other factors that may influence the occurrence of landslides. These factors include the slope, the moisture content of the soil, and the composition of the soils and subsurface geology. In addition to earthquakes, heavy rain or the improper grading of a construction site may trigger a landslide.

### Flooding Hazards

Two areas, the first along the southern and eastern portions of the existing town boundaries and the second along the northern and western boundaries (in general terms), lie within a 100 year floodplain. Flooding can occur as a result of heavy, prolonged rainfall or a smaller precipitation events in a degraded watershed or drainage system resulting from a recent fire or excessive grading. Because these areas are susceptible to flooding, limited development should occur within the boundaries of a 100 year flood zone.

Typical uses considered appropriate for these areas are golf courses, jogging and biking paths, hiking and equestrian trails, parks, and other uses, which do not, required extensive permanent facilities and which do not encourage large congregations of people.

Uses generally considered inappropriate for flood zone areas are single family residential, multifamily residential, general commercial and retail enterprises, and other uses which encourage extensive permanent facilities and large congregations of the public.

## Wetlands

The previous version of this plan reported on recent concerns in the Bryce Valley area over wetlands that included a request that was made of the Army Corp of Engineers to investigate an area in Tropic. The area investigated were located generally in the southeast portion of town. This area was the most likely to be considered as or develop concerns related to “wetlands” issues. Michael Schwinn, Chief Regulatory Officer with the Army Corp of Engineers made a site visit and concluded that “...it appears that no wetlands are present.”

