

AGENDA
WESTCLIFFE PLANNING COMMISSION
TOWN OF WESTCLIFFE
OCTOBER 2, 2024
PATTERSON HALL-1000 MAIN
REGULAR MEETING
3:00 p.m.

ZOOM

Meeting ID: 852 1102 3982 **Passcode:** 590904

By phone: 719 359 4580

1. Call to Order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Roll Call
4. Recognition of Visitors
5. Approval of minutes
6. Old Business
 - A. Discussion of the possible proposed Affordable Housing Ordinance.
7. New Business
 - A. PUBLIC HEARING: consideration of recommending to the Board of Trustees rezoning 106 South 7th Street from Residential Single Family to Traditional Neighborhood.

 - B. Consideration of recommending to the Board of Trustees to rezone 106 South 7th Street from Residential Single Family to Traditional Neighborhood.

 - C. Discuss, consider, and recommend to the Board of Trustees the Master Plan
8. Public Comment
Adjourn
NOTE: The Mayor and another Trustee may vote on matters before the Planning Commission and the Board of Trustees.

1-1-18 Affordable housing

A. Purpose and intent. The purpose and intent of this chapter is to provide clear and articulable direction for the Town of Westcliffe and its citizens and interested developers and partners on the Town's policies, stance, and outline to provide affordable housing for its citizens.

B. Definitions

1. Emergency services: organizations that ensure public safety, security, and health by addressing and resolving different emergencies.
2. Workforce/Affordable Housing: Housing that attracts and retains "essential workers" for the Town and the surrounding community, Housing for young family, looking to put down roots, Housing for single professionals looking for an outdoor oriented lifestyle, and Housing for retired individuals.
3. Affordable: Affordability shall be defined as an individual paying no more than 30% of their income (including utilities) toward housing.
4. Architectural Control Committee (ACC): A committee that oversees building development in the Multi Family District. The ACC shall oversee architectural requests and compliance lined out in 10-1-18 F.
5. Individual income levels: The individual income levels shall be defined as a person's yearly income reported to the IRS. The income levels shall be set upon by the most recent housing needs assessment.
6. Deed Restriction: specific rules and regulations regarding the use of the property or land, that shall accompany and bind an affordable home for a period of no less than 30 years.
7. Housing Authority:

C. Affordable shall be defined as:

1. No more than 120% AMI based off of the current housing needs assessment for the area.
2. No more than 30% of the individual income or combined income going toward housing, including utilities.
3. A deed restricted property/dwelling that must be restricted for a minimum of 30 years for private homes, and perpetuity for Town owned lots meant for affordable housing.

D. Housing Authority

1. Before the Town partners with a developer for affordable homes an IGA must be signed and attested between the Town and Upper Area Arkansas Council of Governments (UAACOG) to manage the affordable units in the Town, through a housing authority. The Town is not in the business of being a property manager.
2. The agreement shall and must outlay priority to the citizens of Westcliffe and the surrounding area (Custer County).
3. The agreement shall serve the following point system in order to ensure Town residents and the surrounding community, that rely on the local economy, get priority:
 - a. Working in Westcliffe- 5 points

- b. Working in Silver Cliff- 4 points
- c. Working in Custer County- 4 points
- d. Specific job fields served:
 - (1) Government, Westcliffe- 5 points
 - (2) Emergency services- 5 points
 - (3) Teachers- 4 points
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- e. Income- Different waiting lists for different AMI's shall be established below per individual income (subject to change by resolution for new Housing Needs Assessments).
 - (1) Low-income bracket (\$35,000 per year) 40% of units
 - (2) Middle income bracket (\$45,000 per year) 40% of units
 - (3) Upper income bracket (\$55,000 per year) 20% of units
- 4. In order to ensure the units are being provided to all residents who need it, a cap for rent shall be established. Each lease must serve each individual or household for no more than 5 years. The goal is to provide starter homes for those looking to get started, not lifelong government assistance.
- 5. It shall be the intent of the housing Authority to safely and appropriately divide the dwelling units fairly to ensure an equitable amount of units are spread out amongst all job fields within the Town of Westcliffe.
- 6. The agreement shall also have a clause giving the Town approval to audit the housing Authority once every two years, if needed, to ensure housing is prioritized and following section D. in its entirety.
- 7. The housing authority shall have a board that the Town can place a member on, to ensure it is following the original intent of this chapter.

B. Incentives for Developers

- 1. The Town should create incentives for any developer, partner, or housing authority it deems necessary to keep overall costs and rent down. The following shall be a guide for the Town to adopt incentives:
 - a. No Density limit. The Units built by a developer on Town owned lots shall have no density limit
 - b. Building height. A building height of 35' shall be allowed for the Town owned lots.
 - c. Reduced utility fees. The Town should work with Black Hills Energy and Round Mountain Water and Sanitation District to reduce fees and initial infrastructure cost.
 - d. Reduced property taxes. The Town shall have the right to give land over to a non-profit/ governmental group, such as UAACOG, to provide property tax relief.
 - e. Reduced local government costs. The Town shall have the right to create resolutions to its Feed Schedule in order to lower costs.
 - f. Reduced land development costs. The Town, if it chooses, may work with a developer, partner, or housing authority to give the land over, if the other party can serve the following:
 - (1) Provide housing in perpetuity to the following categories:
 - (a) Low-income bracket (\$35,000 per year) 40% of units

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(2) Provide in return a daycare center

(3) Provide in return an indoor recreation center

(4) Parks

(5) Community gardens

C. Development Review Process for the Town owned lots.

1. All site development within the Town owned lots shall be required to follow the procedures and satisfy the requirements set out in 10-1-9 prior to development. Site development is defined at Section 10-1-6. C.59. The developer is required to attend in person or by authorized representative, all meetings at which the project is considered, unless otherwise notified by the Town. With the exception of the erection of signs which must comply with the sign ordinance, no site development of property may be initiated, the use of property may not be substantially changed, substantial clearing, grading, filling or excavation may not be commenced, and buildings or other substantial structures may not be constructed, erected, moved or substantially altered except in accordance with **and pursuant to all of the following approvals:**
 - a. A site plan approval pursuant to Section **10-1-10 and 10-1-18 D. 2.**,
 - b. A subdivision approval pursuant to Chapter 3,
 - c. A use permitted by special review pursuant to Section 10-1-12,
 - d. An agreement between the Town, Developer, and UAACOG (housing authority).
2. **Site plan approval.** A site plan approval pursuant to Section 10-1-10 must be complied with before additionally adding a description of the proposed affordability.
 - a. What AMI the developer is seeking to serve
 - b. Unit breakdown. Number of beds per unit
 - c. Number of affordable units (no more than 30% of income at 120% AMI and below) and unaffordable units (110% AMI and above), based on the most current housing needs assessment/market study.
 - d. The developer shall provide units to serve the following individual income levels laid out in 10-1-18 B, 1, f, (1)

D. Architectural Control Committee (ACC). The Board of Trustees are hereby granting the Planning Commission the duty to act as an Architectural Control committee defined in 10-1-17 B. The ACC shall inspect and approve all buildings within the Multi Family District, including the Town owned lots. The purpose of the Architectural Control Committee is to ensure the health and wellbeing of Westcliffe is protected. The Town wants to keep its rural character, while providing tasteful housing options for its residents. Each dwelling (as defined in 10-1-6 15. & 16.) shall be reviewed under the same process as Municipal Code 10-1-10.

1. The ACC shall not inspect the structural components of the building
2. The ACC shall only review the exterior "façade" and architectural concepts. Those who submit plans to the ACC, and are accepted, shall be expected to build what they present.
3. No Dwelling shall be erected, placed, or built on any lot until the construction plans showing the location of the structure within the lots have been approved by the ACA, as to the sufficient quality of workmanship and materials, harmony of external design with

the existing structures, and the topography of the lots as to finished grade elevations. In addition, all sidewalk, landscaping and the signage plans shall be submitted and approved by the committee.

4. The Architectural Control Committee has the authority to establish and maintain harmonious lot grades and the right to establish grades prior to the construction of any building. The grades designated and all improvements shall be maintained continuously by the owner of the lot and no structure, planting or other material shall be placed or permitted to remain which may damage or interfere with the established slope ratios, create erosion or sliding problems or which may change the direction of flow of drainage channels or obstruct the flow of water through drainage channels.
 1. Design Standards
 - a. Approved exterior siding shall be stucco, vinyl, metal, engineered wood siding, bevel, board and batten, and split logs, all to be of earth tones.
 - b. Different siding colors may be allowed by the ACC to give the owners more diverse options.
 - c. Alternate approved exterior finishings: Brick cladding, stone veneer, and stone siding may also be a viable option.
 - d. Overall, the building must fit into the surrounding area in terms on design.
- E. Development Review Process for individual lot owners.**
1. 1. All site development within the Town owned lots shall be required to follow the procedures and satisfy the requirements set out in section F of this chapter.
 2. Water and Sewer infrastructure
 - a. The Town shall have the right to develop and install water and sewer lines in the Multi Family District. In the event that the Town does not install these lines, the owner shall be responsible to comply with Round Mountain Water Sanitation Districts "Rules and Regulations".
 3. Sidewalks and gutters: All properties within the MFD shall have sidewalk, curbs and gutters installed along the roadside property line before a certificate of occupancy shall be granted. All work shall comply with the Town of Westcliffe Sidewalk Specifications. This section shall comply with Title 7 of the Westcliffe Municipal Code.
 4. Driveways: All driveways shall comply with the Town of Westcliffe Sidewalk Specifications. This section shall comply with Title 7 of the Westcliffe Municipal Code.
 5. Roads
 - a. The Town of Westcliffe shall have the right to design, install, and maintain roads within its ROW.
 6. Site plan
 - a. The owner of the lots shall present to the ACC a site plan laid out in 10-1-10 of the Westcliffe Municipal Code.
 - b. If the owner is trying to provide affordable housing (as defined in 10-1-18 B, 2), they shall present to the ACC a site plan laid out in 10-1-17 E. 2. The Town shall also require a deed restriction (as defined in 10-1-18 B) to accompany and bind with the land for a period of no less than 30 years.

F. Unlawful acts

1. It is unlawful for any person to build on the Multi Family District without first seeking approval from the ACC and the ordinance within this chapter.

G. Enforcement and Penalties

1. Any provision within this chapter that is violated will be to the sum of five-hundred dollars (\$500.00) per day.

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CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Patterson called the meeting to order at 3:00 P.M.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Patterson led the Pledge of Allegiance

ROLL CALL

The following members were present: Chairman Patterson, Mr. Wenke, Mr. Fulton, Mr. Van Doren, Mr. Lund (via Zoom).

ABSENT:

OTHERS PRESENT

Don Cook, Laura Piquette, Leslie Parks, Robert G. Veltrie, Bianca Trenker, George Mowry, Chuck Jagow, Jakki Behan, Peggi Collins, Steve Cocks, Twila Geroux, Melinda Ruzanski, Jerry Peters, Paul Young, Diane McDaniel, Bryan Hammeth (?), Mike Liebaum (?), Tami Malone, Jack Malone, Scott Bowers, Marlys Hartbauer, Cynthia Gooding (?), Elliot Jackson, Mark Datsun (?), Michael Nuanes, Caleb Patterson, Kathy Reis, Melane Rella.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

ACTION: Mr. Wenke moved, and **Mr. Van Doren** seconded to approve August 7, 2024 minutes. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

- a. **Bianca Trenker presents signatures in support of affordable workforce housing and photos for perspective.**

Ms. Trenker presented pictures showing what 35 feet looked like from different perspectives in Town. She detailed walking into local businesses and collected 140 signatures in favor of affordable housing.

Chairman Patterson attempted to dispel rumors regarding Affordable Housing.

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- b. Consideration of recommending to the Board of Trustees the possible rezoning of blocks; Discussion on 19&20, 33&34, and Town owned lots to Multi-family District (MFD).**

Statistics regarding the need for Affordable Housing were discussed. The public was informed that the Town is not a developer; this meeting is to discuss whether the Planning Commission that those lots should be rezoned should a developer decide to build on them. Some citizens voiced concerns about illegal aliens moving into the possibly built housing. Discussion was had about how the Town owned lots could be zoned. A consensus was agreed on by all to keep the current ordinance: A duplex. (2) A Single-Family home with a required ADU (as defined in 3-7-1). Both options must be built on a minimum of 2 lots. A consensus was reached that no short term rentals would be allowed if the blocks are rezoned. Citizen comments expressed concerned about stipulations on receiving grant funds. Consensus was no for the need for an architectural design committee.

ACTION: **Chairperson Patterson** moved and **Mr. Wenke** seconded a proposal to recommend to the Board of Trustees that Town owned blocks 33&34 be rezoned to multifamily housing while keeping consistent with current Town specified code. Motion carried.

John Van Doren: Nay
Chris Lund: Aye
Paul Wenke: Aye
Christy Patterson: Aye
Bob Fulton: Aye

ACTION: **Mr. Lund** moved and **Mr. Van Doren** seconded recommending to the Board of Trustees that in the eventuality blocks 19&20, 33&34 are rezoned to multifamily, a minimum of two Town lots would be needed to build a single family home, a duplex or a single family home with and ADU. With four lots there would be a maximum of a four plex. Motion carried.

John Van Doren: Aye
Chris Lund: Aye
Paul Wenke: Aye
Christy Patterson: Aye
Bob Fulton: Aye

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c. Consideration of recommending to the Board of Trustees the ADU Ordinance.

ADU is defined as an accessory dwelling unit. Discussion of what the ADU size should be.

ACTION: Mr. Wenke moved and Mr. Van Doren recommending to the Board of Trustees that the suggested changes to the ADU ordinance be adopted. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

a. Consideration of recommending to the Board of Trustees the Affordable Housing Ordinance.

Item was TABLED due to needing additional information.

b. Christy Patterson requests the Planning Commission recommend to the Board of Trustees that Heavy Industrial zoned properties have the same option as Commercial zoned properties to have a dwelling above, below or behind the business.

Christy Patterson stepped down due to having interest in the agenda item.

Ms. Patterson asked that a property she owns with a partner be rezoned from Heavy Industrial to be the same as Commercially zoned properties, specifically to allow the property to have a residence in or above the building. Commission discusses the cons of safety for whomever would buy and possibly live on the property. Discussion around liability to the Town.

Item was TABLED due to needing more information.

Christy Patterson steps back up as chairperson.

PUBLIC COMMENT

A citizen expressed concern about depleting water sources with bringing in more people. Also concerns about first responder services being overwhelmed. Concerns about the number of proposed housing units and number people could be brought in to Westcliffe.

Mr. Wenke moved and **Mr. Van Doren** seconded to adjourn. Motion carried.

ADJOURN

Recorded by:
Melane Rella
Deputy Clerk

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Old Business A

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Old Business A

F. **Unlawful acts**

1. It is unlawful for any person to build on the Multi Family District without first seeking approval from the ACC and the ordinance within this chapter.

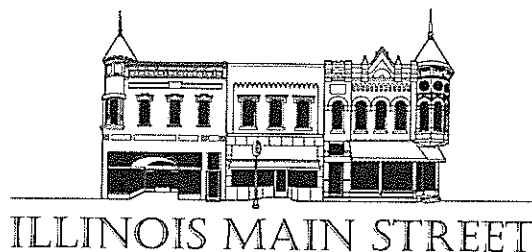
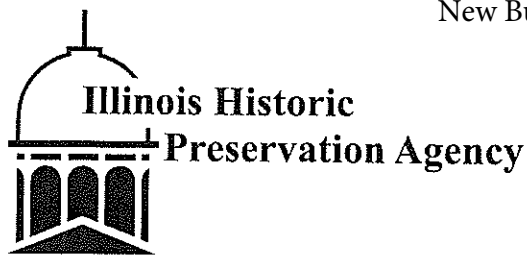
G. **Enforcement and Penalties**

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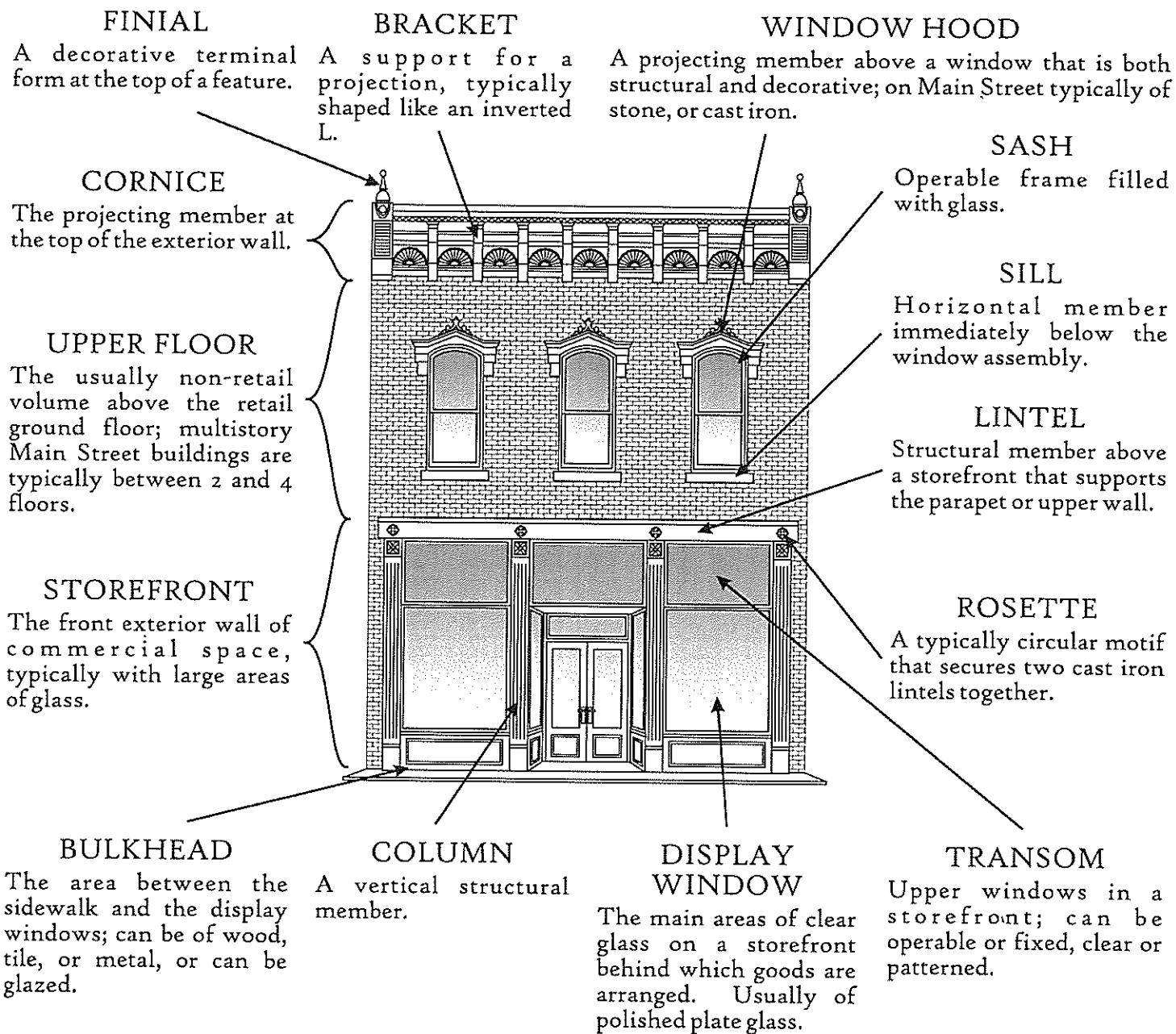


In regards to the towns master plan our guiding principle is to be business friendly. By approving my application I will provide additional housing in the heart of the downtown district while providing business space to generate more income for the city of Westcliffe.

New Business A



ANATOMY OF A MAIN STREET BUILDING



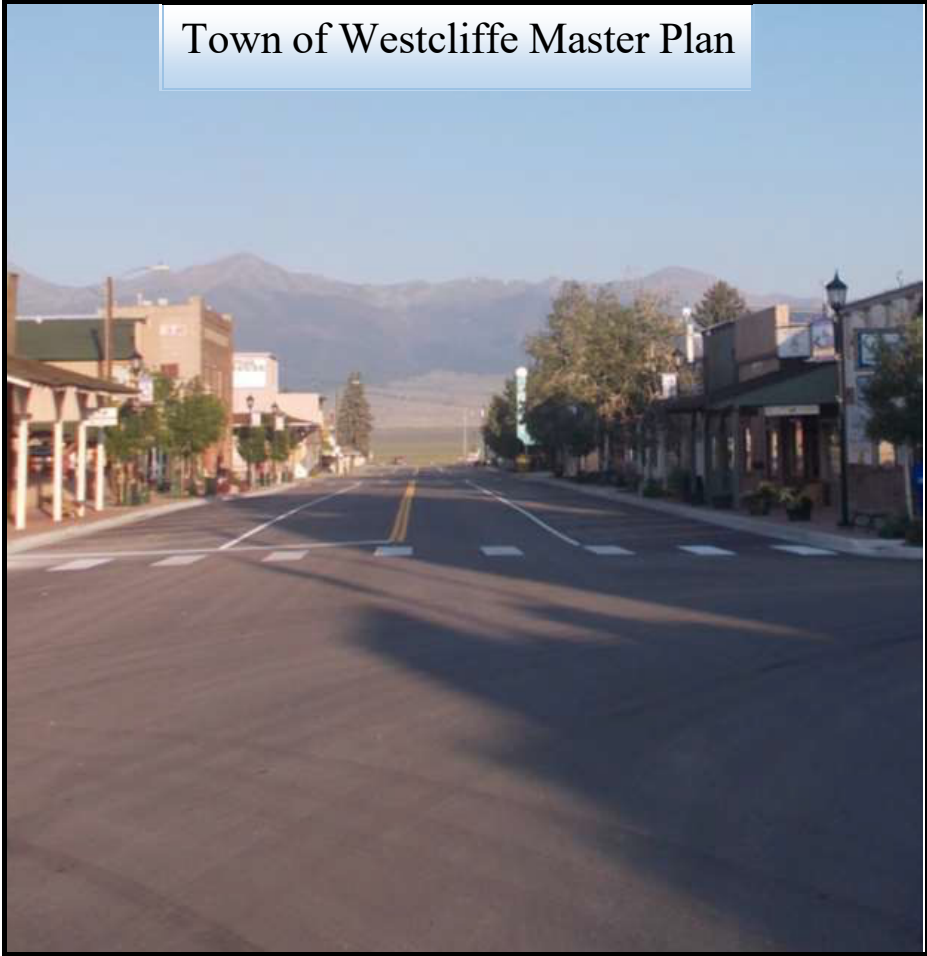
Office of Lt. Governor
414 Stratton Bldg.
Springfield, IL 62706
217.782.3734
www.state.il.us/lrgov

Illinois Historic Preservation Agency
One Old State Capitol Plaza
Springfield, IL 62701
Fax: 217.524.7525
www.illinois-history.gov

Office of Lt. Governor
100 W. Randolph
JRTC, Suite 15-200
Chicago, IL 60601
312.814.5220

Mike Jackson, FAIA 217.785.5031 mike.jackson@illinois.gov
Carol Dyson, AIA 217.524.0276 carol.dyson@illinois.gov
Anthony Rubano 217.782.7459 anthony.rubano@illinois.gov
Anna Margaret Borntreger 217.782.7534 annamargaret.borntreger@illinois.gov
Darius Bryjka 217.782.8221 darius.bryjka@illinois.gov

Town of Westcliffe Master Plan



August 2024

Vision

By 2030, the Westcliffe will be ranked as one of the top 10 most desirable small towns to live and work in Southern Colorado.

Mission

The Town's Mission is to:

- Provide and maintain safe pedestrian walkways, roads, parking, broadband, and public space (parks and trails) infrastructure.
- In partnership with BHE and RMWSD provide for water, sewer, and electric power infrastructure.
- In partnership with the County, the Town will provide for the health, welfare, and safety of its residents and visitors.
- Promote the economic development, growth, and vitality of the Town.

Core Values (from our Strategic Plan)

- A town where people can live and raise their families in a healthy, safe, stimulating and culturally rich environment.
- Preservation of our small-town Western heritage.
- Encourage an appropriate, healthy, vital, and diverse business environment.
- Be a town government that is: Responsive to citizen needs, and practices fiscal integrity, sound and effective Town management and has a clear Vision for the future.

Executive Summary

"You can't really know where you are going until you know where you have been."

The Town of Westcliffe is one of Colorado's hidden gems. Located in the Wet Mountain Valley of south-central Colorado and framed by the majestic Sangre de Cristo Mountains and the Wet Mountain (Sierra Mojada) Range, Westcliffe's extraordinary natural setting, community spirit, and civic amenities has made it one of southern Colorado's most desirable places to visit and live.

The history of Westcliffe and the adjacent town of Silver Cliff are closely intertwined. The Valley mining boom started in 1872, but the silver discovery in 1878 in what would become Silver Cliff set the stage for the eventual incorporation of the two towns. The town of Silver Cliff was incorporated in 1879 and by 1880 its population exceeded 8,000 as it campaigned to become the capital of Colorado.

Taking advantage of the mining boom, the Denver & Rio Grand Railroad built a narrow gage rail line to the area in 1881. However, because new rail lines are always partly real estate ventures the line terminated south of Silver Cliff in what was to become Westcliffe. Mining production in the Valley peaked in 1884 and mines began to close. As the terminus for the rail line, Westcliffe became the economic center of the Valley whose main economic driver reverted from mining to cattle ranching. The Town of Westcliffe was incorporated in 1887.

In 1888, the narrow gage line was lost due to flooding and replaced by a standard gage line in 1901, and much of what is now Westcliffe was platted by the Denver & Rio Grand at that time. In 1929, Westcliffe officially became the Custer County seat. In 1938, the standard gage rail line closed due to the Great Depression and the Valley became an isolated agricultural community with a declining population until SH96 was paved in 1964 giving the Town and Valley much improved vehicle access to the Front Range population and markets.

Starting in 1990's the population of both the County and Town began to grow rapidly driven by a relatively low cost of living and the Baby Boom generation's "Retirement Boom". One result of that growth in that Custer is now the 2nd oldest county in America with a median age in 2023 of 60.1. The Town of Westcliffe is somewhat younger with a median age of 47.4 compared to the State median age of 37.7.

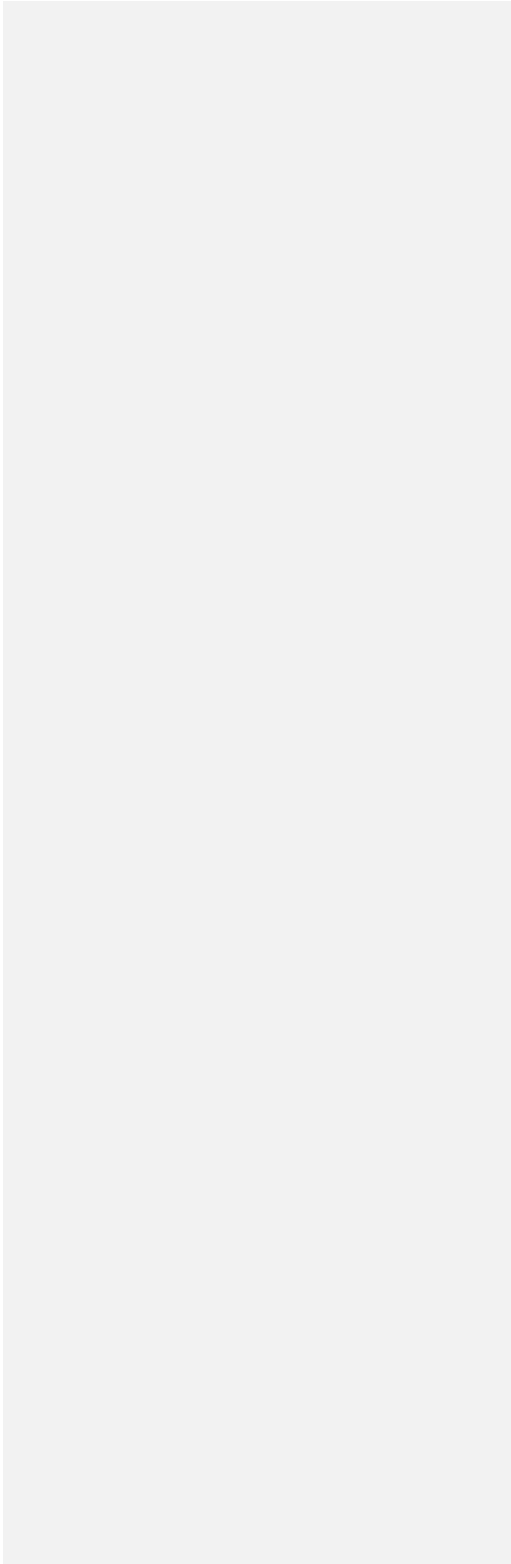
However, the recent sharp increase in property values and end of the Baby Boomer Retirement Boom around 2030 may lead to a population decline. Organic growth is currently negative due to the current birth/death ratio. Going forward, growth will depend on a positive net migration by attracting a younger demographic, improving housing affordability, and continuing to make our limited Town footprint (1.25 sq miles) more attractive to visitors and residents. (See Appendix A

Today, the Town is uniquely positioned to achieve its 2030 Vision by building on its many existing strengths and civic amenities. Some key elements of the 2024 Plan include:

- Attracting a younger demographic by marketing the Town to remote tech and professional workers.
- Improving the Town's Walkability
- Greening our streets with more trees, walkways, and landscaping
- Transforming the Main St. Core into a more pedestrian friendly central public space
- Working with developers to build out a higher density mixed use plan for the vacant land between Lowe's Market and the Summit and Cliff Parks.
- Encouraging affordability with higher density infill housing on existing vacant lots and with Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU's) in existing single family residential areas.
- Working with developers to build out an affordable and higher density residential area south of Hermit Park. An area that is currently lacking any water or sewer service.

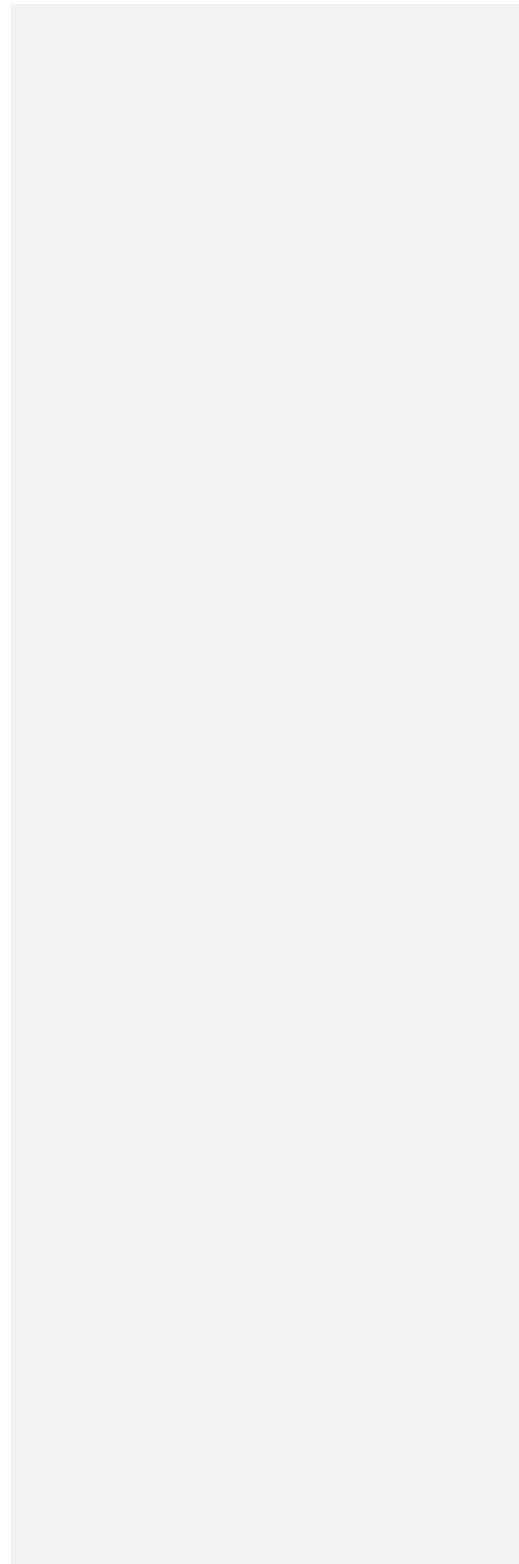
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Introduction

Context For The Plan

Westcliffe is located in south-central Colorado and is the county seat for Custer County. Situated in the Wet Mountain Valley (Sierra Mojada) at the intersection of two state highways, the Town of Westcliffe presently covers approximately 1.236 square miles of land area.

Dr. William A. Bell owned the ranch that the original town of Westcliffe is platted on and began to sell his subdivided lots after convincing the Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad to extend its rail line to his property in 1881, nearby the booming mining town of Silver Cliff. Westcliffe was incorporated in July 1887 and is named for Westcliffe-on-the-Sea in England, the birthplace of Dr. Bell.

Over the past 129 years, the population of Westcliffe has fluctuated significantly, experiencing the "boom and bust" cycles common throughout Colorado's history (see Appendix A). From 2000 to 2020, Westcliffe's population increased 36.2 percent, from 417 to 437 persons. Westcliffe is the region's economic center, the "downtown" for Custer County and the Wet Mountain Valley.

It's the year 2024, and population and economic growth is expected to continue. By the year 2030, the Colorado Division of Local Government estimates that 437 people will be living in Westcliffe (see Appendix A). *Please see table 14 for estimated growth in Custer County.*

Total revenue by all industries in Westcliffe has increased by about 295% since 2010, and is in large part due to the success of seasonal event-driven tourism. Westcliffe and Custer County still experience a significant outflow of retail dollars due to the lack of availability of consumer retail goods for local residents, such as clothing, pharmaceuticals, and office supplies. Additional affordable housing, expanded medical services, i.e., dental, eye care, and growth in affordable food service industry.

Purpose of the Plan

The Master Plan (hereinafter referred to as the Plan) is prepared in accordance with state statutes that authorize the Town of Westcliffe's Planning Commission to develop a master plan for its physical development. Per C.R.S. 31-23-207, the purpose of the Town Master Plan is for "guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted, and harmonious development of the municipality and its environs."

More specifically, the Plan serves the following additional purposes:

- To respond to community issues
- To shape development in harmony with the natural characteristics of the land, the capabilities of public services and facilities, and the existing built environment
- To provide a policy foundation for updating zoning, subdivision, and related ordinances within the Town's Land Use Code.
- To provide guidance for preparing the Town's capital improvement program.
- To address matters of regional concern that require interjurisdictional coordination.

- To serve as a community database and be used as supporting documentation for pursuing grants for community development activities.

About the 2024 Plan

The Town’s original Master Plan was completed in November of 2000 and updated in August of 2017. The 2024 Plan is the second review and update and will also incorporate the September 2020 Strategic Plan and Master Plan into one document.

Use of the Plan

The Plan provides a Vision and responds to key issues facing the Town of Westcliffe. It establishes direction, policies, and actions for Town development, and should be consulted by Town staff, the Planning Commission, and the Board of Trustees when considering development proposals, subdivision and zoning regulations, intergovernmental issues, annual budgets, and when reviewing progress toward accomplishing plan goals. The Plan should also be used by residents, landowners, and project applicants for guidance concerning land planning objectives.

The Plan is considered an advisory document only. Although advisory, the Plan is considered the guiding document for regulatory measures including land use code updates and project review recommendations. The Plan should be used in conjunction with the Town Land Use Code and Zoning Map to guide the appropriate location, character, type and intensity of new development and rezoning activity.

The Plan serves as the guiding document for future intergovernmental agreements, capital improvement programming, and detailed studies and programs. It should also be used as a supporting document for State and Federal grants.

The Plan should be reviewed on an annual basis for progress and as new strategies are identified. Policies should also be reviewed on an annual basis and revised with changing circumstances, as appropriate. The entire document should be made available for public review and updated every five years.

Key Metrics to Achieve Our Vision

Several questions come to mind relative to achieving our Vision.

What are the living and working metrics that make a town like Westcliffe a desirable destination? What amenities and features appeal to the younger demographic that we are wanting to attract? How do we rank against those metrics now and how can we improve?

After a review of organizations that rank the livability of towns, the Planning Commission developed and ranked the following list of criteria to judge how well we currently meet our stated Vision (See Appendix A).

Comparison with Other Towns

How do our demographics compare with 25 other small and med-sized towns in Southern Colorado? What are some of our weaknesses? (See Appendix A).

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Deleted: Note that schools currently stand out as a major deterrent to attracting new young families to our towns and county ...

SWOT Analysis

As part of our assessment of the Town’s current state, the Master Plan Team conducted a *strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats* workshop on January 23, 2024. There is a strong correlation between the findings of the ranked *Living & Working Metrics* shown above and the SWOT analysis shown below. [One weakness is the](#) Town’s Walkability and Bike Ability (See Appendix A).

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Deleted: weaknesses that stand out are our school district and the

Walkability & Bike Ability (Walkscore.com)

Walkability is not only an important criterion for attracting a younger demographic to the Town, but also an important for the safety, health, and wellbeing of our existing residents. Bike Ability is an especially important for the Millennial and Gen X demographic. See Appendix A

Main Street Historical District – To Close or Not to Close

How do we make Main St. more pedestrian friendly? One option is to follow Salida’s lead and close Main St. from 2nd to 3rd during the “season”.

Salida’s Main St. is F Street which was closed in response to the pandemic in 2020. The closure was so successful that the town expanded the areas of closure and now closes the street from May 15th to September 4th each year.

They also managed the closure with very little cost, using concrete barriers painted by local artists and light weight wooden planters that are easily moved for emergencies.

A 2020 survey by the town of 613 residents was overwhelmingly positive.

- ◇ 51.5% said they loved it.
- ◇ 26.1% said they liked it, but that it could be improved.
- ◇ 16.2% said they hated it.
- ◇ 5.3% said they didn’t like it but were willing to try something new.
- ◇ 1.3% were neutral.

Among members of the business community the response was 78.7% positive:

- ◇ 42.6% said they loved it.
- ◇ 36.1% said they liked it, but that it could be improved.

Some of the respondents to the survey wanted the town to make the space more inviting by adding temporary landscaping, seating, and by providing shade structures.

October 2020 Letter to the Mountain Mail Editor:

Dear Editor:

We would like to extend our sincere gratitude and thanks to Mayor P.T. Wood, Salida City Council, Drew Nelson, Salida Business Alliance and city officials who were responsible for turning F Street into a pedestrian use walkway.

This year has been full of uncertainty for our businesses and community members, but how fortunate we are to have representatives take initiative and help us tread through the uncharted waters of 2020. With talking to others, we truly are lucky to have this leadership, keeping our community thriving and safe.

We have been an F Street business for close to a decade and seen, first hand, the benefits of the street closure. It is safer, quieter and gives our downtown district a vibrant feel.

A special thanks to Michael Varnum and Ken Brandon for organizing many of Salida's artists to decorate the cement barriers. We feel it added more energy and made our creative district come alive.

Going forward, we hope to see the closure made permanent and the space made more beautiful for our residents and tourists to enjoy. It's an exciting look into the future of downtown Salida and what it could feel like with an optimistic mindset and a little adaptability.

*Thank you Salida for supporting, not only us, but our entire community.
We are truly fortunate and blessed to have a business in such a caring, loving town.
From the bottom of our hearts,
You rock.
Nikki Manes and
Johnna Baughman,
Eye Candy Art and Treasure*

Planning Influences

ENVIRONMENTAL CHARACTER

Location and Geography

Westcliffe, Colorado, lies at an elevation ranging from 7,800 to 7,900 feet in the Wet Mountain Valley, a northwest-southeast trending area between the Wet Mountains to the east and the Sangre de Cristo Range to the west. The Valley is 4th high elevation park or valley in Colorado. The Sangre de Cristo range was formed by the same geologic forces that formed the Grand Tetons in Wyoming and rise abruptly from the valley floor to elevations exceeding 14,000 feet. The much older Wet Mountain range include foothills and rises gently to around 10,000 feet.

The Wet Mountains are largely composed of Precambrian (1,700-1,800 million years old) metamorphic felsic and hornblendic gneisses that were derived from volcanic rocks. The younger Sangre de Cristo Range consists of the Permian and Pennsylvanian (248-323 million years old) Sangre de Cristo Formation (arkosic conglomerate, sandstone, and siltstone).

The land surface in the majority of the Wet Mountain Valley beneath and surrounding Westcliffe is composed of unconsolidated Pleistocene (1.8 million years old) gravel and alluvium deposits. Older, Tertiary deposits in the area include the Sante Fe Formation, comprised of siltstone, sandstone, and conglomerates from the Miocene era, and lava deposits from the earlier Oligocene era. These intra-ash flow quartz latitic lavas are present to the immediate east of Westcliffe; Silver Cliff lies atop a volcanic deposit.

The Valley aquifer is 4,000 feet deep and is estimated to hold 1.2-million acre-feet of water.

Soils

Three soil units exist in Westcliffe: the Feltonia sandy loam, the Silver Cliff gravelly sandy loam, and the Coutis sandy loam. The soil unit underlying the majority of Westcliffe is the Feltonia sandy loam. This deep, well-drained soil has moderate permeability and low available water capacity.

Also deep and well drained, the Silver Cliff gravelly sandy loam soil is found along Grape Creek and Chloride Gulch. The permeability of the Silver Cliff gravelly sandy loam soil is moderately rapid, and the available water capacity is low. Located in the drainageways and foot slopes near the intersection of Grape Creek and Chloride Gulch, the Coutis sandy loam soil has moderately rapid permeability, and moderate available water capacity.

Of the three soil types in Westcliffe, the Feltonia sandy loam that is found throughout Westcliffe is the best suited for development. Only those soil units found along the drainageways (the Silver Cliff gravelly sandy loam and the Coutis sandy loam) are not well suited for development. In particular, the Coutis sandy loam is subject to ponding or flooding. Surface runoff for all three soil types is medium, creating a moderate to high erosion hazard.

Vegetation

The native vegetation in the area is mainly needle and thread, western wheatgrass, mountain muhly, and Arizona fescue linked to the Feltonia sandy loam soil. As the native lands deteriorate, blue grama, gray housebrush, rabbitbrush, sleepygrass, silmstem muhly, and snakeweed increase. Suitable grasses for seeding include intermediate wheatgrass, pubescent wheatgrass, western wheatgrass, and Arizona fescue.

Numerous non-native species are also found in Westcliffe, particularly within established neighborhoods. Typical trees include honey locust, Blue spruce, Aspen and cottonwoods; shrubs include lilac, creeping junipers, and honeysuckle.

Drainages and Floodplains

Mountain streams from the Sangre de Cristo and the Wet Mountains drain into the Wet Mountain Valley where they join Grape Creek. Grape Creek flows northwest from Westcliffe and then northeast through the DeWeese Reservoir, joining the Arkansas River at Canon City. Chloride Gulch, located just north of Westcliffe, is the major drainageway for the town and flows to the west into Grape Creek.

The Wet Mountain Valley receives substantial moisture from intense thunderstorms in the late spring and summer months. As a result, Grape Creek, Chloride Gulch, and the low-lying areas in the southwest part of Westcliffe are vulnerable to flooding.

According to a drainage study prepared in 1996, flooding occurs on an average of once every two years (a two-year storm event) because the existing storm water drainage system is inadequate to manage the flows generated by the intense storm events.

The source of flooding originates on the east side of Westcliffe as well as in Silver Cliff, just east of the Westcliffe town limits. Within Westcliffe, the existing drainage structures

that are supposed to divert flow from the south side of Main Street to the north side and then into Chloride Gulch are inadequate. Consequently, storm water encroaches onto the street rather than staying in the swales, creating flooding problems in the business and residential areas.

In consideration of financial constraints, the drainage report identified a design solution to manage a 25-year storm event. Because the majority of runoff reaching the southwestern areas of Westcliffe originates in Silver Cliff, the drainage report recommends diverting as much flow as possible to Chloride Gulch before it reaches Westcliffe. Installation of two new 24" culverts and catch basins on Main Street West of Seventh St. draining to Chloride Gulch should relieve Main St. by 50% during an average storm and as much as 90% during a severe storm.

Federal Emergency Management Agency flood insurance maps are not available to determine 100-year floodways and floodplains in Westcliffe. However, additional development within Chloride Gulch is not recommended in order to minimize increases in downstream flood elevation, potential life or safety hazards, and property damage.

Water Quality

Westcliffe is located in the Arkansas headwater watershed, which has a water quality ranking of "3" on a scale of "1" to "6," signifying less serious water quality problems and a low vulnerability to toxic pollutants. The municipal water in Westcliffe is drawn from three wells in the intermontane trough of the Wet Mountain Valley, a terraced alluvium aquifer. Westcliffe's water is currently in compliance of state water quality standards. However, the use of individual septic tanks outside within and adjacent to Westcliffe boundaries could potentially affect future water quality within town limits.

Dark Skies

The Town of Westcliffe adopted a Dark Skies friendly community. All street lights are hooded so that there is limited light pollution created.

The 'Cliffs and the Wet Mountain Valley are known for their beautiful mountain vistas and big skies, but not much is known about our world-class dark night skies. In 2016 Silver Cliff and Westcliffe were recognized by the International Dark-Sky Association as the ninth Dark Sky Community in the world, seven of which are in the United States, the 'Cliffs being the first in Colorado and with an elevation of almost 7900 feet, the nearest to the heavens.

Since 1998, Dark Skies of the Wet Mountain Valley, a 501(c) 3 non-profit, has been working to reduce local light pollution and create public awareness of a valuable and irreplaceable part of our Western heritage. Those who worked tirelessly to obtain this designation realized that *our* night sky is a precious natural resource to be preserved for residents and visitors alike - for many years to come. It's wonderful to think that we have the ability to enjoy and appreciate the same night sky that the original settlers of the area observed. Our clear night sky is as much a part of our heritage as the ranches and riparian areas which are preserved below them from the Bluff Park one can view the heavens from the newly dedicated Smokey Jack Observatory with its 14" computer-automated telescope. Besides the public star parties, People can reserve the Smokey Jack Observatory for private viewing sessions under the direction of volunteer guides.

Air Quality

The Environmental Protection Agency currently monitors air quality at the Custer County Road and Bridge Department in Westcliffe. The air quality in Westcliffe is excellent and meets state air quality guidelines. Non-point sources of air pollution, which are not regulated by the state, can contribute to air quality problems. Fugitive dust from gravel and dirt roads and alleys is the chief non-point air quality problem. Westcliffe is subject to wind gusts of up to 110 miles per hour. Air Quality is subject to local and non-local fires during the fire season.

Climate and Climate Change

The climate within Westcliffe and the surrounding area fluctuates due to the area's varied terrain and altitudes. Temperatures are characteristic of a high altitude, dry continental climate. The average January and July temperatures at Westcliffe are 22.0 and 63.4 degrees Fahrenheit, respectively, with low humidity. The average annual precipitation is 16 inches, and annual snowfall is 80 inches.

According to 2024 Colorado Climate Assessment Report, Colorado is warming faster than the U.S. Average and south-central Colorado is warming faster than the State average. (See Figure 2). According to Assessment Report, with high confidence we can expect a warmer and dryer climate with more frequent heat waves and drought conditions. This will increase the heat island effect adjacent to our Town roads which represent a large percentage of our land area.

Wildfire risk outside the Town and in Colorado and adjacent States will also increase leading to periods of poor air quality (See appendix A).

Wilderness and Wildlife

The Sangre de Cristo mountains are designated Wilderness Area with hundreds of miles of hiking trails, biking, and 4-wheel drive opportunities.

Both our Valley and mountain ranges are rich in wildlife with abundant herds of elk, deer, and pronghorn antelope, fish in our lakes, streams and rivers, and a healthy variety of raptors, and waterfowl cruising our skies.

Wildlife Habitat

The Colorado Division of Wildlife lists 73 species of birds and 38 mammal species found in Custer County. Federally listed threatened or endangered species in the county include the American peregrine falcon, bald eagle, greenback cutthroat trout, meadow jumping mouse, Mexican spotted owl, southwestern willow flycatcher, and whooping crane. No threatened or endangered species, or areas of potential high or very high wildlife impact, currently exist within Westcliffe.

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Transportation

Regional and local circulation is accomplished primarily through a network of state, county, and local roads. Via paved road, Westcliffe is located 133 miles from Alamosa, 44 miles from Canon City, 75 miles from Colorado Springs, 150 miles from Denver, 56 miles from Pueblo, 50 miles from Salida, and 60 miles from Walsenburg. A small airport also serves the region.

In 2009 the Colorado Department of Transportation identified 10.29 miles of arterial, collector, and local roads in Westcliffe. Public and private streets and alleys account for 18 percent of the town's land area.

Arterial Roads

Arterial roads are designed to move traffic through town. Westcliffe's arterial roads are characterized by having right-of-way widths of 80 feet. Principal arterial roads in Westcliffe include:

- State Highway 69 and
- State Highway 96

From US 50 at Texas Creek, State Highway (SH) 69 enters Westcliffe from the north, turns east into Main Street, and then turns south on 6th Street, continuing to Walsenburg. SH 96, a national scenic byway, begins at the junction of SH 69 at Main Street and 6th Street, extending east through Silver Cliff over Hardscrabble Pass to Wetmore and Pueblo.

Westcliffe's collector roads are characterized by having right-of-way widths of 80 feet. Major collector roads in Westcliffe include

- Main Street,
- 6th Street,
- Hermit Road, and
- Lake DeWeese Road.

Main Street and 6th Street are also portions of SH 69, although they principally serve to collect traffic from surrounding neighborhoods and businesses. The increase in truck traffic onto Main Street and 6th Street has raised noise and safety concerns from local residents and business owners. Intersecting at 6th Street, Hermit Road provides access to the west, exiting Westcliffe as County Road (CR) 160. East of 6th Street, Hermit Road becomes Hermit Lane, providing access into the Vivienda Parque subdivision. Lake DeWeese Road extends north where SH 69 curves on the north side of Westcliffe and quickly becomes CR 241.

Local Roads

The Town of Westcliffe was platted in 1887 with “streets and avenues 80 feet wide, alleys 20 feet wide.” The boundaries for the original plat were Grape Creek to the west, Mill Gulch to the north, the “west line of the corporate limit of Silver Cliff” to the east, and what is now Lincoln Avenue to the south. More recently, the majority of local streets are platted with 60-foot-wide rights-of-way.

Alleys still transect many of the local streets within the original platted area, with the exception of Silver Cliff Avenue, which is now called Main Street. Several of the alleys off Main Street have been purchased or claimed by adjacent property owners and are now either covered by structures or used for access to private parking lots.

Road maintenance consists of asphalt repairs, chipseal, dust control, snow removal and sanding, sign upgrades, alley grading, and general right-of-way maintenance. The Town of Westcliffe owns its two maintenance shops.

Sidewalks

Sidewalks in Westcliffe are characterized by their variety in location and type. Detached, concrete sidewalks are found in the older residential sections of Westcliffe, along both sides of 2nd Street south to Hermit Road. Moving east, detached sidewalks are found along portions of 3rd and 4th Streets (primarily north of Edwards); 5th Street has very little sidewalk. Sidewalks on Main Street consist of various widths and materials, from narrow dirt paths to attached concrete sections to improved brick streetscape areas. Sidewalks on Rosita Avenue consist of improved drainage, and ADA crossings. The Town is currently looking to install sidewalks along Rosita to Adams Boulevard to Main Street in order to improve Walkability in the Town. Sidewalks on Powell are also being installed to connect Town trails and homes to businesses on Main Street. Future endeavors of the Town include: a crosswalk on 0 block of Main Street, Green Streets, and using RMS grants to improve walkability to all homes to businesses. Sidewalk, curb, gutter, and drainage improvement along S HW 69.

Airport

The Silver West Airport, located nine miles south of Westcliffe off SH 69, provides general aviation services, including hanger rental, tie downs, and fueling. The airport, which is operated by the Custer County Advisory Board, has a 7,000-foot-long, 40-foot-wide paved runway. Currently, only chartered aircraft is available at the airport. Passenger air service is provided in Pueblo, Colorado Springs, Denver, and Albuquerque, with connections worldwide.

Transit

While transit services are limited, the Wet Mountain Rotary Van Service operates the vans to transport Westcliffe area residents to Florence, Canon City, and Pueblo, primarily for medical appointments. Rides are available on a demand/response basis. The service operates four vehicles with accommodations for the handicapped, there are no fees, donations are accepted. Due to recent events the Van Services are facing problems and their services in the future are unclear. The Rotary Van service is a non-profit organization.

Public transportation exists from Salida (50 miles away) to Union Station in Denver.

UTILITIES

Utilities consist of water, wastewater, propane, electricity, solid waste, and telecommunications. Utility providers are entities separate from the Town of Westcliffe.

Water

Westcliffe is located in the Arkansas headwater watershed, which has a water quality ranking of "3" on a scale of "1 to 6," signifying less serious water quality problems and a low vulnerability to toxic pollutants. The municipal water in Westcliffe is drawn from two wells in the intermontane trough of the Wet Mountain Valley, a terraced alluvium aquifer. Westcliffe's water is currently in compliance with state water quality standards. However, the

use of individual septic tanks within and adjacent to Westcliffe boundaries could potentially affect future water quality within town limits.

Water

The Round Mountain Water and Sanitation District (RMWSD) provides water service within an area that encompasses approximately 6,345 acres and includes the towns of Westcliffe and Silver Cliff.

Water is supplied to the community from two (2) wells; the Hermit (or Smith) Well and the Gallery Well. Both wells are located south of town. Prior to distribution to the community the water is disinfected with a small amount of chlorine. A project to significantly upgrade the Smith well is close to completion which will provide over double the water pumping capacity at less than one-half the energy cost.

Treated water is pumped from the wells through the distribution system to two steel storage tanks with a combined potable water capacity of 450,000 gallons. Both the 200,000 -gallon and 250,000-gallon tanks are located north of Silver Cliff. Water flows by gravity from each storage tank back into the distribution system consisting of three-inch, four-inch, six-inch, and eight-inch water pipes.

The current system is a combination of the existing water systems of Westcliffe and Silver Cliff, installed as early as the 1880's that were upgraded and connected by RMWSD in 1974. The distribution system includes six pressure reducing valves and approximately 78 fire hydrants within Westcliffe.

All residences and businesses within Westcliffe are connected to the water system by the use of water meters, with the exception of a few "grandfathered" properties that are still using individual wells.

The RMWSD currently serves 700 residential and commercial customers. **RMWSD has sufficient water rights and water pumping capability to meet the increased demands of population growth well into the future.**

Wastewater

The RMWSD also provides wastewater service within its service area. The wastewater system in Westcliffe, constructed in 1975, consists of six-inch to 10-inch gravity collection lines that terminate at a lift station located on Adams Boulevard that pumps collected wastewater via a four-inch force main to a Class D treatment facility. The wastewater treatment plant, located on a 10-acre site at SH 69 and Adams Boulevard, consists of two aerated ponds and a polishing pond. Wastewater effluent is either applied to an adjacent 40-acre site or chlorinated and discharged to filter beds.

RMWSD is completing the process of acquiring Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) approval for a major upgrade of the existing treatment system that will provide over twice the treatment capacity once installed.

Propane

Natural gas is not available in Westcliffe, the majority of homes in Westcliffe are served by propane. The Town of Westcliffe has numerous suppliers for propane in Town.

Electricity

Black Hills Energy provides electric power to the approximately 600 customers in Westcliffe. The electricity arrives via a 69-kilovolt line from Canon City to the Skinner substation in Silver Cliff. Power is then distributed by a grid system to Westcliffe. The current distribution system is capable of supplying an area 15 times the size of Westcliffe with electric power. The majority of power lines are above ground, although all new utility lines must be buried per requirements of the Town of Westcliffe's subdivision regulations

adopted in 1998. Black Hills Energy also maintains the town's streetlights.

Given funding it is the Town's desire to change all electric lines from poles to underground infrastructure.

Solid Waste

Solid waste disposal service in Westcliffe is provided by Oak Disposal and P Bar O Disposal private hauling companies. The refuse is transported to the Custer County Landfill, "the cleanest landfill in the state," opened in 1994 on land located south of Westcliffe on CR 328 (Rosita Road. Town Silver Cliff and the Town of Westcliffe sponsor an annual town clean-up day).

The Town of Westcliffe, Custer County and the Town of Silver Cliff all participate in the Upper Arkansas Area Council of Governments Recycling Program. A per capita fee is paid which gives the community the ability to recycle glass, tin, aluminum and newspapers. A non-profit, High Country Recycling, formed in 2007. This education focused organization has created a relationship with Angel of Shavano Recycling in Salida, which has afforded the community to also be able to recycle plastics, cardboard and office pack. There are currently recycling containers located by the the County Landfill.

Telecommunications

The telecommunications infrastructure in Westcliffe is owned by CenturyLink, which provides approximately 2,400 access lines to the town. DSL is provided by numerous providers.

Broadband

The town of Westcliffe, Silver Cliff, and Custer County has partnered to bring in fiberoptic broadband line as well as other private services are and will be available. Of note: Starlink and future Project Kuiper and One Web.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Emergency services consist of law enforcement, search and rescue, fire protection, and medical services. Emergency service providers are entities separate from the Town of Westcliffe.

Law Enforcement

The Custer County Sheriff's Department Office provides law enforcement services to Westcliffe through a service contract with the Town of Westcliffe. The Sheriff's Department Office is located at 702 Rosita Avenue adjacent to the County Courthouse in Westcliffe. Custer County Search and Rescue provides assistance in locating lost or injured individuals in the Custer County area. The Search and Rescue building is located just east of the Sheriff's office at 710 Rosita Ave. in Westcliffe. The Search and Rescue team is comprised of volunteers – they include an ATV team, horse team, rock team, ground pounders, and office personnel. Search equipment includes four vehicles, a mobile command trailer, various radio equipment to allow remote relay towers for communications interoperability, and rock-climbing rescue equipment. Our Search and Rescue team has assisted Fremont, Teller, Pueblo, Huerfano, Saaguache, Alamosa and Costilla counties in various missions.

Fire Protection

The Wet Mountain Fire Protection District (WMFPD) is a combination organization that provides fire suppression, fire prevention, hazardous material response, specialty rescue, and public education services to a Fire District comprising over 611 square miles. Fire apparatus includes 18 pieces of equipment that range from brush trucks to Class A pumpers, with water capacities that range from 250 to 3000 gallons. Compressed-air foam (CAFS) is available on five trucks and foam alone is available on two additional units. The department has two trucks dedicated to rescue services.

A formal mutual aid agreement exists with Deer Mountain Fire, Canyon City FPD, Western Fremont County Fire, Rye Fire Department, Beulah Fire, Upper Huerfano Fire, Wetmore Fire, Florence Fire, and others. The average response time in the town areas of Westcliffe and Silver Cliff ranges between eight and ten minutes. The Department implemented a paid shift system that helps assure that one or two firefighters are available for rapid response. The town of Westcliffe itself currently has an Insurance Service Office (ISO) rating of “5/6”, which is used to determine insurance costs based on fire protection capability. The lower the rating, the lower the cost of insurance.

Medical

The Custer County Clinic is operated by Heart of the Rockies Regional Medical Center in Salida Colorado. The clinic is located at 704 Edwards St., Westcliffe. Custer County Medical Center provides comprehensive family practice, acute care, acute care stabilization for EMS transport, physical therapy, optometry, Orthopedics specialty, GYN specialty and Cardiac specialty services laboratory, x-ray and patient education. The clinic is staffed with 2 Physicians and 1 Nurse Practitioner and is open 5 days a week from 8:00am to 5:00pm. To schedule an appointment, please call 719-783-2380. Same day visits are often available.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Westcliffe's community facilities include the town hall, the County Courthouse, the West Custer County Library, the Westcliffe Community Building, the old school house and All Aboard Westcliffe.

Town Hall

The Westcliffe town hall, Patterson Hall, is located at 1000 Main Street. The town hall serves as the municipal administrative office and is staffed by a Town Manager, Building and Zoning Official and a Town Clerk and Deputy Clerk.

The Elected Board of Trustees and appointed Planning Commission each conduct monthly meetings at the town hall.

Courthouse

The Custer County Courthouse is located at 205 6th Street. The courthouse contains numerous Custer County administrative offices, a Colorado State University Cooperative Extension office, human service functions, and the combined courts. The elected County Commissioners, the appointed Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Adjustment each conduct monthly meetings at the County Courthouse.

Public Library

The West Custer County Library District offers a local collection of around 12,000 items plus e-book and e-audio book downloads and more than 1.3 million books and movies for loan through a shared catalog with other Colorado libraries. The Community Room is available for community use both for group rental and as a quiet work space when it is not reserved. Events and classes for all ages are offered throughout the year, including a summer reading program for children and teens, several monthly events for teens and adults, a winter adult reading program, a weekly playgroup, and a monthly interactive learning series for early elementary students. The library sponsors three book clubs, a writers' group, a Scrabble group and local author events. True broadband is available through Wi-Fi and 10 public computers and laptops, and library staff provide one-on-one computer training by appointment. A number of online research and educational resources are available through the library's website. The library houses a central archive to assist in historical research of the area, much of which is available online for easier public access.

Other Community Buildings

The Westcliffe Community Building, located at 207 Main Street adjacent to the library, was donated to the Town of Westcliffe approximately 55 years ago. Operated by the West Custer County Library, and with a seating capacity of approximately 50 persons, the building is used for monthly meetings by various community groups.

The Historic "Westcliff" Schoolhouse, located at 320 South 4th Street is currently home to the Mennonite Children during the school year serving grades 1 - 8. During the summer the school serves as community center for individuals and organizations as well as a museum open to the public by request. Two most prominent activities are the Annual Book Fair in August and the Older Schoolhouse Quilters Quilt show Labor Day weekend.

All Aboard Westcliffe, a community organization dedicated to the preservation of Westcliffe's railroad heritage. The interpretative center was designed as a replica of an historic depot and features information about the area's railroad history, and includes a 40-seat video theater with additional adjacent seating and a snack bar. The Heritage center is available for meetings and catered functions.

EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

Educational facilities in Westcliffe include the Westcliffe Consolidated School and the Custer County Pre-School.

Custer County Public Schools

The Westcliffe Consolidated School, operated by Custer County School District C- 1, is located at 709 Main Street and provides kindergarten through grade 12 education. Currently, all grades are located under one roof with an elementary school wing and a high school wing.

[Colorado Department of Education Metrics. See Appendix A](#)

Land Use

ADJACENT LAND USE

While "rural Westcliffe" is a local term for the unincorporated area bringing Westcliffe to the north, south, and west, the incorporated Town of Silver Cliff lies to the east of Westcliffe. Rural Westcliffe and Silver Cliff both influence land use patterns in Westcliffe.

Unincorporated Vicinity

The rural area outside of Westcliffe generally west of Grape Creek. The Grape Creek Zoning District is located in the Wet Mountain Valley, west of Westcliffe, State Highway (SH) 69 and Grape Creek. The Grape Creek Zoning District is generally a rich alluvial environment dominated by agricultural land uses, including irrigated lands, meadow hay lands, and grazing lands along the Grape Creek drainage. The Grape Creek Zoning District is intended to have a low population density and to remain agricultural in character, with a minimum lot size of 80 acres. Special consideration is being given to original parcels described by the aliquot method. Few subdivisions exist in the Grape Creek District.

Unincorporated areas generally east of Grape Creek are within the Foothills zoning district. The Foothills Zoning District is located in portions of the Wet Mountain Valley and the Wet Mountains, and is generally a sagebrush-covered environment with patented mining claims and approved residential subdivisions of 5 acres or more. The largest subdivision is Silver Cliff Heights, located in the northern portion of the Foothills District. Over 30 subdivisions in the Foothills Zoning District are platted with lots of at least 35 acres in size. Of these, the following 35 acre subdivisions, originally in the Foothills Zoning District, have been rezoned to Zoning District II: Bull Domingo Ranch, Centennial Ranch, portions of the Woods at Buck Mountain, Gem Mountain and McKinley Mountain.

Silver Cliff

Incorporated in 1879, Silver Cliff is the eastern gateway to Westcliffe via SH 96. Although its population is similar in size to Westcliffe's, Silver Cliff has an incorporated land area of

Deleted: Our School District (GreatSchools.org & CDE)

Our School District has been struggling. 12 teachers resigned last year and many parents have opted for home schooling. However, a new slate of school board members was elected and installed in January of 2024. They immediately began to heal the rift between faculty/staff and the administration.

However, district and school performance measures are well below expectations and will be an obstacle to attracting new young families to the area. Great Schools scores, which are found on any Zillow search of homes in the area, will be a red flag for many new families considering living and working in Westcliffe.

The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) are not as readily accessible but tell a story of declining performance in the district. Hopefully, a new school board and superintendent will be able to reverse this decline.

Great School Scores

High School	
Overall	3/10
Student Progress	2/10
Middle School	
Overall	3/10
Student Progress	3/10
Elementary School	
Test Scores	4/10

11.5 square miles, most of which is agricultural or undeveloped land extending south and east of Silver Cliff's existing urban area.

Silver Cliff contains five zoning districts that describe the town's existing land use: Agricultural, Urban Residential, Mobile Home Residential, Business, and Urban Residential with Subsurface Mining. Numerous mining claims still exist on Round Mountain and the agricultural lands in the eastern portions of Silver Cliff.

The majority of Silver Cliff's western edge shares a boundary with the eastern edge of Westcliffe. Zoning along this boundary between the two communities is relatively compatible, although each town has separate subdivision regulations that result in distinct land use differences.

OPEN LANDS AND TRAILS

There is a Park to Park Trail starting at Memorial Park going east to the Silver Cliff Park. The Park Master plan identifies future trails to go north of Bluff Park, alongside of Chloride gulch, and then into Silver Cliff. Westcliffe and dedicated open space are principally limited to 11.83 acres of drainage basins, almost 200,000 acres of public lands exist in Custer County. The U.S. Forest Service manages 85 percent of the public lands located in the county. The boundaries of the San Isabel National Forest are as close as seven miles west of Westcliffe in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains and 16 miles east of town in the Wet Mountains, offering access to public lands via numerous public trails.

Within Westcliffe, almost 104 acres of private land is zoned agricultural, providing open views to the Sangre de Cristo range (see Appendix A). While a portion of agricultural land lies along Grape Creek and is relatively unsuited for development due to poor access and/or soil conditions, other areas currently zoned as agricultural are suitable for development.

The Colorado Open Lands is a nationally accredited 501(c) 3 non-profit, non-political conservation organization working with landowners to protect their land and water in Custer, Fremont, Pueblo, and Huerfano Counties

Town parks

Westcliffe has four existing developed parks. A fifth park site, undeveloped, is located on Jerry Drive and is large enough to accommodate playground equipment.

Jess Price Memorial Park is a small "pocket" park, owned and maintained by the Town of Westcliffe, located on Main Street at the corner of 4th Street. The park is landscaped with benches, and there is a public restroom adjacent to the park. Jess Price Park consists of a stage for bands and art, seating areas for people to gather, and is a gathering area for local organizations like the Farmers Market to help bring business to Main Street.

Memorial Park, located north of Hermit Street between 3rd and 4th streets, covers an entire town block. The park is fenced and has a baseball diamond, two picnic shelters, and a restroom. New playground equipment has also been installed recently. Memorial Park is owned and maintained by the Town of Westcliffe.

Hermit Park is immediately southeast of Memorial Park that has a multipurpose playing field, tennis court, a picnic pavilion and parking area.

Summit Park is a small area located at the west end of Westcliffe on Adams Blvd.

adjoining the Bluff area. The park is used for events and viewing the area. There is an Westcliffe Parks Advisory Committee (WPAC).The WPAC is currently reviewing all parks in the Town to plan, grow, and develop new designs for all parks in the Town of Westcliffe.

Observatory at the west end of the Summit Park donated by Dark Skies, Inc. known as the Smokey Jack Observatory.

Bluff Park area of about 10 acres is owned by Colorado Open Lands and is a Conservation Easement, to preserve it as a public park with open views across the valley forever. The Bluff Park is a partnership between San Isabel Land Protection Trust and the Town of Westcliffe. There are plans in the current agreement between the Town and Colorado Open Lands to have a stage. The Town should partner with Colorado Open Lands and GOCO to try to build the stage.

Regional recreational facilities are available within a short drive from Westcliffe. Five miles north of Westcliffe is DeWeese Reservoir, a Colorado state wildlife area with camping and fishing.

Pocket Park was developed by private, public partners: Cliffs' Action Revitalization Team, Town of Westcliffe, Rebeccas Fund and private individuals- Willie Britt and Cathy Snow, and David Music transforming an alley into a multiuser park

Residential

Currently, 111 acres of land within Westcliffe are developed for residential purposes at an average density of 5.1 persons per acre. With 206 acres of vacant land zoned for future residential development, anticipated population increases can be accommodated at the same average density within Westcliffe town limits for the next 20 years (see Appendix A). **Currently there are six blocks south of Hermit Road that are undeveloped. These 6 blocks could be used for higher density housing.**

Commercial

Commercial land accounts for 59 acres in Westcliffe. The majority of commercial activities are in the Main Street corridor, either on Main Street between 2nd Street and 6th Street or along 2nd Street between Rosita Avenue and North Avenue. Commercial uses are dominated by numerous retail trades, several real estate offices, financial institutions, and lodging facilities.

The leading source of income for the Town of Westcliffe is derived from the tax on retail sales. The total sales tax revenues for Westcliffe in 2023 is anticipated to be approximately \$1,263,491, or 70 percent of the total revenues. Westcliffe does not have a lodging tax.

Several vacant parcels west of 2nd Street to Adams Boulevard are available for commercial activities. More significant, however, is the amount of available vacant land zoned for commercial uses east of 6th Street/SH 69 and south of Main Street.

There are five (5) planned unit developments (PUDs)-Adams Filing 1 & 2, Mission Plaza Filing 1 & 2, Nordyke Commercial Park, Sangre View Park and Shadow Ridge. There are two (2) subdivisions-Columbine Park and Demense Conquistador. While portions of these PUDs may be used for either residential, industrial, or other purposes, land remains available for commercial use (see Appendix A).

Industrial

Industrial uses, primarily office warehouse, light manufacturing and outdoor storage, cover 5 acres. These developments are located in the, Rodeo Park, Sangre View Park, and Nordyke Commercial Park subdivisions.

The Rodeo Park subdivision, located on the north end of Westcliffe off of SH 69/Lake DeWeese Road, and the Nordyke Commercial Park, located near the southern tip of Westcliffe off of SH 69, have several vacant parcels that are zoned for industrial uses. At build-out, these subdivisions could collectively accommodate almost three times the amount of industrial development that currently exists within Westcliffe.

Institutional

Westcliffe has numerous institutional uses (public and quasi-public facilities such as government facilities, schools, and churches) that account for 94 acres of land.

Another 32 acres of land could potentially be developed into institutional uses. The Town of Westcliffe owns two vacant parcels at the southern end of town, one at SH 69 and Hafford Street and the other at SH 69 and Chicago Street. Custer County has two additional parcels of land north and east of Hermit Park. The Custer County School District owns several parcels of land north of the Westcliffe Consolidated School.

HISTORIC BUILDINGS

Westcliffe has six structures that are designated as historic on either the Colorado State Historic Register or the National Historic Register.

Denver and Rio Grande Engine House West end of Rosita Avenue State Register 12/08/1993, 5CR221

Constructed in 1900-01, the Denver and Rio Grande engine house served the Westcliffe terminus of the branch line from Texas Creek. The engine house, depot (Miller House), section house (Eissmann House) are all that remains of the Texas Creek branch of the Denver and Rio Grande railroad line. Few historic engine houses of any type survive in Colorado, and engine houses were not commonly built on branch lines. This example of a single-stall, branch-line engine house is particularly rare.

Hope Lutheran Church 310 3rd Street National Register 01/31/1978, 5CR55

Designed and built in 1917 by its pastor, the church houses one of the oldest Lutheran congregations in Colorado. The ornamental concrete block building has a 96-foot tower visible for miles. An elaborately carved altar with a gothic arch and 11 ornate spires was also the work of the pastor. Fourteen stained glass windows illuminate the simple interior.

National Hotel/Wolff Building
201 2nd Street
National Register 11/05/1987, 5CR5

This 1887 two-story brick building has a quarry-faced stone front with arched windows trimmed in contrasting tooled and dressed stone. This example of a small 19th, century Victorian commercial building has a sophistication of design not usually found in the small mountain communities of Colorado. It was Westcliffe's first hotel and is the only remaining stone front building in Westcliffe.

Mercier House
215 S. 6th
Street State Register 06/12/1996, 5CR261

The Mercier House, built in 1898, is significant as an example of the residential work of Archie Scherer, an early Westcliffe stonemason. Scherer, who was known for his skillful use of local fieldstone and for his attention to detail, also built the Westcliffe Jail and the Westcliffe School.

Westcliffe Jail
116 2nd Street
National Register 02/03/1993, 5CR218

This small one-story building was constructed in 1888 of locally collected fieldstone. The building served as an incarceration facility until the mid – 1920's.

Westcliff School
304 4th Street
National Register 07/27/1989, 5CR29

Built in 1891 of local fieldstone, this rural schoolhouse functioned as a school until 1953. The building has an unusual flat-topped gable roof.

EXISTING COMBINED LAND USE AND ZONING MAP

The Existing Combined Land and Zoning Use Map depicts the land use categories described further in this document, and acreage for each use, including vacant land, is calculated. Platted streets, blocks, and lots are shown, and public and private right -of-way acreage is also calculated. Names of parks and institutional properties and locations of designated historic structures are labeled. Key viewpoints and community gateways are also identified.

The Existing Combined Land and Zoning Use Map should be viewed as a "snapshot in time," providing a visual context for the planning directions that follow.

Planning Directions

INTRODUCTION

Consistent with the public process used to identify and prioritize planning issues, review plan alternatives, and select plan preferences, planning directions for Westcliffe are organized into seven categories:

1. Growth and Development
2. Economic Development
3. Community Image
4. Historic Preservation
5. Transportation
6. Recreation
7. Capital Improvements
8. Recommended Land Use and Zoning Map Combined
9. Future Projects-Long Range

Listed by each of these categories are relevant directions, policies, and actions. Plan objectives, expressed as directions, are followed by policies that articulate the directions as statements of public policy. Actions list one or more implementation measures that can be taken by Town of Westcliffe staff, the Planning Commission, or the Board of Trustees, as appropriate, to support the directions and policies. Each action includes a timeframe for completion: short-term (one to two years), mid-term (three to five years), long-term (beyond five years), on-going.

DIRECTIONS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Direction

- GD-1** Avoid development in environmentally sensitive, constrained, or hazardous areas. On-going.

Policies

- GD-1A** Development in flood-prone areas shall be avoided. Where development is unavoidable or redevelopment is desirable, all construction shall be designed to prevent damage due to flooding in accordance with Federal Emergency Management Agency guidelines. Development proposals within

flood-prone areas shall be accompanied by plans for proper flood-proofing measures. On-going.

GD-1B All future development will consider and incorporate best practices for accessibility

GD-1C The Town of Westcliffe shall encourage activities that preserve non-developable open lands, protect natural and scenic resources. On-going.

Actions

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Direction

GD-2 Direct development to vacant parcels within existing town boundaries, maintain a compact town form, and ensure that any future annexations foster fiscally responsible growth of the community.

Policies

GD-2A All annexations shall be in conformance with the provisions of Section 31-12 of the Colorado Revised Statutes. In particular, a community of interest shall exist between the Town of Westcliffe and any area proposed for annexation, with clear support by existing and/or potential town residents.

GD-2B A fiscal impact report shall be completed and submitted concurrent with a petition for annexation. Fiscal impacts associated with an annexation shall be adequately offset by (a) an increased tax base within the annexation area, (b) an increased tax base elsewhere within Westcliffe, and/or (c) the overall economic benefit to Westcliffe. Long-term.

GD-2C Direct costs of services and infrastructure associated with an annexation shall be borne by the petitioner. Lands needed for public purposes (parks, trails, schools, fire stations, etc.) shall be dedicated to the Town of Westcliffe or other appropriate public entity. All improvements shall be constructed in accordance with Town of Westcliffe or other appropriate public entity design standards, with performance surety in place.

Actions

- Prepare and adopt a Three-Mile Area Plan in compliance with C.R.S. 31-12-105(e). *Timeframe: Short-term*
- *Adopt a Tiny home code for alternative ADU's.*
- *Rezone the six blocks south of Hermit Lane to Multi-Family.*
- *Rezone empty lot in Vivienda Parque in residential zone multi-family*
- *Make commercial lots in Vivienda Parque a new commercial district.*
- *Plan and look into all vacant lots in residential districts to turn into multi-family.*
- *Extend the Core Commercial District west to Adams Boulevard.*

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- Prepare a model annexation agreement that includes clauses for a fiscal impact study, infrastructure improvements, and land dedications.
Timeframe: Mid-term

Direction

GD-3 Zone land consistent with the Master Plan and its Recommended Land Use and Zoning Map, in consideration of market needs and opportunities.

Policies

GD-3A The Town of Westcliffe shall periodically review and update its Land Use Code to ensure compatibility with the directions and policies of the Master Plan. In particular, the Code will be reviewed for policies that impede and increase the cost of affordable housing. Every effort will be made to support ADU's, higher density in-fill housing, and higher density development of south Westcliffe and the vacant land on Adams Subdivision to Bluff Park.

GD-3B The Town of Westcliffe shall periodically review and update its Land Use and Zoning Map.

GD-3C All applications for rezoning shall be consistent with the Land Use and Zoning Map and the directions and policies of the Master Plan.

GD-3D The Land Use and Zoning Map shall be periodically updated in consideration of market needs and opportunities that are consistent with other Master Plan directions and policies.

Actions

- Revise the Land Use Code/Zoning Code to be compatible with the directions and policies of the Master Plan, recent case law, and statutory updates.
Timeframe: On going
- *Review and revise LUC to eliminate impediments to affordable housing.
Timeframe: immediate*
- *Eliminate 20-foot setback in Core Commercial District to 5 feet. Each business must still allow for a minimum of two parking spaces on their lot.*
- *Change side yard setback in Residential SF to 3 feet and front/rear yard to 5 feet with room for at least two vehicles. For Residential Multi-Family change side yard to 5 feet and front 10 and rear 5 with/without alley. Must allow for one parking space per dwelling.*

Direction

GD-4 Cooperate with the Town of Silver Cliff and Custer County on interjurisdictional planning and/or development activities.

Policies

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GD-4A The Town of Westcliffe shall work to coordinate the directions, policies, and actions within the Master Plan with the goals and objectives of the Town of Silver Cliff and Custer County master or strategic plans.

Actions

- Submit an electronic copy of the Master Plan to Custer County and Town of Silver Cliff officials for their use. *Timeframe: Short-term(1-2 years, meet with both municipalities)*

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Direction

ED-1 Encourage economic development activities that will provide a balance of goods and services within the community, consistent with a defined community vision.

ED-1A The Town of Westcliffe recognizes that due to its median age, organic population growth will be negative and a concerted effort must be made to increase net migration and attract a younger demographic. Accordingly, the Town will market itself to highly skilled remote workers

Policies

Actions

- *The Town will work with Custer County, Silver Cliff, and the Custer County Tourism Board to market the Town and region directly and indirectly to highly skilled, and younger remote workers. Note that a secondary effect of increased tourism traffic is that a certain percentage of visitors will choose to relocate to the region.*
- *The Town will enact policies and make infrastructure investments that appeal to a younger demographic. For example, Main St closure to vehicles, improved Town trail systems, walkability & bike ability, greening our streets, etc.*
- *Work with the Upper Arkansas Enterprise Zone Administrator, Department of Local Affairs and the State of Colorado or any appropriate others to facilitate the preparation of an economic development plan. Timeframe: Ongoing*
- *Create a business incubator for the Town of Westcliffe. Work with local governments and local private entities to help these businesses. Timeframe: ongoing*
- *Work with the Upper Arkansas Enterprise Zone Administrator or any other appropriate entities to identify existing local businesses that could qualify for tax incentives, such as tax credits for investment, research and development, rehabilitation of vacant commercial buildings, or job training. Timeframe: Ongoing*
- *Work with the Upper Arkansas Enterprise Zone Administrator or any other appropriate entities to identify strategies to attract new businesses that would improve the availability of local goods and services. Timeframe: Ongoing*

Direction

ED-2 Encourage an adequate supply of housing for Westcliffe residents of all income levels to ensure the availability of a diverse and qualified labor force, using Prop 123 funds and DOLA grants. See GD-3A and GD-2C-Actions.

Policies

ED-2A The Town of Westcliffe will maintain an adequate supply of multi-family zoned land and actively promote ADUs rentals within existing residential areas for wage earners within Westcliffe.

Actions

- Identify new Multifamily Zoning Districts (including potential in-fill lots) and work with landowners to rezone property in appropriate locations for apartments and townhomes. *Timeframe: Short-term Used lots 15-28 adjacent to Chicago Avenue for affordable housing in conjunction with Proposition 123.* Enact and actively promote a new ADU Ordinance that encourages all six forms of residential ADUs. *Timeframe: short-term*

COMMUNITY IMAGE

Direction

CI-1 Protect the rural, small western town character of Westcliffe.

Policies

CI-1A The rural community character of Westcliffe shall be protected through appropriate land use activities.

Actions

- Open opportunities for expansion in agricultural zones while preserving views, community edges. *Timeframe: On-going*
- *It should be the best interest for the Town to protect the land between Bluff Park and Grape Creek, possibly owning the parcel and putting it into a conservation easement with Colorado Open Lands.*

Direction

CI-2 Enhance the visual elements of Westcliffe that reflect and reinforce its ranching, wildland & wildlife, and railroad heritage.

Policies

CI-2A The Town of Westcliffe may establish recommendations for commercial building design, landscaping, and welcome signage along the SH 69, Main Street, and SH 96 corridors. **Actions**

- Update the Title 10 Land Use Code to incorporate design guidelines that

provide incentives for integrating recommended architectural elements into the core commercial zone and traditional neighborhood. . *Timeframe: Mid-term*

- *Investigate and consider having Architectural standards in the Core Commercial District, DHM may help bring some insight. Timeframe: on-going*

Direction

CI-3

Enhance beautification in the Town through green plantings.

CI-3A Policies

The Town of Westcliffe may establish incentives for citizens and businesses to plant greenery.

Actions

- Create a tree planting/greenery grant: the grantee must buy the tree from a list of trees the Town comes up with, with help from the Garden club, and the Town can create a plaque in remembrance of loved ones. The tree must be in Town ROW and can be any homeowner or business. Plaque is optional.
- When planning sidewalk grants, the Town of Westcliffe should have tree plantings accompany the grant.
- The tree planting grant should also include planting trees in parks.
- The grant must be a cost share program.
- The grant should be in Town ROW, preferably between the sidewalk and curb.
- Plantings should all be drought resistant perennials.
- Xeriscapes should be considered.
- The Town should use the UAACOG mini grant to plant trees in the town.
- The Town shall come up with height restrictions of tall signs along highways.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Direction

HP-1 Preserve the historic character of the Main Street District.

Policies

HP-1A The historic character of the Main Street District shall be protected using guidelines for new buildings and renovations that maintain existing architectural scale, continuity, and texture.

Actions

- Install consistent sidewalk paving, uniform lighting, and other pedestrian amenities along Main Street between Adams Boulevard and 6th Street and along 2nd Street between Rosita Avenue and North Avenue. *Timeframe: Short-term: On going*
- Update the facade grant to give more money to those who are preserving historic character, and small-Town Western feel.
- *Complete Main St. master plan of improved walkways, public spaces, and landscaping from 3rd Street to Adams Blvd.*
- Widen the sidewalks, have a uniform sidewalk design, plant more trees along 3rd street and Main to Adams Blvd.
- Try to divert commercial traffic from Main Street.
- Encourage awning builds for the Core Commercial district in the facade grant.

Direction

HP-2 The historic character of properties and historic homes should be protected.

Policies

HP-2A The historic character of the Properties and historic homes shall be protected using guidelines for new buildings and renovations that maintain existing architectural continuity, and texture.

Actions

- Incentivize remodel permits, take 20% off of the building permit fee.

TRANSPORTATION

Direction

- T-1** Provide a safe, accessible, and efficient navigation network system.
- T-2** The Town will explore and support Public Transportation links to Denver in Salida (Bustang).

Policies

- T-1A** The Town of Westcliffe shall maintain and improve its navigation network transportation system, consistent with available funding.

Actions

- Prepare and adopt a Major Street Plan (Have the Planning Commission prepare a master street plan) in conformance with the provisions of Section 31-23-212 of the Colorado Revised Statutes. *Timeframe: Mid term*
- Improve sidewalk and street crossing safety at key locations. *Timeframe: Short-term*

RECREATION

Direction

- R-1** The Parks Committee and the Town of Westcliffe should encourage and develop recreational opportunities for visitors and residents of Westcliffe.

Actions

- *Bolster the Town Parks to enhance the community.*
- *Start to design and incorporate the Hermit and Memorial Park complex.*
- *Acquire the land between Bluff Park and grape creek to create a park attraction for families to play in the creek.*
- *Town Trails should be enhanced and expanded along Chloride Gulch to connect to Silver Cliff and possibly the San de Cristo trail heads.*
- *Partner with other non-profit groups like Trails for all in order to take the heavy lifting off the Town when applying for grants through CPW and other government and non-profit groups.*

Policies

- R-1A** The Town of Westcliffe shall maintain and continue to improve its park system.
- R-1B** The Town of Westcliffe shall encourage any opportunities to build a regional indoor recreational center to serve residents and visitors.
- R-1C** The Town shall support the development opportunities to develop a community trail network, linking residential, commercial, and recreational areas.

Actions

Work with the Westcliffe Park Advisory Committee and public to encourage the development of a community trail network, linking residential, commercial, and recreational areas. Time Frame-Mid Term

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Direction

- CIP-1** Make the Town more walkable by constructing sidewalks throughout Town.

Policies

- CIP-1A** The Town shall budget and plan additional sidewalk improvements each year.
- CIP-1B** The Town will seek grants to construct sidewalks.

Actions

- Work with CDOT and other granters to go for sidewalk and infrastructure grants.
- The Town shall pursue grants to help offset costs.
- The Town shall have a plan for constructing and sidewalk improvements five years out.

Direction

- CIP-2** Make the Town more walkable by completing loop and perimeter within Westcliffe, and by connecting the trails from Silver Cliff to Westcliffe.

Policy

- CIP-2A** The Town will seek grants and work with non-profits to help steward, and construct sidewalks.
- CIP-3A** The Town shall try to work with land owners to complete the trails from Westcliffe to Silver Cliff.

Actions

- Plant Drought tolerant trees and shrubbery along the trails

- Plant check dams along the trail at chloride gulch to help combat flooding and plant trees behind the dams to help green the trails.
- Design and plan park benches around the trails.
- Work to create a trail system to connect both Towns.

Direction

CIP-4 The Town of Westcliffe shall develop the South six blocks (south of Hermit Rd.) for multi-family housing and/or higher density housing.

Policy

CIP-4A The Town shall work with developers, state entities, and other non-profit groups to place infrastructure and housing.

Actions

- The Town shall seek grants to help offset the cost of water and sewer infrastructure.
- Work with a developer to replat the Town owned land.
- Work with a developer to make the Town owned land multifamily housing.
- Chase grants to put in infrastructure.
- Work with the on call engineer and Round Mountain to plan, map, and get costs for the water and sewer infrastructure

Direction

CIP-5 The Town shall develop a landscaping plan.

Policy

CIP-5A The Town shall work with outside entities to help develop a landscape plan.

Actions

- Develop a landscaping plan to help trees on Mainstreet grow for longevity.
- The Town should work with the garden club to select trees that are drought resistant and deer resistant.
- Help encourage residents to plant the greenspace between the sidewalk and street by developing guidelines and incentives. Residents who participate would be recognized by local paper.
- Develop incentives for Zero scaping the greenspace between the sidewalk and road.
- Help encourage residents to plant the greenspace between the sidewalk and street by developing guidelines and incentives. Residents who participate would be recognized by local paper.
- Develop incentives for Zero scaping the greenspace between the sidewalk and road.

Policies

CIP-1A The Town of Westcliffe shall develop, maintain and make appropriate upgrades that annually update a capital improvement program to prioritize funding for street, sidewalk, and drainage.

Actions

- Prepare a road, curb and gutter, and drainage improvement plan that includes improvements to accessibility, walkability, and bike ability.
Timeframe: long-term
- Work with FEMA and Colorado water control Board to develop a 100-year floodplain mapping.
- Plan the drainage improvements to get water to flow along Hermit Road and Chloride Gulch and the un-named gulch.

Direction

CIP-6 Require developers to pay for all services and infrastructure.
Developers shall adhere to the Town of Westcliffe Sidewalk and road guidelines.

Policies

CIP-6A Land developers shall pay the initial costs of services and infrastructure associated with new development.

The Town shall maintain the costs of maintenance after development process is complete.

RECOMMENDED LAND USE AND ZONING MAP

Eleven land use categories comprise the Recommended Land Use and Zoning Map described as follows:

1. **Agricultural.** This district is designed to protect and preserve the agricultural industry of the Town of Westcliffe, and to protect the rural property owners from encroachment by urban land uses. This district was formerly the A-1 Agriculture District and is hereby renamed.
2. **Single Family.** This district is designed to accommodate a maximum of two permanent residential single and two family attached or detached Dwellings with a minimum dwelling size of 550 square feet for the primary residence. And 400 for the secondary. The secondary dwelling should be no larger than the primary residence ADU ordinance should have no limit on size and allow for up to two ADUs.
3. **Multifamily.** This district is designed to allow for permanent multi-family dwelling units to a density of six (6) dwelling units per minimum lot area. Probably needs review, how do we account to infill opportunities?
4. **Mobile Home Park District.** This district is designed to allow for permanent residential mobile home development to a density of twelve (12) dwelling units per acre. Can density be increased with Tiny Homes?
5. **Core Commercial.** The core commercial category is intended for retail sales, offices, and services in the Main Street District and vicinity to accommodate businesses that ordinarily serve the permanent residents of the area and that are pedestrian oriented. This district allows for dwelling units above, below or behind a business. Needs review to increase density of units above.
6. **Highway Commercial.** This category is intended for highway commercial uses along the SH 69 or SH 96 corridors to accommodate businesses that ordinarily serve customers arriving for a specific service by automobile.
7. **Heavy Industrial.** This district is intended to provide a location for a variety of employment opportunities such as manufacturing, warehousing and distributing, indoor and outdoor storage and a wide range of industrial operations. Locations for this zone require good access to major arterial streets and adequate water, sewer and power.
8. **PUD Planned Unit Development.** This district is designed to provide flexibility in the development of large sites, and to promote the unified development and use of such sites while protecting environmental and ecological assets. Does this include mixed use development?
9. **Special District** The institutional category is intended for public and quasi-public uses, such as government facilities, schools,
10. **Special District** The parks and open space category is intended for passive and

active recreational uses, such as parks and trails

11. Create a commercial zone for areas not along Main Street or the Highway
12. **Multifamily District.** This District is designed to accommodate work force housing, affordable housing, senior housing, and veteran housing. The Town of Westcliffe recognizes its small footprint and is designing this district to allow for more housing and growth in the Town. This zoning designation covers all lots South of Hafford Avenue.
13. **Special Commercial District.** This District is designed to give a zoning designation for businesses not on Main Street or in the Core Commercial District.

The Land Use and Zoning Map should be used in conjunction with the directions, policies, and actions of the Plan to guide development in Westcliffe. The Land Use and Zoning Map is regulatory, any changes should be consistent with the land use categories shown on the Land Use and Zoning Map.

FUTURE PROJECTS-LONG RANGE

1. Pavillion at Summit Park. Water and Sewer lines for the six blocks south of Hermit Road.
2. Explore Broadband Initiatives
3. Gazebos at the Jess Price
4. Amphitheater at the Bluff
5. Public Transportation to and from Westcliffe.
6. Improvements to Memorial and Hermit Parks
7. Walkability in town, sidewalk infrastructure
8. Drainage plan
9. Greening our extra wide streets with more trees, walkways, and landscaping.
10. Plan streets to have greenways in the middle
11. Grape Creek Park with splash course, to extend to Pine Rd.
12. Chloride Gulch disc golf course.
13. New Shop for employees

Trailway along chloride gulch shaded by trees with benches, and check dams

Accomplishments

Current accomplishments

Jess Price Park
More Sidewalks in the Town
Facade grant
Roadway improvements
Improved Parking for Bluff Park
Paving Parking Lot Behind Jess Price Park
Bluff Park turned over to the Town

Appendix A: Tables

Table 1: Historic Population

1890	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
192	256	232	388	333	429	390	306	243	324	312	417	568	437

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; 2010

Table 2: Population Projections

2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
662	746	828	902	967

Source: Colorado Department of Local Affairs; 2016

Table 3: Land Use Acreage

Private Land Use	Number of Acres	Percentage of Total
Agriculture	104	18%
Residential	111	19%
Commercial	59	10%
Industrial	5	>1%
Vacant	206	36%
Religious	12	2%
Local Government	78	13%
Other	4	>1%
TOTAL	579	100%

Source: Custer County Assessor's Office; 2022

Table 4: Employment Projections – County wide

	2020	2030	2040
Total Jobs	2,624	3,439	4,358

Source: Colorado Department of Local Affairs; 2022

Table 5: Selected Planned Unit Development Activity

Planned Unit Development	Number of Lots	Number Built	Percentage Built-Out
Adams Filing #1	33	10	30.3%
Adams Filing #2	84	40	47.6%
Mission Plaza Filing #1	22	5	22.7%
Mission Plaza Filing #2	16	3	18.7%
Nordyke Commercial Park	5	3	60%
Sangre View Park	9	6	66.6%
Shadow Ridge Filing	109	46	44.2%

Source: Town of Westcliffe Building and Zoning Department 2024

Table 6: Selected Subdivision Activity

Subdivision	Number of Lots	Number Built	Percentage Built-Out
Columbine Park	35	11	31.4%
Demense Conquistador	34	0	0

Source: Town of Westcliffe Building and Zoning Department 2017

Table 7: Assessed Valuation

2016 Assessed Valuation	
Property Type:	Assessment:
Vacant Land \$	1,869,430
Residential \$	3,173,430
Commercial \$	4,914,180
Industrial \$	55,000
Agricultural \$	6,830
Natural Resources \$	250
State Assessed \$	445,870
Assessed Value \$	10,464,990
Exempt Valuation \$	4,018,420
Total Valuation \$	14,483,410

Source: Custer County Assessor's Office; 2016

Demographics	
Residential Population	437
Annual Growth Rate (2010-2016)	56%
Median Age	54.3
Households	259
Average Household Size	2.14
Households with Children (2020)	14.7%
Median Household Income	\$46,477
Associates Degree or Higher	40.9%
HOUSING	
Median Home Value	\$237,500
Total Housing Units	319
Owner Occupied	72%
Renter Occupied	28%
Vacant Housing	93

Table 8: Census

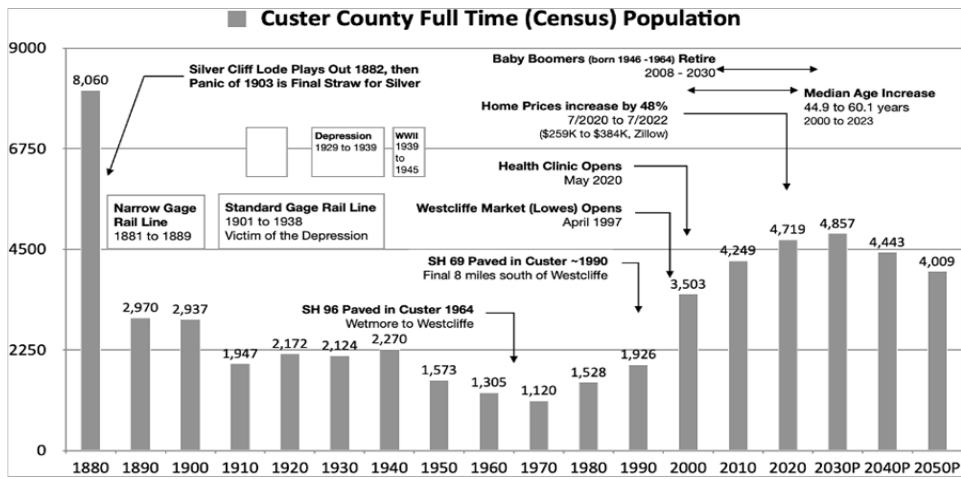


Table 9: Town of Westcliffe living metrics

	Criteria (Living & Working Metrics)	Letter Grade
1	What kind of access does the Town have to the outdoor recreation opportunities?	A
2	What's the climate and air quality like?	A
3	Does the Town offer a variety of housing choices?	C
4	Is the Town walkable? Bikeable?	C
5	Is housing affordable?	C-
6	What is the Town's economy like?	B-
7	What is the Library system like?	A
8	What access does it have to the arts? Galleries, plays, movies?	A
9		
10	Is the Town near larger Metro areas?	C
11	What about hobbies? (And are there fellow hobbyists in the Town?)	B
12	Is it easy to find a spiritual home? 21 churches.	A
13	What about special health issues? Can the hospitals/providers support them?	B+
14	What kinds of foods do you like? Are there good restaurants/grocers for that?	C+
15	How is the coffee scene (with WiFi places to hang out with my laptop)?	A
16	Does the city work to show empathy and listen to its citizens?	B
17	How do Crime Statistics compare with other Towns in southern CO?	B
18	Is there public Transportation to major Rail & Airline Terminals?	C
19	Is there a Music Scene? Festivals and concerts?	A
20	Is there a singles Night Life?	D
21	Is public space Broadband available?	C-
22	Is highspeed Broadband available for Work from Home? Starlink.	B+
23	How are the Public Parks, Playgrounds, public spaces?	B-
24	What is the Educational Level of the current Town residents?	C+

Deleted: How are the schools performing?

Deleted: D

Table 10: Comparison with other Towns

Towns <small>(west of I25, south of I70)</small>	Source: U.S. Census Bureau - 2020 Town Profiles					Source: GreatSchools.com (out of 10)			Source: Realtor.com
	Population	Median Age	Employment Rate	Median HH Income	Educational Bachelors+	Schools Elementary	Middle	High	Median Home Price
1 Alamosa	9,806	29.7	59.8%	\$50,239	28.0%	5	5	6	\$270,000
2 Basalt	3,984	46.2	73.5%	\$103,049	56.1%	7	4	6	\$1,400,000
3 Buena Vista	2,855	33.3	68.5%	\$58,168	37.6%	4	7	8	\$810,000
4 Carbondale	6,434	42.0	77.7%	\$92,083	57.1%	3	7	6	\$1,800,000
5 Crawford	403	42.9	64.1%	\$55,375	16.2%				\$328,000
6 Cortez	8,766	37.9	51.4%	\$55,962	31.1%	5	5	4	\$282,500
7 Crested Butte	1,639	41.5	72.5%	\$67,625	75.0%	9	8	8	\$829,000
8 Del Norte	1,458	43.8	55.3%	\$40,756	20.2%		5	5	\$261,000
9 Delta	9,035	43.4	45.7%	\$45,950	18.1%	4	6	5	\$353,000
10 Monte Vista	4,247	38.2	56.1%	\$51,071	30.1%	5	6	4	\$153,000
11 Durango	19,071	36.6	65.9%	\$76,177	58.7%	8	8	7	\$750,000
12 Fairplay	724	37.4	81.0%	\$80,179	24.2%	7	8	5	\$567,900
13 Florence	3,822	44.6	58.1%	\$58,167	21.8%				\$310,000
14 Ouray	898	50.3	57.0%	\$68,750	54.4%			7	\$424,000
15 Gunnison	6,560	24.9	74.1%	\$63,229	55.9%	3	5	6	\$587,000
16 La Veta	862	65.3	43.8%	\$48,297	31.2%		6	6	\$351,000
17 Lake City	432	54.9	51.4%	\$57,548	40.9%				\$306,000
18 Leadville	2,633	38.0	87.2%	\$80,100	57.9%		3	4	\$512,500
19 Mancos	1,196	46.5	61.1%	\$63,185	43.2%			5	\$344,000
20 Montrose	20,191	48.7	49.9%	\$60,132	31.7%	7	5	5	\$486,900
21 Pagosa Springs	1,577	34.2	62.2%	\$32,500	21.7%	6	4	5	\$592,500
22 Paonia	1,447	38.9	54.3%	\$54,643	38.1%	7	4	10	\$408,500
23 South Fork	510	59.3	40.5%	\$70,804	38.9%				\$114,300
24 Salida	5,666	44.3	59.1%	\$63,775	46.2%	9	5	6	\$520,000
25 Silverton	622	45.4	64.8%	\$64,000	37.9%			10	\$658,000
Median	2,633	43	59.8%	\$60,132	37.9%				\$424,000
Westcliffe	435	47.4	59.6%	\$52,500	37.8%	4	3	3	\$449,000
Silver Cliff	609	38.9	43.6%	\$35,583	14.2%	4	3	3	\$304,000
The "Cliffs"	1,044	42.4	50.3%	\$42,632	24.0%	4	3	3	

Blank cells indicate no scores available

Table 11: SWOT analysis

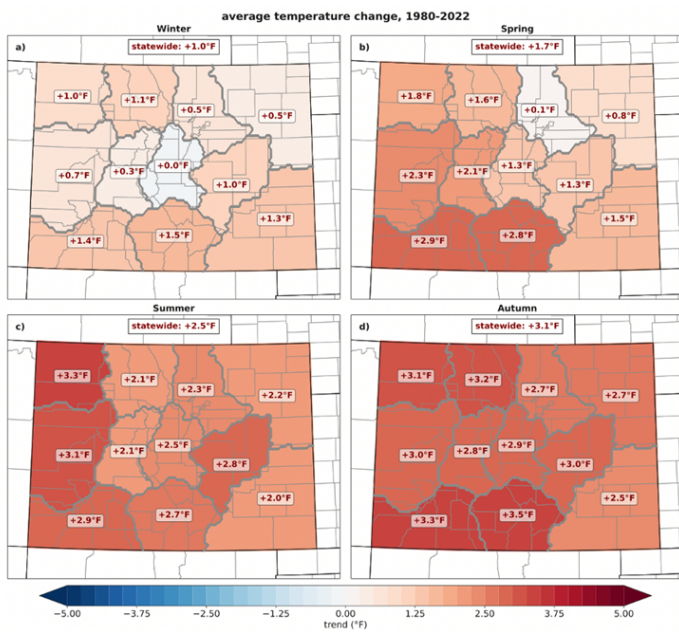
STRENGTHS		WEAKNESSES	
5.00	Small Town Friendly Community & Feel	5.00	Available Workforce
5.00	Dark Skies Community	5.00	Attainable Housing
5.00	Low Crime Rate	5.00	Through Traffic (SH69)
4.75	Mountain Viewscapes	4.80	Drainage (flooding)
4.60	Healthy Environment (air, water, weather)	4.80	Lack of Water/Sewer Lines
4.60	Rich History	4.75	Broadband Cost & Availability
4.50	Valley Strong, Non-profits	4.60	Lack of Restaurants
4.25	Outdoor Recreation Choices	4.60	Lack of Land for Growth
4.25	Town Parks	4.50	School Ratings & Performance
4.00	Library	4.40	Lack of Lower Cost Shopping (people buy staples "down the hill")
4.00	Wet Mountain Valley Location	4.20	Lack of Forward Thinking to Protect Past & Present
4.00	Little or No Traffic	4.20	Walkability
3.40	Arts & Music Culture	4.17	Seasonal Tourism
3.00	Gym & Public Pool	4.00	High Median Age
2.40	Rodeo	3.80	Political Antagonism
2.00	Abundance of Worship Choices	3.60	Bike Pathways
		3.40	Three Different Governments (duplication of costs)
		3.25	Significant Seasonal (non voting) Population
		3.00	Lack of Snowfall
		2.00	Minimal Public Transportation
OPPORTUNITIES		THREATS	
4.80	Attract a Younger Demographic	5.00	Losing Town Trees
4.60	A More Pedestrian Friendly Environment	5.00	Lack of Adequate Funding/Revenue
4.40	Recruit Remote Workers	5.00	Water/Sewer Availability
4.20	Increase Tourism	4.60	Temporary Loss of Adams Blvd Sewage Lift Station
4.20	Community (public) Art Projects	4.00	Nearby Forest Fire
4.20	Entry for 1st Time Home Owners	4.00	School Distric Leadership
4.20	Connected Trails Town to Town	3.80	Folks who Move from Elsewhere Trying to Impose their Values
4.20	Allow for ADU's	3.60	Losing Historic Buildings
4.00	Park Along Grape Creek	3.40	High Wind Events
4.00	Improve 200 Block of Main St for Users	3.40	Main St. Fire
3.60	Attractive Signs Entering Town on SH69 & SH96	3.00	Front Range Architecture Spilling our Historical Feel
3.20	Business District & Higher Density Housing South of Town	2.80	Losing Valley Agriculture
3.20	Close 200 Block of Main St during Tourist Season	2.80	Small Mindedness
2.80	Summit Park Music Pavillion	2.40	Flooding
2.80	Require & Assist Owners in Using Historic Paint Colors	2.40	Air Quality from Near & Distant Wildfires
	Plant more Trees, GreenStreets	2.20	Increased Crime with Population Growth
			Climate Change

Table 11: Walkability score

	Walk Score	Bike Score
Main Street	56	41
Old Westcliffe	51	41
Adams Subdivision	40	32
South Westcliffe	39	34
Mission Plaza	27	26
Shadow Ridge	5	20

Bike Score	Description
90-100	Biker's Paradise Daily errands can be accomplished on a bike.
70-89	Very Bikeable Biking is convenient for most trips.
50-69	Bikeable Some bike infrastructure.
0-49	Somewhat Bikeable Minimal bike infrastructure.

Table 12: Climate Analysis



Deleted: Table 13: School rating
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Matriculation Rates | All Students

Matriculation rates reflect the percentage of students who have enrolled in a post-secondary program or enlisted in the military at any time during high school through the fall following graduation.

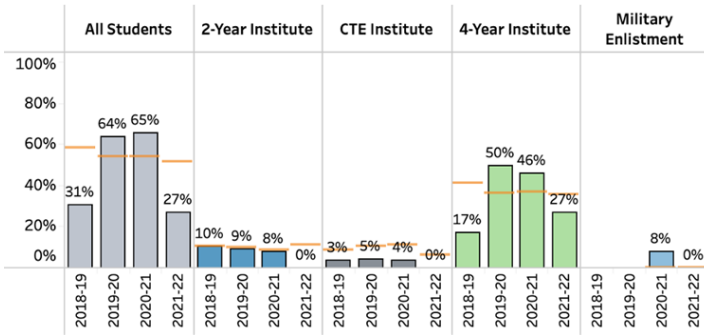
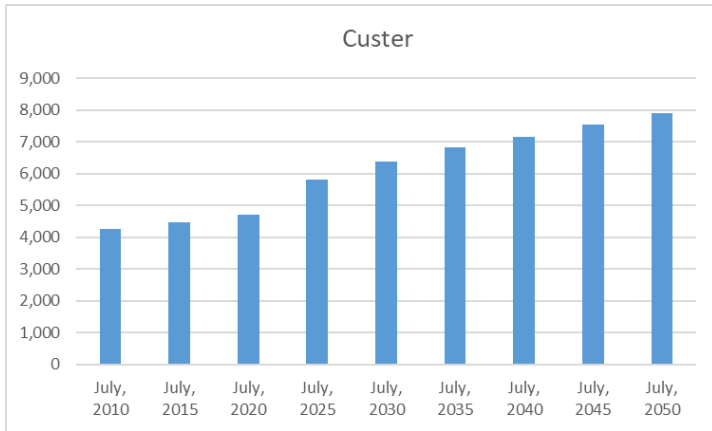


Table 14: Demographics

Demographics	
Residential Population	435
Annual Growth Rate (2010-2016)	4.65%
Median Age	54.3
Households	289
Average Household Size	1.82
Households with Children (2020)	14.7%
Median Household Income	\$46477
Associates Degree or Higher	40.5%
HOUSING	
Median Home Value	\$449,000
Total Housing Units	319
Owner Occupied	72%
Renter Occupied	28%
Vacant Housing	2%

Table 15: Custer County Population growth



Appendix B: Glossary of Terms

- Master Plan:** Is prepared in accordance with state statutes that authorize the Town of Westcliffe Planning Commission to develop a master plan for its physical development. Per C.R.S. 31-23-207, the purpose for the Town of Westcliffe Master Plan is "guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted, and harmonious development of the municipality and its environs".
- Capital Improvement Plan:** (CIP), is a short-range plan, usually four to ten years, which identifies capital projects and equipment purchases, provides a planning schedule and identifies options for financing the plan.
- Actions:** Measures to implement the Master Plan and ultimately achieve a desired goal. Each action includes a timeframe for completion: short-term (one to two years); midterm (three to five years); long term (beyond five years), and on-going.
- Goals:** The broad objectives to be achieved by the Master Plan.
- Polices:** Guidelines for decision-making.
- Planned Unit Development:** A project or subdivision that consists of common property and improvements that are owned and maintained by an owner's association for the benefit and use of the individual units within the project.
- Subdivision:** The division of a parcel of land into two or more parcels, sites or lots for the purpose, whether immediate or future.

Appendix C: Common Acronyms

CAFS	Compressed-air foam
CR	County Road
EMT's	Emergency Medical Technician
FPD	Fire Protection District
ISO	Insurance Service Office
PUD	Planned Unit Development
RMWSD	Round Mountain Water and Sanitation District
SH	State Highway
WMFPD	Wet Mountain Fire Protection District

Appendix D: Bibliography

Custer County Assessor's Office

Town of Westcliffe Building and Zoning Department

Colorado Department of Local Affairs

U.S. Census Bureau

APPENDIX E: ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Planning and Zoning Members

Chairman Christy Patterson

Caleb Patterson
Paul Wenke
Bob Fulton
Chuck

Alternates

Chris Lund
John Van
Doren

Westcliffe Staff

Caleb Patterson
Kathy Reis

Thanks to:

Amy Moulton
Delwin Lester
Marci Gregg
Dave Tonsing
Shelly Penkoff
Glen Livengood
Jim Bradburn
John Van Doren

**TOWN OF WESTCLIFFE
RESOLUTION 4-2024**

WHEREAS, Section 31-23-206, C.R.S. provides that it is the duty of the Planning Commission to make and adopt a master plan for the physical development of the municipality, including any areas outside its boundaries, subject to the approval of the governmental body having jurisdiction thereof; which in the commission's judgment bear relation to the planning of such municipality. The master plan of a municipality shall be an advisory document to guide land development decisions; and

WHEREAS, a Master Plan for the physical development of the Town known as the Westcliffe Master Plan was adopted by Resolution 2000-3 November 20th 2000; and,

WHEREAS, The Planning Commission may amend, extend, or add to the plan from time to time; and,

WHEREAS, the adoption by resolution of the Westcliffe Master Plan Amended carried by affirmative votes of not less than two-thirds of the entire membership of the Planning Commission June 10, 2024; and,

WHEREAS, an attested copy of the plan has been certified to the Town of Westcliffe Board of Trustees; and,

WHEREAS, the Master Plan adopted by Resolution 2000-3 has been revised by the Westcliffe Planning Commission known as the Westcliffe Master Plan Amended; and,

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees believes that it is in the best interests of the Town of Westcliffe that the Westcliffe Master Plan Amended be adopted by Resolution.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of Trustees of the Town of Westcliffe, Colorado that;

SECTION 1. Adoption of the Master Plan. The Westcliffe Master Plan Amended for the Town of Westcliffe, as adopted by the Planning Commission on June 10, 2024 by resolution, is hereby approved.

SECTION 2. Public Inspection. Copies of Westcliffe Master Plan Amended are available for public inspection at the office of the Town Clerk during regular business hours and available on the Town website www.townofwestcliffe.com.

SECTION 3. Attestation. A copy of this Resolution shall be attached to each copy of the Westcliffe Master Plan Amended and shall serve as an attestation that each such copy is a true and correct copy of the original Westcliffe Master Plan Amended as adopted.

SECTION 4. Filing with County. The Town Clerk shall file a certified and attested copy of the Westcliffe Master Plan Amended with the Clerk and Recorder for Custer County, Colorado.

SECTION 5. Effective upon Adoption. This Resolution shall become effective upon adoption by the Board of Trustees.

APPROVED AND ADOPTED this 17th day of September 2024 by the Board of Trustees of the Town of Westcliffe, Colorado.

BY: _____
Paul Wenke, Mayor

ATTEST: _____
Kathy Reis, Town Clerk