

>> MOVING FORWARD



**MORGAN**  
C O U N T Y  
GENERAL  
PLAN

Adopted December 21, 2010



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# Moving Forward Morgan County General Plan

Prepared by



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## Introduction

### Overview

Named in honor of Jedediah Morgan Grant, Morgan County consists of 610 square miles of land nestled in the Wasatch Mountains. The first settlers arrived in 1855. Early settlers located in the northern part of the County due to its access to water and natural resources. The main entrance to Morgan County is through Weber Canyon which opens on both the east and northwest sides of the County. The Weber River flows from the east to the northwest through the valley. The valley is surrounded by the Wasatch Mountains on the north, west and south, and the Uinta Mountains on the east. Morgan County has a larger percentage of privately owned land than any other County in Utah (93%). Much of the land is used for raising beef, dairy cattle and sheep, and for hay and other field crops. The County attracts visitors year round for outdoor recreation including: boating, fishing, camping, hunting, cycling, and skiing. Morgan County's historically rural atmosphere and home town character make the County a desirable place to live.

This Morgan County General Plan serves as a road map for the future by establishing goals and policies to direct growth responsibly, solve problems, and improve the quality of life for County residents. Not only will the General Plan guide land use decisions, but it will also serve as a reference and blueprint for community decisions, as well as for public and private sector initiatives. This plan is driven by issues that residents have identified as critical, which generated long-term goals and the vision of the future.

The planning horizon for the Morgan County General Plan is twenty years, through 2030. However, Morgan County residents should periodically revisit the General Plan and supplement or amend the Plan as necessary to reflect changing circumstances and new opportunities. A bi-annual (every two years) review is suggested to keep the General Plan

relevant. Depending on current circumstances, the bi-annual review could be as simple as a staff memorandum describing how the Plan is being implemented, or could include a review and update of all or elements of the General Plan.

### General Plan Elements

Elements in the Morgan County General Plan (referred to as the General Plan in the remainder of this document) address goals, objectives, and policies as well as planning guidelines to manage future growth and development. The General Plan consists of the following eight elements:

- **Land Use.** This element provides the framework for the physical development in the County. It establishes policies related to the location and intensity of new development and County-wide land use policies. The Land Use Element contains a Future Land Use Map illustrated in two sheets. Sheet one shows future land uses for the County, and Sheet two shows the future land use detail for the Mountain Green area.
- **Economic Development.** This element addresses fiscal trends, job creation, education, tourism, and economic development efforts.
- **Housing.** The housing element consists of standards and programs for the improvement of housing quality, variety, and affordability, and for provision of adequate sites for housing. It also addresses the County's short-and long-term housing needs, and satisfies Utah state code requirements for moderate income housing planning.
- **Transportation.** This element includes policies, programs, and standards to maintain efficient circulation throughout the County. It establishes functional classifications and design standards for County roads, and addresses alternative transportation modes.
- **Public Facilities.** This element addresses public facilities and services, including water, wastewater, schools, general government services, fire protection, law enforcement, and utilities in Morgan County.
- **Parks and Open Space.** This element addresses policies related to open space, trails, and recreation within Morgan County.

- **Environmental, Natural and Cultural Resources, and Historic Preservation.** This element addresses policies relating to land resources, habitat and biological resources, water quality, air quality, and prehistoric and historic cultural resources.
- **Implementation.** This element details the manner in which the General Plan is (or may be) implemented.

### Community-Driven Plan

This General Plan is based on an extensive public and stakeholder engagement process. From the outset of the planning process, discussion has focused on what is most important to Morgan County residents, exploring potential opportunities, weighing priorities, and making choices about Morgan County's future.

Development of this General Plan began with a review of the planning work accomplished in Morgan County over the past few years, including:

- Envision Morgan in 2007
- The Mountain Green American Institute of Architects (AIA) Design Assistance Team (DAT) project
- The Mountain Green; Croydon and Lost Creek; Enterprise; Peterson; Porterville/Richville; Milton; Stoddard/North Morgan; and Round Valley, Como, and Taggart's Area Plans

Public involvement began with a series of interviews with County officials and stakeholders to identify key issues and priorities for the Plan update project. Project kick-off open houses were held in Mountain Green and Morgan on April 21 and 22, 2010, to introduce the General Plan update project, discuss the results of Envision Morgan and the area plan planning efforts, and to solicit suggestions and ideas for moving forward with the General Plan project. Project planners met periodically with the Morgan County Planning Commission at regularly scheduled meetings to discuss project status and solicit direction and suggestions from the Commission and meeting attendees. Finally, an open house held on November 4, 2010, provided an additional

informal opportunity to discuss and comment on the plan, prior to the formal hearing process which began later the same day with the Morgan County Planning Commission.

### Using the General Plan

The General Plan articulates the County's vision, growth projections, and objectives the County seeks to achieve. The purpose of the General Plan is to identify guiding policies to provide direction related to growth, development, redevelopment, preservation, and investment. Regional agencies, Morgan City, nonprofit entities, and potential new businesses looking to locate in the area are just some of the groups that may use the General Plan.

The General Plan is a decision-making guide for Morgan County officials and staff. It delineates existing and proposed future land uses for the public and for landowners and developers. The General Plan is used by Morgan County staff to review and determine the compatibility of projects and applications, particularly zoning map and text amendments. Additionally, the General Plan provides guidance in developing annual work programs and budgets.

Developers and landowners considering land development may refer to the General Plan to gain an understanding of the County's vision and policies, the anticipated uses of property in an area, or how a desired project might be compatible with the General Plan.

### Relationship to Area Plans

Over the past decade, Morgan County and its citizens have created area plans for Croydon & Lost Creek, Enterprise, Milton, Mountain Green, Petersen, Richville/Porterville, Round Valley/Como/Taggart, and Stoddard/North Morgan. The area plans represent each community's preferences for future land uses and growth management in their respective areas. In order to support implementation of the area planning preferences, the future land use maps for each plan area (where they existed) have been

incorporated into the Morgan County Future Land Use Map. The common goals, objectives, and policies of the area plans have also been incorporated into the General Plan.

There remain some policy and direction distinctions among the area plans, however, that are not readily incorporated into General Plan. The work done by the area plan committees is valuable to provide background and the perspective of area residents that can inform land use decisions in the future. The Mountain Green Area Plan (2005 and 2010 update), for example, is much more detailed than the other area plans, and reflects more specific goals and objectives than can be successfully incorporated or implemented in the County-wide General Plan. In order to acknowledge the vision of the residents of the Mountain Green area, the Future Land Use Map from the Mountain Green Area Plan is incorporated in the County's Future Land Use Map to acknowledge the unique circumstances of the area. Future land use classifications from the Mountain Green Area Plan that aren't yet identified as future land uses in other parts of the County are also included in the Land Use element of the General Plan.

In order to capture and preserve the planning work of the area plan committees, the area plans, as adopted by the County Council, are incorporated as appendices to this General Plan for informational purposes and references as County officials make future decisions. If circumstances in one of the plan areas change in the future, or if a new development application raises area-specific concerns, area residents may ask the Planning Commission to decide on an approach to address the issue. Alternatives for the Planning Commission could include requesting assistance from the County staff or a committee of citizens, convening an area plan committee, or addressing the issue itself with a recommendation to the County Council. The area plans, as appendices to the General Plan, are integrated parts of the General Plan. When an application for re-zoning

or development is submitted to the County, the relevant provisions of the applicable area plan should be included in the staff report to the Planning Commission and County Council. Figure 1 shows how the area plans could be referred to and considered in addressing future issues and land use questions.

### **Existing Zoning and the General Plan**

This General Plan does not change zone classifications or development entitlements that currently exist on private property.

Both private property rights and local land use control have been the cornerstones of American society for many years. The Fifth Amendment to the United States Constitution generally states that private property must not be taken for public use without just compensation. In the case of a government regulatory action (such as zoning), a "regulatory taking" is considered to be an action that so interferes with the use of private property that it has the same effect as a physical appropriation. In most cases, the test of whether an action is a taking is whether the regulation denies an owner of all economically viable use of the property.

Any laws or regulations governing the use of private property should depend upon the government's authority and responsibility to protect public health, safety, and welfare. Based upon this premise, courts have supported limitations on the use of private property through land use plans and regulations such as general plans, zoning ordinances, and subdivision regulations to achieve those governmental purposes.

It is strongly recommended, however, that zoning map changes conform with the land use recommendations of the General Plan prior to their adoption. Where possible, the General Plan should be amended or updated prior to application for zoning map changes.

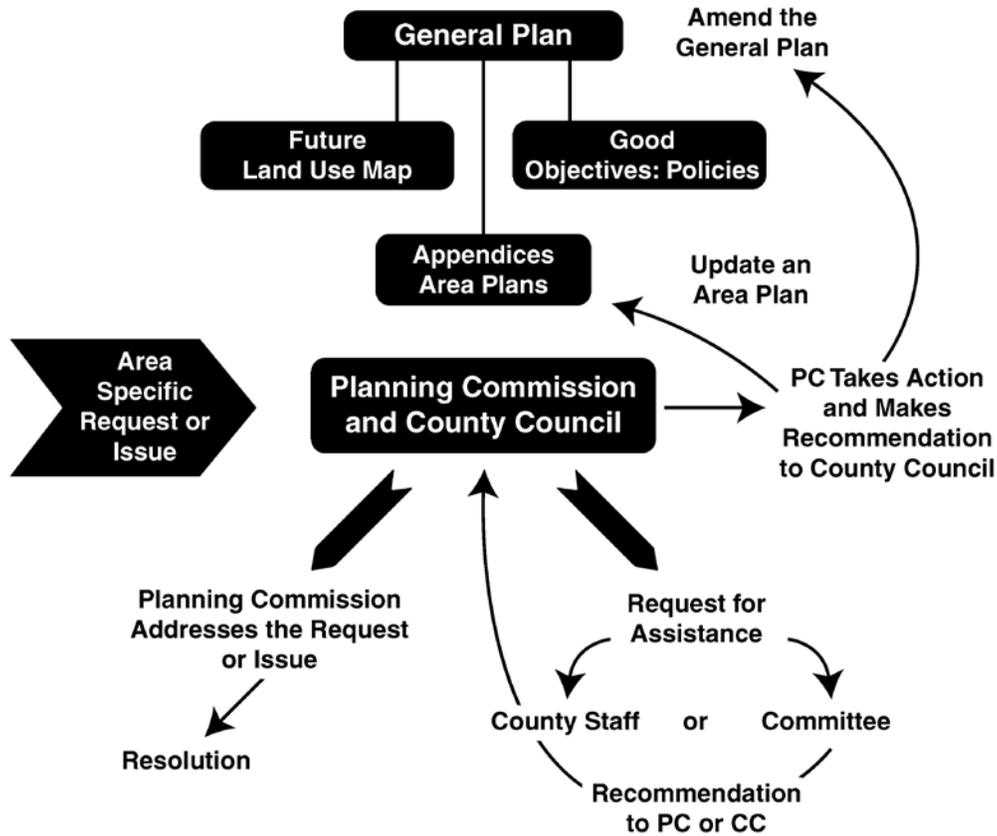


Figure 1 - How Area Plans Relate to the General Plan

### Implementing and Amending the General Plan

Political, social, economic, and educational institutions must work together to address their varied interests, values, and desires and to identify the goals, objectives, and policies needed for quality growth and development in the County. These broadly stated goals are the foundation on which the General Plan’s land use policies have been constructed to address a variety of individual interests, and to reconcile them Countywide through implementation of the General Plan.

The General Plan is intended to be a dynamic document that is periodically updated in response to changing needs and circumstances. A bi-annual review is suggested to keep the General Plan relevant. Requests for General Plan amendments may be submitted by individuals or initiated by the County according to adopted procedures. While many plan amendments will propose a change in

land use designation for a particular property, the change should remain compatible and consistent with the policies and text of the General Plan. Therefore, all proposed plan amendments will be reviewed to determine consistency with General Plan policies for each element.

### Vision Statement

A vision statement is the description of an overall image of what the County aspires to be, and how it wants to look in terms of desired future conditions. The statements below reflect the desired future conditions for Morgan County, and serve as the foundation for more specific goals, objectives, and policies.

### Morgan County Vision

1. Morgan County attracts families with its quality of life, rural atmosphere, secure environment, and natural beauty. Residents have a wide range of employment, housing,

and lifestyle choices. The County benefits from a balanced economy, livable wages, economic prosperity, and first-rate community services.

2. Morgan County respects property rights and recognizes personal responsibility to the land and communities.
3. Morgan County values its distinctive natural landscapes for their beauty, solitude, recreational opportunities, and natural resources and will work to ensure their long-range conservation and preservation.
4. Morgan County safeguards water resources for future generations, and conserves and reuses water whenever possible.
5. Morgan County public policies support the viability of working and hobby farms, protection of agricultural lands, and the conservation of natural resources and rural character.
6. Morgan County accommodates growth responsibly by integrating new development in a way that is respectful of the environment, supports County values, considers long-term sustainability, and uses available infrastructure. To help achieve this goal, the County strongly recommends that growth occur within or adjacent to corporate limits and villages, or be located within master-planned communities.

## Land Use

### Introduction and Purpose

The population of Morgan County has grown by 4.7 percent per year over the past five years, based on information supplied by the Governor’s Office and Planning and Budget. It is anticipated that a somewhat slower growth rate (3.5 percent in 2010) will continue in the foreseeable future. Table 1 shows anticipated future County populations. Land use patterns in Morgan County have been

**Table 1 - Morgan County Projected Growth**

Year	2010	2015	2020	2030
Population	9,183	11,621	16,756	24,478

Source: Bonneville Research

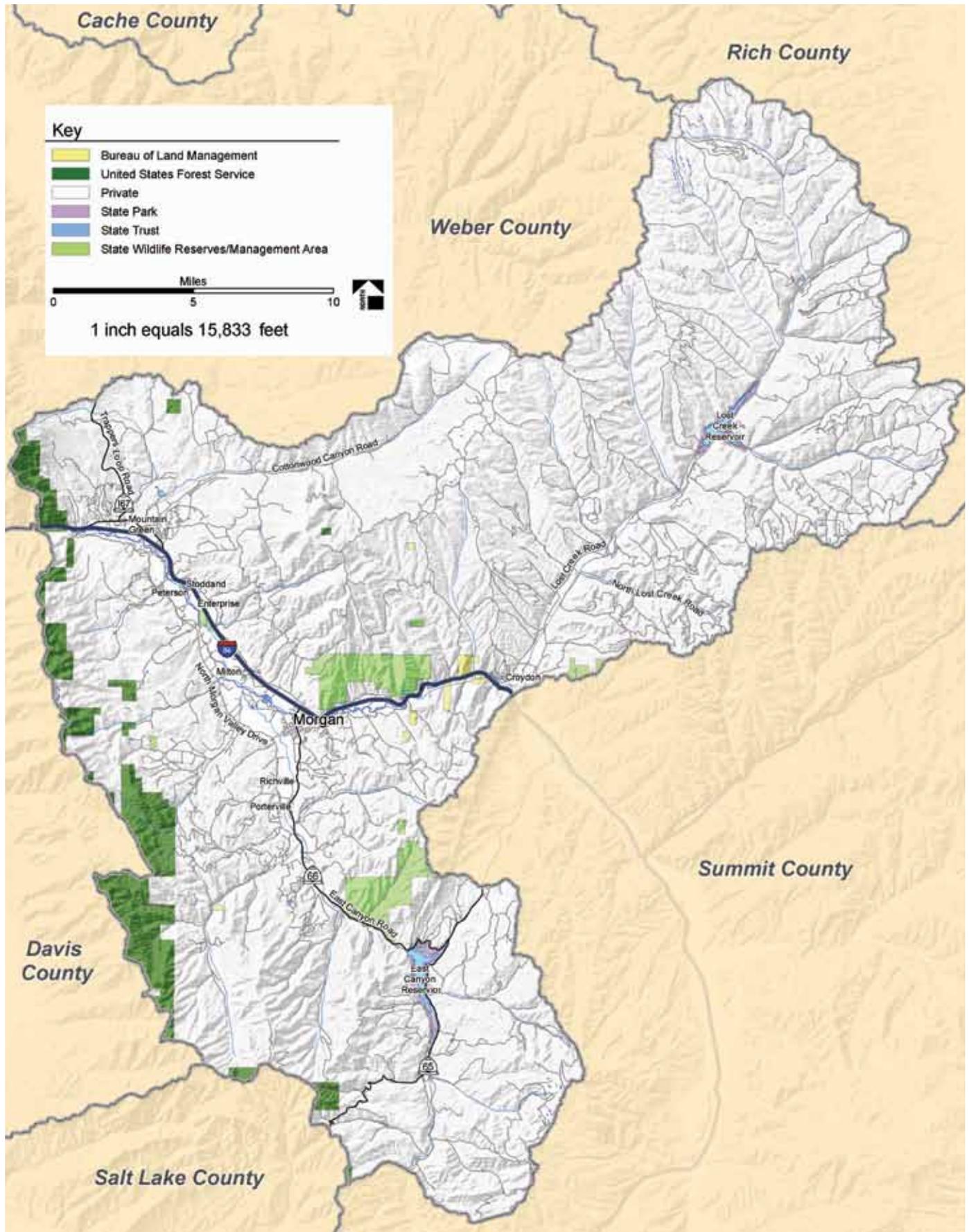
shaped not only by the areas plan, zoning and subdivision regulations, but also by factors such as land ownership, topography, water availability, and on the housing market and general health of the economy. Morgan County is over 93% privately owned (Table 2). Land ownership in Morgan County is shown on Map 1. Public lands, such as those managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (DWR), and U.S. Forest Service (USFS), are managed in accordance with adopted resource and forest management plans. Public lands that are transferred to private ownership become subject to the County’s planning jurisdiction. State land parcels with high-value scenic or habitat attributes may be designated by the County for conservation, but they must be purchased or leased to be preserved in perpetuity.

One municipality (Morgan) and six village centers are located in Morgan County; Mountain Green, Peterson, Enterprise, Stoddard, Croyden, and Porterville. Most of these areas have identified future growth areas. The majority of future

**Table 2 - Morgan County Land Ownership and Management**

Landowner	Total Acres (approximate)	Percent of Total County Land
Private	365,467	93.57
USFS	14,394	3.69
State Wildlife Reserve/ Management Area	7,477	1.91
State Parks and Recreation	2,477	0.63
BLM	775	0.20
<b>Total</b>	<b>390,590</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Logan Simpson Design



Map 1 - Morgan County Land Ownership

development in Morgan County is anticipated to occur in or near these areas. Current zoning designations are shown on Maps 2 and 3.

## Terrain

Much of Morgan County is mountainous. Part of the County is wetlands and waterway. With some exceptions, these two factors combine to limit potential growth in the County to a fairly narrow corridor on either side of the Weber River.

## Strategic Areas

### Future Land Use Map

The Morgan County General Plan is a vision-based plan that describes desired future land uses in the County. This vision, in turn, is supported by goals, objectives, and policies that will support implementation of the General Plan.

The Morgan County Future Land Use Map (Map 4, shown on sheets 1 and 2) shows general patterns of future development designed to achieve the goals, objectives, and policies of the General Plan. Sheet 1 shows future land uses for Morgan County except for the Mountain Green area. Sheet 2 shows the detail of future land uses in the Mountain Green area. Both the text of the General Plan and the Future Land Use Map must be considered when making decisions about future development or redevelopment. Zoning changes should be in conformance with the Future Land Use Map. In many cases the Future Land Use Map will need to be amended or updated prior to consideration of zoning map changes. This approach to guiding future development will provide flexibility to create innovative development projects that align with Morgan County's vision and policies, while achieving important General Plan goals and objectives.

The Future Land Use Map divides the County into a number of land use designation areas. The intent of these categories is to provide direction in determining growth patterns. Some future land use designations are specific to the Mountain Green area, others appear in a variety of locations throughout the County.

These designations define the land uses supported by the General Plan and describe the general locations and desired intensity of development. The designations on the Future Land Use Map are not zoning districts. They are general anticipated future land use categories. In many cases, a formal rezoning will be required to accommodate future development. In some cases, a Land Use Map Amendment may be required.

- **Natural Resources and Recreation**

This designation comprises the vast majority of the land in Morgan County. Lands in this use category are managed primarily to maintain the resource, recreation, ranching, grazing, and open space uses and value of the lands. Residential uses that are incidental to and don't interfere with the primary use may be allowed. The maximum density is 1 residential unit per 160 acres.

- **Agricultural**

This designation identifies areas of existing agricultural land uses. The purpose of this land use designation is to support viable agricultural operations in Morgan County, while allowing for incidental large-lot residential and other uses. The residential density in this category is up to 1 unit per 20 acres.

- **Ranch Residential 10**

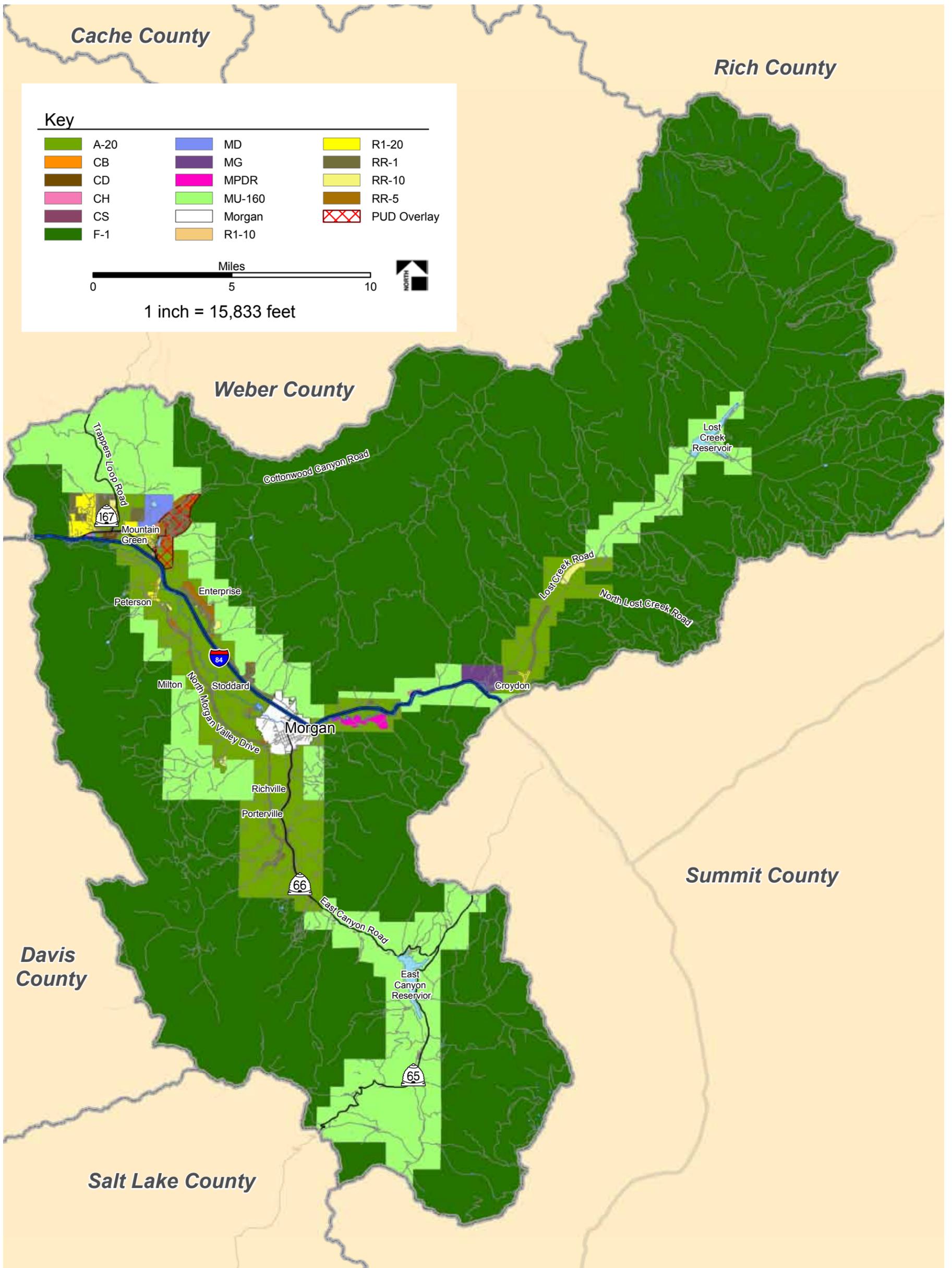
The Ranch Residential designation accommodates rural large lot development with generous distances to streets and between residential dwelling units and a viable semi-rural character setting. Livestock privileges are a part of this character. Areas in this category are generally larger lots with accessory structures that may be used for livestock. The residential density is a maximum of 1 unit per 10 acres.

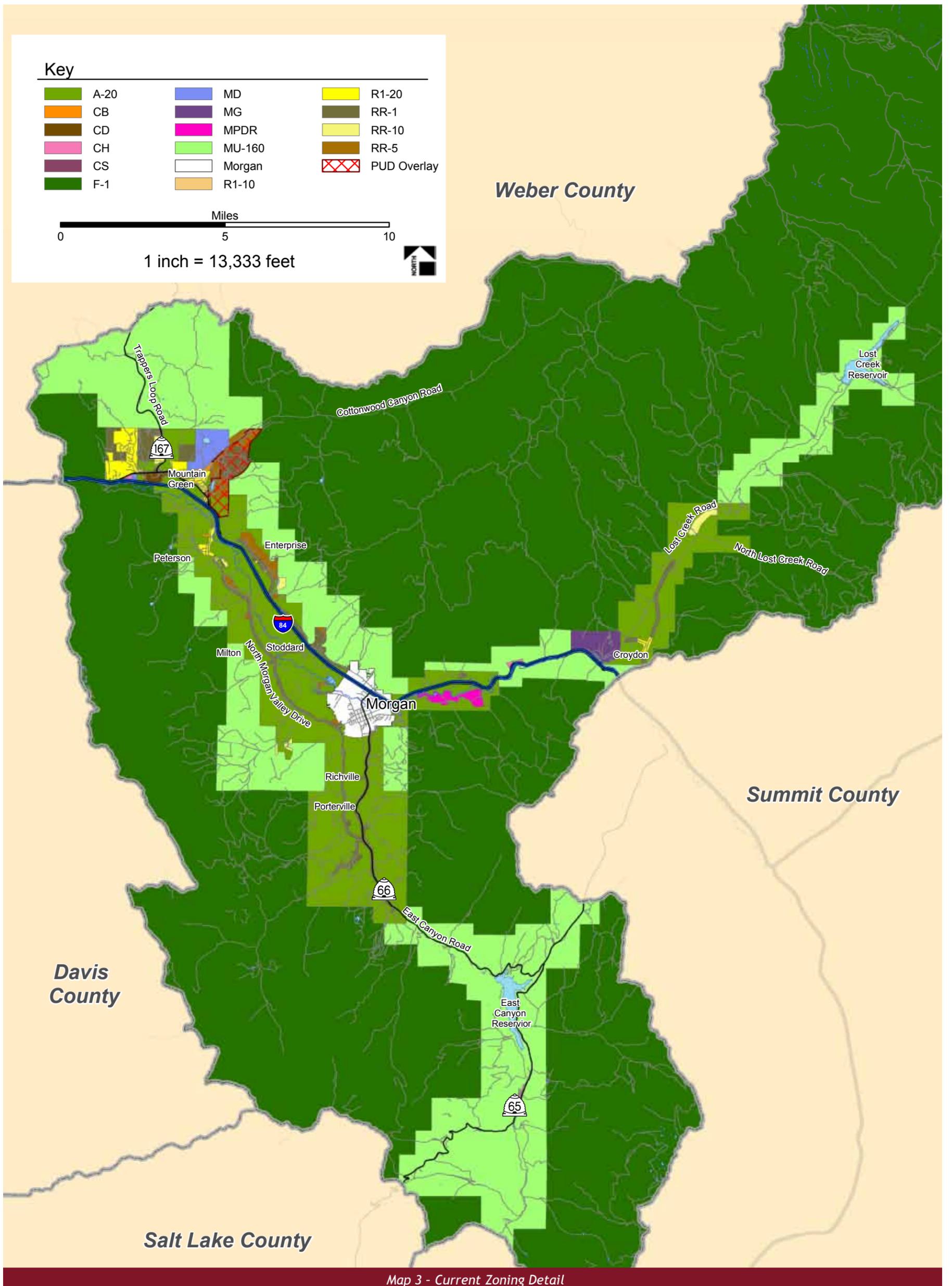
- **Ranch Residential 5**

The Ranch Residential 5 designation provides for the same uses as Ranch Residential 10, but allows for residential density of up to one unit per 5 acres.

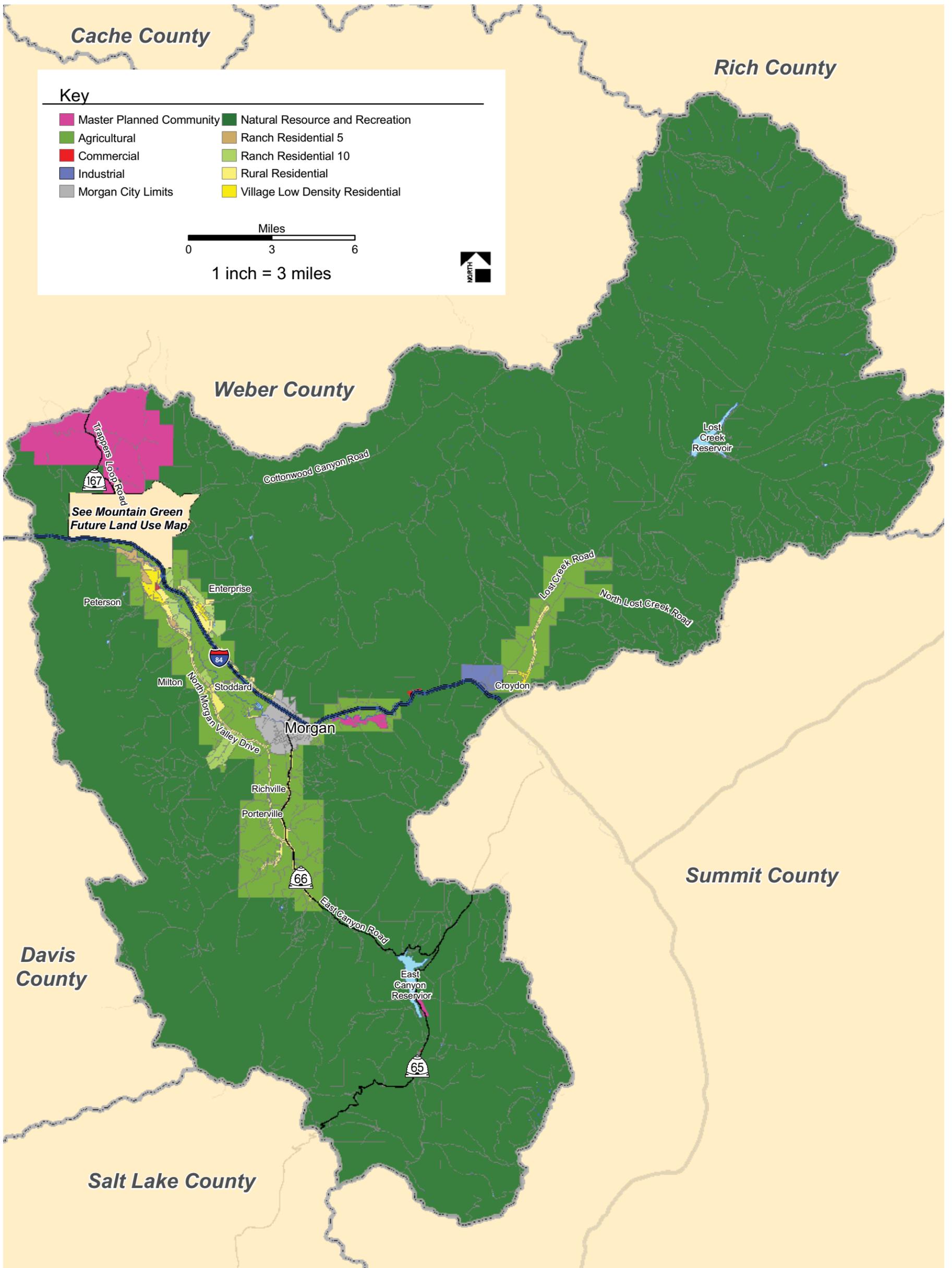
- **Rural Residential**

The Rural Residential category designation accommodates semi-rural large lot

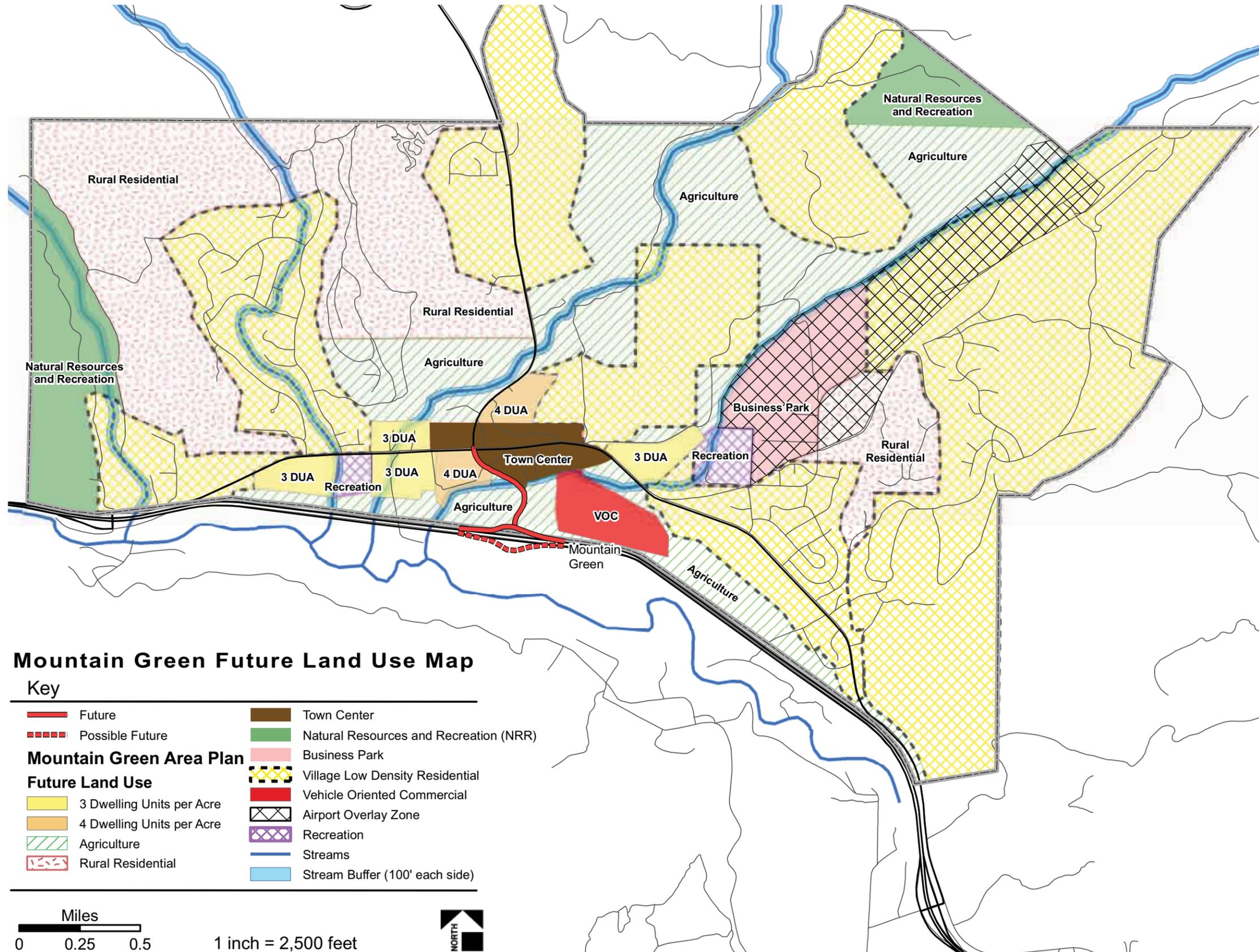




Map 3 - Current Zoning Detail



Map 4 - Future Land Use



**Mountain Green Future Land Use Map**

**Key**

	Future		Town Center
	Possible Future		Natural Resources and Recreation (NRR)
<b>Mountain Green Area Plan</b>			Business Park
<b>Future Land Use</b>			Village Low Density Residential
	3 Dwelling Units per Acre		Vehicle Oriented Commercial
	4 Dwelling Units per Acre		Airport Overlay Zone
	Agriculture		Recreation
	Rural Residential		Streams
			Stream Buffer (100' each side)



1 inch = 2,500 feet



Map 5 - Future Land Use Map Mountain Green Area Detail

development, with generous distances to streets and between residential dwelling units in a viable semi-rural character setting. Residential density in rural residential areas is a maximum of 1 unit per acre.

- **Village Low Density Residential**

The Village Low Density Residential designation provides for a lifestyle with planned single family residential communities, which include open space, recreation and cultural opportunities, including schools, churches and neighborhood facilities located in established village areas (formerly area plan boundaries) or master planned communities. The residential density is a maximum of 2 units per acre.

- **Village Residential**

The Village Residential category designation provides for a combination of single family attached and detached dwellings, townhomes, and duplexes. Substantial common open space for visual relief and recreation amenities would serve residents. This designation is currently found in the Mountain Green area with designated densities of up to 4 units per acre, and is appropriate for established village areas with infrastructure to support the uses.

- **Commercial**

The Commercial category designation provides for commercial nodes on individual parcels and more intense commercial uses near major road corridors. The intent of the Commercial use category is to provide for commercial uses ranging from small-scale commercial uses which, through sensitive and creative building design, orientation of buildings, access, lighting, signs, parking, and landscaping can be made compatible with adjacent residential neighborhoods, to regional retail, neighborhood retail, family entertainment, office, and compatible employment uses in master planned developments.

- **Business Park**

The Business Park use category is intended to provide for areas for the development of uses that provide employment involving light manufacturing, assembling, warehousing, and wholesale activities and associated office space and support uses. The Business Park designation is intended to encourage campus-style commercial development near

the airport which incorporates amenities including attractive streetscapes and enhanced landscaping. This use category provides for employment in commercial and light industrial uses that are compatible with adjacent or surrounding land uses. The areas designated for Business Park uses have adequate transportation and infrastructure access, and emphasize minimal conflict with existing adjacent land uses. This designation provides for the development and accommodation of administrative and research industries, offices, and limited manufacturing and support services. Typical uses may also include construction contractors, small, screened storage yards, and small warehousing spaces.

- **Heavy Industrial**

The Heavy Industrial use designation is intended to provide for capital-intensive operations that manufacture or fabricate products within enclosed or partially enclosed structures. Heavy Industrial provides for the development and accommodation of intense industrial activity involving mining, manufacturing, warehousing, assembly, and storage characterized by open space uses/or storage, industrial processes, which involve significant amounts of noise, heat, mechanical and chemical processing, large amounts of materials transfer, and large-scale machinery and structures.

- **Town Center**

The Town Center designation denotes areas suitable for a mixture of commercial, employment, and supporting residential uses in appropriate locations. Horizontal mixed uses would be required for master planned projects, and vertical mixed uses would be encouraged. Residential uses in the Town Center category should be vertically and/or horizontally integrated, and complementary to non-residential uses. Town Center projects should be designed to provide maximum compatibility with surrounding land uses. Increased aesthetic and architectural design requirements and focus on streetscape creation are paramount to the development of a Town Center area.

- **Master Planned Community**

The intent of this use designation is to provide for planned developments and resorts that offer a mix of residential and non-residential land uses. Potential development locations

would capitalize on good transportation, the physical amenities of the area, and recreational opportunities. The Master Planned Community designation allows for flexibility in land uses in order to encourage property assemblage and coordinated infrastructure and access. Resorts require adequate infrastructure and necessary services for each development. The assignment of this land use category should precede zoning designations to Master Planned Development Reserve (MPDR) or other similar resort or planned development zoning designations.

- **Public Facility**

This designation identifies areas for public facilities such as schools, churches, golf courses, cemeteries, parks, County, municipal and utility facilities intended for essential community services and facilities.

### Land Use Strategic Objectives

The land use element of the General Plan is designed to accomplish several important strategic objectives for existing development and future growth:

- **Provide Flexibility to Respond to Market Changes**

The Land Use element is not intended to predetermine all future land uses on individual parcels. This element provides support for the development market by guiding development to the most appropriate areas of the County. When reviewing individual development projects, the policies and guidelines of this element will provide criteria to evaluate land use compatibility and to encourage a mix of land uses Countywide.

- **Encourage Sustainability**

The term “sustainability” defines how the County changes and adjusts to meet the needs of its current and future residents. A sustainable County is one that meets its needs by using its resources efficiently while ensuring that adequate resources will be available for future generations.

- **Protect Morgan County’s Agricultural Heritage**

The General Plan supports agriculture as a commercially viable land use. The General Plan supports an orderly transition from agriculture to other uses in a way that supports continued agricultural operations and minimizes use

conflicts between agriculture and other uses. Strong leadership will be required to achieve these objectives. The General Plan sets the stage and presents strategies to accommodate future growth while preserving the agricultural character of Morgan County.

- **Support Employment Growth**

To achieve economic sustainability, a diverse mix of jobs must be present within the County. Most of the employment opportunities will continue to occur within Morgan City and Mountain Green, due to the ability to provide needed public services and incentives for economic development in those areas. However, Morgan County recognizes that it must also support employment growth by identifying areas suitable for commercial and industrial uses to be economically viable over time.

- **Support Retail and Commercial Growth**

The General Plan supports growth of retail and other commercial activity in Morgan County - particularly Mountain Green - in order to provide goods and services to County residents, and to expand the County’s tax revenues for the provision of County facilities and services.

- **Integrate Land Use and Transportation Planning**

Land use and transportation planning must be integrated to accommodate automobile and other transportation modes, such as bicycling, equestrian, livestock driving, and pedestrian travel. Land use decisions will affect transportation demand and new transportation infrastructure can drive development pressure. The General Plan encourages development patterns that provide for effective multimodal connectivity, and supports the coordination of land development with local and regional mobility improvements. The General Plan also encourages development patterns that provide for safe, non-vehicular movement within and between residential neighborhoods.

- **Maintain a Regional Focus/Area Plans**

Morgan County recognizes that if Morgan City and the planned area plan villages are economically viable, the County as a whole will be positively affected. This interdependence is a fundamental component of the General Plan.

- **Public Land Agencies**

While local governments do not have regulatory control over state and federal lands, state and federal agencies manage lands and resources through approved management plans that are developed with extensive public involvement processes. It is during development of these management plans that local governments can have considerable influence over public land managers that are not subject to local government regulation.

- **Residential Development**

Residential development will continue to occur in Morgan County because of the region's quality of life and strategic location. The General Plan and Future Land Use Map encourage most residential development to take place either in Morgan City or within the County's villages. Residential development remote from existing communities and infrastructure can create burdens on the provision of public services, and can expose residents to natural hazards if not properly planned and designed.

In 2007, Envision Morgan estimated that there were approximately 2,300 homes, 1,550 approved subdivision lots, and 7,400 lots that could be developed based on current zoning and future land use plans. Over the past ten years, the County has issued an average of 57 residential building permits per year. With an inventory of 1,550 approved residential lots, there are enough existing lots to accommodate 29 years of future development at historic growth rates. The County should carefully consider requests for rezoning of lands from agricultural to residential use in areas remote from identified growth areas, especially if the property is planned to be served by individual wells and septic systems, or if there is limited access to the County's transportation system.

- **Morgan City**

Morgan City is the only incorporated city in the County. It is estimated that the 2010 population of Morgan City is 3,695. Today approximately 60% of County residents live in unincorporated areas. In the absence of any new municipal incorporations or other change in circumstances, that percentage is expected to increase to 80% by 2030. This will create a challenge for the County to provide

the necessary and requested services for a large and dispersed population, as discussed in the public facilities element. The General Plan policy is to collaborate with Morgan City to coordinate growth in the vicinity of the City, particularly within the one-half mile City growth area, and to provide additional commercial and industrial opportunities.

- **Future Municipal Incorporation**

The General Plan supports and encourages the incorporation of Mountain Green as a second municipal hub in the County.

## Goals, Objectives, and Policies

**Goal 1:** Manage and guide growth in a manner that promotes economic development and efficient use of services.

**Objective 1:** Plan for orderly and sustainable growth.

**Policies:**

1. Guide town-scale development to Morgan City, Mountain Green, master planned communities, or villages as shown on the Future Land Use Map.
2. Require new subdivision development to provide adequate infrastructure and services, including, but not limited to, water, sewer, roads, and emergency services. The County should also require more secure methods of financial security from developers for required improvements.
3. Encourage the use of existing water and sewage systems in preference to individual wells and septic.
4. Limit the impacts of residential development in the Agricultural and Natural Resource and Recreation land use categories by encouraging compact development that allows for viable agricultural operations and avoids sensitive natural lands through the use of planned development ordinances, incentives, and other techniques.
5. Require large scale development, if remote from existing infrastructure, to be developed as a master planned community, and to provide adequate infrastructure and services for the development.

6. Require long-term management plans for all designated open space areas.
7. Adopt new regulations for master planned communities, town center mixed use developments, and compact or flexible subdivisions.
8. Encourage the use of centralized water and sewer systems for all new residential subdivision development. To provide flexibility in lot sizes and encourage better subdivision design, and establish unit density (residential units per acre) standards
9. Adopt hillside and ridgeline protection ordinances.
10. Adopt engineering design standards for villages and rural areas.
11. Discourage residential rezoning in agricultural areas remote from village centers and other identified growth areas.

**Objective 2:** Plan for the future incorporation of Mountain Green.

**Policies:**

Support incorporation when it is financially feasible for both Mountain Green and the County.

1. Revise the zoning and subdivision regulations to facilitate the development of an economically viable Mountain Green Town Center.

**Objective 3:** Implement Area Plans

**Policies:**

1. Encourage new development to take place in or adjacent to villages and identified growth areas, rather than dispersed throughout the County’s agricultural areas.
2. Adopt development regulations that require infrastructure improvements for development in villages and village centers.
3. Encourage retail commercial uses to locate in the Mountain Green, Peterson, and Morgan City centers.

**Objective 4:** Protect agricultural businesses.

**Policies:**

1. Develop a County-specific “Agricultural Protection and Right to Farm” ordinance to support the economic viability of agricultural operations in Morgan County.
2. Study and adopt development regulations to minimize impacts on existing agricultural land uses between urban and agricultural land uses.
3. Adopt fence laws designed to reduce the economic impact on agricultural activities resulting from changes in land use, including related liability exposure.
4. Pursue an aggressive weed control program that addresses noxious weeds.
5. Adopt policies that encourage and support uses of agricultural lands to derive supplemental income.
6. Encourage new developments to locate where infrastructure already exists, is planned, or will be provided.
7. Whenever possible, encourage proposed development in areas outside the village centers to be located on non-tilled, non-irrigated farm lands.
8. When development is proposed on irrigated farm lands, it should be developed in such a way as to maintain the agricultural uses of the remaining parcels.
9. Explore ways to reduce economic impacts of development on agricultural land owners
10. Encourage the protection and maintenance of existing agricultural land uses and character.
11. Protect irrigation systems, water sources, stock driveways and other necessary features of agricultural operations.
12. In agricultural areas, allow only residential uses that are incidental or accessory to agricultural uses. Discourage residential rezoning in agricultural areas remote from identified growth areas.

**Goal 2:** Require costs associated with new development to be borne by the developer.

**Objective 1:** Maintain clear policies and procedures to evaluate development proposals and identify both short-term and long-term financial impacts and costs.

**Policies:**

1. Consider requiring a fiscal cost analysis for all rezoning applications in order to determine the adequacy of services and infrastructure in the area. Ensure that new development provides the on-site infrastructure needed to meet the needs of the residents of the development.
2. Maintain an annually updated capital improvements plan to quantify identified needs in light of anticipated growth and to determine how new projects will be integrated into the development impact fee structure.
3. Adopt a comprehensive index of level of service standards for all areas of the County so new facilities or expanded services can be predicted and planned for.
4. Consider the adoption or amendment of impact fees to cover the incremental costs of new facilities.
5. Adopt and maintain a set of current infrastructure development standards to provide for adequacy and consistency of public facilities throughout the County.

**Economic Development**

**Introduction and Purpose**

The level of success of a local or regional economy touches everyone’s quality of life. Strong economies create jobs and payrolls, generate tax revenues to provide infrastructure and services, and are diversified to adjust to changes and trends. The Economic Development plan element of the General Plan is intended to help the County expand its base of economic development opportunities and thereby reduce the extent of sales tax revenue lost to other communities, while also increasing the number of jobs for County residents and increasing the range of services for local residents.

Residential land uses generally require greater expenditure of public funds to provide services than they generate in tax revenues. The current trend in residential growth, if allowed to

continue without a balanced employment growth component, will strain the County’s ability to provide services without raising taxes. Morgan County must increase the number of jobs and generate tax revenue within its borders to keep pace with its residential growth, and to provide local employment opportunities.

Balancing residential growth with job creation is the central theme of the Economic Development element. Job to population balance is defined as the ratio of the number of jobs to the number of employed residents in the County. Jobs and population are said to be balanced when there are an equal number of employed residents and jobs within a given area, generating a ratio of approximately 1.0. Today, there are 0.45 jobs per person in Morgan County. This ratio is consistent with other rural counties, where residents frequently travel to work in more urbanized counties (see Table 3). The Wasatch Front counties have more than one job per resident, as commuters come from areas like Morgan County to work. Morgan County’s close proximity to Weber, Davis and Salt Lake Counties puts it within convenient daily commuting distance of major employment centers, and makes attracting employers more difficult than if it were further from jobs.

Residents and community leaders recognize that a balanced and healthy economy is necessary to

**Table 3 - Job to Population Ratio**

County	Ratio
Davis	1.22
Juab	0.34
Morgan	0.45
Millard	0.28
Salt Lake	1.87
Sevier	0.40
Utah	1.42
Weber	1.27

*Source: Logan Simpson Design*

attain economic and fiscal sustainability. In order to fulfill this purpose, the Economic Development element concentrates on the County’s ability to provide quality employment opportunities for its residents.

The economic stability of Morgan County hinges on its ability to maintain and increase the ratio of jobs per capita and generate tax revenue. The County can achieve this through sound economic development policies. Creating a viable economy rests on the collaborative efforts of the citizens, businesses, education, and government that operate within the County. The Economic Development element should guide the County in expanding the local economy by expanding, retaining, and preserving quality jobs, strengthening the tax base, and providing public services to existing and new residents and businesses.

**Strategic Areas**

**Education**

A strong education system will influence the students’ productivity and future educational opportunities. Furthermore, a strong educational system will produce a competitive workforce in the future, which will attract businesses seeking this talent. A strong education program focuses on all segments of the County’s population.

K-12 education is an important factor in economic development. The overall capacity and objective ranking/rating of the local education system will be a factor in the willingness of top management and skilled workers to choose the community in which they will relocate themselves and their families.

Ensuring rigorous college prep high school requirements, including math, science, and language skills will assist in post secondary success. Coordination in curriculum between local school districts and Utah State University will offer an opportunity for students to be prepared for jobs within the County.

**Employment**

Today, 63 percent of all employment in Morgan County is concentrated in the service, retail, and construction industries. The County will need to increase and diversify employment opportunities in order to have a sustainable economy.

Attracting and retaining business begins with having a job-ready workforce with the appropriate educational background and skills. The total number of jobs in Morgan County over the last five

**Table 4 - Morgan County Employment Number Projections by Year**

	2010	2020	2030	2040
Total Employment	4,212	7,676	11,497	15,918

*Source: Utah Governor’s Office of Planning and Budget*

**Table 5 - Morgan County Employment Percentage Projections by Year and Industry**

Industry	2010	2020	2030	2040
Construction	15.93%	16.35%	16.19%	16.01%
Education and Health Services	7.55%	9.38%	11.56%	13.59%
Financial	7.55%	9.38%	11.56%	13.59%
Government	11.56%	11.99%	11.78%	10.90%
Information	0.47%	0.46%	0.43%	0.38%
Leisure and Hospitality	7.67%	8.08%	8.55%	9.19%
Manufacturing	7.57%	8.44%	9.13%	9.69%
Natural Resource and Mining, Farming and Ranching	8.71%	4.27%	2.52%	1.62%
Other Services	6.05%	6.33%	6.54%	6.76%
Professional and Business Services	9.95%	10.28%	10.01%	9.63%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	16.00%	15.82%	14.64%	13.41%

*Source: Utah Governor’s Office of Planning and Budget*

years has increased by 14 percent. Increasing the number of jobs will depend on developing a skilled labor pool that will attract new business. The County will need to be proactive and consider new approaches to attract new businesses.

### **Income and Wages**

A measure of a community's economic health resides in the amount of household disposable income. The more disposable income, the more direct and indirect spending will be generated. Retailers look at median household income as a measure of consumption. The area median income for Morgan County is \$63,856, which is higher than the state average of \$59,738. To attract companies that pay higher wages, Morgan County will need to focus on advancing educational attainment and investments to attract those companies that pay higher wages, and on developing policies that will encourage those companies to grow and expand.

### **Infrastructure**

Business attraction and expansion is dependent on having adequate capacity in the utility systems and infrastructure. The building blocks of a viable economy must include both direct and indirect investments. Direct investment embodies the traditional mechanisms of funding infrastructure improvements, developing shovel-ready sites, or funding economic development programs. Indirect investments, such as time and resource savings, are realized through streamlined processes, development support, and progressive land use policies.

Transportation and economic development are two aspects which are inevitably linked together. Interstate highway, air, and rail transportation are all necessary in the movement of goods and people from one place to another. Both local and regional traffic through and within the County must be managed. Due to the cost and interconnectivity of major transportation improvements, they must be addressed on a regional basis. Quality transportation networks facilitate such things as the movement of workers between work and

home, linking communities, increasing safety, and improving the quality of life.

### **Preservation of Land for Employment**

For the County to attract new business to the area, or to allow existing businesses to expand or relocate, it is necessary for it to have an inventory of available land and available buildings to facilitate business expansion. The County needs to position itself to be able to provide for the needs of business expansion as it pertains to economic development. Without the necessary available infrastructure, business expansion and economic development opportunities become severely limited.

The General Plan encourages the identification and dedication of parcels of land that can be used by businesses to build and maintain industry.

### **Incentives**

Business profitability is achieved by increasing revenues or by reducing costs. Revenue is primarily a function of the market and the public sector has little influence on the market. The public sector can influence costs associated with producing and delivering goods and services thereby increasing profitability. Incentives are used to increase a business' profitability thereby attracting new business and employers.

Two of the most common types of incentives are financial and business climate. Financial incentives can take the form of sales and property tax rebates, tax increment financing, reduced land development and acquisition costs, loans, grants, building renovations, and providing infrastructure. A positive business climate includes a proactive County staff and streamlined permitting and building review procedures.

### **Sustainability**

A County's fiscal outlook tends to rise and fall with economic conditions. When economic conditions are favorable, employment levels are robust and higher individual and household incomes support expanded discretionary spending. Retail sales increase, property values may rise, and all of

the activities that relate to local government charges, such as fees and taxes, tend to increase. Therefore, County revenues are likely to grow. While new development may add to a County’s service delivery responsibilities, it will also at the same time contribute to increased local revenues.

When economic conditions are adverse, the opposite tends to occur. Long-term economic stability strengthens the predictability of municipal costs and revenues. The effects of a marked change in economic direction, whether it is expansion or contraction, take time to show up in revenue increases or reductions of County fiscal conditions. The influence of an economic cycle on the public sector normally lags behind the private sector.

**Sales Tax Leakage**

Sales tax leakage is the loss of revenue due to residents purchasing goods and services outside of the County boundaries. Most of Morgan County’s buying power is spent outside of the County. Sales tax leakage to Ogden City and Weber and Davis Counties will continue to be the norm, unless there are other options for residents within the County. Additionally, there is an opportunity for the County to capture sales tax revenue from visitors to the Snowbasin and Pineview area resorts. Key locations should be identified and planned for desirable uses such as outdoor recreation equipment rentals, restaurants, and other recreation support businesses.

**Goals, Objectives, and Policies**

**Goal 1:** Create new business and employment opportunities in Morgan County.

**Objective 1:** Increase the number of businesses that are created, expanded, and located in Morgan County.

**Policies:**

- 1. Create and implement an economic development plan.
- 2. Identify the types of incentives the County

will use attract the types of business the County is seeking.

- 3. Provide incentives for targeted businesses including agriculture.
- 4. Focus business assistance and economic development efforts in Morgan County on the retention and expansion of existing industry and the recruitment of feasible and desirable industry and businesses.
- 5. Explore the development of broad-based funding mechanisms to finance infrastructure investments in support of focused economic development, and to recoup investments as development occurs.
- 6. Participate in local and regional economic development opportunities and organizations.
- 7. Create expedited permitting processes for targeted projects.
- 8. Update codes and ordinances to ensure consistency with the General Plan, other policies, and current procedures.
- 9. Maintain application review schedules that are consistent with or faster than those of other counties in the region.
- 10. Coordinate Utah State University and Weber State University and the Morgan School District so that the current education/training programs available to County residents match the education/skills required in order to succeed in the regional marketplace and to develop bachelors’ degree programs that will create a skilled labor pool to attract new businesses.
- 11. Maintain current demographic information on the County’s trade area and distribute information to potential developers and businesses.

**Objective 2:** Become economically self-sustainable by generating income from local sources.

**Policies:**

- 1. Reduce sales tax leakage from Morgan County to adjoining communities.
- 2. Continue efforts to attract retail and service businesses, especially those in under-

represented categories, in order to help reduce sales tax leakage.

3. Diversify the local tax base to become self-sufficient.
4. Support second home development in resort and other appropriate areas to supplement the County's property tax revenues.
5. Encourage the development of a Mountain Green town center.
6. Limit increases to the general property tax.

**Goal 2:** Encourage the preservation of adequate locations for employment land uses to meet long-term economic development needs.

**Objective 1:** Promote diverse employment opportunities in appropriate locations.

**Policies:**

1. Protect and preserve lands needed for employment-related land uses.
2. Encourage, coordinate, and support commercial and business land uses in appropriate areas to ensure the provision of adequate public services including transportation, water, sewer, fire suppression, and utilities.
3. Encourage retention of existing, and the creation of new, employment opportunities, including oil and gas; agriculture and farming; recreation and tourism; high-technology industries; services; and retail in appropriate areas.
4. Encourage the provision of buffers in the form of separation and setbacks, walls, berms, or landscaping to protect residential, agricultural, and commercial/industrial areas and open space from conflicting land uses.
5. Encourage development that does not need infrastructure to be extended across excessive distances to provide service and support.
6. Encourage the development of employment centers such as large business parks that provide attractive and competitive sites.
7. Explore the use of private/public partnerships to provide "shovel-ready" sites to encourage employment uses.

8. Encourage the expanded use of the County airport to make this an area of focus for the County.

**Goal 3:** Equitably allocate the provision of government services throughout the County, and balance the need for and provision of services with the burden of providing services.

## Housing Element

### Introduction and Purpose

The linkage between a sustainable economy and housing availability is essential. Maintaining a good ratio of jobs to population allows people to live in proximity to where they work, as described in the Economic Development element of the General Plan. When imbalances exist, either people will move to areas with more employment opportunities, or employers will move to areas with more workforce opportunities.

The following are some facts about housing in Morgan County:

- The average value of a residential property is approximately \$56,000 more than the state average.
- 91.4% of housing units are single-family detached.
- 88.3% of housing units are owner occupied.
- 11.7% of the housing is rental properties.
- 5.1% of housing units are vacant. Of this 48.2% are categorized as seasonal or recreation.
- 61.5% of the housing units were constructed prior to 1979.

The Housing element is intended to encourage a mix of housing types in the County. The County can influence the region's housing market through planning, review, and approval of housing developments; code adherence and enforcement; and coordination with other agencies and entities that are directly involved in addressing housing issues.

Maintaining affordability and availability of housing for a wide range of income levels is critical to the

County's economic sustainability as well as the quality of life of its residents. This element focuses on encouraging a mix of housing types and helping Morgan County to address changing markets, desires, and trends. Supporting housing and economic information is included in Appendix C.

## Strategic Areas

### Moderate Income Housing

Section 17-27a-403 of the Utah State Code establishes the availability of moderate-income housing as a statewide concern, and requires counties to propose a plan for moderate-income housing as a part of their general plans. "Moderate-income housing" is defined as housing that is affordable for households with gross incomes equal to or less than 80 percent of the median gross income of the County, or 80 percent of the area median income (AMI). State code also states that no more than 30 percent of a household's income should be spent on housing costs, including utilities. The purpose of the statute is to ensure that people with moderate incomes who desire to live in Morgan County can do so. The County should offer a reasonable opportunity for those with moderate incomes to obtain housing in the County and to fully participate in all aspects of neighborhood and community life during all stages of their lives.

The AMI in Morgan County is \$68,500. A family of four in Morgan County would need to earn a minimum of \$55,050 per year to earn a moderate income, while a family of five would need to earn a minimum of \$59,500 per year. The average household size in Morgan County is 3.46. According to the 80 percent of AMI standard for moderate income, a four-person moderate-income household earns \$55,050 annually and would have an affordable home mortgage or rent payment of \$1,101 a month, including utilities, and could afford to purchase a home with a value of approximately \$188,108.

The average home value in Morgan County is \$296,051 and the median home value is \$249,096.

In 2008, it was estimated that approximately 750 homes, or approximately 30%, of the homes in Morgan County had values less than \$188,000. This would indicate that moderate-income households could not afford a median price home in the County. Additional socio-economic information is contained in Appendix C.

## Goals, Objectives, and Policies

**Goal 1:** Provide a variety of housing types and options in Morgan County.

**Objective 1:** Encourage and monitor the availability of affordable housing to support economic development efforts.

### Policies:

1. Promote and maintain a range of housing types and affordability, where supported by infrastructure.
2. Promote upgrading of and reinvestment in existing housing stock and neighborhoods.
3. Encourage the provision of moderate-income housing within Morgan City and the Mountain Green Village.
4. Develop and maintain an inventory of existing housing products (by type, size, and value) and monitor new developments to maintain balance.
5. Create a housing program or authority to allocate housing funds being deposited from developments such as Aspen Meadows and Rivala.

**Objective 2:** Support the development of housing projects that can accommodate people with special needs.

### Policies:

1. Monitor housing development for the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Fair Housing Law Compliance through the County's development review process.
2. Work with other jurisdictions (local, state, and federal) as well as the private and nonprofit sector to leverage resources to address special needs Countywide.

3. Require master planned communities to provide and integrate moderate income housing within their developments.

**Objective 3:** Promote quality residential development in well-designed subdivisions.

**Policies:**

1. Encourage new housing units that are designed to respect the mass, scale, siting, and form of other buildings in a neighborhood or area.
2. Use buffering, screening, fencing and design standards to mitigate impacts of incompatible land uses.
3. Enforce codes and ordinances to ensure maintenance of neighborhood integrity as the housing stock ages.
4. Encourage subdivision designs that protect environmentally sensitive areas or unique property characteristics such as, but not limited to, as stream corridors, the night sky, significant stands of vegetation, wildlife habitat and corridors.
5. Encourage the use of Conditions, Covenants, and Restrictions (CC&R's) and Property Owner or Homeowners Associations (HOA's) in new development. However, the County should be cautious in relying on HOA's as a permanent provider of services and maintenance.
6. Seek funding sources that will assist in the maintenance and improvement of housing conditions in the County.

## Transportation Element

### Introduction and Purpose

The purpose of the transportation element of the General Plan is to provide direction to the safe and efficient flow of goods, services, and people throughout Morgan County. Well-planned County transportation systems provide a supporting network of local, collector, and arterial streets to accommodate development, as well as unified property access and circulation systems. A Transportation Element is one of the required elements of a County General Plan, per the Utah State Code.

This element of the General Plan outlines the existing condition of the transportation system that serves Morgan County. Based on current and projected information gathered from a variety of sources, including public input and area plans, improvements to the existing transportation system are identified as Plan objectives.

Information contained in a number of earlier planning documents was relied on to formulate the transportation element. Those planning documents, supporting transportation information, and identified future transportation projects are listed in Appendix B.

### Strategic Areas

#### Transportation Policies and Standards

Existing transportation policies and standards are set by the agencies that have jurisdiction over the roadways within Morgan County. Each agency has its own specific standards and policies. The street classification and related design standards determine roadway construction. Street classification standards relate the design of a roadway to the function performed by that roadway. The functional class of a roadway is determined by its operational characteristics such as traffic volume, operating speed, safety, and capacity. Street standards are necessary to provide a community with roadways, which are appropriate for the intended use. Standards are based on experience, policies, and publications of the transportation industry. Within the generally accepted range of standards, communities have some flexibility in adopting specific design requirements to match the planned roadway with adjacent land uses

#### Functional Classification System

Different types of roadways serve different functions. The Functional Classification System (FCS) classifies streets and highways based on the level of access and mobility provided by the road to the overall transportation system. When the intended function of a roadway is to move significant volumes of traffic at a higher speed, limiting access becomes an important aspect of the roadway design. The

other end of the spectrum is when the function of a roadway is to provide ample access to adjoining property. In that case, it is desirable to have low speeds and frequent access points.

Currently there is no County-wide functional classification of roadways throughout Morgan County. Recent studies have referenced functional classification of Morgan County roadways by the Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT) and the Utah Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP). References to functional classes are made in various reports, though sometimes without a clear map showing the starting and stopping point of the road class.

**Recommended Road Classifications**

In order to specifically address County needs and provide uniform standards for new roads, the General Plan identifies four functional County roadway classifications for roads, as shown on Map 6, and four corresponding standard cross sections, as shown in Figure 2. Interstate 84 would be classified as a Major Arterial, but is not included in the County roadway classification scheme. Table 6 details the recommended roadway County functional classification standards.

**Table 6 - Recommended Roadway Classification standards**

Type	Right of Way	Pavement Width	# of Lanes
Residential Local Road	60'	34'	2
Rural Collector*	60'	36'	2
Village Collector*	80'	40'	3
Minor Arterial*	100'	60'	3-5

\*Table note: Arterial and collector streets may provide lanes and other facilities for bicyclists within the right of way where appropriate.

**Minor Arterial**

Minor Arterials are designed to serve the highest traffic volumes over the longest distances. As such,

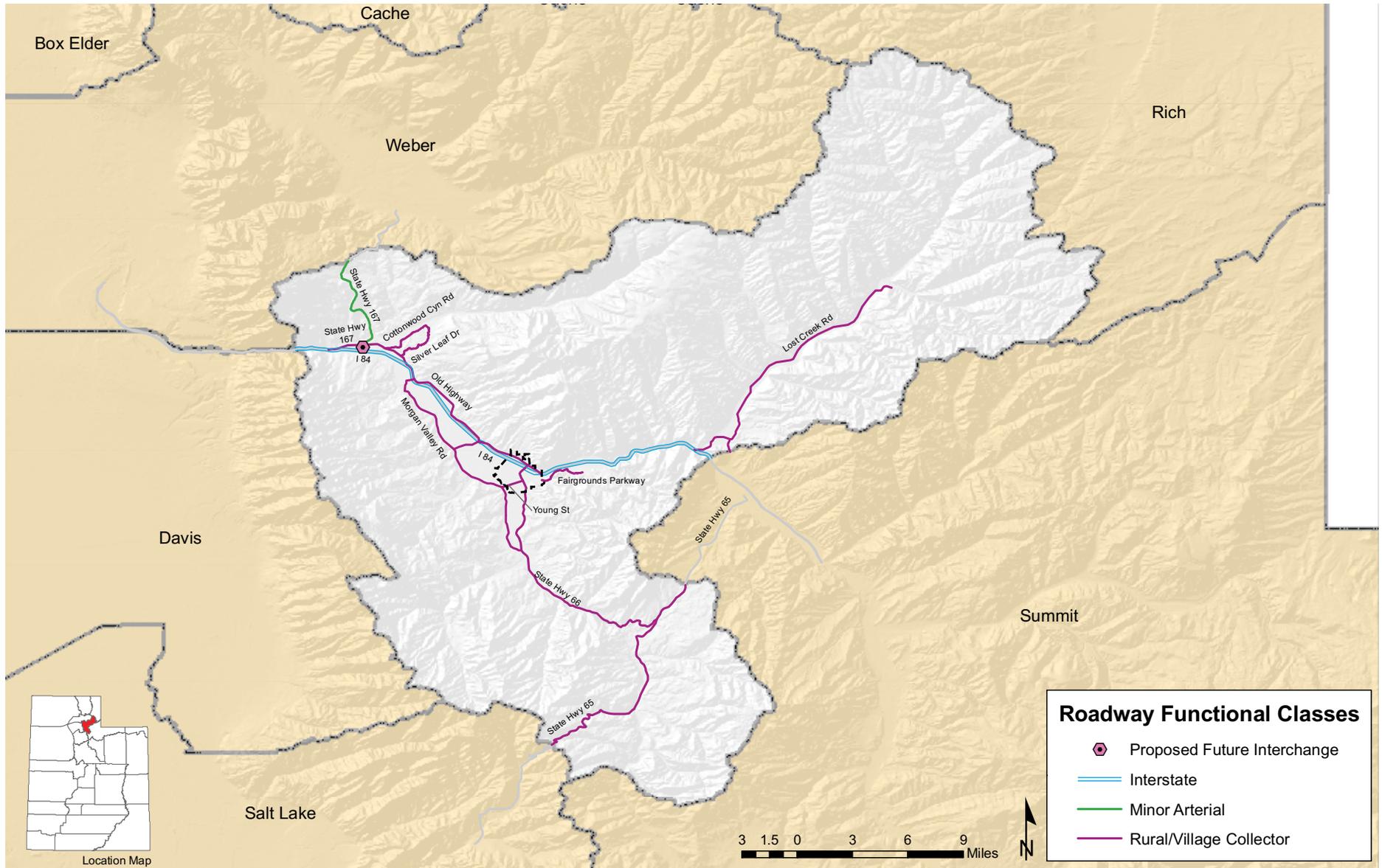
Minor Arterials have design features which promote sufficient vehicle speeds to allow for inter-County travel. Access points, particularly private driveways, are often controlled or minimized on higher speed roads, or are provided only with the addition of turn lanes. Minor Arterial streets generally serve trip lengths exceeding five miles and are often valuable to connect cities within the County. Due to the generally sparse network of major streets in Morgan County, UDOT-defined differences between Major and Minor Arterials are likely semantic, and related to UDOT’s reporting requirements to Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). However, from a functional standpoint, Morgan County must continue to work with UDOT to promote street design standards on Minor Arterials, and to adjust classifications as per Morgan County plans. Trapper’s Loop is the only currently designated Minor Arterial in the County.

**Village Collector**

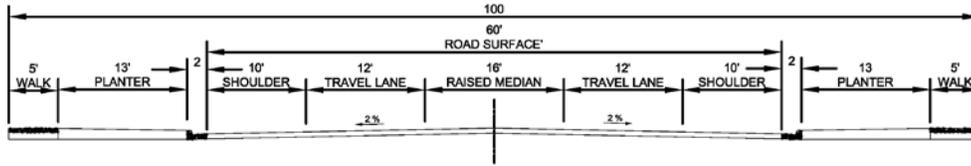
Collector streets provide for movement primarily within the County, and incorporate some levels of access control and design to allow for through traffic. A dense pattern of collector streets allows for arterial streets to be unimpeded with access points, thereby improving safety and traffic capacity on higher functioning roads. Village Collector streets are used where there is need for on-street parking and left-turn lanes at intersections. In areas of dense development, Village Collector streets should be provided to serve commercial development in ways which minimizes direct access onto arterials. Village Collector streets may or may not be State Highways, and may carry traffic volumes exceeding 5,000 vehicles per day over short segments, or areas of significant activity.

**Rural Collector**

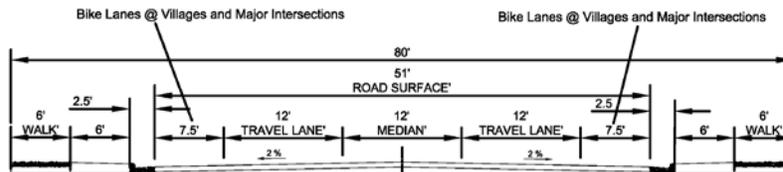
Rural Collector streets connect village communities and maintain a rural feel. The rural feel is obtained typically by not including curb, gutter, or sidewalks along the road, and by allowing direct residential and other access onto the roadway, due to the lack of secondary local



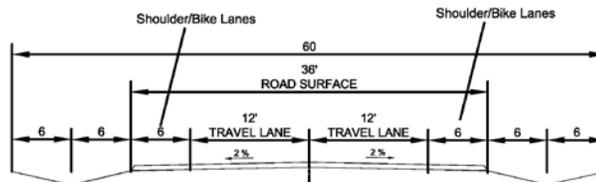
Map 6 - Roadway Functional Classification



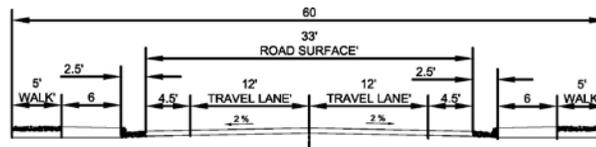
**MINOR ARTERIAL (100' ROW) - 3 to 5 Lanes**  
**Pavement Width = 60'**



**When Approaching Intersections**  
**VILLAGE - COLLECTOR (80' ROW) - 3 Lanes**  
**Pavement Width = 40'**



**RURAL - COLLECTOR (60' ROW) - 2 Lanes**  
**Pavement Width = 36'**



**RESIDENTIAL LOCAL ROAD (60' ROW) - 2 Lanes**  
**Pavement Width = 34'**

*Figure 2 - Typical Roadway Cross-Sections*

roads in the area. These roadways carry traffic volumes exceeding 1,000 vehicles per day.

### **Residential Local Road**

Residential Local Roads are not specifically designated on the General Plan Transportation Element maps, because they are not a part of the County's Capital Improvements Program (CIP). The specific design and layout of Local Roads will be determined on a case-by-case basis as development applications are received, and they will generally be provided by the project developer. Local Roads include all streets without a "higher" functional designation. Local Roads serve to connect individual properties to the larger street system. In general, Local Roads serve low traffic volumes, typically below 2,000 vehicles per day, at relatively low speeds (less than 30 mph), with one lane in each direction. Local Roads are typically controlled with stop and yield signs. In order to develop an efficient transportation system, dead-end or cul-de-sac Local Roads will be discouraged in favor of a network of streets with multiple points of entry and exit. Local road connections and stubbed streets should be required in all new subdivisions.

### **Access Management**

Access management programs seek to limit and consolidate access along major roadways, while promoting a supporting street system and unified access and circulation systems for development. The result is a roadway system that functions safely and efficiently for its useful life and creates a more attractive corridor. The goals of access management are accomplished by applying the following principles:

#### *Limit direct access to major roadways -*

Roadways that serve higher volumes of regional through traffic need more access control to preserve their traffic function. Frequent and direct property access is more compatible with the function of local and collector roadways.

*Locate signals and major intersections to favor through movements -* Long, uniform spacing of intersections and signals on major roadways enhances the ability to coordinate signals, ensure uniform travel speeds, and to ensure continuous movement of traffic at the desired speed. Failure to carefully locate access connections or median openings that later become signalized can cause substantial increases in arterial travel times. In addition, poor signal placement may lead to delays that cannot be overcome by computerized signal timing systems.

*Preserve the functional area of intersections and interchanges -* The functional area of an intersection or interchange is the area that is critical to its safe and efficient operation. This is the area where motorists are responding to the intersection or interchange, decelerating, and maneuvering into the appropriate lane to stop or complete a turn. Access connections too close to intersections or interchange ramps can cause serious traffic conflicts that result in crashes and congestion.

*Limit the number and separate conflict points -* Drivers make more mistakes and are more likely to have collisions when they are presented with the complex driving situations created by numerous conflict points. Conversely, simplifying the driving task contributes to improved traffic operations and fewer collisions. A less complex driving environment is accomplished by limiting the number and type of conflicts between vehicles, vehicles and pedestrians, and vehicles and bicyclists.

UDOT presently administers access management on State Highways. State roads in Morgan County are designated according to Administrative Rule R930-6 which includes nine general access management

categories, including three which are applicable to Morgan County; Category 2 S-R, System Priority Rural; Category 4 R-R, Regional Rural; and Category 7 C-R, Community Rural. These categories specify the distances between intersections and other roadway access points, and establish other design criteria to maintain the function and safety of County roads.

Old Highway Road, Morgan Valley Road and other Country roads are not state routes, and therefore do not have access management categories assigned. This General Plan adopts access management classifications for non-state roads in the County, as shown on Map 7.

### **Proposed Mountain Green Interchange**

There have been various discussions and feasibility reports regarding the possibility of a new interchange along I-84 at Mountain Green that would connect directly with Highway 167 (Trappers Loop). The continued development of Snow Basin Resort and development in the Ogden Valley are resulting in increased traffic on Trapper's Loop. The County's Future Land Use Map shows the proposed interchanges in Map 5, Sheet 2, the Mountain Green area detail map, and proposes land uses in the area of the interchange to support town center development plans. The County road classification for the Trapper's Loop road is Minor Arterial, with a one hundred foot right of way. For the Trapper's Loop/I-84 connection to be made, land between the current intersection and I-84 would need to be acquired. This will require the cooperation of UDOT and land owners, within and without Morgan County.

### **Airport**

Airports constitute a major asset in a growing local economy, serve as a catalyst for private sector enterprises, provide access to smaller population centers, and are used for emergency air medical operations, business, recreational, and personal flying activities. To protect the airspace around the airport and approaches to each runway from hazards that could affect the safe and efficient operation of aircraft arriving and departing, Federal Aviation Regulations (FAR) Part 77 are used as a guideline

in establishing regulations pertaining to potential hazards. This Element includes goals, objectives, policies and standards related to airport planning.

The airport is located within the Mountain Green area, near some existing light industrial uses. An Airport Overlay Zone is in place to protect airspace in accordance with FAA regulations.

### **Goods Movement (Truck and Rail)**

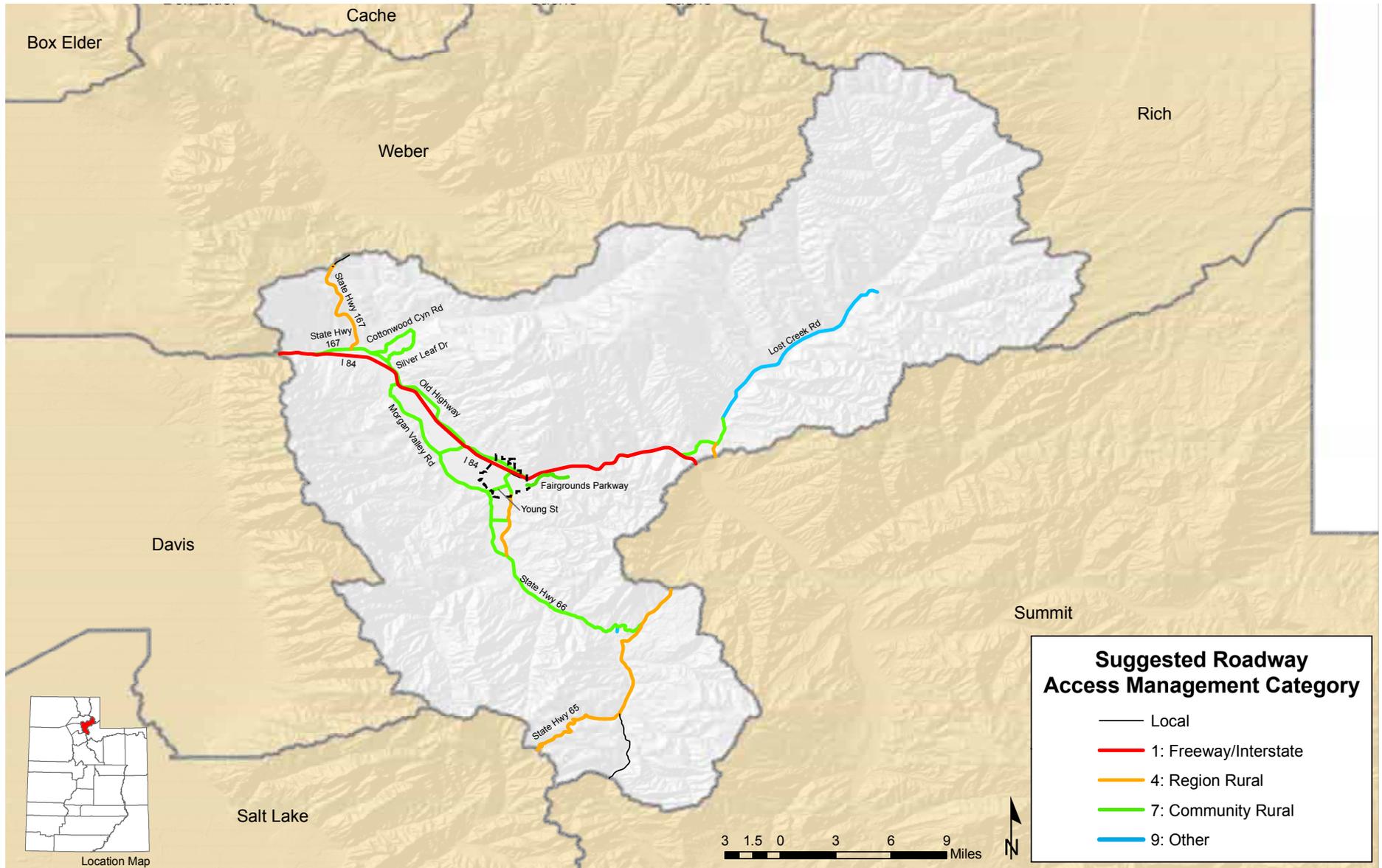
Currently there is one major freight rail line that runs through Morgan County following the Weber River and I-84. This rail line allows industries access to bulk commodity transport to and from the area. Rail also has the potential to decrease truck traffic through the area, increasing the life expectancy of the road network. There is a rail spur to the cement plant near Croydon, but no other sidings or rail stops in the County. There are three at-grade railroad crossings in Morgan County and they are shown on Map 8.

### **Bicycle, Pedestrian and Equestrian Facilities**

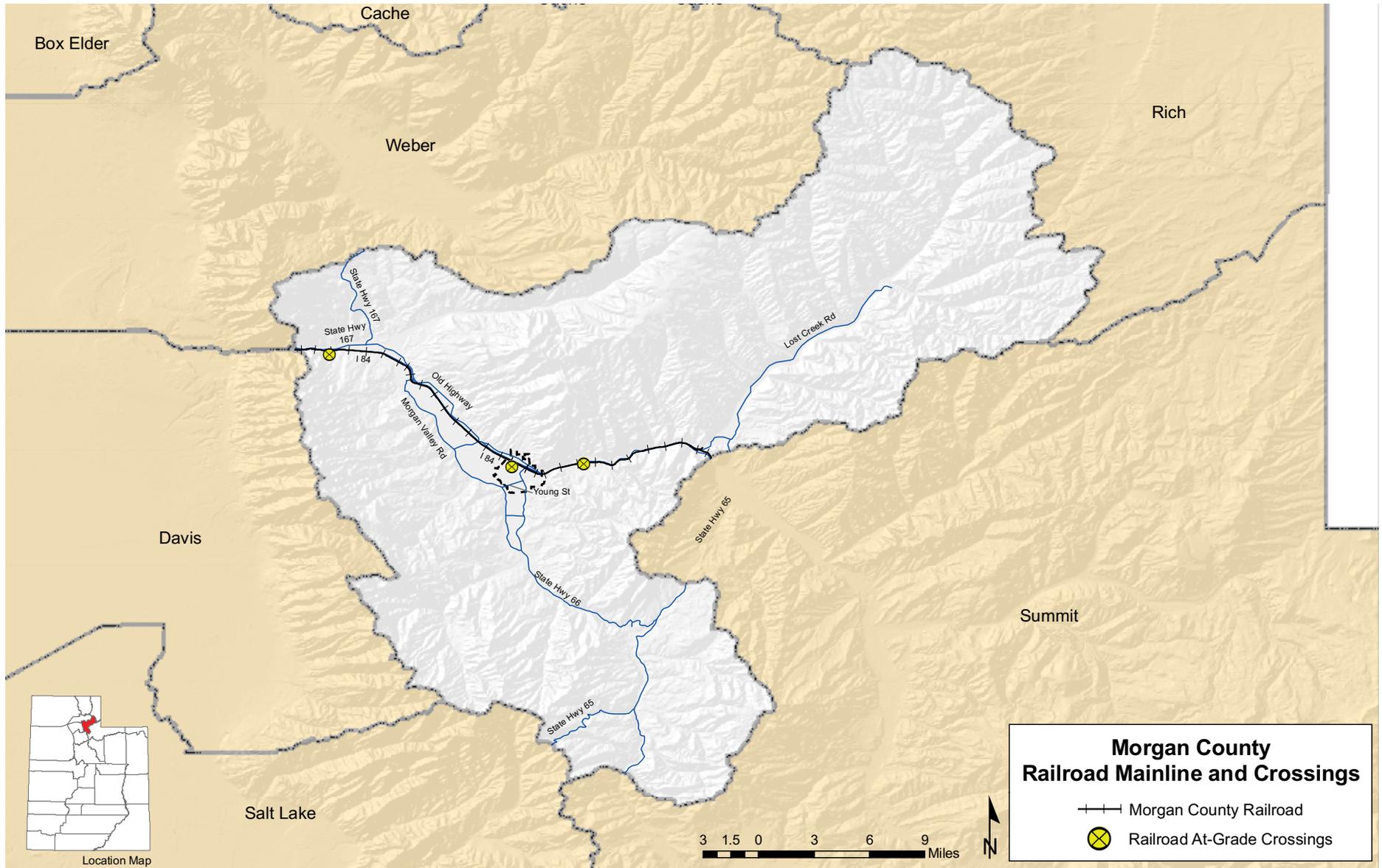
As development in the County continues, the demand for pedestrian and bicycle transportation facilities will grow. There are sections within the Morgan County road network where sidewalk and wider roadways are available for pedestrians and bicycles, and newer subdivision developments are installing sidewalks next to the roadways. These types of improvements have provided a benefit for the pedestrian traffic within development areas.

### **Livestock Driveways**

Farmers and ranchers in Morgan County have historically used local and County roads to drive livestock to and from pastures, transportation hubs and other destinations within the County. Traditional livestock driveways are an integral part of the County transportation system, and periodic use of public roads for livestock movement will continue into the foreseeable future. As for other non-motorized transportation in Morgan County, provision must be made for continued use of public ways for livestock movement in a coordinated manner with other roadway uses.



Map 7 - Access Management Categories



Map 8 - Railroad Features

### *Bicycling*

Bicycles are permitted on all roadways within the County, except where legally prohibited. Many of the Morgan County Area Plans state that there should be more effort in establishing bicycle, pedestrian, and equestrian facilities. In addition to increasing local bicycle traffic on County roads as the population of the County grows, many recreational bicycle riders come to Morgan Valley as a destination to ride. Trapper's Loop, Old Highway, Morgan Valley Road, Highway 66 and Big Mountain Pass are frequently used regional bike routes, although road shoulders are narrow. Currently used County bike routes are shown on Map 9.

Improvements to enhance safety for both bicyclists and motorists should be given consideration during the planning and construction of new roadways. Opportunities to include bicycle facilities such as signage, bike paths, bike lane striping and wider shoulders in conjunction with new roadway projects or ongoing maintenance, should be explored whenever technically, environmentally, and financially feasible.

### *Trails*

An integral part of decision making regarding area improvements should be the interconnectivity of pedestrian and equestrian trails within Morgan County. In order to provide for better quality of life for all of those living in Morgan County, trails should be accessible to a variety of users and should incorporate American with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements where appropriate. The trails system, as they are planned, designed, and constructed, may have variations in design due to differing planned uses and differences in the terrain.

Trail uses may include pedestrian circulation internal to residential and mixed-use projects; equestrian trails; multi-use trails to scenic and recreational destinations; or off-road bicycle paths to allow for non-motorized transportation within the County. Applicable trail design standards published by such organizations as the American

Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) should be followed, and guidelines for appropriate signage of the trails system should also be established.

### *Pedestrian Ways*

Sidewalks in residential areas should be at least 5 feet wide. This will provide adequate room and a level of comfort to persons walking in pairs or passing and will specifically allow for persons with strollers or in wheelchairs to pass. On major roadways, sidewalks at least 6 feet wide and with a 6 to 10-foot park strip to provide a snow storage area and buffer to higher speed traffic are appropriate. In pedestrian-focused areas such as in the vicinity of schools, parks, sports venues or theaters, and in hotel and market districts, even wider sidewalks are desirable to accommodate and encourage larger levels of pedestrian activity. As sidewalks are planned and placed throughout the county, the Utah Department of Transportation's (UDOT) approved standard for sidewalks should be adhered to. This will ensure consistency throughout Morgan County.

### **Road Impact Fees**

Morgan County has maintained a policy that new development should pay for itself, and that the costs of development-related impacts should be borne by the developer. In order to ensure that the transportation impacts of development are borne by the development community, the County adopted a transportation impact fee in 2006. This fee should be re-evaluated as a result of this new planning effort, current growth projections for the County, and changes in Utah law regarding impact fees. Impact fees cannot be used for operation and maintenance costs, or to fix existing deficiencies not caused by new growth.

### **Goals, Objectives, and Policies**

**Goal 1:** The existing county roadway system should be maintained and managed, and expansions should be made only to provide for orderly growth and meet compelling public interest needs.



**Objective 1:** Keep County roadway systems at a minimum to maintain the rural character of the County and protect taxpayers from additional costly road maintenance, construction and reconstruction.

**Policies:**

1. The County will not accept responsibility to maintain new road infrastructure unless it finds a compelling public interest to accept dedication of the road. Examples of a compelling public interest to add to the existing County road system would be to move people and goods safely and efficiently throughout the County, or to provide access to land designated for development by the General Plan.
2. Development applications (re-zoning or subdivision) should be accompanied by a traffic impact analysis to determine the project impact on existing roads, and to project the need for additional new road, trail and other transportation infrastructure, as required. Methods to manage and fund mitigation of those impacts will be a part of the analysis.

**Objective 2:** Ensure that County roadways are designed and maintained to provide safe, efficient vehicular circulation.

**Policies:**

1. Discourage the flow of truck traffic through municipal/residential areas by providing a truck route program which will accommodate the needs of the commercial and industrial uses within the County.
2. Establish a Capital Improvements Program (CIP) which incorporates a capital improvements budget and plan for the construction of improvements to the County's roadway system. Specific improvement proposals should be determined for the entire community and all local benefit, cost, feasibility, and safety issues should be considered.
3. Seek alternative funding opportunities to provide adequate transportation and circulation improvements such as impact fees,

special assessment areas, redevelopment districts, and grants.

4. Limit the number of intersections and driveways on all major, secondary and limited access secondary state roadways to promote a safe, efficient and steady flow of traffic. Require new roads and development to meet County access management standards.
5. Require access to higher density land uses and commercial developments from major, secondary and limited access secondary roadways, and not from low density residential neighborhoods.
6. Establish hillside street design and construction standards that are sensitive to topographical constraints, necessary grade separations and other special needs.
7. Maximize use of all major, secondary and limited secondary roadways while minimizing use of all collectors and local streets. Protect residential neighborhoods from intrusion of undesirable through traffic.
8. Review design standards for roadway and intersection improvements to safely and efficiently accommodate existing and projected traffic patterns and circulation.

**Goal 2:** All new roads required by new development should be constructed to County standards.

**Goal 3:** The existing railroad line may serve as a possible mode of future regional transportation. Development patterns should facilitate future alternative transportation systems, if necessary.

**Objective 1:** Keep a close working relationship with the rail operators of Morgan County. At this time railroad use is limited to the Croydon area sidings. In the future there may be a need to return the historic sidings to Morgan City and other town centers for freight and/or passenger service.

**Goal 4:** Non-motorized transportation is an important alternative form of transportation and offers recreational opportunities, and should be made available in Morgan County.

**Objective 1:** Establish bicycle routes to improve bicyclist and motorist safety, and offer an

alternative mode of transportation between and within Morgan County communities.

**Objective 2:** Perform a ride-ability audit of proposed bicycle routes for safety and accessibility, including sight distance checks for clear zones at driveways and intersections, road hazards such as potholes and grates, signage, and cooperation with UDOT to help enhance the safety of bicycle routes.

**Objective 3:** Trail systems are an important alternative form of transportation and provide for recreational opportunities, and may be appropriate within future master planned communities and developing areas such as Mountain Green.

**Policies:**

1. All future major residential and mixed-use developments should be planned with trail systems. All new development will conduct pedestrian impact analysis studies and design and construct trail infrastructure to meet those needs.
2. All future road construction and re-construction projects should take bicycle safety and accessibility into account, and should provide for bicycle routes where appropriate.

**Objective 4:** Provisions should be made for the continuing use of County roadways as livestock driveways in a safe manner.

**Objective 5:** Support development of a commercial helipad at the County airport.

## Public Facilities Element

### Introduction and Purpose

Public facilities and services are required to support a community's basic needs for fire protection, flood and pollution control, law enforcement, and emergency response and management. By allocating resources appropriately and adopting effective plans and ordinances, the County can promote an effective level of services to satisfy these needs. Collaborative efforts with

other agencies, organizations, and community groups also contribute to the safety of residents and visitors.

Morgan County residents support development within or proximate to Morgan City and the County's villages. This model can reduce the cost of new development while leveraging greater value from the community's investment in existing infrastructure and reducing maintenance costs.

The Public Facilities element presents goals and policies for County services. The goals and policies presented in this element are designed to ensure that the County plans for adequate services and facilities, either during the land development process or through appropriate government programs.

### Strategic Areas

#### Establishing Appropriate Levels of Service

Standards for service provision are valuable tools for measuring and monitoring the effectiveness of service and for assessing how well services are provided. Establishing service level standards that are appropriate can also help the County make short- and long-term budget and facilities planning decisions.

#### Providing Appropriate Levels of Service

Demands for services tend to exceed most jurisdictions' resources. Morgan County does not have the resources to immediately satisfy all of the service demands of its residents. The County should adopt service provision standards that are realistic in light of available public resources. The provision of services and means for payment of services should be balanced, so that County residents provide support for services in levels proportionate to the services requested and received.

#### Water

In Utah, water is appropriated by water users as approved by the Utah State Engineer. This

results in virtual “ownership” of the waters of the State by the appropriators, subject to statutes and rules governing its use. The “ownership” of water is referred to as a “water right”, and may be represented by a deed, a certificate of appropriation, a share of stock in an irrigation company, or other means. Ownership of a water right entitles the owner to take water from an approved surface or underground water source (a “point of diversion”) and put it to a “beneficial use” such as irrigation or culinary use. Water rights are limited by the quantity of water that can be taken, the point of diversion from which they can be taken, and frequently, in the case of irrigation water, the time at which it can be taken.

While the science of developing groundwater wells is quite well understood, the actual quantity and quality of the water a new well will produce is not certain until the well has been drilled, completed and pump tested. This means that ownership of a water right (called “paper water” by some) for a certain quantity of water in an irrigation ditch, may not result in the production of an equivalent quantity of useable quality water (“wet water”) from a new well.

Although Morgan City and the Mountain Green Sewer District are on community sewer systems, most other development in Morgan Valley uses septic tank soil-absorption systems for wastewater disposal. These septic-tank systems are on valley-fill deposits that are a major drinking-water aquifer for the area. Preservation of groundwater quality and the potential for groundwater quality degradation are critical issues that should be considered in determining the extent and nature of future development in Morgan Valley. Local government officials in Morgan Valley have expressed concern about the potential impact that development may have on groundwater quality, particularly development that uses septic tank soil-absorption systems for wastewater disposal.

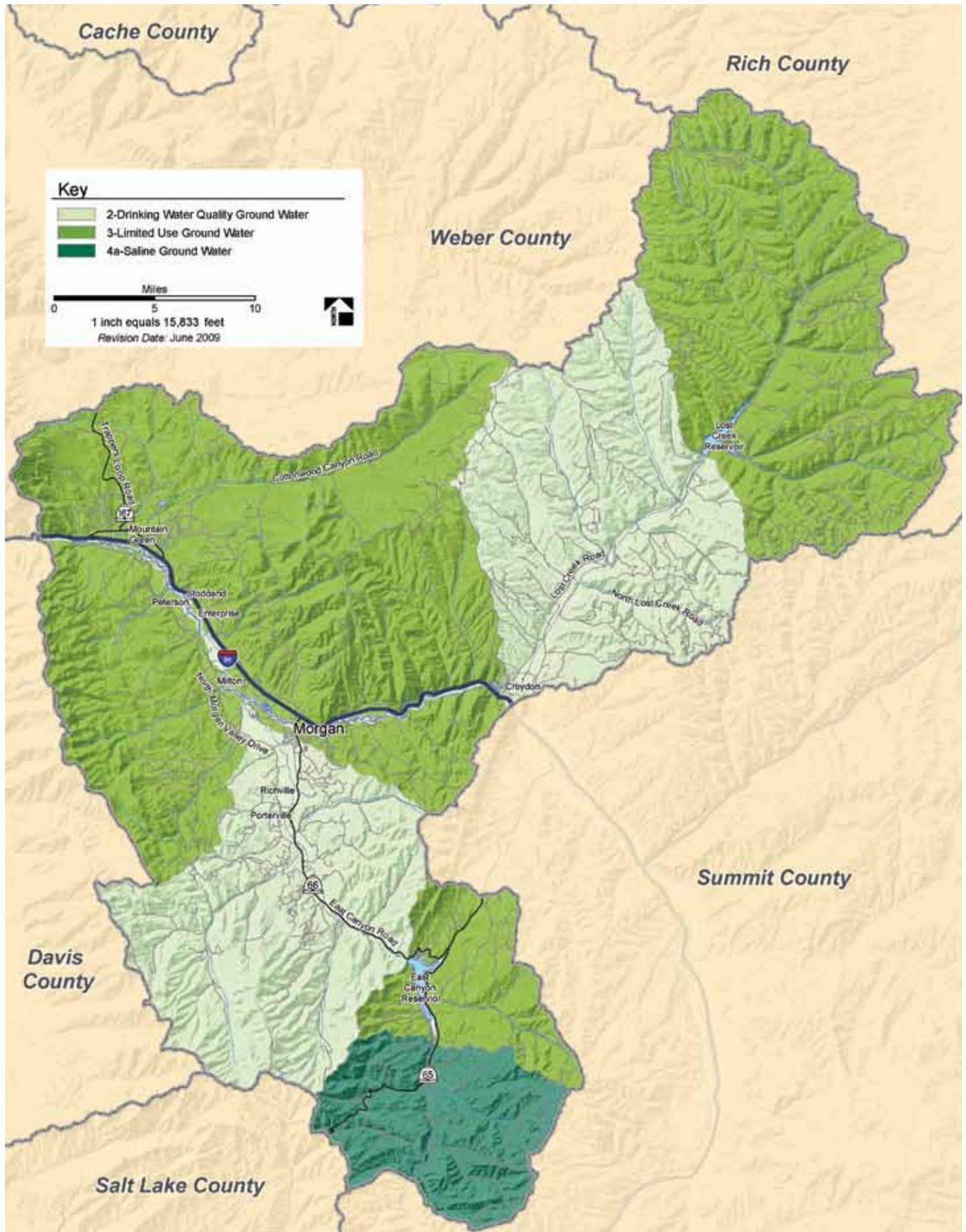
Valley-fill alluvium is the most important aquifer in the Morgan Valley area due to its permeability

and because it contains fresh water. Groundwater resources in Morgan Valley are developed by means of small-capacity wells for domestic use at farms and individual residences, and in large-capacity wells for public-supply and some industrial uses. Many wells are screened in both Quaternary alluvium and Cretaceous and Tertiary semi-consolidated rocks such as the Norwood Tuff and Wasatch Formation. Total groundwater discharge from wells and springs for public, domestic, and industrial use is estimated to be about 1200 acre-feet per year.

Groundwater quality in the Morgan Valley is generally good and is suitable for most uses. Under drinking-water and groundwater protection regulations, ground water is classified based largely on total-dissolved-solids (TDS) concentrations. Class IA and II water is considered suitable for drinking, provided concentrations of individual constituents do not exceed state and federal groundwater quality (health) standards. Class III water is generally suitable for drinking water only if treated, but can be used for some agricultural or industrial purposes without treatment.

A 2007 study by the Utah Geological Survey indicates that the valley-fill aquifer contains mostly high-quality groundwater resources that should be protected. Ninety-eight percent of the valley-fill area in Morgan Valley is classified as having Class IA ground water, and 2% is classified as having Class II ground water. Much of the groundwater outside the valley-fill aquifer area is of lower quality (Classes 3 and 4a) and is less suitable for drinking water purposes, as shown on Map 10.

Current and projected expansion of the population in Morgan County will require more water for culinary purposes, and groundwater is expected to be the primary source. Surface water can be treated to meet culinary standards, but the construction and operation of water treatment facilities is expensive. In the near term, the



Map 10 - Groundwater Quality

quality and availability of groundwater will influence both property values and opportunities for residential and economic development in the County.

Rules have been adopted regarding the protection of public drinking water sources. These rules require that each public drinking water supplier prepare a source protection plan. This plan must be reviewed and approved by the Utah Division of Drinking Water. Typically, a plan is developed after a hydrogeological evaluation is conducted for each source. The investigation determines what areas must be protected, and the extent of protection which is necessary. Within these protection zones, various activities or facilities may be restricted if they will jeopardize the purity of the drinking water source. Source protection requirements apply to both new and existing sources.

### **Emergency Services**

The County places a high priority on the rapid and effective identification of properties by public safety personnel and emergency response agencies.

### **Cost of Services**

Morgan County provides a portfolio of services:

- General County government administration
- Law enforcement (sheriff's department/courts/jails/probation)
- Fire protection
- Emergency Management and 911
- Elections
- Courts
- Planning, zoning, and development services
- Economic development
- Health services and public and indigent welfare services
- Motor vehicle registration
- Fairgrounds
- Road maintenance
- Snow removal
- Extension services

Each of these services is affected by population growth and development. The costs of development vary. Mathematical calculations, such as a set number of police officers per 1,000 residents, provide a fairly clear picture of need and associated costs. But many other growth impacts are less clear.

The County should have solid facilities plans in place that contain population and service-level triggers and anticipated costs of new facilities. This will assist in long-term financial planning and in the update and formulation of development fees and other revenue sources.

To make good financial decisions when evaluating the cost of a given development, the following three factors should be considered:

### **One-Time Costs**

Growth can trigger the need to develop expensive new public facilities such as roads, sewer and water, buildings, and parks. Counties are authorized to charge impact fees for the purpose of raising revenue for facilities required by new development. Impact fees are one-time charges on new development. Impact fees are a type of exaction, and are specifically authorized by Utah Annotated Code Sections 11-36-101, et seq. Impact fees are only authorized to raise revenue for the following "capital facilities:"

- Water rights and water supply or distribution systems;
- Waste water collection and treatment facilities;
- Storm water, drainage, or flood control facilities;
- Municipal power facilities;
- Roads;
- Parks, trails, open space, and recreational facilities; and
- Police and Fire Facilities (including certain types of fire-fighting equipment).

Based on level of service standards the County adopts, the need and timing of expenditures for new facilities can be anticipated, and financing

mechanisms implemented accordingly. However, most of these facilities will have significant ongoing maintenance and operating costs that cannot be covered by the one-time fees or additional taxes and fees collected from new development.

**Maintenance and Operating Costs of New Facilities**

Upkeep and operation of facilities must be financed by increased ongoing revenue streams. The County’s revenue-generating policies need to identify from where these new funds should come.

**Expanded Existing Services**

Growth will require the expansion of existing services, including more firefighters and Sheriff’s officers and equipment; expanded maintenance staffing; more buildings, vehicles, and equipment; and additional administrative staffing. Also, expanding the areas where these services will need to be provided can have significant financial impacts. The County must ask itself whether the increase in revenues (for example, property tax, sales tax) generated by new developments will be enough to pay for the expanded services?

The County must also attempt to anticipate new public services that may be desired. As people move from cities and towns or other parts of the country where more services are provided, Morgan County could be confronted with the public’s desire to add to its service portfolio.

**Goals, Objectives, and Policies**

**Goal 1:** Provide public facilities and services to meet the need of current and future residents.

**Objective 1:** Plan for future public facilities and services.

**Policies:**

1. Develop and adopt master plans for County utilities, services, and facilities.
2. Determine the appropriate level of service for County services.

3. Adopt and regularly update a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).
4. Coordinate with other jurisdictions (such as Morgan City, school districts, special districts, state and federal agencies) to identify opportunities for joint uses that will improve the quality and/or efficiency of public service provision.
5. Discourage the construction of new infrastructure that would allow growth beyond existing plans and/or infrastructure.
6. Update impact fee analysis and fee schedules.

**Objective 2:** Ensure emergency services and response to meet residents’ needs.

**Policies:**

1. Define an appropriate level of emergency support that can be provided by the County.
2. The availability of adequate emergency services and emergency access routes shall be considered in the review of developments and subdivisions.
3. Require an emergency response mitigation plan for development projects located in remote areas without nearby emergency medical services.
4. Provide emergency medical services, police and fire, appropriate to meet the needs of all residents.
5. Continue to support 911 services, providing regular updates of address information for new developments.
6. Encourage the use of geographical information systems which are the basis for accurate addressing and residence locations.

**Objective 3:** Provide for fire protection and safety.

**Policies:**

1. Define an appropriate level of fire and safety support that can be provided by the County.
2. Development projects shall include adequate fire and police protection measures, as determined by the County Council with input from the local fire district, appropriate fire management agencies and the Sheriff’s office.

3. Encourage property owners to use Firewise construction and landscape design elements, to maintain defensible space, and to seek technical assistance from the County and their local fire district for fuels mitigation and fire prevention measures. Encourage the fire chiefs to update the County’s wildland urban interface to reflect the unique circumstances in Morgan County.
4. Commercial and industrial development projects shall identify all potentially hazardous or toxic materials expected to be used, stored, or produced by the development, and detailed plans shall be submitted regarding the use, storage, transportation, and disposal of such materials before considering approval of the project.
5. Development projects shall acknowledge existing conditions or hazards that may pose a threat to residents—such as proximity to physical hazards—and should mitigate such threats through appropriate site planning, buffering, and other physical design approaches.

**Goal 2:** To protect the long-term culinary water supply for Morgan County.

**Objective 1:** Ensure that all new development has an adequate water supply.

**Policies:**

1. Require that developments in unincorporated areas demonstrate physical availability of culinary water before approving an application for rezoning or a subdivision plat.
2. Require water availability disclosures as a note on subdivision plats.
3. Require water line connections when a culinary water line is reasonably available.
4. Support development of additional private secondary water systems in villages throughout the County.

**Objective 2:** Maintain water quality.

**Policies:**

1. Encourage land use regulations that help preserve culinary and secondary water supplies.

2. Adopt and implement erosion control standards for new development.
3. Identify watersheds and water source areas, and adopt a water resource protection ordinance.

**Objective 3:** Encourage conservation of water resources.

**Policies:**

1. Develop a water conservation program.
2. Apply for federal and/or state grants to support the implementation of a water conservation program.
3. Consider adopting landscape standards requiring the use of water-wise landscaping.
4. Encourage new wastewater treatment facilities to implement a program for the direct reuse by turf, industry, and agriculture and for underground storage (either direct or indirect recharge) of reclaimed water within Morgan County.
5. Protect floodplains from development which would reduce water absorption areas.

**Objective 4:** Reduce dependence on individual septic tanks.

**Policies:**

1. Encourage new developments of more than four lots to provide community septic or other disposal systems.
2. Require sewer connections when a sewer line is reasonably available.
3. Support development of centralized sewer systems.

**Goal 3:** Maintain long-term financial sustainability for Morgan County.

**Objective 1:** Maintain a sound financial-planning process to support equitable funding of facilities and services.

**Policies:**

1. Consider logistics (for example, distance from current service areas, accessibility) when reviewing development proposals to evaluate their actual costs of service provisions.

2. Invest in long-range planning to anticipate and quantify future funding needs.
3. Conduct periodic service-fee evaluations to determine whether fees are commensurate with the costs of services that the County provides.
4. Identify and pursue public-private funding opportunities to supplement County expenditures.
5. Require new development to provide adequate infrastructure and services, including, but not limited to water, sewer, roads, and emergency services.
6. Require the use of alternative funding sources for infrastructure, including but not limited to special assessment areas, special service districts, and improvement districts.
7. Explore grants and other alternative funding opportunities to provide the necessary financial resources.

## Parks and Recreation

### Introduction and Purpose

Morgan County's outstanding scenery and healthy natural environment provide diverse recreational opportunities. These amenities also factor strongly into its economy and quality of life. As the County's population increases, there will be a growing need for open space and recreational opportunities.

The County vision includes offering a variety of recreational opportunities throughout the County. Therefore, we must not only preserve open spaces but also protect important natural areas and provide stewardship for them. We envision a highly integrated system of active and passive recreational opportunities, including a community-based network of parks and recreational facilities and Countywide open spaces and critical natural areas.

Improved parks and recreational facilities are the province of the County's individual communities. The General Plan addresses parks and recreation by establishing policies that focus on providing recreational access to open areas by a number

of means—including a trail system that links communities, public lands, and activity centers—and policies that allow off-highway vehicle (OHV) use on designated routes but discourage such use where impacts on natural and cultural resources could be significant. The policies in the Parks and Open Space element strive to balance the need for providing diverse recreational opportunities with the desire to preserve the County's scenic character.

### Strategic Areas

#### Parks

The County currently maintains a number of small parks located in village areas. Funding for continued maintenance of existing parks and the construction of new parks is limited. Increased funding for additional maintenance of existing parks is needed, as is funding for the expansion of existing parks and development of new parks to meet the needs of County residents.

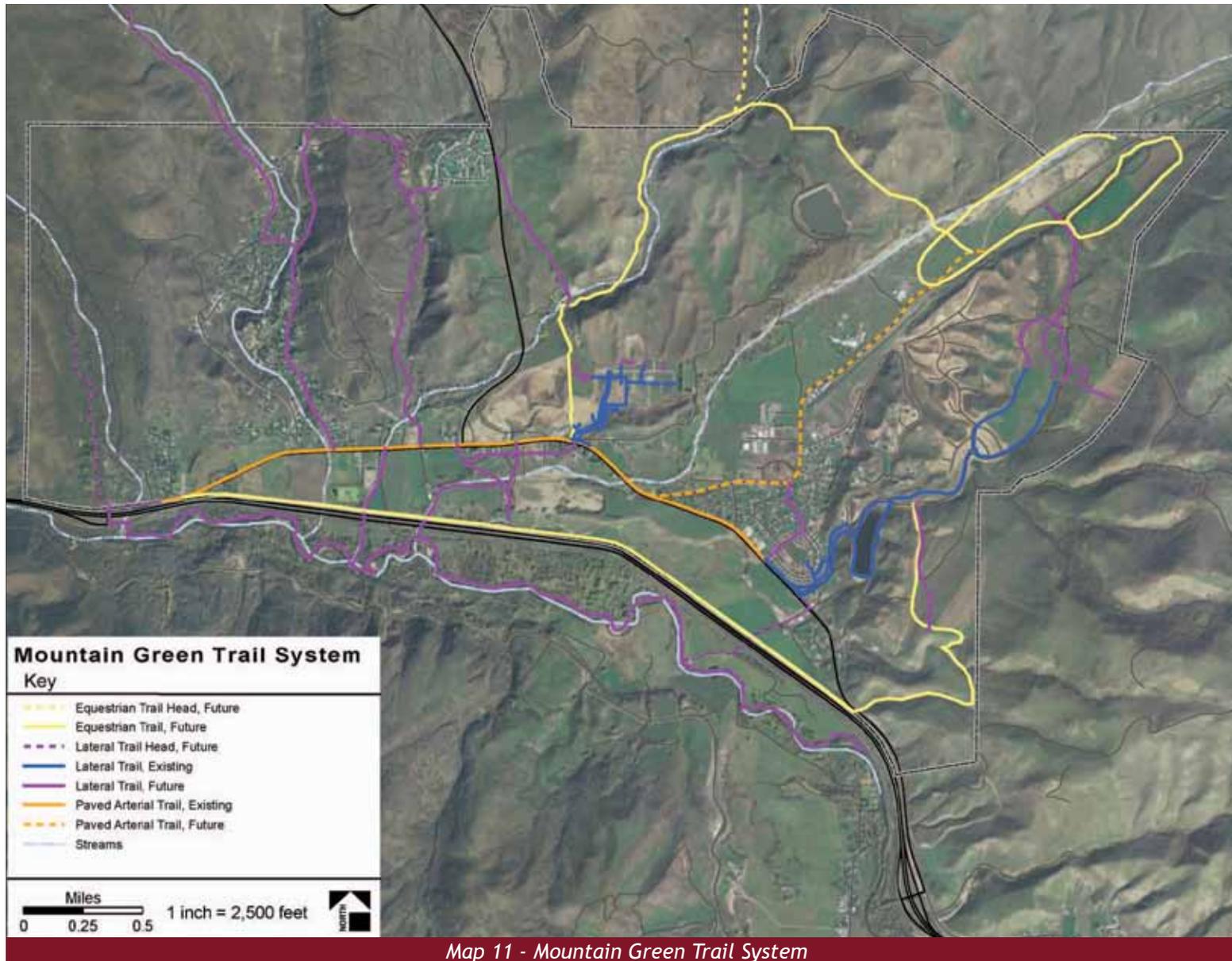
#### Trails

Trails connect people to parks, natural areas, open space, neighborhoods, schools, shopping, and work. Popular for recreation, exercise, and commuting, trails are used by walkers, equestrians, hikers, backpackers, runners, birdwatchers, bicyclists, and OHV riders. Morgan County supports the creation and use of trails in and around communities, between communities, and on open public lands in the County.

Currently, the only proposed trail system is in Mountain Green and Peterson (see Map 11). The only current developed public trails in the County are in Mountain Green and Morgan City.

#### Open Space

Open space means different things to different people. Morgan County enjoys an abundance of open areas, some in active agricultural operations, some in riparian areas and high-value wildlife habitat, some in expanses of grass- and brush-lands, and some in mountain forests. The visual open space provided by agricultural fields and open grass and shrub lands generally require no special



protections or management prescriptions beyond good land stewardship on the part of land owners and managers. High-value habitat and recreational open spaces, however, generally do require special designations and management programs. With exceptional features like Weber River, Lost Creek Reservoir, and Snowbasin, Morgan County has a high visitation rate for outdoor recreation. Outdoor recreation has become increasingly popular, but can also have significant impacts on natural resources. The County should work with local residents, scientists, and conservationists to identify lands with the most significant habitat and other natural resource values, and develop management plans to protect them.

### Goals, Objectives, and Policies

**Goal 1:** Develop a system of natural open space areas that protect and conserve natural, physical, and social resources.

**Objective 1:** Identify, protect and conserve high value wildlife habitat and recreational open space areas.

#### Policies:

1. Adopt an open space plan that identifies prime lands for conservation and develops strategies for the acquisition and long-term maintenance of these lands.
2. Support private land managers, management agencies, and citizen groups in their efforts to coordinate planning and maintenance of recreational opportunities that minimize adverse impacts to natural systems and residential areas.
3. Promote the protection of important natural resources through collaboration in acquiring, managing, and interpreting natural areas.
4. Explore implementation of flexible zoning techniques that promote open space preservation.
5. Encourage density transitions to separate rural from urbanized areas and to buffer preserve areas from urbanized areas.
6. Seek opportunities for easements, dedications, joint-use agreements, or other

appropriate methods with other public agencies, jurisdictions, and private property owners.

7. Support the viability of agricultural operations as a means of long-term maintenance of working open spaces.
8. Provide and protect existing and future access to the Weber River and public lands.

**Goal 2:** Improve the quality, quantity and design of open space, park lands and trails.

**Objective 1:** Develop guidelines to meet the park land and facility demands for neighborhood and community parks created by new development.

#### Policies:

1. Adopt a Parks, Recreation and Trails master plan.
2. Require developers to meet the park land and facility demands for neighborhood and community parks created by new development through impact fees and master planned communities.
3. Develop standards and development criteria for integration of park land, open space and trails into new residential development.
4. Develop standards for construction and maintenance of parks and trails to ensure long term usability.
5. Encourage the development of increased year-round recreational opportunities.

**Goal 3:** Develop a safe, multi-use trail system that provides connectivity throughout the County and to recreational areas.

**Objective 1:** Provide for a wide range of non-motorized and motorized trail uses including hiking, equestrian, mountain biking, and off-highway vehicles.

#### Policies:

1. Provide for multiuse path and trail corridors for connectivity throughout the County.
2. Provide for a safe separation of non-motorized and motorized trail networks and corridors.

3. Develop paved and unpaved trail standards for village and rural environments.
4. Provide for public access to all trails by coordinating with local, state, and federal agencies and private developers to ensure that appropriate public trail connections and access points are planned, constructed, and maintained.
5. Encourage and promote the benefits of volunteer labor and material donations for trail development and maintenance.

## Environment, Natural Resources and Historic Preservation

### Introduction and Purpose

Morgan County residents take pride in the natural environment. Maintaining healthy natural systems is an investment in our future that supports our quality of life, helps to maintain property values, and promotes economic development. Residents want to protect the environment and acknowledge the need to balance competing interests.

This element provides guidance on how to maintain the environmental integrity of Morgan County while continuing to grow in a way that is compatible with the County's values and vision. The quality of the natural environment will influence the character of a community as well as property values and economic development.

### Strategic Areas

This element characterizes components of the environment, recognizing that each component plays an important role in the long-term viability of Morgan County and the quality of life of its residents. To develop a sustainable community, these elements need to be considered together, reflecting local and regional opportunities, to advance environmental stewardship across boundaries.

### Environmentally Sensitive Areas

Environmentally sensitive areas are natural features and resources that are relatively rare,

especially valuable, or vulnerable to negative impacts. While Morgan County has not developed formal criteria or designated specific areas, floodplains, riparian areas, wetlands, subsidence, liquefaction, and fissure zones, steep slopes, and critical wildlife linkage zones can be considered environmentally sensitive areas. These areas can serve as habitats for rare and endangered plant and animal species, be instrumental in groundwater recharge, or serve as flood control to protect developed areas. In many cases, relatively small disturbances can lead to negative environmental impacts. Environmentally sensitive areas require special consideration during design development processes.

### Floodplains

Portions of the County are located within floodplains designated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Areas with the potential to flood require special consideration during the design development process. Floods are unpredictable and understanding the nature of potential flood hazards, such as floodwater levels and events, are fundamental in planning development in or near a floodplain. If development is proposed in or around a flood hazard area, the floodplain can be engineered to minimize hazards to people and property.

### Riparian Areas and Wetlands

The habitat zones found immediately adjacent to streams and rivers are called riparian areas. Riparian areas encompass not only the bed or channel of the water body but the surrounding banks, bars, ponded waters, and floodplain surfaces. In general terms, wetlands are lands on which water is present at or near the surface during significant portions of the year. Wetlands support valuable plant and animal habitat, can improve water quality, and also serve important hydrologic functions.

Riparian habitat and wetland areas depend on water supplied by the rivers and lakes they line. As water supplies change in quantity and quality, the natural state of these areas constantly evolves.

## Geologic Hazards

Steep slopes and ridgelines can also be environmentally sensitive. Generally, they are found in the mountainous areas within Morgan County. Slopes greater than 25 percent are considered unsuitable for development because such steep slopes are prone to soil erosion and landslides. Development on these slopes can involve extensive cutting and filling, which damages the slope characteristics, affects the slope stability, and creates significant visual scars.

Several areas of geologic instability have been identified throughout the County. The Utah Geological Survey has prepared several site-specific landslide investigations that documented damage to private and public structures. The General Plan discourages development in geologically unstable areas in order to avoid property damage and risks to public safety.

## Habitat Areas

Several federal agencies share the responsibility of protecting threatened and endangered species and their habitats and restoring these species to a secure status. Preserving critical habitat areas is an important part of this mission. Fragmentation of wildlife habitat and linkages can threaten a species survival, isolating wildlife populations and disrupting ecological functions.

## Cultural Resources

Cultural resources are the finite, nonrenewable remains of our prehistoric and historic past. They reflect our traditional and cultural heritage. Cultural resources include archaeological sites, historic buildings, historic structures, shrines, monuments, trails, rock circles, historic roadways, and other cultural objects. Cultural resources are extremely valuable for scientific, historical, and environmental research, and as educational opportunities. Cultural resources are also a tremendous asset for expanding the tourism industry.

## Goals, Objectives, and Policies

**Goal 1:** Include environmental stewardship as part of all decisions.

**Objective 1:** Promote ecologically responsible development patterns within Morgan County.

### Policies:

1. Adopt regulations for development in environmentally sensitive lands.
2. Require the avoidance or mitigation of environmental hazards such as flooding, landslides, and subsidence or fissure zones as part of the development review process.
3. Minimize the fragmentation of wildlife habitat and support efforts to maintain or restore connectivity among habitats.
4. Consider conserving contiguous open space on lands that are environmentally sensitive due to geological instability, steep slopes, floodplains, watersheds, and habitat areas.
5. Consider providing incentives for landowners to preserve and protect environmentally sensitive lands.
6. Explore the implementation of flexible zoning techniques that protect environmentally sensitive lands.
7. Encourage density transitions to separate rural from urbanized areas and to buffer preserve areas from urbanized areas.
8. Encourage the use of conservation easements which are supported by the land owner(s).
9. Protect scenic vistas by discouraging development on ridgelines and high-visibility areas.
10. Discourage increased densities in designated floodplains.
11. Adopt outside lighting standards to reduce light pollution and protect the Morgan County night sky.

**Goal 2:** Protect the health, safety, and welfare of Morgan County residents by directing growth away from hazardous areas and sensitive lands.

**Objective 1:** Protect property and residents from natural hazards, including flooding and other flood events, seismic events, landslides, rock fall, or subsidence.

**Policies:**

1. Development proposed in geologically hazardous areas or on steep slopes should be avoided or, if allowed, done in a manner that poses little or no hazard to life, health or property.
2. Require utility providers to strengthen, relocate, or take other appropriate measures to safeguard pipelines, transmission lines, and other utility infrastructure in areas subject to elevated natural hazard risk.

**Objective 2:** Reduce the threat of wildfire in Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) areas.

**Policies:**

1. Require developments and subdivisions in the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) to provide forest stewardship, fuels mitigation plans, and property maintenance covenants that incorporate the principles of defensible and survivable space along with reduced potential for home ignition.
2. Include the appropriate fire district and municipal fire agencies in the review of development proposals and assist the fire districts and municipal fire agencies in communicating their concerns to developers.
3. Limit, through the rezoning process, the increase in housing density (a) outside fire districts, (b) in the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) areas, and (c) in areas where roadways are substandard.
4. Regularly update the County's Wildfire Management Plan.
5. Update and tailor the WUI code to meet the needs of Morgan County.

**Objective 3:** Preserve, protect, or conserve natural watercourses, water bodies, and drainage systems.

**Policies:**

1. Identify the significant natural watercourses, water bodies, and drainages and develop County regulations to manage development near such features to protect their natural function and fluctuation.

2. Develop a watershed management plan that protects the County's key contributing areas to promote water quality and conservation.

**Goal 3:** Conserve cultural resources within Morgan County.

**Objective 1:** Compile a list of significant Morgan County cultural resources and encourage the protection of significant concentrations of archaeological, historical, and other cultural resources.

**Policies:**

1. Encourage nominations to the National Register of Historic Places.
2. Encourage the conservation, restoration, and preservation of those properties already listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
3. Encourage intergovernmental cooperation in cultural resources management.
4. Seek adaptive uses as an alternative to demolishing or significantly altering historic structures.
5. Encourage property owners to conduct cultural resource surveys on significantly sized projects, or projects which are located in proximity to areas identified as having cultural resources.
6. Work with owners of properties with significant cultural resources to identify alternative funding sources to avoid, reduce, or mitigate impacts on the resources.
7. Identify appropriate treatment measures to be taken when significant prehistoric or historic sites, buildings, structures, and objects may be adversely affected.

## Implementation

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### Overview

Implementation of any policy document like a General Plan will take careful consideration over many years. In addition to supporting the pursuit of the goals and objectives, County decision-makers will implement this plan each time they adopt an ordinance or authorize a capital expenditure. In this way, the General Plan will be

implemented by a series of incremental decisions informed by its goals, objectives, and policies.

In addition, the Plan itself is likely to require changes over time and careful monitoring. By adopting an “adaptive management” approach, the Plan assumes that as technological advances occur and as conditions on the ground change, the County’s policy framework should change accordingly. Thus, General Plan amendments should be expected from time to time. This chapter describes, in general terms, the three strategic areas in which the County will focus its efforts in the next five years. These strategies will be updated as often as deemed necessary to ensure that it reflects the County’s implementation and strategic priorities.

### **Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulation Update**

The County’s Zoning Ordinance translates plan policies into specific use regulations, development standards and performance criteria that will govern development on individual properties. The General Plan establishes the policy framework, while the Zoning Ordinance prescribes standards, rules and procedures for development. The Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations will need to be amended to be consistent with the General Plan’s policies and Utah State law.

In addition, a number of County residents expressed concern that the County’s subdivision and land development regulations are not sufficiently flexible, and don’t encourage good development design. Residents expressed the need for regulations that provide for master planned developments, mixed-use projects, clustering of development on a project site; and provision for residential uses in predominantly agricultural areas in ways that don’t interfere with on-going agricultural operations or place undue burdens for services on the County. The following priority regulations updates are needed to implement the General Plan and address County resident concerns:

1. Update Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations to comply with current State law.
2. Develop ordinances for master-planned communities and developments.
3. Develop ordinances to regulate development on ridgelines and in sensitive areas.
4. Develop regulations to allow for residential uses in agricultural areas in ways that protect the viability of agricultural operations and don’t create undue burdens for the provision of services.
5. Develop an ordinance to manage and regulate resort developments.
6. Develop mixed-use, town center development standards.
7. Develop light pollution and night sky ordinances.

### **Transportation**

The goals and objectives of the Transportation Element acknowledge the need for improvements for both motorized and non-motorized transportation within the County. Specific initiatives identified include:

1. Adopt regulations to require a traffic impact analysis in conjunction with re-zoning and subdivision applications to determine the re-zoning/project impact on existing roads, and to project the need for additional new road, trail and other transportation infrastructure.
2. Incorporate a capital improvements budget and plan for the construction of improvements to the County’s roadway system as part of the County CIP.
3. Seek alternative funding opportunities to provide adequate transportation and circulation improvements such as impact fees, special assessment areas, redevelopment districts, and grants.
4. Establish bicycle routes to improve bicyclist and motorist safety, and to offer an alternative mode of transportation between and within Morgan County communities. Take bicycle safety and accessibility into account in all future County road construction and re-construction projects, and provide for bicycle routes where appropriate.

5. Perform a ride-ability audit of proposed bicycle routes for safety and accessibility, including sight distance checks for clear zones at driveways and intersections, road hazards such as potholes and grates, signage, and cooperation with UDOT to help enhance the safety of bicycle routes.
6. Provide for the continuing use of County roadways as livestock driveways in a safe manner.
7. Adopt regulations that require all major residential and mixed-use developments to plan for trail systems, and to conduct pedestrian impact analysis studies and design and construct trail infrastructure to meet those needs.

### **Economic Development Strategies**

The goals and objectives outlined in Economic Development Element requires a collaborative effort on the part of the County, community leaders, private employers, regional partners, and educators. Some of the objectives are intended to be implemented by County staff, while other objectives, such as improving education, are intended to be implemented through a collaborative effort on the part of the business and education communities. Implementation of economic development goals and objectives includes:

1. Create a Morgan County Economic Development Plan, Strategies, and Priorities

### **Capital Improvement Plan**

A 10-year Capital Improvement Plan is the primary means of scheduling and funding infrastructure improvements of County-wide benefit. Special assessment districts or other means of financing improvements benefiting specific areas can also be used to provide needed infrastructure. Goals supported through this effort include:

1. Review and update the County's CIP annually.
2. Update the County's Impact Fees.

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