



Rio Blanco County Community Survey

February 2, 2009

Dear Rio Blanco County Community Member:

As you may know, Rio Blanco County is updating its Master Plan. A critical part of the planning process is assessing public opinion regarding the County and its future. The attached survey is meant to provide us with that important information and will be used in conjunction with other public input to develop goals and policies for the Rio Blanco County Master Plan. The survey may take up to 20 minutes to complete, but it is vital that we get responses that are as complete as possible from as many people as possible – whether you live in the County part time or full time, are temporarily living here, have just moved here or have lived here all your life. Please fill out the survey and return it according to the instructions within ten (10) days - we appreciate your time and assistance. We have sent one copy of the survey for your household. If other adults in your household want to fill out a copy, please call Jeannette Rudkin, Staff Assistant at (970) 878-9580, to get an additional form, or pick one up at the Rio Blanco County offices at 317 E. Market Street, Meeker or 17497 Highway 64, Rangely. In addition to the enclosed paper survey, those with access to the Internet can instead choose to complete the survey ONLINE, up until **February 28**, by logging on to the following website with the password provided:

www.rrcinfo.com/rio-blanco

password: _____

The County has engaged the professional firm of RRC Associates to conduct this research, and you can be assured that all responses will remain confidential and that no names or addresses will be identified with your survey responses. However, we are interested in adding you to our mailing list and including you in the public process that will be a part of the County's Master Plan revision. Please use the form below to let us know if we may contact you. Once you've completed the survey, please return it in the enclosed postage-paid envelope **within the next 10 days**.

If you have questions or concerns about the survey process, feel free to contact Ryan Mahoney at (520) 906-3053 or centralmountainplanning@gmail.com. Be sure to watch for publication of the survey results, which should be completed in April 2009. On behalf of the Board of County Commissioners, thank you for your help with this important project.

Sincerely,

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF RIO BLANCO COUNTY
Joe Collins, Chairman

Rio Blanco County Community Survey

Please return the survey in the enclosed postage-paid envelope within 10 days of receiving it.

1. What community do you associate yourself with?

- Rangely
 Meeker
 Unincorporated Rio Blanco County
 Do not associate myself with a community

2. Where is your home in Rio Blanco County located?

- Rangely
 Meeker
 Unincorporated Rio Blanco County
 Other: _____

3. Are you a:

- Year-round resident (*permanent residence is in Rio Blanco County, and you reside here throughout the year*)
 Part-time resident (*e.g., second homeowner, permanent residence is outside Rio Blanco County*)
 Temporary resident (*e.g., temporary/contract/seasonal worker*)

If part-time or temporary resident, how many months per year do you reside in Rio Blanco County? _____ months

4. Is Rio Blanco County progressing in the right direction or do you feel it has gotten off on the wrong track? (Check appropriate box)

- Right direction
 Wrong track
 Don't know

In a few words, please explain your response: _____

5. Over the past two years, would you say the quality of life in Rio Blanco County has: (Check appropriate box)

- Improved
 Gotten worse
 Stayed the same
 Don't know/no opinion

Please explain your response: _____

6. The community planning process will consider a number of different topics. Please rate the importance of the following to you and your household. Use a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 means "Not At All Important" and 5 means "Very Important."

| | Not At All Important | Neither Important nor Unimportant | Very Important | Don't Know/ No opinion | | |
|--|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|---|---|
| Available Services (<i>Affordable/attainable housing, ambulance/public safety services, childcare, county communication with citizens, education, hospital, available healthcare, library, nursing home/senior housing, senior programs, school overcrowding, crime prevention, etc.</i>) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| Are there other services that are important to you? _____ | | | | | | |
| The Environment (<i>energy conservation, natural gas/oil shale development impacts, wildlife, scenic quality, water use/conservation, air quality, etc.</i>) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| Are there other environmental factors that are important to you? _____ | | | | | | |
| Growth/Planning/Design (<i>code enforcement, land-use and zoning, preservation of rural character, etc.</i>) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| Are there other growth/planning/design factors that are important to you? _____ | | | | | | |
| Infrastructure (<i>airports, alternative/public transit, landfills, parking and commuter/carpool lots, roads, traffic, utilities, etc.</i>) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| Are there other infrastructure factors that are important to you? _____ | | | | | | |
| Parks/Recreation/Open Space/Trails (<i>open space areas, parks, trails, public landscaping, recreation programs and opportunities, public land access, public land management, etc.</i>) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| Are there other parks/recreation/open space/trail factors that are important to you? _____ | | | | | | |
| The economy (<i>economic development efforts, job creation, maintaining economic base, shopping opportunities, viability of agriculture, viability of expansion of local businesses, etc.</i>) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| Are there other economic factors that are important to you? _____ | | | | | | |

11. What factors might cause you to leave Rio Blanco County in the next five years? Use a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 means “Not At All a Factor” and 5 means “Definitely a Factor.” If you do not plan to leave the region in the next five years, check the box below the grid.

| | Not At All A Factor | 1 | 2 | Might or Might Not Be a Factor | 3 | 4 | 5 | Definitely a Factor | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | Don't Know/ No opinion |
|--|------------------------|---|---|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|------------------------|---|---|---|---|----|----|---------------------------|
| 01) Desire for change in living environment | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 | | | | | | | | | |
| 02) Lack of health care and medical facilities | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 | | | | | | | | | |
| 03) Disparity between wages and cost of living | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 | | | | | | | | | |
| 04) Lack of employment and professional opportunities | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 | | | | | | | | | |
| 05) Growth and change in the region | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 | | | | | | | | | |
| 06) Climate/elevation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 | | | | | | | | | |
| 07) Lack of adequate affordable/attainable housing | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 | | | | | | | | | |
| 08) Lack of opportunities for children (education, activities, etc.) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 | | | | | | | | | |
| 09) Lack of entertainment, culture, and shopping | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 | | | | | | | | | |
| 10) Government regulations/high taxes | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 | | | | | | | | | |
| 11) Other: _____ | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 | | | | | | | | | |

None of these – do not plan to leave the region

Growth Questions

12. Different future growth patterns result in varying consequences to the County. A recent report sponsored by the Associated Governments for Northwest Colorado states that “Because the existing municipalities may not be able to absorb the anticipated growth, much of the future growth is assigned to unincorporated county areas.” Careful planning can help Rio Blanco County to prepare for the anticipated growth. Please indicate which of the following statements you MOST agree with. (CHECK ONLY ONE)

- Growth should be concentrated in or near the incorporated Towns of Rangely and Meeker
- Growth should continue to occur in the existing pattern of development in scattered small and large lot development outside existing Towns
- Growth should be addressed by a combination of smaller lot developments (less than one acre) near towns, and large lot developments (35+ acres) in rural areas
- New towns should be created to serve anticipated growth from the energy industry
- Growth should occur as individual landowners desire without any overall direction

13. In regard to an overall plan for Rio Blanco County, which of the following is closest to your opinion? (CHECK ONLY ONE)

- The County should develop a plan and follow it closely
- The County should develop a plan and only deviate from it if there is a public benefit as a result
- The County can plan for the future but use the plan as a general guide and not something on which to base decisions
- It is unnecessary for the County to develop a plan

14. The 2007 population of Rio Blanco County was estimated to be 6,434. A recent report sponsored by the Associated Governments for Northwest Colorado estimates that the population of Rio Blanco County could reach 39,013 by 2035 with the increase of natural gas and oil shale production. This represents a 6.6 percent compound annual growth rate. How would this increase in population affect your quality of life in Rio Blanco County? (CHECK ONLY ONE)

- My quality of life would be diminished
- My quality of life would improve
- My quality of life would not be affected
- Don't know/no opinion

15. Level of service (LOS) can be described as the quality of government services and infrastructure that are provided to the citizens of Rio Blanco County (outside incorporated cities/towns). When new growth occurs, the demand for services such as law enforcement, fire, roads, and sanitation increases. Have you noticed a change in the LOS in unincorporated Rio Blanco County in the last five years? (CHECK ONLY ONE)

- Yes, the level of service (LOS) has noticeably decreased
- No, the LOS has stayed the same
- The LOS has improved
- I have noticed changes in the quality of some services/infrastructure and not others
- Don't know/no opinion

Infrastructure Questions

16. Rio Blanco County provides a variety of services. In the following question, we ask you to assume that you have \$100 to distribute to services and improvements in the County. As an indication of your funding priorities, please allocate your \$100 among the following services in \$10 increments, with the total allocation equaling \$100. (Example: \$50 to Fire/Emergency Services, \$30 to Roads, \$20 to Water and Sewer).

- Parks
- Open space
- Law enforcement
- Road maintenance
- Traffic
- Public transportation
- Historic preservation
- Public land access
- Parking (commuter/carpool lots, etc.)
- Water and sewer system
- Fire District/Emergency Services
- Recreation facilities/center
- Community festivals
- Landfills
- Airports
- Hospital/health care
- Public health
- Senior services
- Social services
- Cultural amenities
- Other (excluding education and schools), please specify: _____

\$100 (total should equal \$100)

Economic Development Questions

17. Currently, where do you most often shop for the majority of your food/groceries (indicate city and store)?

- Rangely
 Grand Junction
 Meeker
 Rifle
 Vernal, Utah
 Craig
 Other: _____

18. Please indicate store name: _____

19. The report sponsored by the Associated Governments for Northwest Colorado also states that energy production employment (gas-related only) will account for 80% of the jobs in Rio Blanco County by 2035. Please check one of the following statements that most closely represents your opinion about this statement.

- I support this type of industry and welcome the jobs into the community
- I think the County should work to diversify the economy so our residents are insulated from the boom/bust cycle of the energy industry
- I don't think the County should support the energy industry
- Don't know/no opinion

20. The expanding energy development in Rio Blanco County will increase demands for use of rural agricultural lands for storage, worker housing, pipelines, and industrial space. Please choose the following statement that best describes how you feel about the use of agricultural lands for industrial/commercial activities:

- The County should be very flexible and allow these uses wherever they are requested
- These uses should be regulated and limited to specific areas to minimize impacts to agricultural lands
- These uses should be restricted to existing industrial areas/utility corridors and NOT be permitted on agricultural lands
- Don't care/no opinion

Housing Questions

While it is recognized that there are a number of definitions for affordable housing, for the purposes of this survey, please refer to the following definition:

Affordable Housing -- when the amount spent on rent or mortgage payments (excluding utilities) does not exceed 30% of the combined gross income of all household members. There is no single amount that is "affordable." The term is not synonymous with low-income housing, where, under most Federal programs for low-income housing, occupants pay 30 percent of their gross income for rent and utilities.

21. Please indicate which of the following statements you MOST agree with. (CHECK ONLY ONE)

- Rio Blanco County should take aggressive efforts to provide housing that is affordable
- The County should not concern itself with affordable housing issues
- Affordable housing is needed in Rio Blanco County
- Rio Blanco County has enough affordable housing

22. Within the next five years, do you want to:

- Stay in current residence
- Buy a new or different home
- Rent a new or different home

23. Which type of unit best describes your current residence? And, as you consider the next stage of your life over the next five years or so (including the potential for marriage, purchasing your first home, retirement, children leaving home, etc.), what housing type do you think is realistic and achievable for you and your household? (CHECK ONE IN EACH COLUMN)

| <u>CURRENT</u> | <u>FUTURE</u> | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Single-family home on large lot (larger than 5 acres) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Single-family home on large lot (1 to 5 acres) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Single-family home on small lot (smaller than 1 acre) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Townhome |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Apartment or condominium |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Mobile home |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Community housing for older residents, with or without assisted living |
| -- | <input type="checkbox"/> | Will be in my current home in five to 10 years |

24. How many bedrooms are in your current home? _____ bedrooms

25. What is the total monthly RENT or MORTGAGE PAYMENT for your residence? \$ _____

26. What choice best describes your satisfaction with your current residence?

- Very satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Somewhat dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

27. To provide the right balance of housing for various lifestyles, ages, and incomes in Rio Blanco County, do you think we have the right amount, too much, or too little of the following:

| | Too Little | Just About Right | Too Much |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Mobile homes | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Townhomes | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Apartments/condominiums | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Assisted living for senior citizens | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Single-family homes on large lots (larger than 5 acres) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Single-family homes on large lots (1 to 5 acres) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Single-family homes on small lots (smaller than 1 acre) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Environmental Questions

28. Preservation of physical features in Rio Blanco County is one way to maintain the existing community qualities. Are there local features that should be preserved from development impacts? (List both natural and man-made features).

29. How important is it to restrict development because of the following environmental impacts or other constraints? Use a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 means "Not At All Important for Restriction" and 5 means "Very Important for Restriction."

| | Not at all Important for Restriction | | | Very Important for Restriction | | Don't know/ No opinion |
|---|---|---|---|-----------------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| 1) Steep slopes | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| 2) Riverside habitat | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| 3) Areas identified by Division of Wildlife as important wildlife habitat | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| 4) Prominent ridges around the County | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| 5) Geologic hazards | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| 6) Flood plains/wetlands | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| 7) Other: _____ | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |

OR No areas should be restricted

30. How important is it to preserve the following types of land as open space in Rio Blanco County? Use a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 means "Not At All Important for Preservation" and 5 means "Very Important for Preservation."

| | Not At All Important | | | Very Important | Don't Know/ No opinion | |
|---|-------------------------|---|---|-------------------|---------------------------|---|
| 01) Agricultural properties/ranches | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| 02) Cultural and historical sites | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| 03) Geologic features | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| 04) Meadows along highway corridors | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| 05) Mountain slopes and peaks | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| 06) Prominent land features | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| 07) Ridgelines | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| 08) River/stream corridors and wetlands | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| 09) Visually prominent parcels | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| 10) Wildlife habitat | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| 11) Other: _____ | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |

Demographic and Household Questions

31. Where do you currently get community information?

(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

- Newspapers
- County newsletter
- Radio
- Television
- County website
- Postings at County buildings
- Public meetings
- Talking with friends/neighbors
- Coffee shop
- Other: _____

32. What is your age? _____

33. What is your housing status?

- Own Visiting/living with friend or relative
- Rent Employer provided housing
- Other _____

34. How long have you lived in Rio Blanco County? How long have you lived at your current residence?

- | In
County | Current
Residence | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Less than 1 year |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 to 5 years |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6 to 10 years |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 11 to 20 years |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | More than 20 years |

35. What is your household income before taxes?

- \$0-19,999 \$100-149,999
- \$20-39,999 \$150-199,999
- \$40-59,999 \$200-249,999
- \$60-79,999 \$250,000 or more
- \$80-99,999

36. _____ Including yourself, how many people live in your household?

_____ How many are under the age of 18 years?

_____ How many are over the age of 55 years?

37. _____ How many vehicles (cars and trucks) does your household have?

38. Approximately what are your total household car/truck payments per month? (If you do not pay car payments at all, enter 0)

\$_____ Per month

39. How many miles (round trip) do you commute to work?
_____ miles

40. When commuting to work, what is your primary mode of travel?

- Car (1 person) Carpool/vanpool (2+ people)
- Bus Walk/Bicycle
- Telecommute

41. Where do you and other adults (persons 18 or over only) in your household work? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

| <i>You</i> | <i>Other workers</i> | <i>Work Location</i> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Grand Junction area |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Craig |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Meeker |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Rifle |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Rangely |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Rural Rio Blanco County |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other: _____ |

42. How many jobs do employed adults in your household (persons 18 or over only) work? (Enter the number of jobs you work and the number of combined jobs all other adults work.)

| | <i>Adult #1 (You)</i> | <i>Total for All Other Adults</i> |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| FULL time jobs | | |
| PART time jobs | | |
| TOTAL JOBS | | |

43. Currently, what types of jobs are held by your household?

| | <u>YOU</u> | <u>OTHERS</u> | <u>TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT</u> |
|-----|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| 01) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Retail clerk |
| 02) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Restaurant/bar employee |
| 03) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Health practitioner (physician, nurse, therapist, etc.) |
| 04) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Teacher, child care provider |
| 05) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Fireman, police officer, other emergency services |
| 06) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Municipal, county, federal or state employee |
| 07) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Guide, instructor, wrangler or other recreation services |
| 08) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Accountant, bookkeeper, financial advisor, banker, mortgage broker |
| 09) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Realtor, property manager |
| 10) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Professional – attorney, architect, engineer, business owner or manager, scientist, etc. |
| 11) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Construction |
| 12) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Admin assistant, office clerk, etc. |
| 13) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other _____ |

44. Do you have any further comments or suggestions concerning the many topics addressed in this survey? (If you need additional space, please use the space below)

REMINDER: Please use the insert slip to provide contact information if you are willing to be contacted as part of the Master Plan process.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!