



THE TOWN OF OAK CREEK

Comprehensive Plan

In the spring of 2008, the Town of Oak Creek created a citizens survey to gather information on the current community vision. The surveys were mailed in the Utility Bill, available for pick up at several locations, and handed out at the Taste of South Routt. With a 146 surveys returned, the survey was a success!

Questions and Results:

1. In general, what are the 3 things you like most about living in Oak Creek?

Conclusion: Small Town character, Natural Environment and Close-knit community rated highest as reasons you most like living in Oak Creek.

- | | |
|---|-----|
| a) Small town character | 122 |
| b) Low crime rate | 53 |
| c) Good for kids | 34 |
| d) Outdoor activities | 47 |
| e) Close-knit community | 59 |
| f) Natural environment | 80 |
| g) Written Comments: | |
| i) Affordable | |
| ii) Be able to walk to restaurants, pharmacy and lots of amenities. | |
| iii) Close to steamboat | |
| iv) It feels REAL *2 | |
| v) Laid back attitude about life | |
| vi) motorized and non outdoor activities | |
| vii) No conveniences | |
| viii) No yuppies | |
| ix) Own power grid | |
| x) Relatively affordable (compared to SS) | |
| xi) Small population/low density/ not crazy busy like steamboat | |

2. In general, what are the 3 things you like least about living in Oak Creek?

Conclusion: Condition of Town Streets, Depending on Steamboat Springs, and Lack of Local Jobs narrowly lead the three things you like least.

- | | |
|--|----|
| a) Condition of town streets | 65 |
| b) Depending on Steamboat Springs services | 59 |
| c) Lack of local jobs | 58 |
| d) Physical condition of buildings | 47 |
| e) Influx of newcomers | 19 |



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- f) Lack of good paying jobs 55
- g) Written Comments
 - i) A good dentist would be welcomed!
 - ii) Appearance of personal property
 - iii) Coal smoke
 - iv) Code violators – non participation
 - v) Commute system to SS. Bus, rail, train.
 - vi) Condition of unkept homes
 - vii) Current state of code enforcement/police department
 - viii) Drinking water concern
 - ix) Having to drive to steamboat for work
 - x) Inconsideration of winter road crews
 - xi) Infighting of the Town council!
 - xii) Junk, excessive junk appliances, broken down cars, semis parked on residential streets - *2
 - xiii) Lack of bike lanes on 131
 - xiv) Lack of public transportation to Steamboat
 - xv) Need bike paths
 - xvi) Need more activities for kids and families
 - xvii) Need transit system to steamboat – OC canyon is dangerous to drive
 - xviii) No bus service to steamboat
 - xix) No natural gas, tv/internet cable.
 - xx) No youth group program or activities
 - xxi) Not enough for appropriate city budget
 - xxii) Overzealous police force. * 1
 - xxiii) Pave streets
 - xxiv) People not taking care of property
 - xxv) People that want to change everything
 - xxvi) Pit bull dogs running loose
 - xxvii) Police and Code Enforcement
 - xxviii) Politics
 - xxix) Shitty infrastructure/no money for improvements *3
 - xxx) Side road to dusty
 - xxxi) Strict law enforcement
 - xxxii) The above can only improve with an increase in south Routt population
 - xxxiii) The anti-police, don't enforce the laws, movement that seems to always reappear wasting time, resources and money.
 - xxxiv) The constant debate about the police department
 - xxxv) The junk visible on private property.



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- xxxvi) The mentality of our police does not watch the needs of the town
- xxxvii) The mentality of some of the residents
- xxxviii) The offensive OC police *3
- xxxix) Too many laws
- xl) Too opposed to growth.
- xli) Train whistle
- xlii) Uncertainty of commercial planning and regulation – no zoning – inadequate commercial property rights.
- xliii) Yard junk
- xliv) Yellow water in the spring

3. The current population is 949, what do you feel is the most appropriate size for Oak Creek?

Conclusion: Between 949 and 1200 people is what the slight majority of the respondents reported as their ideal size.

- | | |
|------------------|----|
| a) Less than 949 | 13 |
| b) 949-1200 | 58 |
| c) 1200-1500 | 47 |
| d) 1500-2000 | 20 |
| e) 2000-5000 | 9 |
- f) Written comments:
- i) 10,000 people
 - ii) Blended growth, commercial, residential (not low income housing – we have plenty) More residential for mid to upper income.
 - iii) Depends on if future annexations are “green” includes trails, open space, parks, etc. Only if done with those things in mind.
 - iv) Do we really think we can control the population to this exact of limits – where is this going?
 - v) Growth happens!
 - vi) I don’t believe there is a most appropriate size.
 - vii) I just want a healthy vibrant town – size doesn’t matter
 - viii) I think the town is a good size but it could grow a little.
 - ix) smaller then better for OC
 - x) What OC can support in terms of jobs, school needs (\$) recreation. 949 is good but is 1500 not good??
 - xi) Whatever infrastructure can afford
 - xii) Whatever it takes to get the streets paved.



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4. Should additional mobile home parks be allowed within Oak Creek?

Conclusion: A clear “no” on if additional mobile home parks should be allowed.

- | | |
|---|----|
| a) No | 77 |
| b) Yes | 19 |
| c) Yes with strict regulation | 47 |
| d) Other | |
| i) clean up mobile home parks that we have | |
| ii) Define mobile home from pre-manufactured home. | |
| iii) If they own the land | |
| iv) Mobile home – yes. Mobile home parks – no. | |
| v) Mobile home parks are nice and may be the people could own the land under their mobile homes. | |
| vi) New mobile home parks no longer represent viable affordable housing die to const of mortgages, code issues. | |
| vii) Or have park, with owners owning the land | |
| viii) should be on rent to own property | |
| ix) They are a big impact on a neighborhood, due to a lot of vehicles in a small area. Too much dust in the air | |
| x) West areas and fish creek falls | |
| xi) yes, trailers should be spaced with adequate space. | |

5. Mobile homes are currently not allowed outside of mobile home parks. Should they be?

Conclusion: A clear no regarding allowing mobile homes outside of mobile home parks. However, several comments were made requesting modular homes be separated from the definition of a mobile home.

- | | |
|--|-----|
| a) No | 103 |
| b) Yes | 18 |
| c) Yes with strict regulation | 25 |
| d) Comments | |
| i) The ones currently here are grandfathered in perpetuity | |
| ii) Yes, but only modular's *3 | |



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6. What kinds of business do you think Oak Creek should try to attract?

Comment: The top business the town should attract is service retail followed by industrial.

- | | |
|---|------------|
| a) Specialty retail (gift shops and clothing stores) | 60 |
| b) Service retail (hardware stores and restaurants) | 113 |
| c) Office | 55 |
| d) Industrial | 72 |
| e) Other | |
| i) Adult entertainment | |
| ii) All | |
| iii) All of the above – what you can attract | |
| iv) Any business that promotes effective/smart growth & beauty. | |
| v) Anyone who wants to come | |
| vi) Art galleries | |
| vii) Artist and craftsmen/women | |
| viii) Call center | |
| ix) Computer/home businesses | |
| x) I believe OC's main goal should be to attract as many businesses as possible. | |
| xi) light industrial *2 | |
| xii) Location neutral – internet professional. | |
| xiii) Non-profits and local crafts, artists | |
| xiv) Outdoor guide services | |
| xv) Provide jobs for residents | |
| xvi) Rental shop, bookstore, another gas station | |
| xvii) Services, craftsmen retail - like Carbondale is to aspen (tile, plumbing fixtures, specialty) | |
| xviii) Sustainable *2 | |
| xix) The ones that collect sales tax | |
| xx) Tourism based | |
| xxi) Vet/dentist | |
| xxii) We have good restaurants | |
| xxiii) We need four wheel drive shops and swimming pools | |
| xxiv) Would like specialty shops, art gallery, unusual crafts or local products that cannot be purchased anywhere else. | |



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7. How often do you support the existing business in Oak Creek by shopping at them or eating in the restaurants?

Conclusion: The people of Oak Creek visit the businesses with great frequency.

- a) 2-3 times a week 102
- b) Once a week 26
- c) Once a month 17
- d) Never 2
- e) Comments:
 - i) Every time we are in OC, about 10 to 12 times a year.
 - ii) About 10-12 times a year
 - iii) 2-3 times or more *5

8. If it were up to you, how would you allocate an 'extra' \$100 of the Town's money? (Please indicate an amount next to each that you feel should receive money).

Conclusion: The respondents chose to street maintenance as its highest "extra" priority followed Parks and Trails and Assistance Programs to Encourage additional local businesses.

- a) Parks and trails 59
- b) Provide assistance programs to encourage additional local businesses 55
- c) Beautification of downtown (new benches signage, flowers, etc.) 43
- d) Street maintenance and improvement 73
- e) Public safety services 18
- f) Recreation facilities 43
- g) Historic preservation 31
- h) Affordable housing 37
- i) Comments
 - i) Change land use codes to guarantee commercial property rights and encourage business investments.
 - ii) Encourage a bowling alley or Movie Theater or other recreation but not swimming pools.
 - iii) Enforcement of leash laws. \$100
 - iv) More artwork in the community
 - v) Note: this past winter my street, highland was only plowed once a week – Unacceptable!



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- vi) Refurbish the beat up Oak Creek sign on the road from the marina at Stagecoach Reservoir.
- vii) Return it to the taxpayers
- viii) Schools!
- ix) Youth programs *2

9. Do you think the number of homes heating with coal and wood burning devices should be reduced to improve air quality?

Conclusion: Based on the comments written on the survey, it appears that a majority or residents do agree with restricting coal heating in new construction with any existing coal burning being grandfathered into compliance.

- a) Yes 49
- b) No 92**

- c) Comment
 - i) Coal Bad, wood okay *2
 - ii) Depends upon the home and the resources of its owners
 - iii) eliminate coal
 - iv) Hard to say
 - v) I don't see how you can legally reduce the already existing number. Regulations on new construction seems like the reasonable place to start.
 - vi) I think you should have to permit them through the county. Existing fixtures should be grandfathered in.
 - vii) I think that gradually they are being reduced.
 - viii) Let's look at the options and the money involved.
 - ix) Maybe they could lower electric rates
 - x) Need more information on this
 - xi) Need to address now for the future
 - xii) Rather than banning support cheaper fuel.
 - xiii) Reduced no, discouraged, yes
 - xiv) Replace with EPA certified – this was done in Libby, Montana – great project
 - xv) Seek out grants to help pay for this.
 - xvi) There is a lot of pollution from the coal fired burner outside the old Curry Hotel. There may be a way to adjust the air flow or coal flow into the furnace to alleviate the problem.
 - xvii) Those people who currently heat with coal should be allowed to continue, but no new homes or bought homes by someone else should be allowed



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10. If affordability of Oak Creek is important to you, what steps should the community take to maintain Oak Creek's affordability?

Conclusion: A majority of residents agree with both requiring new developments to require a certain amount of affordable housing units and encouraging low income housing units such as self help homes.

- a) Require new developers to provide a certain amount of affordable housing units - 67
- b) Encourage low income housing such as self help homes 60
- c) Subsidize affordable housing through a New property tax 6
- d) Comments:
 - i) affordable housing to developers is not affordable to a home buyer
 - ii) Allow alternative heat sources, such as wood (or coal) fuel.
 - iii) Allow the small lots to be built upon
 - iv) Build earth ships
 - v) Build smaller homes
 - vi) Building normal size houses – we don't need mansions.
 - vii) Don't allow developers to have minimum square footage requirements.
Small houses = sustainable
 - viii) Habitat for humanity is welcome.
 - ix) Have a town minimum wage of \$12.50 hour
 - x) I work two jobs and nobody helped us with affordable housing.
 - xi) Increase the number of businesses that pay above average salaries to the work force.
 - xii) Keep homes simple
 - xiii) Keep the government out of housing
 - xiv) Let the market take care of itself
 - xv) None
 - xvi) None of the above
 - xvii) OC already is affordable. *2
 - xviii) Or some creative variation of this.
 - xix) Require new developers to pitch in on infrastructure
 - xx) Should be able to build on a single city lot (not on two adjacent lots only).
Every other city in the country deals with this effectively, why can't we?)
 - xxi) Size restrictions



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- xxii) Town should become a world model for low cost energy – ie. Wind, solar, other creek electric and sell back to the grid. Provide low cost in town power (Cooperative for all town owners)

11. Should the Town do more to regulate the appearance of personal property (i.e., abandoned cars, unmaintained lawns, etc.)

Conclusion: A overwhelming majority of respondents agree with the regulation and fair enforcement of personal property appearance codes

- a) Yes 119
- b) No 21
- c) Other:
 - i) Enforce the ordinances we have
 - ii) Everyone needs to be treated the same. Ticket people with lots of junk in their yard!! *2
 - iii) I do want O.C. to be able to maintain its own character
 - iv) I feel the town should get a handle on treating its employee’s right, before they run out and waist more money on picking up dogs and cats. Give them a raise, like a \$1.00
 - v) I think they are doing a pretty good job – better than in the past.
 - vi) I think they do a good job of this
 - vii) Keep long trucks from parking on the street on Moffat
 - viii) Only if the town helps out with the removal/recycling of junk
 - ix) Overgrown with weeds, grass, trash, should not be tolerated.
 - x) Stop dumping of vehicles/trailers/campers.
 - xi) The extra cars stacked near the park are a real eye-sore and send a negative message to visitors.
 - xii) The town should enforce the ordinances already established.
 - xiii) Use people who have to complete community service to fix up homes.
 - xiv) We already have the codes, but for some reason they have not been applied fairly and equally. The days of the corrupt “good ol’boy” system (or traditional use” as Dave Fisher called it) needs to come to an end or somebody (not me) and their lawyer will do it for you.
 - xv) We don’t want this like a condo facility. Don’t tell residents how property should look.
 - xvi) Within reason, it’s our property.
 - xvii) Yes, but it should be very, very basic – not conveniences like fencing materials or trail storage restriction.
 - xviii) Yes, I think those standards are already in place though. And they aren’t really enforced. *5
 - xix) Yes, in regards to the front yard junkyards
 - xx) Yes, To a certain degree.



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12. Would you like to see a separate industrial district designated in the South Arthur/Diagonal Street area?

Conclusion: Respondents would like to see an industrial district in the South Arthur/Diagonal Street area. The written comments suggest a careful evaluation of what uses and building character would best blend with the existing residential.

- | | |
|--|----|
| a) Yes | 68 |
| b) No | 46 |
| c) Comments: | |
| i) A definite designated area should be designation at the edge of town. | |
| ii) Also W. Nancy Crawford Blvd. | |
| iii) But another district should be closer to downtown – out of sight not very helpful | |
| iv) Don't know | |
| v) I thought it already was, we have had industry in the past. | |
| vi) If the darling division is annexed into town, this could be an industrial division, as the people who worked there would live here and be part of the community. | |
| vii) It was recommended in the last plan | |
| viii) Look at live/work of fitting into this district. | |
| ix) Maybe – depends on type of businesses. (don't want wood mill, tire factory, etc) | |
| x) maybe light industrial | |
| xi) Maybe, with more info | |
| xii) No!! Terrible idea – one of the nicest areas of town. | |
| xiii) No. Make lots into garden or park | |
| xiv) Not among residences | |
| xv) Please look into the Brownstone Corp Town Parks Grant! | |
| xvi) Possible to create # of jobs*2 | |
| xvii) Separate industrial from commercial from residential is not a bad idea. | |
| xviii) Very strict regulations for noise and appearance. *2 | |
| xix) We have residential presence that will be dirt. Move industrial out town like other mountain towns. | |
| xx) Yes, as long as they do not pollute or disturb neighbors | |



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13. Should the Town limit the size of a house so that it is compatible with the neighboring homes?

Conclusion: A slight majority of respondents agreed to the idea of limiting the size of homes; however the comments suggested homes should be a flexible requirement.

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| a) Yes | 77 |
| b) No | 62 |
| c) Comments | |
| i) All home sizes in Routt County should be limited with more efficient, less wasteful buildings. | |
| ii) also encourage building homes in empty lots in town. | |
| iii) Brilliant!! *2 | |
| iv) Depends on the location | |
| v) Hard to say. | |
| vi) How about 2000square feet, unless it is proven more space is needed. | |
| vii) No, but perhaps they can compensate in another manor if it's an impact on the community. | |
| viii) No, but stay affordable, homes should be build under x amount of square footage. (ex, no more than 3k??) | |
| ix) No. this is a property owners decision | |
| x) Oak creek has mostly small older affordable houses, need a blend to attract all income levels. | |
| xi) Should limit the height instead. | |
| xii) Shouldn't be about your neighbors, but the whole town. | |
| xiii) Square footage of home vs property | |
| xiv) The size of new houses in my neighborhood are eye-sores. They don't fit and make other houses look worse. | |
| xv) Well, it wouldn't look to nice if you let a million dollar home on myers street. | |
| xvi) Yes, but with flexibility | |
| xvii) Yes, within reason, although it doesn't seem to be a real problem. | |



14. Should land uses that do not contribute to sales tax revenue be allowed on Main Street (car washes, real estate, etc.)?

Conclusion: 70 of the respondents thought Main Street should consist of businesses that contributed to sale tax revenue for the town. Many of the written comments,

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thought those non-sales tax uses would be better situated on the second floor of a building.

- a) Yes **70**
- b) No **57**
- c) Comments:
 - i) But maybe not - too many detracts from tourist/visitors.
 - ii) Don't know
 - iii) Except the broken car wash
 - iv) Fill in some of or all of the empty commercial spaces first
 - v) How about looking into the unbuilt on properties on main street – 1st properties owners can do as they wish if they already own it.
 - vi) I feel yes, but there is not enough incentive for these businesses to move in, so no to keep the small town feel.
 - vii) It depends upon the role it plays with an interesting streetscape.
 - viii) Market should dictate usage
 - ix) Not sure
 - x) Okay on main but restrict/ do not permit on street level *2
 - xi) Old businesses should be grandfathered in.
 - xii) Property owners decision
 - xiii) Rather than discouraging any businesses that may provide local jobs and or services, alternative should be explored. (usage fees, other taxes)
 - xiv) Sensible zoning would exclude residences from commercial districts.
 - xv) they should be taxed another way *3
 - xvi) Until we have a thriving business comment we should be beggars and choosers.
 - xvii) Why aren't they contributing?
 - xviii) Yes, although the car wash doesn't work.

15. What should the Town's greatest priority be for the next 10-15 years?

Conclusion: Strengthening the economy and successfully managing growth are the two noted greatest priorities of the next 10-15 years.

- a) Parks, trails and recreation facilities **25**
- b) Strengthening/diversifying the economy **68****
- c) Successfully managing growth **59**
- d) Maintaining affordability **36**
- e) Preserving town character **50**
- f) Historic preservation **13**
- g) Comments:
 - i) All are important – the most is to maintain the town character



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- ii) Allow trained dogs off leash and in bars
- iii) Appearance of the Town) get read of old building, unmaintained structures, cars and trash!!!)
- iv) Attract business.
- v) Better education
- vi) Generate power for the entire town
- vii) Improving existing infrastructure
- viii) Income
- ix) Infrastructure/water/sewer/not paving
- x) Make roads bicycle friendly
- xi) New police
- xii) Roads, sewer, drainage
- xiii) Setting goals that are actually followed through with that well. Positively affect the area for local as well as newcomers.
- xiv) Slow growth – carefully control growth.
- xv) This is hard!
- xvi) Upgrading infrastructure, paving streets. *3
- xvii) Very hard question!!!
- xviii) We need a plan the entire community supports

16. – Draw on Map where Oak Creek Should Grow.

Conclusions: The most noted areas for growth are behind the school and Rossi Meadow.

- a) Comments:
 - i) Don't forget white city tramway – eligible for rails to trails.
 - ii) Growth in these areas (sierra view, north of the school) would mean citizens would have to come through the town to go to work if they worked elsewhere. They would be a part of the town. The annexation of the Darling Division would not be part of the town as they could bypass OC as they traveled elsewhere to work.
 - iii) Houses on south grand ave by school
 - iv) Infill – vacant lots, nonconforming lots – build on them first
 - v) Leave it the way it is, it will grow on its own.
 - vi) No growth
 - vii) Not up the sides of the valley.
 - viii) Passive solar, great southern facing hill for homes



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- ix) Sierra division
- x) Take out the car wash – put in buildings for business
- xi) The south side of town is already separated from EMS by the railroad. A bridge should be built here before any additional growth takes place.
- xii) This is hard too – hate to see Rossi Meadows developed.
- xiii) This seems silly, as much of this land is not available or for sale. I believe prospective growth should be looked at a case by case, as land us available for building. Certainly considerations will be evaluated such as flood plains, grade etc. such as this planning com. Is used to dealing with. Homes nestled in the hills are less obtrusive then clearly visible big development.
- xiv) We could annex all the way to CR 14 and create a regional shopping complex for all complexes for all those big box stores that Steamboat Springs won't allow. We'd get a lot of jobs that way.
- xv) West of water town and also south

17. What should new homes in Oak Creek look like?



1st Place



2nd Place



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1st

- a) A. 6
- b) B. 35
- c) C. 22
- d) D. 60**

3rd

- a) A. 20
- b) B. 51**
- c) C. 25
- d) D. 22

2nd

- a) A. 13
- b) B. 34
- c) C. 46**
- d) D. 28

4th

- a) A. 79**
- b) B. 3
- c) C. 21
- d) D. 16

e) Comments:

- i) Earth roof homes
- ii) Earthships
- iii) Homes should look what the owner wants them to look like if they follow basic codes –
- iv) Houses that collect and filter rain water.
- v) Option C is okay.
- vi) Owners choice *5
- vii) Strawbled

18) What type of building would best fit in downtown?



1st Place



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2nd Place

1st

- e) A. 74
- f) B. 8
- g) C. 27
- h) D. 16

3rd

- a) A. 11
- b) B. 53
- c) C. 17
- d) D. 39

2nd

- a) A. 36
- b) B. 23
- c) C. 30
- d) D. 35

4th

- a) A. 3
- b) B. 36
- c) C. 49
- d) D. 31

Comments:

- 1) Don't like any of these
- 2) Like Brick
- 3) You're kidding right? Just clean up what's already there, get rid of the mobile home and repair and paint the eyesores



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