

JACKSON | TETON COUNTY



Comprehensive Plan



JUNE 2011

ecosystem stewardship | growth management | community character

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OUR VISION | EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Jackson | Teton County Comprehensive Plan

ecosystem stewardship | growth management | community character



Our Vision

Preserve and protect the area's ecosystem in order to ensure a healthy environment, community and economy for current and future generations.

As inhabitants of one of the nation's largest intact ecosystems, we must have a Comprehensive Plan organized around stewardship of our ecological resources. Wildlife, natural and scenic resources draw both residents and visitors to this special place and are at the core of our heritage, culture, and economy. To be responsible stewards of this area, we must protect and enhance the ecosystem in which we live.

Yellowstone (the world's first National Park), Grand Teton National Park, Bridger-Teton National Forest, Targhee National Forest and the National Elk Refuge are testaments to the ecological richness and international significance of our community. These roughly 2.6 million acres of federally-protected lands foster a strong stewardship ethic in both residents and visitors to Jackson and Teton County. This Plan extends that ethic to the private lands in Teton County, which comprise only 3 percent of the land area, but are where most of the community lives and works.

Each resident and visitor has a responsibility to use public and private lands in a way that preserves the function of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem so that it can continue to be enjoyed in its intact state for generations to come. The community thrives on a shared appreciation of the natural setting in which we are located and the quality of life it brings. The community's long-term environmental, social, and economic health share a common requirement - the preservation and protection of the area's ecosystem

"The Town of Jackson and Teton County are a gateway to Yellowstone National Park, Grand Teton National Park, Bridger-Teton National Forest and the National Elk Refuge. This Plan focuses on private lands, which make up 3% of the land area in the County, or just over 76,000 acres."



Plan Framework: A Continuous Feedback Cycle

The Jackson/Teton Comprehensive Plan is designed to be a living plan, able to proactively adapt to changing conditions and community needs. This Plan is comprised of a four part cycle to achieve our community vision. **Our Vision** is the basis of the Plan and informs the policies that describe our **Common Values**. The geographic implementation of those policies is depicted in the **Illustration of Our Vision**. The success of our policy implementation is analyzed through the Growth Management Program to ensure that we are **Achieving Our Vision**. As we identify our successes and failures in achieving our vision we will adapt our policies and implementation - continuously progressing through the cycle.

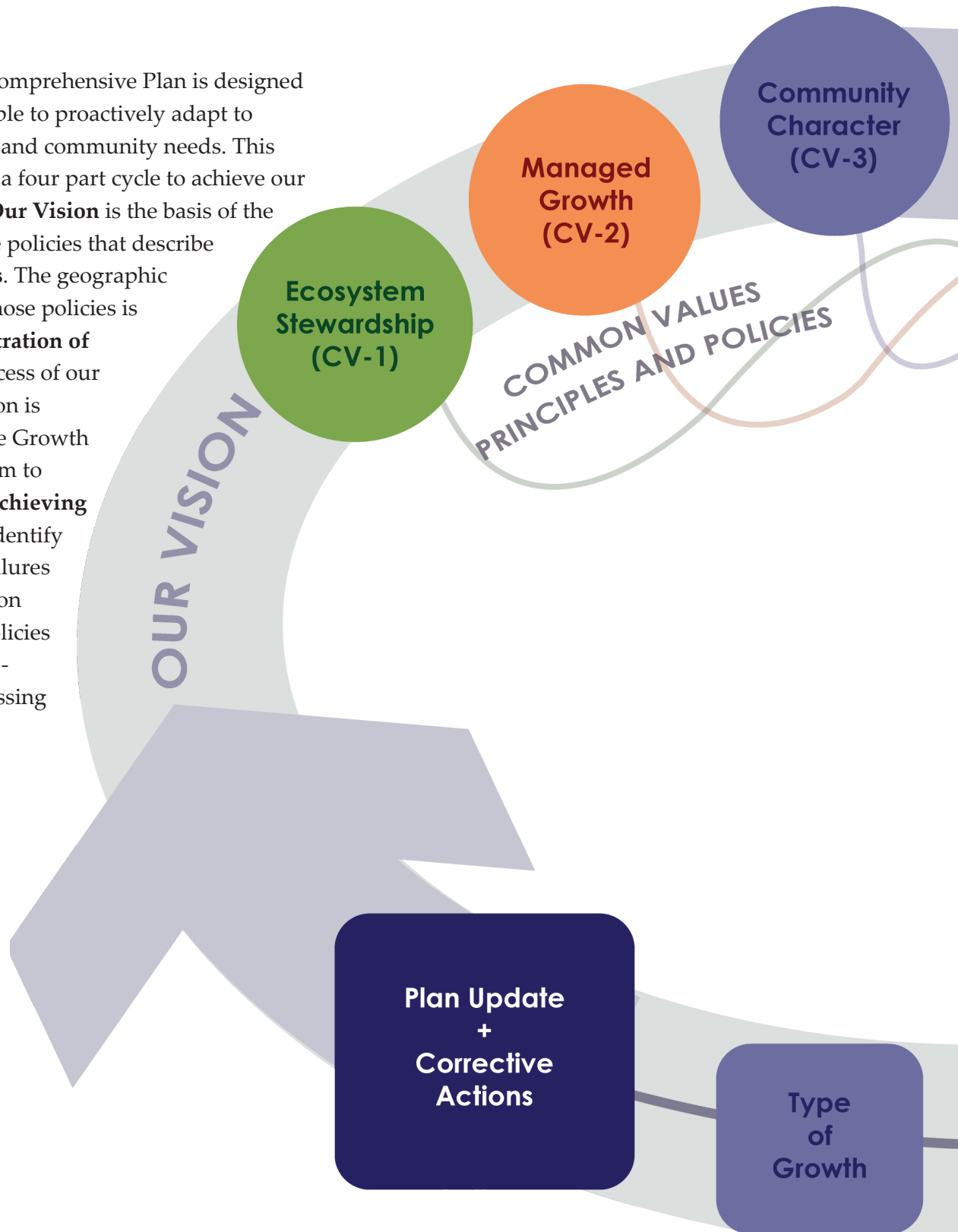


ILLUSTRATION OF OUR VISION

ACHIEVING OUR VISION

GROWTH MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Location of Growth

Amount of Growth

Annual Work Plan

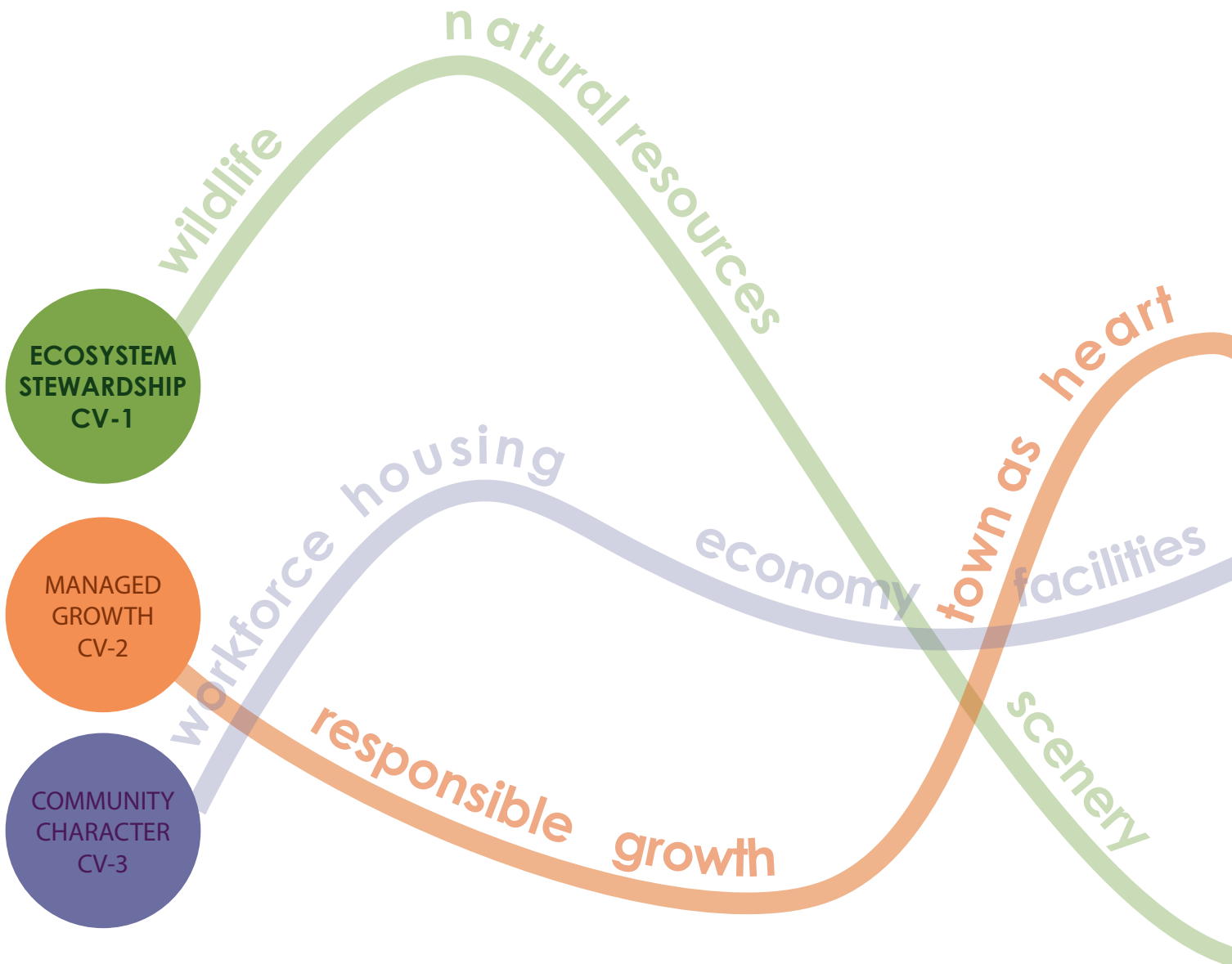
Annual Indicator Reports



Common Values

Just as the strength of a rope depends on the integrity of each intertwining thread, the strength of the Plan is derived from a commitment to our shared values, each in support of the others. The Plan fulfills our community vision by adhering to these three common values:

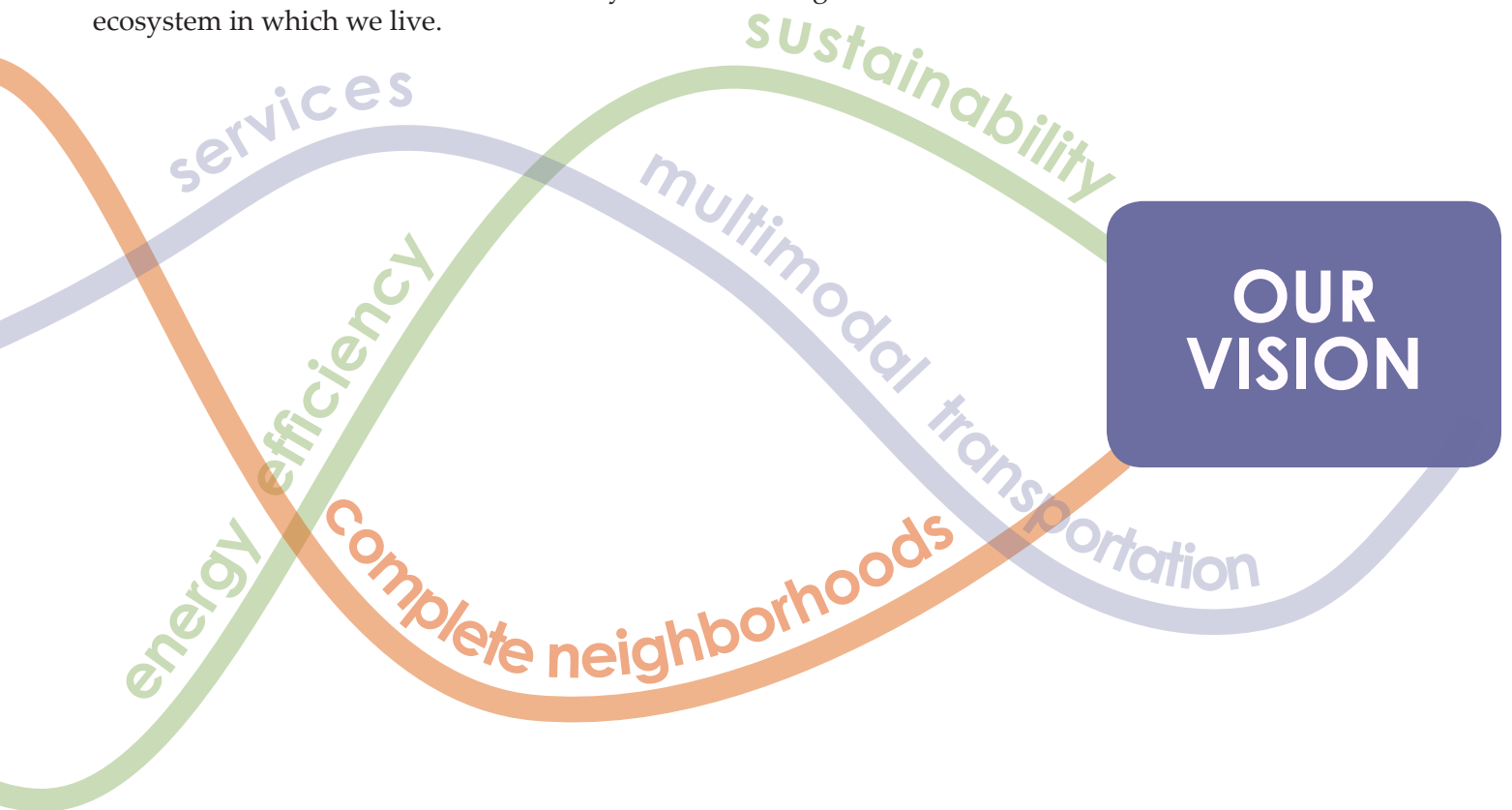
- Ecosystem Stewardship (CV-1)
- Managed Growth (CV-2)
- Community Character (CV-3)



Ecosystem Stewardship (CV-1)

The Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem – the largest intact ecosystem in the lower 48 states – transcends the physical boundaries of Jackson and Teton County. Accordingly, ecosystem stewardship is a common value of the community in and of itself. Our vision delineates that preserving the area’s ecosystem transcends our common values, inspiring and resulting from achievement of each of them. Wildlife, natural and scenic resources, open space, and climate are at the core of our community character and growth management values, but they have additional intrinsic value beyond our physical and socioeconomic character. The quality of this ecosystem has attracted numerous visitors throughout the years and is the primary reason many residents live here. We understand that our quality of life depends on many factors, but the primary factor is the continued health and viability of the ecosystem in which we live.

With this Plan, the community recommits to responsible stewardship of the ecosystem to ensure that the abundant wildlife, quality natural resources and scenery, open space, and climate that we experience today lasts long into the future. While our community’s international popularity and location in an intact ecosystem heighten the importance of ecosystem stewardship, growth management, and community character, they also provide the community with an opportunity to lead in implementing strategies for climate sustainability and protection of wildlife, natural and scenic resources, and open space. Our community must lead by example to show how local efforts can positively affect entire ecosystems. The community’s stewardship of our surrounding ecosystem has been and will continue to be our legacy to future generations.



Common Values

Managed Growth (CV-2)

Effective growth management is essential to protecting our surrounding ecosystem and reinforcing our community's character. Our three common values are mutually supportive, so the community must work to enhance our built environment into desirable places for residents, businesses, and visitors that also protect wildlife habitat, habitat connections, scenery and open space. If the most ecologically suitable places for development are also the most desirable places to live, our ecosystem and community character will both benefit.

Managing growth means proactively planning for what we want – rural open spaces and high quality, desirable complete neighborhoods. The Plan identifies a range of land use patterns, from rural to urban, to assist the community in visualizing how we will implement our Common Values over time.

These land use patterns vary by the ratio and level of intensity of their natural, built and social components.

Growth management will ensure that the heart of the community – the Town of Jackson – will continue to be the community's housing, employment, social, and civic center. By directing the majority of growth into areas of existing infrastructure and services, which comprise less than 5% of private land, we can preserve open spaces of ecological and scenic value while also allowing for enhanced housing, economic development, social, and civic opportunities. Our community realizes the importance of growth management in achieving our value of ecosystem stewardship in harmony with our desired community character.



Common Value 1

Common Value 2

Community Character (CV-3)

The Jackson and Teton County community takes pride in our local identity and character. Our natural character is protected through the stewardship of the surrounding ecosystem, and our physical character is guided by our growth management. However, the more emotional aspect of our character – our quality of life – is equally important to our community. We have always been a diverse community that supports a variety of lifestyles and employment opportunities, and we welcome others to share in the enjoyment of our intact ecosystem and western mountain lifestyle. Our quality of life and a quality visitor experience depend not only on ecosystem protection and growth management, but also on preserving the community character that is so attractive to residents and visitors alike.

Retaining a stable spectrum of local employment and housing opportunities preserves our identity as a community of long-term residents who steward our surrounding ecosystem and welcome visitors to do the same. Residents and visitors have become accustomed to high-quality life safety, transportation, educational, social, cultural, and recreational services. Continuing to provide these services in a manner that better achieves our vision will enhance the livability and appeal of our community. A community that offers a spectrum of housing and employment options and provides access to safe, efficient, and economical transportation and services is a desirable community to call home and an attractive destination to visit time and again. This quality of life is a function of our common value of community character and also leads to greater resident and visitor investment in our ecosystem stewardship and growth management values.



Common Value 2

Common Value 3

Achieving Our Vision

As a community set in a sensitive and dynamic natural environment, we must be able to evolve and respond to changing conditions to ensure we achieve our vision. Past experience both locally and throughout the nation has shown that if we do not plan to be adaptive, we may reflect ten years from now and only be able to speculate as to why our vision was not achieved. This is too big of a risk to take.

Based on a natural systems approach, our method for achieving our vision consists of a robust growth management and monitoring program.

Existing entitlements and previous planning efforts could result in roughly a doubling of our built environment. Our growth management program looks beyond this overall limit on the amount of growth to quantitatively monitor and shape the location and type of growth that determines our future community form. The growth management program is composed of ongoing monitoring, fixed thresholds, triggers, feedback mechanisms, and corrective actions; all of which are linked to the policies and strategies of the community's three common values.

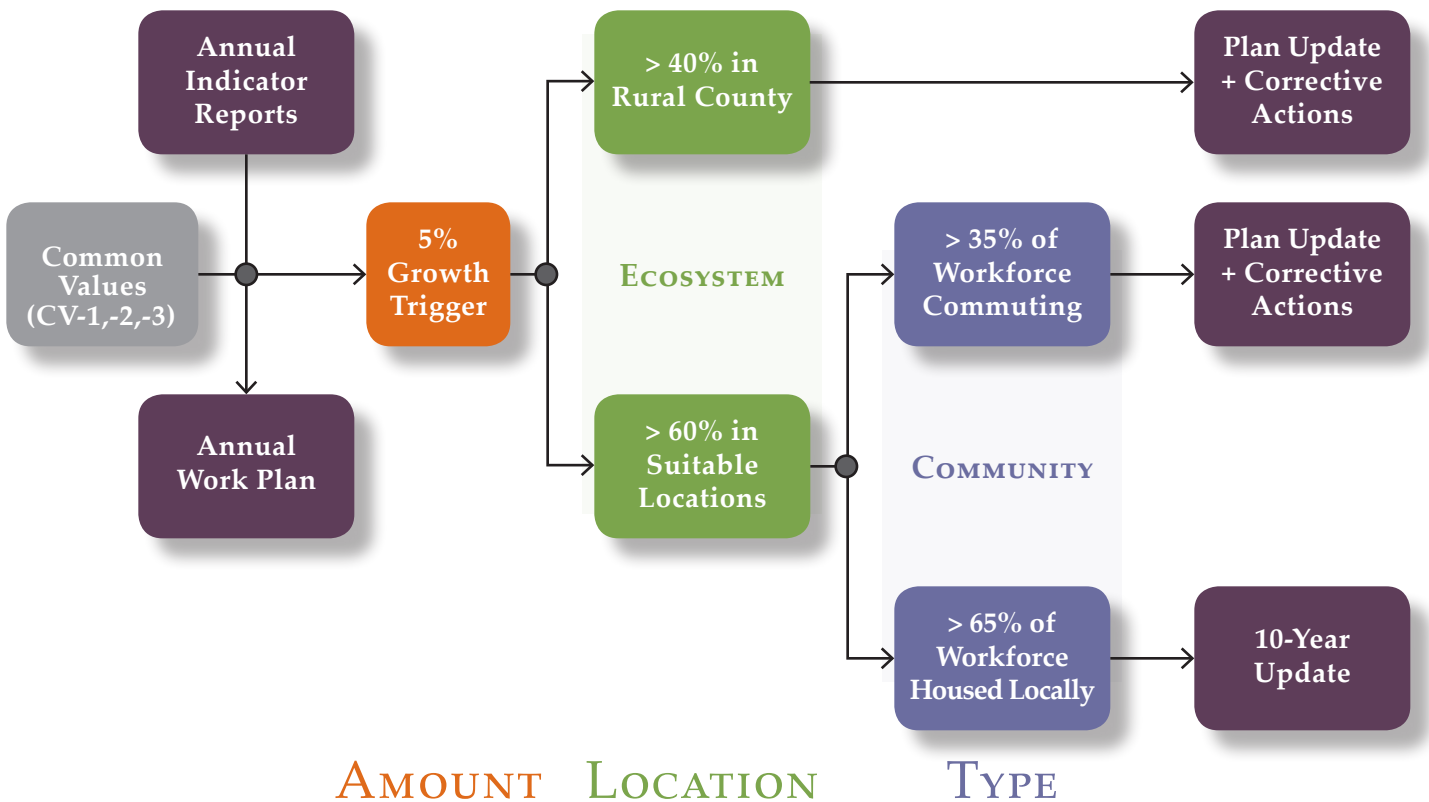
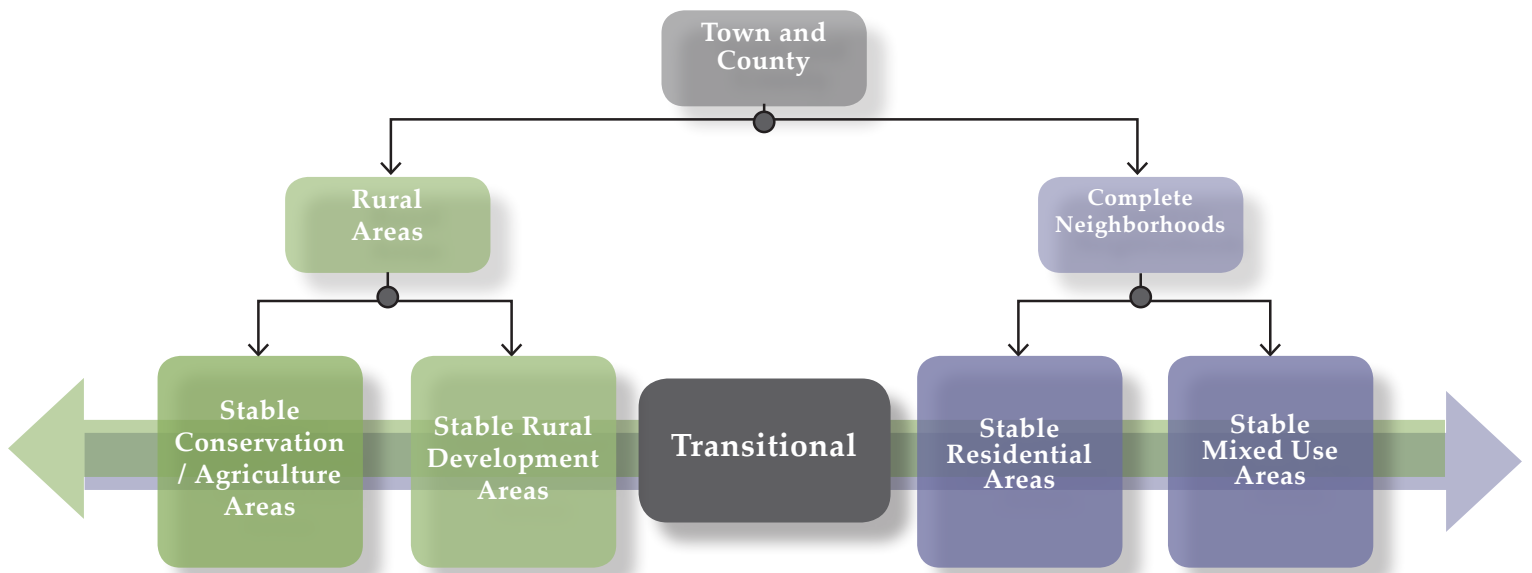


Illustration of Our Vision

The character districts that comprise the Illustration of Our Vision chapter of the Plan describe the character of each area of the community that will allow for achievement of the community's common values. Areas will be grouped into character districts based upon shared characteristics that relate to the community's common values. Within each character district, areas of stability and areas of transition are identified and the desired future characteristics of the district are depicted and described.

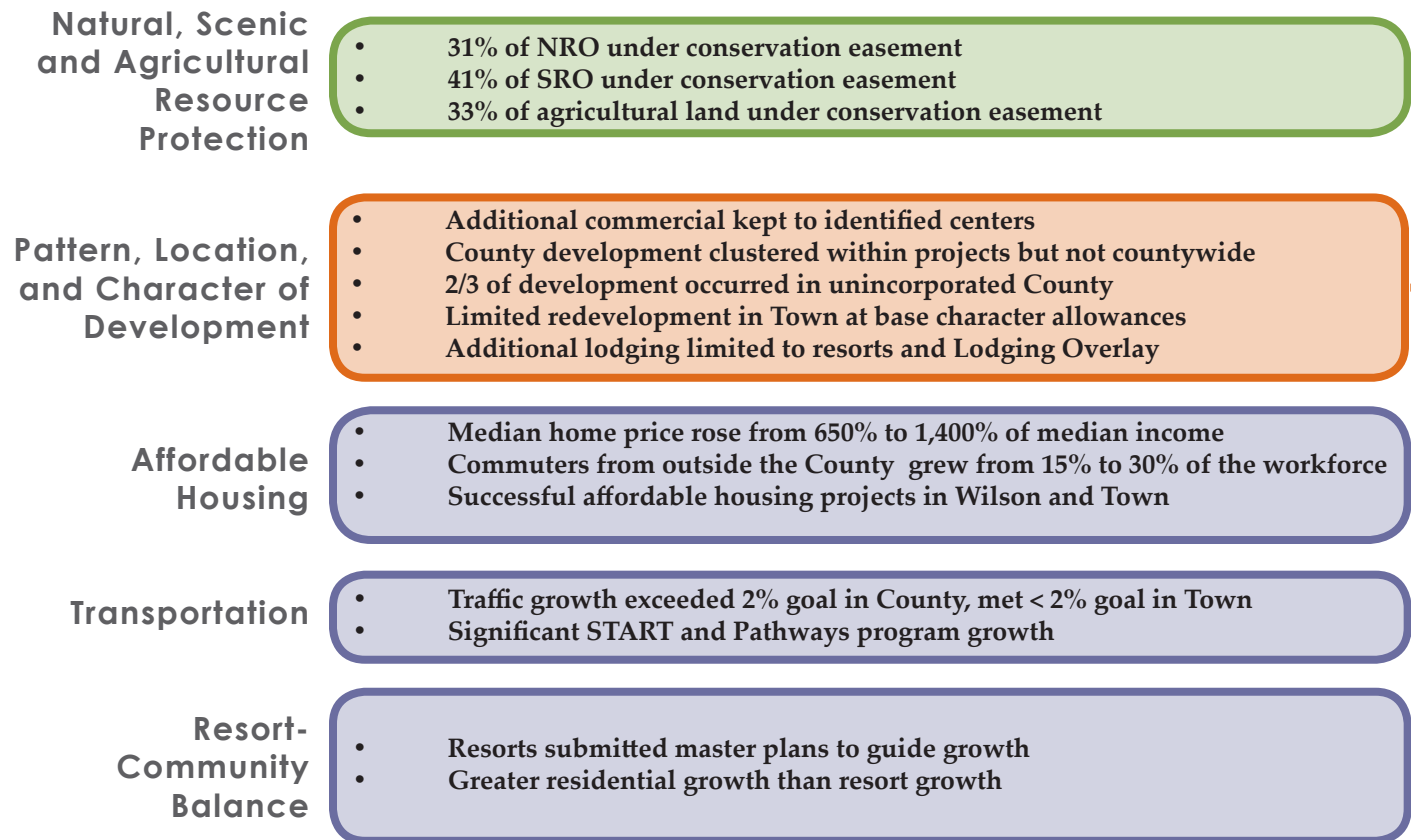
Future land development regulations and decisions will be based on preserving stable areas and achieving the desired level of conservation or development in areas of transition, as described in the character districts.



Plan Highlights: Learning from the Past

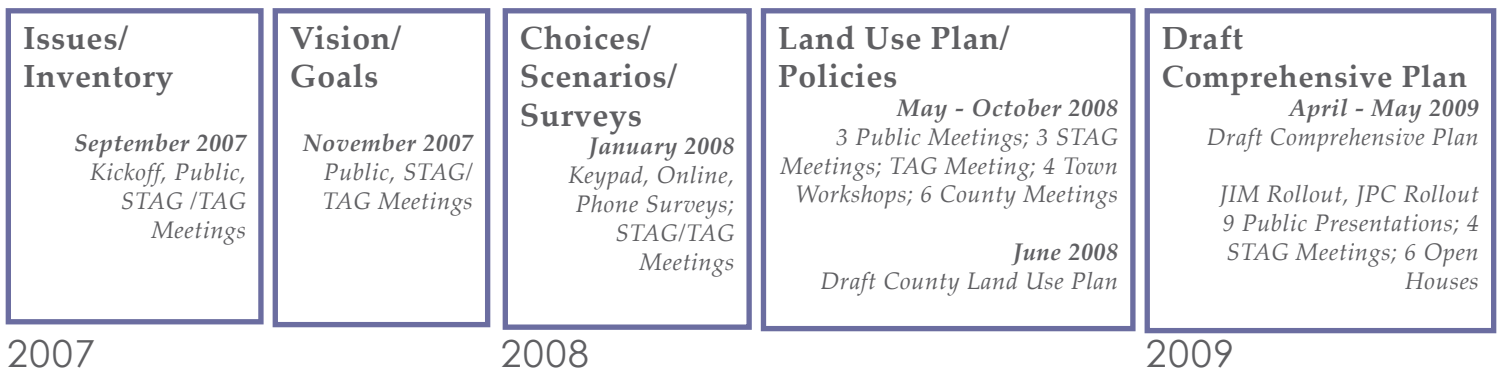
The 1994 Plan set the foundation for our vision and common values described in this document. This Plan builds on that foundation and the lessons learned from the 1994 Plan to advance the implementation of the community's vision.

What Happened (1994-2011)



Plan Update Process (Appendix Ω)

Over 100 public meetings in the making, this Plan represents the community's dedication and commitment to preserve and enhance this special place.



Lessons Learned

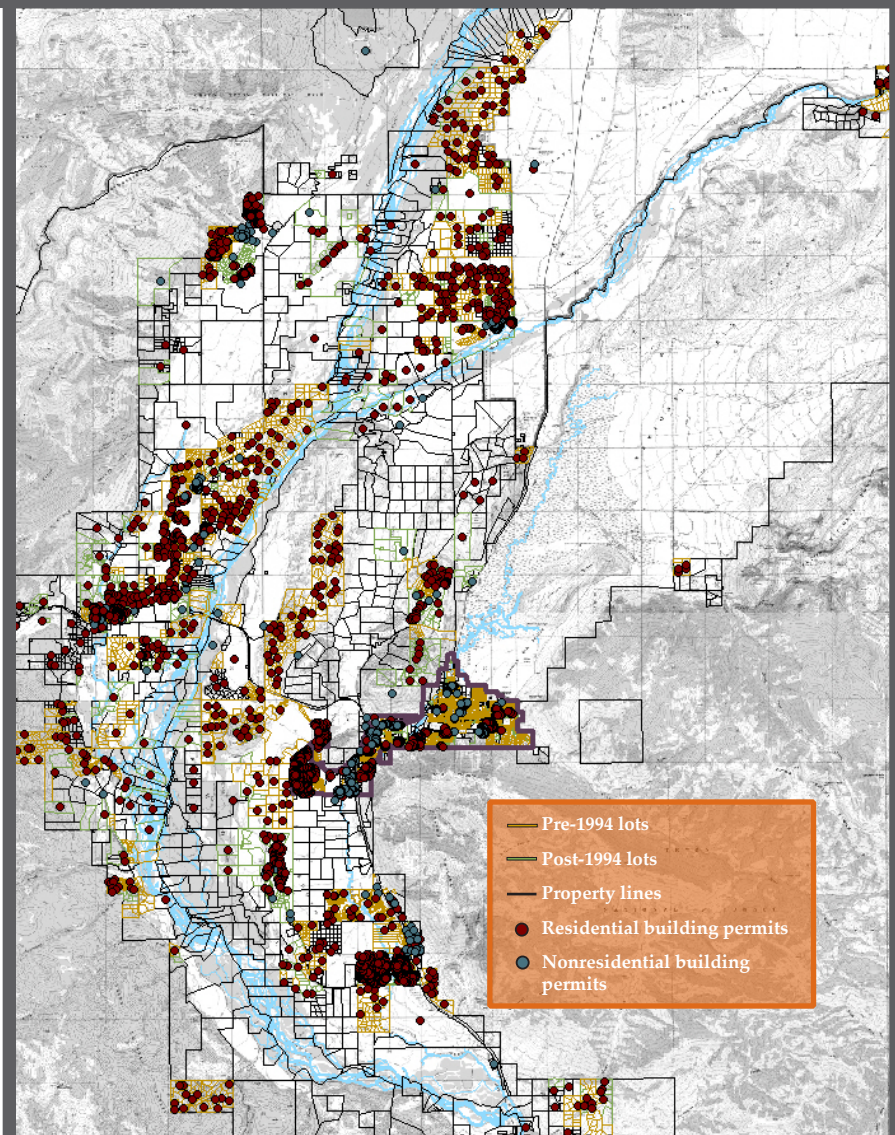
Expand toolbox to further protect sensitive lands

Predictably and proactively plan and monitor for desired amount, location, and type of growth for all areas

Enhance our ability to house those who work in our community.

Expand efforts for mode shift and adjusting land use patterns.

Focus on utilizing existing capacity rather than expanding or adding resorts and create atmosphere for development of year-round business



Joint PC Review

*May 2009 -
September 2010*
41 Public Hearings with
Public Comment
BO/EG Task Force
Roundtable Meeting
with Key Stakeholders

May 2010
PC Preliminary Draft

September 2010
PC Certified Draft

2010

Vision, Common Values, Achieving Our Vision

February - May 2011
Joint Elected Officials'
Review
10 Public JIMs
(5 with Public Comment)

May 2011
Final Plan Draft

July 2011
Plan Approval

2011

Illustration of Our Vision

July - December 2011
Community Workshops
Joint PC/Elected Review
PC Adoption
Joint Elected Adoption

Plan Highlights: Innovative Planning Tools

With a vision to preserve and protect the intact ecosystem in which we live for future generations, we must continue to implement the best available planning practices and lead in the understanding of impacts and possible solutions.

ECOSYSTEM STEWARDSHIP (CV-1)

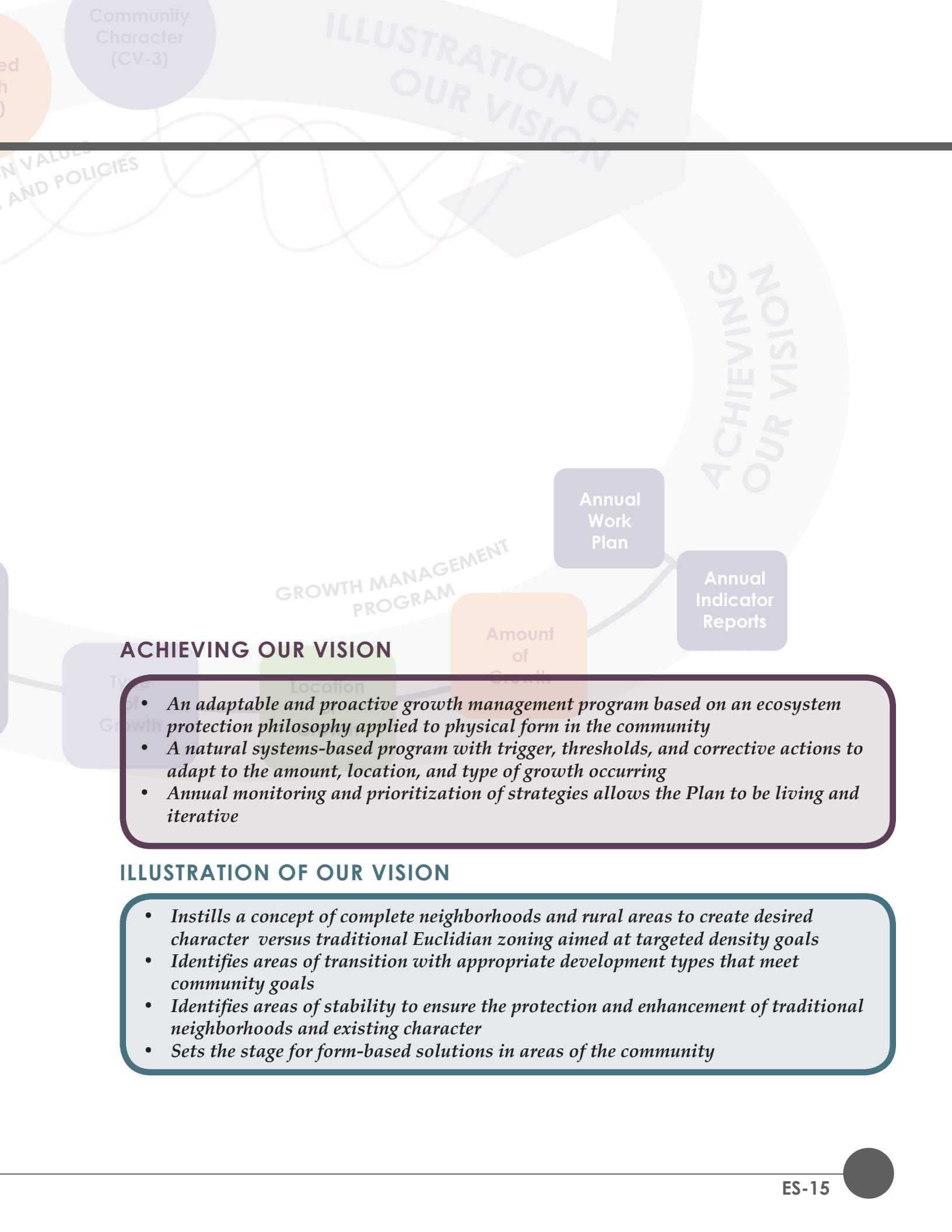
- *Tiered Natural Resource Overlay (NRO) to protect wildlife habitat with the most critical habitats subject to the greatest density, intensity, and design restrictions*
- *Scenic Resources Overlay (SRO) to protect natural skylines, foregrounds, and forested hillsides*
- *Wildlife permeability and wildlife/human conflict design requirements*
- *Clustering and buffering requirements and incentives*
- *Expanded tools, funding and programs for wildlife protection*
- *Sustainability program including green buildings, zero waste goals, renewable energy, transportation mode shift program*

MANAGED GROWTH (CV-2)

- *Joint Town and County planning and implementation of plan*
- *60% of the growth directed toward < 5% of private land*
- *Defined rural areas and complete neighborhoods in the Town and County*
- *Lodging restricted to Lodging Overlay (LO) in Town and resorts in the Town and County*
- *Predictability through commitment to direct zoning and well defined performance based incentives*
- *Consideration and cooperation with greater region*

COMMUNITY CHARACTER (CV-3)

- *Ensure we house over 65% of the workforce locally*
- *Mitigate impacts from new development and address loss of existing workforce housing stock*
- *“Better not bigger” economic philosophy that shifts development toward sustainable businesses and year-round lifestyle-based tourism.*
- *Meet future transportation demand through alternative modes*
- *Create a safe, efficient, interconnected multimodal transportation network*



ACHIEVING OUR VISION

- *An adaptable and proactive growth management program based on an ecosystem protection philosophy applied to physical form in the community*
- *A natural systems-based program with trigger, thresholds, and corrective actions to adapt to the amount, location, and type of growth occurring*
- *Annual monitoring and prioritization of strategies allows the Plan to be living and iterative*

ILLUSTRATION OF OUR VISION

- *Instills a concept of complete neighborhoods and rural areas to create desired character versus traditional Euclidian zoning aimed at targeted density goals*
- *Identifies areas of transition with appropriate development types that meet community goals*
- *Identifies areas of stability to ensure the protection and enhancement of traditional neighborhoods and existing character*
- *Sets the stage for form-based solutions in areas of the community*

