UTAH'S RURAL COMMUNITIES:
PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

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Two of the biggest concerns facing communities in the Intermountain West are the dichotomies of rapid growth and development as opposed to economic decline and stagnation. Numerous strategies have been developed by social and economic scientists to help communities manage the many problems associated with these concerns. One strategy recommended by many researchers and used by numerous communities to stabilize their economies is economic diversification. For many rural communities in Utah, tourism and recreation have been used as part of that diversification effort. Recreation and tourism also play a role in the dichotomies of rapid growth and development by often serving as the antecedent to rapid growth, or serving as the antidote for economic stagnation and decline.

This thesis examined four rural communities in Utah which have diversified or are
attempting to diversify their economies through incorporating tourism and recreation into their economies, which also include agriculture, ranching, and extraction of natural resources, as well as other industries such as manufacturing and services. Our purpose was to examine strategies used by these communities to make recreation and tourism compatible with other activities, as well as determining what tactics they drew upon to preserve the small town atmosphere and unique characteristics of their communities. Through understanding and sharing the problems encountered and strategies used by these four communities, we hoped to assist other communities attempting to integrate tourism and recreation into their economies and lifestyles.
DEDICATION

For my husband Doug,

for his support, patience, and understanding.

For Tyrus and Aubrey

my beautiful children of whom I am so proud.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Two of the biggest concerns facing rural communities in the Intermountain West are the dichotomies of rapid growth and development as opposed to economic decline and stagnation. While communities may face one or the other of these problems, both pose significant challenges for communities when they are confronting these situations.

Arizona, Colorado, Montana, Nevada, and Utah are the five fastest growing states in the United States (Riebsame et al. 1997). While much of that growth is taking place in urban areas, it is also occurring in some rural communities. The term rapid growth defines an area that is experiencing growth rates that exceed the national average (Flora et al. 1992). Problems generally associated with rapid growth in rural communities include: 1) a lack of infrastructure to accommodate new residents, resulting in an increased cost for basic services for all residents; 2) changes in land values, making it more difficult for middle and lower income families to find affordable housing; 3) a lack of professional planners to help manage the growth; 4) heightened social tensions between long-term residents and new residents; and 5) a loss of rural character, which for many residents means a decline in the quality of life (Fitzsimmons and Freedman 1981; Flora et al. 1992; Stokes and Watson 1989).

On the other end of this dichotomy are rural communities that are struggling to escape economic stagnation or decline. Problems for these types of communities include the inability to: 1) stem outmigration, particularly of youth; 2) stabilize their economies and offer employment opportunities to their residents; 3) maintain a viable tax base needed
to offer basic services such as education and health services; and 4) provide or improve other public services such as community centers and libraries (Fitchen 1991; Galston and Baehler 1995; Stokes and Watson 1989).

For many of Utah’s rural communities, these problems (of either growth or decline) have been compounded by the problem of dependency on public lands and the changing perceptions by the general public of how public lands should be used. Utah communities whose economies have revolved around farming, ranching, and extraction of natural resources have depended upon access to and use of public lands, but use of these lands for tourism, recreation, maintenance of biodiversity, storage of hazardous wastes, military operations, and other public purposes has increased user competition and decision making conflicts. Planning activities are becoming extremely difficult as community decision makers face changing and increasingly diverse public perceptions about resource issues. The viability and sustainability of many rural communities depends upon their ability to harmonize their traditional uses of these lands with new economic opportunities (Stokes and Watson 1989).

Recreation and tourism are important components of Utah’s contemporary economy (Utah Division of Travel Development 1997). These activities have brought about rapid growth in some of Utah’s rural communities that suddenly became targeted sites for particular recreational activities (e.g., Moab and mountain biking). Some rural communities have tried to develop recreation and tourism potentials as an economic diversification strategy while attempting to maintain traditional forms of employment. Still
other communities have remained wary of embracing recreation and tourism out of concern for the changes associated with them (Howe et al. 1997).

This thesis project examined four Utah communities that are located near public lands, three of which have diversified or are attempting to diversify their economies through incorporating recreation and tourism into their economies, which also include agriculture, ranching, and extraction of natural resources, as well as other industries such as manufacturing and services. The fourth community’s economy is based primarily upon recreation and tourism, but continues to include a small amount of agriculture, as well as other employment for which individuals commute to nearby communities.

Two of the study communities have experienced rapid growth in the past, but the trend has slowed significantly. Presently, both are growing, but at a manageable pace. The other two communities have experienced stagnation and decline. One of these communities, however, due to recent events, has the potential for rapid growth and all of its associated problems.

We are interested in learning what strategies these communities have used to cope with the concerns related to rapid growth or stagnation and decline, and what role recreation and tourism have played in their economies. We are also interested in understanding what these communities have done to make recreation and tourism compatible with other economic activities, and what tactics they have drawn upon to preserve the small town atmosphere and unique characteristics of their communities. By understanding and sharing the strategies and processes used by these four communities
with other rural areas facing similar circumstances, it may be possible to help these small
towns in their attempts to integrate tourism and recreation into their economies and
lifestyles.
CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW

Defining the concepts of “community” and “rural” is admittedly a difficult task. Therefore, while it may not be possible to put a clear and concise definition on these terms, this literature review examined some of the classic and contemporary sociological literature in an attempt to better understand the concepts for the purpose of this thesis. Additionally, this review focused on the importance of rural communities to our society, with an emphasis on the research that has taken place concerning community and economic development. We are especially interested in research done on communities that have experienced rapid growth or stagnation and decline, and what strategies they used to cope with the growth or to promote and enhance development, including techniques used to implement the strategies.

Defining Community

There have been many studies conducted on communities trying to define what a community is, how the whole is affected by the parts, and why they are important to society (see Bender 1978; Effrat 1974; Hillery 1955; Stokes and Watson 1989; Wilkinson 1990). Yet, experts have not been able to develop a clear and concise definition of the “community” phenomenon. In 1955, George Hillery did a comprehensive analysis of the sociological literature by examining 94 definitions of community (Hillery 1955). He found that a majority of the definitions included three common elements: area, common ties, and
social interaction. The first of these, “area,” is basically defined as a geographical locale. It is a place “where people live and move and have their being” (Wilkinson 1990: 157).

This idea of community as an area has also been described by some researchers as “a sense of place” (Flora et al. 1992; Hine 1980; Wilkinson 1991). As defined by Hine (1980):

A sense of place is an ingredient common to almost all definitions of community. The group must exist in a definable space, and its geography and architecture feed its sense of belonging together. The shared knowledge that the sun will rise over that precise notch on the hill creates a climate of uniqueness: for no other group will the sun rise in quite that way. The known horizon and the familiar walls are the stuff of community. (Hine 1980: 21)

The second frequently used element for defining community as identified by Hillery is “common ties.” It includes such ideas as a feeling of belonging by members within the group, and an emotional attachment to the group (Bender 1978; Effrat 1974; Fitchen 1991; Flora et al. 1992; Hillery 1955). In the 1880s Ferdinand Toennies, a German sociologist, identified two different types of communities. The first he termed Gemeinschaft (community) and, as translated by Hine (1980), it aptly describes this element of community: “a unity stemming from emotions, beliefs, and shared life experiences” (Hine 1980: 19). The idea of “common ties” or Gemeinschaft also encompasses the idea of a certain homogeneity of the population, at least to the extent that those individuals who make up the group share similar values and interest. An example of this type of community commonly exists here in Utah and includes people brought together as a result of their religious beliefs or family ties.
The third common characteristic Hillery identified as an element of community is "social interaction." Effart (1974) refers to this idea of community as a "group of people who share a range of institutions (economic, political, and social) on the basis of their belonging to some familiar social category (e.g., as defined by ethnicity, occupation, lifestyle, or residential location)" (Effart 1974: 3). The idea is not so much that a community is made up of institutions, but that the institutions within a community allow for interaction of the participants of the community. The term also includes the concept of self-sufficiency, or self-reliance. This idea suggests that a community is able to offer everything that its participants require to live (i.e., physical and emotional requirements). Wilkinson (1990) also discusses this idea of self-reliance as being an important part of defining "community." He suggests, however, that the idea of a community as being "all inclusive" does not imply the community is actually closed or exclusive. He points out that a community should have the ability to offer its participants the opportunity to meet their needs within its confines, but that does not mean all participants will do so. He asserts that the "wholeness" of a community should be seen as meaning "that people could meet all their needs within a community, not that they should do so as a condition of it being a community" (Wilkinson 1990: 158, emphasis in original).

There are other social scientists who believe that in this age of advanced communication and transportation, which has resulted in increased mobility and contact with others, a definition of a community can no longer be confined to the ideas of "area," or the requirement that a community must be able to meet all of the needs of its
participants. Instead, they believe the definition should be broadened to include groups of people who share similar interests and values, without the necessary requirements of a common geographical space (Bender 1978; Flora et al. 1992; Wilkinson 1990). Bender (1978) suggests that concentrating too much on territory confuses the understanding of community. He likes to define community simply as “a network of social relations marked by mutuality and emotional bonds,” which “may or may not be coterminous with a specific, contiguous territory” (Bender 1978: 7).

As mentioned earlier, Toennies also identified a second type of community, which he referred to as Gesellschaft (society), that describes community as resulting more from people coming together for practical reasons such as common goals or interests, rather than simply because they live in a common area. Communities of this sort would include groups such as professional societies, clubs, and fraternities. Toennies was suggesting that as a result of industrialization, modern society was moving away from Gemeinschaft, a community held together through shared life experiences, to Gesellschaft, a type of community where “[i]ndividuals were more separate, and the links between them more pragmatic” (Hine 1980: 19).

While there may be disagreement on how to define a community, there are two main areas of agreement in the literature. The first of these is that, although communities may share certain characteristics, they are also individualistic, with each one having a unique flavor of its own. Differences between communities include such factors as levels of isolation, dominant industries, attitudes of the citizens, and ability to attract visitors
(FEMAT 1993; Fitchen 1991; Fitzsimmons and Freedman 1981; Flora et al. 1992; Galston and Baehler 1995; Stokes and Watson 1989). The second area of agreement is that communities are dynamic, and thus constantly changing as they adapt to new social, economic, and demographic situations (Fitchen 1991; Flora et al. 1992; Hine 1980; Luloff 1990).

**Defining “Rural Community”**

Definitions for the term “rural community” often mimic the definitions of community discussed above, in that it is often defined using the three elements identified by Hillery (1955): geographical area, common ties, and social interaction. Just as frequently, however, it is simply characterized by population size and distance from an urban center (Fitchen 1991; Fitzsimmons and Freedman 1981; Flora et al. 1992). The U.S. Census Bureau has given us a very broad definition of rural as a “territory, population, and housing units not classified as urban,” and having less than 2,500 people. Others have defined rural to mean simply a place that lies outside of the urban and suburban areas, which are sparsely populated, and where the bases for at least some of the locals’ livelihoods are agriculture or extraction of natural resources (Fitchen 1991; Stokes and Watson 1989). Additionally, there are often images associated with the term “rural,” including such notions as a homogenous culture, wide open spaces, a strong sense of local identity, a high quality of life, and a sense of belonging.
Importance of Rural Communities

The fate of rural communities has been a long-standing concern for both federal and state governments. Rural communities serve a number of vital purposes for our society. The first of these, and perhaps the one perceived as most important, is their role as suppliers of food, fiber, and natural resources for the United States, and many other countries. As noted by Rees (1997), urban areas are dependent upon rural areas for most of the resources that sustain them, and there is much truth in his statement “[w]hereas the countryside could be quite viable without the city, there could be no city without the countryside” (Rees 1997: 55).

Most of our rural communities were settled because of the natural resources that were located there, including farm and grazing land (Galston and Baehler 1995). However, as population trends in rural areas fluctuated over the years, the number of people actually farming in rural areas decreased. Between 1920 and 1970, the actual number of farms in the United States declined from 6,518 to 2,954 (Fitzsimmons and Freedman 1981: 9). In addition, “employment of rural farm males in agriculture, forestry, and fisheries declined from over 80 percent in 1940 to less than 70 percent in 1960, while that in manufacturing increased from 6 percent to nearly 11 percent” (Fitzsimmons and Freedman 1981: 9). These results were primarily due to an increase in the mechanization of farming techniques which resulted in larger farms using less manual labor. As the number of farms decreased, and the need for laborers decreased, the populations in rural areas also decreased. Many rural residents moved to the cities, as industrialization
intensified, opening up opportunities for employment in the manufacturing industries (Humphrey 1994). Furthermore, many of the young people in rural communities, especially those with college educations, left to find better employment opportunities in metropolitan areas (Galston and Baehler 1995). In the 1970s, however, the trend changed and, as noted by Fitchen (1991: 87), “for the first time in history rural America experienced widespread population gains and actually grew faster than metropolitan areas.” This trend showed the potential for rural communities to thrive as economies boomed due to industries moving to small towns, an increase in tourism and recreation, and renewed mining activities (USDA 1997).

Unfortunately, the gain was short lived, and did not actually result in an increase in the number of people farming. In fact, as the United States moved into the 1980s and was faced with a recession and foreign industrial competition, rural communities again found themselves facing the problem of losing their most educated and industrious youth to larger cities. Additionally, they were faced with a “farm crisis” that resulted in many small farmers going out of business and selling most if not all of their property either to larger farmers or development projects (Fitchen 1991; Johnson and Beale 1998; USDA 1997). By the end of the 1980s, the portion of the rural population consisting of farmers and their families had actually declined from 15 percent of the population in the 1950s, to less than 2 percent in 1987 (Flora and Christenson 1991).

Demographic trends of the 1990s indicate that populations in rural areas are again on the rise, with most of the growth occurring in “recreational and retirement areas,
beyond the metropolitan periphery, and in diversifying manufacturing, commuting and service counties” (Johnson and Beale 1998: 3). Much of this growth has been attributed to increased employment opportunities in rural areas (e.g., manufacturing and service industries), “technological advances” that enable individuals to work from home offices, and positive views about rural lifestyles and wide open spaces (Johnson and Beale 1998; Riebsame et al. 1997).

Rapid Growth Communities

This trend toward increased populations and rapid growth in certain rural areas, however, is not necessarily beneficial to either America’s farmlands or its communities, as it has resulted in more and more land being converted into shopping centers and housing developments. As agricultural lands are converted into commercial centers or suburban residential areas, the results are often increased costs to communities for extending their infrastructure to accommodate new growth. This in turn often causes a severe financial burden on many cities’ budgets (Stokes and Watson 1989). Changing land use patterns in rural areas has other ramifications for farmers and rural communities as well. These include such things as increased land prices, which make farming more difficult and expensive, and conflicts between farmers and new residents over smells, noises, and use of pesticides (Mantell et al. 1990). In turn, this can result not only in a dwindling of America’s agricultural lands as more farmers sell their land, but in effects on the rural lifestyle associated with it, as animosity toward newer residents can replace previous feelings of hospitality and friendliness (Fitchen 1991).
To address the problem of a diminishing supply of farmland due to population growth and expansion of rural communities, the federal government in the 1970s established the National Agricultural Lands Study (Stokes and Watson 1989). In 1981, it concluded that many of its own programs contributed to the loss of farmland. For example, grants for highway construction often resulted in the loss of farmland, and grants to build sewer systems through farms frequently resulted in increased development. As a result of these findings, Congress in 1981 passed the Farmland Protection Policy Act, which directs all federal agencies “to identify and take into account the adverse effects of federal programs on the preservation of farmland” and consider alternatives that would lessen the effects (Stokes and Watson 1989).

While the federal government has enacted some policies to preserve and protect farmland, most of the burden has rested with state and local governments (Flora and Christenson 1991). State laws, including those passed in Utah, often include measures that protect farmers from nuisance lawsuits, reduce taxes while maintaining property values, and establish “agricultural protection areas” which prevent local governments from enacting ordinances or regulations that would put unreasonable restrictions on farm structures or farming practices. In addition, many states have approved conservation easement acts that help preserve and maintain land or water areas for the purposes of agriculture, recreation, culture, wildlife habitat, or other uses consistent with the protection of open land (Mantell et al. 1990; Stokes and Watson 1989).
Similarly, many local governments have enacted legislation or ordinances to help preserve farmland. This includes policies such as agricultural zoning ordinances that would restrict nonfarm uses or promote agriculture preservation through open space strategies. Other ordinances often adopted include antinuisance clauses, or “right to farm” laws that protect farmers and ranchers from complaints about smells, spraying activities, or other normal farming activities that may offend nonfarming neighbors (Fitchen 1991; Stokes and Watson 1989).

In addition to preserving farmland for the purpose of agriculture, there is an increasing awareness by residents of rural communities that keeping farmland as open space preserves the identity and character of the community (Fitchen 1991). As noted above under defining community, many residents feel a “sense of place” because of how they view their communities, and part of that vision lies in seeing themselves as farming communities, even if agriculture is no longer the primary basis for their economies. Thus, as rural communities lose farmland and open space, they may also lose their sense of identity. Furthermore, as open space disappears, so does much of the aesthetic appeal associated with living in or visiting a rural community. The unfortunate irony involved in this situation is that when a community goes through rapid growth, the resulting development can destroy the cultural, scenic, and natural qualities that attracted both visitors and residents to it in the first place (Gottlieb 1995; Stokes and Watson 1989).

Rural communities also serve as guardians for many other natural resources, including water, timber, minerals, and wildlife (Stokes and Watson 1989). In this role we
must count upon them to protect natural resources from the destruction that often takes
place when communities face overdevelopment, or when the use of public lands becomes
controversial. There are two main concerns with rural communities playing this role of
natural resource guardians. The first lies with communities which are experiencing rapid
growth. Many of these communities have had an increase in recreation and tourism in
their areas, helping them to diversify their economies and reduce their dependency upon
extraction industries. Therefore, one might expect that they would be more sensitive to
retaining and protecting the natural resources that sustain them. Frequently, however,
rapid growth and poor planning result in reckless development in sensitive areas such as
foothills and wetlands, which serve as wildlife habitat and replenish and clean water
supplies. Similar concerns are associated with the loss of forested land. Forests not only
provide wildlife habitat, but also protect watersheds by slowing runoff from rain and snow
melt, therefore allowing water to seep into the ground, recharge aquifers, and reduce
siltation in streams and rivers (Stokes and Watson 1989). Furthermore, increased water
use associated with development can lower lakes and decrease the flow of area streams,
threatening wildlife and aquatic life (Flora et al. 1992).

Stagnating or Declining Communities

The second concern surrounding rural communities as guardians of our natural
resources rests with those communities on the other end of the dichotomy, communities
experiencing stagnation or decline, many of which have not diversified their economies
and are still relying primarily on one industry to keep their economies afloat. Most of
these communities were settled because of a single natural resource in their area such as timber, coal, oil, or open land for grazing, and their existence remains tied to the use of that resource. Additionally, many of these industries are dependent upon the use of public lands, and public sentiment about how these lands should be used significantly affects both the industries and surrounding communities (Flora et al. 1992). Local residents and industry management often harbor bitter feelings because they believe others have taken control of their destinies, and their fate is now determined by entities such as environmentalists, recreationists, and federal policymakers. There is a tendency for residents of rural communities, especially those in the U.S. west where public land is most common, to perceive these groups as interfering with the residents' ability to utilize public lands in traditional ways, and to make a decent living.

An example of this conflict is between ranchers who lease public lands for grazing of sheep or cattle, and recreationists who use the land for hiking, biking, or camping and do not wish to encounter domesticated animals, or witness the damage done by overgrazing (Wilkinson 1997). Federal policymakers have also played a role in this conflict by reexamining public land policies, with the result being a reduction of actual acreage open to grazing. In the past, public land transactions that allowed ranchers permits for grazing or private companies land leases for mining or logging were essentially handled as a private matter between a federal agency and the rancher or company. This changed, however, in the 1970s with the passage of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), which requires public participation in management decisions concerning

One consequence of new regulations was the Sage Brush Rebellion, which began in Grand County, Utah, when the BLM attempted to set aside land for possible wilderness designation that local residents of Moab believed should be used for the purposes of oil and uranium exploration. Rather than serve as guardians of our natural resources, these residents felt justified in bulldozing new roads through pristine high desert wilderness in order to prevent wilderness designation of the area, and reserve it for multiple uses such as mining and oil drilling. They strongly felt their community’s existence and their livelihoods depended upon it (Wheeler 1989).

Many residents of rural communities, especially those in the western U.S., still feel that public lands should continue to be used in ways that allow the local communities to have employment opportunities in timber harvesting, mining, and other extractive industries. However, more people are migrating into these communities from other areas because of the beauty of the surrounding environment, and they often bring with them different ideas about natural resource and public land use. Many people are moving to rural areas to capitalize on the growing recreation and tourism occurring on public land, and, in some areas are less likely to want to see the land disturbed by timber harvesting, grazing, or mining. While both longtime residents and newer immigrants want a healthy economy, the latter group is a little less willing to do it at the expense of their natural
surroundings. Both groups, however, often want desperately to retain the character of their community (Howe et al. 1997).

While tourism and recreation are often touted as being more environmentally friendly than other alternatives in diversifying an economy, such as the extractive industries or many manufacturing companies, they are also known to have their own detrimental effects upon the landscape surrounding the community. Increased tourism and recreation can degrade scenery, reduce water quality, and disrupt fish and wildlife by invading their habitat with new buildings, increased trash and litter, and a rise in automobile traffic (Howe et al. 1997).

One example of this is Gatlinburg, Tennessee, a gateway community to the Great Smokey Mountains National Park. As the community has continued to grow and the economy has become increasingly dependent upon tourism, it has had a tremendously negative impact upon the wildlife in the park. This is especially true for the local black bears, who were the original attraction for visitors. As the town has expanded it has taken away much of the habitat outside the park previously used by the animals. As they have lost their habitat, they have lost the ability to feed and care for themselves. Also, as more visitors are coming to the area, more bears are being lost to traffic fatalities (Howe et al. 1997).

**Diversifying Rural Communities**

Rural communities that are economically stable through diversified economies and adequate planning are better able to concentrate efforts on land preservation, both for the
purpose of keeping natural resources healthy and for retaining the rural character of their communities (Ashton and Pickens 1995; Fitchen 1991; Flora and Christenson 1991; Galston and Baehler 1995; Howe et al. 1997; Stokes and Watson 1989). Resource-dependent communities and communities that depend upon one major manufacturing plant are the most susceptible to economic stagnation and decline. Data on these types of communities have shown sharply fluctuating unemployment rates that tend to be above national rates (Krannich and Luloff 1991). A 1984 study by Dreilsma also found counties with the highest poverty levels in the U. S. tend to be those that are dependent upon forestry and mining (Freudenburg and Gramling 1994). Some researchers have suggested that one of the difficulties for these types of communities is that decisions regarding their futures and livelihoods are often made outside of the communities by corporate CEOs, government officials, and international markets over which they have no control (Freudenburg and Gramling 1994; Peluso et al. 1994). Also, communities that base their economies on natural resource extraction are dependent upon the abundance and health of those resources. When timber or coal supplies are exhausted, or drought, flooding, or insect damage destroys crops, the economies of these communities may also be depleted or destroyed.

To help stabilize their economies, and thereby bring about more local control, state and federal governments have been urging rural communities to diversify their economies. While most communities offer some mix of employment opportunities, it does not necessarily mean that their economies are diversified. A diversified economy, as defined
by Ashton and Pickens (1995), is one in which there are employment opportunities in different sectors, and “employment is spread evenly over the sectors present, while economies that lack diversity have a disproportionate share of employment in only a few sectors” (Ashton and Pickens 1995: 23). Researchers identified two important benefits of a diversified economy. The first is that it can help guard against a community’s entire economy collapsing should one sector become nonviable (Furuseth and Thomas 1997). The second is that communities with diversified economies tend to have slightly lower unemployment rates and more stable employment opportunities over time (Ashton and Pickens 1995).

While there is quite a bit of research on the benefits of diversified economies, there does not appear to be an easy answer as to how communities should diversify. Many communities have attempted to attract high technology industries or light manufacturing companies, but competition for these industries is high. Less attractive alternatives have also been considered by some communities such as serving as a state or federal prison site, or as a site for a variety of waste disposal needs, ranging from “landfilling household garbage and construction debris to burying incineration ash” (Fitchen 1991: 227).

Other communities have turned to tourism and recreation as viable means to diversify their economies and attract new employment opportunities and revenue (Allen et al. 1988; Flora et al. 1992; Galston and Baehler 1995; Stokes and Watson 1989). This is especially true of communities adjacent to parks, forests, wilderness areas, and other large tracts of public land. Tourism can be described as a community’s attempt to bring in
visitors through special events and sight-seeing attractions that have been created and promoted by the community for this purpose (King 1998). This would include such things as county fairs, festivals, museums, galleries, and gift shops. In addition, there is another type of tourism gaining popularity called “heritage tourism,” which draws visitors to historic and cultural sites. Interest in this type of tourism has captured the attention of some large corporations such as American Express Travel Related Services and Alamo Rent a Car, Inc., which have donated large sums of money to the National Trust for Historic Preservation to help communities develop their historic and cultural sites (Dickinson 1996).

Recreation, on the other hand, can be characterized as an outdoor activity that capitalizes on outstanding features of the local natural environment (King 1998). It can be categorized into five different types of activities: 1) activities of physical pursuit which include climbing, caving, riding, sailing, and using recreational vehicles; 2) observing wildlife such as birding or whaling; 3) recreational hunting and fishing; 4) simple enjoyment of the scenery; and 5) visiting historical and archeological sites such as petroglyphs and ancient Indian ruins (Edington and Edington 1986). As discretionary incomes in the U.S. tend to rise over time, and individuals have more leisure time due to both longer holidays and longer life expectancies after retirement, tourism and recreation activities will continue to expand, creating many opportunities for communities to get their share of these dollars and expand their economies (Edington and Edington 1986; Galston and Baehler 1995; Howe et al. 1997).
Recreational or seasonal housing is also a form of tourism and recreation which is not frequently mentioned in the literature. This type of recreational option often “provides an important leisure opportunity for the users and makes up a significant component of the housing stock in many rural communities” (Green et al. 1996: 427). Recreational housing is shown to benefit communities by contributing additional jobs and tax revenue (Green et al. 1996).

Similar to the paradox communities face when bidding for a new state prison or a waste disposal facility, there is much controversy surrounding the idea of communities using tourism and recreation to diversify their economies. Some researchers see an increase in tourism and recreation dollars as the panacea for rural communities’ economic woes. Others see it as another problem with which rural communities must learn to cope.

In the early 1990s the timber industry in the West had predicted extensive job losses due to a reduction in federal timber harvesting on public lands, which was taking place in order to protect certain endangered species and to halt deterioration of freshwater fisheries. By the beginning of 1996, however, this prediction had failed to materialize. In fact, many western states “were in the midst of vigorous economic expansions that brought unemployment rates to their lowest levels in 25 years and added tens of thousand of new jobs annually” (Power 1996b: 49). Thus, while many of the extractive industries were floundering in the 1980s and early 1990s, other industries, such as those related to tourism, were enjoying steady growth in terms of both revenue and employment opportunities. As stated by Glaston and Baehler (1995: 176-177), “In 1986,
the [tourist] industry supported 5.21 million jobs, which paid wages of $57.8 billion...” and “participants in outdoor recreation activities spend more than $100 billion per year, supporting 9 million jobs in the private leisure/recreation industry. The government spends $5 billion per year on related facilities and services.” Most states (46 out of 50) count tourism among its top three revenue producing “industries,” and spend large sums of money promoting their state to prospective tourists. According to the U.S. Travel Data Center (1999), 49 states will spend a total of $524,400,531 on tourism development in the 1998-99 fiscal year. For the same time period, the state of Utah’s Travel Office has a total budget of $4.3 million.

Consequently, tourism and recreation are seen by many people, including researchers, government officials, and community leaders, as a positive addition to a community’s economy, and as a way for a community to continue to expand and improve. Primarily, tourism and recreation provide a way for communities to increase their employment opportunities and boost their tax revenues (Allen et al. 1988; Stokes and Watson 1989). But there are other advantages. One is that tourism has the potential to encourage communities to preserve and improve their natural environments in order to attract tourists, recreationists, and possibly new residents, rather than to allow the environmental degradation that may accompany manufacturing or extraction of natural resources (Flaccavento 1996; Power 1996a; Stokes and Watson 1989). Another advantage noted by Galston and Baehler is that tourism and recreation may offer “tremendous opportunities for developing a climate of entrepreneurship in a community or
region and for expanding the local pool of entrepreneurs to include less advantaged populations" (Galston and Baehler 1995: 175). Lastly, residents often find that as new businesses are developed to accommodate the tourists, especially destination tourists, they also reap the benefit by having new leisure opportunities made available to them (Dawson et al. 1993; Gottlieb 1995). In turn, this helps rural economies when residents spend more of their leisure dollars within their communities, rather than going to other areas to recreate (Galston and Baehler 1995).

On the other hand, many communities have found there are numerous disadvantages to tourism and recreation development. Probably the most commonly mentioned concern is that many of the jobs created by tourism are considered "low quality in terms of wages, benefits, stability, continuity, opportunity for advancement, and dignity" (Galston and Baehler 1995: 175). Also, host communities and residents often complain that tourism and recreation result in increased noise, traffic congestion, crime, and consumer prices; disruption of family structure; and resentment by local residents for intrusion into their communities and lives (Allen et al. 1988; Dawson et al. 1993; Fitchen 1991; Riebsame 1997). Another major concern is the stress that tourism and recreation often place on a community’s infrastructure, especially if the stress results in rapid growth for the community. This includes the need to provide such things as paved roads, street lighting, litter control, and public restrooms. Finally, there is the problem experienced by many communities of having become too popular with tourists or recreationists and having grown too much. This puts them in the predicament of trying to protect the beauty
of the natural environment, and the unique character of the community that attracted visitors and residents in the first place, from being destroyed by tourism growth (Gottleib 1995; Power 1996a; Stokes and Watson 1989).

**Rural Community Development Strategies**

There has been much research in the area of community development, and while there is no "one size fits all" development plan for communities, four main strategies have been identified. The most important strategy is the need for communities to plan for the future (Howe et al. 1997; Mantell et al. 1990; Segedy 1997). This often will include preparing a comprehensive document that clarifies the community position on plans for significant issues such as: open space, affordable housing, transportation, and natural and historical resource protection (Mantell et al. 1990). Additionally, the plan should include information on the consequences new development may have on environmental, social, and economic factors important to the community (Luther 1997). All of these factors combine to make up the integrity of the community, and one of the consequences of communities not planning sufficiently for the future is the loss of that integrity.

One of the most difficult, yet critical, aspects of the planning process is for a community to create a vision of their future (Howe et al. 1997; Mantell et al. 1990; Segedy 1997; Stokes and Watson 1989). Community leaders and residents are often taken by surprise when tourism growth changes the character of their community, stresses local infrastructure, and destroys the surrounding environmental beauty. Or, they can be equally surprised when suddenly their community has serious problems due to population
decline and loss of local businesses and the concomitant loss of tax revenue needed to maintain schools, churches, libraries, and historical buildings. In order to prevent these unpleasant scenarios, community leaders and residents must determine what they want their community to look like in the next 20 or 30 years, and how they are going to get there. Their vision should encompass the full range of local concerns such as “schools, housing, economic development, neighborhoods, parks and open space, and protection of traditional industries like farming, commercial fishing, logging or ranching” (Howe et al. 1997: 48). This visioning process is difficult, and community leaders must make a “firm commitment to inform, involve, and educate the public” (Howe et al. 1997: 49). Two possible methods for accomplishing this are through a series of town meetings or a questionnaire.

The second strategy found to be important for managing change is for communities is to do an inventory of both environmental and man-made resources that are publicly and privately owned. This would include identifying such things as problem areas, what threats they face, and how they can be protected (Howe et al. 1997; Mantell et al. 1990; Stokes and Watson 1989). In communities adjacent to public land, the inventory should also include information on the type of activities that will be permitted on public land and future plans for public land by the agencies responsible for managing it (Howe et al. 1997). In order for community leaders to make sound land use decisions, it is also important that the inventory includes data on natural resources such as soil and vegetation types, surface and ground water conditions, wildlife habitat, and significant historical
buildings (Howe et al. 1997; Stokes and Watson 1989). Additionally, the inventory should include demographic and economic trends, such as information on the rate of population increase or decline, age, income and occupation characteristics of residents, local industry trends, and availability of affordable housing (Mantell et al. 1990). Lastly, it should contain information on local zoning ordinances, state and federal policies, and the community’s current master plan, if one exists, to ensure that the citizens understands any legal requirements they must comply with in the new plans they develop (Howe et al. 1997; Mantell et al. 1990).

A third strategy for managing change often adopted by communities is the use of regulations such as zoning ordinances, subdivision regulations, building restrictions, and impact fees (Howe et al. 1997; Mantell et al. 1990). The first three are used to help communities implement the ideas envisioned by the community during the initial planning process. Impact fees help communities deal with the stresses placed on their infrastructure by an influx of new residents and new subdivisions (Howe et al. 1997; Stokes and Watson 1989). The costs associated with improving and maintaining local community infrastructure may be large and place a heavy burden on rural cities’ budgets. As noted by Howe et al. (1997):

A recent study by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the American Farmland Trust concluded that for every dollar of tax revenue collected from residential land uses, local governments spend an average of $1.36 to provide services. By contrast, for every dollar received from agriculture land uses, local governments spend only 21 cents. “Cows don’t go to school,” the study noted wryly. (Howe et al. 1997: 87)
To offset these costs, many municipalities have begun imposing impact fees on developers to finance the expenses of expanding local infrastructure to accommodate new residents. However, because community leaders come and go, and regulation and zoning laws can be easily changed, some communities are coming up with more creative ways to influence the development process. Howe and his associates give a comprehensive list of these ideas, which include:

innovative programs to acquire sensitive lands, tax abatements that promote the rehabilitation of historic buildings, incentives that encourage developers to plan projects with the needs of the larger community in mind, or education campaigns that encourage voluntary actions by citizens. (Howe et al. 1997: 72)

Their list also includes ideas such as conservation easements, tax incentives, or purchasing land for conservation purposes (Mantell et al. 1990). Balancing these approaches with regulations can make achieving community goals much more stable and realistic. This is especially true if there is a lot of conflict surrounding the issue of appropriate land use. Another suggestion mentioned by Howe et al. (1997) is that community planning commissions attempt to work closely with developers to ensure that they understand the community’s vision for the future, and adapt their plans to this vision. Summit County in Utah is a good example of an area that has put this idea into practice. In exchange for building permits, developers in Summit County must agree to include in their plans conservation measures such as maintaining open space and preserving historic buildings (Cates 1998).
The fourth strategy for managing change, which is not commonly discussed in the literature, but which could be especially useful to communities in states such as Utah where there is a lot of public land, is the idea of public/private partnerships where community leaders team up with public land managers in ways that will benefit both the community and the public lands (FEMAT 1993; Howe et al. 1997). One of the main contributions a national park, forest, or wilderness area can make to a community is to help strengthen the local economy. This can be done in a number of ways, including: encouraging visitors to the area to frequent businesses in town; ensuring that the land management agency purchases its supplies from local businesses; and, promoting the hiring of local residents whenever possible. In addition, having a national park, forest, or wilderness area as a neighbor can contribute significantly to the quality of life for residents within a community (Howe et al. 1997).

**Economic Development Strategies**

In addition to community development strategies, there are specific economic strategies to help communities in the development process. Economic development strategies tend to be most important to communities which are facing declining or stagnant populations, or a possible decline in their social and economic viability (Reed and Blair 1993). Again, because of the diversity involved in rural communities, there is no "one size fits all" economic development strategy, yet there are myriad strategies and programs designed to help communities improve their economic situations. Strategies vary from ideas on expanding existing industries to bringing in new industries. This includes
developing innovative ways that natural resource-dependent communities can enhance their competitive market position. For example, there are techniques for attracting value-added businesses to their areas such as food processing plants or wholesale and transportation operations (e.g., warehouses) (Galston and Baehler 1995). Other economic development ideas include those already discussed, such as serving as a site for a new state prison or waste facility or integrating tourism and recreation into the economy (Fitchen 1991; Freudenburg and Gramling 1994; Stokes and Watson 1989; Walzer and Gruidl 1991).

In spite of these possible economic strategies, many rural communities face the dilemma of being at a competitive disadvantage for attracting new industries, especially the smaller more remote communities which are usually the most desperate for new economic opportunities. While part of this is due to their remoteness and a lack of access to transportation and markets, an equally large part is due to a lack of individuals in leadership positions who are capable of or have the time to spend luring new industries into their areas. Many rural communities have volunteer mayors and city council members who assume the responsibilities for economic development, while at the same time hold down full-time jobs and take care of their families (Walzer and Gruidl 1991). Leaders in these communities have less time to devote to implementing economic development strategies, tend to be less sophisticated organizationally, and have fewer leadership skills, knowledge of available resources, and training and technical skills to aid them in their quest for successful economic development (Reid 1986).
Kusel refers to this idea of community locality, structure, and leadership ability as “community capacity,” which he defines as “the ability of residents, and community institutions, organizations, and leadership to meet local needs and expectations” (Forest Ecosystem Management Team 1993: 71). He has found that communities with the best access to transportation, markets, raw materials, and with competent leadership, tended to have the greatest economic diversification, as well as the greatest capacity. Communities with the greatest capacity are also most able to adapt to economic changes and to capitalize on economic opportunities (Forest Ecosystem Management Team 1993).

In addition to their own development initiatives, there are numerous federal and state programs to help rural communities pursue economic development (Luther 1997; Unruh 1991; Walzer and Gruidl 1991). Unfortunately, federal funding for rural communities has been decreasing steadily since the 1980s. As noted by Unruh (1991):

Programs like the Community Development Block Grant, Farmers Home Administration grant and loan programs, and Environmental Protection Agency wastewater treatment funds have all been reduced, greatly limiting the options available to rural communities for financing new or improved infrastructure or for assisting new or expanding businesses. (Unruh 1991: 136)

As a result, much of the responsibility for aiding rural communities has been passed on to state governments (Luther 1997; Unruh 1991). Most state programs offer communities help in the planning process, grants to finance feasibility studies and hire professional facilitators, and information on low cost loans for remodeling or starting new businesses (Walzer and Gruidl 1991). The state of Utah has an example of such a program in the
The 21st Century Communities Initiative: Positioning Rural Utah for the 21st Century helps rural cities, towns, counties, and Indian tribes to "prepare rural Utah for unprecedented population and visitor growth; create new jobs and reduce unemployment; diversify rural economies; and, protect quality of life" (The Governor's Rural Partnership Office 1998: 2). The initiative was started in April 1998 and offers many of the same services mentioned above. A sampling of these services includes: community planning and assessment tools, priority access to state programs and financial resources, technical support and mentoring, and, leadership training (The Governor's Rural Partnership Office 1998).

One of the main questions for many local leaders, however, is how to get information on these initiatives so they can take advantage of the programs and grants being offered by the states. Unruh (1991: 131) offers a solution to this problem by suggesting states offer conferences as a way to "identify and communicate with rural leaders, to market existing state services, and to identify and prioritize policy issues for administrative and legislative considerations." Additionally, conferences offer an opportunity for rural leaders to come together and discuss strategies that have worked in their communities.

While many communities are attempting to recruit new industries or expand existing ones, some researchers would suggest this is not the best way to diversify. According to much of the literature, quality of life factors have become more significant for influencing in-migration and retaining residents than the availability of jobs (Green
1997; Luther 1997; Power 1996a). In a report on the economic well being of communities in the Pacific Northwest, Power (1995) states:

As quality of life becomes more important to the region’s economy and natural-resource extraction becomes less important, a shift is taking place in the economic role that natural resources play. Our natural landscapes no longer generate new jobs and incomes primarily by being warehouses from which loggers, farmers, fishermen, and miners extract commercial products. In today’s world, these landscapes often may generate more new jobs and income by providing the natural-resource amenities--water and air quality, recreational opportunities, scenic beauty, and the fish and wildlife--that makes the Pacific Northwest an attractive place to live, work, and do business. (Power 1995: ii)

Despite a record number of job losses due to lay-offs in the timber and aerospace industries, the Pacific Northwest has continued to prosper because of its diverse economic base which was able to absorb these losses. This diversity is a result of people moving into the area and staying there because of the natural amenities it offers as compared to other areas, such as scenic beauty, recreational opportunities, clean air and water, and it is relatively uncongested. As more people move to the area, it attracts new businesses, and thus new employment opportunities. Although there is the argument that many of the jobs are in the service industry, and thus do not pay as well as the jobs they are replacing, Power (1995) disputes this argument by presenting statistics that show not only have the number of jobs in the Pacific Northwest increased, but also incomes have continued to grow, and many of the jobs replacing those in the natural resource extraction industries
actually pay higher wages. This is not to say, however, that jobs, especially in rural communities, have not been lost, and that many of the region’s rural communities are not having a difficult time. His point, however, is that these communities may be better off in the long run if they use their natural amenities to attract new residents and new industries than if they rely on short-term extractive uses and possible destruction of their environment.

Growth in population is not the sole indicator of a community’s viability. For many years it was believed that rural areas were “destined to either grow up to be urban places or to fail” (Luther 1997: 152). Luther (1997) believes we need to develop new models for rural communities that “explore and evaluate alternative futures” (p.152) other than those simply related to growth and urbanization. He advocates ideas such as growth in quality of living standards that includes some economic growth, but not at the expense of losing the community’s integrity and character. This type of growth takes vision and planning by local residents and community leaders, and usually revolves around sustainable development, which “does not necessarily endeavor to increase income, but rather to increase the quality of life” (Clugston 1997: 87).

Implementing Community and Economic Development Strategies

As previously discussed, there are many strategies for community and economic development, but how effectively communities implement their strategies can make a difference for how well they meet their purposes. There are two key factors for
implementing both community and economic development strategies. The first is that creation and implementation of any strategies used by a community must be done locally, and must generally be accepted by the citizens. As discussed earlier, informed and involved citizens will have a positive impact on the outcome and success of planning and those ideas developed during that process (Segedy 1997). To encourage public participation, many communities have used project committees or task forces made up of local residents to help in all aspects of planning, including visioning for the future, handing out and collecting questionnaires, and inventorying community resources.

It should be noted here that community leaders often encounter a serious problem when attempting to bring citizens together to develop a strategy. The problem is that communities are made up of different groups of people, and each of these groups may be affected differently by the changes communities face, and therefore might react differently to the strategies that are proposed. For example, wilderness designation for BLM land in southern Utah can be perceived as a positive for businesses catering to tourism and recreation, but a negative for residents whose livelihood depends upon mining or grazing. Thus, how these groups would view and approach potential wilderness designation in their area would be very different. The variability of the needs and desires of the different groups making up the community can create difficulties for community leaders in finding effective strategies and solutions to their economic problems. As noted in the FEMAT report (1993):

Groups within communities vary in their ability, willingness or both to respond to economic shifts. What might seem
like rational adaptation from one perspective might be “out of the question” for others. (FEMAT 1993: 71)

The second key factor in implementing economic and development strategies, is in the attitudes and abilities of community leaders. Rural community leaders must be innovative, committed, and willing to take the necessary action needed to implement the chosen strategies if they are going to be effective (Reed and Blair 1993). In the case of economic development, community leaders must also have an entrepreneurial attitude and an ability to motivate others in the community to recognize and take advantage of economic opportunities (Luther 1997; Walzer and Gruidl 1991). As already mentioned, this is not always an easy task for rural community leaders, especially those who are doing it as part-time volunteers.

Rural communities are diverse, and the strategies needed to aid a community will depend upon the unique characteristics of the community and its particular concerns. For example, communities going through rapid growth are more likely to focus on concerns related to environmental and social systems, such as infrastructure, zoning ordinances, and the character of the community. Communities experiencing stagnation or decline will tend to focus more on economic development, including ideas for bringing in new industries and/or maintaining current ones (Reed and Blair 1993).
This chapter is divided into two main sections. The first section explains the methods used in choosing the four study communities. The second section discusses the methods used for gathering data about the communities through the use of key informant interviews and secondary information sources.

Study Sites

Much research has focused on changes occurring in communities that are located in areas adjacent to public lands and that have shifted to an economic base primarily dependent upon tourism and recreation. The intention of this thesis, therefore, is to look instead at four rural communities that are located near public lands but that have used tourism and recreation to diversify their economies. The communities included in this study have or are in the process of integrating tourism and recreation into their economies, but continue to include farming, ranching, or other extraction of natural resources, as well as other industries such as manufacturing and services not related to tourism and recreation. The two main questions for this thesis then become: What strategies did these communities use to integrate tourism into their economies? and How have they kept the integrity of the community (i.e., maintained the unique characteristics of the community)?

To find communities which would meet the purpose of the research, there were five main criteria used to select the four communities: 1) close proximity to state or federal
lands, and, consequently, an ability to attract tourists and recreationists destined to use that land; 2) a diverse economy which includes at least some tourism, or the community is attempting to encourage tourism to help diversify its economy; 3) an ability to maintain the communities’ rural atmosphere and unique characteristics through local land use ordinances, regulations, and land acquisition programs that will conserve and preserve natural resources and cultural heritage; 4) a population of less than 10,000, and located in a nonmetropolitan county (as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau); and 5) an existing master plan or the community is in the process of developing a plan for the future. For the purpose of creating a sampling frame from which to select the case studies, a rural community was defined as a geographical area (i.e., city or town) that is not part of a metropolitan area, and which has a population of less than 10,000 residents.

The four rural communities in Utah chosen for this project were: Escalante, located in Garfield County in south-central Utah (population: 818); Randolph, located in Rich County in north-central Utah (population: 488); Springdale, located in Washington County in southeastern Utah (population: 275); and Vernal, located in Uintah County in northeastern Utah (population: 6,644). While it was difficult to find communities that where a perfect match for the criteria, each study community meets at least four of the five criteria and has at least some aspects of the fifth. Three of the communities (Springdale, Vernal, and Escalante) are considered “gateway communities” to either a national park or monument.
Springdale has served as the gateway community to Zion National Park since its inception (it was designated as a National Monument in 1909 and became a National Park in 1919). Vernal has also had many years of experience as a gateway community to Dinosaur National Monument, which was established in 1915. Escalante, located adjacent to the new Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, which was designated in 1996, is a new gateway community. The fourth community, Randolph, is just beginning to work on promoting tourism and recreation, but without the benefit of a national park or monument nearby. They do, however, have other public lands such as the Wasatch National Forest, BLM land, and state lands surrounding their community.
Information from the 1990 U.S. Census and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) [Economic Research Service (ERS), USDA] was used to begin the process of narrowing down the number of eligible communities in Utah. The information was used first to determine which communities in Utah fit the criteria of a population base of less than 10,000, and were located in nonmetropolitan counties (number 4 above). Secondly, it was used to help in identify communities which also met the criteria of an economy that included some tourism and recreation, as well as communities that were located adjacent to federal lands (numbers 1 and 2 above).

In order to determine which rural communities in the state would best meet the other selection criteria (numbers 3 and 5 above), seven key expert informant interviews were conducted with individuals from agencies and nonprofit organizations within the state of Utah who work closely with rural communities. The respondents were advised on all five criteria being used to select the study communities, but were asked only to identify which communities they thought were “successful” in the community development process. This was defined for them as including such factors as diversifying their economies, maintaining their rural atmosphere, and developing a plan for the future. Although most of the respondents mentioned all four of the communities chosen for the study as communities that they thought were “successful” in the community development process, how they defined “successful” was dependent upon their area of expertise. For example, a specialist in the area of landscape development found Vernal to be successful because residents had planted trees and flowers down Main Street. A specialist in tourism
felt Springdale was successful because residents had done such a good job capitalizing on the tourism industry. Thus, while the term "successful" is subjective, enough of these professionals saw the four communities as "successful" through their own lens of expertise that we believe the communities have met the criteria well enough to serve as possible examples for other rural communities.

The expert key informant interviews lasted approximately 45 minutes. The following is a list of the seven respondents who served as expert key informants, and the organizations they work with:

- David Bell, Utah State University Extension Specialist, Community Development
- Wes Curtis, Coordinator, 21st Century Communities Initiative
- Ann King, United States Forest Service, Capital City Team
- Bim Oliver, Main Street Program Coordinator, State of Utah Department of Community and Economic Development
- Allen Rasmussen, Utah State University Extension Specialist, Range Management
- Dave Rogers, Utah State University Extension Specialist, Community Resource Development
- Karen Sudmeier, Research Coordinator, Utah Travel Council

Using the information given by these individuals, a tally was done of all the communities they suggested for inclusion in the study, and a list of seven communities with the most "votes" was generated. In order to determine which four of the seven communities would best meet the needs of our study we decided geographical dispersion
would be a useful element if the communities were to serve as examples for a variety of communities within the state. Therefore, we chose four communities from four different counties that represent four different tourism regions within the state. The communities were also chosen because they represent different levels of economic activity in the area of tourism and recreation, as well as in the diversification of their economies. Lastly, the communities chosen exhibited varying degrees of experience in the planning process. Escalante and Randolph both began their planning processes in the early 1990s and have less than 10 years of experience. Springdale and Vernal began their process in the late 1970s and early 1980s, respectively, and have had 15 to 20 years of experience.

TABLE 1 Community Selection Criteria Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communities</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>Economic base</th>
<th>Tourism region</th>
<th>Public lands</th>
<th>Planning experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Randolph</td>
<td>488</td>
<td>Rich</td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>Bridgerland</td>
<td>Wasatch National Forest</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Escalante</td>
<td>818</td>
<td>Garfield</td>
<td>Timber</td>
<td>Canyonlands</td>
<td>GSENM</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Springdale</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>Tourism</td>
<td>Colorlands</td>
<td>Zion National Park</td>
<td>high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vernal</td>
<td>6,644</td>
<td>Uintah</td>
<td>Energy Resources</td>
<td>Dinosaurland</td>
<td>Dinosaur National Monument</td>
<td>high</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Collecting Data About the Communities

Sampling Design and Identification of Respondents

There were two main data sources used in collecting information about the study communities. The primary method used was in-depth key informant interviews with leaders from each of the communities. Initial identification of potential interviewees began during the expert key informant interviews.

A non-probability sampling method frequently used in community studies—which can be referred to as either snowball, reputational, or chain-referral sampling—was used for this research (Bailey 1987; Bernard 1994; Newman 1994). With this method, one or more key individuals are located who are asked to name others who would be likely candidates for the study (Bernard 1994). A random sample, which is normally used for quantitative research, was not appropriate for this thesis because of the need for a particular type of respondent. A qualitative approach was used to analyze the data collected, and the respondents needed to obtain the information where a special group of people who would be considered community leaders, in that they were involved and well informed on their community’s planning process.

Our process began with a letter to the mayor of each study community introducing the research and requesting an interview with him or her (see Appendix A). The mayors also provided names of other possible study participants who are knowledgeable about the history of the communities’ planning processes and who have been involved in its implementation (see Appendix B). The types of individuals interviewed included: political
leaders (mayors, city council members, county commissioners, planning and zoning committee members, and board of adjustment members); business leaders (chamber of commerce presidents and members, real estate development interests, and owners of local businesses, especially those related to tourism and recreation); public land managers; and city employees (planners and managers). Snowball sampling allowed us to attain the names of community leaders with varying backgrounds, levels of experience with the community, and views on the communities' success in both the planning and economic diversification process, and whether community integrity was retained.

Not all individuals identified as potential respondents were contacted and asked to participate in the study. The number of potential respondents for each community ranged between 12 and 15, with most people, when asked to give names of other potential respondents, repeating the same names already given by other participants. Due to financial and time constraints on the study, only 10 individuals from each community were interviewed. Those individuals who served as respondents for each community were the first 10 we were able to contact, and who agreed to the interview. Although additional respondents may have offered additional perspectives, we considered those respondents who did participate to be key members of the communities' planning processes, both past and present, and, therefore, we believe they serve as suitable respondents for the information needed for this research.

One week after the letters to the mayors were sent, a follow-up telephone call was made to each mayor. During this phone call an interview time was scheduled and the
mayors were asked to give names of other potential respondents. All other respondents in the study were contacted via the telephone, at which time they were given information on the purpose of the study, asked to participate, and asked for the names of other potential respondents. Interview times and locations were also arranged.

For the four study communities, 41 potential respondents were contacted, with only one individual from Springdale refusing to participate in the study. The reason given for the refusal was a planned vacation and a lack of time. All other respondents were gracious in their willingness to give us the time needed to conduct the interviews. Most were rather flattered that their community was seen as a "successful" community by the seven expert key informants previously mentioned. The objective of looking only at "successful" communities is likely the factor behind the low refusal rate by the respondents.

Interview Protocol Design and Procedures

In-depth interviews were conducted with 10 individuals in each community. Participants in the study were asked to sign a formal consent form approved by Utah State University’s Institutional Review Board. The consent form granted the interviewer use of the information received for this thesis (see Appendix C). To ensure the credibility of this research, it was considered important that those who participated in the interview process be referenced as primary sources of information. All respondents were reminded of their right to refuse to participate, to answer any specific question, or to have specified remarks
kept “off-the-record.” All respondents recognized, however, that their comments were not anonymous, unless they specifically requested it. There were very few comments that respondents requested be kept off-the-record, and none of these comments were included in this thesis.

The interview itself was designed to be an open-ended discussion guided by a standard protocol of interview questions (see Appendix D). The use of open-ended questions and a conversational format allowed respondents the opportunity to elaborate on those areas in which they had the most knowledge and expertise, and to decline answering questions on which they did not feel qualified to comment. Rigorous adherence to wording, order, or content of the questionnaire was not required.

The protocol was designed to address several key topics under study. Those topics about which each interviewee was questioned included:

- an assessment of their community’s past and present economic activities, which helped to determine how diversified the community’s economy actually was, and which industries had played a role in the diversification process;
- their community’s planning process, including the motivation behind it, who was responsible for creating and implementing it, and how they solicited citizen involvement in the process;
- strategies used to integrate tourism and recreation into the economy and lifestyle of their community, and what type of social and economic concerns the community encountered as a result of the integration;
strategies used by their community to maintain its unique characteristics and rural atmosphere in the face of change;

• types of conflicts commonly encountered by the community pertaining to growth and economic diversification, and how residents have or are trying to manage them;

• sources of government aid and funding used; and,

• recommendations for other communities in similar situations.

Personal demographic information on each of the respondents was not obtained, as it was not deemed important to this research. Their involvement in the community was discussed, however.

All interviews were conducted by the author of this thesis, which allowed for consistency across all interviews in respect to the explanation given for the study, instructions, clarifications, and recording of the responses. All interviews, except one, where conducted face-to-face. An interview with one Randolph respondent was conducted via the telephone due to the respondent’s work schedule and difficulty involved in scheduling an interview. Interviews lasted anywhere from 1 hour and 10 minutes to three and a half hours. The average interview lasted two and a half hours. Most of the interviews were recorded using both an audio tape and handwritten notes. Due to a breakdown in the audio equipment, six Randolph interviews were recorded only through the use of handwritten notes.
Respondents were sincerely thanked for their contribution to the research. An unsigned copy of the consent form was left with each respondent, which included contact information for the principal investigator (Dr. Joanna Endter-Wada) and interviewer (Judy Kurtzman). This courtesy provided interviewees with the opportunity to ask additional questions they may have had regarding the study or to offer additional information after the departure of the interviewer.

The interviews in each community took place on the following dates:

- Springdale - Wednesday, October 21, 1998 to Friday, October 23, 1998
- Escalante - Wednesday, October 28, 1998 to Friday, October 30, 1998
- Vernal - Wednesday, November 4, 1998 to Friday, November 6, 1998
- Randolph - Tuesday, November 10, 1998 to Thursday, November 12, 1998

A qualitative approach was used for analysis of the data. Data analysis was conducted by the interviewer to ensure consistency in transcribing the information. The interviews were transcribed by breaking the information down into categories which coincided with the key variables found in the questionnaire as previously discussed. The information was then edited into the format used in this thesis in Chapters IV through VII.

Secondary Sources of Information

Secondary sources of information were used to attain information on population and economic trends, social concerns as observed by other researchers and authors, and historical background on the communities. The secondary information came from a variety of sources, including newspaper articles, published histories of the communities,
the United States Census Bureau, community planning documents, and published works of
other researchers in the area of community development. In a few instances, it was also
necessary to conduct telephone interviews with individuals working on community
projects that were pertinent to this research. This included such people as the outside
consultant working with Escalante on their new master plan, and an individual from Utah
Power and Light to discuss their community development program. The information was
used to gain a better understanding of the communities, as well as to evaluate and
supplement information given by the respondents.

Assessment of Research Design

Ten key informant interviews may be considered by some to be too small of a
sample to obtain a true and diverse picture of each community. We believe, however, that
those who participated were strong community leaders, well informed, and able to give
pertinent information. While more respondents may have offered additional information,
there was general consistency and overlap of information obtained in each community.
Thus, we found that through the 10 interviews conducted, we received a fairly
comprehensive picture of the communities historic and current planning process and
diversification effort. Also, we found that in the latter interviews in each community, we
were getting very little new information.

The use of key informant interviews was chosen for this research because of the
depth of information we could obtain using this method versus others such as the survey
method. Although surveys would have allowed us the option of including additional
respondents in the study, surveys would not have given us the breadth and complexity of information needed to do qualitative research on these communities. We were interested in the stories behind the communities' planning processes and the motivations behind the choices made by community leaders. We determined that a standard survey questionnaire would not give us the same extent of information as would the use of in-depth interviews.

A second possible limitation in this study was the lack of written documentation to supplement or clarify the respondents' accounts in some areas of their communities' history on some of the variables under study. However, there were only two instances in which there was a discrepancy between responses. In one instance, there was a different account given on a story relating to a conflict within the community. In another it related to the importance of tourism and recreation to the community's economy. These differences in the information received do not appear to be significant, however, as they pertain to details related to these issues, and not on the bigger issues that were pertinent to this research. Also, these are both areas that a difference in interpretation may very well be expected. Therefore, while the differences in the details are noted in the information given for each community, they did not change the overall picture of the community, or the lessons learned from the communities.
CHAPTER IV
ESCALANTE

Background

In the past, employment opportunities in Escalante have primarily centered around farming, ranching, and the local saw mill. There have also been some positions available in the extraction of coal and gas. Although tourism and recreation are relatively new the city of Escalante, they are not new to Garfield County in which it resides. The county is home to Bryce Canyon National Park and encompasses portions of Capital Reef National Park, Lake Powell Recreational Area, and a small section of Canyonlands National Park. In addition to the lands administered by the National Park Service (NPS), the county also includes lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the United States Forest Service (USFS), and the Utah Division of Parks and Recreation (Governors Office of Planning and Budget 1996; Five Counties Association of Governments 1986).

Consequently, tourism and recreation have been playing an ever increasing and important role in the areas economy. With the 1996 designated of the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, which borders the city of Escalante, they also are finding their local economy expanding to include businesses related to tourism and recreation. The changes happening in the community associated with this new industry, however, have not been completely welcomed by many longtime residents. This rural community, which has spent most of its history in isolation from the rest of society, now
finds itself not only the center of much attention, but also the center of many controversies.

Community Profile

Escalante is a small city located in south-central Utah. The population count in 1996 showed 876 residents. The city was originally settled in 1875 by Mormon pioneers relocating from the older communities of Panguitch and Beaver, Utah. Escalante is a rather unique Utah community in that it was not established at the directive of the Mormon Church, but because its early settlers were seeking an area with new economic opportunities and a climate more suitable to agriculture (Nelson 1925; Ohidester et al. 1949).

According to some of the respondents, because of the isolation and inaccessibility of the community its population has remained relatively stagnant over the years, and during the late 1980s and early 1990s the community experienced many of the problems associated with stagnation and decline. However, according to the Governors Office of Planning and Budget (1996), while Escalante’s population has fluctuated between 1990 and 1996, the population has increased approximately 7 percent during that time period. Although there are no figures showing the population since 1996, some local residents estimate that the community has grown to over 1,000 residents in the last 2 years. While the community has not received the large influx of people they expected after the designation of the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, it has nonetheless
been dealing with many of the problems associated with rapid growth, such as a lack of infrastructure, changes in land values, and heightened social tension between longtime residents and newer residents.

**Economic Opportunities**

Most respondents agreed that today, the top two employers in Escalante are South Central Utah Communications, which employs approximately 150 people, and Utah Forest Products, the local saw mill with approximately 92 employees. Various government agencies with offices in the region were also mentioned as important sources of employment for residents. Government agencies in the area include: the United States Forest Service (USFS), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the National Park Service (NPS), and the Utah Division of Parks and Recreation. It was estimated by the mayor that these agencies employ 60 to 75 people, depending upon the season. Although the number of positions offered by the agencies has been steadily increasing, especially positions within the BLM, which manages the new monument, many of the jobs go to individuals living outside the area. Federal agencies are required to advertise all permanent full-time positions nationwide. As a result, local residents are often hired for only seasonal positions.

Other jobs available within the community include positions with the local schools, such as Head Start, the grade school, and the high school. The library, grocery store, and city offices also offer a few positions. Additionally, Turnabout Ranch, an in-house
program for troubled teens, employs approximately 15 people to work with the children or as ranch hands.

To a lesser degree, respondents mentioned a few opportunities in construction or skilled labor (e.g., welding, bricklaying). Commuting to Boulder, Utah, approximately 30 miles east of Escalante, to work for Garkane Electric was also considered by some to be an option, as were opportunities in the local service industry, including hotels, restaurants, and the gas station. It was noted, however, that because these positions tend to be lower paying and part-time, they are primarily taken by younger workers.

Dependency on Extractive Industries

Mining. Currently, Escalante is not economically dependent upon mining. That is not to say, however, that some within the community do not see it as important to the city. Some of the community’s leaders had hoped to use mining as a way to further diversify Escalante’s economy. According to them, the designation of the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, and of some lands to wilderness surrounding the community, have dashed any hopes that there will be employment opportunities in this area for local residents. A few respondents expressed strong resentment toward President Clinton, the BLM, and environmentalists in general, for these perceived lost opportunities.

Mining opportunities in the area which are thought to have been affected by designation of wilderness and the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument include:

- A large deposit of anthracite coal within the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument boundaries, on the Kaiparowitz Plateau. This is a low sulphur, low
ash, thus cleaner burning coal which is in high demand for coal-fired power plants. One respondent lamented that with so much open land here, it is a shame that a tiny portion of it could not have been mined, which would have not only benefitted the community, but the state as a whole.

- A large deposit of carbon dioxide gas (CO2), located within the Box-Death Hollow Wilderness Area. Carbon dioxide gas is generally used in carbonated drinks, and for a certain type of gastro-intestinal surgery.

- Conoco also has some drilling rights in the area, and actually has one working well within the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument borders. Despite much controversy, in the summer of 1998, they drilled a few more areas in an attempt to find oil. It was believed, however, that the company was doing it more to make a point to the government about their rights, than because they actually intended to set up an oil rig. One respondent suggested that even if they did find oil, it would only be a short-term project, and nothing that would significantly help Escalante’s economy.

Timber harvesting. Currently, Escalante is very dependent upon timber harvesting. A main employer in the community is Utah Forest Products, the local saw mill. It employs approximately 75 full-time employees, and another 25 to 30 people in related industries such as trucking and independent contracting. The mill is a self-sustaining industry as long as it can continue to get timber, and at the moment it appears to be stable. It has been in
business since 1956, but was closed in 1991 when the holding company lost interest in continuing the business. The community attempted to reopen the mill in 1992, but was unable because of a lack of funds. In that same year (1992) it was purchased and put back into production by a company from Sheridan, Wyoming.

**Agriculture.** Agriculture has always been an important element in Escalante’s economy and lifestyle. Historically, most residents were farmers and ranchers, and it was not until the last few decades that this way of life began to lose its importance as the primary means of employment. Today, it provides more of a supplemental income for many of the families still in business. This change in lifestyle has resulted in several local ranchers selling their cattle and land, which in turn, has made the economy less dependent upon agriculture. In spite of this, it is still very much a part of the community’s identity.

Those who practice farming and ranching in the area today generally have 20 to 30 acres of land with irrigated crops, and anywhere from five to 50 head of cattle. Many respondents blamed the decline in ranching on the designation of wilderness areas in the region and the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument. Because of these designations, it is believed that the acreage available on public land for ranchers to graze their cattle has steadily been declining. Others, however, also mentioned factors such as a decreasing demand for beef, increasing costs of maintaining a ranch, competition by large cattle companies, and a lack of interest by the succeeding generations, as having played a large part in many of the smaller ranches going out of business.
Historically, there were also orchards in the area. However, it was noted that as more people have moved to the area, using water for farming and domestic needs, less water is available to support that type of agriculture. Water has played a key role in the inability of locals to do any large-scale farming. Farmers primarily grow enough hay or alfalfa to feed their cattle, and a few grow enough to sell small amounts of it to ranchers outside the region.

Dependency on Recreation and Tourism

A few of the people interviewed did not believe Escalante’s economy was significantly impacted by tourism and recreation at this time. Two respondents observed that to them, it appears people are still mainly passing through the community on their way to other destinations. According to the owner of the local grocery store, currently, only about a quarter of his business comes from tourists.

Statistics from the 1990 U.S. Census Bureau would support this view. It reported that only 2 percent of employment in the city is related to tourism and recreation. It should be recognized, however, that the U.S. Census Bureau numbers were published prior to the designation of the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument (1996) and the subsequent “discovery” of the area by tourists and recreationists.

Other respondents, however, suggested that tourism and recreation are steadily becoming more important to the economy. Numbers from the Utah Division of Travel Development (1997) would support their view. These statistics show the percent of
employment in tourism-related industries in Garfield County is 47.9 percent. In addition, they indicate that in 1997, spending in the county by travelers was $53,678,766. However, because these are county numbers, it is difficult to know how many of these jobs and how much of this money has actually benefitted Escalante.

Presently, Escalante offers its visitors three restaurants, a gas station, a few art galleries, an outfitters shop, a bed and breakfast, and over 100 hotel rooms, the biggest hotel in the city having been built within the last 2 years. While it is probably true that Escalante’s economy is not reliant upon tourism at this time, it appears that with time the community may become more dependent upon it than many residents want to believe. One respondent commented that if all visitors ceased to come starting tomorrow “it would only impact a handful of businesses.” Considering that there are only a handful of businesses in the city, this might suggest that tourism and recreation do impact the community.

Economic Concerns

Several respondents mentioned that most of the employment opportunities in Escalante are low-paying, low-skill, and dead-end positions. Wages, of course, vary depending upon the level of skill needed, and the employer. South Central Utah Communications Company was said to pay the highest wages, starting at $8.00 per hour. The saw mill’s starting wage is $7.50 an hour, with the opportunity to move to other positions paying anywhere from $10 to $13 an hour.
Additionally, a number of respondents felt that there simply were not enough jobs available within the community. Garfield County’s unemployment rate in November of 1998 was 10.3 percent. This was significantly higher than the state’s unemployment rate, which was at 3.0 percent. The actual unemployment rate for Escalante itself is unknown, but it is believed to be slightly lower than the county’s because of positions available at the saw mill.

Despite a high unemployment rate for the county, some respondents suggested employers in the area are having difficulty finding enough workers to fill their positions. Although the saw mill pays what some consider to be decent wages for low-skilled jobs, they continue to have trouble finding enough workers from within the community to fill their openings. As a result, many of their positions have been filled by men and women from the Navajo reservation, located approximately 90 miles from Escalante. It was also mentioned that businesses in the service sector often have trouble finding and keeping employees. Some respondents suggested the work ethic in the community could be improved on, and that too many residents are willing to take government or church welfare to avoid working in lower paying, less desirable jobs.

A few respondents discussed the need to diversify Escalante’s economy in order to offer residents new and better employment opportunities. Currently, the economy is based primarily upon two companies. While the saw mill appears to be stable for the next decade, there is concern that a decrease in available timber on government land could hurt the future of the mill. Another respondent mentioned that although it is locally managed,
the mill is owned by a company out of Sheridan, Wyoming, and crucial decisions regarding the future of the mill are made outside the control of the community.

Other respondents discussed the need to diversify Escalante’s economy for the purpose of improving the quality of life in the community. Currently, residents must travel at least 45 miles to buy any type of clothing, and many travel as far as 125 miles to Cedar City to do their shopping. It was suggested that the community could support a second grocery store, a full-time physician, a clothing store, and more restaurants. Three respondents, however, stressed they do not want any fast food chains locating in the community. Most felt it should be local people who create these businesses. However, many commented that, realistically, they know most new businesses will be brought in from the outside, because there are no funds in the community to open these types of enterprises. It was emphasized that if new businesses are going to succeed, owners of these new establishments should seek to give them a “home town” feel. In other words, they should attempt to cater to the wants and needs of the local people, and not just to the tourists and recreationists.

A number of respondents also mentioned the lack of opportunities available to Escalante’s youth, and the large numbers of young people who have left the community. Records from the local high school show that for the past 10 years, 95 to 96 percent of the high school graduates have left the area immediately after high school. Those who stayed, or returned without having furthered their education, were generally forced to take lower paying, dead-end jobs. Those that have furthered their education can find much better
opportunities elsewhere, and generally do not return. One respondent suggested that it would benefit the community to have an industry that required its employees to have a college education so there would be more opportunities for young people who have left to get an education to return.

Building up the infrastructure to accommodate current and new residents was also mentioned as a serious economic concern. The immediate needs in the community at this time are an increase in the water supply, upgraded water lines, new sewer lagoons, more paved streets, and improving streets that are paved. Due to a lack of funds, the city will attempt to do “a little bit at a time” rather than increasing taxes or charges for utilities. The city did raise the cost of water last year by $5 a month, and it was noted that this was acceptable to the residents because they knew there were some serious problems concerning the water supply. The city council also implemented impact fees in 1997 on new development to help defray the cost of expanding and upgrading local infrastructure. Current impact fees for a new home are $6400, which reflects the additional costs a new home adds to the city for services such as water, sewer, fire, police, parks, and recreation.

**Unique Community Characteristics**

The spectacular environment which encompasses Escalante was often mentioned as a unique feature of the community. Escalante is surrounded by mountains on three sides, and a desert on the fourth side. Lake Powell is close by, and according to one longtime resident, their climate is perfect, “not too hot, not too cold.” Other amenities mentioned included the ability to walk through town and experience all of the open spaces
which surround the community, and the ability to go in any direction and find an array of natural beauty, ranging from the forest, to the desert, to the red rocks.

Many respondents also discussed the city’s rural atmosphere, and the beautiful brick homes that were built 100 years ago or more, which gives the community a special aura. There is a small-town feel to the community, where neighbors know and care about each other. Some also felt there is an innate sense of neighborliness in those who live there, so that in times of need, even if you are an “outsider,” people will help you.

The isolation this community experienced for the first 85 years of its existence was also believed to have had a strong influence on the character of the community and its residents. Up until the late 1960s or early 1970s, Highway 12 (the main highway running through the center of the community) was a dirt road that dead-ended in Boulder, a small community 28 miles east of Escalante. Thus, there was not a lot of traffic in and out of Escalante, and the people basically scraped, scrounged, and adapted what they could to ensure their community’s survival. This also meant that they relied more upon their neighbors and themselves to supply their basic needs. For example, most people had large gardens, because they did not have the ability to run to the store for everything they needed.

One of the not-so-positive unique features mentioned is the lack of community pride and near-ghetto conditions found in some Escalante neighborhoods. There were three main reasons given for these conditions. The first reason is that most of Escalante’s families live on only one income, leaving little money to invest in the upkeep of buildings
and lawns. This has often resulted in families abandoning the original brick house on the property for a less expensive and easier to maintain single wide or double wide trailer. Or, as also frequently happens, children who cannot afford property of their own will place a trailer on their parents’ property. Although it is in violation of city ordinances to have two dwellings on one half-acre lot, the ordinance has not been enforced in the past. The second reason given is the prior isolation of the community, which perhaps resulted in a lack of interest among residents to enhance their property or take pride in its appearance. The third reason given is that much of the property that has been left to deteriorate is the property of deceased residents. Their family members no longer reside in Escalante, but wish to continue to own the property for sentimental reasons. While these families have no desire to sell the property, neither do they wish to invest the dollars needed to properly maintain it, so it is often left to decay.

Planning Process

Motivation

Escalante began its planning process in the early 1990s when the state of Utah mandated that cities implement a plan for the future. At the same time, Escalante had begun to exhibit some of the signs of a community in decline. The city’s population was decreasing as young people left the area for better job opportunities elsewhere. The cattle industry was in a slump, and the local saw mill had closed. It was at this point the community leaders realized that something needed to be done to help rejuvenate the community. In March of 1995, they implemented Escalante’s first general plan.
Community leaders decided after the designation of the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, however, that the plan was no longer adequate to meet the needs of the community. To effectively address changes the monument designation may likely bring to the area, city officials began the process of designing and implementing a new general plan in 1997. They are still in the process of working on it.

Another factor that has influenced the planning process was the establishment of a subdivision in the mid-1990s on the outskirts of the city. According to some respondents, it was very poorly planned and has resulted in costly problems for the city. One of the main problems cited was the lack of provisions for extending water and sewer lines to the development site. Another was that the road into the subdivision is located on a flood plain and submerged in spring run-off each year, which has resulted in an annual repair bill of approximately $10,000 paid for by the city. This caused a number of people to realize that the old ordinances were not sufficient and that not all ordinances which were in place were being applied to all developers equally.

Responsible Entities

While the city council directed the initial phase of planning in the early 1990s, the planning and zoning committee has recently become the primary initiator in that area. Committee members are mostly newer residents who have moved to Escalante within the last 10 years, with the exception of one member who is a longtime resident of the city. This has caused much conflict within the community, which will be discussed in more detail under the section on community conflict.
Besides the city council and planning and zoning committee, there is also a board of adjustments. The board addresses concerns of residents or businesses who wish to appeal for a variance in an ordinance for their individual situation.

In the mid-1990s, a USFS employee, Kevin Schulkowski, introduced to the community the idea of an Action Team. The Team includes individuals from local businesses, city officials, concerned citizens, a representative from the local high school, and personnel from the federal agencies in the area. The program is part of the 1990 Farm Bill (S.2830, P.L. 101-642, 11-28-90, cited as the "National Forest-Dependent Rural Communities Economic Diversification Act of 1990"). Its purpose is to assist rural communities in or near national forests that are economically disadvantaged by federal or private sector land management practices in preparing action plans to identify opportunities that will promote economic diversification and enhance local economies. (Ashton and Pickens 1995: 232)

The Escalante Action Team has accomplished a number of projects for the community including: 1) produced the first brochure on Escalante to promote tourism and recreation; 2) applied for and received a grant to help the community reestablish the sawmill in 1992; 3) applied for and received a grant to help the community provide additional training for emergency medical technicians; and 4) has worked on getting funding for help in establishing a city run day-care center for local children.

There is also a local chamber of commerce whose membership mostly consists of newer residents. This is not all that surprising, however, considering many of the local businesses are owned by relatively newer residents.
The city has also been receiving help in their planning efforts from two other sources. One is a recent transfer from the governor’s office, Suzanne Winters. Governor Leavitt has “lent” Suzanne to the city to serve as both an economic developer for the community, and as executive director of the Escalante Center. The other is a consultant from the Five Counties Association of Governments, who was hired by county officials.

Community Involvement

Most respondents agreed that although community leaders have attempted to solicit community involvement in the planning process and other city affairs, longtime residents have been somewhat apathetic about their involvement. Respondents agreed that most residents will only get involved if an issue affects them personally or financially. It was also noted by a number of respondents that it is primarily new residents who are the pro-active members of the community, getting involved in the chamber of commerce, planning and zoning committee, and attending the public meetings. There were two ideas on why this is. The first is that they are the ones who are doing the building, and need the permission of the city council and planning and zoning committee, so it is only natural that they would be the ones at the meetings. It was also suggested that since many of them have lived in other places where growth and development have shaped their communities, they know the benefits of taking action early in the process.

It was suggested that one of the reasons there is a lack of participation by most community members, is because the community lacks a vision for the future. Some respondents felt that until the rest of the community has a vision of the potential damage
caused by not planning, it will be difficult to convince them of the importance of participation. It was also suggested that perhaps many residents feel that it is the city council’s responsibility for ensuring the planning process takes place and the city is ready for the future. Additionally, it was mentioned that since the city council members are all longtime residents, the views of the longtime residents are already being well represented. However, as one city council member lamented, it is difficult for the city council to know which directions to take without the citizens giving them some input or feedback on the issues. He suggested that it may help to get more citizen involvement if the city were to inform residents on their monthly utility bill of the dates, times, and issues that would be discussed at each of the city’s administrative meetings. Currently, residents are notified of meetings through agendas being posted at the city’s post office, local grocery store, and city offices.

One respondent remarked that last year attendance at city council meetings was better because members of the council invited guest speakers to address issues. One notable meeting included guest speaker Luther Probst, a well known author and researcher on community development in gateway communities. Probst led a discussion on what is involved in being a gateway community, both the positive and negative aspects of it. There were also scoping meetings held regarding the effects of the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument on the community. One respondent observed, however, that most of the attendees at these meetings were the newer residents, not the longtime residents.
Tourism and Recreation

Creating Opportunities

One member of the planning and zoning committee stated that although the county is encouraging tourism and recreation, Escalante is not, and therefore they are doing nothing to attract visitors to their community. However, he did note that they allowed a new bed and breakfast to open within the community. His statement is not entirely correct, however. According to some of its members, the local chamber of commerce has put up a website and printed a few brochures to promote the city to potential visitors.

Although nothing has been done yet, three respondents felt strongly that the community could benefit by investing in heritage tourism, a type of tourism that capitalizes on a community’s unique historical and cultural resources (Mantell et al., 1990). This would include listing properties, such as many of the old brick homes and businesses, on the National Register of Historic Places, which would help to secure funding for restoring and preserving these buildings. They believe that Escalante’s past is of historical interest to many people, and would attract enough visitors to help diversify the economy and preserve the community’s heritage. Also, since most of the buildings and knowledge of the community are in the hands of the locals, it could be done by longtime residents. According to a newer resident who has been researching this idea, there are two very important elements that are necessary for this idea to work. The first is to secure funding for the restoration and maintenance of the historical buildings. The second is full community involvement in the project. He noted that those communities that have
succeeded in heritage tourism (e.g., Jefferson, Texas and San Luis, Colorado) had tremendous backing and involvement by members of the community, and that it would be necessary to convince a large part of the population that it would benefit them to invest in the restoration of their neighborhoods.

Another idea presented by the chairman of the planning and zoning committee was for the community to supply handicap access to the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument. His vision is for the city to create a hard-surface trail from their community down to the Escalante River, which would continue on to the mouth of the Escalante Canyons. The parkway would be open to walkers, bikers, and wheelchairs. He sees it as a long-term project for the community. The idea is to have the trail run adjacent to the river, which would require cooperation from all property owners along the river. He suggested perhaps they would agree to putting their land into conservation easements in return for tax credits, or in return for receiving federal dollars to preserve these riparian areas.

The mayor also suggested that they would like to become a destination spot for recreation groups such as off-road vehicle users and boaters. In stating this, he also recognized the city council’s stance against the closure of roads in proposed wilderness areas, and their support of keeping all roads open in the area, at least to the maintenance level they are at now. He feels that a lot of these roads serve other purposes, such as for fixing power lines or getting to cattle.
Concerns with Integrating Tourism and Recreation into the Community of Escalante

Many of the respondents who are longtime residents expressed a concern that Escalante’s unique heritage and rural look will fade away as development takes place. They were especially concerned that too many of the new businesses will be owned by people from the outside, who might not understand the community, and therefore might not attempt to integrate the city’s culture and history into their plans. One resident put it this way:

The biggest problem, though, is that we will lose the personality of our community, the type of atmosphere that I grew up with, and that my kids grew up with. Our priority has been to maintain the atmosphere in Escalante that we have always had. Growth is here, but we want to control it so that we can keep the character and lifestyle of our community.

A number of respondents also discussed the dependency of Escalante on federal lands, suggesting it was the life blood of the community. They were concerned that many outsiders have a different view of how public lands should be used, and these views could adversely effect their community. Escalante’s roads, power lines, telephone lines, and water all cross federal lands. Additionally, many residents use public land for grazing cattle, the local mill harvests much of its timber from U.S. Forest Service land, and they recreate on this land. So, new regulations on public land would have a large impact on the lifestyle of local residents, and on the community’s economy. One respondent felt this way about it:
Ninety-eight percent of Garfield county is federal land, and slowly our rights to use this land are being taken away as they make wilderness or monuments out of it. We cannot use it for grazing anymore, and more and more is being locked out from the timber industry for logging. The environmentalists have messed us up, taking away mining, grazing, and logging areas. They have closed up a lot of the roads we used to use. Even though this is federal land, we have always felt it was our land. Now all of a sudden it’s not ours anymore - we cannot even go a lot of the places we would go all the time. It’s tough to lose it.

Others expressed many of the same concerns that other rural communities in the situation of being discovered by tourists and recreationist have expressed. One concern is that developers will be attracted to the area and, as ranching becomes more difficult, developers will buy up land from local ranchers. They fear that if that happens, Escalante will become a retirement community for wealthy retirees, prices of land and housing will escalate, and young local families will not be able to afford to stay. Another worry is that wages paid by businesses catering to tourism and recreation tend to be too low to really help the community’s economy, and too volatile for it to rely upon.

Lastly, a number of the community leaders voiced a concern that in order to accommodate new businesses and residents resulting from increased tourism and recreation, the current infrastructure will need to be upgraded, resulting in a huge tax burden on current residents. These respondents also noted that Escalante is required to take responsibility for supplying emergency medical treatment to visitors who are hurt while recreating at the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument. It was mentioned
that a Monument rescue can take up to 36 hours, and during that time, the city is left with no ambulance or medical personnel.

One respondent remarked that many of Escalante’s residents believe the federal government should help the community meet their costs associated with increased tourism, especially since it was the federal government that was responsible for designating the new Monument, which led to increased visitation to the area.

Some of those who own businesses catering to tourists and recreationists expressed a concern that a few of the residents and workers in local businesses have treated visitors to the area badly. According to a former executive director of the chamber of commerce, this type of behavior has been a chronic problem in Escalante. According to her, the local chamber of commerce has received complaints from guests about service received in the city. A situation also occurred in which a group of young people in a car were yelling disparaging remarks at tourists who were walking down the street. A former mayor of Escalante remarked that the Utah Tourism Council and a University of Utah professor who specializes in teaching communities hospitality for tourism addressed this problem at the local high school in an attempt to help the younger people realize the benefits visitors can bring to a community. In addition, Escalante’s high school sent some students to Springdale to discuss the issue of tourism with students there, and to learn how they accommodate visitors.

Some of the business owners worried that there are too few businesses in the city to entice people to stop, thus most people simply drive through on their way to other
destinations. On the other hand, others noted it is often difficult for tourism-related businesses to find employees, perhaps because there are so many opportunities in the community.

Conflicts Between Tourism and Recreation and Other Industries

Although to date there have been no problems between the local saw mill and tourism and recreation, a few respondents associated with the mill expressed concern that conflict may arise in the near future. One of the biggest worries was conflict developing between tourists driving the winding two-lane highways, and semi-trucks hauling logs, finished products, and waste from the mill. One respondent suggested this mix of semi-trucks and tourists could make driving the local highways more dangerous, and lead to an increase in traffic accidents. A second concern discussed was that an increase in visitors could mean an increase in the amount of land being placed off limits for logging. The mill has already been affected by environmental groups fighting to stop the harvesting of trees on federal lands, and they fear this will only expand as the area becomes better known.

A former mayor of Escalante reflected that she did not feel tourism and recreation were ruining the extraction industries, but a change in society’s attitude. She noted that these industries have been on the decline for a number of years, which started long before the increase in visitors to the area. She suggested that as the public has seen the environmental destruction these industries can cause, they have become more aware that we need to find better ways to develop our natural resources.
Strategies for Making Tourism and Recreation Compatible with Other Industries

In the summer of 1998, an employee of Utah Forest Products who had previously worked with tourists in another occupation, came up with the idea of opening the saw mill for tours. Two bus loads of visitors passing through the area were invited in and shown the operations of the mill. It turned out to be a very positive experience for both those working at the mill and the visitors. Some of those visitors wrote thank you letters to the manager of the mill, expressing their appreciation for the tour as well as the work being done there. A city council member suggested that bringing in visitors to tour the mill may help to alleviate the misconceptions that often surround timber harvesting. He surmised that the more knowledge people have, the less extreme their thinking tends to be, which makes it easier for people to get along with each other.

Keeping public lands open for use by rural communities was suggested as a means of avoiding conflict. A number of Escalante’s city officials voiced their desire to see public lands remain open for multiple use. They expressed their support of federal agencies’ efforts to do this. One city official went so far as to say the community should help federal agencies financially with road construction and putting in power lines on public lands whenever possible.

Social and Economic Effects of Tourism and Recreation

Socially, the most substantial effect of tourism and recreation mentioned by respondents was the steady increase in the local property values, which has been both
good and bad for local residents. The bad part is that last year the county reevaluated residents’ properties for the first time in 13 years, and some homeowners had their real estate taxes doubled, for others it tripled. Although this is not necessarily a direct result of the designation of the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument and the influx of new visitors, it did happen less than one year after the designation, so in the minds of local residents there is a direct association. Also, for those residents who do not own property, which includes many of the younger residents in the community, buying their own place is becoming an unreachable dream. This is a serious concern for Escalante’s parents who would like to see their children have opportunities to stay in Escalante. They know that with increasing costs for both housing and community services (i.e., impact fees), and with wages remaining relatively low in the area, their financial futures will be very difficult.

One idea being considered by the planning and zoning committee to address this problem is to rezone certain areas to allow for smaller lot sizes. The idea is referred to as “up-zoning” and would allow individuals to build homes on smaller lots where the infrastructure is already in place. This reduces the costs to the city and the builders, thus making the housing more affordable, especially for young local residents. Currently, the city ordinances mandate a half-acre lot or more for a single family dwelling in most places within the city limits. The new ordinance would reduce this to a quarter-acre lot. There were two problems mentioned with making this change. The first problem pertains to another ordinance regarding the ability of residents to house farm animals on their property. Presently, the ordinance states that an individual must have a half-acre lot to
property. Presently, the ordinance states that an individual must have a half-acre lot to house animals. By reducing the lots to a quarter acre, people could no longer have animals in the city. Many residents feel this is an unacceptable change because it would take away the rural flavor of the community. The second problem is that if they do re-zone this area for quarter-acre lots, and later realize that it was a mistake, there is no going back once the houses have been built.

On the positive side, an increase in property values allows those residents wishing to sell property the opportunity to make a decent profit. Apparently, more and more citizens are making this decision. According to a member of the planning and zoning committee, there have been between 75 and 100 property sales within the last year, with most of the land being sold by local residents to people currently living outside of Escalante.

In addition, increased tourism and recreation have brought in more people from the outside who are opening businesses that cater to tourism and recreation. It has also brought in other people who have bought land either for investment purposes or to share in the beauty and splendor of the area. Some people feel this has taken away from the intimacy of the community. Whereas it used to be that everyone knew everyone else, it is not that way anymore; now there are strangers in Escalante. It was also mentioned that people do not feel as safe in the community as they used to when everyone was familiar with their neighbors. In the past, no one locked their doors or were concerned about walking the streets at night; people now lock their doors, and stay in after dark.
As previously mentioned, there has been some conflict already in the community between Escalante residents and visitors to the area. According to the mayor, there are two types of people who visit Escalante, the “campers” and the “backpackers.” The first group he identified as motorized recreationists, who spend money in the city and have no problem with the work at the mill. The second group, whom he refers to as “backpackers, for lack of a better term,” are described as individuals who “come in with a $20 bill and a pair of shorts and don’t change either one. They want their experience of wilderness and solitude, and oppose everything else. They hate any kind of development at all, except that which benefits them. For example, they hate roads until they need medical help.” He did not feel the community should encourage “backpacker” type visitors to the area, since he did not believe they monetarily benefit Escalante. Although he is quick to state that he is not opposed to National Parks such as Bryce Canyon and Capital Reef, he is opposed to wilderness designation of vast tracks of lands that are currently used and, according to him, “protected well.”

**Attracting New Industries**

According to those interviewed, neither the mayor nor city council has done or is doing anything to attract new industry or businesses to Escalante. In fact, the mayor expressed concern about new industry locating in the area. He felt that new industry gives opportunities not only to local residents, but to those wishing to move to the area as well. Thus, he believes the city must be careful about what it attempts to do, for fear that it will bring too many outsiders to the area who will put too much stress on the infrastructure.
A few respondents discussed potential problems that make the area less appealing to new industries. First, they believe that because of the visibility the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument brings to Escalante, any new industry must be clean and have a low impact on the environment. Also, since there are no railroads or freeways nearby, the lack of transportation facilities in the region was thought to make it less attractive to a new industry. There is an airport nearby, but according to the mayor it would need to be redeveloped before an industry could use it for transporting goods. Lastly, a lack of water makes it difficult for many industries to even consider locating in Escalante.

Although community leaders did not actually attempt to attract it, the Escalante Center should benefit the community greatly once it is up and running. The Center will encompass a number of facilities, including: a research institute; field institute; education resort; museum; and art center. Although it probably will be another two years before ground breaking for the actual Center, some of the programs will begin next summer. The benefits of the Center to the community include approximately 40 new jobs, the opportunity for local high school students to work in the research laboratory side-by-side with scientists in numerous disciplines, and exposure of the community as a whole to science and diverse types of people. According to an article in *The Salt Lake Tribune* (November 11, 1998), the city was granted $25,000 in November 1998 by the Utah Division of Business and Economic Development Board, to help with the cost of planning the Center.
Issues with Controlling Growth

Factors Limiting Growth

Most respondents agreed that the biggest factor limiting growth right now is a shortage of water. Within the recent past, the city began restricting the number of water meters dispensed each month in order to limit the stress being put on the water system. This is partly being done to promote growth in areas where infrastructure is already in place, thus reducing city utility expenses and encouraging renovation of older homes. Prior to this policy, the city issued water meters to developers before plans for the buildings were begun. This resulted in the city never knowing how many people actually would be drawing on the system at any one time, and therefore not knowing the actual water needs of the city. Eventually, the city found that it had become overextended, and residents were using more water than the city had water rights to. Escalante has since been forced to lease water from the two water companies that supply the city with both its culinary and irrigation water, resulting in an increased cost to the city. According to the former mayor, although there is an increased cost to the city, the water companies are supplying the additional water at a very reasonable rate.

Escalante also has a well to tap into ground water in times of emergencies. However, according to the mayor, it is very expensive to pump, and most residents do not like the taste of the well water, as it has a high concentration of iron. Presently, it takes approximately 2 years to get hooked up to the city’s water system for a new home in the subdivisions that are being developed outside Escalante. To solve these problems, the
city is attempting to purchase additional water rights from the two irrigation companies, and transfer those rights to culinary use. Escalante also has a plan to increase the size of their reservoir located just outside of the city, which is currently used for irrigation water. Some respondents also discussed the possibility of attaching a new water treatment facility to the reservoir. If both of these ideas are implemented, it would give the city access “to all the water it needed.” At a minimum, however, the reservoir expansion is necessary before any substantial new growth can take place.

The population of Escalante in 1996 was 876 people, and is considered to be slightly higher now. It was estimated that the maximum growth for Escalante is limited to anywhere from 2000 to 3000 people. The limit to growth is not simply a result of the water supplies, but is also due to the capacity of the current sewage treatment lagoons and the amount of available private land.

Affordable and available housing was also mentioned by a number of respondents as a factor currently limiting growth. One of the respondents who recently moved to the community with her family stated that it took them 4 months to find an acceptable place to live in the community. To increase housing availability, the city recently approached a local developer about building apartment complexes. The incentive given to the builder was the promise of a waiver of the impact fees. The developer declined the offer, however, stating he could make more money building single, high-priced, family dwellings. In addition, many of the residents in the neighborhoods that are zoned for apartment complexes have expressed reservations about having them built in their areas.
A few respondents expressed concern over the lack of consistency with which the laws where applied to residents and developers. They suggested there is a problem with exceptions being made for friends and family, in spite of members knowing that this can result in the city being sued. Two other respondents, however, stated that the city council has become much more willing than they were in the past to follow the rules implemented by both themselves and the planning and zoning committee.

Planning and Implementing Zoning and Building Ordinances

According to one longtime resident, the city council made their first attempt to implement zoning and building ordinances in Escalante 20 years ago. Apparently, the community was not ready for them yet as they were vetoed by the local residents.

It was not until 1995, when the city’s first general plan went into effect, that the city council also enacted zoning and building ordinances in an attempt to control growth. Many city officials, however, no longer feel that either the plan or the ordinances passed at that time are sufficient for the city’s current needs, due to the designation of the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument. Thus, community leaders are again in the process of developing a new plan and new ordinances.

To assist them in this process, the county hired a consultant from the Five Counties Association of Governments. In August of 1997, with the assistance of the consultant, the community conducted its first resident survey. All Escalante citizens age 16 and over were asked to participate. Unfortunately, the response rate was poor. From
approximately 800 potential respondents there were only 150 responses. Although the consultant felt the number was an adequate sampling of “households,” others involved with the study deemed it too small of a sample to consider valid or useful in developing the general plan.

Community leaders have also formed a special committee that includes both long-time and newer residents. They hope this committee will assist them in their future planning efforts. They are intending to complete both the new master plan and implementation of new ordinances by June of 1999.

Examples of ordinances currently in place to protect the integrity and character of Escalante include:

- a set width size for the streets;
- set-backs which include a required 25-foot set-back for buildings from the street, and depending upon the zone, a 2-foot set-back from the property line;
- signage ordinance that regulates the size, position, colors, and material used in sign design; and,
- minimum lot size for buildings includes: quarter acre in center of community; half acre in all other areas within the city limits; one to five acres in areas outside the city, depending upon the area.

Ideas for new ordinances that some respondents believe will give better protection to the community include rules for businesses on their architectural design (such as how they look, their height, stricter signage rules) and ordinances to protect vistas.
According to members of the planning and zoning committee, the committee has had reoccurring problems with residents spending a lot of money on planning for a new home or building on their property, only to discover their plans are not allowed under city ordinances. This in turn has resulted in a lot of conflict between planning and zoning committee members and other residents. To alleviate this problem, the committee implemented new rules in the fall of 1998. One of the rules requires that people planning to build on their property attend a “pre-planning” meeting with committee members prior to fully developing their plans. They also instituted a checklist for all new development. This is used to verify the builder has received notice of concerns the committee may have with their project, and to track those concerns and confirm that they were addressed.

Open Space

Maintaining open space was not a major concern for most respondents. They feel there is enough open space surrounding the community via the designation of wilderness areas and the Monument, and that it is not necessary to require it within the community or in new subdivisions. Also, the concern was expressed that mandating open space could be a financial burden on the city, both in maintaining it as well as in lost property taxes. One respondent commented that requiring open space in new developments is paramount to telling private land owners what they can and cannot do with their land, and that is not looked upon favorably by many people within Escalante. Another respondent stated, “I think there needs to be open space, but it should be confined to city parks, and we have two parks, that is enough for now.”
There was, however, one respondent who did mention open space as a concern, and hoped the community would attempt to maintain it through the use of conservation easements or land trust easements. In a discussion with Robert Hughey from the Five County Association of Governments, he stated that three ranchers in the area have expressed interest in land trusts to help them maintain their ranches by reducing the taxes, and making it more affordable for them.

**Community Conflicts Due to Change**

A few respondents suggested that the designation of the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument has caused the most conflict in Escalante. A number of respondents commented on the pain and division President Clinton's decision had caused in the community. Without that, they felt that the community would not have had to face an influx of new people into the area, and the many changes that influx has brought.

Some respondents remarked that many longtime residents fear change and lack an understanding of the value of planning for the future. They also felt that a lot of residents see city ordinances and plans as something that makes their lives more complicated and restricts their rights. However, it was mentioned that more residents are starting to see some of the negative ramifications of growth, with positive implications for attempting to plan and control that growth. It was suggested that as time passes, these residents may become less opposed to the planning process and more involved.

Most respondents agreed, however, that the main conflict today is between the longtime residents and the "outsiders." According to one longtime resident, the term
“outsiders” refers to anyone who was not born and raised in the community, including residents who have lived there for 20 years or more. It was suggested that longtime residents fear they are losing control of their community to the “outsiders” and that changes are being made that are not compatible with the community as they have always known it. These changes include things such as tearing down the old historical buildings, outlawing farm animals within the city limits, mandating open space, and taking away the rights of private property owners. One respondent who is a longtime resident summarized these feelings with the statement, “We are afraid the outsiders are trying to change the community to be what they want, and not what we want.”

On the other side, the newer residents, or “outsiders,” do not feel so much that they have taken control away from the longtime residents, as they have simply taken control because no one else was doing anything, and things needed to be done. One newer resident, who has been involved in both the planning and zoning committee and the board of adjustments and who has only lived in the community for 3 years, expressed his unhappiness at the attitude of many of the longtime residents. He felt that while they were doing nothing to solve the community’s growth problems, many of the newer residents were actively involved trying to ensure the integrity of the community. He believes that the newer residents have been unfairly chastised for taking on that responsibility.

Some would suggest that the conflict lies not with all “outsiders,” only with those who are environmentalists trying to push their views for the area. For others, this conflict extends beyond the environmentalists who have moved into the area to include what is
often referred to as the “backpackers,” who visit the area and spend little to no money, but who have strong opinions regarding wilderness designation and use of the land. The environmentalists and “backpackers” have been blamed for most of the changes that have taken place, such as a loss of grazing land, lawsuits preventing logging by the local mill, and the designation of the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument.

**Strategies for Managing Conflict**

Escalante is as much in the midst of dealing with conflicts as they are in dealing with changes taking place in their community. One of Suzanne Winters’ hopes as an Economic Developer for the community is to be able to “pull the community together and make them understand how much they have to lose, and get them involved before the game ends.” This will include educating citizens on possibilities for their community, and attempting to bring all the stakeholders together, with a facilitator, to work through their differences. Other respondents agreed that if the community truly wishes to resolve its conflicts within the near future, an outside facilitator or arbitrator who is respected and trusted by both groups is necessary.

Still, others feel that time and hard work on the part of both groups will help in resolving the conflicts. It was suggested that if everybody in the community would become more involved in the planning process, attending meetings with open and frank discussions, it would allow the citizens an opportunity to get to know one another, which would result in better relationships and better communication between the groups. A couple of respondents stated that gossip is a method often used right now for spreading
information, and that has been detrimental to the community solving its problems. One respondent remarked that one of the problems is that too many people in the community want to take the easy road, which means they do not get involved. Rather than taking the time and energy to get involved and work on solutions and compromises, they simply sit back and complain about what has been done.

The mayor tried to shed some light on what many residents are feeling today. He noted that before the designation of the Monument and the influx of new residents, the community did not have or need all the regulations on building that are now being implemented. Longtime residents are not used to being told what they can and cannot do on their property, and this results in feelings of resentment. Other respondents agreed with his assessment. They believe that, in time, people will adjust to the idea that things have changed. If they wish to keep the integrity of the community in place, they will need to learn to live with new rules. A few respondents mentioned that this is already taking place. As people become more acquainted with the rules, and work with them, they find they are not so impossible to live with after all.

**Recommendations for Other Communities**

Respondents in each community were asked to give recommendations to other community leaders that are also in the process of planning for the future and diversifying their economy. The following is a list of the ideas shared by the people of Escalante. It is divided into four categories of recommendations: those related to creating and
implementing a master plan; those related to encouraging community involvement; ideas for information and funding sources; and miscellaneous recommendations.

Planning

- Start yesterday in getting your plan together. You are never going to know if you have arrived without a plan to get you there.
- Accept that change is inevitable and look at a range of possible options. Then pick the one that will benefit the city most financially (this is important if it is going to work), and then run with it.
- We have made a lot of mistakes in the past, and it has cost the city some money here and there. Developing a general plan, zoning, and all that is a trial-and-error process.
- If a community does not have ordinances in place now, they should do it, because they will need them sooner than they think.
- You need to show the citizens some progress, or they get sick and tired of hearing about planning when nothing is accomplished.
- Get planning and zoning in place, but make it simple. Do not get carried away with the details. Leave yourself room with conditional use permits so you can evaluate individual projects on their merits.
- Develop an infrastructure as soon as possible, before growth occurs. Escalante’s biggest problem was that it let its water system deteriorate as the city was
growing, and did not plan a sewer system to keep up with the growth. Now we are trying to play catch-up.

• Planning is necessary to some degree, but do not get carried away with it to the point that you never take action. Decide what you want to do, then get it done.

• Change is inevitable. If you do not plan for it, you will be run down by it.

• A vision is a good thing, even if it is a vision of what you do not want.

Community Involvement

• Talk to everybody to get ideas, not just those who think like you do.

Where to Find Help

• Steal plans from others [communities] and learn from their mistakes. If you see someone doing it right, ask them how they are doing it. Most communities will be very willing to share, so ask them for help and ideas.

Miscellaneous

• Listen to both sides before making a decision. Do not base your decisions on your emotions, but instead do what you think is best for the community.

• Do not make a decision on a controversial issue while emotions in the community are high. Wait until things have cooled off, then re-address the issue.

• Hang on to your heritage and traditions. And, get the young people involved in the activities early, so when the older people can no longer do them, someone can take over.
CHAPTER V
SPRINGDALE

Background

Historically, Springdale's economic base was built on agriculture. The residents primarily farmed the flood plain, and raised cattle. The community's destiny, however, was dramatically changed in 1909, when through a presidential proclamation, Mukuntuweap National Monument was established immediately outside the community's boundaries. In 1919, the Monument was redesignated as a national park, and its name was changed to Zion National Park (National Park Service 1955). Springdale has served as the gateway community to Zion National Park since its designation, and the park has had a tremendous influence upon the community.

As early as the mid-to-late 1940s tourism and recreation became an important part of Springdale's economy. At that time, there were just a handful of people catering to the tourists, but by the late 1950s, pastures and orchards began to give way to hotels, restaurants, and specialty shops. Today, Springdale's economy is primarily based upon tourism and recreation, and most community leaders are quite comfortable with their community's status as a tourist and recreation destination.

Community Profile

Springdale is a small town located in southwestern Utah. It was believed to have been established by Albert Petty in the fall and winter of 1862-63 with 20 families, at the
directive of the Mormon Church. At that time the Mormon Church was moving many families into southern Utah with the hopes of making the region a major producer of cotton (Woodbury 1950).

Springdale is part of Washington County, one of the fastest growing counties in the state of Utah. The population of Springdale has also continued to increase with an estimated 18 percent increase between 1990 and 1996, at which time the population was shown to be 324 residents (Governors Office of Budget and Planning 1996). Some community leaders, however, have suggested that the increase is slowing due to the high prices of real estate in the area. Springdale has dealt with most of the problems associated with rapid growth including changing land values, which has made it difficult for the children of many local residents to find affordable housing. However, community leaders have worked very hard to maintain the community’s integrity and rural character and have been very successful in their efforts.

Economic Opportunities

Businesses catering to tourists and recreationists are by far the biggest employers in Springdale. The range of opportunities for employment in tourism and recreation varies widely. It includes possibilities such as: positions with the National Park Service, both seasonally and year around; working as a maid, waiter, or waitress; employment in the local stores and specialty shops; positions with the Zion Canyon Cinemax Theatre; and selling goods in local shops and at seasonal art fairs, as is done by a large contingency of artisans such as painters, photographers, pottery makers, jewelry makers.
Besides tourism and recreation, there are a few other employment opportunities for local residents. For example, some residents tele-commute, such as a small family-run architectural firm and a book designer. Others physically commute to St. George or Cedar City, where there are numerous opportunities, including employment with Southern Utah University or the area hospitals. Springdale’s local government also offers some employment opportunities, as does the local grade school and library. Construction occasionally offers employment in both housing and commercial development.

Although the role of agriculture has significantly diminished in Springdale, a few residents still participate in a Saturday Farmers Market during the summer months. Primarily, they sell home grown and home made products such as flowers, vegetables, and freshly baked goods. The town also has one apple and nectarine orchard (Springdale Fruit Company) that ships its produce around the country, but also caters to the local tourists, offering fresh organic fruits, produce, and juices. Although the orchard serves as an employer for seasonal farm workers, few of their employees are actual Springdale residents. Most are seasonal laborers from out-of-town.

Lastly, retirees make up a fair portion of the population. According to the 1990 U.S. Census Bureau, 29 percent of Springdale’s population is retired, and the USDA Economic Research Service (ERS) has designated the county as a “non-metro retirement destination county.” This is defined by the ERS as meaning “[t]he population aged 60 and over in 1990 increased by 15 percent or more from 1980-90 through in movement of people” (USDA 1995). However, as noted by one respondent, most retirees in the county
being 45 miles away, and the nearest major grocery stores or department stores being an equal distance.

Dependency on Extractive Industries

Mining. Mining was not mentioned as an employment opportunity for local residents by any of the respondents. However, according to the 1990 Census Bureau data, 2 percent of the population is employed in the mining industry. It is possible that these residents are working at a different location and commuting from Springdale.

Timber harvesting. There is no timber harvesting in the area at this time. In the early 1900s, there was some “cable logging” being done on Cable Mountain in Zion National Park, but that ended prior to the time that Zion was designated as a national park in 1955.

Agriculture. There are a few local residents who keep cattle or sheep on their property, but mostly as hobby farmers or small ranchers with 15 or less animals. Most respondents agreed that they would like to see these small ranches and farms continue. The local orchardist mentioned above is also part of the agricultural sector.

Dependency on Recreation and Tourism

All respondents were in agreement that tourism and recreation are the life blood of the community. The USDA (1995) Economic Research Service designated Washington County as a “service dependent county,” meaning “[s]ervice activities contributed a
County as a “service dependent county,” meaning “[s]ervice activities contributed a weighted annual average of 50 percent or more labor and proprietor income over the three years from 1987 to 1989.”

**Economic Concerns**

The economic concern most frequently mentioned by respondents is the lack of affordable housing in Springdale. Land and homes have become unaffordable for local residents and anyone else without large sums of money to spend on housing. In October of 1998, half-acre lots within the town limits were selling for $160,000, and a three bedroom home on 2 acres of property was listed at $250,000. There is virtually no rental space available. While some people in the community see this as a possible means of keeping population growth at a minimum, others see it as the community becoming too exclusive and expensive for the average citizen to afford.

Many of those interviewed found it especially disturbing that individuals who make up much of the labor force in lower paying jobs, such as maids, waiters, waitresses, and shopkeepers are unable to afford a decent place to live in town. Most of them must either drive from Hurricane or LaVerkin, 12 miles one way, or resort to camping in local campgrounds or along the Virgin River for the 6 to 8 months a year that they work in Springdale.

Even those people working for the National Park Service (NPS) are experiencing problems with the lack of housing in the area. Recently the NPS instituted a new policy to eliminate employee housing in the parks, thus forcing employees to live in nearby
communities. This has posed a problem for NPS employees at Zion, including those with the higher paying positions, who are finding it difficult, if not impossible, to find affordable housing within Springdale.

Utah’s legislators are aware that the issue of affordable housing has become a serious problem, and have mandated that each municipality “adopt a plan for moderate income housing within its municipality” (Utah Code Section 10-9-307). “Moderate income housing” is defined in the Code as “housing occupied or reserved for occupancy by households with a gross household income equal to or less than 80 percent of the median gross income of the metropolitan statistical area for households of the same size.” Currently, Springdale is not in compliance with this mandate. However, the town council is looking at a few options that would help to bring them into compliance. These options include: requiring all new development to include a certain portion of affordable housing within their development plans; offering a “density bonus,” meaning the current requirement of one unit per 4,000 square feet would be changed to allow more than that, but only if affordable housing was included; changing a zoning ordinance to allow individuals to rent out guest houses or build accessory apartments in private homes; mandating the larger employers to supply housing for their employees, which is currently being done by Zion Park Inn; or institute a shuttle bus for employees living in other communities.

Some respondents expressed concerns with some of the economic deficiencies related to tourism and recreation. The seasonality of the industry was one of the main
problems discussed. While Zion National Park is open year around, most of the business within the town of Springdale is currently occurring between the months of March and October. Although many residents appreciate this aspect of the industry and have adapted their businesses to the ebb and flow of the tourist season, other local businesses are having a tough time making ends meet on only 8 months of steady income.

The second concern associated with tourism and recreation is its fickle nature and unpredictability. While the number of visitors to our national parks has been steadily increasing since the end of World War II, and park visitors for the early 1990s has shown astonishing growth (Howe et al. 1997), there is no way to ensure that the numbers will remain steady. There are many factors involved in determining what destination people pick for their vacations. This includes such things as the strength of the economy, gas prices, and personal preferences. All of these factors are out of the control of communities hoping to attract tourists and recreationists. So, while one year may be incredibly profitable, the next may result in large losses. According to the town planner, these swings do not appear to be tied to how much the community has invested in advertising.

Unique Community Characteristics

The eclectic group of individuals who make up the community was the most common response received to the question “What makes Springdale a unique community?” Although Springdale’s population is only around 350, residents believe they lack the mentality frequently associated with small towns, in which outsiders are viewed
with suspicion and are not welcome. Most respondents saw their community as more open, accepting, and sophisticated than is generally found in rural Utah. Examples of this openness include the quickness with which new residents are accepted onto the town’s planning and zoning committee and voted into public office. One former town council member was elected into office after being a resident for only 8 months. The current mayor is also a relative newcomer to the community, having moved there in 1988.

Also considered unique was the ability of local residents to get along with each other and to accept and respect each others’ opinions. There is no division within the community between “old timers” and “newcomers” or between Mormons and non-Mormons. According to the mayor, there is a special quality in Springdale’s residents that allows them not only to be tolerant of new ideas and different ways, but to willingly embrace the differences in people and incorporate those differences into their community.

In addition to the openness of residents, the willingness of so many of them to volunteer their time and become actively involved in civic roles was also mentioned as a unique factor.

Of course, the natural beauty of being surrounded on three sides by Zion National Park is another unique characteristic of this community. The scenery when standing in town is almost as spectacular as that found within the park. In addition to the natural beauty, many of the respondents felt the town had done a good job of keeping its own beauty and integrity, in spite of the large numbers of people passing through it and the new development that has taken place in the last 40 years. Much of the credit for this was
given to both early and current town planners, who had the foresight to implement laws that would preserve the town's integrity before it was too late.

The relationship between the community and employees of Zion National Park was a third factor that was mentioned as being unique to the community. There is a true spirit of cooperation between the two entities, and this appears to be especially true of the relationship between the mayor of Springdale, Phillip Bimstein, and the Park's superintendent, Don Falvey, who both feel they have benefitted from their association.

The park has been very careful to include the community in their planning processes, such as the shuttle project already mentioned. Town officials have reciprocated this consideration by asking Don Falvey to serve as an honorary member of the planning committee, recognizing that what happens in the community affects the activities of the park. Although not a voting member of the committee, Don Falvey does attend all meetings and engages in all discussions of the town's plans. The special relationship between the park employees and Springdale was formally recognized with an award being given to the park by the National Park Foundation.

In addition, the respondents all seemed quite grateful that the park itself exists and that they serve as its gateway. They see these public lands as being important to their way of life, both economically and culturally, and they believe that Zion National Park has truly been more of a blessing to the community than a curse.

Lastly, the relationship that Springdale has with its neighboring community Rockville is also seen as unique. For the same reasons that they have asked the
Superintendent of Zion National Park to be an honorary member of the town’s planning and zoning committee, they have asked the mayor of Rockville to serve in the same capacity. Some respondents felt that it would behoove the two communities to join as one, but the town of Rockville prefers to remain a separate entity.

Planning Process

Motivation

The first planning committee was established in the late 1960s and according the current town planner, “the committee was dedicated to keeping the community from being raped and pillaged by developers.” They determined that to do this, they would make it difficult and expensive for individuals to move in and develop the land. At the time, many residents complained that this would make the town exclusionary. Others, however, felt there was nothing wrong with their tactics. They felt it would benefit the community by making it impossible for people to come and destroy the land, while at the same time allowing for some development to take place.

The 1970s brought a wave of new development into St. George, and many of the town council members who watched this growth were determined not to let the same thing happen in Springdale. A consultant was hired who established the concept of a “village atmosphere,” which was well received by the community. He also established a few simple guidelines for preserving it.

According to some respondents, however, the ordinances passed in the 1960s and 1970s were not adequate to handle concerns the town began facing in the 1980s. These
respondents suggested that the real planning for the future and the foresight for implementation of laws governing the town today did not occur until around 1986. At that time the town was sued by a local developer, and a scandal broke out which allegedly involved a plan by the town administrators to take private property for development of a golf course and resort that would make the town into a vacation destination spot.

The story varies somewhat, depending on who is telling it. It begins with a developer from Salt Lake City coming to Springdale in the early 1980s with plans to build a recreational vehicle (RV) park in town. The community decided to be pro-active and outlawed RV parks before the developer could put his plans into action. But, the town planners said to themselves, “What can we do together [with this developer] to benefit the community?” They came up with the idea of a joint venture to build a municipal golf course and conference center that would make the town a destination resort spot and bring additional jobs and tax revenue to the community. The golf course and resort would have been managed by the developer.

The conflict surrounding the development of the golf course was mainly focused on how Springdale’s leaders intended to acquire the land necessary for the project. According to one respondent who owned property that the town was interested in, he was approached by town administrators about donating a portion of his land to the project “after I’d just paid good money for the place.” He refused. He stated that another land owner he had spoken to also refused the town’s request.
At that point, some of the respondents felt land was basically going to be taken by town planners, using the Utah Neighborhood Development Act (Utah Code 17A-2-1200), which established redevelopment agencies (RDAs) across the state. The legislation “was originally approved to aid communities in the removal and prevention of blight” (Utah Redevelopment Agencies 1991). However, according to some of the respondents, the land that was going to be condemned was land bordering the river and pastures, in other words, prime commercial properties that hardly fit the definition of blighted lands. Residents who owned the necessary land were offered below market price, and were basically told that they must sell for the good of the community, or the land would be taken through eminent domain. A “Performance Audit” of Utah Redevelopment Agencies (1991) states that this sort of problem did exist with RDAs. According to the report, much controversy and conflict was created in Utah because RDAs were found to be operating as economic development agencies, and eminent domain was being used for community tax base gains, rather than the elimination of true blight (Utah Redevelopment Agencies 1991).

There is a second version of this story which was presented by a lifetime resident of Springdale. According to this person, no one in town government at the time had any intention of “taking” residents’ properties, nor did they believe local residents would believe these rumors. They assumed that since these were their neighbors, they would know better than to believe this gossip. As a result, the town planners did not counter the rumors, nor did they attempt to discuss their plans with any of the individuals spreading
those rumors. During the next election, this decision blew up in the administration’s face when the mayor and most of the town council members were replaced.

There is agreement in the story again at this point: a new administration was elected who put a stop to the development plan, and a stop to the sale of a prearranged number of water shares for the developer. This resulted in a lawsuit by the developer, who took the town to court and won back his rights to purchase the water shares. Another longtime resident and former member of the town council observed that this issue could easily be seen in two different lights. He felt that, on the one hand, the golf course and use of the RDA would have been good for the community, both in keeping green space as well as generating revenue to improve the town’s infrastructure through tax breaks offered through the RDA. On the other hand, he believed that people were being manipulated to sell their property at below market value. He feared that this type of development would bring in more developers than the town wanted or needed.

A second incident that people believed served as a catalyst for the planning process was another lawsuit, by another developer in the early 1990s. At that time, a number of developers where challenging the new ordinances that had been put into place in Springdale in the mid-1980s. According to a former council member, in 1992 during one of these lawsuits, a judge declared all of Springdale’s ordinances and zoning laws invalid. The judge determined that the town had not “supplied appropriate public notice prior to implementation” of the laws. This resulted in the town declaring a 6-month moratorium on all new development, and creating and implementing new ordinances, which were a
mixture of old and new. In addition, the court decision also allowed the developer to build a hotel that was not in accordance with either the ordinances in place prior to the ruling, nor those that were implemented after the 6-month moratorium.

**Responsible Entities**

Spingdale’s administration consists of an elected mayor and town council; two paid employees, the town manager and the director of community development; and nine members of the planning and zoning committee (which includes two non-voting members) who are appointed by the mayor. As required by the state, the town also has a board of adjustments that a resident or business can appeal to if they feel that a particular ordinance should be waived or adjusted for their individual situation. The board is made up of five individuals from the community who can make exceptions if they deem it prudent.

**Community Involvement**

To assure community involvement during the development of the town’s master plan in the mid-1980s, community leaders established several committees that consisted of a variety of Springdale’s citizens. This not only helped to ensure citizen involvement in the process, but it also helped to ensure that residents understood and accepted the new plan.

Today town officials have two means of encouraging community involvement. The first is to notify residents of all public meetings. Times, dates, and locations of the meetings are posted in the local post office (where all residents receive their mail), as well
as at the town offices and the local bank. In addition, if a proposed project affects adjoining land owners, a letter is sent notifying them of the proposal and date of the meeting in which it will be discussed.

Secondly, the mayor publishes a quarterly newsletter which is distributed in the same places that are used to notify citizens of public meetings. According to the mayor, its purpose is to keep citizens informed and communications open. He began this a few years ago to prevent gossip from being the main agent for disseminating information within the town.

Concern was expressed by some respondents, however, about the lack of participation in the decision-making process by a majority of residents. It was noted that participation increases noticeably when a controversial issue is being discussed. For the most part, however, residents do not get involved unless they are directly influenced by the outcome of a decision. Or, it was noted, all too often residents wait until after a decision has already been made by the administration to raise an issue.

A few respondents suggested that people often do not feel the need to get involved if things are running smoothly and people trust the administration. They were hoping that might be the case in Springdale. As the mayor observed, “Maybe it’s a compliment that people don’t feel the need to get so involved.”

One respondent suggested that leaders of small communities should not assume that people automatically feel a part of the decision-making process. She recommended
that citizens be invited and reminded to get involved. If they are not, people begin to feel isolated from the process, and suspicion and rumors begin to spread.

**Tourism and Recreation**

**Creating Opportunities**

Because of the natural beauty of the area and the popularity of Zion National Park with both national and foreign visitors, Springdale has not needed to concentrate a lot of effort or money on creating opportunities for recreationism and tourism. There were, however, a few projects that the town and businesses within the community have done in the hopes of promoting their community to visitors.

The first is a promotional effort by the local chamber of commerce (the Zion Canyon Chamber of Commerce, which serves Springdale, Rockville, and Virgin) to educate the public on the wonders of Zion National Park and the local communities during the off-seasons of winter and spring. The hope is to make the region a year-round destination spot. To assist them in this effort, they have developed a colorful brochure, the *Zion National Park: Thirteen Months of Sunshine*, and *Springdale and Zion National Park Visitors Guide*, which informs potential visitors of available lodging, dining, recreational opportunities and special events that have been planned for each season, as well as gives information on the beauty and splendor of both the town and the park.

The second project is to promote Springdale as a conference center. Currently, there is only one hotel in town, Zion Park Inn, large enough to accommodate conferences (i.e., availability of meeting rooms and enough beds to house a majority of the attendees).
According to a number of respondents, these efforts are still in the early stages and more promotional activity is needed. However, the Zion Park Inn has hosted a few conferences, which have resulted in some spill-over of business to other establishments. Other community activities which have helped promote the town include:

- Local restaurants becoming regionally known for their cuisine, such as the Bit and Spur, which has attracted people from as far away as Salt Lake City.
- The Cinemax Theatre, which offers visitors spectacular views of the Park in the comfort of air-conditioning.
- Construction of a town park next to the Virgin River, which runs through the south end of town. The park will allow public access to the river.
- A music festival, which was held for the first time in the fall of 1998, featuring local musicians and artist. While it was not as successful as they had hoped, it did bring in a few people from St. George.
- Springdale also observes two main holidays that help give visitors a flavor of the local life. One is St. Patrick’s day, which is celebrated with a parade, Irish music and food, and a renowned green Jell-O contest. The other is the Fourth of July celebration which tends to bring in mostly people from Washington County, since it has the only parade in the county and also offers a fireworks display against the backdrop of the Zion cliffs at dusk.
- The town also sponsors a “Butch Cassidy Fun Run” (10 kilometers) on Thanksgiving weekend to help promote the town during the off-season.
Concerns with Integrating Tourism and Recreation into the Community

Most of the respondents felt that Springdale had done a good job of integrating tourism and recreation into their community, despite of the lack of diversity in their economy. Nonetheless, respondents did discuss a few concerns they had with tourism and recreation.

The biggest problem mentioned was the encroachment of development on the aesthetic beauty of the community. Residents feared that development would replace open spaces, and that "giant, garish signage, that some think they need to attract customers, will eliminate our gorgeous dark skies." They also worried that the unique feel of the "small town" would be lost as family businesses were replaced with big franchises, and developers were allowed to build whatever and wherever they wanted.

A second concern frequently mentioned was the cost of implementing and maintaining the infrastructure necessary to accommodate tourists and recreationists. This included such things as improving the roads, providing street lights, sidewalks, public restrooms, public trash canisters and collection, sewer, water, police protection, and emergency services.

In order to help communities pay for the additional services resulting from tourists and recreationists, the Utah Legislature has passed various tax legislation. One of these is the Transient Room Tax (Utah Code Ann. 59-12-301), which allows counties to impose up to a 3% tax on all accommodation charges for "hotels, motels, motor courts, and
similar public accommodations for occupancy of less than 30 days” (Utah State Tax
Commission 1997). The tax is generally collected by the state, returned to the county, and
distributed to the various communities. In addition to the transient room tax, Springdale
receives money through a special resort communities sales tax (Utah Code Ann.59-12-401
and 59-12-402). Under this law, the town may impose a tax of up to 1 percent “of the
purchase price on the same transactions as state sales tax” (Utah State Tax Commission
1997). This tax may only be imposed by “municipalities whose transient room capacity is
greater than or equal to 66 percent of the permanent census population, and upon voter
approval, an additional ½ percent may be imposed” (Utah State Tax Commission 1997).
Springdale has been imposing the 1 percent resort tax for the last 12 years, and has used
the money primarily to improve and maintain their infrastructure.

Although many communities see these increased cost as a burden, Springdale’s
mayor noted that sometimes the improved infrastructure benefits residents as well. For a
town of 350 people, Springdale enjoys more amenities than most small towns not located
near a metropolitan area. He gave the example of their community’s ability to afford an
emergency medical technician (EMT) crew, which recently saved the life of a resident who
had experienced a heart attack. Many small communities in Utah cannot afford to staff an
EMT team.

Traffic associated with tourism and recreation is also a serious concern for many of
Springdale’s residents. With approximately 2.5 million visitors a year passing through
Springdale, it is bound to pose some problems. However, all the respondents who
mentioned this as a concern were quick to state that they were not complaining about the traffic, as they realized it is necessary if visitors are going to come to their community.

A number of respondents also discussed the problem of most Zion visitors simply passing through Springdale on their way out of Zion and on to another destination. One solution to this problem, which is also meant to address the first concern mentioned (traffic congestion), is a proposed shuttle transportation system between Zion National Park and Springdale.

Working together, the park and the community have proposed the “Zion Transportation System Springdale Loop.” The proposed action in the Finding of No Significant Impact Statement recently released by the United States Department of the Interior - National Park Service states:

In the year 2000, Zion National Park is scheduled to institute a transportation system for visitors to Zion National Park and Springdale, Utah. In order to protect community values and reduce traffic congestion, a Springdale loop of the transportation system would be developed to serve visitors and residents alike. The Springdale loop facilities will be implemented through the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) Transportation Enhancement funds. These facilities would involve construction of ten shuttle stops, a contact/comfort station, and streetscape improvements. The shuttle stops would consist of shelters, benches, stone masonry walls, concrete pavement and bus braking pads, signage, plant materials and trash receptacles. The contact/comfort stations will be constructed at Springdale’s Riverfront Park. The streetscape improvements involve historic canal, curb and gutter rehabilitation and restoration, sidewalks, and street tree plantings. With the exception of the contact/comfort station improvements would be confined to
Springdale residents were invited by the National Park Service to participate in the planning process, and most of the individuals interviewed were very much in favor of the project. The positive aspects of the project for Springdale that respondents mentioned included: an increased number of people visiting the town and possibly spending time and money in local establishments; the town becoming more pedestrian oriented, with slower traffic and safer streets; and a means for Springdale to become better known by Zion visitors as a destination spot, as opposed to a community that they just pass through. The Park also receives benefits, including less traffic passing through it, and a reduction in the need for parking spaces within the Park boundaries.

Only one respondent expressed reservations about the shuttle project. The most serious of these was a lack of day-use parking available within the community. Springdale does not currently have any large parking lots, and there are no plans to build any in the near future. According to the superintendent of Zion National Park, during the peak of the summer season there can be four to five thousand cars coming into the park each day. The system is scheduled to run during the peak visitor season (Easter weekend through late October) and will be mandatory for all visitors wishing to go into Zion Canyon from the Springdale entrance. The Park will only be offering 400 parking spaces, and “visitors will be encouraged to leave their cars at designated parking areas within Springdale and use the transit system, thus reducing the number of parking spaces needed in the park” (National Park Service 1997).
No one, however, was able to give a clear description of where the “designated parking areas within Springdale” will be located. The respondent felt there was an incredible potential for an increase in traffic congestion as desperate tourists and recreationists try to find an empty parking spot. Also, it could pose a problem for local businesses, as there parking spots are filled up by non-customers headed into the Park.

**Conflict Between Tourism and Recreation and Other Industries**

The only conflict mentioned was that tourism and recreation had many years ago displaced agriculture as the mainstay of Springdale’s economy. For most respondents, however, that was so long ago that they have no memory of the community prior to its dependency on visitors. It was very obvious that most of the respondents were careful not to criticize tourism and recreation because, as one respondent put it, “Everyone’s life revolves around Zion Park and tourism. We don’t have anything else.”

Tourism and recreation have not appeared to cause conflicts among residents and business owners either. A few respondents suggested this is because Springdale residents have had to deal with large numbers of tourists for over 50 years. They felt most residents realize that tourism and recreation are the bread and butter of the community. One respondent noted that the influence of tourism has generally been positive for the community, helping to shape the citizenry into open minded and accepting people, and instilling the diversity that makes the community unique.
Strategies for Making Tourism and Recreation Compatible with Other Industries

Because Springdale has not been put into a position of having to attempt to make tourism and recreation compatible with other industries, there were no suggestions on strategies for doing this. However, the local orchardist has managed not only to maintain his agricultural business in the midst of high land values, but also to capitalize on visitors by making his orchard another tourist stop and selling his goods to them.

Social and Economic Effects of Tourism and Recreation

Most respondents agreed that the biggest impact on the community, which directly relates to tourism and recreation, was the large amount of development that has taken place in Springdale in the recent past. Much of it has been in the last seven years. This includes the addition of the Cinemax Theatre and two new large motels, The Zion Park Inn with 120 rooms and the Desert Pearl with 65 rooms. In addition, new subdivisions under development could add another 182 homes, which would almost double the population (Ludwig 1997).

A second impact on Springdale believed to be a direct result of increased visitation to the area has been the increased cost of housing. This, however, is not necessarily seen as a bad thing by all residents. A former member of both the town council and the planning and zoning committee suggested that there are benefits with high-cost housing. He felt the biggest benefit was that it allows the developer a better opportunity to ensure that buildings are of high quality and meet standards set forth by the community.
According to the mayor, some of the residents, primarily those who have lived in Springdale most of their lives, feel that the town is “going to hell.” The mayor’s response to this, however, is “As compared to what? Yes, compared to 80 years ago we are big, but compared to other communities bordering national parks, I think we are doing great.” To back this statement up, a respondent who grew up in Springdale remarked that she feels the changes to the community have been gradual enough that they appear almost natural, rather than startling. She added that while there may be fewer open spaces and orchards than in the past, it is still a lovely place for a child to grow up, and the changes are acceptable.

**Attracting New Industry**

Because the community is surrounded on three sides by Zion National Park, and on the fourth side by Bureau of Land Management land, there is not much opportunity for adding other industries to the local economy. A lack of space, resulting in extremely high property values, poses a serious drawback to any industry with an inclination to settle in Springdale.

Additionally, the town lacks the infrastructure to accommodate industry, especially in the area of transportation. The community has no airports or train depots available, and the closest major highways are between 25 and 30 miles away. Recently, the town council discussed the issue of diversifying the economy. The decision was made not to go after other industries for the reasons already mentioned, as well as the fact that the community
has no place to house the extra people an industry may bring. Therefore, as one respondent put it, “Tourism is it.”

**Issues with Controlling Growth**

**Factors Limiting Growth**

Growth has also been limited in the past by water availability. It was not until Springdale was able to purchase additional water rights from the Virgin River basin in 1988 that they could even begin to hope for additional growth in the community. To add to the potential for future development, a new water treatment plant was built and the town’s sewer treatment was expanded in 1996 (Ludwig 1997). According to Springdale’s town planner, the community could accommodate close to 700 new residents. Most respondents agreed, however, Springdale will never become a St. George with condominiums and large apartment complexes built on its hillsides, because the current zoning laws will not permit it.

**Planning and Implementing Zoning and Building Ordinances**

After the golf course incident, Springdale decided to determine what they did and did not want to be. They hired a private consultant, and worked with the Five County Association of Governments, which provides communities in southern Utah assistance in community and economic development.

One of the first things the community did to was to develop a vision statement and a master plan. Springdale’s vision statement declares:
We envision Springdale as a model gateway community that is pedestrian friendly, employing diverse modes of transportation. Springdale will maintain its environmental and aesthetic integrity while supporting a diverse population.

To help them in their planning process, in 1988, a survey was conducted of Springdale residents. They were asked such questions as: What do you value about our community? What services do you want the town to provide for you? What do we need more of; what do we need less of? and Where do you want development to take place? The local Lions Club distributed and picked up the surveys, and each adult resident was asked to participate. This information was used to develop the town’s master plan. The master plan, in turn, was used to develop the subsequent ordinances developed by the Planning and Zoning Committee, and passed by the town council. According to one respondent, the master plan is still used today in town council and planning committee meetings to ensure that changes made meet the will of the residents.

The other incident in 1992, in which all of Springdale’s ordinances were found invalid by the court, resulted in the town declaring a 6-month moratorium on all new development. According to one respondent who was a member of the planning and zoning committee at the time, the committee “dug in its heels” and developed new ordinances for the town. They did such a thorough job that most of the laws passed at that time are still in use today.

To do this they gathered information on ordinances passed by other resort communities which they determined had done a good job of controlling growth and
sprawl. They also used some of the prior ordinances that had worked well for them. Additionally, they turned to local organizations such as Five County Association of Governments and the Utah League of Cities and Towns. According to some of the people involved, it was a difficult, painful, yet satisfying 6-month task.

Most respondents felt that Springdale’s ordinances do a good job of fulfilling their purposes, which are to control growth and urban sprawl and maintain the integrity of the community. A sample of these ordinances includes:

1. **Set Backs:** the distance allowed between a residential and a commercial building, or between two residential dwellings, or two commercial building. The required set back from property line for residential dwellings is 30 feet; commercial buildings is 50 feet.

2. **Building Density:** the size of residential dwellings are limited to 5000 square feet, and can cover only 25 percent of the lot, leaving 75 percent of the lot in open space. Buildings within commercial zones are limited to 8000 square feet, and those within the valley are mandated to keeping 70 percent of their land in open space, while those within the center of the town are mandated to keep 50 percent in open space.

3. **Architectural standards for all new development includes** a height limit of 26 feet in residential zones, and 28 feet in commercial zones.
4. Protection of the surrounding foothills requires larger building lots (e.g., two to five acres depending upon slope and level of property) and only allows single family dwellings to be built which cover only 20 percent or less of the total land.

5. Lot Size: within the valley area building lots must be no less than 3/4 of an acre for residential development, and no less than 1/2 an acre for commercial development.

6. Signage Regulations: permits two signs per business, one free standing, the other attached to the business’ building. Size limits on the signs include one limited to 20 square feet and the other to 40 square feet. Signs must be made from a natural material (most use wood or rocks), and colors must be chosen from a predetermined color pallet provided by the town.

7. Night Sky Ordinance: limits the amount and type of lighting used by businesses at night to advertise, and protects the ability of residents and visitors to enjoy the night sky.

Zoning ordinances were not popular at first, and the administration recognizes that Springdale’s ordinances are fairly strict for a community of only 350 residents. A few respondents also discussed the difficulty of maintaining the balance between the rights of developers and the rights of the community to control the developers. It was felt, however, that most residents and developers have accepted the rules because they now see the benefits to the community. For example, the signage ordinances have helped keep the unique “sense of place” the community possesses, by keeping the signs in town pleasant to view and making business owners more aware of how their businesses blend into the
ambiance of the community. Limiting the heights of the buildings has also benefitted the community by keeping the vistas open, and the view spectacular. Also, it was stressed by both the mayor and the director of community development that the ordinances were put in place not to stop growth and development, but simply to limit it, and control how it is done. Two of the respondents, however, commented that they feel the town has gone too far in the implementation of ordinances, especially those concerning development on private land.

Open Space

Open space is of primary concern to town planners in Springdale, and they have done a few things to ensure it. First they have passed an ordinance mandating open space with all new development. Secondly, the community has accepted a conservation easement from one of the developers (the Anasazi Plateau), which is building 76 home sites on 300 acres adjacent to Zion National Park. The easement will ensure public access to the Park in this area. The town officials who discussed it were very excited about the opportunity it presents, and hopes it serves as an example for future developments.

Community Conflicts Due to Change

A number of respondents mentioned that during Springdale's controversial period after the golf course incident and before the implementation of the current ordinances, the town council and planning committee meetings were generally well attended and often raucous, with fist fights breaking out and deputy sheriffs in attendance to control the
crowds. Also, there were many lawsuits, with numerous developers suing the town, and at one time the mayor suing the town council members. Many of the problems were blamed on a lack of trust of town officials by most citizens.

Since that time, there were two other potential conflicts that community leaders were actually able to quickly dissipate. The first involved the Cinemax Theatre, which is located approximately 500 feet from the Park's border. While all of the town council and a majority of the citizens were in favor of the theatre, an outside group (which one respondent remembered as the National Parks and Conservation Association) threatened to sue the town if the project was allowed. Their argument was that the town had made an "arbitrary and capricious decision to put the theatre in."

However, according to a respondent who was a member of the town council at the time, the council had given the project careful consideration, and had documented the criteria they used to approve the project. As a result, the judge tossed the case out of court and the theatre was built. According to most respondents, the theatre has been good for the community both as an employer and as a source of revenue for the town.

The other controversy involved the shuttle transportation system. For a long time no one in the community raised concerns about the system. Then just prior to the Park and town agreeing on the shuttle plans, rumors began to spread that the Park was "trying to take over the town." The mayor called a meeting to discuss the issue and squelch the rumors. Apparently people were satisfied with the discussion, and support for the project within the community increased.
public receives the correct information by talking directly to the people, especially those who may be spreading rumors. Lastly, he tries to ensure that public affairs are handled fairly, which in turn builds trust and allows people to feel a part of the process. He feels his best qualities for accomplishing this are being a good listener and having no agenda of his own, but helping with others’ agendas.

Others mentioned the implementation of ordinances and sticking by those ordinances as another effective method for managing conflicts. They felt this ensures everyone is treated fairly and reduces the concern of lawsuits when people are not treated similarly. It also allows individual members of the planning and zoning committee, town council, and board of adjustments an out with their family, friends, and neighbors, since they have no options but to follow the rules.

One respondent noted that life was much simpler before the town ordinances became so detailed, when they could simply say “no” to development projects they did not like and yes to those they did, without having to give a lot of reasoning behind their decision. He did admit, though, that this method generally resulted in lawsuits and controversy, and “in the long run was probably not a lot easier.”

Also, residents being able to see benefits from the ordinances passed has helped to diffuse some of the prior arguments against change and new regulations. Examples given of this include the change from open ditch irrigation to pressurized (pipe) irrigation. Some of the citizens did not like the idea of changing to a pressure irrigation system, but those in
favor of it were able to convince others that it would be a good thing, and in fact it has been.

A second example given was the new sewer treatment system, which some members of the community were against. However, when it was done correctly and they saw the advantages to it, most agreed it was a beneficial change. They do not mind having to pay extra on their monthly utility bill to help maintain it.

Lastly, it was noted by a current member of the planning and zoning committee that committee members are trying very hard to work together and to arrive at the best solutions for the community. He commented that disagreements are not made personal; instead, there is a true spirit of cooperation that he sees in both the town council and town administrators.

It was also suggested that some of the residents who have moved into the community within the past few years and taken leadership positions, tend to be more sophisticated and experienced at dealing with the public. This has resulted in more alternatives being offered to residents. This in turn has increased the willingness by some of the "old timers" to listen to ideas presented by the "newcomers." According to one newer resident, "Old timers are sensitive to newcomers' feelings, and want them to assimilate into the community and become a part of it."

**Recommendations for Other Communities**

Respondents in each community were asked to give recommendations to other
their economy. The following is a list of the ideas shared by the people of Springdale. It is divided into four categories of recommendations: those related to creating and implementing a master plan; those related to encouraging community involvement; ideas for information and funding sources; and, miscellaneous recommendations.

**Planning**

- It is really hard to anticipate everything you will need, so just do it!
- Do not let it just happen to you.
- Try to figure out how bad it can get, then try to prevent, but expect the unexpected.
- Have a vision, then do it.
- A community should plan, because no planning equals a bad plan. So, take the responsibility to plan or you will end up with something you do not want.
- Do it well in advance.

**Community Involvement**

- Make sure residents can buy into the vision.
- The town’s master plan must reflect the will of the community.
- Make sure you get plenty of community involvement (if you can).
- Make sure that the public is involved from the beginning of the planning process. Find out what they want their community to look like and to be in the future. Get
help on this from the local Association of Governments, and others in the community such as influential members of the church.

• Listen and be responsive to the citizens’ concerns.
• Have a vision of how your decisions will effect the entire community, not just how it will effect a few individuals or neighborhoods.
• Be honest, open, and invite people into the process.
• The more people you get involved, the more everyone has an equal understanding, and the more they become a part of the solutions.

Where to Find Help

• It is important for communities to have paid planning staff. However, if that is not possible, use the staff at the local Association of Governments.
• The Internet is another good resource for getting ideas from other areas with similar size, concerns, and economics.
• Ask questions! Experience helps!
• To get good ideas, get copies of successful communities’ ordinances, then adapt them to meet your communities’ needs.
• Hire a professional facilitator if necessary to help with the envisioning process.

Miscellaneous

• Be fair in implementing the laws, and make sure the same system is used for everyone (no preferential treatment!)
• Do not let a few vocal people push you in a direction you should not be going. Try to be unbiased when looking at these plans; see all sides.

• Do not take away people’s private rights with the idea that it is good for the whole.

• Have fun; do not take yourselves too seriously!

• Take a stand about what you think is right, then be thick skinned, because 50 percent of the people are going to hate you, and 50 percent are going to think you are a hero. But in the end you will have alienated everyone to some extent.

• Remember, developers are not all bad, some are honest and we need people who will take risks.

• Be flexible. Have an awareness that the planning body can make mistakes, or the results are not what the community wanted, or they are unfair in a way that was not anticipated, and changes may need to be made. On the other hand, do not change things every time an individual within the community does not like something. The laws are written to protect the community and residents must be willing to have some restrictions put upon them in order to protect the community as a whole.

• Think in other directions, be open to every possibility there is, do not think it needs to be done in a certain way just because that is the way it has always been done.

• Be brave and committed enough to stick to your guns.

• Be a good balancer.
• Get involved, because if you live in a community, you need to give something back to it.

• You are not going to make everyone happy doing what you think is right.

• Growth is inevitable, but try to do it in such a way that everybody is comfortable with it, and that in growing, you do not destroy the community’s original charm.
CHAPTER VI

VERNAL

Background

Historically, Vernal’s economy has been primarily dependent upon the extraction of energy reserves such as: oil, gas, tar sands, phosphate, and gilsonite. Cattle and sheep ranching have also played a significant role, although more so in the earlier years of this century than recently (Governors Office of Planning and Budget 1996).

In the 1970s, during the oil embargo by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), the United States government became concerned about the stability of foreign oil reserves and the United States’ access to them. As a result, President Carter established the Synthetic Fuels Corporation (SFC), a government program whose purpose was to identify and produce synthetic fuels in the United States, thereby increasing domestic reserves and reducing our dependency on the Middle East nations. The Corporation was interested in developing tar sands, a deposit of sand or sandstone mixed with petroleum.

During the 1970s, the Uintah Basin was identified by the federal government as being rich in oil, tar sands deposits, and natural gas (Krannich et al. 1986). As a result, it was believed the government would invest large sums of money to develop these deposits. Optimism about energy-related growth in the area was so high that the Utah Governors Office predicted Vernal’s population would swell to 50,000 residents in 10 years. Local residents and developers also had high growth expectations, and many believed they had
found their fortunes as they bought property in the area and began building subdivisions, trailer parks, and motels.

In the mid-1980s, Middle East nations suddenly ended the embargo and the cost of fuel plummeted. With the drop in fuel prices, the U.S. government lost its interest in exploring alternative fuel sources, and President Reagan shut down the SFC. Apparently, the government decided that tar sands were no longer a good substitute for foreign oil, with the cost and difficulty of extracting the oil from the sand being too high. In addition, they stopped exploring the region for other oil deposits. As a result, Vernal’s economy took a sudden plunge. Plans for Vernal’s anticipated growth ceased and many people lost their homes and life savings from investments in that growth. According to some residents, half the businesses in the city closed their doors.

The 1980s were a devastating time for Vernal and residents became angry and depressed. Unfortunately, it was not the first disappointment Vernal had experienced due to fluctuating oil prices. The community had gone through a similar economic slump in the 1960s. However, the 1980 bust had a more profound effect upon the community, perhaps because they had such high hopes this time, and its leaders decided it was time to do something about the city’s dependency on energy extraction by diversifying the local economy. Part of the diversification strategy was to increase tourism and recreation in the region through the promotion of other natural resources found in the area, including Dinosaur National Monument, Flaming Gorge Recreation Area, and the Ashely National Forest.
Community Profile

Vernal is by far the largest community in the study with a population in 1996 of 7,105 residents (Governors Office of Planning and Budget 1996). Vernal is found in Uintah County on the northeastern border of Utah and Colorado. The entire county is known for its geological deposits of gilsonite, oil shale, tar sands, and oil (Governors Office of Planning and Budget 1996). Utah’s first commercial oil production occurred in Uintah County in 1948 (Vernal Chamber of Commerce 1960), and the county has been the state’s major oil producer since the 1950s (Krannich et al. 1986). Over the years, Vernal’s population has fluctuated. As previously mentioned, rapid growth occurred in the 1970s and early 1980s, then quickly declined. During the years from 1990 to 1996, the population has increased slowly but steadily, with a total increase of 7 percent (Governors Office of Planning and Budget 1996). Vernal has experienced both ends of the dichotomy, rapid growth and stagnation and decline, and is now in a period where the city is feeling in control of its destiny, and optimistic about its future.

Economic Opportunities

The energy industries are still considered by most to be the major employers in northeastern Utah. This includes companies involved in the extraction, production and distribution of oil, natural gas, phosphates, gilsonite, oil shale, and tarsand. According to the 1990 U.S. Census Bureau information, 12 percent of Vernal’s population receives its income from the mining industries. The county has also been classified as a “nonmetropolitan mining dependent county.” This is defined by the USDA (1995)
Economic Research Service to mean “mining contributed a weighted annual average of 15 percent or more labor and proprietor income over the three years from 1987 to 1989.”

Most respondents agreed that government also serves as one of the largest employers in the area. Government agencies offering employment opportunities include: the National Park Service (NPS); Bureau of Land Management (BLM); Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA); United States Forest Service (USFS); Natural Resource Conservation Service; both state and federal fish and game agencies; the Utah Department of Natural Resources, Division of Parks and Recreation; and local county and city governments. Most of the federal government jobs open to local residents, however, are entry level and seasonal positions. This is a result of the federal government requirement that its permanent full-time positions be advertised nationwide. Also, federal government jobs require employees to be willing to transfer to other locations, making them less appealing to the local residents.

While some of these government positions are related to tourism and recreation, others are not. When respondents discussed these positions, it was obvious that they were not including them in their assessment of employment opportunities related to tourism and recreation.

The local retail trade industry was also considered by many as a major employer for Vernal residents. Since the opening of Wal-Mart and K-Mart on the west end of the city a few years ago, numerous other retail outlets have also been established in the area,
making Vernal a regional shopping center for the Uintah Basin, southern Wyoming, and western Colorado.

While tourism and recreation were not seen by most respondents to offer as many employment opportunities as energy industries, government, and retail trade, most did cite it as an important source of employment for area because it helps to diversify the local economy. The city offers a variety of hotels, motels, restaurant, gift shops, recreation services, gas stations, and fast food establishments.

Other employers of local residents include the local hospital and clinics, a small saddle manufacturing company, a small shoe manufacturer, two saw mills, and a log furniture and home building company that is just starting business.

Employers located within the county, but outside of Vernal, include the Uintah Basin Telephone Association in Roosevelt, Utah, located approximately 40 miles west of Vernal, and the Deseret Generation Power Plant located 38 miles southeast of the city.

One respondent felt strongly that northeastern Utah has not shared in the prosperity experienced by many other areas of the state, especially the Wasatch Front. Although Vernal's unemployment rate is less than 6 percent, respondents frequently mentioned that finding employment that pays decent wages and provides benefits is not always easy. One respondent remarked that a number of individuals from California had attempted to move to the area, but were unable to do so because they could not find acceptable employment.
Dependency on Extractive Industries

**Mining.** Uintah County is the second largest mineral producing county in the state. Emery County is the largest. According to one lifetime resident, Vernal will forever be tied to extraction of natural resources which, according to him, “is not [such] a bad thing, as some people are trying to make it.” In speaking with individuals within the community, it is quite apparent that much of Vernal’s identity is based upon its relationship to the energy extraction industries.

Numerous respondents discussed both the importance of the mining and drilling industries as well as concerns the community has about relying on them for employment. The residents of Vernal were deeply affected by the oil bust in the mid-1980s and it is apparent that they do not want their community to be dependent on any one sector of the economy.

**Timber harvesting.** While there is some timber harvesting in the region, two local saw mills, and a home and furniture manufacturing company in the city, surprisingly, no one mentioned timber-related employment as being of any real significance to Vernal’s economy. According to the mayor, the timber industry has been steadily declining over the past 10 years.

**Agriculture.** While many residents in and around Vernal still rely on ranching for a portion of their income, its role in the economy was much larger 30 to 40 years ago. Where once the hills surrounding Vernal were teeming with sheep and cattle, today the average ranch in the area only has between 150 and 200 animals. According to one
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Agriculture. While many residents in and around Vernal still rely on ranching for a portion of their income, its role in the economy was much larger 30 to 40 years ago. Where once the hills surrounding Vernal were teeming with sheep and cattle, today the average ranch in the area only has between 150 and 200 animals. According to one
respondent, this number is too small to be able to make a decent living and, for most families, another source of income is required.

The biggest agricultural export commodity is cattle. The area does host one slaughter house, but it is too small to accommodate most of the region’s cattle. No other industries tied in with agriculture were mentioned as employers for local residents.

Although it no longer plays a significant role in the community’s economy, agriculture it is still very important to Vernal’s identity. Most respondents agreed that residents consider their community to be a ranching town, and have based many of the local social events on the western cowboy theme, including the annual rodeo, and many of the local tourist attractions.

While there was some mention of a reduction in grazing allotments on public lands during the last few years, no one blamed this for the regions decrease in ranching and farming. The decline was contributed to general conditions within the agricultural sector as a whole, which have not been favorable to small operators located far from market outlets.

Dependency on Recreation and Tourism

Tourism and recreation have been a part of Uintah county’s economy since the 1930s. Although Dinosaur National Monument has always been the main attraction, the area also offers activities associated with Flaming Gorge (rafting and fishing) and Ashely National Forest (camping and hiking). Whether it is considered a significant part of the economy, however, depends upon whom one speaks with. According to one respondent,
businesses relating to tourism and recreation are in the top five forms of employment in
the area, and many of those owning these businesses are making good money.

Others, however, suggested that tourism has played only a minor part in the city’s
economy. They surmised this was because Vernal has not become a destination spot.
One city council member commented, “[Vernal] is a stop over on the way to other
destination places. We are the only reasonable place of this size to stop within a hundred
miles.” He also felt that there are more recreationists who make Vernal their destination
spot than tourists because there is so much more for them to do, and since there are fewer
recreationists than tourists, the numbers coming to Vernal remain small. Respondents
noted that many of the recreationists who have discovered the region’s beauty and
uncrowded conditions are frequent visitors who return to the area on repeat occasions.

**Economic Concerns**

The concern most frequently mentioned was the instability of the extractive
industries, especially the oil industry. One respondent suggested it is a difficult industry
for a community to rely upon because of its “fickle nature.” Vernal’s economy has
become more diversified in the last 10 years, so fluctuations in demands for the energy
resources found in the area have not had as profound of an impact on the local economy
as they once did. That is not to say, however, that the community has not been affected.
As noted by one respondent, “As long as oil prices remain low, it will have a negative
effect on the community and on the employment opportunities available to local
residents.”
A number of respondents also commented on the lack of control Vernal has over energy industries. Prices for natural resources are based upon supply and demand factors that are governed by international markets. Additionally, all of the companies extracting natural resources in the area, such as Conoco Oil Company and American Gilsonite, have their offices in other states, making it difficult for local leaders to influence any of their decisions.

A second economic concern raised by interviewees was the difficulty oil companies have had in making a profit from the area’s oil fields, especially when oil prices are low. Oil found within the Uintah Basin is located in deep wells and mixed with paraphine, a type of wax that must be extracted from the oil base. The cost of pumping the oil from these deep wells, and separating it from the paraphine makes oil production in the area very expensive and therefore it can be uncompetitive when oil prices are low.

Another economic concern frequently mentioned was that too many of the jobs currently available in Vernal pay minimum wage and offer no benefits. Respondents suggested that local companies often get by with paying lower wages because people want to live in Vernal and are willing to make concessions to stay there. As noted by Vernal’s mayor, many of the youth feel that there are only two options: either leave Vernal in order to find decent paying positions, or stay and make a financial sacrifice. It was also suggested that because Uintah County’s unemployment rate is relatively high in 1998 compared to other areas of Utah (6 percent vs. 3 percent for the overall state), local businesses can get by with paying minimum wages and offering no benefits.
An economic frustration expressed by two of the respondents was that they do not believe Vernal has received its fair share of the royalties paid by companies who are developing minerals in the county. The royalties are paid to the federal government, which sends half of the amount they receive from companies working in Utah back to the state. The state gives a third of the money they receive to a Community Impact Board (CIB), which funds various community projects across the state. To receive funding, communities apply to the CIB, whose board is responsible for reviewing each proposal. Some residents suggested that rural Utah, as compared to the Wasatch Front, is the state’s step child when it comes to allocation of these funds.

**Unique Community Characteristics**

Many respondents discussed the unique lifestyle offered by Vernal. The city has the feel of a western, rural community, yet it offers many social and economic amenities. As noted by one respondent, “We have the benefits of a large city, such as shopping and events, without the negatives like crime and traffic congestion.” Another respondent put it this way, “It’s small enough to be able to be personable, and [for residents] to really care about what is going on, but big enough to provide the services they need.” A third respondent proudly stated, “Vernal is one of the most cosmopolitan rural communities in the state.”

The citizens who make up the community were identified as a second unique factor. Respondents felt the residents’ openness and accepting nature made them special. As noted by one respondent, “Vernal is not closed to outsiders, residents here are open to
new ideas and thoughts,” and this person believed newcomers to the community are made to feel welcome. Many suggested this openness was due to the region’s history, with oil companies hiring people from all across the nation to work in their local operations, and Dinosaur National Monument bringing in visitors from all over the world to visit paleontological sites. This influx of different types of people has helped accustom residents to accommodating new people and new ideas. One respondent commented, “We are an isolated community that is not really isolated.” Most respondents felt residents in Vernal also possess a strong sense of belonging and community pride, which is demonstrated in how well the community is maintained. Additionally, Vernal residents were said to be friendly, caring, good, honest people who have a high sense of integrity.

Some respondents remarked that the city’s staff and elected officials added a special ingredient to the community. Specific traits mentioned included their personalities, sense of humor, understanding of the issues, competency, and effectiveness in getting things done.

The beautiful environment and the diverse opportunities it offers were also mentioned. One can find near Vernal mountains, desert, lakes, streams, white water rivers, steep canyons, and meadows. In addition, the area is rich in history offering the dinosaur quarry and museum, the Dry Fork petroglyphs, and sites frequented by outlaws such as Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid, who once used the area as a hideout.

Finally, its isolation was thought to help make the community special. This was defined by its distance from any other major metropolitan area, and the fact that it is
surrounded by mountains on four sides: the Bookcliffs on the south, the Rocky Mountains on the East, the Uintah Mountains on the north, and the Wasatch Range on the west.

Planning Process

Motivation

According to one longtime resident, city and county officials hired two professional planners in 1970 to help put together the city’s first master plan. How and why the plan was originated was not known.

A second master plan was completed in 1981. Its main purpose was to steer the community through the major growth that was expected during the energy boom years. The city administrators indicated that the plan has served the community well. It has been especially important in helping the community to identify its strengths and weaknesses and to try and determine how both can be used to the city’s advantage. Funding for that planning process was provided by Utah Power and Light’s program to help communities with their strategic planning process.

Although Vernal did not establish a new master plan after the oil bust, many people agreed that it was a critical time for planning the community’s future. The leaders recognized the need for a change in Vernal’s economic structure. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, they began to make a concentrated effort to diversify the economy in order to balance out the economic cycles caused by the energy extraction industries. Most community leaders and residents felt strongly that Vernal could no longer depend solely upon, and be at the mercy of, energy extraction. They also felt it was necessary to
demonstrate to the state their willingness to help themselves and not to rely on state funding to revitalize their economy.

Community residents began the process by hiring a consultant to help them do a socioeconomic study, which was funded by a Community Impact Board (CIB) grant. The intent of the study was to help community leaders identify ways to diversify the city’s economy and promote tourism and recreation. They deliberately hired an outside consultant with the hope he could help them work through some of the anger people were continuing to feel due to the bust in the oil market and the huge financial losses many of them experienced. The study was completed in 1992 and, according to the city manager, it was done well enough that the information is still being used today to make city policy. One of the main outcomes of that planning process was the development of the Western Park, a city and county project which is discussed in further detail in a later section.

Most respondents agreed that Vernal has done a good job of fulfilling its objective to diversify the economy over the last decade. Employment opportunities have expanded to include more jobs in government, retail trade, a few small manufacturing and service-orientated companies, various teaching positions, and businesses related to tourism and recreation.

With assistance from the University of Utah, city administrators are now in the process of redoing a master plan for Vernal. Many respondents noted that the 1981 plan is outdated and the community’s issues have changed. They will also be completing a new socioeconomic study to assist them in the planning process. City officials have hired a
consultant from Bonneville Research to conduct the study. To help pay for the cost of these consultants, the city has received another grant from the CIB. They have also teamed up with Naples, an adjacent community which is also in the process of completing a new master plan. Although the communities will have separate master plans, because of their close proximity they share many of the same issues and so are able to share much of the same information.

A few respondents noted that the biggest challenge facing community leaders and residents in the current planning process is to develop a vision for their future. One respondent directly involved in the planning process reflected, “We have to decide what we want to be. Do we want to be a Moab, and accept the problems associated with that type of development? I don’t know, but I don’t think so...this community has to identify where they want to go.” Some people are suggesting the community needs to promote industry and do a better job of developing tourism, so there are opportunities for young people to remain in the area. Other people want the status quo with no new growth or development. As noted by one respondent, these two goals are not compatible.

Responsible Entities

Vernal has had a city manager since the early 1950s. The current city manager, Ken Bassid, has been there since 1978. Many respondents commented on Ken’s exceptional ability as a city manager and the many good things he has done for Vernal during his tenure.
Three years ago, the city also hired a full-time planner, Russ Pearson. Prior to Russ' arrival, the city of Vernal and Uintah County shared a planner. Community leaders began to realize, however, that because of the diverse issues facing the two entities, it was much too complex of a position for one person to handle. They determined it was in the best interest of Vernal to hire its own planner. As one city council member commented, "Long-term planning is difficult with a part-time mayor and city council members. We can't get the necessary background for doing what needs to be done." He suggested that a city needs full-time employees if the city is going to plan effectively. In Vernal, the city planner also serves as an advisor to both the city council and the planning and zoning committee, as well as the liaison between the two groups. He keeps members from each group informed on what is happening in the other group.

Vernal also has an active planning and zoning committee, which was started by a local contractor. The committee is responsible for determining necessary changes to current ordinances. They also serve as a buffer between the citizens of Vernal and the city council. Most of the current members have been on the committee for 10 or more years, giving them a good understanding of the committee's responsibilities and processes.

Some respondents commented, however, that the planning and zoning committee has not always functioned so smoothly. Back in the late 1970s when the oil boom hit, the city was unprepared for the sudden growth. The planning and zoning committee, which was fairly new and inexperienced, was inundated with proposals and the city lacked the necessary regulations to control growth. During their monthly meeting the committee
would receive so many requests that they did not have time to adequately review them, much less follow up on any stipulations they put on the builders. Eventually, the city saw that something needed to be done to bring development under control. In time, the city council passed a number of zoning and building ordinances to help guide the planning and zoning committee, and committee members implemented rules requiring set time-frames for applications and for how proposals were to be submitted to the committee for approval.

Vernal’s city council members are also said to be experienced, well informed, and active in community affairs. According to one informant, the average time served by council members is 8 to 10 years.

Although Vernal’s mayor is part-time, a situation often considered to be a problem for rural communities, one respondent suggested that in Vernal’s case it is a good thing. He commented that by being part-time, the mayor cannot depend upon the position for a living and is forced to continue working within the community. This helps him to remain in touch with the citizens and their concerns. He also suggested that perhaps it works well in Vernal because the city has two employees working full-time managing and planning for the community.

**Community Involvement**

During the socioeconomic study that was conducted in the early 1990s, city administrators actively attempted to identify residents who would be willing to help them in developing a plan for diversifying the economy and improving the community.
According to the city manager, they contacted people from the chamber of commerce, local churches, “and anybody else we could think of who would give us some good information on who might want to be involved and would be good.” They brought these people together for 12 weeks. As explained by the city manager, “There were eight to nine different groups dealing with the issues of infrastructure, economic development, housing, transportation, and recreation and tourism. The purpose of the committees was to determine the major concerns and problems for each issue and then identify solutions to those problems.” Most respondents felt this approach, of developing committees made up of residents, was successful both in getting better community involvement in the planning process and in identifying concerns and solutions to the issues identified above.

Presently, notification of all public meetings are posted at the local public library and city offices, as well as advertised by the local newspaper and television station. In spite of the city’s efforts to inform its citizens of upcoming meetings, a number of respondents commented that most residents do not attend public meetings unless a controversial issue is being discussed.

Respondents frequently mentioned, however, that although Vernal’s residents may not be good about showing up at public meetings, they are involved in the community in many other ways. According to one respondent, “Vernal has the best volunteers in the world.” Examples of community participation included: the large numbers of citizens involved in the chamber of commerce, which is considered one of the most active in the state; numerous youth groups such as little league, junior jazz, and the juvenile justice
program; and, the "Vernal Dynamites," a group of approximately 35 citizens who, at their own expense, go to other communities to promote Vernal. Community involvement also includes efforts by local citizens to assist the city in keeping streets and parks clean. There are numerous adoption programs for the parks, canal ways, and walkways. The city manager noted that this has benefitted the community in two ways. First it has instilled community pride in residents. Second, it has made the community a pleasant place to visit, resulting in many visitors returning to the city.

An annual event that has brought many community leaders and residents together is the local chamber of commerce's "Chartering the Course" conference. Although the conference is held in Vernal, it is also open to city and county government officials, local business owners, those involved in higher education, and concerned citizens from throughout the county. Its purpose is to bring people together to discuss concerns and options for the region's future. In the three years that the conference has been held (1996, 1997, and 1998), certain topics have surfaced each year. These include developing facilities for higher education, diversifying the economy, controlling crime, and promoting community unity. To address some of these concerns, the community has purchased land to build a local facility to hold Utah State University (USU) classes in Vernal. They have also been working on upgrading the Dinosaur Museum and improving participation in local tourism and recreation programs.

The local high school has also been encouraging its students to participate in community government. It started a "youth city council" which consists of five council
members and a mayor, elected by their peers. The group meets on a weekly basis to discuss city affairs. According to one respondent, it took a while for the youth council to be accepted by the “real” city council members and mayor. However, the students were so professional in their positions that they are now fully recognized and considered an important asset to the community. The purpose of the program is not only to teach students about city government but also to get them more involved in community projects, in the hopes of making them better citizens. To ensure that all students participate in the program, the high school also requires each student to attend and report on a specified number of regular city council meetings before they are allowed to graduate. In addition, the school offers DECA: An Association of Marketing Students program, which has been doing annual business symposiums for the last few years to assist local businesses on better approaches to management.

Tourism and Recreation

Creating Opportunities

One of the needs identified during the socioeconomic study done in the early 1990s was for Vernal to develop more opportunities for tourism and recreation. Although the region has had fishing, hunting, Flaming Gorge, and Dinosaur National Monument, all of which attract visitors, the city manager explained that “There was no organized effort on the part of the community to promote these things and get tourists here, and keep them here for other activities.” Vernal leaders and Uintah County commissioners felt that
Vernal needed to develop a western theme to help focus their promotion of tourism and recreation. They also felt they needed better facilities and activities to attract visitors.

Although Vernal already hosted an annual rodeo, in 1992 people decided it was time to build a better facility to house it, one that would also serve as a convention center for the region. To help pay for this facility, Vernal received funding from both the CIB and Uintah County. The Western Park, as the facility is called, is a large convention center and heritage museum located in the heart of the city. According to the city manager, "The Western Park has become a real jewel for the community, and has allowed us to bring various groups and conventions here." Vernal and Uintah County have been very successful in their promotion efforts with the Park, drawing numerous events including a national wrestling competition, car shows, home and garden shows, and the National Hang Gliding convention. It now employs a full-time marketing person and offers great economic benefits to the community as a whole by bringing destination visitors to the area.

The county paid much of the original cost of marketing the Western Park through their economic development office and convention bureau. Eventually, the city’s chamber of commerce, through funding from both the city and county, took over the responsibility of promoting the Park. Vernal has also made a significant financial investment in advertising the Park. One city administrator noted that spending money to promote tourism and recreation is critical if a community is going to make it successful. He suggested, "If you want to establish yourself as a viable center in your area for tourism,
you have to throw money at it! You cannot expect to do it without investing some dollars. You can be as excited as you want, and have as many volunteers as you want, which is critical, but you also need cash investments to improve facilities and advertise your events."

According to the city manager, it took several years to become successful in promoting the Park. To assist them in this effort, community leaders established contacts at the state level to help them set up marketing programs and identify other resources in the Salt Lake area (e.g., the Utah Travel Council). They also developed a number of brochures to advertise the Park and invested in television commercials that are broadcasted not only in Salt Lake City but in other major cities across the Intermountain West.

Efforts by the local chamber of commerce to create and promote programs, activities, and events in the community was mentioned by most of the respondents, as was the hard work and positive attitude of its volunteers. A few people mentioned that serving as a volunteer for the chamber is quite popular in the community, and weekly meetings frequently attract as many as 50 people.

The chamber has taken on numerous projects, including organizing volunteers for the annual flower planting event in May, which has helped to make the city more attractive to visitors. It has also organized various committees and programs to improve community involvement, including the Old Town Alliance for renovating the downtown area and the
Government Affairs Committee, which organizes the annual “Charting the Course” conference.

The chamber was also given credit for implementing two clever ideas for promoting tourism and recreation in the area. The first is an idea, started in the 1950s, as a gimmick to promote the Dinosaur National Monument by distributing “dinosaur hunting licenses” to those visiting the area. The licenses became so popular that people were calling from all across the country for a copy of it. The “licenses” are still distributed today in information packages sent out to potential visitors. According to the Dinosaurland Travel Board, which is now responsible for much of the promotional material for Uintah County and Dinosaur Land, they send out approximately 5,000 information packages each year.

The second idea was conceived in an attempt by the chamber find ways to keep tourists and recreationists in the area for longer periods of time. The chamber felt that too many visitors were simply stopping for a few hours to eat, shop, or visit the museum on their way to another destination. To promote Vernal as a place to stay, the chamber developed the concept of “one day tours.” To promote this concept they created informational packages that give visitors information on specific activities within the area designed to be done in one day (e.g., maps, mileage, and points of interest). The concept began with eight different day tours, including the Dinosaur National Monument, Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area, scenic byways, and the Dry Fork Petroglyphs. The idea has since been expanded to 11 tours, with three more in the works. The Travel Board has
found that through promotion of these day tours, many visitors are returning to the area for activities they were unable to do during their first visit. Depending upon the popularity of the activity, in 1998, the Travel Board distributed between 7,000 and 11,000 of these “one day tours” packets.

According to a number of respondents, the Dinosaurland Travel Board has also played a significant role in promoting Vernal as a destination spot for tourists and recreationists. The Travel Board is set up to accommodate three counties (Daggett, Duchense, and Uintah) and has three full-time staff members. They are responsible for producing “Utah’s Dinosaurland Region” brochure, which gives travelers information on museums, historic places of interest, parks, outdoor recreation activities, and tourist accommodations for the entire area. Their funding comes primarily from the county tax levied on hotels, motels, and restaurants.

Lastly, the city has made an effort to educate visitors on what amenities the community has to offer by funding a visitors center in the downtown area, which gives information on local hotels, motels, restaurants, and community events.

Businesses related to tourism and recreation have benefitted from the establishment of a number of new businesses in Vernal during the last few years. The new businesses have included Wal-Mart, KMart, and numerous fast food restaurants, which have helped to make Vernal the regional shopping center.

Although few people would argue that this growth in businesses and shoppers has been bad for the community, there were a few respondents who expressed concern about
how these businesses were affecting the viability of the city’s downtown area. Most of the new businesses have been established on the west end of the city. Many respondents felt that keeping the downtown area alive and well was important for the image of the community. To help the current downtown businesses, the chamber of commerce is attempting to lure new businesses to that area. To assist them in this goal, they have organized a committee called “the Old Town Alliance.” Its members are local business owners and concerned residents. Some of their recommendations for improving the downtown area include a new signage ordinance and new street lights that would give downtown more of an old town, western feeling.

Another concern expressed in regards to the downtown businesses is that they simply do not cater to tourists and recreationists. While both the Dinosaur Museum and the Western Park are located in the heart of downtown and have helped to bring some visitors to the businesses there, keeping them there to do their shopping has proved difficult. Two main reasons for this were given. The first was the problem with downtown businesses closing at 5 p.m., while most of the shops on the west end of the city remain open until 9 or 10 p.m. The second concern is the odd mixture of businesses in downtown, which are not seen as compatible. According to the city planner, the mixture includes everything from jewelry stores and book stores, to offices for real estate agencies and Hatch River Expeditions. He felt it was simply too chaotic and confusing, making it difficult for some people to shop there.
In May 1998, the community contracted with Jim Davis, the community development director for Salt Lake City, to do some strategic planning for the downtown businesses. His fees are being paid by a grant from Utah Power and Light. City leaders and downtown businesses hope that he will help to develop a plan that will both promote stability and bring more businesses and activities to the downtown area.

In addition to the Western Park, the Dinosaur Museum, and shopping opportunities, the community has also built an 18-hole golf course, which was funded by the CIB. It was suggested that this has benefitted local residents and has helped to bring more retirees to the area to visit.

A few respondents discussed their growing concern in regards to the competition Vernal is receiving from other communities attempting to capitalize on dinosaur fossils. It was suggested that because the local Dinosaur Museum has not been well maintained, other communities such as Price and Ogden (Utah) and Grand Junction (Colorado) may be luring visitors away from Vernal with their more modern museums. Although maintaining the museum is the responsibility of the Utah Division of Parks and Recreation, the city has partnered with them in an attempt to find $14 million to improve the exhibits, and to make the museum more visitor friendly.

Uintah County has also partnered with its neighboring counties in the Uintah Basin, Duchense and Daggett, to pursue the idea of extending the traditional tourist season (May to October) into the winter months. They recently conducted a feasibility study on promoting winter sports in the region. The study found the idea feasible, and
recommended that they concentrate on offering snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, and snowshoe trails. The study also suggested they expand the existing trails and offer a trail system that would begin at one end of the Uintah Basin and extend to all the way to other side. Lastly, the study recommends linking the winter sports to convention business and offering a winter festival.

Vernal has recently received two developments which they did not solicit, and which may not fall neatly under the tourism and recreation banner, but which have attracted people who rent hotel rooms, patronize the local restaurants, and buy goods at the local stores. The first is a new temple for members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS or Mormon church), which was dedicated in 1997. It serves all church members in the Uintah Basin, western Colorado, and southern Wyoming. Many respondents noted that this addition to their community has been genuinely beneficial, both spiritually and financially. One respondent put it this way, “What a wonderful thing it was for the community...and economically it really does make a difference. It was really frosting on the cake.”

The second unsolicited opportunity Vernal received was a movie production. It brought in a large number of people during the month of November 1998, an off-season month for most tourist-related businesses. It was estimated that people associated with the film (Chill Factor) spent well over $500,000 during the two-plus weeks they were in Vernal. Although many people in the community were excited by this opportunity, and a few locals received bit parts in the film, others relayed some hesitation in promoting
Vernal as a place were Hollywood would be frequently welcomed. Most of the concern expressed was in regards to the disruption it caused in the community, including the closing of certain downtown areas and streets during the day for filming, and the use of local police officers to assist in keeping people away from the filming areas (Vernal City Council meeting, November 4, 1998).

Concerns with Integration of Tourism and Recreation into the Community

Most respondents felt that Vernal’s leaders had done a good job of keeping a balance between promoting tourism and recreation and other industries. As one respondent explained, “We don’t promote tourism as our main industry, but we do promote it, and we have a history of promoting it. But, tourism has not been promoted to an extreme over other industries.” In addition, most respondents felt that tourism and recreation have not taken over the community, nor caused it any social or economic problems.

One concern with integrating businesses catering to tourists and recreationist into a community is that they are often owned by people who are not native to the area. The concern with this is that long-term, more permanent residents do not always benefit from an increase in visitors to the area. Also, these businesses often do not blend into the local lifestyle and feel of the community. According to a number of respondents, this has not been the case in Vernal, as most businesses catering to tourists and recreationists here are owned by longtime residents. One respondent estimated, “Ninety percent of the tourist
businesses are owned by locals, and those who were outsiders when they came here and opened a business have now become locals."

Although the seasonal nature of tourism was mentioned by three of the respondents as a something Vernal may attempt to expand upon, it was not considered a serious concern for the community or local businesses. Presently, most tourism takes place from May to mid-October and has been fairly steady throughout the years. The season has been slightly expanded due to an increase in convention business during the last few years. While no one seemed especially concerned about the seasonality of this sector of the economy, the city recently completed a winter sports and recreation study to help determine ways to attract more visitors during the off-season. Vernal is considering attempting to bring in more snowmobilers, cross-country skiers, and snowshoers by grooming and connecting local trails throughout the county.

Another observation made was that local businesses related to tourism and recreation do not seem to understand it, perhaps because they have not had enough experience with it, and therefore have not adapted their businesses to take advantage of it. According to one respondent, the lack of adaptation should be viewed in a positive way, since it shows that the local businesses are not as financially dependent upon tourism as they often think they are. Another, however, suggested this lack of understanding and adaptation actually reflects a lack of professionalism, and local businesses should strive to be better hosts to their visitors.
Only one respondent discussed a concern for the low wages that are often associated with employment opportunities in tourism and recreation. He stated that he felt tourism and recreation were more beneficial to business owners than to the community as a whole because of these low wages. He compared the wages to those paid by the oil industry, which he felt were forced to pay high wages because the work is more demanding, the hours longer, and a higher degree of skill is required. He felt that because of the higher wages paid, the oil industry was a bigger benefit to the community than businesses related to tourism and recreation.

Conflicts Between Tourism and Recreation and Other Industries

Most respondents felt strongly that there were no conflicts between tourism and recreation and the various extractive industries in the area. Many of the respondents felt that it had simply worked out that way, without any effort on the part of the city or the industries. Others felt, however, that the extractive industries had made an effort to avoid conflict by abstaining from blatant acts of environmental destruction, and cleaning up areas where there may have been concerns in the past.

One respondent, however, suggested that some tension does exist between recreationists and the oil companies. Oil companies have begun drilling along the banks of the Green and White Rivers, which are used for white water rafting, a favored recreational sport in the area. Apparently those associated with rafting have started to complain that the companies’ oil rigs are located too near the water. Concern was also mentioned
regarding the planned expansion of recreation activities to winter sports, and the potential conflicts that may surface both between the participants of the various sports (e.g., snowmobilers and cross-country skiers), and between the recreationists and the extractive industries for use of the land.

A few respondents remarked that although they have not seen conflict in the past, as the national sentiment continues to move closer toward environmentalism, and more recreationists visit the area, the potential for conflicts increases. One respondent used the example of the Book Cliffs Initiative, a proposal by the federal and state governments and the National Elk Foundation to, as he put it, “lock up state lands for hunting purposes.” His main concern was that the proposal, which did not go through, could have hurt the future of the community by making the area off limits to mining. Apparently, the area has a high potential for gas and gilsonite mining and his concern was that as other mines in the area begin to close, the industry will need new areas to develop to remain within the region.

**Strategies for Making Tourism and Recreation Compatible with Other Industries**

A number of respondents mentioned that Vernal residents tend to be fairly balanced in their beliefs. It was suggested that while local residents insist upon a healthy environment, they also understand the benefits the extractive industries bring to the area, and they see the two can be compatible. According to one resident, while the community does have a few extremists, most citizens recognize the “need for a happy medium.”
Community leaders, however, have not formally addressed potential conflicts between tourism and recreation and other industries in their area. Because there have been no conflicts in the past they have not had to develop strategies to make the industries compatible.

Social and Economic Effects of Tourism and Recreation

Many components of tourism and recreation that have traditionally posed a problem for rural communities apparently have not affected Vernal. For example, the value of private property in the area has not been adversely affected through high inflation of land or houses. In fact, the mayor noted that those who have moved to the area, or who have purchased second homes here, have helped to put value back into the local real estate market. After the oil bust, the housing market was flooded with homes, which were significantly undervalued. While most homes are still considered reasonably priced, with an average cost between $70,000 and $80,000, it was noted that people are now able to get their money back when they decide to sell.

There were also no concerns that a lack of affordable housing would become a problem any time in the near future. However, it was mentioned that more apartments or condominiums would be a benefit to house some of the retirees that have relocated to the area since the LDS temple opened in the community.

A second element of tourism and recreation that can often pose problems for rural communities is the relationship between visitors and residents. Vernal has not experienced
this concern either. Tourists and recreationists are seen as an asset to the community and are welcomed. For example, the city holds an annual 4-day rodeo that brings hundreds of people to the city. In the 48 years that they have hosted the rodeo, there have never been any complaints from residents, or social problems due to the visitors. One possible reason for this good relationship, as identified by interviewees, is that tourism and recreation have not taken over the community as they have in other places. The city is not inundated with large crowds of people tying up traffic, crowding the residents out, or littering their streets, even during their peak season. The numbers of tourists and recreationists have remained low enough that they more or less blend into the community, and this sector of the economy has not usurped either residents or other economic activities.

Some respondents suggested that Vernal has not had any problems with integrating tourism and recreation into the community yet because of the low numbers of visitors the area receives. Dinosaur National Monument reported five million visitors in 1997, which, according to Dennis Ditmanson, the superintendent of Dinosaur National Monument, “is much less than most parks in southern Utah receive.” A number of the respondents felt that Vernal could actually benefit from more visitors, without any adverse effects to the community.

The city manager observed that while new businesses and local events can benefit the community, if they are not well planned they can also reduce the quality of life in a community. Vernal would like additional industries to come to their community, especially those offering well paying positions. However, they do not want to be another
North Salt Lake City with gas companies operating adjacent to the city. They also like the money brought in by tourists and recreationists, but do not want to become another Moab, which they perceive as overrun by them. As the mayor explained, an overabundance of either one (visitors or new industries) is likely to result in a decreased quality of life in Vernal, something most residents would prefer to avoid.

**Attracting New Industry**

A few of the respondents expressed a desire and need for Vernal’s community leaders to promote the area to new industries, especially those that have the potential to pay higher wages and offer stable employment. As part of Uintah County’s effort to promote the area, the Economic Development Office and Convention Bureau serves as an information center for individuals and corporations interested in moving their business or industry to area.

There are a number of problems, however, the city confronts in attempting to attract new industry. The biggest one is the lack of transportation facilities. According to the mayor, this region is the largest geographical area in the United States not serviced by a railway. Presently, companies extracting natural resources in the area are using trucks to transport raw materials to markets. Community leaders believe if they can convince someone of the profitability of developing a rail system in the region, it would make the area much more economically viable, not only for new industries, but for existing industries as well. While many think it is a long shot, according to the mayor, there is some discussion with a potential investor regarding expanding existing rail lines currently
used to bring coal from eastern Colorado to the Deseret Generation and Transmission Cooperative, a power plant located 38 miles south of Vernal.

A number of the respondents mentioned that although they would like to see the community attract new industry, especially if it offers decent wages, they also fear the changes it may bring about in the character of the community. As noted by the mayor, there is a trade-off that comes with economic diversity and the addition of new industry. As more jobs are added, especially if they are higher paying, more people will be attracted to the area. As Vernal grows, it changes, and many of the qualities that make living in the community appealing, may be threatened.

Many of the respondents felt that opportunities for higher education must be a focal point for a “successful” community. They see it as not only a way to help local youth develop necessary skills and become more employable, but also as a way to help the community keep its talented youth in the area and reduce the need for welfare for local residents. Vernal’s community leaders and residents have actively been working for the past 30 years to bring Utah State University (USU) courses to the University Extension center in Vernal. The chamber of commerce has also formed a committee on higher education which works directly with USU and other universities such as Brigham Young University to actively promote the courses and degrees being offered through the community’s extension program. Recently, the city purchased through its own funds additional property to expand and improve the local educational facilities.
USU has a second Extension center in Roosevelt, Utah, located approximately 40 miles west of Vernal. According to some of the respondents, there was a time when the two centers were quite competitive. Dr. Hartman, director of the centers, eliminated the competition by offering different degrees at each center. Roosevelt’s center concentrates on degrees in the field of education, while Vernal’s center is geared toward the sciences. Currently, the Vernal Extension center offers 15 different 4-year degrees, and six master degrees. In addition, Vernal houses the Uintah Basin Applied Technology Center, one of four in the state.

Retail trade is the largest growing industry in Vernal today. The city has become a regional shopping center for the Uintah Basin, parts of western Colorado, and southern Wyoming. While there were no numbers readily available on how many new businesses have actually located there in the last 10 years, the west end of the city has been steadily increasing in size as stores such as Wal-Mart, KMart, and just about every fast food restaurant one could imagine have set up business there. According to the city administrators, sales taxes received from these businesses indicate that their business is fairly steady throughout the year, with the Christmas season being the busiest time of the year.

Several respondents did mention that there was some controversy when Wal-Mart originally proposed locating a store in Vernal. The community held meetings and many residents expressed their concerns about its impact on local businesses, especially those in the downtown area. Today, however, Wal-Mart is seen as a plus to the community, as it
has brought in shoppers from all over the region and their shopping dollars have spilled over to other businesses.

**Issues with Controlling Growth**

**Factors Limiting Growth**

The only major factor mentioned that is currently limiting growth in Vernal is the lack of employment opportunities previously discussed. One respondent did suggest that the climate in Vernal is often difficult, with cold winters and hot summers, which may make it less attractive to people. This would be especially true for retirees and people purchasing second homes.

**Planning and Implementing Zoning and Building Ordinances**

When it comes to controlling growth, the city manager suggested that there is really only one way to do it, and that is through planning and zoning ordinances. He stated that while a community would rarely tell businesses that they are not welcome, they may implement zoning ordinances that allow the community to have some controls over where businesses locate. When it was suggested that some communities have tried to restrict access to their community to businesses such as chain motels, fast food franchises, or Wal-Mart, he did not think that was a good idea. He advised that while it is possible to do this by restricting where they can locate, and by making it an undesirable place for them to come, the community must ensure that they place the same restrictions consistently on all like businesses. If they do not, they will probably end up in court.
He also suggested that once a policy like that is implemented, it is very difficult to change because the law requires the community to develop a new master plan whenever they make zoning law changes. Thus, the community should be certain it is “something they want to keep on their books, because you can’t change your zoning ordinances without changing your master plan, and it takes a lot of effort to put together a master plan.”

Vernal has had its zoning and building ordinances in place since the late 1970s, and according to one respondent, “We have been good about following those.” However, another respondent suggested that consistency in following the rules did not happen until about 15 years ago. Problems with compliance surfaced in the late 1970s and early 1980s, a time during which Vernal’s growth was out of control, the rules where fairly new, and it was difficult for the planning and zoning committee to enforce compliance with all of the city’s ordinances.

According to the city planner, Vernal’s ordinances are more of an attempt to prevent sprawl than growth. This includes the implementation of regulations requiring developers to pay the cost of extending water and sewer lines to their development sites, as well as impact fees to help the city off-set the cost of providing water and sewer services to new homes. Presently, the impact fee for a single family dwelling is $2750.

One of the key planning strategies mentioned was “partnering.” According to the city manager, “That is where it’s at... the sky is the limit, it always is. You can do anything with partnering.” The success story he gave as an example of partnering is the
current effort by the community to enhance the Dinosaur Museum. While the museum is owned and operated by the Utah Department of Natural Resources, Division of Parks and Recreation, and they are responsible for making any changes to it, the community decided to try and help the Division raise funds for improvements. The chamber of commerce started an ad hoc committee (the Revitalization Committee) made up of local residents, who have drawn up a plan for the changes and are now awaiting the funding.

Other examples of partnering in the community, offered by other respondents included the county promoting the convention center, the combined efforts of the chamber and the Travel Bureau in promoting tourism, and the Charting the Course conference. A city council member noted that all of the entities in the region, federal, state, county, and city work well together, and focus on the combined needs they have.

A number of the respondents discussed the importance of planning ahead and trying to anticipate possible problems and solutions before the community is faced with them. Two examples of the positive aspects of planning ahead were given. The first was the building of Vernal’s current high school a few years ago. At the time, the community leaders were criticized for building it because it was considered a “grey monster that we would never fill, and people did not see a need for it.” The school is now filled to capacity and residents are grateful that someone had the foresight to anticipate this growth in the school population. Secondly, Vernal is in the process of putting together ordinances to control locations of adult bookstores. Although the city has not received any applications for such a business, they have seen the problems other communities have faced with this
type of an establishment. They are hoping to avoid these types of conflicts should someone decide to open one in Vernal.

Maintaining the quality of a community’s infrastructure was also said to be very important, especially in older communities such as Vernal. Sewer and water lines, as well as street maintenance are the main areas of concern for Vernal now. To rebuild the sewer system alone is an $18 million project, which has resulted in higher sewer bills for the local residents, who apparently understand the need for it and have not complained. The taxpayers also apparently understand the need to finance road repair and, in November of 1998, they approved a quarter of a percent sales tax for construction and reconstruction of roads. According to the mayor, the water and sewer lines run under the road system, so as these are replaced, they will need to rebuild the roads as well. In addition, apparently during the 1980 development boom, a number of the housing developments constructed inadequate roads that now need to be brought up to date, with the addition of curbs, gutters, and sidewalks. Another concern discussed was the need for future water development if the city is going to continue to have adequate supplies for industry, agriculture, and new residents. The city manager lamented that if he were to die tomorrow, his one regret is that “I didn’t get on the infrastructure as fast as I should have as a city manager. We’re dealing with it now, but it’s all catch-up stuff.”

Vernal city leaders have also been quite resourceful in getting funds for their various projects. In fact, some see fund raising for this purpose as the mayor’s number one
job. Both the CIB and Utah Power and Light have made large contributions to the community's efforts to plan for diversifying their economy.

Open Space

Open space in Vernal was not considered a problem by any of the respondents. Perhaps this is because there have not been any large housing or industrial developments in the recent past, nor any planned for the near future. The community has a number of city parks, and a lot of open space within walking distance of the downtown area. This gives the city an uncluttered and accessible feeling.

Community Conflicts Due to Change

As with most communities, Vernal has had its fair share of conflicts. Most of the conflict Vernal experienced, however, came in the late 1980s when the community was plunged into a depression after the oil bust. People were experiencing a lot of different emotions, including anger and despair, which sometimes manifested itself as hostility between various individuals and groups within the community. During that time, city officials were arguing with city officials of a nearby community (Naples), as well as with the county commissioners. One respondent recalled this as a time when city council members did not talk to each other or to the county commissioners. In the 1990 elections there were six candidates for mayor because of the dissatisfaction residents felt with the city's administration, and how city affairs were being handled.
There was also conflict during the boom period (preceding the bust) in the late 1970s and early 1980s when Vernal’s community leaders attempted to annex Naples, a small community that abuts east Vernal on highway 40. Naples preferred to remain a separate city, took Vernal to court, and won. According to some respondents, there is still a little animosity between the two communities because of this incident. But, for the most part, they have put it behind them, and as mentioned earlier, are working together to develop new city plans.

It was mentioned that enforcing rules and ordinances in rural communities is more problematic than in larger cities, and often causes more conflict. This is primarily because most people know each other, and restricting the actions of your relative, neighbors or co-workers can pose difficulties for city administrators and those serving on the council or planning committee.

One longtime resident suggested, however, that Vernal really does not have a serious problem with conflict because most residents do buy into the rules that have been put in place. He said most residents have the attitude that, “If it helps the community then it helps me, even if I don’t benefit directly.” For the most part, all the respondents felt that there are no serious conflicts occurring today, either between residents and community leaders, community and county decision makers, or the city and state and federal agencies.

**Strategies for Managing Conflict**

As previously discussed, after the oil bust in the mid-1980s, a large number of the residents in the community had become angry and depressed. To add to this feeling of
depression, many downtown businesses were closing and community leaders were concerned about it looking like a "ghost town," bringing community morale down even further. They were not sure where to turn, but felt it was important to do something. Two of the community leaders had recently visited Victoria, British Columbia, and had seen the beauty brought to that community through the planting of flowers. They decided this was a simple project they could do that would not only improve the appearance of the downtown area, but could also possibly help to boost both community morale, and tourism. In 1986, they held a raffle and used the proceeds to buy flower planters. The idea was to place the planters throughout the downtown area to add color in the summer, and "make things look alive and vibrant." It worked. Since then, the project has become a true collaboration between the local chamber of commerce, which each May is responsible for finding the volunteers to plant the flowers; the city, which hires someone to maintain the planters (e.g., watering them daily); and the downtown businesses owners who pay the cost of purchasing the flowers each year. Today, Vernal has over 1,000 planters on their main street. While the project may not have brought a lot of money into the community, it did some things that were perhaps even more important. First, rather than continuing to feel angry and divided, the project brought residents together to work. Second, it instilled a sense of community pride that residents continue to feel today about Vernal. Lastly, it brought a feeling of hope to the residents and showed the city was not dead. That encouraged a lot of other things to happen.
Another major factor in their conflict management was the hiring of an outside facilitator for their socioeconomic study. He intentionally ignored past feelings and constantly reminded people of the mission for the study and the need to work as a team. As part of the study, the facilitator formed citizen committees, which also helped to change attitudes in the community and overcome some of the animosity between certain groups. While many of the individuals "may not have loved each other going into the planning process, from [those committees] great partnerships and comradery were formed. We felt on the edge of mentally breaking through the depression caused by the decline in the oil and gas [industries]."

The importance of residents' trust in their city leaders was also discussed as a way to avoid conflict. One respondent noted that Vernal's city officials have been able to gain citizens' trust through understanding their needs, and following through on promises. Two other important factors were mentioned. First, leaders must communicate honestly and openly with the residents, and not let issues fester. Second, they must listen to what their constituents have to say, even if it is simply to complain about something that cannot be changed. This at least allows the citizens to feel they have been heard.

Another respondent suggested that community leaders have learned that, "You don't have to agree, but you do need to discuss the issues, and keep an open mind about them." Another respondent suggested that the city has been lucky in having leaders who have common sense and open minds, and are willing to work together.
Lastly, one respondent suggested that the best way to deal with conflicts arising from enforcement of the city’s zoning and building ordinances was to make certain that the people who must enforce the rules buy into the rules. It is also important to be sure that the ordinances meet their purposes, and to realize they are only a piece of paper that can be changed if necessary. At the same time, it is important to realize that they are the city’s standards, and must be enforced.

Recommendations for Other Communities

Respondents in each community were asked to give recommendations to other community leaders that are also in the process of planning for the future and diversifying their economy. The following is a list of the ideas shared by the people of Vernal. It is divided into four categories of recommendations: those related to creating and implementing a master plan; those related to encouraging community involvement; ideas for information and funding sources; and miscellaneous recommendations.

Planning

- Think positively, and do brain storming sessions - use the people around you.
- Develop strategic plans! Things need to be well planned before any action will be successful. I know some people think “oh, too much planning, we want action” but you are not going to get action or do anything well unless it’s planned out.
- Start planning now, don’t delay.
• Having full-time staff to help the community leaders understand their options is invaluable.

• A lot of times planning is good, but it needs to be flexible too; it comes back to good people with open minds and common sense which make a community work.

• Enter into the planning process with an open mind. Let bygones be bygones.

• Have fun with it.

• A community needs a vision statement to know what they are about (even though Vernal does not have one) to put on the wall of the council meeting room so it can be referred to with each new idea.

**Community Involvement**

• You start tearing down walls in the community with groups and entities that put up the walls. Develop common ground by focusing on the things you agree upon. Show respect to other individuals and groups within your community. Just because you disagree with them does not mean you cannot work with them. It may help to resolve the differences you may have and find compromises to those.

• We have a very strong chamber of commerce here. When you get community leaders and business owners involved like that, it can go a long way toward unifying the community. We will usually get 40 to 50 people attending our chamber of commerce meetings.

• Get as much citizen involvement as you can, look long range, and review on a periodic basis.
• Take a hard look at zoning requirements, and what you are or are not going to allow. And, your infrastructure, water and sewer needs and what you are going to deal with as opposed to what you will let the private sector deal with. For example, who is going to supply power, the city or a private company?

Where to Find Help
• Make sure whomever you are relying on to gather information is capable and trustworthy, and use other communities information. Rely on good resources!
• A lot of plans are plagiarized, and though it may not be just right for your community, it can be adapted to fit your community.
• Get people with good practical ideas who think more of the community than they do of the person’s education. Good, practical experience is more important than an educated idiot.
• To get started, use a professional facilitator, someone who knows how to get a core group together, and get things started. This will also add diversity to the plan because it will get people who think differently working together. A facilitator can identify the strengths in the community and build committees on those strengths.

Miscellaneous
• Identify your strengths; that is so important. Figure out what you have, and what you can do with it.
• Be careful who you vote for!
• When it comes to raising funds, "start at a grass roots level, and never give up! That’s the whole trick, figure out if it’s a worthy project, then do it. If the funds are rejected the first time, don’t give up, look again, and ask again."

• Get some good help.

• Use ideas and expertise from other communities ordinances, but adapt those ideas to your own community’s wants and needs.

• For communities with natural attractions in their backyard, such as national monuments and parks, the superintendent to Dinosaur National Monument recommends, “Use us, we can be of use to you.”

• Hire knowledgeable people. Volunteers are ok for some things, but you need paid, professional people for planners.”
Background

Since the establishment of Randolph in 1870, agriculture has been the primary occupation of most residents. Although this is still true today, many residents now require a second income in order to maintain their ranching lifestyle. Often this means that they work a second job or that their spouse finds employment outside of the home.

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, Randolph was a prosperous community that supported "two mercantile stores, a barbershop, a brick kiln, two lime kilns, three hotels, a harness and saddlery shop, a blacksmith shop, a cheese factory, a dress making shop, a carpentry shop, a newspaper, two water-power mills and one steam powered mill" (Knight and Hyatt 1996: 2). Much has changed in the community since that time. Although the size of the population is relatively unchanged, the assortment of businesses found within the community is drastically different. Today, one finds only two service stations, a small grocery store, a bank, and a local diner. Although tourism and recreation play a fairly large role in the economy of Rich County, of which Randolph holds the county seat, it has not historically played a role in the city's economy. This may be changing though as a few ranching families within this community embark upon a new ranch recreation project.

Community Profile

Randolph is located in Rich county in the northeast corner of the state,
approximately 20 miles northwest of Bear Lake. In the late 1970s the community experienced its first real growth in population in over 50 years due to an increase in oil prices, which prompted oil and natural gas exploration in Rich County. However, as oil prices dropped in the early 1980s, the oil boom ended and most of the new residents left the area (Knight and Hyatt 1996). According to an economic report written by the Bear River Resource and Conservation Development (RC&D) (1997: 8), “during the 1980s and early 1990s over 18 percent of Randolph’s adult population out-migrated.” Since then, the community’s population has remained fairly stagnant. In 1996, the population was reported to be 503 residents, only a 3 percent increase since 1990 (Governors Office of Planning and Budget 1996).

Not only has the population been stagnant for the last two decades, the economy has done the same. Within the last 10 years, a grocery store, gas station, and various eating establishments have closed, and two respondents mentioned that there has not been a new building in Randolph in over 10 years. As a result, Randolph residents have experienced many of the hardships associated with stagnation and decline, especially the inability to stem the outmigration of their youth, and offer employment opportunities to their residents.

**Economic Opportunities**

Ranching remains the primary occupation in Randolph. It was estimated by some respondents that between 50 and 90 percent of residents do some type of ranching. How many residents actually rely solely on ranching to support themselves is not known, and
when asked to estimate the percentage there was a wide range of responses, varying from 5 to 70 percent. According to the 1990 U.S. Census, 23 percent of the Randolph’s residents depend on agriculture, and Rich County is considered a farming dependent county, meaning “farming contributed a weighted annual average of 20 percent or more labor and proprietor income over the three years for 1987 to 1989” (USDA 1997: 4).

One longtime resident remembered the days when just about everybody was involved in ranching in one fashion or another, whether it was owning a ranch or working as a ranch hand on someone else’s ranch. Machinery has since replaced the need to hire ranch hands, resulting in reduced employment opportunities for locals in this profession. In spite of the high number of ranchers in the area, there is only one business in town directly related to agriculture, a John Deere dealer, which does not employ many local people.

In addition to raising cattle and sheep, most ranchers also raise the crops necessary to feed their animals. According to the ranchers who were interviewed, they primarily raise alfalfa. While most of the crop they grow is for their own use, some ranchers are finding it possible to sell a portion of their harvest to the Deseret Ranch, located about 10 miles from the community. The Deseret Ranch is a working ranch, that is popular for private elk and deer hunting opportunities and brings in people from all across the country. Deseret Ranch is a large operation that does not support any other type of businesses in Randolph, nor do any of Randolph’s residents work there.
Most of those ranchers who must supplement their income, and residents who are not ranchers, must commute to their place of employment. The biggest employer in the area is the coal mine in Kemmerer, Wyoming, about an hour drive from Randolph. It was estimated that the mine employs 75 people and offers the highest wages (approximated at $40,000 annually) in the area. Kemmerer has a power plant which offers employment opportunities as well, but not as many as the mine. Other residents commute to Evanston, Wyoming, located approximately 30 miles northeast and are employed by the state mental hospital, service industries, or oil companies. Most of the local youth find summer employment in Garden City, a tourist town located 20 miles northwest of Randolph on the shores of Bear Lake.

The main employment opportunities within Randolph itself are the school district and county government. There are also a few positions at the local bank, two service stations, and small grocery store on the outskirts of town.

Dependency on Extractive Industries

Mineral. Randolph is very dependent upon the coal mines in Kemmerer, Wyoming, which employs many of Randolph’s residents. There are also a few people working for the oil companies in Evanston, Wyoming. Although there is no local mining, quite a few individuals within the community own shares in mineral rights and receive royalty checks that serve as a supplement to their other incomes.
Timber harvesting. There is some timber harvesting and a saw mill outside of Evanston, Wyoming. Only one resident in Randolph, however, is currently employed by the industry.

Agriculture. It was suggested by a number of residents that without ranching and farming, the community would cease to exist. As previously mentioned, the majority of residents are involved in agriculture, and the town’s identity is exclusively that of a ranching community.

Dependency on Tourism and Recreation

Currently, there is very little recreation and tourism in the community. There are a few hunters who pass through in the fall, and a few fishermen and campers who use a nearby reservoir. A number of respondents mentioned that although a lot of traffic passes through the community, especially during the summer months, no one stops there. This may be because there is only one small diner in town and a few historical buildings to entice visitors.

Economic Concerns

A number of respondents mentioned the need to bring in more employment opportunities to the community. Currently, most decent paying jobs in the region are located outside Randolph in communities located anywhere from 30 to 45 miles away. Those employment opportunities that are closer often do not pay as well. Although the
county’s unemployment rate is low (3.5 percent), the average annual income is only $15,600, with 11.5 percent of the population living below poverty level (Bear River RC&D 1997).

One respondent did remark, however, that he did not see the community in desperate need of new employment opportunities. His comment was, “If a business did come to town tomorrow with 20 jobs it would be a problem, because there are not 20 people looking for work here.” On the other hand, he also noted that if someone wanted to move to Randolph tomorrow, “It would be difficult for them to find a job, if not impossible.”

Another concern frequently mentioned was the lack of young families either staying or moving to the area. While there have been some retirees who have recently moved in, and the county as a whole is getting an abundance of people building second homes near Bear Lake and the Garden City area, the number of children in the school system has been steadily declining during the past decade. This has caused serious problems for the local school district, which has had to lay-off personnel and reduce funding for some of its programs, making it more difficult to provide needed services to the children.

A few respondents, however, suggested that this trend may be changing. It was noted that two young families recently returned to the community, and “homes long vacant are now inhabited.” They suggested this was the beginning of a new trend, as people with young children become fed up with the problems associated with big city life.
and decide to move their families to rural areas. One of the respondents and his wife are currently commuting three times a week to Salt Lake City for their jobs, and he believes that more people will be willing to make this commute in order to have the small-town atmosphere in which to raise their children. It was noted, however, that almost all of the current residents were born and raised in the community, and this may make it a difficult community for an outsider to move into. All of the local social functions revolve around church, school, and family, and without these ties it would be very hard for a new person to be integrated into the community. It was also noted, however, that being a part of these close ties is what makes living in the community so special.

A third concern frequently mentioned was the elimination of grazing on public lands by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the United States Forest Service (USFS). According to a number of respondents, these agencies have already begun to reduce the number of permits, and increase the requirements for those they do give out. If they make it so difficult that local ranchers are forced to stop using public lands, many felt the town would be wiped out. In the opinion of a local rancher, the problem is, “People don’t like to see cattle grazing on public lands anymore. Babbitt and the other environmentalists have all the power now. So does the media, who say we’re being subsidized because we don’t pay enough to run our cattle on public lands - that we don’t pay as much to the government as we would if the land were privately owned. But the thing is, we put in improvements for what we are doing, and the bottom line is, it’s about even….It’s just getting harder all the time.”
Some respondents are hoping that the ranch recreation project (discussed in a later section) can help improve public relations between ranchers and other citizens by allowing them to see the trials and tribulations experienced by ranchers, and to help them realize ranchers are not destroying public lands. It was also mentioned that the community is working with the Utah Cattlemen’s Association, Lyle Hillyard, David Ure, Jim Hansen, Orrin Hatch, and Bob Bennett to ensure that public lands remain open to local ranchers.

**Unique Community Characteristics**

A number of respondents mentioned the closeness of the residents within Randolph as one of its distinct features. Most of them felt it was due to the fact that those residing in Randolph are almost exclusively members of the LDS church.

The high percentage of resident involvement in the local schools’ activities was also mentioned as a unique characteristic of the community. A couple of respondents suggested that since most of the community’s social events are functions of either the church or the schools, this serves as a means of bringing people together and keeping them involved in the community’s affairs.

Another unique quality frequently mentioned was that everybody knows one another, and people truly care about each other and watch out for each other. As one respondent noted, “The streets are safe, the water and air are clean, and the community offers a good place to raise a family.” A couple of respondents suggested that Randolph is the type of community that people aspire to live in, with its small-town atmosphere and citizens who are good, honest, and hardworking.
Other respondents mentioned the harsh climate as a unique aspect of the community. According to these residents, with extreme cold in the winter and swarms of mosquitos in the summer, it takes a special breed of people who want to live in Randolph.

Surprisingly, the natural beauty of the area was only mentioned by one person. The local environment offers its inhabitants rolling hills, a lovely valley with the Bear River meandering back and forth through it, and Bear Lake only 20 miles north.

**Planning Process**

**Motivation**

Most respondents agreed that a serious dispute between a local enterprise (a ranch that housed troubled boys) and most of the community's residents was the major catalyst for the implementation of a master plan and new zoning laws in the early 1990s. Many respondents felt that the conflict, which will be discussed in a later section, was due to a lack of zoning ordinances that could have prevented it.

The community received help in developing their plan through a program implemented by Utah Power and Light to assist rural communities in developing a strategic planning process. The program sent in a trained facilitator to help the community identify its needs and to form committees made up of residents to address those needs.

At the same time, they also received a grant from the Bear River Association of Governments (BRAG) and hired an outside consultant from the Bonneville Research Group out of Salt Lake City. The consultant attempted to help them find ways to diversify their economy through both increasing recreation and tourism opportunities and
luring small industry to the area. The hope was that because of fiber optics and a phone company in the area, they could bring in a matrix marketing firm. Apparently they "sent out a few feelers, but nothing happened."

In the area of recreation and tourism, the consultant helped the community produce a promotional brochure that was sent to the area's chamber of commerce and businesses for display, trying to sell Randolph as a place to visit. He also made various recommendations to the community on ideas that would boost their chances for receiving tourists and recreationists. One of his ideas was to establish a bed and breakfast in the community by refurbishing an old home, and capitalizing on the historical aspects of Randolph. One respondent suggested that was the basis for the current ranch recreation project.

The consultant also assisted the town with a survey of residents and local businesses to see what changes they wanted in their community. Volunteers from the community went door to door delivering and collecting the surveys, and they received about a 90 percent participation rate. What they found was that many of the residents did not want to see a lot of change or growth in the community.

**Responsible Entities**

Presently, all positions within the community's administration, except one part-time secretarial position, are voluntary. The administration is made up of the mayor, four elected town council members, a planning and zoning commission, and a board of adjustments. One former mayor commented that she consciously made the attempt to
appoint people to the planning and zoning committee and the board of adjustments who would serve as good representatives for all segments of the community.

Community Involvement

During the strategic planning process in the early 1990s, community members were solicited to serve on committees reviewing community concerns such as infrastructure and increasing recreation and tourism. Two of the respondents involved in selecting committee members felt that they had done a good job in picking residents who represented a cross-section of the community, including business owners, ranchers, church leaders, etc.

A number of respondents commented on the complacency of residents. One respondent used the example of the latest elections, in which no one ran against the mayor and all of the incumbent council members were re-elected. It was suggested that this could reflect community satisfaction with the current administration, rather than complacency. One respondent observed that although the community leaders are basically just putting out fires and have no real visions or goals for the future, if you polled Randolph’s citizenry, you would find most people are satisfied with the efforts of their elected officials. Another respondent suggested that perhaps people are complacent because they are comfortable with their lives, and do not feel the need to get involved, especially if the purpose is to push for growth and change.

Notices for public meetings are placed in the courthouse, post office, gas station, and advertised in the local paper (The Uintah County Journal published out of Evanston,
Wyoming), but, as was found in all the study communities, public meetings in Randolph are generally poorly attended unless a controversial subject is being discussed. Since there has been no controversy in the community for a number of years, none of Randolph’s recent public meetings have been well attended.

Tourism and Recreation

Creating Opportunities

Presently, the town’s main tourist attractions are the Woodruff Wilson home, which the community renovated in the mid-1980s through the volunteer efforts of a local carpenter and a business owner; the Randolph Tabernacle listed on the National Register of Historic Places; the Rich County War Memorial located in front of the town offices, listing the names of local residents involved in World Wars I and II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War; and the Daughters of Utah Pioneer Relic Hall.

Randolph also offers hunting, fishing, camping, and bike trails in the area, all activities which do bring in some visitors, as does the annual county fair and rodeo. However, as noted by a number of the respondents, without the infrastructure to accommodate guests, the community is not able to benefit economically from people visiting and recreating in the community.

The biggest project to bring in tourism to the community is currently in the works. It is an attempt by four ranching families in Randolph to establish a recreation program, entitled “Bear River Valley Working Ranches.” Its purpose is to help local ranchers supplement their incomes by bringing in people from across the country to work at local
ranches and experience life in a rural community. As one respondent noted, Randolph is one of the last western frontiers in the state, with real cattle ranches and real cowboys.

The idea for the project originated in 1994 during a one-day workshop that was offered by a USFS Action Team on the concept of ranch recreation (Bear River RC&D 1997). To further promote the project, the Bear River Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) has continued to hold two informational meetings in the county each year since 1994, and the county has offered an information booth at the county fair each year. Despite this promotional effort, the project has only enticed four local families to participate. However, a number of the respondents believed that there are more ranchers in the county who are interested, but they are waiting to see if the project succeeds before being willing to making a commitment.

The project has been on hold for over a year because of a problem with providing housing for the guests. Randolph has no commercial lodging accommodations and ranchers were reluctant to house the guests in their own homes out of concern for their families’ privacy and liability issues. The problem potentially has been alleviated now by an offer from the USFS for the group to lease an old ranger station located in Randolph. The station has been abandoned for a number of years now, and its use by the group would benefit the USFS by ridding them of the responsibility and expense of maintaining the building.

In the summer of 1998, the USFS brought in volunteers to strip, paint, and clean the building. These volunteers where also used by the ranchers as trial guests. There
were 10 volunteers who participated in activities such as hay baling, a Dutch oven cookout, and a fishing expedition at the local reservoir. According to those involved, the activities and the community were well received by the volunteers. The ranchers were also much encouraged by the experience.

The project's first paying guest was hosted in August 1998. The guest was a woman from Tokyo, Japan who heard about the project through a friend in Salt Lake City. She spent a week in Randolph, enjoying activities such as driving a tractor and raking hay, which apparently was her favored activity, picking and preserving raspberries, fixing fences, and painting a chicken coop. According to those involved with her stay, all went very well, and the ranchers were again encouraged by the experience.

The ranchers involved in the project specifically stated that they do not want to offer guests a dude ranch experience, but instead want their guests to sample working ranches that would allow guests to enjoy real experiences and provide an opportunity for the ranchers to educate guests about environmental issues, history of the region, local scenic attractions, and real concerns facing ranchers in the West. Some of the activities that the ranchers will provide consist of the following: evaluating range conditions, branding and vaccinating cattle, assisting in cattle drives and pasture rotation, repairing fences, doctoring sick cattle, Dutch-oven dinners, cowboy entertainment, scenic trail rides, and much more. (Parker 1997: 2)

In addition to the four ranching families, other residents have also agreed to offer activities such as quilting, saddle making, candle making, leather braiding, and a whole host of other activities. According to the mayor, anyone in the community who wishes to
be involved in the project is welcome. Most of those who are involved see it not only as an opportunity to make some additional money, but also as a way to meet new people and make new friends.

One respondent, however, was not excited about the project. His biggest concern was the proposed use of the USFS building and the fact that it is located in a quiet neighborhood in the midst of the community. He fears some of the guests may want to have some night life after the work day is over, and loud parties would not be conducive to the neighborhood or community’s peaceful lifestyle. This concern was countered, however, by other respondents who suggested that guests willing to pay the costs associated with the project (it was estimated each guest would pay approximately $900 per week), and who were the type of people interested in this form of tourism, would probably not be the type to cause a lot of problems for the community.

According to an article in The Salt Lake Tribune (Maylett 1998), the project has received $85,000 in funding from state grants, $50,000 of which is from Utah’s Industrial Assistance Fund (IAF), and “is contingent upon the venture creating jobs; if it does not create 10 new jobs during a period of years, the amount must be repaid.” The project has also received funding from the state’s Rural Resettlement Fund, and a USFS Community Partnership Grant.

A feasibility study was conducted by the Bear River RC&D in 1996-1997. It was funded by the State of Utah Community Development Division and Utah Tourism Council, and received matching funds from Rich County. The study found the project has
the potential to be a way for the community to diversify its economy and capitalize on the increased recreation and tourism the state as a whole has been experiencing. The study suggested that the economic benefits this type of tourism will bring to Randolph will directly benefit many of the local families within the community. Most respondents agreed with these findings and were quite positive in their views of the project. They also believe it has a fairly good chance of succeeding as long as the USFS building is available for housing the guests.

According to those working on the project, there are only a few items left to accomplish before the project can begin in earnest. These include signing the liability insurance papers, putting the finishing touches on the cabin, and, most importantly, finding the courage to begin advertising it and scheduling the guests. Their hope is to begin advertising in the spring of 1999 and to host their first group of guests in the fall of 1999.

The community embarked upon another joint venture with the USFS to establish a camping and picnic area at a nearby reservoir that is owned and used by the local ranchers for irrigation. The town took the responsibility to level the area, making it more accessible to campers. They also have the responsibility for keeping the area clean and emptying the trash cans. The USFS has planted trees in the area and maintains both the trees and the surrounding fence, which keeps out the cattle which graze nearby. The Utah Division of Wildlife Resources stocks the reservoir annually with trout, which brings fishermen to the area. While this has not helped the community economically because, as previously mentioned, there is no place for these visitors to spend money in Randolph, it
has given the local people a place to go for camping, fishing, and picnicking, and may be used as an activity for the ranch recreation project.

One other community event mentioned was Mosquito Daze, a small carnival-like event sponsored by the local businesses to thank residents for their support. It offered games, food, and a small fireworks display. Apparently, it did bring in a few people from the surrounding communities, but was not meant to be a tourist attraction. The event only lasted for four years, with the last one held in 1997.

Concerns with Integrating Tourism and Recreation into the Community

Unlike other communities which are facing the dilemma of too much tourism, Randolph is concerned about not enough. It has been concentrating its efforts on finding ways to attract visitors, but has encountered a number of serious obstacles in its endeavors. The biggest problem for the community at this time is they have no infrastructure to accommodate tourists or recreationists. There are no hotels, motels, or shops, and the town offers only one small diner. As one respondent put it, “It’s the chicken and egg problem. The tourists won’t come without the infrastructure to accommodate them, but there is no one willing to invest in the infrastructure without there already being some tourist to guarantee them business.” Thus, even if someone from the outside wanted to spend money in Randolph, it would be impossible to do so, as there is simply no place to spend it.
A second concern frequently mentioned was the fact that there are other communities close by that already offer all of the amenities that tourists and recreationists are looking for, such as hotels, restaurants, and gift shops. Evanston and Kemmerer, Wyoming, as well as Garden City, Utah, are all located less than a one-hour drive from Randolph, and offer visitors a wide variety of chain hotels, bed and breakfasts, fine dining restaurants, and fast foods. Thus many residents here wonder why anyone would bother to stop in Randolph.

A third concern has been the lack of success of past and present businesses in Randolph. Apparently, the community had two hotels a number of years ago and both went out of business for lack of guests. Additionally, a number of restaurants have opened and closed in the past few decades, as did a Maverick service station, an autobody paint shop, and a grocery store. It was suggested that Gaters, the only diner currently open in town, is also having some financial difficulty because of so little business during the winter months.

Lastly, many respondents discussed the idea that Randolph’s climate is simply not conducive to tourism and recreationism. Randolph is notorious for having the coldest winter temperatures in the state, often dropping below zero during the winter months. Many believe this excludes them from attracting cross-country skiers, snowmobilers, and other winter guests. The summer months are not considered a whole lot better, as they bring with them hordes of people-eating mosquitos, making it difficult for people to enjoy the outdoors during the late afternoon and early evening hours. Some respondents
suggested these concerns may pose a serious problem for the ranch recreation project proposed for the area.

In addition to environmental problems, it was suggested that the extreme isolation of the community could also pose a problem for out-of-town guests. There are no movie theaters, large grocery stores, or medical facilities within 30 miles of town.

Conflict Between Tourism and Recreation and Other Industries

As previously mentioned, one respondent did express concern about the use of the USFS building located within the community to house guests for the ranch recreation project. Most other respondents, however, saw the project as a benefit for the community and were encouraging those involved to move forward with the project. Many of them also commented that they had not heard anyone else in the community express concern with the project, and could not think of any reasons residents would oppose it.

One respondent did suggest that the ranch recreation project could eventually cause some controversy if the town experiences growth and ranchers begin to sell their land to developers. He foresaw a time when residents involved in the ranch recreation project and environmentalists will be on the same side, against those trying to develop their lands.

There was some discussion regarding conflict between ranchers using public lands for grazing, and individuals from outside the community who are opposed to this use. Apparently last summer someone shot and killed 15 cattle that were on public land but
belonged to a local rancher. No one was ever arrested in the incident but, according to one respondent, this is a new form of terrorism that ranchers must deal with. Seemingly, it is becoming more of a concern for the residents as these types of problems are becoming more commonplace.

**Strategies for Making Tourism and Recreation Compatible with Other Industries**

A number of respondents suggested that the ranch recreation project may serve as good public relations strategy for ranchers by helping the general public gain a better understanding of their operations and of their difficulties. The ranchers involved in it are hoping that by having people working side by side with them, it will give these folks a better feeling for the plight of ranchers, as well as a better appreciation for their lifestyle.

**Social and Economic Effects of Tourism and Recreation**

Randolph has not had any true tourism or recreation in their community to date. Therefore, they have not had to deal with any social or economic effects due to visitors to their community. This may change, however, with the advent of the ranch recreation project.

**Attracting New Industry**

Randolph would very much like to bring in a small manufacturing company to help boost employment opportunities for its residents. There are three serious problems, however, in doing this. The first is Randolph’s geographical location and its lack of
transportation facilities. It is approximately 30 miles from the nearest freeway, 140 miles from the nearest airport, and there are no railways in the area.

The second problem mentioned was that the community leaders are at a loss on how to go about luring industry into their community and they lack the time and energy to "learn the ropes." The mayor and the four elected town council members are all volunteers in these positions, working full-time in other positions to support their families. Many of them expressed their frustration with their own lack of knowledge and the unavailability of information to help them. One town council member remarked that the town leaders had met with State Senator Hillyard to discuss their concerns on this subject and he gave them a list of grant options. As this town council member stated, the problem is that neither the town council members nor the mayor has the knowledge or the time to do grant writing either. In addition, Utah State University has sent community development experts to the community a few times in the last two years with the hopes of bringing them some new ideas and methods for development. Unfortunately, they came on weekdays between 9:00 and 5:00 p.m., the same time the community leaders are expected to be at their jobs, so there were very few who were free to meet with them.

The third concern with bringing in new industry is the lack of housing available in the community. There are currently no homes or lots for sale or rent. As one respondent noted, "If a new industry decided to locate here and it required 20 new people to relocate, we would have no place to put them." It was suggested that some residents may be reluctant to sell their available lots to strangers because they are hoping their children will
use the land. Even though most of the youth who have left will probably not return, the parents fear that by selling the land they have eliminated that option for their children. It was also suggested that people are not selling their land because they fear growth, and holding onto their property prevents growth from occurring.

A few years ago the community attempted to bring a furniture business to town. They lost the business, however, to Evanston, Wyoming. Reasons given for not locating in Randolph were that Evanston offered a larger population base and there are greater numbers of people passing through that area. It was also mentioned that the tax structure in Wyoming is much more friendly to businesses and individuals than Utah’s tax structure. This makes it that much more difficult for Randolph to compete with Evanston in luring new businesses or industries.

Randolph has managed to bring in both Utah State University (USU) satellite classes and the Bridgerland Applied Technology Center classes to the area. The community purchased a building that was abandoned by Mountain Fuel and is now able to offer their high school students and others in the community classes in dental hygiene, automobile mechanics, and many of the basic courses required for a 2-year college degree.

Randolph also has the distinction of being one of the few rural communities in Utah that is already connected to the fiber optics network, giving those residents with the option to tele-commute for their jobs the ability to do so. Fiber optics is a state-of-the-art communications system that is extremely fast, allowing transmission or downloading of information through the Internet to be done 300 times more quickly than an average
telephone modem (Horiuchi 1998). For individuals requiring use of the Internet for their jobs, the availability of fiber optics is almost essential.

**Issues with Controlling Growth**

**Factors Limiting Growth**

Currently, there are two main factors limiting growth in Randolph. The first of these is the lack of employment opportunity. As was previously mentioned, it is considered almost impossible for a person from the outside to find employment in the region that would sustain them.

The second factor was also previously mentioned, and that is the shortage of available housing in the community. According to all of the respondents, there are no homes for sale or rent. There are also currently no lots for sale, although one respondent did suggest that if the price were right, a person could probably convince someone to release one.

A few respondents also suggested that the harsh climate found in Randolph may also limit growth. Being considered the coldest town in Utah is not necessarily the best advertisement for attracting new residents.

**Planning and Zoning and Building Ordinances**

While the community has never invested time in developing a vision for its future, community leaders did implement a master plan approximately 10 years ago. They are currently in the process of updating it. One respondent commented that he believes most
residents are hoping the community will remain the way it is now, with the same quiet, peaceful lifestyle, but they are not doing anything to keep it that way other than hoping it will stay like it is. Most residents just do not believe that rapid growth will ever pose a serious problem for them because of the community’s isolation and lack of amenities.

Many of the respondents felt that the town’s current zoning ordinances and infrastructure are sufficient to handle any growth the town may receive. However, one member of the planning and zoning committee commented, “If we get tested, we may find otherwise.” Most of the ordinances in place have to do with lot size, where a structure can be located on the property (e.g., set-back requirements), and building safety requirements. There are currently no requirements regarding appearance or maintenance for either structures or property. A few respondents expressed concern with this as they fear older homes, especially those with absentee owners, may be allowed to become eyesores, reducing the community’s aesthetic qualities. Other people were concerned that some residents have allowed junk to accumulate on their property, also taking away from the beauty of the community. One possible serious flaw in the town’s ordinances is that they have not implemented impact fees to reduce development costs to the community should property owners decide to develop their land.

The town’s main infrastructure project in the last year has been to repair its water system, which is made up of a fresh water spring and two wells. In early 1998, the spring had a cave in and the town had to build a new vault to house it. In addition to repairing the system, the community is required by the state to test the water quality on a monthly
basis because of some concerns that the water will become contaminated by non-point source pollutants. The community does not have a water treatment plant, only the fresh water spring and wells. Therefore, there is concern that the town cannot afford to have its water contaminated. Some ranchers, however, also expressed concern that they could be blamed if the water did get contaminated, and be put out of business.

Community Conflicts Due to Change

The biggest conflict the community has dealt with in the recent past was a problem with the Majestic Ranch, a privately owned boys ranch that opened in the late 1980s as a place for troubled boys. The ranch is located about a mile from town. It began as a small, private, for-profit organization for Utah boys with behavior problems. The business grew quickly, however, and began taking children from all over the United States. Eventually they outgrew the ranch and purchased a small apartment complex within the town where they lodged many of the boys. They also purchased another building in town for use as a schoolhouse, because the public schools in the area were both unable and unwilling to take the children. According to a number of the respondents, the boys were not well supervised, and the project became a nightmare for Randolph's other residents. Randolph does not have a police force, and so there was no one to enforce laws within the community. Two respondents noted that the crime rate in town increased to the point that the community was given the dubious distinction of having the highest car theft rate per capita in the nation.
Ultimately, the town took the ranch owners to court to force them to close down by citing violations to zoning ordinances and an issue regarding their business licenses. The case was settled out of court and, according to one respondent, the town paid the owners to move the boys to a ranch in Montana. The Majestic Ranch still has an office at their headquarters outside of town, but none of the respondents knew for certain if there were any boys still housed there. A few respondents suggested that it was a shame this project did not work out, as it could have been an economic benefit to the community, both in supplying jobs and increasing local sales revenue. Most respondents, however, agreed that the community was better off without this type of business and they were willing to forego the benefits in order to eliminate the problems associated with the ranch.

Another area of conflict mentioned by a few of the respondents was the implementation of the current zoning and building ordinances. The biggest conflict revolved around the requirement of a 10-foot set-back from the property line, which apparently caused problems for some residents who wanted to build enclosed porches on their homes, and another who wanted to put in a garage on his property. A few respondents suggested that the problems have been resolved by the town council making exceptions to the rules, or changing them to fit the situation. For example, in one instance the town council had zoned an area to eliminate large farm animals, but then grandfathered in a man in the neighborhood who always brought his 30 sheep into his yard. Another respondent indicated that because the town has no police force, there is no way to enforce the ordinances and some residents just ignore them. Others, however, remarked that while
there were problems in the past, that is not the case today. According to these respondents, both the town council and board of adjustments are pretty good about enforcing the rules, and residents are equally good about following them.

One respondent felt that most residents are agreeable to the new zoning requirements and realize the laws are there to help the community. It was frequently mentioned, however, as it was in all of the study communities, that enforcing rules in a small community is much more difficult than in larger cities because as one respondent put it, “It’s our friends we are saying no to. In Salt Lake City, people don’t have that problem.” It was also mentioned that planning and zoning can be more difficult in small communities that are attempting to maintain their rural atmosphere by allowing residents to have a horse or a couple of cows on their property, without it conflicting with zoning laws. Lastly, the issue of private property rights was also frequently mentioned, and the fear that too many regulations, and too strict of control, can infringe upon the citizens’ rights.

Strategies for Managing Conflict

One respondent suggested that most conflicts within the community are worked out by having open discussions and allowing residents to have a place to voice their opinions. Another commented that because of the smallness of the community people cannot hide from each other when they disagree. Thus, they must learn to recognize that it is alright to disagree, just not to become disagreeable. Because of the size of the
community, they are generally forced to continue their association and interaction with each other, which usually results in people working out their problems.

**Recommendations for Other Communities**

Respondents in each community were asked to give recommendations to other community leaders that are also in the process of planning for the future and diversifying their economy. The following is a list of the ideas shared by the people of Randolph. It is divided into four categories of recommendations: those related to creating and implementing a master plan; those related to encouraging community involvement; ideas for information and funding sources; and, miscellaneous recommendations.

**Planning**

- Get it done!!
- Get a vision, it's pretty hard to go somewhere if you don’t know where you are going.
- It works, this planning process. It works to sit down and plan and try to represent as many people in the community as you can.
- Do a follow-up so you can see if you are on tract, it's also helpful in determining if you are reaching your goals.

**Community Involvement**

- Involve the community, that was our biggest success, and give deadlines, then follow up on them.
• Get involved. The more you do, the more you will see that it helps you.

Where to Find Help

(No comments given under this category.)

Miscellaneous

• Be careful what you wish for, you might get it.

• Look at both sides of an issue, and listen to both sides.

• Be reasonable, there are some things that are important, and others that are trivial.
The four study communities involved in this research, Escalante, Springdale, Vernal, and Randolph, were chosen for a number of reasons: their population size; their proximity to federal lands; their attempts at planning for the future; their experience with rapid growth or stagnation; their efforts to diversify their economies; and the use of tourism and recreation to accomplish this diversity. The purpose of the research was to look closely at the workings of these communities and to examine what economic and development strategies community leaders had chosen. We were also interested in seeing what changes had taken place in the communities, and how well residents had adapted to these changes.

The research consisted of 10 in-depth interviews with town staff members and community leaders in each of the selected study communities. Each interviewee was asked questions pertaining to a set of predetermined variables. Some of these variables were chosen because literature on rural communities identified them as being important in a community’s economic and social development. The topics generally pertained to the ability of a rural community to diversify its economy, while at the same time maintaining its integrity and unique characteristics. The other variables were used to better understand the community, and to clarify whether the community had in fact met the original criteria used to choose “successful” communities.
Summary of Findings

Economic Opportunities

Economic and employment opportunities within each community varied greatly, as did the diversity among the study communities economies. Vernal’s economy would probably best fit the description of a truly diverse economy as defined by Ashton and Pickens (1995), in which there are employment opportunities in different sectors and those opportunities are fairly evenly dispersed among industries within the sectors. Vernal’s economy incorporates numerous industries involved in the extraction of natural resources, as well as, federal, state, county, and town government positions. Vernal also has jobs in the retail trade industry and in businesses catering to tourism and recreation. Additionally, there are a few other opportunities in the medical field and in small manufacturing companies.

Springdale’s economy was the least diverse, with employment opportunities based almost exclusively on the tourism and recreation industry. Within this industry, however, there is a wide variety of choices. This includes government jobs, service positions, retail trade, and artisans. The lack of diversity does not appear to have hurt Springdale’s economy, however. Washington County, where Springdale resides, has one of the lowest unemployment rates in the state. As of January 1999, the county’s unemployment rate was 3.1, as compared to 3.4 for the state as a whole (Utah Department of Workforce Services 1999).
Whether Escalante’s economy fits the definition of a diversified economy is questionable. Most respondents agreed that the community is dependent upon two companies for its survival, the local saw mill and a communications company. In a truly diversified economy, the closing of one industry would not risk the collapse of the entire economy (Furuseth and Thomas 1997). Escalante’s economy is slowly diversifying due to a few new businesses that are related to the tourism and recreation industry. However, many of the community’s leaders are neither encouraging nor assisting their residents in this endeavor. Many people in Escalante do not wish to see their economic opportunities expanding if it means they must rely on visitors to do so.

While the employment opportunities within Randolph itself are limited, those within the region appear to be fairly diverse. Residents have found jobs in mining, government, the service industry, and the medical field. Most of them, however, commute 30 to 45 miles one way to reach their place of employment. Randolph is attempting to implement a ranch recreation project to add to the local economy. Community leaders are hoping the project will allow residents an opportunity to earn income from visitors willing to pay to work on local ranches and participate in local activities.

**Economic Concerns**

Three of the four communities, Vernal, Escalante, and, Randolph, mentioned the need to bring in more and better employment opportunities as one of their main economic concerns. All of them, however, have been unsuccessful in luring new industry or manufacturing companies to their area due to a lack of transportation facilities within their
region, a common problem for many rural communities (Galston and Baehler 1995). None of them had the advantage of a railway or a major freeway nearby, which possibly would have made them more appealing to a prospective manufacturer or industry.

Escalante and Randolph respondents also mentioned other serious problems that make them less attractive to industries and manufacturing companies. Escalante lacks land and water, both vital considerations in the location decisions of industries or manufacturing firms. Randolph lacks workers and available housing.

Vernal and Springdale offer an interesting comparison in terms of one of their economic concerns. While Vernal’s economy relies fairly heavily on extractive industries, and Springdale’s is focused primarily on tourism and recreation, both communities expressed similar concerns about these industries. The biggest concern mentioned by each was the “fickle nature” or unpredictability of the industry, which referred to a lack of consistency over time. In the extraction of natural resources, for example, the factors of supply and demand play a large role in how active the companies are and, thus, in how many people they will employ. Tourism and recreation face the same dilemma in regards to supply and demand, and how popular a community is as a destination spot will determine how many jobs are available, and for how long. It should be noted, however, that although tourism and recreation are seen as a “fickle” industries, neither of these communities, which rely fairly heavily upon them, have actually experienced a “boom/bust” cycle with them. Both communities have only seen a steady increase in the numbers of people visiting their regions, as well as in revenues received by these visitors.
The lack of control the communities are able to exert over their economies was also mentioned as a frustration. In Vernal, most of the energy-related companies are owned by corporations with headquarters in different states, and thus their decision makers are not residents of Vernal and community leaders have no influence on them. Springdale is also dependent upon decisions makers and factors that are outside of their control, such as the strength of the economy, gas prices, and recreational and tourism preferences and fads.

The other common concern about these industries was their seasonality and sometimes temporary nature. There is a difference, though, between the industries in how this seasonal employment affects employees. For the energy extraction industries, although jobs may last for a number of years, when mines or oil fields shut down it is usually a permanent closure. In the tourism and recreation industry, jobs may only last 6 months out of the year, but they will probably be available each year.

One of the biggest complaints communities have had about businesses related to tourism and recreation is that the wages they pay are generally significantly lower than wages paid by the extractive industries (Dawson et al. 1993). Interestingly, though, the 1990 U.S. Census Bureau’s figures show the median household income in Springdale is $27,875, while Vernal’s is $21,793. This number, however, does not necessarily reflect higher wages being paid to employees. One possible explanation is that many of the people who move to Washington County, especially to Springdale and St. George where the cost of real estate is higher than one would find in Vernal, tend to be wealthy
individuals, which may skew the income figures. Also, business owners in Springdale probably make higher incomes than those in Vernal because of the higher number of visitors to the area. It should also be noted, however, that the unemployment rate in Washington County, which is known to rely heavily on tourism and recreation, is significantly lower at 3.1 percent, than Uintah County’s 6 percent, which is known to rely heavily on the extractive industry.

Unique Community Characteristics

The purpose of this topic was to help give us a better understanding of the community, and perhaps some insight into why the community was considered successful in their endeavors at community and economic development. Since each of the communities was considered “successful,” perhaps it should not come as a surprise that many of these “unique” characteristics were actually similar across communities. For example, in all four of the communities the beauty of the surrounding area was considered a unique feature of the town. This, of course, makes sense since integrating tourism and recreation into a community without this feature would be extremely difficult.

The small-town atmosphere and sense of belonging were also mentioned as special characteristics of each community. As part of his definition of community, Hillery (1955) referred to this quality as “common ties.” Perhaps this quality is not so unique, and is simply an element of rural communities, where populations tend to be smaller, and therefore people feel recognized and part of the group.
Vernal and Springdale, the two communities that have been working at the planning process the longest, and which have also experienced visitors to their areas for the longest periods of time, discussed the open, accepting, and friendly attitudes of their citizens as being unique to their communities. Randolph and Escalante, the two communities with the least experience, and possibly the most isolation, expressed just the opposite sentiment about their residents. Many of the respondents discussed the difficulty new residents often have with feeling a part of the community.

There were two possible reasons suggested for this difference. The first is that Vernal and Springdale have had so much exposure to visitors because of Dinosaur National Monument and Zion National Park bordering their communities, that they have grown used to strangers in their midst, and as noted by one respondent, are “no longer surprised by anything.” Both communities have also received many new residents and have had several years to adapt to them. In Escalante and Randolph, where visitors and new residents are not yet the norm, people have not been exposed to as many different attitudes and lifestyles, which makes the adjustment more difficult for them.

Planning Process

The literature on rural communities suggests that planning for the future is important for communities, especially those that are experiencing rapid growth or economic decline and stagnation (Howe et al. 1997; Mantell et al. 1990; Segedy 1997). Each of the study communities had already accomplished this important strategy for community development. We focused on three specific factors regarding their planning
process: what was their motivation to begin; what entities within the community were involved; and how did they solicit community involvement.

**Motivation.** Both Vernal and Springdale began the planning process 20 to 30 years ago because of an increase in population. Both of these communities have also updated their zoning and building ordinances within the last decade, and have either completed or are working on a new master plan. Randolph and Escalante, however, are new comers to the process, with both communities establishing their first master plan and zoning and building ordinances in the early 1990s. Both communities have also experienced some problems with implementing and enforcing their ordinances.

In all four of the communities, the inspiration behind the plan and implementation of new ordinances was a crisis. In two of the communities, Springdale and Randolph, the motivation stemmed from a conflict between the residents and a developer, in one community, and a local business, in the other. While the conflicts were disruptive for these two communities, and caused some serious relationship problems between residents, some people felt it was a positive experience for the community, because it forced community leaders and residents to evaluate the future of their town and determine what they did and did not want to have happen.

For the other two communities, Vernal and Escalante, the motivation for planning and implementing ordinances stemmed from a sudden increase in population, and subdivisions that went wrong. Many of the ordinances passed in Escalante were a direct result of the designation of the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, which
inspired them to reevaluate their plan in 1997 and implement ordinances to control anticipated growth. Many of Vernal’s ordinances were implemented after the onset of the oil boom of the 1970s, when the area was inundated with new residents hoping to make their fortunes. Each of the communities also had at least one subdivision which was not well designed, yet was approved by the city council, and which has cost the respective cities a lot of money to repair the problems.

One might conclude from this that communities must face a crisis or have some impending change before being motivated to go through the long and often tedious process of designing and implementing plans and ordinances. In spite of their own history, all of the communities advise other communities to plan before they face a development problem. That way, it was suggested, they can take the time to really understand what they want and what fits best for their town.

Responsible entities. In addition to elected officials (mayors and city council members), all of the communities have developed a planning and zoning committee and a board of adjustments. Both are important entities for developing, evaluating, and enforcing city ordinances. Vernal and Springdale, however, also have two full-time paid staff members to manage city affairs, and to concentrate on community development. They also assist city officials in understanding and following through on information and funding for community projects. Escalante and Randolph only have paid secretarial staff, and most of their city officials are working full-time jobs in addition to their responsibilities associated with the community.
Some researchers have suggested that rural communities relying on volunteer mayors and city council members to take responsibility for planning and economic development are at a distinct disadvantage because their leaders often lack the time and knowledge to do it well (Segedy 1997; Walzer and Gruidl 1991). This constraint is quite apparent in Randolph and Escalante, where the lack of paid full-time staff has hurt their ability to secure funding for city projects and interface with state and federal government programs set up to assist rural communities. A few of the city officials in Randolph actually commented on this disadvantage. However, officials in both communities suggested that they could not afford the luxury of hiring a city manager or planner. On the other hand, both Springdale and Vernal respondents commented that their cities could not afford to not have their paid staff.

**Community involvement.** Segedy (1997) suggests that the success of a community’s planning process is dependent upon citizen involvement, which is usually encouraged through participation in project committees or task forces consisting of local residents. Respondents in all four study communities discussed their community’s success at doing just that. In each community, the leaders solicited involvement from all residents and identified certain leaders they felt would bring important knowledge or talents to the various committees formed to address the community’s concerns. Each of these communities also discussed the positive nature of this type of community involvement, both in forming solutions to problems and in ensuring that plans were well received by residents.
Each of the communities also encouraged community involvement in the planning process by conducting a survey of local residents to determine what people wanted for their community. This information was used by the communities’ leaders to assist them in both the planning process and in the development of ordinances. On the other hand, respondents in all four communities also lamented about the lack of citizen involvement in maintaining and improving the plans and ordinances. People from each of the communities mentioned that large numbers of residents only attend public meetings when there is a controversial issue being discussed that directly or personally affects them. Otherwise, most residents tend to ignore them.

Solutions to this problem were scarce. One Escalante official suggested putting dates and times of meetings on utility bills to ensure residents are aware of them. Another Escalante resident suggested that their meetings were better attended when they involved outside speakers addressing issues in which the citizens were interested. Vernal has attempted to address the problem by encouraging the involvement of younger residents through various programs implemented by the local high school. The hope is that these students will become connected with the community at a young age and stay connected throughout their lives. Springdale has come up with a way of assuring information is received by its citizens through a quarterly newsletter written by the mayor. This way, even if they do not attend the meetings, residents can stay informed on what their leaders are doing. It was also suggested that this prevents gossipers from being the sole distributors of information in the city.
Tourism and Recreation

Creating new opportunities. Three of the communities, Randolph, Springdale, and Vernal, have been actively pursuing bringing visitors to their area and boosting businesses related to tourism and recreation. Vernal and Springdale already receive quite a few tourists during the summer months and are attempting to expand the season to include the fall, winter, and spring months as well. They are also attempting to bring in convention businesses to augment their other tourism and recreation businesses. Primarily they are doing this through various promotional methods, such as brochures and television advertisements. Both of these communities have also sponsored a variety of activities for visitors such as the annual rodeo in Vernal, and the “Butch Cassidy Fun Run” in Springdale. Leaders in these communities also noted the significance of efforts by their local chambers of commerce in helping to promote the city and its natural attractions.

Randolph is just beginning its attempts to capitalize on its community’s natural attractions, which includes the local ranchers. Four of them are working together to establish a ranch recreation program that they hope will benefit not only them, but others within the community. The program is targeted at visitors who want to work on the ranches, but will also be encouraged to participate in various other activities such as quilting, leather braiding, and preserving raspberries. These activities will be offered by other citizens within the community who will share in the ranchers’ earnings.

Each of the study communities has also been successful at partnering with a federal or state agency in their areas. Some researchers have suggested this can be a benefit to
both entities, which has been the case for all three of these communities (FEMAT 1993; Howe et al. 1997). The partnership in each community has resulted in both improvement in their relationship with the agency and in their attempts to attract more tourists.

In Vernal, city officials and volunteers are working with the Utah Department of Natural Resources, Division of Parks and Recreation to improve the local Dinosaur Museum. Although this is the responsibility of the Division, the community leaders recognize the importance of the museum to the businesses in the downtown area and therefore have offered their help in finding the funding needed to make improvements to the museum.

In Springdale, community leaders have established a close relationship with the superintendent of Zion National Park, including giving him an honorary position on the community’s planning and zoning committee. He in turn has also been very careful to keep community leaders and residents both informed and involved in the Park’s affairs. They have embarked upon a joint project, referred to as the “Zion Transportation System Springdale Loop,” which the city leaders hope will bring more people to their businesses, and the superintendent hopes will alleviate parking problems within the Park.

Lastly, Randolph and the USFS are working together on the ranch recreation project. The project came to a temporary standstill because the community has no hotels, motels or bed and breakfasts in which to accommodate visitors to the community, and the project had no money with which to build one. The USFS offered the project an old building of theirs which was no longer in use. Both entities benefitted because the project
now has a place to house visitors, and the USFS is no longer financially responsible for maintaining the building.

**Concerns with integrating tourism and recreation into the community.** In Springdale and Vernal, most respondents felt the community leaders had done a good job of integrating tourism and recreation into the economy while at the same time maintaining community integrity. It is also apparent in these communities that respondents are less critical of their leaders’ efforts, and more positive about the community’s future than was generally found in Escalante or Randolph.

Escalante and Springdale are the two communities with the most visitors, and many of their concerns were similar. What differed, however, was their attitude and approach to facing their concerns. For example, they both mentioned as their number one concern the loss of their communities’ rural feel and unique heritage as a result of too many new businesses and development projects within their community, especially those owned by people from outside the community. To alleviate this concern, Springdale has passed a number of ordinances that address the problem, such as restrictions on signage and architectural standards that protect the community’s vistas. Escalante, on the other hand, has passed very few ordinances, especially ones which address maintaining community integrity. Many of Escalante’s leaders mentioned their fear of limiting people’s property rights. While this was also discussed in Springdale, leaders there were more apt to mention the importance of maintaining the beauty of the community than the rights of developers.
A second area of difference between Escalante and Springdale was their attitudes on improving their infrastructure to accommodate visitors. This is a concern of many rural communities that have become destination spots for tourist and recreationists and are faced with the increased costs of improving roads, picking up litter, and building public restrooms (Allen et al. 1988; Dawson et al. 1993; Fitchen 1991; Riebsame 1997). For both communities, the increased costs pose a serious problem for the cities’ budgets. In Springdale, however, the mayor also made the comment that the improvements to the infrastructure have benefitted residents as well as visitors. He used the example of a local resident whose life was saved because the community had invested in an EMT crew. Without the visitors, he did not believe a city of Springdale’s size could afford to invest in EMT services. Escalante also has an EMT crew, but comments there centered more around the burden visitors place upon that crew, and many respondents felt the federal government should pick up costs incurred by the city for supplying this service.

Conflicts between tourism and recreation and other industries. None of the communities are currently experiencing any problems between tourism and recreation and other industries. In three of the communities, however, there were concerns for potential problems that may be lurking on the horizon. Escalante respondents mentioned two areas of potential conflicts between the local saw mill and visitors. One was on the use of the highways, and the other was on harvesting timber from federal lands. A few Vernal respondents discussed a possible problem between the oil companies and river rafters, but again nothing has happened to date. In Randolph, there is some concern that the public no
longer wants ranchers using public land for grazing, and there is fear of the effects this public sentiment may have upon the future of the community.

**Strategies for making tourism and recreation compatible with other industries.**

Although there have been no real conflicts between tourism and recreation and other economic activities thus far, there were two suggestions for how a community might best deal with such conflicts. Both ideas include bringing together tourists and recreationists with people from the industries that may cause the conflict, and using the opportunity to increase the public’s knowledge of the industry. For example, in Escalante, they opened the saw mill for tours, which educated visitors on the operation of the mill and the various products it produces. In Randolph, many respondents expressed the hope that by opening the ranches to the public, people will have a clearer understanding of the ranchers’ need to use public lands and will also see that they are not destroying public lands. They desire to change what they see as a move in public opinion toward the views of environmental extremists, who they believe want to eliminate grazing on public lands.

**Social and economic effects of tourism and recreation.** Escalante and Springdale again had similar concerns when asked about the social effects of tourism and recreation on their communities. Respondents in both places mentioned their principal concern was the increase in property values, which has become a common problem for many rural communities in the United States experiencing rapid growth (Fitzsimmons and Freedman 1981; Flora et al. 1992; Stokes and Watson 1989).
Housing prices in Springdale have become increasingly unaffordable, making it almost impossible for anybody but the affluent to afford to buy a home in the area. Community leaders are attempting to address the problem, either through changing ordinances to encourage more apartments, or by requiring all new development to include a certain portion of affordable housing within their development plans.

In Escalante, the costs for building lots have not risen to the same extent as they have in Springdale, and there are still a few that could be considered affordable. However, many respondents expressed concern that the costs are continuing to rise, as are impact fees associated with building a new home. It was also mentioned that local wages have not risen to the extent needed to meet these costs. Longtime residents fear that their children will not be able to afford to purchase a home in the area at the current rates and, therefore, will not be able to stay there. To address this concern, city officials are considering reducing lot sizes, which not only would reduce the price of a lot, but would also make more lots available where water and sewer lines already exist. This, in turn, would reduce expenses associated with impact fees.

In Escalante, a few respondents expressed concern over some of the residents’ and community leaders’ negative attitudes towards visitors to the area. This was quite apparent during the interviews as well, as a number of respondents expressed outright their contempt for certain visitors, especially those who they believed were pushing environmentalist views on their community. Other respondents expressed apathy toward the visitors, and only a very few expressed any appreciation for them. This negative
attitude toward visitors stood in stark contrast to what was found in Vernal and Springdale. In both of these communities, respondents were quick to acknowledge how important tourists and recreationists are to their cities, and how much they value and want them there.

**Attracting New Industry**

In three of the communities, Vernal, Randolph, and Escalante, at least some of the respondents expressed a desire to see the city bring in a new industry that would diversify employment opportunities for residents. None, however, are in the process of actively pursuing one. As previously discussed, because they lack the transportation facilities needed by most industries and manufacturing companies, their ability to attract these opportunities are greatly diminished.

In both Vernal and Escalante, there were also respondents who expressed a desire to keep new industry out of their communities for fear of the changes it would bring. As noted by the mayor of Escalante, new industry that offers employment opportunities to residents also offers opportunities to those wishing to move to the area, and can result in an influx of new residents. The mayor of Vernal noted that is a trade-off that comes with diversifying the economy.

Randolph and Vernal have concentrated a lot of their efforts on providing higher education opportunities to the youth in their communities. Both communities offer courses through Utah State University Extension and the Bridgerland Applied Technology Center. Although Vernal’s program is more advanced than Randolph’s, both communities
were very proud of this accomplishment and appreciative of what it meant to their young people. A few respondents suggested that it was more important for a community to offer its youth the opportunity to further their education than to offer employment opportunities.

Issues with Controlling Growth

Factors limiting growth. In Vernal and Randolph, the biggest factor limiting growth is a lack of employment opportunities for new residents. Neither community has found a solution to this problem since they have not been successful in luring new industries to their communities.

In Springdale and Escalante, the biggest factor mentioned was a lack of available water for new development. Both communities have attempted to address this problem. In 1988, Springdale purchased additional water rights from the Virgin River Basin and, in 1996, they built a new water treatment plant. Escalante is currently in the process of purchasing additional water rights from two local irrigation companies, which they intend to convert to culinary water, to meet current needs. If additional water is required, they also have the option of increasing the size of their reservoir and attaching a water treatment plant to it.

Randolph and Escalante also mentioned the lack of housing as another factor limiting growth. In Randolph, there are no lots for sale, nor homes or apartments for rent. In Escalante, while lots are available, it takes two years to get hooked up to city water, making it nearly impossible for someone to simply build a home and move into the area.
They also have no apartments or homes for rent. However, neither of these communities appeared to be overly concerned with this limiting factor. Perhaps it is because neither community is really interested in seeing a lot of people from outside the community move to their locales.

**Planning and implementing zoning and building ordinances.** Researchers in community development have suggested rural communities must design and implement both a master plan to guide the community into the future, and city ordinances to control growth and maintain a community’s integrity (Howe et al. 1997; Mantell et al. 1990; Segedy 1997; Stokes and Watson 1989). All four of the study communities have accomplished these important steps. To do this, they all used a professional consultant to assist them in the planning process, from conducting a survey of residents to actually developing and writing the plan.

Springdale, however, is the only community to have also developed a vision statement. According to their town planner, the vision statement is used to assist community leaders in remembering what the community is about when they are considering implementing new ordinances. They also have by far the most stringent ordinances. These range from requirements for signage and architectural standards already mentioned, to ordinances limiting businesses in their use of lights (to protect the night sky) and requiring larger building lots in the foothills to protect the soils’ ability to absorb water. For those researchers who see rural communities as guardians of our
natural resources, ordinances such as these last two are essential (Stokes and Watson 1989).

Growth is a concern for both Vernal and Springdale, which has resulted in the communities passing ordinances that concentrate on preserving the integrity of these communities. They appear, however, to go at it in distinctly different ways. In Springdale, many of the ordinances are designed to protect the environment and the look of the community, which is a serious concern for residents there. Vernal’s community leaders, on the other hand, have concentrated on preventing urban sprawl, a more critical problem for their community.

In Randolph, where there has been the least amount of growth, there has also been the least number of ordinances instituted. It is the only community which has not yet implemented impact fees to help the community defray the costs of offering services to residents building new homes. As mentioned by a few of the Randolph respondents, there has not been any new development in over 10 years so, to date, this has not posed a problem. One city council member suggested that although the town thinks they have all the ordinances in place to handle any future growth, if they are tested, they may find out otherwise.

Escalante is somewhere between Springdale and Randolph, with a few ordinances pertaining to signage and minimum lot size, both of which help maintain the community’s rural character, as well as impact fees to prevent sprawl. They, however, have been very
careful not to put in too many regulations for fear of infringing upon the rights of individuals within the community.

Open space. Springdale was the only community that was concerned with preserving open space within their town. They not only have passed an ordinance mandating open space preservation as part of all new development, they also have been offered and accepted a conservation easement from a local developer. The developer owns 300 acres of land adjacent to Zion National Park on which he intends to build 76 homes. He has agreed to cluster the homes in such a way that 80 percent of the land will remain open, and he has put that 80 percent into a conservation easement. Not only does this ensure the space remains open in perpetuity, but it also ensures public access to the park from this development. According to the town planner, by accepting the financial and legal responsibility for the easement, the city council had decided to "put its money where its mouth is." They are believed to be the first community in Utah to accept a conservation easement from a developer.

The other three communities have not experienced development to the same degree as Springdale, so the issue has not taken on the same significance. In Escalante, most respondents felt that between the city parks and the federal lands surrounding the community, there is more than enough open space. Some of the city officials also expressed reservations about the town taking responsibility for open space, believing it can be an expensive endeavor for a community. Despite this reservation, three Escalante ranchers have expressed an interest in putting their ranches into conservation easements to
reduce their taxes. This would help guarantee that some private land within that community remains open.

Community Conflicts Due to Change

Each of these communities has dealt with its fair share of conflict. As previously mentioned, conflict can be considered positive when it brings to light flaws within the structure of a community’s policies, and inspires changes in those policies to better meet the needs of local residents. This has been the case for Randolph, Vernal, and Springdale, whose major conflicts are in the past.

However, conflict can also be considered extremely harmful for a community when it divides residents into separate camps and closes the communication lines between them. This appears to be the case, presently, in Escalante. The community is experiencing a serious conflict between the longtime residents and the “outsiders,” which is how residents refer to people not born and raised in the community. When President Clinton designated the Grand Staircase-Escalante Monument, the longtime residents began to feel control of their community and the surrounding region slip from their hands. The designation also seemed to bring with it new people who have made Escalante their home. These newer residents have seen how communities that are unprepared for an influx of visitors and new residents can be impacted. They would like to ensure that Escalante is not taken by surprise by passing ordinances now that protect the integrity of the community. The mixture of these two elements, longtime residents feeling powerless and new residents wanting to make changes in the community, has resulted in a serious battle between the
two groups. Most respondents felt that the only way the groups could reconcile their differences is either through the efforts of an outside facilitator or the passing of much time.

Each of the communities has experienced a certain amount of strife resulting from implementing and enforcing their building and zoning ordinances. In both Vernal and Springdale, however, respondents mentioned that most of the problems regarding their ordinances have diminished over the years because residents see the positive effects they have had on their communities. Also, each of these communities has become very careful to apply the ordinances fairly to all residents and developers, and to enforce them.

Randolph and Escalante’s ordinances are fairly new. Thus, residents are still in the process of learning about them and how to live with them. City officials in these communities are also in the process of learning to adjust to the new rules and of being required to impose them upon friends, neighbors, and family members.

The difficulty of enforcing ordinances in small rural communities was also mentioned by respondents from each of the communities. It was suggested that because residents are so close knit in these communities, the task of city officials to evenly apply and enforce the rules is very difficult. According to officials in Springdale and Vernal, however, it is vital. Not only does it save the community a lot of money in court costs, but it also serves as an out for city officials, since they have no options but to follow the rules.
Strategies for Managing Conflict

The most common strategy discussed for both avoiding and managing conflict was open and honest communications between the community’s leaders and its residents. This, it was stated, develops trust, which is vital to effective leadership. The ability of those in leadership positions to gain the trust and confidence of their constituents appears to be a key factor in bringing people together to work for the betterment of the community. How well a community can implement this strategy appears to depend upon the skills of those in leadership positions. In Springdale, most respondents mentioned the efforts by their mayor to reduce tension and manage conflict by holding public meetings when controversial issues arise. They admire his willingness to listen to the concerns of his constituents. The same comment was made about city officials in Vernal.

Additionally, in all of the study communities, members of the planning and zoning committees, and boards of adjustments appeared to be fairly representative of the groups which make up the communities. For example, in each community, these appointed positions were held by both longtime and newer residents, as well as by people with different backgrounds and opinions. Both the current mayor of Springdale and a former mayor of Randolph stated they made a deliberate effort to include in their appointments a mixture of people who represented different views in order to ensure that the factions within the community felt like their voice was heard, and that their opinions mattered.

Another idea frequently presented was the need for community leaders to recognize that they must be open minded and willing to listen to ideas that conflict with
their own. Much of it came down to the idea that community leaders must possess a certain amount of maturity, and lack a certain amount of ego that requires them to always have their agenda met. In Springdale, the mayor mentioned that he has tried very hard not to have an agenda of his own, but to instead promote the agendas of others.

Two of the communities suggested the use of an outside facilitator to help communities manage their conflicts. Vernal’s city officials used the facilitator hired by them to help conduct a community study. As part of the study, the facilitator brought the opposing groups together by forming “citizen committees” and forcing them to work side-by-side. Because he was not a member of the community, he was able to ignore the dissension, and remind them of the importance of working together for the sake of their communities future. It worked quite well in getting various individuals to look past their anger and form new relationships with those who had previously been their adversaries. A number of respondents in Escalante also felt that the only way they would be able to resolve their current conflict was through the services of a professional mediator, who could be trusted by both the longtime and newer residents to treat the groups equally and fairly.

Lastly, it would appear that time plays an important role in managing conflicts. In Vernal, Springdale, and Randolph time has healed many of the wounds caused by arguments and poor communication between residents and community leaders. It also has allowed longtime residents, who initially resented the imposition of regulations upon their actions, to see the positive effects of an “active government.” Additionally, it allows
both groups, the longtime residents and the newer residents, to recognize that although their methods may have differed, their goals for the community were similar, in that both groups wanted to maintain the lifestyle and integrity of their community.

**Recommendations for Other Communities**

The most frequent recommendation was for communities who have not yet invested in the planning process, to just jump in and do it, do not delay. Most of the respondents agreed that the planning process works, and that it is important for a community to have some idea of where they are going.

The importance of community involvement in the planning process was also stressed in this section. Most respondents recommended getting as much community involvement as possible, and making certain it represents the entire community.

The idea of using other communities’ ordinances as a guide was often suggested for communities which are developing new building and zoning ordinances. However, it was also stated that the ordinances must be adjusted to fit the community, and not the other way around.

Lastly, the importance of looking at all sides of an issue, and of listening to those with different views, was deemed important by many respondents. Some respondents stated it as a need to be reasonable, and to base decisions on good ideas and facts, not emotion.
Recommendations for Future Research

There are two main recommendations for research that would enhance the knowledge gained from this research. The first is a community-based study using a resident survey. Strategies and methods considered successful by the community leaders may be viewed differently by residents. Use of tourism and recreation to diversify a community’s economy may also be viewed differently by residents not in leadership positions. A community is not really “successful” in its planning process, unless its residents are satisfied with the results, and without a means of surveying the general citizenry on their level of satisfaction, it is difficult to determine how well the strategies actually worked.

The research could also be further enhanced with a longitudinal study that follows the communities’ efforts over the next 5 to 10 years. The current study showed that the communities with the most experience in the process, Springdale and Vernal, also appeared to be the most successful at achieving their goals. It would be interesting to see if Randolph and Escalante, given another 10 years, were equally successful. If that were so, it may be easier to know what factors had changed within these communities to help them achieve this success.

Final Insights

The four communities used in this research either already have or are in the process of integrating tourism and recreation into their economies. The two communities
that have had the most time and experience in the process, Vernal and Springdale, also appear to have been the most successful in this undertaking. “Success,” for the purpose of this study, is measured by the fact that tourism and recreation play an important role in the communities economy, and community leaders feel the town’s integrity and uniqueness has been maintained.

After Vernal suffered through the oil bust in the 1980s, it was the vision of their leaders to ensure that the community was no longer reliant on one industry, and they have succeeded in making this vision a reality. Vernal’s economy is the most diverse of the four study communities, incorporating energy extraction industries, retail trade, a few manufacturing companies, and tourism and recreation.

Springdale’s leaders, on the other hand, set their visions on something entirely different. They are the community that receives the most visitors and yet they have been the most successful at keeping the integrity of their community in tact. They have been very careful in passing regulations that will ensure Springdale retains its rural character and natural amenities, despite thousands of visitors each year.

For both of these communities, the ability to have what community leaders, past and present, felt was important lay in their vision of the communities’ future. They did more than just put together a plan for their community; they had foresight into what would make their communities thrive and then developed a plan to make it happen. Many researchers in community development have stressed the importance of a community creating a vision for its future (Howe et al. 1997; Mantell et al. 1990; Segedy 1997;
The success of these two communities in making their visions happen would suggest these researchers are correct, and they serve as an example of its importance for other communities.

The literature discusses another important element in determining how successful a community will be in its development efforts, which is that individuals within leadership positions have the time, knowledge, and skills to move their community in a positive direction both economically and socially (FEMA T 1993; Kusel 1996; Walzer and Gruidl 1991). In all four of the study communities, city and town officials were volunteers and the majority of them worked full-time in another occupation. While this posed a serious problem for Escalante and Randolph, it was not a significant concern for officials in Springdale and Vernal. Both communities have found the funding to hire two full-time staff to work on managing their cities’ affairs and planning for future development. This, in turn, has resulted in the communities having much better knowledge and access to funding and programing geared toward assisting rural communities in their development efforts. Also, attitudes of community leaders in Vernal and Springdale tend to be more positive and the leaders appear more active than those in either Randolph or Escalante. Perhaps this is because the communities’ affairs are better organized and they have accomplished more of their goals.

Jonathan Kusel (1996) uses the concept of “community capacity” (originally identified by Flora et al. 1992), which he defines it as the ability of various factors within a community to promote well being among residents, and “what enables communities to pull
through hard times” (Kusel 1996: 364). He suggests it consists of three components: physical capital (land), human capital, and social capital. These components were originally identified and defined by and included a fourth component of capital goods. Under the “physical capacity” component he includes “physical elements and resources in a community (e.g., sewer systems, open space, business parks, housing stock, schools, etc.) along with financial capital.” (Kusel 1996: 369). The findings of this research would suggest that Kusel’s notion of the need for physical capacity to be in place before community well being can be completely realized are correct. In all four of the study communities, housing affordability and availability were a serious concern for community leaders at one time or another. In two of the communities, the availability of water has also posed a problem in the ability of the community to meet the needs of its residents. Some of the housing concerns may be addressed through a change in zoning and building ordinances. The issue of water scarcity, on the other hand, is much more difficult to solve.

While communities are unique in what they want for their future and the resources available to assist them in reaching their goals, this research has identified a few strategies used by community leaders in their efforts to diversify their economies and integrate tourism and recreation. These findings agree with the insights of other community development researchers. The first is that whether or not the community had a vision for the future, community leaders and residents in all four study communities have, nonetheless, taken the time to develop a master plan. Without this first step, it would be
difficult for a community to know which strategies will be most effective for them, and the
best means for implementing their chosen strategies.

Secondly, leaders within these four communities recognized the importance of
citizen involvement in the planning process. They solicited and received involvement
through the formation of committees that they felt truly represented their communities.
They also conducted resident surveys in an attempt to gain a better understanding of the
wants and needs of their citizens. Through the use of both of these methods, community
leaders felt they not only developed better plans, but also that their residents had a better
understanding and acceptance of their city’s master plan.

Lastly, the community leaders recognized their own limitations, and hired outside
consultants to aid them in their planning process. This included not only writing the actual
plan, but also conducting resident surveys. By receiving assistance from an expert in the
field of community development, most of the respondents felt they had done a much better
and more thorough job on the planning process than if they had attempted it on their own.
In addition to helping in the planning process, the facilitator can also serve as a mediator in
managing community conflicts. In recognition of the importance of these outside
facilitators, federal, state and county governments, as well as some private organizations,
have developed funding sources to assist communities in paying the costs of a consultant.
The state of Utah has numerous programs such as The 21st Century Communities Initiative
and the Utah Power and Light program previously mentioned.
Implications

The purpose of this research was to examine four rural communities in Utah to assess the range of experiences they have had with respect to the community planning process and their attempts to integrate tourism and recreation into their economies. We believed that by examining the success and failures of these communities, we would find in them examples that could be used by other rural communities who are struggling through similar changes brought about by either rapid growth or stagnation and decline within their communities.

The four study communities chosen represent a diverse range in both the extent to which tourism and recreation are used to diversify the economy, and in the length of time and stages the communities are at in developing their planning strategies. While none of them have been perfect in their attempts, they all serve as good examples in their own special way. As is stressed in much of the literature, communities are unique, and there is no one strategy that fits them all when it comes to either planning for the future or developing their community. Perhaps the best advice for rural communities leaders and planners, which was given by a number of different respondents in this study, is to use ideas developed by researchers and other communities, but to adapt them in such a way that they fit the unique situations found in their own communities.
REFERENCES


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Utah Division of Travel Development. 1997. *Utah! Road map for destination tourism: A long-range strategic plan for tourism development*. Salt Lake City, UT: Utah Division of Travel Development.


APPENDICES
APPENDIX A. Mayor Correspondence
October 5, 1998

Name
Address
City, UT, Zip Code

Dear Mayor __; 

I am writing to introduce both myself and my thesis project. I am a masters student in the Department of Forest Resources at Utah State University (USU). I am doing a thesis project that will involve an in-depth case study of four Utah rural communities. It will focus on experiences with planning and public involvement in community development of tourism and recreation. The project is being funded by the Institute of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism (IORT) in the USU Department of Forest Resources. Our objective in doing this study is to determine what strategies were used by the four study communities to integrate tourism and recreation into their existing economies.

In order to choose the four study communities, I interviewed a number of people in Utah who work with rural communities. I asked them to give me a list of communities they thought had done a good job of planning for the future and that had undertaken specific planning efforts to diversify their economies by incorporating tourism and recreation opportunities while maintaining other forms of employment as well. Your community was identified by a number of these rural community experts.

The research that I plan to do involves visiting your community, conducting in-depth interviews with approximately 15 individuals, and reviewing pertinent literature or documents about your community. The majority of my questions pertain to the plans and strategies used by your community to both attract and control recreation and tourism. I will also be asking some questions about your community’s history, economy and lifestyle. I would very much appreciate it if you would serve as one of my interviewees, as well as help me to identify the key individuals within your community whom I should interview and important written information that I should review.

The results of this study will be shared with other rural communities in Utah. Many of these communities are involved in planning efforts aimed at assessing development alternatives and determining the best methods for incorporating tourism and recreation into their economies. This study is primarily descriptive; it will tell the story of your community’s planning process as portrayed by those who are interviewed. The story will cover the background on why and how your community came to incorporate tourism and recreation, opportunities and constraints posed by your physical location and community infrastructure, the strategies your community pursued to accomplish its goals, the people and organizations involved in planning efforts, the perceived strengths and weaknesses of
your community’s experiences, assessment of the outcomes, and plans for the future. These study results will be written up as my masters thesis but will also be revised and edited for a USU extension publication.

If you have any questions about this proposed research, please feel free to contact me or my faculty advisor, Dr. Joanna Endter-Wada. The following is information on how to contact us:

Judy Kurtzman  
Department of Forest Resources  
Utah State University  
Logan, UT 84322-5215  
435-797-0242 (Dept. of Forest Resources main number)  
435-797-2581 (my office hours; 1:30-4:30 p.m. Monday - Friday)  
435-563-4046 (home and answering machine; 8:00 - 11:30 a.m. Monday - Saturday)  
email: slf42@cc.usu.edu  

Joanna Endter-Wada, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor, Dept. of Forest Resources  
Utah State University  
Logan, UT 84322-5215  
435-797-2797 (leave a message with Shauna Leavitt, Staff Assistant)  
435-753-0592 (home and answering machine)  
email: endter@cc.usu.edu  

I will be calling you within the next week to schedule a time to visit your community and to talk to you about other individuals you would recommend that I interview. Perhaps we can also set a time when I can meet with you, hopefully when I first arrive. Thank you in advance Mayor _____ for your time and consideration; I truly appreciate it.

Sincerely,

Judith Kurtzman
APPENDIX B. List of Respondents
LIST OF RESPONDENTS

**Escalante**

Chris Christensen: City council member; lifetime resident

Richard Costigan: Committee Chair, planning and zoning committee

Brent Griffith: Past member of the city council and planning and zoning committee; owner of the local grocery store

Sandie Hitchcock: Former mayor

Tom Mansell: Planning and zoning committee member; owner of a local bed and breakfast

Jens Munthe: Board of adjustment member; prior member of the planning and zoning committee

Harriet Priska: Former Executive Director of the Chamber of Commerce; owner of a local art gallery

Stanley Stowe: Member of the city council; member of the planning and zoning committee; longtime resident

Lenza Wilson: Mayor; former member of the city council

Suzanne Winters: Escalante Center Executive Director

**Other Contributors:**

Steven Steed, Manager: Utah Forest Products (phone conversation, 2/12/99)

Robert Hugey: Consultant, Five County Association of Governments (phone conversations, 2/2/99)

**Springdale**

Phillip Bimstein: Mayor

Ross Clay: Planning committee member; owner of the Novel House Inn
Fay Cope: Town Planner; longtime resident

Eileen Crooks: Planning Committee member; owner of the Red Rock Inn

Louise Excel: Planning Committee member; former town council member; lifetime resident

Don Flavey: Superintendent Zion National Park; honorary planning committee member

Dale Gilcrest: Planning committee member; former town council member

Linda Holder: City council member

Diane McDonald: Director of Community Development

Steven Roth: Planning committee member; former town council member; Gifford Park Project Manager; longtime resident

**Vernal**

Bert Angus: Established the planning and zoning committee, served as a member for 12 years

Ken Bassid: City Manager

Dennis Ditmanson: Superintendent, Dinosaur National Monument

Greg Hawkins: Previous director of the Chamber of Commerce; local business owner; lifetime resident

Garth Heaton: Former director of the Dinosauurland Travel Board and retired USFS employee

Leonard Heeney: Former mayor and longtime resident

William Kremlin: Mayor and longtime resident

Allen Mashburn, City council member

Russ Pearson: City Planner
Rita Wetencamp: President of the Chamber of Commerce; local business owner; lifetime resident

Other Contributors:

Sharon Breshearf: Executive Assistant, Dinosaurland Travel Region, phone conversation, March 11, 1999.


Randolph Respondents:

Doug Blach: Manager of local branch of Zion Bank; former county commissioner and member of the planning and zoning committee.

Doug Bingham: Former mayor; member of the board of adjustments.

Lonnie Cornia: member of the town council; lifetime resident.

Blair Francis: County Commissioner.


Roy Hoffman: Rancher; lifetime resident; participant in the Bear River Valley Working Ranches Project

Kevin Kearl: Mayor (telephone interview).

Flora Lamborne: Former mayor and city council member; lifetime resident.

Rex Sterling: Chairman of the planning and zoning committee; city council member; lifetime resident; participant in the Bear River Valley Working Ranches Project

Heidi Weston: Coordinator of the Bear River Valley Working Ranches Project.
APPENDIX C. Consent Form
Informed Consent

Title: Utah’s Rural Communities: Planning for the Future

I have read the information letter on the reverse side of this consent form and agree to be a participant in the research project named above.

I have been informed that the code of ethics for research requires that all participants in a study be informed of the project’s purpose and benefits, the research methods that will be used, the potential risks that participants may incur, and the right of the participant to have more information at any point during the research process.

I am a voluntary participant and understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time without consequences. My signature at the end of this consent form signifies that I voluntarily consented to participate in this study, and that I have confidence that my questions have, or will be answered by Dr. Joanna Endter-Wada and/or Judy Kurtzman.

Participant’s Name: __________________________________________

Participant’s Address: __________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

Participant’s Signature                                   Interviewer’s Signature

______________________________________________________________

Date                                                  Principal Investigator’s Signature
Dear Study Participants;

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this case study for a masters thesis from Utah State University.

This thesis project will involve an in-depth case study of four Utah rural communities. It will focus on experiences with planning and public involvement in community development of tourism and recreation. The project is being funded by the Institute of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism (IORT) in the USU Department of Forest Resources. Our objective in doing this study is to determine what strategies were used by the four study communities to integrate tourism and recreation into their existing economies.

The research that I plan to do involves visiting your community, conducting in-depth interviews with approximately 15 individuals, and reviewing pertinent literature or documents about your community. The majority of my questions pertain to the plans and strategies used by your community to both attract and control recreation and tourism. I will also be asking some questions about your community’s history, economy, and lifestyle.

In that this study is relying on information from interviews of community members who have participated in the communities’ planning process, it is important for its validity that those participating in the study allow me to include their names as my resources for this information. Therefore, in writing the results of this study, all information will be attributed to the participants, unless a participant specifically requests that specified information be kept either confidential, or anonymous. Also, with your permission, the interview will be tape recorded. Once the interview has been transcribed, the information on the tape will be erased. All data will be collected solely by Judy Kurtzman, and will be kept secured at all times.

The results of this study will be shared with your community, as well as other rural communities in Utah.

Again, we sincerely thank you for your participation in our study.

Joanna Endter-Wada, Ph.D.
Associate Professor, Dept. of Forest Resources
Utah State University
Logan, UT 84322-5215
435-797-2797 (leave a message with Shauna Leavitt, Staff Assistant)
435-753-0592 (home and answering machine)
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435-563-4046 (home and answering machine; 8:00 - 11:30 a.m. Monday - Saturday)
email: slf42@cc.usu.edu Judy Kurtzman
APPENDIX D. Interview Procedures and Protocol
Interview Format

In that these interviews are designed to be more of a discussion than a completion of a survey questionnaire, the questions will be asked in a conversational tone. The questions will be used as a guide for the interviewer, and rigorous adherence to the wording of the questions will not be required.

**General procedures for key informant interviews:**

1. Information needed from each interviewee:
   - name
   - address
   - affiliation (occupation/formal groups)
   - years of residence
   - time/date/place (of interview)

2. Type of key informants sought for interviews (10-15 per community):
   - political leaders (mayor, city council members, county commissioner, etc.)
   - business leaders (Chamber of Commerce president, economic development officer, real estate development interest, local businesses (especially those related to tourism and recreation)
   - newspaper editor/reporters
   - local activists (both preservationists and use orientated)
   - local “knowledgables” (local opinion leaders (liked and respected), informal leaders, and influentials)
Utah Rural Communities: A Plan for the Future

Introduction

I would like to begin by again thanking you for your participation in this study. I will briefly go over for you the background of this thesis project. It will involve an in-depth case study of four Utah rural communities. It will focus on experiences with planning and public involvement in community development of tourism and recreation. The project is being funded by the Institute of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism (IORT) in the USU Department of Forest Resources. Our objective in doing this study is to determine what strategies were used by your community to integrate tourism and recreation into the existing economy.

In order to choose the four study communities, I interviewed a number of people in Utah who work with rural communities. I asked them to give me a list of communities they thought had done a good job of planning for the future and that had undertaken specific planning efforts to diversify their economies by incorporating tourism and recreation opportunities while maintaining other forms of employment as well. Your community was identified by a number of these rural community experts.

The research that I plan to do involves visiting your community, conducting in-depth interviews with approximately 15 individuals, and reviewing pertinent literature or documents about your community. The majority of my questions pertain to the plans and strategies used by your community to both attract and control recreation and tourism. I will also be asking some questions about your community’s history, economy and lifestyle.

As mentioned in the consent form, your name will be included as one of my resources for the information I obtain in doing this study, and all information you give to me will be attributed to you, unless you specifically requests that certain information be kept either confidential, or anonymous.

Do you have any questions regarding the study?
Questions

I. Community Background Criteria

1. What types of employment opportunities were available to residents in your community prior to the integration of tourism into your economy?

2. What types of employment opportunities are available today?

3. How dependent is your community on mining?

4. How dependent is your community on timber harvesting?

5. How dependent is your community ranching?

6. How dependent is your community and recreation and tourism?

7. What have been some of your community's major economic concerns?

8. What have been your community's major concerns in regards to integrating tourism/recreation into your economy?

9. What do you think makes your community unique?

II. Community Planning Process:

10. What motivated your community to begin the planning process?

11. Who was involved in the planning process?

12. How was it determined who would be involved?

13. Did community leaders solicit involvement by community residents. If yes, how?

14. What types of tourism and recreation opportunities has your community developed and implemented to attract non-resident visitors?

15. Are there other types of economic opportunities that your community has specifically set out to attract, that have helped to diversify your economic base?
16. Where there any real or perceived conflicts between tourism and recreation, and other industries in your community when you began the planning process to integrate tourism into your economy?

17. (If yes to #16) What strategies were used by your community to make tourism and recreation compatible with these other industries?

18. What strategies did your community develop to control tourism (i.e., was an attempt made to ensure that it would not change the fundamental characteristics of the community. This would include: implementation of zoning laws, limiting population growth, etc.)?

19. What types of changes have taken place in your community due to the increase in non-resident visitors to your area (social and economic changes)?

20. How has your community dealt with those changes?

21. What types conflicts did your community encounter during the planning process?

22. How did your community deal with those conflicts?

23. What advice would you give to other communities who are attempting to integrate tourism and recreation into their economic base?