

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

- The purpose of the **Minturn Community Plan** is to lay out a course of action for dealing with the pressures of future growth and development in Minturn while maintaining the small mountain town quality of life. The Plan is a wide-ranging, community-generated statement about what is good and desirable for the future. The ultimate intent of the Plan is to improve the lives of the citizens of Minturn through the expression and implementation of the ideas and values that comprise it. It is also intended to indicate to citizens and private developers a sense of what kind of development is most desirable from the community's standpoint .
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- The Plan is a policy document for Minturn's elected and appointed officials and staff to use in making recommendations and decisions on specific land use and development proposals, and related policy matters and is based on direction and input from the citizens of Minturn. The Plan complements other planning and land use documents developed by the community, which include the Minturn Park and Recreation Plan, the 1975 Comprehensive Plan, and the Zoning Code.

Planning Process and Minturn Advisory Committee (MAC)

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- The planning process was initiated in June 1992 with the establishment of the Minturn Advisory Committee (MAC), an 18 member group appointed by the Minturn Town Council to develop a Plan which represents the diverse issues, interests and goals of the community. The membership of the MAC was formulated specifically to represent a broad spectrum of the community.
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- With assistance from the planning consultants, HOH Associates and Cole and Associates, MAC met monthly for over a year to discuss issues such as community character and quality of life, the environment, parking, transportation, recreation, and existing and future land use and development.

Vision Statement

- Based upon community input, the MAC established a Vision Statement which is intended to convey the Committee's view of how they would like to have Minturn develop in the future and to serve as a guide for the *Minturn Community Plan*.

"Minturn needs to retain its historical character and its hometown, friendly atmosphere. We will stand out in this resort valley by providing the sense of Colorado sought by visitors from outside the community. We can only retain our vibrancy and maintain our small town character by providing adequate facilities and services to support well-planned growth.

ORGANIZATION OF THE PLAN

The Minturn Community Plan (MCP) is organized into three main components. The first section, entitled "Implementation and Priority Actions" is in actuality an end product of the process of researching and writing the *Minturn Community Plan*. It presents the MAC's analysis as to which are the most critical issues and how to implement this plan.

"Current Conditions", the second section, describes important characteristics of the community and the region including physical, economic, social and environmental conditions. From an understanding of the community clarified during the process of gathering and discussing information and ideas about Minturn, MAC began to identify both specific and general ideas and solutions. These were the bases upon which the third component of the plan, "Goals, Objectives and Actions", was formulated.

"Goals, Objectives and Actions" are statements describing an ideal future. The goals are the most general statements of values and ideals which ought to be used to guide growth and development. Objectives are more specific ideas and ways to accomplish the larger goal, while actions are still more specific, "do-able" projects or steps. Attaining a goal requires taking many positive and consistent actions.

The latter two sections are divided into distinct topics to facilitate the discussion and presentation of ideas, and address these ideas in approximately the same order. However, the document and the community must be considered as a whole. Ideas and plans which promote one value or affect one element of the community are often at odds with another. Readers and users of this plan are encouraged to read it in its entirety and to refer to both the Goals and the related Current Conditions section in order to more fully understand each and the community as a whole.

Within the MCP, six distinct planning areas were defined based on natural boundaries or land use characteristics. The relevant existing conditions and policy statements for each planning area are presented together in this section of the document to promote a better understanding of their special characteristics and needs.

Chapter 1:

IMPLEMENTATION and PRIORITY ACTIONS

"The purpose of the **Minturn Community Plan** is to lay out a course of action for dealing with the pressures of future growth and development in Minturn while maintaining the small mountain town quality of life."

IMPLEMENTATION

Commitment to Achievement: The Minturn Advisory Committee believes that strong leadership by the Minturn Town Council is critical for achieving the Vision, Goals, and Actions contained within the *Minturn Community Plan*. More specifically, Town Government needs to work towards established, consistent values as presented in this plan, and especially in regard to all land use and development policies and regulations in the community.

The ideas and values presented in this plan can be a valuable tool for influencing the future. Their realization requires a commitment by the present and future Town leadership, and a strategy for implementation in decision-making by the Town Council and in the daily operations of town staff.

Specific recommendations to the Minturn Town Council include the following:

1. Commit to the incorporation of the Minturn Community Plan in daily decisions, approvals and enforcement. If the Town Council believes that it is necessary to deviate from policies and recommendations of the plan, the Town Council should publicly document the rationale behind their decisions.
2. Direct the establishment of written management procedures outlining responsibilities for monitoring compliance and achievement of the MCP, and communication among town staff and between management and staff to insure consistency and effective use of human resources.
3. Provide adequate budgeting for effective planning and code enforcement
4. Encourage citizen participation and empowerment in achieving the goals of the MCP through active discussion and communication of issues and ideas.
5. Direct both an on-going analysis of community needs in relation to the ideas and values in this document and a thorough review of this plan no later than five years after its adoption or sooner if determined necessary.

PRIORITY ACTIONS

Based upon the goals, policies and actions identified in the Community Plan, the Minturn Advisory Committee has selected **Priority Actions** for implementation within the next one to three years. After the Community Plan is adopted, the Minturn Town Council *and the Planning and Zoning Commission* must translate these **Priority Actions** into work programs and then direct their implementation by staff and other interested groups in the community.

Future Infrastructure Improvements: These **Priority Actions** were identified with the understanding that maintenance and development of infrastructure and improvements in municipal services are **baseline priorities** of the town. They are fundamental to the well-being of the community and thus to the achievement of the Priority Actions.

Priority Action #1: Secure long-term community parking and address existing parking problems as part of a comprehensive process.

Consider purchase, lease or trade in order to secure additional parking, including a long-term commitment on the lease of space for public parking from Union Pacific Railroad.

Evaluate existing parking limitations created by overcrowded housing and commercial uses in order to better protect neighborhoods.

Priority Action #2: Implement the recreational improvements and recommendations.

Adopt the *Minturn Parks and Recreation Plan*, attached as Vol. 2 of this document.

Develop the Eagle River corridor as a community recreational amenity and focal point.

Secure easements and/or right-of-ways along the Eagle River where possible to ensure that planned bicycle paths and trail systems are not precluded by private development next to the river.

Clean up debris along and in the Eagle River.

Coordinate with the USFS, Union Pacific Railroad, Eagle County, and private landowners to protect open space, where appropriate.

Work with USFS in their "Land Ownership Adjustment Plan" to identify possible acquisitions or trades which are in the interest of the Town of Minturn.

Priority Action #3 Provide citizens with improved services through a "pro-active" approach to economic development in Minturn which creates alternate and enhanced revenue sources.

Develop an overall economic development strategy for the community, which may incorporate the following activities:

Encourage businesses which provide revenue to the community.

Promote the relocation of Colorado Mountain College to Minturn.

Investigate a Minturn connection to the Vail ski mountain in discussions with Vail Associates, Union Pacific Railroad and the USFS.

Develop a pamphlet explaining and simplifying the process of opening a business in Minturn.

Priority Action #4: Review, evaluate and amend as needed current zoning and architectural guidelines to reflect the goals and objectives of the Community Plan.

Pay special attention to mass and scale issues in commercial and residential areas.

Evaluate parking requirements relative to their impact on the character and function of the downtown area and in all planning areas.

Develop and define a mixed use zone to mitigate conflicting land uses.

Priority Action #5 Investigate the relocation and/or redevelopment of a new "Town Center", a community gathering place.

Identify a desirable mix of uses, including civic, cultural and other community services, appropriate to potential "Town Center" locations (which need not be absolutely "central"). Consider individual facilities as well as a multi-use facility incorporating town offices, the post office, Colorado Mountain College, municipal parking, and parks and recreation facilities.

Inventory potential and appropriate sites and identify costs, access and parking impacts associated with development or redevelopment.

Identify potential co-tenants, complementary uses and/or strategies which could help offset costs.

Priority Action #6: Develop a beautification program for Minturn.

Promote landscape improvements beginning with a highly visible public space or public project.

Promote private improvements through a community-wide contest.

Develop streetscape improvements which create a pedestrian friendly environment.

Develop a welcome sign/entry monument for both ends of town.

Chapter 2:

CURRENT CONDITIONS

"Community character is part of what makes a place special. It is the sum of the ways in which its physical, social and environmental attributes interact. These form the identity of the town, the way it is perceived by residents and visitors."

CURRENT CONDITIONS

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

Envisioning a better future for the town requires an understanding of current conditions. The process of gathering and analyzing this information was basic to the development of the Minturn Community Plan. An understanding of present conditions provides citizens, staff, town leaders, and other interested persons with a better sense of the community.

Community character is part of what makes a place special. It is the sum of the ways in which its physical, social and environmental attributes interact. These form the identity of the town, the way it is perceived by residents and visitors. The components which describe the special character of a community include demographics, economic profile, architecture, patterns of land use and circulation, and the environmental setting. The following section describes these aspects of Minturn's character.

Demographics

1. In contrast to the rapidly developing areas in and around Vail, Avon, Eagle-Vail and Edwards, Minturn has maintained a comparatively low growth rate. Of the total estimated 1995 Eagle County population, Minturn only represented 4% of the total population with 1107 residents. The entire County experienced a 400% increase in population from 7,498 year round residents in 1970 to 28,692 in 1995. During that same 20 year time period, Minturn experienced a 51% increase by adding 360 new residents.
2. The population is primarily young and expanding - 26% of the population is under the age of 18. More than a third of these children are under the age of 5. Adequate child care is a real concern because over 80% of Minturn's mothers are in the work force.
3. The population is family oriented - 55% of the population are married couples with children.
4. Only 18% of the population is over the age of 45, as compared to 37% for the State of Colorado.
5. Over half the population is Hispanic in origin, however, only approximately one third the population speaks Spanish either as a first or second language.
6. Approximately 76% of the adult population has a high school degree, and 15% has a bachelor's degree or more.

Housing

1. Home values and rents are above the Colorado average, but are more affordable when compared to the Eagle County average.
2. Over half the residents have lived in the same house for at least seven years which suggests a stable community as compared to the rest of Eagle County.
3. The current total occupancy rate is 90%, reflecting a stable year round housing market. Seasonal vacation homes in other parts of the County skew the county wide occupancy percentage to nearly half of Minturn's rate.
4. Mobile homes represent 25% of the housing stock.

Employment

1. Almost half of Minturn's workers are employed in the resort economy, which includes both retail trade and personal services.
2. Local growth industries are the resort and construction sectors, which reflects a general statewide trend.
3. Most growth has been in small, independently owned businesses.
4. Unemployment is closer to State levels during the "off-seasons" of spring and fall.
5. Vail Associates is the major employer of Minturn residents.

Minturn's Niche in the Regional Economy

Minturn originally developed as a railroad, mining and agricultural settlement. In recent years it has become more economically entwined with the employment centers in the Eagle River and Vail valleys that have developed since the ski industry came to the area in the 1960's. Minturn's economic future will clearly be impacted by this larger economy of which it is a part. The following develops more fully Minturn's economic position in the region:

1. The regional economy in which Minturn exists is a predominantly tourism and service-based economy. These sectors will therefore dominate Minturn's economic picture as well. For the last few years, 80% of gross sales generated within the Town of Minturn have been from the retail and service sectors. The retail trade sector was dominated by the local restaurants representing 44% of total retail sales in the community. Services contributed 31% and the next largest economic contributor of sales tax was the contract construction industry at 16%.
2. Although the year round population has remained stable since the area's ski resorts developed, the local economy is very seasonal and dependent on the summer and winter tourist and part-time resident spending. Highway travelers from I-70 and Highway 24 are also significant participants in the overall economy. All of these visitor types are potential consumers of products and services Minturn might provide.
3. Minturn is so small that one or two stores can dominate or completely occupy an entire service or manufacturing category. The loss or addition of a single business can have a significant impact on gross sales in the community. In the last five years, Minturn has lost many of its "neighborhood" commercial businesses (grocery store, dry cleaner, and hardware store) presumably because of competition from regional or national chains locating in the Vail and Eagle River valleys.
4. Minturn does draw from the regional economy because of its range of specialized businesses and its reputation for being more eclectic and authentic than the other, younger nearby communities. Minturn needs to understand and protect the niche that it occupies - small town and small businesses. However, larger scale businesses can be sensitively developed to accommodate Minturn's small town character.

LAND USE

Land use is fundamental to the character of Minturn. It describes the intensity, character and activities which take place on land and is influenced by topography, historical development, adjacent uses, natural features, and types of access like highways or railways, and other factors. Land use planning can prevent and help solve conflicts between neighboring uses, encourage economic viability, convenient access, safer and more enjoyable neighborhoods, and desirable qualities and experiences for residents and visitors.

Good land use planning helps a community sustain its positive attributes and attain its goals while providing for a full range of community needs. Land use planning seeks to maximize community values in an equitable manner.

1. The Town of Minturn is located in a high, narrow river valley that runs northwest to southeast and is generally steeply sloped on both sides.
2. Minturn is surrounded by U.S. Forest Service land with designated wilderness areas nearby.
3. The Eagle River flows through town but is not fully utilized as a recreational asset. It was plagued for years by pollution from mining but is recovering.
4. Nearby ski resorts and communities include Vail to the east, Eagle-Vail, Avon, Beaver Creek Resort and Arrowhead to the west. The Town of Redcliff lies nine miles to the southeast.
5. The Union Pacific Railroad(formerly Southern Pacific Railroad , and the Denver and Rio Grande) rail freight track line runs through the town, parallel to the Eagle River. Operations include a staging yard and short-term housing located just north of the downtown core. Many railroad workers also live in Minturn. Union Pacific has ceased rail traffic on this freight line and is in the process of abandoning the rail line. If the abandonment is completed, it would open the railyard area to commercial, mixed use and residential development.
6. Natural hazards such as flood plain, rock fall, avalanches, and landslides exist and impact present and future land uses.

7. The following lists current zoning categories and acreages of land currently within those categories:

Zoning Category	Acres	% of total
Low density residential	4	1
Medium density residential	60	9
High density residential	6	1
Mobile homes	3	
Commercial	24	4
Industrial	121	18
Agricultural (public and private)	398	61
Right-of way (public streets)	39	6
Mixed Use	1	
Planned Unit Development	1	
Total land acreage in Minturn	657	100%

8. The following table indicates how much of the total land base in Minturn is currently developed or undeveloped. Based on this analysis it is clear that there is a significant supply of undeveloped land within the Town boundaries. Much of it is owned by Union Pacific and located in the area of the existing railyard. Other parcels are located on the hillsides above the west side of Town, city-owned lots on the east side of the Eagle River and in platted lots located throughout the Town.

Type of land	Acres	% of total
Developed land (all zone districts)	111	17
Public open space (U.S.F.S.)	235	36
All other undeveloped, zoned land	272	41
Right-of-way	39	7
Total	657	100%

*It is important to be aware that Forest Service administrated lands are sometimes subject to exchange to private interests or local communities.

ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Preservation and protection of the environment are essential for the life of every community and make good economic sense. As a resort and tourism oriented community, a high quality natural environment attracts visitors and is significant to individual quality of life and community character. Minturn has many wonderful resources including its alpine climate, scenery and vegetation, clean air, wildlife, nearby U.S. Forest Service lands, and the Eagle River, all of which make Minturn an attractive place to live and to visit.

Human activity and development can respond sensitively and thoughtfully to the opportunities and constraints posed by our environment. Growth or development which negatively impacts our environment is often irreversible and imposes costs upon the community. These costs can be thought of as the dollar value necessary to replace an item that has been degraded or lost, such as health, livability, and potential development.

Geological hazards constrain development through potential loss of property or life. They include flood plains, rock falls, avalanches, and landslides. Mitigation of identified hazards may allow development in certain areas.

1. Winter activities include downhill, cross country and back-country skiing, snowboarding and snowmobiling. Summer activities include hiking, picnicking, camping, bicycling, horseback riding, fishing, motorcycling, mountain biking, kayaking and four wheeling.
2. Soils are generally considered adequate for development.
3. Geological hazards may be a factor in determining developmental suitability. Geological hazards present in the Minturn valley include flood plains, rock falls, avalanche paths and landslides of unstable slopes.
4. Environmental remediation of mine tailings located south of town is on-going. The fish habitat in the Eagle River has been severely affected but is recovering.
5. Areas of special environmental sensitivity include the Eagle River riparian area, which acts as a fishery and wildlife area, particularly for elk. Other wildlife habitats exist in nearby areas, identified by Eagle County wildlife maps.
6. Vegetation is typical of a small town located in a Colorado mountain valley, with some open meadow and forested areas, and formal landscaping on residential lots. In the summer season the downtown looks quite festive and inviting with its hanging plants and colorful flower beds.

7. Mature street trees are lacking in certain areas, as is landscaping to screen undesirable views of recreational vehicles, dumpsters, parking lots and industrial uses.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Community facilities and services are important factors in making a community a desirable place to live, and in providing for the health and safety of every citizen and visitor. A successful community must have the resources to provide essential services such as water, sewer treatment, rubbish collection, fire and police protection, and education. Amenities such as parks and recreation, and human services such as senior programs, also add greatly to quality of life. These must all be provided in the most efficient and cost-effective way possible to ensure maximum utilization of tax dollars.

Citizens should make the effort to create a better community-- a place to which children will want to return and grandparents to remain. Participation in community service activities, such as the volunteer Fire Department, Minturn Clean-up Day or a festival or beautification committee, contributes to a feeling of "belonging" to a community.

Community Growth

Growth in a small community presents special problems. Improvements must be paid for in advance of increased tax revenue generated by growth. Maintenance and replacement costs are quite high, but funding is often lacking or sources of funding are not fully investigated nor utilized. "Bedroom communities" such as Minturn often have a difficult time providing for their needs because the relatively large amount of residential use creates costs not met by the small amount of commercial sales tax funds. Minturn's seasonal, tourist-oriented economy means that infrastructure, resources and services have to accommodate additional demands placed by visitors and part-time residents.

Utilities

1. Existing water rights owned by the Town of Minturn are adequate for future needs.
2. Sewage treatment is provided by the Eagle River Water & Sanitation District located in Avon, which has ample future capacity.
3. Electric service is provided by Public Service Electric Association and Holy Cross Electrical Association. Natural gas is provided by Public Service Company of Colorado.

Services

1. Rubbish collection is provided by the Town of Minturn or independent contractors, but inadequate controls exist regarding disposal of construction materials and abandoned vehicles or inoperable equipment.
2. Fire protection is provided by the Town of Minturn Volunteer Fire Department.
3. Police protection is also provided by the Town of Minturn. Police protection, compared with other small towns, consumes a large percentage of the town budget (30%).
4. Human services provided by the Town are limited, but include a community bulletin board, space for meetings at the Town Hall, including space for a county lunch program for seniors.
5. Emergency ambulance service is supplemented through a property tax.
6. Health services are provided either by private providers or through Eagle County. Vail Valley Medical Center, in Vail, is a non-profit, full service hospital with a 24 hour emergency room available.

Facilities

1. The old Town Hall is available for community use and includes kitchen facilities. A portion of the old Town Hall serves as offices for the Minturn Police Department, Minturn Town Manager and Minturn Town Clerk. Offices for the Minturn Town Planner and Minturn Treasurer are located in a trailer adjacent to the old Town Hall
2. A Town maintenance garage and storage yard is located adjacent to the old Town Hall in the middle of an established residential neighborhood.
3. The Fire Station is also located in a residential area. The structure will not accommodate future equipment storage needs.
4. The Post Office is located in a modular building adjacent to the Fire Station.

Education

1. Pooh Corner Preschool offers daycare for children one to six years of age. It is a non-profit organization and works with Social Services in providing daycare to low income families.
2. The Red Sandstone Elementary School is located in the nearby town of Vail.
3. The Minturn Middle School is located south of the community but outside of town boundaries.
4. Battle Mountain High School is located west of Minturn in Eagle-Vail, an unincorporated area of Eagle County
5. Colorado Mountain College provides adult education and college level facilities at campuses in Vail and Eagle.

Parks and Recreation

1. Current parks owned and maintained by the Town consist of the Minturn Recreation Park , a 7-acre, largely unimproved area, barely level enough for a ball field. Eagle River Park (also called La Playuela Park) a park with picnic facilities located adjacent to the east bank of the Eagle River. The Town of Minturn is working on expanding this park area to the south with money received from Great Outdoors Colorado (basketball court, sand volleyball court...). A small (.9-acre) riverside park near downtown has recently been developed by the Town and a local Scout troop. Maloit Park is located south of town. It is owned and operated by the school district and may not remain as a permanent park.
2. U.S.F.S. land surrounding Minturn provides open space and views, trails for hiking and snowmobiling. Winter activities such as skiing and sledding are also available. The local U.S.F.S. headquarters is located north of town just off U.S.Highway 24/Main Street and I-70 within town boundaries.
3. U.S.F.S. trails in the area include Meadow Mountain, Grouse Creek, Game Creek, Martin Creek and Two Elk. All terminate at separate points in town. These trails are not linked together in a contiguous trail system.
4. Minturn lacks a convenient, adequately sized park that allows children room to run and play safely. This is especially important because of the number of children living in Minturn, and because of small residential lot sizes.
5. Organized recreation programs are sparse, although Minturn sponsors occasional town celebrations.
6. The Eagle River is used yearly for a Town sponsored kayak race. Recreational fishing within town boundaries has not occurred for some time because of pollution from past mining activities.
7. Other programs and facilities exist in the area such as Little League, tae kwan do and softball.

TRANSPORTATION

Adequate, efficient and safe transportation through a community can greatly affect quality of life in a community, allowing better access to and interaction with the diverse elements within a community. Transportation in Minturn includes motorized vehicle, bicycle, pedestrian, bus and train.

Safety is a primary concern in Minturn. US Highway 24/Main Street bisects the community, posing a danger to children crossing or playing near it and to pedestrians in the downtown area.

Improved physical design could resolve many transportation problems. Side-walks and trails permit separation of pedestrians and vehicles. Curb and gutter regulates paving and defines entrances, making a stroll through town safer and more enjoyable. Maintenance costs are also less when curb and gutter protect road edges and channel runoff. Well-defined crossings and well-lit streets also contribute to pedestrian safety. More pedestrian amenities means fewer vehicles on the road. More pedestrians attract others and contribute to higher retail sales.

1. Minturn is divided east and west by rail right-of-way, the Eagle River and U.S. Highway 24/Main Street, which connects with Interstate 70 at Dowd Junction on the north end of town.
2. Three bridges provide access over the Eagle River. Access to pedestrian, bicycle trails and open space could be improved.
3. U.S. Highway 24/Main Street is maintained by the Colorado Department of Transportation.
4. Curb and gutter has been built in the 100 block of Main Street and some sections of curb in the 800 block, but sidewalks are generally non-existent beyond the downtown core area. Side streets are generally paved but also generally lack curb and gutter.
5. A lack of sidewalks and well marked crossings hinder pedestrian access and safety. This conflicts with the "friendly", pedestrian oriented town core.
6. 55% of Minturn's residents live within 20 minutes of work. 9% of residents currently walk to work.
7. Local bus service is provided by Avon/Beaver Creek Transit. During the ski season busses run twice daily to Leadville, Vail and Avon. Service is once daily during the balance of the year. Evening bus service to local restaurants is available during the ski season. Greyhound Bus Line provides long distance service and operates out of Vail.

8. The downtown parking lot is located north of the core area and provides parking for approximately 75 cars. The land is leased by the Town from the Railroad on a 30 day lease.
9. Current regulations require on-site parking for new buildings. Since many older businesses and homes do not have adequate on-site parking, customers and residents must either park on public streets or use the town parking lot.
10. Snow removal for the town parking lot and streets requires equipment and personnel, and a place to dump it. Private property owners pay for their own snow removal.
11. The Union Pacific Railroad owns railroad right-of-way that passes through the Town of Minturn. Rail service has been discontinued in the railroad corridor at this time and Union Pacific is considering the abandonment of the rail line in this corridor.
12. There are three at-grade railroad crossings within the Town where vehicular circulation is frequently interrupted.

Chapter 3:

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

"Goals, Objectives and Actions" are statements describing an ideal future. The goals are the most general statements of values and ideals which ought to be used to guide growth and development.

Objectives are more specific ideas and ways to accomplish the larger goal, while actions are still more specific, "do-able" projects or steps. Attaining a goal requires taking many positive and consistent actions.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

A1) Goal: Define and capitalize upon Minturn's current and potential economic role in the region

Objectives:

- a) Nurture Minturn's potential as an arts community and/or as a center for recreational opportunities. Both are powerful draws in a tourism environment where visitors are looking for aesthetic and active experiences;
- b) Encourage businesses which fulfill complementary regional niches;
- c) Be good at being a unique small town. Encourage highly specialized retail and service businesses which attract visitors from the region because they are unique.

Actions:

- a) Investigate the conditions under which the Colorado Mountain College could and would return to Minturn;
- b) Encourage a positive and mutually advantageous relationship with major regional employers, such as Vail Associates and Union Pacific Railroad;
- c) Evaluate linkages to ski areas in terms of potential social and economic costs and benefits to the community.

A2) Goal: Preserve and promote Minturn's western, railroad, and mining heritage and small town qualities

Objective:

- a) Acknowledge and celebrate the beauty and strength of cultural diversity.
- b) Encourage the establishment of a museum, possibly celebrating the community's railroad and mining heritage;

Actions:

- c) Explore historic landmark or district designation for Minturn; Coordinate with the State Historic Preservation Office to identify and promote the historic resources of Minturn;
- d) Investigate joint activities with the railroad, such as a scenic train which embarks from Minturn;
- e) Develop an interpretive program for the downtown area which might include historic plaques and maps.

A3) Goal: Promote community pride and responsibility in terms of an attractive and well-maintained physical environment

Actions:

- a) Design streetscapes and public improvements which reinforce Minturn's small town character as a place where people live and visit;
- b) Develop a coordinated beautification program for the entire town:
 - Encourage and facilitate the efforts of private property owners to clean up and maintain their properties throughout Minturn;
 - Clean up the Eagle River (remove concrete, steel, etc.) and adjacent area, including both public and private lands;
 - Work with Union Pacific Railroad to clean up the railroad corridor;
 - Coordinate beautification activities with annual clean up day;
 - Determine who will continue to spearhead and encourage the public to stay involved in the clean up effort;
- c) Develop a phased program and policies for placing overhead utility lines and new service lines underground.

A4) Goal: Promote high quality and compatible architectural and urban design for Minturn

Action:

- a) Evaluate the current architectural review system with respect to the special architectural and urban design personality of Minturn ; require sensitivity to the mass and scale of nearby structures.

A5) Goal: Promote business activities that are compatible with the community and which also make a financial contribution to the community

Objectives:

- a) Promote appropriately-scaled businesses that reinforce the small town concept;
- b) Take advantage of the access and proximity provided by Interstate 70 and Highway 24 in order to gain additional visitors;
- c) Concentrate on attracting commercial activities which bring economic benefits to the community;
- d) Encourage balanced activities by promoting recreation and day time businesses to offset automobile use and overload of evening businesses;
- e) Encourage organizations to have more celebrations, sales, parties, and other events which bring people into town.

Action:

- a) Investigate other means through which the revenue base of the town can be increased.

A6) Goal: Provide a variety of housing opportunities to the full cross section of the Minturn community

Objectives:

- a) Acknowledge and build upon Minturn's role as a balanced and family-oriented bedroom community;

- b) Provide housing opportunities and work with housing providers for various income levels and needs;
- c) Continue to provide opportunities for housing for senior citizens.
- d) Discourage the creation of over-crowded short-term rental properties which have inadequate provision for parking and poor exterior property maintenance.

Action:

- a) Identify appropriate areas within Minturn to provide opportunities for a variety of housing types.

LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

The MCP Land Use Map represents the community's view of the desirable use of land. It does not necessarily indicate present zoning nor guarantee that a property may receive zoning equivalent or similar to that shown for any particular lot or parcel. The rezoning of property requires the approval of the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Town Council and follows a well-defined process with opportunity for public input. Both bodies will evaluate any proposed land use or zoning change for compliance with the policies of the Minturn Community Plan, for appropriateness and for potential impact upon nearby uses as well as the entire community, residents and property owners. Information about both current and potential land use as allowed by existing regulations may be obtained in the Town offices.

Land use and development proposals which meet both the needs of the individual and of the community are encouraged. All members of the community are encouraged to participate in exploring the definition and fulfillment of those needs.

B1) Goal: Develop policies which promote appropriate future land use patterns.

Actions:

- a) Evaluate current land use regulations in terms of their appropriateness, consistency, enforcement flexibility and opportunity for creativity, and revise them as necessary;
- b) Develop land use policies and regulations which are specific to different character (single or mixed uses, compatibility, conflicts, access, etc.) and physical conditions (soils, slope, etc.) of character areas within the town (shown on the following map) that include:

Character Area #1: Meadow Mountain
Character Area #2: Downtown/North Minturn
Character Area #3: South Minturn
Character Area #4: Cross Creek
Character Area #5: Game Creek Corridor
Character Area #6: Two Elk Corridor

B2) Goal: Provide for a balance of land uses appropriate to the needs of the community

Objectives:

- a) Strive to develop a balance of land uses which results in a positive fiscal benefit to the community;
- b) Provide for future residential development, consistent with the community's future requirements and specific goals relative to housing as described in this document.
- c) Accommodate the needs for retail and commercial space. Identify areas most appropriate for neighborhood, community and regional commercial development;
- d) Encourage the gradual development of vacant or under-utilized land within Town, excluding areas which are designated for future permanent open space;

B3) Goal: Mitigate or eliminate the negative effects of conflicting land uses

Objectives:

- a) Encourage commercial or mixed use/commercial zone district expansion to adjacent lots, properties or areas, and discourage such expansion within distinctively residential areas, consistent with the policies and recommendations of this plan and other development standards and regulations of the Town.
- b) Pay specific attention to potential conflicts and impacts resulting from residential and commercial land uses.
- c) Address land use conflicts in a balanced and equitable manner, recognizing that achieving greater land use compatibility in existing developed areas may have to occur over time, in a phased manner.

Actions:

- d) Identify conflicts in existing land uses and attempt to resolve them through:
 - Changes in zone designation of specific areas;
 - Changes in current land use regulations;

- Mitigation measures, either public or private;
- Enforcement of existing regulations.

B4) Goal: Identify and preserve priority natural open spaces, river areas and scenic vistas

Actions:

- a) Identify and prioritize areas of critical open space and unique environmental characteristics and investigate means for permanent preservation;
- b) Identify important view corridors within town or to the surrounding mountains and develop protective regulations;
- c) Develop policies which require all new development to provide appropriate open space, either on-site or off-site;
- d) Work with the State Department of Fish and Game, U.S.F.S. and other public agencies to achieve enhancement of open space and riparian areas.

B4) Goal: Provide for the orderly and efficient expansion of the town through annexation.

Objectives:

- a) Solicit community input and coordinate with Eagle County and other jurisdictions relative to planning issues in the surrounding unincorporated and incorporated areas;
- b) Closely monitor Forest Service, railroad and other public and private land use activities, sales and exchanges in the surrounding area.

Actions:

- c) Prepare and adopt an annexation "Three Mile" policy plan for Minturn per Colorado State statutes that considers growth and possible annexation requests for areas outside of Minturn's town boundaries.

PLANNING AREA POLICIES

INTRODUCTION

For purposes of clarity and information, the Town has been divided into six planning areas based on natural boundaries or land use characteristics. Special characteristics of each area are presented and then followed by site-specific policies. These policies are intended to provide additional guidance for future land use and development and should be considered in conjunction with the Land Use Map.

1 - Meadow Mountain Character Area

Existing Conditions:

1. Existing open space and agricultural land use in the area is consistent with the Agricultural/Open Space zoning which is currently in place.
2. The area has a variety of low/medium/steep slopes, with identified geologic hazards.
3. It may be possible for the Town or private interests to acquire/control USFS land through a land exchange or "Land Ownership Adjustment Plan"
4. The Town could potentially grow through annexation to the north.
5. The in-town USFS parcel provides access to the adjacent recreational areas.

Meadow Mountain Character Area Policies:

- a) As in all character areas, develop the Eagle River corridor as a community recreation and open space resource, in accordance with the Minturn Parks and Recreation Plan.
- b) Preserve the existing USFS Meadow Mountain land as agricultural/open space. Require that any future redevelopment and land use decisions for this planning area incorporate significant community input and involve an open public process. In order to remove the parcel from a potential land trade, investigate acquisition by the Town.

2 - Downtown/North Minturn Character Area

Existing Conditions:

1. This area includes what is perceived as downtown Minturn due to its commercial activity and vitality.
2. The area is a patchwork of land uses, which is reflected in the zoning. The land uses include areas primarily commercial in nature, areas primarily or exclusively residential in nature, and areas characterized by a mix of commercial and residential uses, often across the street from one another. This development pattern results in many conflicts, such as traffic, parking, noise, density and visual impacts.
3. State Highway 24/Main Street is the primary street through Minturn as well as the principal place from which most travelers view and experience the town. The system of secondary streets in the area helps to define separate land uses and circulation.
4. Existing zoning regulations allow more intensive development, particularly in terms of height, than the current and historical pattern of development.
5. There is vacant land on the west hillside which is zoned agricultural/open space, has very steep slopes and lacks access.
6. Developable, private lands adjacent to the Town's western boundary could be considered for annexation at some point in the future.

Old Town Character Policies:

- a) As in all planning areas, develop the Eagle River corridor as a community recreation and open space resource, in accordance with the Minturn Parks and Recreation Plan.
- b) Preserve the existing character and mix of areas of residential, commercial and mixed uses along Main Street.
- c) Continue to concentrate commercial uses on Main Street, and discourage commercial uses on secondary streets.
- d) Concentrate "high impact" commercial uses (e.g. restaurants) along Main Street only in the immediate area of similar existing uses, which are currently located at the north end of the core area.

- e) Develop and apply land use and design guidelines that promote and preserve the established qualities and context of building mass, scale, and exterior character which currently contribute to the distinctive urban form of the community.

3 - South Minturn Character Area

Existing Conditions:

1. The area is a patchwork of land uses, which is reflected in the zoning. The land uses include areas primarily commercial in nature, areas primarily or exclusively residential in nature, and areas characterized by a mix of commercial and residential uses, often across the street from one another. This development pattern results in many conflicts, such as traffic, parking, noise, density and visual impacts.
2. Land use and zoning along Highway 24/Main Street is a mixture of residential and commercial development. In addition, there are businesses off Highway 24/Main Street which are adjacent to residential areas.
3. Residents perceive that the area suffers from a poor overall appearance and lack of residential and commercial maintenance.
4. The area lacks a secondary street system. As a result, all access is from Highway 24/Main Street.
5. Vacant land is zoned agricultural/open space - but is buildable from a technical point of view.

South Minturn Policies:

- a) As in all planning areas, develop the Eagle River corridor as a community recreation and open space resource, in accordance with the Minturn Parks and Recreation Plan.
- b) Preserve the existing character and mix of districts of residential, commercial and mixed uses along Main Street. Discourage "high-impact" commercial uses.
- c) Develop and apply land use and design guidelines that promote and preserve the established qualities and context of building mass, scale, and exterior character which currently contribute to the distinctive urban form of the community.
- d) Encourage the creation of a secondary road system which improves access to internal sites and reduces access conflicts along Highway 24/Main Street.

- e) Develop the Martin Creek trailhead and recreational area as a major amenity and component of the Town of Minturn park and recreation system and consider as a potential site for a multi-purpose public facility.
- f) Investigate acquisition of the USFS parcel by the Town for possible relocation of the Town offices and creation of a Town park.

4 - Cross Creek Character Area

Existing Conditions:

1. Currently the area is predominantly undeveloped and zoned agricultural/open space.
2. Severe environmental problems at the mine tailings site, which is just south of the Town boundary, may affect future development and use of the surrounding area.
3. The planning area has significant road frontage on both sides of Highway 24. The only other access road through the area leads to the Middle School and Maloit Park.
4. An "enclave" of county zoned land exists just north of the Middle School road.
5. The Middle School and Maloit Park are located adjacent to this planning area, but outside of Town boundaries.
6. Southerly portions of the planning area have been identified as winter elk range.

Cross Creek Character Area Policies:

- a) As in all planning areas, develop the Eagle River corridor as a community recreation and open space resource, in accordance with the Minturn Parks and Recreation Plan.
- b) Preserve a significant portion of the extreme western and southern portions of the planning area as open space.
- c) Encourage appropriate and site-sensitive residential development for the majority of the area.
- d) Encourage annexation of the existing "county enclave" with restrictions for "low-impact" commercial or residential uses appropriate and complementary to an area which is a gateway into the community.

- e) Consider annexation to the southwest of Town boundaries (e.g. Maloit Park), subject to the availability of services and utilities, appropriate land use planning and the relationship of proposed development to existing development in the Town of Minturn.

5 - Game Creek Character Area

Existing Conditions:

1. The area is visually prominent from the north entryway into Minturn. The terrain is predominantly level with some slopes along the Eagle River channel and steep mountain slopes on the east edge of the area.
2. The area is predominantly owned by the railroad and devoted to railroad uses, although there is significant undeveloped land in areas zoned for both residential and industrial use.
3. An at-grade crossing frequently disrupts traffic flow between residential uses in this planning area and the downtown area.
4. The current railroad or other allowable industrial uses may conflict with future uses, such as residential development. Portions of the planning area are currently zoned industrial and residential.
5. Most of the area lacks street right-of-way as well as utilities. The dedicated right-of-way that exists is substandard and provides poor access between the area and Minturn's mixed-use commercial core.
6. The Minturn Parks and Recreation Plan identifies a river corridor park in this area as a community priority.
7. The planning area includes two existing business parks on the west side of the river, accessed from Highway 24/Main Street.
8. Critical winter elk habitat is located along the east side of the planning area.

Game Creek Character Area Policies:

- a) As in all planning areas, develop the Eagle River corridor as a community recreation and open space resource, in accordance with the Minturn Parks and Recreation Plan.
- b) Future development and land use decisions for this planning area need to incorporate significant community input and involve an open public process.
- c) Development proposals for the planning area should identify potential impacts on public services, e.g. streets and access, water, sewer and other utilities. Reasonable cost mitigation measures should be adopted.

- d) Other than the existing railroad uses, future "high-impact" industrial uses in the area are discouraged. Zoning and land use regulations should be revised to define "high-impact" industrial uses.
- e) Future development shall address impacts on the winter elk range and wildlife areas.
- f) Development in the planning area needs to incorporate appropriate transitional land use near existing residential development on the eastern side of the planning area along Taylor Street.
- g) Investigate relocation of Town of Minturn facilities and offices to the planning area, in order to help establish a civic center for Minturn.
- h) Develop and apply architectural standards to improve the visual appearance of existing and proposed development; geologic hazards should be addressed by any development plans in this area.
- i) Improved access across the Eagle River and railroad track line should be incorporated into development plans for this planning area.
- j) Adequate provisions for recreation & open space should be included in any plans for the development of the railyard.
- k) Development plans for the railyard should include adequate area for commercial and mixed use development that will pay for the cost of the development itself and will increase the revenue base of the Town.

6 - Two Elk Character Area

Existing Conditions:

1. Existing industrial land is currently used by the railroad, but otherwise is undeveloped.
2. The planning area lacks streets, street right-of-way and utilities.
3. Access to USFS land outside of Minturn is possible from the planning area.
4. The Town of Minturn owns several acres of unincorporated land in the planning area.
5. Critical winter elk habitat is located along the east side of the planning area.

Two Elk Character Area Policies:

- a) As in all planning areas, develop the Eagle River corridor as a community recreation and open space resource, in accordance with the Minturn Parks and Recreation Plan.
- b) Potential geologic hazards in this area should be addressed by any development plans in this area.
- c) Other than the existing railroad uses, future industrial uses in the area are discouraged.
- d) Future development should consider impacts on the winter elk range and wildlife area.
- e) Improved access across the Eagle River should be incorporated into development plans for the planning area.
- f) The site owned by the Town of Minturn site could be considered as a potential site for a "Town Center".
- g) The possibility of ski area access expansion into this area should be investigated and policies developed to anticipate this possibility.

The Proposed Land Use Map

Several new zones or land use designations are shown on the Proposed Land Use Map. The following language explains the intent of these zones. The allowable uses and development standards for existing zones are described in the Town of Minturn Zoning Code.

Planned Unit Development Area:

This area may be comprised of one or more residential, public or commercial uses. The transportation corridor function (as described below in the "Transportation Zone") remains a desirable use within this district as well. Specific uses have intentionally been left undetermined to allow for timely, innovative and site-sensitive planning consistent with the overall goals and policies of the Minturn Community Plan, and the specific goals and policies of the Game Creek Planning Area. Development in this area must be preceded by a comprehensive planning process which addresses both the site itself as well as impacts upon the community and the surrounding area.

Mixed Use District:

The Mixed Use District is a low impact mixed use commercial and residential zone designed to allow commercial and/or residential uses within the same building or on the same site. The Mixed Use District is envisioned as being a good neighbor for residential uses through the restriction of the types of uses allowed, the allowable physical development including setbacks and landscaping requirements, and restrictions on its location. The district will also be appropriate in areas requiring sensitivity to adjoining uses which are primarily undisturbed natural settings or open space.

The Transportation District:

The Transportation District is characterized by two main features. The railroad track and right-of-way comprise the primary developed use within the area. The railroad corridor is a complementary use to the second major function of the area which is its role as a highly valued open space providing an important visual and wildlife habitat resource. Given the critical nature of both transportation and access issues, and wildlife habitat and open space in this narrow mountain town, the most appropriate uses within this district are the existing transportation and open space functions. Proposed changes in use for this district will require a comprehensive planning process which addresses long-term local and regional transportation needs and wildlife impacts.

ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

D1) Goal: Encourage actions which maintain or improve environmental quality in the Minturn area and establish Minturn as a model community for environmental excellence

Objectives:

- a) Encourage Town government and citizen groups to become involved in issues of environmental quality in the area;
- b) Work with State and Federal authorities to protect elk and wildlife habitats within or near town;

Actions:

- c) Identify areas within town that possess special environmental characteristics, such as stream corridors and wetlands or areas of physical hazards such as rockfalls, extreme slopes, flood plains and erosion-prone areas;
- d) Establish rules and regulations to guide development and land use in the above mentioned environmentally sensitive areas, e.g. cluster development, development free zones;
- e) Evaluate the current air quality in the Minturn area, considering all sources of air pollution including but not limited to solid fuel burning, automobiles, road maintenance practices, commercial, industrial and railroad uses, and develop policies or regulations to comply with all relevant air quality standards and community desires;
- f) Develop and promote a community-wide recycling program.

D2) Goal: Through appropriate processes, continue to remediate the harmful environmental effects resulting from previous development or activities in Minturn and the surrounding area

Actions:

- a) Work with the property owners and appropriate government agencies (e.g. EPA) to clean up the tailings and mine area southwest of town;
- b) Work with the appropriate government agencies to monitor and improve the water quality and fisheries habitat of the Eagle River.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

E1) Goal: Provide the appropriate level of municipal government services and facilities to support the needs of the community

Actions:

- a) Evaluate the physical condition and suitability of the structure and location of the town office building and other facilities and investigate the possibilities for upgrading, replacement or development at alternative sites. Sites identified on the Land Use Map as "Potential Town Center" have been identified as appropriate for further consideration.
- b) Investigate the feasibility of a single use, multi use facility and potential co-tenants of any redeveloped Town office building or complex in order to offset costs.

E2) Goal: Encourage the development and management of appropriate recreational areas and facilities to serve the community:

Actions:

- a) Establish a Town Council appointed Task Force to initiate, coordinate and implement Minturn's park and recreation programs, plans and facilities;
- b) Identify, evaluate and prioritize key trail, corridors, park and open space opportunities in and around Town and work toward establishing them on public and private lands. Potential priority projects are explained in greater detail in the draft Town of Minturn Parks and Recreation Master Plan (1991);
- c) Investigate the creation of an organization or entity to fund the establishment and maintenance of parks and recreational facilities in Minturn, such as a non-profit foundation, taxing district, or partnership between public and/or private sectors;
- d) Investigate a liaison with other recreation districts;
- e) Work with U.S.F.S., Eagle County, adjacent municipalities, private land owners and agencies to establish linkages to regional bike path, hiking and cross country ski trails;

- f) Work with the U.S.F.S. to develop or upgrade their trailheads and facilities e.g. Grouse Creek, Two Elk, etc.

E3) Goal: Provide adequate and cost effective water and sewer services to the community

Actions:

- a) Investigate the status of the town's water rights and take the necessary steps to protect them as appropriate.
- b) Develop a phased plan to improve existing town water system for current users and projected growth;
- c) Investigate providing water to users outside of Minturn based on the projected population growth and water needs of Minturn and the surrounding area;

E4) Goal: Provide adequate and cost-effective fire protection to the community

Objective:

- a) Provide adequate staff and resources to meet the fire protection needs of the community;

Actions:

- a) Evaluate the cost effectiveness of the current volunteer system and the potential of converting to a paid staff, paid for by a special taxing district, or of contracting with neighboring communities for services;
- b) Investigate systems for fire protection in new buildings as a requirement for new construction;
- c) Continue to recruit volunteer firefighters.

E5) Goal: Provide adequate and cost effective police protection to the community

Objective:

- a) Provide adequate staff and resources to meet the law enforcement needs of the community;

Action:

- a) Investigate contracting with other jurisdictions for law enforcement needs.

E6) Goal: Support quality educational resources and facilities in the community

Actions

- a) Actively pursue the relocation of Colorado Mountain College to Minturn;
- b) Support the goals and programs of the School District, including early childhood education (e.g. Headstart) and other special programs.

E7) Goal: Provide for the appropriate level of social and human services within the community

Actions:

- a) Support, when possible, programs which benefit local residents, such as Meals on Wheels;
- b) Consider reuse of Old Town Hall buildings as community resource centers, medical centers, dental offices, or meeting rooms (for example) if town offices or facilities are relocated.

TRANSPORTATION

F1) Goal: Provide adequate and efficient parking for the needs of Minturn.

Objectives:

- a) Acknowledge that the automobile is the primary mode of transportation and that adequate and convenient vehicle parking is a necessity for the economic health and improved community character of Minturn;
- b) Provide additional visitor and merchant parking in the downtown core;

Actions:

- c) Evaluate parking problems, existing inventory, demands, and regulations throughout Minturn;
- d) Encourage the Town and business community to investigate implementation and financing alternatives (e.g. user fees, special tax) to improve parking;
- e) Investigate employee and visitor transportation parking solutions (e.g. employee only parking lot);
- f) Enforce parking regulations on public property and encourage private property owners to enforce parking in approved parking spaces on their property;
- g) Consider a Main Street peak hour shuttle with possible funding by the business community.

F2) Goal: Encourage safe pedestrian and bicycle circulation throughout Minturn

Actions:

- a) Preserve existing pedestrian routes and paths and encourage new ones throughout the town both north/south and east/west;
- b) Prioritize sidewalks sections and construct or replace sidewalks as funds become available;
- c) Work with the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) to formalize safe pedestrian crossings on Highway 24/Main Street;
- d) Implement the Minturn Parks and Recreation Plan to provide pedestrian and bicycle access to and through the Eagle River corridor;

- e) Develop a year-round maintenance program for trails and sidewalks.

F3) Goal: Promote adequate, efficient, appropriate and safe transportation throughout Minturn and the surrounding area.

Actions:

- a) Prioritize un-paved streets and pave as funds become available;
- b) Develop cooperative, ongoing maintenance practices for transportation routes with Eagle County and CDOT;
- c) Work with CDOT and Union Pacific to provide safe and improved vehicular and pedestrian train crossings with minimal delays;
- d) Work to improve the County Road in order to reduce local traffic on Highway 24/Main Street. Improvements should consider critical elk habitat;
- e) Work with CDOT to evaluate traffic history, uses, volumes and related impacts on Highway 24/ Main Street and develop a plan to mitigate impacts that also addresses the option of re-routing portions of Highway 24 and the impacts of truck traffic through town;
- f) Work with CDOT to evaluate and resolve road design problems that still exist on Highway 24 that were not corrected during improvements made in 1991 (such as last curve into town, mud slides, etc.);
- g) Plan for long range access and transportation improvements which might resolve railroad and river crossing needs at the same time.
- h) Coordinate planning for bike paths with Eagle County and aggressively pursue funding.

F4) Goal: Work toward solutions to regional transportation problems in the Minturn area

Objectives:

- a) Support efficient regional vehicular transportation, emphasizing safety for users and pedestrians;

- b) Coordinate intermodal transportation planning and implementation with the surrounding communities, County and State;

Actions:

- c) Evaluate potential park-n-ride at Dowd Junction, the downtown public parking lot and other sites;
- d) Work with the railroad and other large landowners to develop a cooperative solution to transportation problems;
- e) Preserve the option of using the railroad corridor for different modes of transportation;

APPENDIX

Citizens of Minturn and other interested parties who generously gave of their time and effort as members of the Minturn Advisory Committee, the primary authors of this plan, were:

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