

Chapter 9: Economic Vitality

Vision

Pagosa Springs will retain, grow, and support our unique local businesses and encourage a diverse economic base with year-round job opportunities.

Pagosa Springs is a vibrant town that traditionally has relied primarily on resource-driven industries such as timber and ranching. Like many Colorado mountain towns, over time, this economy has gradually shifted to one based primarily on tourism and services.

In the future, the town will continue to support our mainstay tourism and service-based industries while also pursuing opportunities to diversify the economy and reduce some of the effects of a tourism-based economy, such as seasonal fluctuation. This will take a joint effort of the town, county, and other public agencies and private enterprises. Desired new industries will help level out fluctuations and provide desirable year-round livable-wage jobs for people who live and work in the community. In addition, our town recognizes that natural resources and the environment, existing businesses and entrepreneurs, diverse demographic makeup, and community infrastructure are the primary drivers for our future economic vitality.

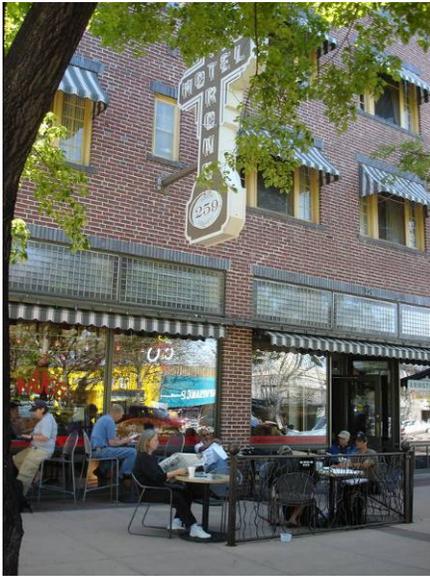


This image shows a downtown business.



This is a business in the Lakes area.

Goals and Policies



A café adorns a restored mixed-use historic structure (hotel and retail).



The Pagosa Springs hot springs are located along the San Juan River.

Goal E-1: Our town will retain and help expand unique and independent local businesses.

Small businesses are an important component to our economic sustainability, provide opportunities for local asset accumulation, and contribute to the small town character and uniqueness of Pagosa Springs.

Policy E-1(a): Support for Local Businesses

Our town will foster a business climate that helps to retain our existing local businesses and to attract and support new independent local businesses, reducing economic leakages to other communities and mitigating the impacts of large retailers. We will also work to encourage greater local purchasing and identify voids in businesses or services that are contributing to the leakage.

Policy E-1(b): Downtown as Major Community Asset and Tourism Attraction

The town will strive to maintain and expand downtown as a major community asset and tourism attraction by restricting businesses that do not fit the downtown character and developing programs and organizations that help retain downtown businesses.

Actions

- E-1.1 Develop a market study to identify and close voids in business or services that are contributing to economic leakage and develop strategies to encourage greater local purchasing.
- E-1.2 Target infrastructure improvements that improve the desirability of downtown as a tourism and shopping destination.
- E-1.3 Identify an ongoing management organization and structure for downtown businesses.
- E-1.4 Support programs to train local business owners.
- E-1.5 Retain services for locals in the downtown commercial area. Monitor businesses in different parts of town to ensure a balance of tourism-related and other services.

- E-1.6 Review fees and taxes on an ongoing basis to ensure equitable treatment of businesses and a fair business climate for existing and new businesses.

Goal E-2: Pagosa Springs will support new businesses that are compatible with and complement our distinct character and community’s values, and that avoid an “Everytown USA” image.

Pagosa Springs values its locally owned and operated businesses and seeks to ensure that all businesses, including franchises, chains, and corporations, contribute to our local economy, and are compatible with our distinct small town qualities. Growth of commercial businesses should not destroy the small town feel and character.

Policy E.2(a) New Commercial Designed to Fit Character

New businesses in Pagosa Springs should be compatible with the character of distinct parts of town and should go in locations defined on the Future Land Use Plan.

Actions

- E-2.1 Identify needs for services in different parts of town and recruit the types of enterprises that would fulfill those needs.
- E-2.2 Review and enhance commercial design standards to ensure that franchises and corporate businesses develop in a manner that fits Pagosa Springs' character.
- E-2.3 Limit drive-through businesses in downtown and possibly other parts of town. Require buildings to conform to downtown character, as outlined in the Downtown Master Plan.
- E-2.4 Continue to study “Big Box” regulations and size limitation policy. Revise the LUDC to limit the locations and appearance of “Big Box” stores, and possibly the size. Mitigate the economic impacts of large retailers.
- E-2.5 Study the feasibility and impact of limiting the total number of “formula” (chain) businesses in the town.
- E-2.6 Create design guidelines for businesses and commercial development that conforms to the character of the town.



Distinct offerings and homegrown businesses help avoid an “Everytown” image.



The downtown area is a center of tourist activity.

Goal E-3: Pagosa Springs will continue to support our tourism economic base.

Pagosa Springs depends heavily on tourism to support the local economy and will continue to support this industry.

Policy E-3(a) Tourism Economy Monitored

Understand market dynamics affecting tourism and track economic indicators that measure a healthy and sustainable tourism industry in Pagosa Springs.

Policy E-3(b) Support for Tourism-Related Land Uses, Businesses, Events, and Marketing

Continue to support tourism-related land uses, businesses, events, and marketing.

Actions

- E-3.1 Encourage and support development of a strategic plan for the long-term sustainability of the tourism industry.
- E-3.2 Create a system of licensing that enables the town and other economic organizations to track businesses within the town.
- E-3.3 Work with partners in the community to create economic indicators, and meet on a yearly basis to monitor and develop strategy plans. Measure and monitor current marketing efforts using these marketing indicators to establish performance measures for the expenditure of public monies.
- E-3.4 Emphasize joint participation in the positioning and marketing of Pagosa Springs with involvement and funding by all entities that will benefit.
- E-3.5 Focus visitor-related capital and marketing investments on those improvements and programs that will increase visitation in off-peak periods throughout the year.

Goal E-4 Pagosa Springs will support and attract businesses and industries that will diversify and sustain the local economy and level out seasonal fluctuations.

A few successful new businesses have used local entrepreneurial talent to build on traditional natural resource industries. These businesses are models for the future “new economy” that our town seeks. The town also supports

recruiting other small businesses or sole proprietors who may relocate here and eventually expand. The key to our success in this area is making Pagosa Springs an attractive place to live and to provide necessary infrastructure and adequate land for commercial and industrial development.

Policy E-4(a) Balance of Land Uses and Mixed-Uses

New development should conform to the Future Land Use Plan, which promotes a balanced mix of land uses for jobs and housing.

Policy E-4(b) Quality of Life Infrastructure

Make Pagosa Springs an inviting place to invest and to live in by assisting with providing infrastructure such as roads, sidewalks, trails, parks, schools, and easy access to services.

Policy E-4(c) Well-Trained Workforce

The town will continue to work with the school district and other partners to ensure that residents have opportunities for a high quality education and lifelong learning in the community. Explore attracting other educational opportunities (e.g., higher education, degrees, accredited schools, etc.).

Policy E-4(d) Small Business Recruiting

Recruit small businesses and support local entrepreneurship to bring in new businesses and industries that fit the small town atmosphere of Pagosa Springs and that are non-seasonal.

Policy E-4(e) Home Occupations with Opportunities to Grow

Support home occupations that allow people to live and work from home and to expand a home-based business to add several employees, where appropriate.



Downtown business is shown in this image.

Actions

- E-4.1 Use Economic Indicators to measure industry diversification.

- E-4.2 Develop a Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) program to identify infrastructure needs to improve “community quality of life” factors. Focus on transportation and physical infrastructure, but also consider amenities such as open space, downtown, communications infrastructure, and the airport. *(Note: CIP is addressed under Chapter 5: Growth and Development and in Chapter 13: Provision of Services and Fiscal Responsibility.)*
- E-4.3 Collaboratively investigate the feasibility of different types of small-scale business that might build on our base economy, such as private colleges, trade schools, medical facilities, conference facilities, and research enterprises, that could diversify our jobs and industry.
- E-4.4 On a selective basis, work with applicants to create facilities, products, and promotions that can fill particular market niches.
- E-4.5 Explore feasibility and costs and benefits of business incubators.
- E-4.6 Adopt an incentives policy for businesses that support our local environment, are “direct-based” in nature, provide primary jobs, and are compatible with our town’s character, including sustainable or “green” businesses.
- E-4.7 Review the LUDC to see if building and planning process could be better streamlined for new developments and businesses without compromising environmental quality.
- E-4.8 Maintain an inventory of supply of finished and raw sites with services that are suitable for economic development uses.



This image provides an example of a mixed-use project with offices and apartments.

Goal E-5 Pagosa Springs will contain a balance of businesses that provide services and shopping for local residents’ needs and for tourists.

As our neighborhoods grow, we aim to continue to have a balance of local services and tourism shopping in activity centers.

Policy E-5(a) Balance of Business Types

Ensure a balance of business types throughout the community.

Actions

- E-5.1 Monitor businesses and balance services and other businesses in different parts of town.
- E-5.2 Provide incentives for desired business types to locate in certain areas.

Goal E-6 The town will facilitate adequate regional access by air and highway.

The town recognizes that access by air and highway are primary economic drivers in the community. The town will work jointly to address reliability of the airport facility and will work with Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) on highway transportation issues (see Chapter 11: Transportation, Trails, and Mobility).

Policy E-6(a) Participate in Long-Range Airport Planning

The town will participate in master planning of the airport and explore feasibility of taking on the airport as a municipal asset.



Archuleta County Airport Stevens' Field.

This page blank