

Chapter 2

Community Character and Design

Geographic Setting and Community Form

The City of Delta, Colorado, is nestled in a valley surrounded by mountains and is located between Grand Junction and Montrose at the confluence of The Uncompahgre and Gunnison Rivers. With a current population of approximately 8,000, the City has an elevation of 5,000 feet above sea level. It was incorporated on October 24, 1882, has a Council/Manager form of government, and is a home rule city.

Public Opinion About Community Design

The 2006 public opinion survey included several questions about community appearance and architectural standards. Most survey respondents (60%) felt that the City's downtown image was "good" or "excellent."



City of Delta Museum

However, when asked about "Community Design & Appearance," about half (42%) of the respondents felt that the community had "Good" or "Excellent" design and appearance while the other half (48%) rated the community "Poor" or "Fair." It should be noted that

the City of Delta annexed large areas of unincorporated Delta County in the 1990's. Delta County has no zoning regulations.

Desired Future Condition, Policies and Action Items

Desired Future Condition

The City of Delta's atmosphere, historic character, pedestrian scale and agricultural heritage of Delta are preserved and enhanced. New development and redevelopment in older parts of Delta are visually compatible with historic character and pedestrian scale, and streetscapes are attractive.

Policies and Action Items

Policy 1 – Good design is appropriate in key areas of Delta to preserve and enhance community character and to foster economic development. Action items to implement this policy include:

1. Update the land use code to require design standards for new commercial development near U.S. 50 and State Highway 92
2. Update the land use code to encourage design guidelines for all new or renovated buildings in the proposed downtown mixed use zone (see Chapter 3).
3. Coordinate with CDOT to beautify U.S. 50 and State Highway 92 coming into town.
4. Update the land development code to encourage the preservation of structurally sound older houses, including those converted to businesses and other buildings with historic character.
5. Update the land use code to encourage the preservation of structurally sound older houses, including those converted to businesses and other buildings with historic character in the downtown area.
6. Update the land use code to require design standards for new commercial development
7. Update the land use code to encourage design guidelines for all new or renovated buildings in the proposed downtown mixed use zone.

Policy 2 – Encourage more aesthetic streetscapes such as street edge landscaping (including street trees), benches, gardens, ornamental light fixtures, hanging flower baskets, banners and works of art. Action items to implement this policy include:

1. Encourage the continuation of the Delta Murals project and public art and sculpture at visible locations on Main Street, Highway 92, in public parks and schools.

Delta Comprehensive Plan 1997

Section One: Community Appearance	Status (C=completed, I=incomplete, P=in progress)
Goals	
Strive to unify the designs of public buildings and spaces and to create models which will inspire the community	P
Encourage the use of the local materials and design themes which are compatible with the culture of the community and which reflect harmony in the environment	P
Find meaningful themes and slogans which reflect our local heritage and environment	P
Enhance the public street and parking areas with particular attention to the most viewed, used streets, with an emphasis on highway access	P
Actions	
Incorporate the theory and practice of landscape architecture into design phases of projects	P
Educate citizens and businesses as to the importance of aesthetics in community development	CI
Historic preservation downtown	P
Provide citizens with information on vegetation species appropriate to this climate and setting	P
Encourage developers to use natural contours, topographic features, and existing trees where possible in accordance with the propose use of the site	PI
Provide incentives for the developer who provides visual amenities and consider these as positive factors in the evaluation and review of development proposals	PI
Section Two: Neighborhood Identity	
Goals	

Section One: Community Appearance	Status (C=completed, I=incomplete, P=in progress)
Encourage the preservation and development of unique qualities and characteristics	P
<i>Guidelines</i>	
Advocate those design characteristics which promote clarity, definition and identity to neighborhoods throughout the City	P
Encourage the enhancement of those design characteristics within the City which promote unity and cohesiveness	P
<i>Actions</i>	
Preserve and further develop neighborhood focal points such as open spaces, parks, commercial centers, and gathering places which are important to neighborhood identity	P
Facilitate preservation of historical or unique structures in Delta's neighborhoods and downtown	P
Restrict extraneous vehicular traffic from residential areas	P
Educate citizens and businesses regarding the planting and care of trees to maintain the current population throughout the City's neighborhoods	P