



Town of Ridgway Creative District  
Progress Report #1  
*July 15, 2012*

**To:** Elaine Mariner  
**Cc:** Maryo Ewell  
Ridgway Creative District Committee

### **Background Information**

In the spring of 2011 the Ouray County G3 Committee in follow up to Goal #3 of the Ouray County Bottom Up Economic Development Plan. Goal #3 states: "Use HB 11-1031 to Define a Creative District within Ouray County to Obtain Funding to Promote Creative (Artistic) Industries and Cultural Heritage". Upon award of Prospective Creative District status for the Town of Ridgway the G3 Committee held a public meeting to reach out to the community, share the news, and solicit volunteers for a Ridgway focused Committee in advancing the Creative District. The Ridgway Creative District Committee was selected and met on May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2012.

### **Coordination and Meetings**

The G3 Creative District Committee welcomed Elaine Mariner and Sheila Sears with breakfast and a tour of the Ridgway Creative District on May 3, 2012.

The Town Manger attended the Colorado Creative Industries grant workshop in Ridgway on May 3, 2012.

Three Committee members, including the founding Committee Chair, Mayor and Town Manager, attended the inaugural Creative District Meeting in Salida on May 18-19, 2012.

The G3 met numerous times prior to the Prospective District award from CCI. After the award, the G3 met six times to organize and lay a foundation for the Ridgway District, including establishment of the Ridgway Creative District Committee, and the Ridgway Creative District Committee has met 7 times since formed this past spring, from May 17<sup>th</sup> through July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2012.

### **Accomplishments to Date**

1. May 2<sup>nd</sup> Community Outreach Event

The G3 Committee hosted a community outreach event at Ridgway Town Hall to share information on the Prospective Creative District award for the Ridgway community. Approximately 60 citizens attended the event, with over 40 offering to participate on the volunteer committee, and/or contribute to the town-wide effort on the District. Residents, Businesses and "Creatives" from Ridgway, Ouray, and Ouray County were all in attendance. The Committee provided forms for feedback and comments on the district as well as a "sign up" for those wanting to assist in developing the district. In follow up to this outreach meeting, the Ridgway local committee was formed and a volunteer database was developed.

2. Website Development (and Facebook)

The committee developed a website to post events, happenings, information and also to provide a forum for feedback on the Ridgway Creative District (RCD): [www.RidgwayCreativeDistrict.com](http://www.RidgwayCreativeDistrict.com). The website is being used now primarily to promote and solicit feedback on the direction of the

District, and will grow and develop over the coming months as an online resource for the community and the State of Colorado. RCD is on Facebook!

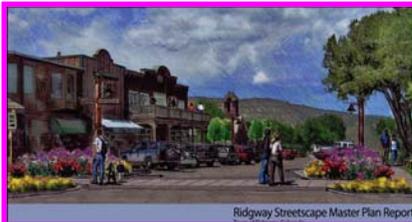
### 3. Inaugural “Imagination Day” Event

On Saturday, July 14<sup>th</sup> the Committee hosted the inaugural Imagination Day event in Ridgway’s central Town Park, in the heart of the Creative District. This signature event was designed as a local, grassroots information gathering event to solicit the community’s input on the direction and future of the Creative Industries in Ridgway. The event was a great success with more than 50 community members in attendance throughout the day. The event was advertised in the local newspaper as well as on the internet: [www.ridgwaycreativedistrict.com](http://www.ridgwaycreativedistrict.com), [www.town.ridgway.co.us](http://www.town.ridgway.co.us) and the [www.Colorado.com](http://www.Colorado.com). In addition, the local and regional newspaper both printed articles about the upcoming event.



Twelve large canvasses were filled with words and pictures describing the Ridgway Creative community. Numerous community members were filmed and photographed during the event, children and adults wrote and sketched on t—shirts expressing their visions of a creative community. The Committee is now in the process of organizing and evaluating the inputs in developing a Vision and Mission for the District. This includes the development of a “word cloud” from the written inputs of the community as well as review of interview transcripts from the event. Next week the group will meet to strategize on moving forward, identify PAN resources, and work on priorities and allocating financial resources for the district development.

### 4. Historic Business District Downtown Streetscape Plan



The Committee has representation on the Downtown Streetscape Task Force through one committee member, the Mayor and Town Manager who are all participating in the Streetscape construction and financing initiative. This includes: finalizing the scope and cost of the Streetscape Plan, developing and implementing a community outreach plan, and leading the way to have a financing and construction question

on the ballot in April 2013 during the regular municipal election. The Streetscape Task Force has convened three times and will meet again on August 1<sup>st</sup> to explore financing mechanisms and initiate work on the outreach plan. During the Imagination Day Event, representatives of the Task Force shared the Streetscape Plan initiative with those participating in the event.

### 5. Public Art in Ridgway Colorado (PARC)

PARC is a volunteer citizen group advancing art in public spaces throughout the Town. Two members of the Ridgway Creative District Committee are active volunteers with PARC. During the July meeting of PARC, it was proposed that the committee work with the Town to design and build decorative, locally crafted banner poles for Town Park to announce local events and activities. Some funds were budgeted this year to get this project off the ground in 2012.

### 6. Rocky Mountain PBS programming on the Ridgway Creative District

Coordinated with Rocky Mountain PBS on the local segment for Ridgway to air on August 3<sup>rd</sup>.

7. Construction of Performing Arts Stage in Hartwell Park in partnership with the University of Colorado-Denver School of Architecture and Design

On Monday, July 9<sup>th</sup> the Mayor and Town Manager (RCD Committee members) met with the program manager for the University of Colorado-Denver School of Architecture and Design to discuss the details of a cooperative effort to finance, design and construct a multi-purpose, public, performing arts stage in Ridgway's central Town Park. Contract details are being finalized now and the stage is planned for design in early 2013 and will include public process with the University graduate students. Construction is planned for the spring of 2013, just prior to the summer outdoor performing arts season.

8. Department of Local Affairs Main Street Community

The Ridgway Town Council approved a letter of intent and Memorandum of Agreement to participate in the DoLA Main Street Program, and DoLA approved the community's appeal for participation. The Agreement has been executed and the Town and Committee representation will be present at the Downtown Colorado Inc. meeting in Westcliffe on July 23-24<sup>th</sup> and will meet with DoLA representatives on July 31<sup>st</sup> in preparation for a formal Downtown Assessment.

### **Budget Expenditures**

The Committee has expended \$949 to date, with all funds being utilized in realizing the Inaugural Imagination Day Event. The committee will confirm the remaining budget detail in the upcoming weeks.

### **In-kind and Cash Assistance, and Volunteer Hours**

1. Home Depot

Donations of wood, canvas, markers for the Imagination Day Community event, valued at \$400.

2. Town of Ridgway

Snacks for community meeting - \$50  
Use of Tables, Chairs, Tent - \$60  
Printing and copying - \$30

3. Committee Volunteer Hours

Redbear Taylor – 40 hours  
Stephanie Rogers – 40 hours (newspaper interview)  
Danelle Norman – 10 hours  
Jan Kubek – 12 hours  
John Clark - 24 hours (website)  
Richard Tavener- 40 hours  
Kathy Wortman – 15 hours

### **Plan for Future**

The committee will meet again on July 25<sup>th</sup> to review the “word cloud” and interview transcripts from Imagination Day, and determine next steps for the district. These inputs will develop the mission and vision of the Ridgway Creative District and lay the foundation for completing a Strategic Plan and Budget. PAN resources will also be identified within the upcoming weeks, based on the analysis of the community

inputs. The Committee is exploring opportunities for Cultural Heritage accommodations and engaging Ronna Lee Sharpe.

Members of the committee will attend the Main Street Community and Downtown Colorado Inc. meeting in Westcliffe on July 23-24, 2012.

On July 31<sup>st</sup>, the Town Manager, also representing the Creative District Committee, will meet with representatives of the Department of Local Affairs to kick off the Town of Ridgway's participation in the State of Colorado Main Street Program. A representative of the Town Council and the President of the Ridgway Area Chamber of Commerce will also participate in this first gathering as a Main Street Community. In follow up to this preliminary assessment, Committee representation will be present for completion of a formal assessment of the Ridgway Downtown Business District through the Main Street Program, which is anticipated to occur this summer or fall.

### **Considerations for Technical Assistance**

The committee is considering PAN resources on the Western Slope to assist with Strategic Plan development and/or branding of the District. The goal is to have these resources identified and conveyed to CCI by September 15, 2012.

### **Attachments**

Community Meeting Flyer – May 2, 2012

Imagination Day Flyer – July 14, 2012