



## Staff Report

February 6, 2023

**To:** Mayor Billick and Town Council  
**From:** Mel Yemma, Long-Range Planner  
**Thru:** Troy Russ, Community Development Director  
**Subject:** Town-Owned Facilities Priorities Plan Kick Off

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**Summary:** The Town is kicking off development of a facilities priorities plan, to help support future capital improvement planning, facility maintenance planning, as well as set community expectations on use of Town facilities. This work session will kick off this process by discussing the plan’s initial goals and process, including community engagement. Additionally, at this work session, staff will engage the Town Council in a discussion about key takeaways from the first phase of this process, which included internal research on best practices in facility planning, Town operational needs and challenges, and identified community needs to explore through this process.

**Background:** Many local governments develop facilities plans to guide management of their facilities’ inventory in a way that leverages municipal resources to maximize services available to the communities they serve. Whether a municipality outgrows their facilities due to operational growth or a community need is identified that a local government can step in to serve, a facilities plan can help strategically guide how municipal facilities are used, upgraded, and maintained with a long-range and strategic mindset, rather than making incremental improvements over time. Local government facility planning is especially unique because local governments need to consider particular planning elements ranging from public service delivery, infrastructure, community planning, funding, community input, and the political process.

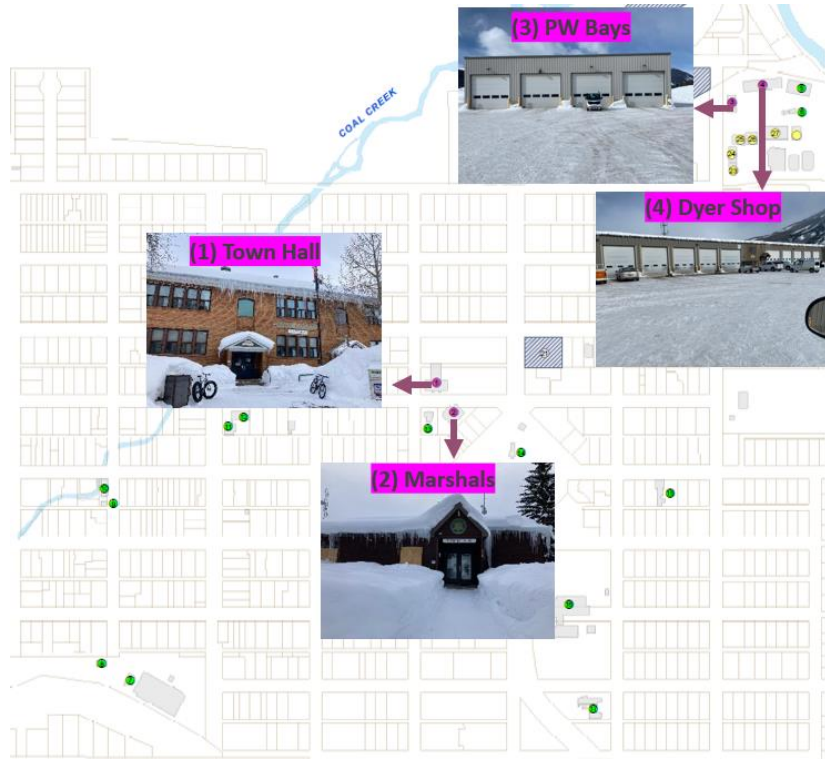
The Town of Crested Butte needs a facilities plan. The Town currently has an inventory of over 65 buildings ranging from administrative facilities, storage sheds, recreation facilities, historic structures, and leased residential and non-residential facilities. The Town’s facilities inventory has grown significantly over time, yet a long-range facilities plan has never been developed, creating challenges in prioritizing use of each space, creating leasing structures, conducting capital improvement planning, and planning for ongoing maintenance.

The need to analyze the Town’s facilities was identified in the Community Compass strategic plan under the goal of “enabling people who live and work here to thrive” and the specific strategy of “assessing the functionality and accessibility of Town facilities and leveraging them to better meet the community’s needs”. The adoption of the Community Compass marks the perfect time to conduct a facilities priorities plan for the Town to better guide use and management of the Town’s facilities.

This planning process will assess the functionality of existing Town-owned facilities and three undeveloped Town-owned lots zoned for development consistent with the Compass decision-making framework. While the Town owns over 65 buildings, this facilities plan will focus on 21 buildings:

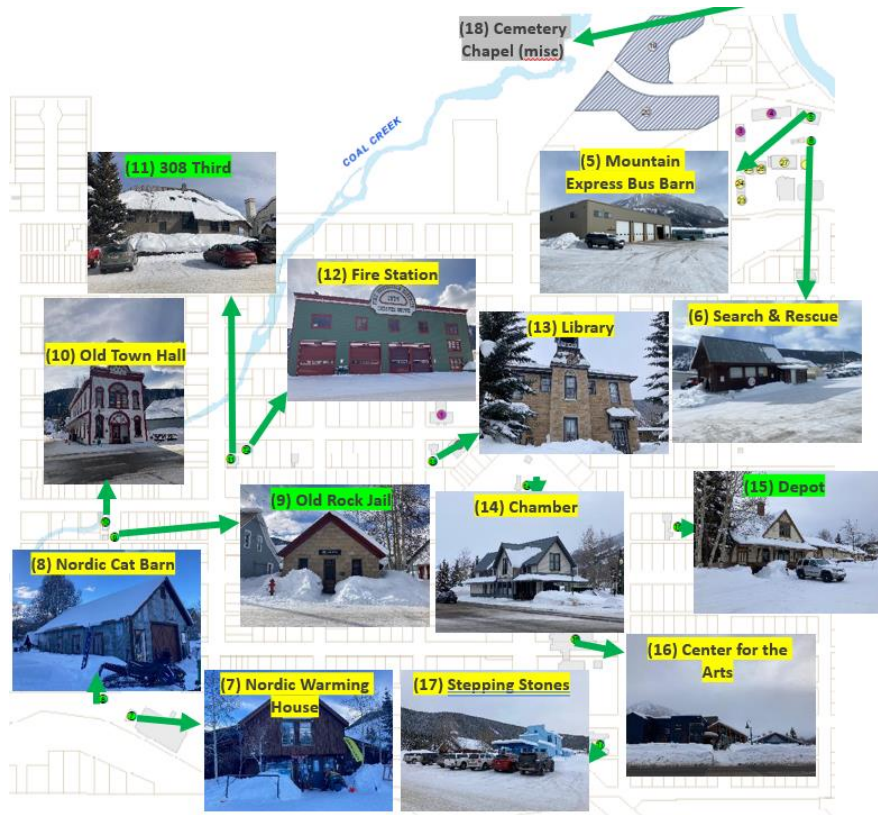
**Four Town-owned facilities that are currently used for Town operations.**

- This scope does not include facilities related to the Town’s enterprise fund (water and wastewater operations) as they operate under their own unique master plan.
- This scope also does not include Town-owned residential buildings (employee housing) nor Parks and Recreation pavilions/facilities as they are managed and planned for under the Community Development and Parks and Recreation Departments, respectively.
- Lastly, this scope does not include transit facilities, as those will be evaluated and discussed during the Transportation and Mobility Plan.



**14 Buildings leased to quasi-governmental and non-profit agencies.**

- Buildings highlighted in yellow represent a “unique” lease arrangement with the Town.
- This category also includes the Cemetery Chapel, which is not leased, but currently does not have guidelines on usage.



**Three Vacant lots owned by the Town that are currently zoned for public facility or commercial development.**

- These lots have previously been discussed for opportunities related to the post office, health clinic, early childhood education, and community housing. This process intends to continue to explore these conversations and recommend their use in the broader context of the remaining Town facilities.



**DRAFT Goal Statement:** The initial goal of this plan is to evaluate how the Town’s existing facilities can effectively meet the Town’s current and future operational needs and identify ways the Town’s facilities can be leveraged to support community needs.

**Process and Timeline:**

**Phase 1 – Internal Research (January 2023):** To initiate this process, the first phase in January included an inventory of Town-owned facilities regarding use, potential future use, and key considerations regarding zoning, size, constraints, and historic significance. The inventory included a review of the Town’s capital plan with planned upcoming facility projects, as well as documented and evaluated the Town’s current lease policy and executed leases.

Additionally, the first phase focused on review of relevant literature and sample plans to learn from case studies and best practices with public facilities planning. The literature review during the first phase pulled from local reports documenting existing community needs.

Lastly, the first phase of the project included interviews with Town department heads to understand current needs and constraints when it comes to the Town’s current operations and anticipated needs related to future growth.

**Phase 2 – Community Outreach and Identifying Success Measures (February 2023):** The second phase of the effort will start with an informational meeting about this planning process on February 8<sup>th</sup> for all organizations that currently lease property from the Town or have expressed an interest or need in facility use.

This phase will also include a survey to all tenants of properties that the Town leases to understand their current use of the facility, anticipated growth, and their future opportunities and constraints.

The survey will be followed up with interviews with unique tenants that include special circumstance leases or organizations that have been identified on the priority list of community needs.

After completing stakeholder engagement, draft success measures will be developed to consider when creating alternatives to ensure stakeholder feedback and project goals are considered in the plan.

**Phase 3 – Creating Alternatives and Drafting the Plan (March 2023):** The third phase develops alternative solutions designed to best meet the project objectives and success measures for Town consideration. Alternatives could include rearranging building operations and leases, consideration to redevelop or develop properties to better serve Town and community needs, and potential disposition considerations of properties that no longer serve Town or community needs. Alternatives could also include recommendations on improvements to facility management systems and other identified operational challenges that emerge from the process.

The first draft of the facilities priorities plan will be created in this phase and shared for feedback from Town department heads first and subsequently survey respondents.

**Phase 4 – Refining and Adopting the Plan (April/May 2023):** The fourth and final phase of the project will include a refined second draft of the plan, as well as a presentation of the draft plan to the Crested Butte Town Council. The feedback received during these presentations will result in final plan refinements. The goal of the effort is to have Town Council adopt the plan on May 15, 2023.

**Work Session Discussion – Phase 1 Emerging Themes & Key Takeaways:** Staff will facilitate a discussion on emerging themes and takeaways from the first phase with Town Council to help frame future community outreach efforts.

**Best Practices:** A literature review of best practices in public facilities planning or management was conducted and a review of two specific plans from Boulder and Estes Park, resulted in the following takeaways for Town consideration:

- ***Start with consolidation*** – It’s not uncommon to have dispersed information but analyzing the entire portfolio comprehensively is important. The first step in any effort should pull together an inventory of existing facilities. This is important because information is dispersed across several Town departments.
- ***Set clear goals and expectations*** – Make a plan that is useful for what the Town needs and manages community expectations. Part of the Crested Butte plan should support the Town Facilities Division by providing an inventory. The plan can include both micro and macro level recommendations ranging from recommended facilities management improvements to larger-scale facilities usage considerations.
- ***Use Success measures*** – Sample plans included guiding principles (like the Compass-related success measures) to guide creation of different alternatives and recommendations. Success measures ensure facilities recommendations are considered holistically and equitably across the portfolio of facilities, in a way that is aligned with municipal needs and the community’s values and expectations.
- ***Don’t forget technology*** – Technology is an important aspect to consider when making facilities recommendations. Understanding technology issues, needs, and improvements can help improve management of facilities and ensure they are used more efficiently and securely.
- ***Beware of the Wishlist*** – In public facility planning, it’s important to find the right balance for effective, efficient and comfortable spaces vs. unnecessary luxury. It is important to set boundaries on needs vs. wants while managing unintended consequences of “smoothing out the rough edges” that was discussed during the Compass.
- ***Be prepared for resistance to change*** – There will likely be a faction of the community that is resistant to change. Change is hard for most communities. Many Town facilities have been used in certain ways for years and rethinking their use can lead to difficult conversations. It will be important to actively involve stakeholders in this process and consider through the alternatives if change is necessary and will best meet the success measures.

**Identified Town Operational Needs:** This plan intentionally started with first identifying the Town's operational deficiencies, constraints, and challenges when it comes to Town-owned facilities. The efficient operation of the Town needs to be evaluated prior to exploring broader community needs. The following needs were identified through interviews with the Town Manager and department heads: Community Development, Finance/Administrative Services, Public Works, Parks/Recreation/Open Space/Trails, Town Clerk, and the Marshal.

- ***Ability to effectively collaborate and coordinate***
  - In general, Town operations are effectively collaborating and coordinating within departments and across departments, however layout of offices and separation of divisions results in intentionality to ensure collaboration happens.
    - Within departments, Community Development and Finance offices could be improved to bring the whole department together (they are currently separated into two separate offices)
    - Across departments, effective coordination currently happens with separated divisions between Town Hall, Marshals, Public Works, and Parks & Recreation. It will be important to consider how future facilities usage recommendations could impact ability to coordinate and build collaboration capacity across all departments.
- ***Space for each department to function***
  - Overall, Town operations are making do with the current space available. However, the following deficiencies were raised:
    - The facilities division currently lacks proper space to physically conduct work. They do not have currently have proper space to build necessary items or repairs.
    - The Marshals' office is over capacity to provide sufficient individual workspace and has crowding issues with other operational needs such as training space and a proper interview room.
    - The Parks and Recreation department is lacking indoor programming space, where they have higher demand for programs than what they can offer with the current space they are working with.
    - Human Resources could have an improved privacy space to allow the ability for staff to visit human resources without everyone else seeing who is visiting the office.
- ***Improved information technology systems***
  - All departments can benefit from improved information technology systems ranging from proper power outlets and ethernet cable ports at each desk, as well as increased IT capacity to promote more efficient digital storage software.
  - Town Hall needs an improved IT room to ensure the server and IT equipment are secure, have backup power, and proper ventilation. The IT room currently operates out of a cabinet/closet in the copy room.
- ***Security improvement considerations***

- While it's important to keep the small-town vibe with Town operations, security improvements can be made in facilities where there is a public/operational interface including Town Hall and the Marshals. There are issues with passing out individual keys for each building, leaving Town Hall open with a magnet for afterhours programming, and overall, not having more security mechanisms in place between public use and town operations.
- ***Storage Needs***
  - Public works lacks storage and has more equipment than available storage space. The public works bays currently operate on a “tetris” system today where vehicles, equipment, and other supplies are stacked incredibly tightly, and certain supplies and equipment are difficult to access.
  - Parks & Rec is making do with its current storage, which has benefited from purging items that are not used. They could also benefit from increased storage, which will need to continue to be coordinated with public works.
  - The Marshals need vehicle storage to ensure on duty officers have cars that are ready to respond quickly in an emergency, which results in challenges in the winter without a garage.
  - As the Town's fleet and equipment electrifies, more indoor storage will be needed to charge equipment (such as mowers, vehicles, loaders, etc.), especially during the winter seasons.
  - The Clerks department needs improved file storage that is flood and fire resistant.
  - Finance and Community Development are working to transition their file storage to digital, which can help free up some office space in the future.

**Additional Town Facility Challenges:** Through the department head interviews, additional challenges relating to the Town's facilities were identified, which could be considered and incorporated into this plan.

- ***Additional needs to integrate with maintenance & capital projects*** – there are currently different projects relating to facilities that are dispersed across departments, including historic preservation assessments, IT management, and energy efficiency projects. This plan could be an opportunity to integrate facilities-related projects more effectively into maintenance and capital project planning to guide the facilities division's work plan. These improvements include:
  - IT and security improvements
  - Climate action and energy efficiency projects
  - Accessibility Improvements
  - Historic structure assessments/improvements
- ***Facilities management operational improvements*** – While both the facilities division and finance department have improved lease management systems in recent years, the following facilities management improvements have been identified to help support management and usage of the Town's facilities.
  - Building Control Systems

- Key Card System
- Property management system + lessee communications
- GIS integration of facilities inventory and associated documents
- ***Community expectations & guidelines*** – lastly, the importance of setting community expectations and guidelines has emerged as a key need for this facilities priorities plan. The Town currently solicits many varied requests to use or upgrade facilities and could benefit from having clear guidelines on what the Town’s role is when it comes to supporting broader community needs (which will be explored through this process). A key consideration of this process will be expectation setting to ensure Town operational needs are met prior to utilizing Town-owned facilities for broader community needs.

**Identified Community Needs to Explore Through Outreach:** The last aspect of Phase 1 included an initial review of existing Town documents and policies (Community Compass, Lease Policy, Town Budget, Capital Plan), as well as existing local needs assessments and reports (Community Foundation Basic Needs Guide, GVH Community Health Needs Assessment, GCSAPP State of the Youth Report, Community Health Coalition State of the Community 2022 Report, Met Rec Needs Assessment) to identify a list of potential broader community needs to explore through this process. In addition, ongoing Town conversations with specific entities about use of spaces have been wrapped into this section.

The following needs have been identified. Staff will engage the Council in a discussion about which of these should be prioritized or explored more through this process. Staff is also curious if Council believes there are needs that are missing or shouldn’t be included on the list.

***Identified Critical Needs from Previous/Ongoing Conversations***

- Post Office – The Town has been in conversations with the Post Office about helping them relocate from their current lease, which expires in 2026. The Cosentino lot has been identified as an opportunity, which is current on an expedited timeline from this plan due to timing needs and interest of the post office.
- Expanded healthcare options – During the Slate River Annexation, the Town had conversations with Gunnison Valley Health about potentially utilizing TP 2 to expand health care options in the north valley.
- Expanded childcare options – The Town has had very preliminary conversations about working with the Gunnison Watershed School District about expanding early childhood education options in the Town, potentially at TP 2.

***Emerging needs to explore through outreach***

- Indoor youth programming space – The Town’s recreational programming is currently over capacity due to space constraints. While this topic will veer into a regional Parks, Recreation, Trails, and Open Space Plan in 2024, it could be worth exploring through this process the role of Town-managed youth programming as well as non-profit managed youth programming (Center for the Arts, Nordic, CB School of Dance, etc.) and how to more effectively utilize the Town’s indoor space to accommodate this need.



- Essential Goods and Services – The Compass identified a need to focus on essential goods and services to ensure Crested Butte has a well-rounded economy. The following services could be explored through outreach if there is a need and demand for space to support:
  - Health & Human Services, County Clerk, Housing Resource Office, etc.– Gunnison County used to historically rent space from the Town to have vehicle registration through the County a couple of days a week. GVRHA currently rents the Old Rock Jail from the Town but their hours/use of the space are currently inconsistent. This plan could provide an opportunity to discuss with Gunnison County and GVRHA if there is a need for space to provide access to their services within the Town.
  - Food Access – Food insecurity was highlighted as an important community need in existing reports. This plan could explore if there is a need for the Food Pantry, Mountain Roots, and/or others to operate within the Town, keeping in mind they are working on a large capital project in Gunnison that may impact their capacity and interest in operating in Crested Butte.
  - Commercial space for trades – A need for fostering more trades services such as plumbers and electricians was raised in the Compass. This plan could explore if a need is there and if it would be useful to consider leveraging Town facilities as incubator space. The IceLab and Chamber of Commerce could be potential resources to explore this potential need with.

***An opportunity to re-think needs that Town facilities fill today?***

- Office/Meeting Space + Storage - Aside from specific facilities that offer programming, the Town currently leases office space to several non-profits in the Town. Some organizations operate seasonally, and the pandemic could have influenced how offices are used today. This plan could be a potential time to evaluate how offices are being used and re-think if there are ways to more effectively support the Town’s non-profits other than leasing to organizations that were able to move in when space became available.
- Visitor Center – While the Town is in separate conversations with the Chamber about its funding agreement, this plan could be an opportunity to think about the need to provide a visitor center and the Town’s role in providing this service. For example, this could be an opportunity to think about needs around stewardship education and discuss the role and use of the visitor center with the Chamber.

**Next Steps:** After the work session, staff will initiate community outreach in Phase 2, starting with an informational meeting on February 8<sup>th</sup> at 4pm via zoom, the stakeholder survey, and targeted stakeholder interviews. Additionally, feedback is always welcome directly to staff through this process.