

2008 Garfield County Community Survey: Executive Summary Report, December 2008

Purpose and Methodology

Purpose

The purpose of the 2008 Garfield County Community Survey is to collect input from the community to be used in the new Garfield County Master Plan.

Specific areas identified for community input:

- Land use
- Growth
- Most important issues
- Strategic planning
- Impact fee initiatives
- Values/Assessment
- Oil & gas development
- Priorities for County Government
- Vision for the future

Methodology

In 2008, Garfield County contracted with Venturoni Surveys & Research, Inc. (VSR) to perform the survey analysis. The Garfield County voter registration list was used to sample local residents. Random sampling techniques were employed to select the samples. Letters were sent to potential respondents directing them to go to the internet to fill out the survey. All respondents were assigned identification numbers (IDN) to assure that no duplicate responses were counted. After two weeks, if the potential respondent had not filled out the internet survey, they were sent a reminder letter, paper copy of the survey and postage paid return envelope.

2008 Garfield County Community Survey

Samples:	Sample Frame	Mailed	Delivered	Completed Surveys	%	*Standard Error
Voter Registration	22,622	4,275	4,070	1,048	25.7%	2.96%
Total		4,275	4,070	1,048	25.7%	

* 95% Confidence Level

The chart above details the size of the original sample frame, the number of surveys that were mailed, the number of surveys delivered (surveys not delivered were returned by the post office as "undeliverable"), the number of surveys completed and the number of surveys returned, % response, and resulting margin of error of 2.96%.

As the table on the right indicates, 478 people, or 46% of respondents chose to respond to the survey on the internet and 570, or 54% chose the paper alternative.

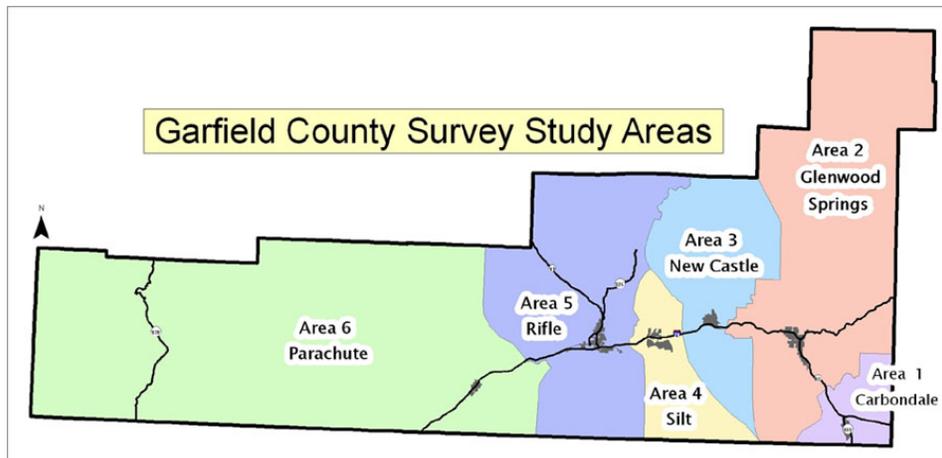
	1st Mailing	2nd Mailing	Total	%
Internet	450	28	478	46%
Paper Survey	0	570	570	54%
Total	450	598	1048	100%

The internet/mail surveys were conducted in September and October 2008.

Highlights of Survey Results

#4. Survey Results by area:

Survey respondents were given a map (see below) and definitions of the geographic study areas identified for the survey.



Definitions of the Study Areas:

Area 1 - Carbondale (Includes the Town of Carbondale, Missouri Heights, Aspen Glen, and South of County Road 114 AKA "CMC Road")

Area 2 - Glenwood Springs (Includes the City of Glenwood Springs, West Glenwood Springs, Ironbridge, Sweetwater, Four Mile Road to Sunlight, North of County Road 114 AKA "CMC Road", Spring Valley, Red Mountain Road, Mitchell Creek, Canyon Creek, and Riverbend)

Area 3 - New Castle (Including the Town of New Castle, Castle Valley Ranch, Apple Tree, West Elk Creek, Main Elk Creek, East Elk Creek and County Roads 245, 243, 241, 314 and 328)

Area 4 - Silt (Including the Town of Silt, Harvey Gap and areas South, Silt Mesa, Areas East of County Road 227 and West of County Road 238, Divide Creek and County Road 313, Mamm Creek and County Road 315)

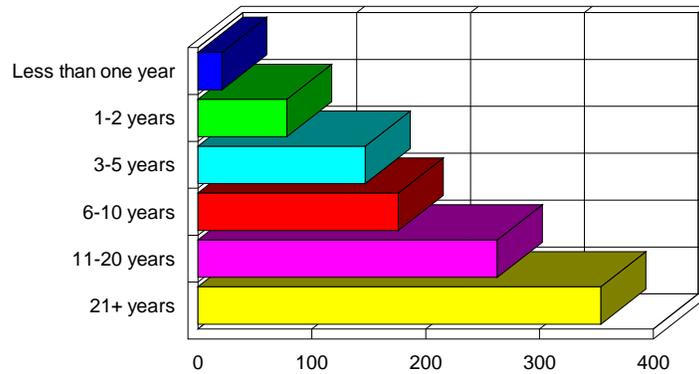
Area 5 - Rifle (Including the City of Rifle, Rifle Gap Reservoir area, All development off State Highways 13 and 325, the Garfield County Airport, Grass Mesa, and Areas East of County Road 317 and West of County Road 319)

Area 6 - Parachute (Including the Town of Parachute, Battlement Mesa, and All Areas West of County Road 325 to the Utah Border including County Roads 215, 204, and State Highway 139)

All survey results are tabulated for the county as a whole and by individual survey study areas.

#5. How long have you lived and/or owned property in Garfield County?

The chart on the right displays the answer to the question “How long have you lived and/or owned property in Garfield County?” The most frequent response, 34%, answered 21+ years, 25% have lived in the county 11-20 years, 17% 6-10 years, and a total of 24% were in the categories of less than 6 years.



Please note that full tabulations of all of the survey questions cross-tabbed by study area and length of residency are available in the survey results notebooks and the web-based application. There are also interactive slides that allow viewers to select specific questions and view the responses in a graphic representation.

#7. What are the most important issues that will be facing Garfield County in the next five years?

	Carbondale area <i>n</i> =221	Glenwood Springs area <i>n</i> =298	New Castle area <i>n</i> =105	Silt area <i>n</i> =117	Rifle area <i>n</i> =181	Parachute area <i>n</i> =126	COUNTY <i>n</i> =1048
Cost of living	62.9%	65.9%	70.5%	73.3%	71.7%	60.3%	66.9%
Affordable housing	47.1%	49.0%	54.3%	42.2%	50.6%	45.2%	48.2%
Traffic mobility and circulation	45.7%	59.1%	41.0%	31.9%	35.6%	63.5%	47.9%
Preservation of rural character	58.8%	41.2%	43.8%	51.7%	39.4%	39.7%	45.9%
Water availability	42.5%	37.2%	52.4%	65.5%	51.1%	38.1%	45.5%
Preservation of open space	54.8%	49.3%	41.0%	44.8%	38.9%	29.4%	44.9%
Water quality	24.9%	23.7%	33.3%	53.5%	41.7%	39.7%	33.2%
Air quality	26.2%	23.3%	27.6%	40.5%	45.6%	42.1%	32.4%
Economic development	23.1%	22.0%	31.4%	24.1%	30.6%	31.8%	26.1%
Housing availability	23.5%	28.7%	17.1%	14.7%	20.6%	22.2%	22.7%
Public transportation	27.6%	25.0%	21.0%	11.2%	16.1%	19.8%	21.5%
Public safety	13.6%	19.9%	18.1%	17.2%	25.0%	27.0%	19.8%
Other:	19.9%	19.9%	21.0%	24.1%	18.3%	9.5%	19.0%
Visual impact of development along I70	18.6%	18.9%	8.6%	14.7%	17.2%	20.6%	17.2%
Number of septic systems	3.2%	3.0%	1.9%	3.5%	2.8%	1.6%	2.8%

Numbers reflect frequency percentages

	70-100%
	60-69%
	50-59%

“Cost of Living” received high ratings as an important issue facing the county in all of the study areas and was the #1 rated issue county-wide. “Affordable housing” was #2 countywide, and received highest numbers in the New Castle and Rifle areas. “Traffic mobility and circulation” was #3, with the Glenwood Springs and Parachute areas expressing the highest concern on this issue.

Water issues (“Water availability and “Water quality”) were higher concerns in the New Castle, Silt and Rifle areas. Other notable concerns include “Preservation of rural character” in both the Carbondale and Silt areas, and “Preservation of open space” in the Carbondale area.

#39 – 49. Land Use Section:

Question: Garfield County (outside of municipal jurisdictions - Carbondale, Glenwood Springs, New Castle, Parachute, Rifle, and Silt) places limits on what property owners can do on their property. These zoning limitations are guided by the Garfield County Comprehensive Plan which was last updated in 2000. The Comprehensive Plan serves as a citizen-based guide for growth and is put in place for a community benefit. In the following questions we would like you to give us your opinion of the community benefit of some of the land use concepts from the Garfield County Comprehensive Plan of 2000. Your responses will help guide the next revision to the Comprehensive Plan. An answer of 1 means you think there is currently little community benefit and an answer of 5 means you think there is currently great community benefit.

	Carbondale area n=221	Glenwood Springs area n=298	New Castle area n=105	Silt area n=117	Rifle area n=181	Parachute area n=126	COUNTY n=1048
Require development in areas without existing central water and sewer service to provide adequate and safe provisions for these services before project approval	89.0%	83.0%	86.4%	82.6%	82.4%	74.8%	83.5%
Encourage protection of river-fronts and wetland areas	90.3%	85.7%	74.8%	84.6%	80.1%	76.9%	83.5%
Encourage the development of energy efficient design, including solar access	86.6%	78.0%	78.6%	80.4%	76.6%	63.6%	78.2%
Retain rural character outside of community limits	84.9%	78.6%	73.8%	81.1%	72.9%	70.7%	77.8%
Ensure that wildlife habitat is a component of the review process and reasonable protection measures are imposed on projects that negatively impact critical habitat	82.6%	76.9%	73.5%	78.4%	71.8%	68.9%	76.1%
Maintain and expand access to public lands	77.7%	64.8%	63.1%	70.5%	68.6%	62.0%	68.3%
Target development to suitable land in and around existing communities	67.8%	57.6%	55.4%	58.9%	49.1%	45.5%	56.7%
Interconnect trail system through the county with community trail systems	72.8%	57.1%	53.4%	38.0%	45.4%	37.2%	53.7%
Extend trail system along river corridors	66.7%	54.6%	47.6%	40.4%	46.6%	43.1%	52.2%
Encourage mix of housing types within a development	60.5%	43.2%	44.1%	39.8%	33.3%	31.7%	43.5%

Numbers reflect the percent of respondents who rated the priority a 4 or 5 on a 5 point scale.
(Little Benefit to Great Benefit)

	80-100%
	70-79%
	60-69%

Support for zoning limitations (chart above) is fairly strong throughout the county, with six of the listed options receiving more than 60% support from the overall county survey respondents.

The chart below also shows a consistent pattern throughout the county, this time related to perception of growth. The most frequent response to the growth question is "Less growth than at present" in all of the study areas.

#50. Garfield County has grown from 29,974 residents in 1990 to an estimated 55,063 in 2007. From the choices below, please indicate which policy you would endorse. (Please check only one.)

	Carbondale area n=221	Glenwood Springs area n=298	New Castle area n=105	Silt area n=117	Rifle area n=181	Parachute area n=126	COUNTY n=1048
Less growth than at present	54.3%	45.2%	44.2%	43.0%	39.3%	34.4%	44.5%
About the same rate of growth as at the present	20.1%	26.7%	31.7%	26.3%	21.9%	20.0%	24.1%
More growth but some controls	9.6%	11.3%	14.4%	8.8%	15.7%	24.8%	13.4%
Zero Growth	10.5%	9.9%	4.8%	11.4%	10.1%	7.2%	9.4%
Other:	7.8%	6.9%	2.9%	10.5%	7.9%	4.8%	7.0%
No growth controls	0.5%	3.8%	5.8%	3.5%	7.3%	10.4%	4.7%

Numbers reflect frequency responses

#51-60. Impact Fees:

Question: In the following section we would like your opinion about the potential benefit of each of the following impact fee initiatives. More specifically, we are interested to know your opinion regarding impact fees from commercial, residential and oil & gas developments to fund road improvements, affordable housing projects, and the acquisition & preservation of open space. An answer of 1 means you think there is little community benefit and an answer of 5 means you think there is great community benefit.

2008 Garfield County Community Survey Impact Fee Initiatives

	Carbondale area n=221	Glenwood Springs area n=298	New Castle area n=105	Silt area n=117	Rifle area n=181	Parachute area n=126	COUNTY n=1048
Roads							
Require new residential development to pay a fee to the County to be used towards impacts on the County's road system from the development	75.1%	72.5%	62.1%	60.0%	61.9%	52.4%	66.4%
53. Require new commercial development to pay a fee to the County to be used towards impacts on the County's road system from the development	87.1%	83.3%	78.6%	85.2%	78.7%	77.6%	82.4%
54. Require new Oil & Gas development to pay a fee to the County to be used towards impacts on the County's road system from the development	94.0%	93.9%	91.4%	93.0%	92.1%	86.4%	92.4%
Affordable Housing							
Require a fee from residential development to construct a certain number of affordable housing units as a part of development	59.6%	49.7%	48.5%	39.1%	45.7%	32.8%	47.8%
Require a fee from commercial development to construct a certain number of affordable housing units as a part of development	71.4%	62.5%	60.2%	42.2%	53.4%	44.8%	58.2%
Require a fee from Oil & Gas development to construct a certain number of affordable housing units as a part of development	78.3%	72.2%	71.2%	70.7%	69.3%	64.5%	71.8%
Acquisition and preservation of open space/parks							
Require a fee from residential development for the acquisition and preservation of open space/parks	67.6%	53.2%	56.3%	51.7%	50.3%	44.0%	54.8%
Require a fee from commercial development for the acquisition and preservation of open space/parks	77.5%	63.4%	62.1%	60.3%	60.4%	56.0%	64.4%
Require a fee from Oil & Gas development for the acquisition and preservation of open space/parks	86.2%	77.9%	77.7%	75.9%	70.5%	68.0%	76.9%

Numbers reflect the percent of respondents who rated the priority a 4 or 5 on a 5 point scale. (Little Benefit to Great Benefit)

	80%+
	70 - 79%
	60 - 69%
	50-59%

Support for some of the impact fee initiatives tested in the survey is very strong, especially in the section regarding roads. "Require new Oil & Gas development to pay a fee to the County to be used towards impacts on the County's road system from the development" has the support of 92.4% of county survey respondents overall. A road impact fee applied to commercial development also displayed strong support at 82.4% county-wide, and residential development measured in at 66.4%.

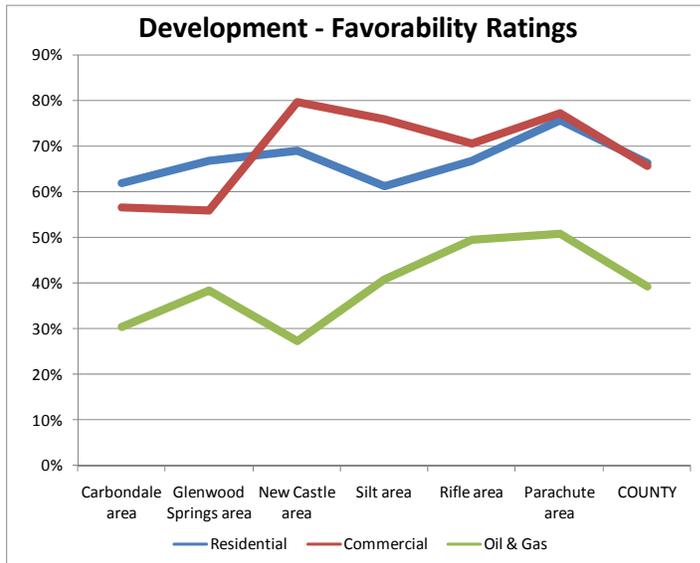
In the sections regarding "Affordable housing" and "Acquisition and preservation of open space/parks", support for the initiatives is highest when applied to Oil & gas development, measuring in at 71.8% and 76.9% respectively.

#61. Please indicate if you feel very unfavorable, somewhat unfavorable, somewhat favorable or very favorable toward the types of development listed below:

**2008 Garfield County Community Survey
Development**

	Carbondale area <i>n=221</i>	Glenwood Springs area <i>n=298</i>	New Castle area <i>n=105</i>	Silt area <i>n=117</i>	Rifle area <i>n=181</i>	Parachute area <i>n=126</i>	COUNTY <i>n=1048</i>
Residential Development							
Very unfavorable	7.3%	10.6%	7.8%	9.5%	9.0%	7.3%	8.8%
Somewhat unfavorable	30.7%	22.6%	23.3%	29.3%	24.3%	17.1%	24.8%
Somewhat favorable	50.9%	54.8%	50.5%	48.3%	47.5%	54.5%	51.5%
Very favorable	11.0%	12.0%	18.5%	12.9%	19.2%	21.1%	14.9%
Commercial Development							
Very unfavorable	7.8%	15.7%	7.8%	7.8%	8.5%	7.3%	10.1%
Somewhat unfavorable	35.5%	28.3%	12.6%	16.4%	21.0%	15.5%	24.1%
Somewhat favorable	46.1%	47.1%	57.3%	54.3%	47.2%	54.5%	49.6%
Very favorable	10.6%	8.9%	22.3%	21.6%	23.3%	22.8%	16.2%
Oil & Gas Development							
Very unfavorable	41.9%	32.5%	35.9%	36.5%	27.0%	27.4%	33.7%
Somewhat unfavorable	27.7%	29.1%	36.9%	22.6%	23.6%	21.8%	27.0%
Somewhat favorable	22.6%	29.8%	18.5%	23.5%	31.5%	33.9%	27.2%
Very favorable	7.8%	8.6%	8.7%	17.4%	18.0%	16.9%	12.1%

The table above indicates responses received on the favorability ratings for “Residential Development”, “Commercial Development” and “Oil & Gas Development”.



The chart on the left plots the overall favorability, combining “Somewhat favorable” and “Very favorable” percentages together. The overall pattern shows favorability ratings for “Oil & Gas Development” consistently lower throughout the county study areas, but there is variation by location, with favorability highest in the Rifle and Parachute areas.

“Residential Development” is most highly favorable in the Parachute area and “Commercial Development” favorability ratings are highest in the New Castle area.

#8-29 and #106-117. Values and Assessment Sections:

A list of characteristics of Garfield County was given to survey respondents which they rated for importance (the values section). The same list was provided near the end of the survey for survey respondents to evaluate how well the county is doing in meeting their expectations for each of the characteristics (assessment section).

By comparing the value and assessment ratings we can identify the things that community members are satisfied with and the things that need improvement. Positive scores on the chart that follows indicate items that are exceeding expectations. Conversely, the items with negative scores indicate that survey respondents would like to see improvements.

For example, Traffic received a value score of 83.9%. Survey respondents assessed the county performance in the area of Traffic at 10.5%. The difference between these scores is the (-73%) shown in the difference column. Affordable housing also displays a large gap at (-52%), Recycling services (-44%) and County road maintenance at (-41%).

These charts have been developed for each of the study areas. Interactive scattergrams that display these results have been included in the full report and can be viewed on the web page as well.

	Value	Assessment	Assessment - Value Difference
	Voter	Voter	Voter
	n=1048	n=1048	n=1048
Recreation opportunities	67.3%	79.7%	12%
Biking Trails	44.4%	54.0%	10%
River access	56.0%	58.9%	3%
Hiking trails	54.6%	55.6%	1%
Animal control	34.1%	34.0%	0%
Shopping opportunities	30.5%	29.4%	-1%
Scenic/visual quality	84.1%	74.3%	-10%
Historic preservation	54.3%	40.3%	-14%
Public transportation	45.0%	29.2%	-16%
Open space	74.7%	57.1%	-18%
Economic development	52.8%	30.7%	-22%
Cultural integration	38.5%	14.3%	-24%
Air quality	83.1%	58.7%	-24%
Water quality/quantity	86.4%	57.9%	-28%
Sense of community	65.8%	37.0%	-29%
Public land access	72.6%	43.2%	-29%
Public safety	78.4%	48.2%	-30%
County road maintenance	69.6%	28.5%	-41%
Recycling services	67.9%	23.5%	-44%
Affordable housing	58.1%	5.8%	-52%
Traffic	83.9%	10.5%	-73%

Numbers reflect the percent of respondents who rated the priority a 4 or 5 on a 5 point scale.

Value: (Not Important to Very Important)

Assessment: (Very Poor to Very Good)

#104. If you were responsible for budgeting \$100 for the following list of discretionary projects, how would you spend it? You may allocate the entire amount to a single item or distribute it, based on your personal priorities, to two or more items.

**2008 Garfield County Community Survey
\$100**

	Carbondale area <i>n=221</i>	Glenwood Springs area <i>n=298</i>	New Castle area <i>n=105</i>	Silt area <i>n=117</i>	Rifle area <i>n=181</i>	Parachute area <i>n=126</i>	COUNTY <i>n=1048</i>
Development of pedestrian/bicycle trails	\$13.92	\$12.48	\$9.76	\$8.47	\$9.32	\$8.70	\$11.05
Purchase of open space	\$21.56	\$20.69	\$15.92	\$15.80	\$17.07	\$11.72	\$18.17
Transit service improvements and expansion	\$15.42	\$12.24	\$13.71	\$10.28	\$9.56	\$12.82	\$12.46
Help provide affordable housing	\$21.13	\$20.02	\$21.48	\$15.34	\$20.74	\$15.42	\$19.39
Road system improvements	\$18.27	\$23.92	\$22.98	\$34.54	\$29.87	\$37.36	\$26.43
Economic development	\$9.87	\$10.02	\$15.85	\$14.94	\$13.77	\$11.20	\$11.96
Total	\$100.17	\$99.37	\$99.70	\$99.37	\$100.33	\$97.22	\$99.46

	1st Choice
	2nd Choice
	3rd Choice

The \$100 question produced pretty consistent results throughout the county. Amounts allocated are highest for “Road system improvements”, “Help provide affordable housing” and “Purchase of open space”.

This Executive Summary is provided to give an overview of some of the survey findings. Survey notebooks will be provided to the BOCC which contain the following:

- Detailed survey results for each of the 121 survey questions by sample frame
- PowerPoint presentation of the survey results
- Color-coded spreadsheets
- Cross-tab results by:
 - Area
 - Length of residency
- Over 125 pages of write-in comments
- Interactive slides
- Web ready application for displaying survey results