

Boulder

Boulder is a small town of 200 located in Garfield County; thirty minutes south of Capital Reef National Park nestled on Utah Scenic Byway 12 at the mouth of the Burr Trail. While Boulder's year round population has only doubled over the past decade, it has been strongly impacted by second home owners both in and around the township. Much like other rural communities and counties in the West they have seen economic decline as a traditional resource and agricultural economy and have made a structural transition to service and trade-based economic activity. This is in large part due to increased awareness by tourists of the area recreational amenities, and influx of second home owners / retired person home owners and the relocation or start up of new small businesses. The local impact has come at the price of pressures in employment, infrastructure and a lack of affordable workforce housing. Boulder has already made a request to the Community Impact Board to update its general plan and has been proactively assessing what types of housing local employers need to stabilize, sustain and grow local businesses.

Boulder's initial pilot community participation in the UWFHI resulted in the early acquisition of a nine-unit single room occupancy project that will keep nine of more local employees in town year round. The impact may seem minimal on the surface, but it enables a small rural community to bring people indoors literally from temporary housing conditions or minimizes long drives from neighboring communities in Garfield County. The township has strong ordinances to support housing choice and as a community is actively engaged in the planning process. Its largest issue is lack of any type of housing. Next steps may include land acquisition(s), 5-10 units of single family housing and/or a small rural rental housing project. The city is uniquely situated to demonstrate best practices for other small towns not only in Utah but across the West.