



ENVISION SILVERTON 2035
VISION AND CITY STRATEGIC PLANNING
FINAL REPORT

Executive Summary

The Envision Silverton Project started in fall of 2015 and lasted through late spring of 2016. HDR, along with Steven Ames Planning, was enlisted to guide a community vision development process and assist the council in developing a long-range strategic direction with robust input from the community.

During the project, community members had numerous opportunities to become engaged with conversations around the future of Silverton, and they responded. At community workshops, events, small group discussions and online, community members provided thousands of comments and suggestions about what they would like to see in Silverton's future. The result is a whole-of community vision and vision ideas in six key focus areas that will provide high-level strategic direction for years to come.



At its work session in late April 2016, the Silverton City Council considered the vision statements and the massive amount of input provided by community members. It led to several value-based mission statements that the council discussed, refined, and finalized for the city.

City of Silverton Mission

To recognize the special nature of our community and advocate for maintaining and preserving our unique heritage, valuable infrastructure, natural resources, and quality of life; to inform and engage community members in Civic activities and collaborate on decisions that affect them; and to proactively look toward the future to address our challenges and take advantage of emerging opportunities by building upon our strengths.

The council also reviewed the community's overall vision for 2035, which reads:

OUR VISION FOR SILVERTON IN 2035...

We envision a Silverton that honors its history, traditions and heritage, encouraging thoughtful change while celebrating our past, present and future. Our future Silverton is a connected community with broad citizen engagement, a clear vision for the future, and a detailed plan of action to achieve it. We envision a Silverton with a strong economy and viable, locally owned businesses, carefully balancing economic growth with our continued small-town livability, quality of life and affordability. Our Silverton is guided by a comprehensive plan for our future growth, with strong leadership, meaningful public involvement, informed decisions, and agreement on our community's key directions. We envision a Silverton that meets the basic needs of all of its residents, including quality jobs, affordable housing, accessible health care, and community safety. Education in our Silverton is a top priority for the entire community, providing our students with the best start in life, driving our community's progress, and shaping its future.

The council concluded its work session by discussing priorities and potential roles for the council and city staff to move the vision forward. From these council conversations, several areas clearly rose to the top as high priorities for significant city lead roles. The areas with full support of the councilors in attendance as a priority direction included:

- *Maintaining and improving public infrastructure*
- *Encouraging meaningful dialogue through a partnership between citizens and leaders that builds trust, lets residents be heard, and results in real solutions.*
- *Encouraging open, honest communication, with multiple ways to share information, deliberate respectfully on important issues, and seek agreement on key decisions.*
- *Utilizing good communication and collaboration to help Silverton make tough financial choices and secure resources to fund our priorities.*

The following sections of this report include the following:

1. The Silverton Vision Process
2. Focus Area Vision Statements
3. Community Involvement Activities and Input
4. Council Strategic Planning
5. Project Team Recommendations for Potential Next Steps

The appendices include:

- A. Sorted community input database
- B. Potential Lead and Supporting Partners Worksheets (6)
- C. Online Surveys
- D. Meeting-In-a-Box Materials

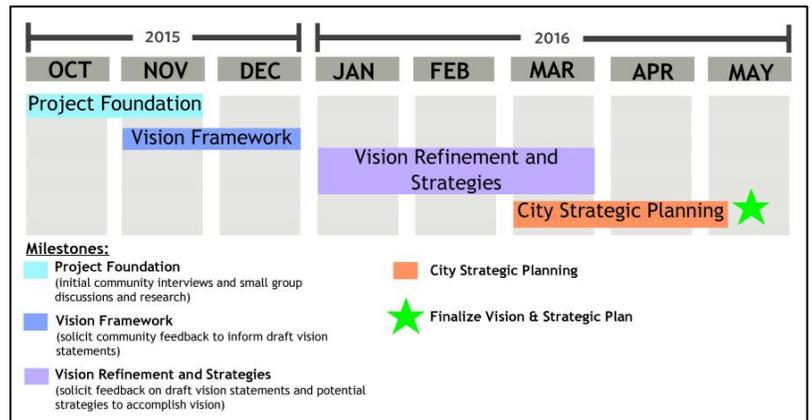


ENVISION SILVERTON 2035

VISION AND CITY STRATEGIC PLANNING FINAL REPORT

Section 1 - The Silverton Vision Process

The Envision Silverton process to develop a community vision started in fall of 2015 and lasted through late spring 2016. HDR, along with Steven Ames Planning, was enlisted to guide a community vision development process and assist the council in developing a long-range strategic direction with robust input from the community. The process had four main tasks (depicted on the below chart). The first task established the foundation for this project with small-group conversations and individual interviews to establish key topics of interest for the community. These early-project conversations provided introductions to some community members while informing communications and outreach plans to reach broader community interests in Silverton.



The second phase—establishing the vision framework—established the project’s six focus areas, which were refined during the course of the project as the project team gathered additional community input. The focus areas served as a foundational structure for the information gathered throughout the process. The focus areas included:

- HOW WE PRESERVE AND CELEBRATE
- HOW WE CONNECT AND COORDINATE
- HOW WE PROSPER
- HOW WE PLAN AND IMPROVE
- HOW WE CARE AND THRIVE
- HOW WE LEARN AND CREATE

The second and third phases of the project established the heart of the city’s visioning process. During this task, the community was fully engaged in articulating vision ideas. These two tasks involved a wide range of engagement events and activities, resulting in a draft community vision statement including ideas for specific achievement strategies. Once the draft vision was created, community members had opportunities—through events, activities, presentations, and online surveys—to voice their thoughts about the vision and offer ideas about actions to bring this vision to life.

Envision Silverton 2035

Silverton’s Vision includes topics such as...

- How We Care & Thrive (Health, Wellness, Welfare, Safety, Emergency Preparedness, Post-Disaster, Elderly, Lower Income, Equity)
- How We Learn & Create (Education, Schools, Lifelong Learning, Recreation, Youth, Sports)
- How We Preserve & Celebrate (Small Town Identity, History, Arts, Culture, Celebration, Agricultural Heritage, Rural Lifestyle)
- How We Plan & Improve (Land Use, Planning, Transportation, Housing, Public Works, Facilities, Parks & Rec, Downtown, Infrastructure)
- How We Prosper (Economy, Employment, Economic Development, Technology, Income Inequality, Transition)
- How We Connect & Coordinate (Governance, Public Involvement, Volunteerism, Community Identity)

The City of Silverton is developing a community-wide vision to help guide Silverton into the future. **Your input is important!**

Go online to weigh in on the future of Silverton. Visit the web address below to take the online survey.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Silverton2035>

For questions or more information about the project, contact Cassie Davis at cassie.davis@hdrinc.com or 503-727-3922. Or visit the project webpage at www.silverton.or.us/silverton2035

The final phase organized the vision components strategically for consideration of the Silverton City Council. The focal point of this phase was a strategic planning session for Silverton City Council, which was supported by community conversations around the last question of the vision process: “What are actions and strategies for achieving the Silverton vision?” As the process was iterative, the project team logged numerous suggestions for strategies and actions prior to the start of this phase.



ENVISION SILVERTON 2035

VISION AND CITY STRATEGIC PLANNING FINAL REPORT

Section 2 - Focus Area Vision Statements

In phase two and three, the community helped establish vision statement around its six focus areas. Two drafting committees of volunteers helped to craft the final language.

HOW WE PLAN AND IMPROVE

WE ENVISION a Silverton that is guided by a comprehensive plan for our future growth, with strong leadership, meaningful public involvement, informed decisions, and agreement on our community's key directions. In our vision, Silverton is open to new ideas and opportunities. We fund public amenities that enhance community and family life, carefully maintain and improve our public infrastructure, and consider community benefits in zoning decisions. A diverse mix of locally owned businesses in downtown and other areas are a focal point of Silverton's growth, along with support for its arts, culture, and natural attractions. Good planning in Silverton means our city has a sustainable economy, affordable housing and senior living options, bike- and pedestrian-friendly streets, ample parks and community spaces, and effective use of our public buildings.

HOW WE PROSPER

WE ENVISION a Silverton with a strong economy and viable, locally owned businesses, carefully balancing economic growth with our continued small-town livability, quality of life and affordability. In our vision, Silverton diversifies its economy, welcoming new investments that contribute to the community and create jobs that sustain our families and civic institutions. We also support thriving homegrown businesses that help retain Silverton's small-town feel, building on our natural assets and amenities to attract visitors, commerce and economic opportunity. As we grow, our bottom line is always attuned to balance, providing for the needs of our residents and visitors in a sustainable way. A balanced economy means Silverton is prosperous yet affordable, dynamic yet down-to-earth – a community where we continue to want to live.

HOW WE PRESERVE AND CELEBRATE

WE ENVISION a Silverton that honors its history, traditions and heritage, encouraging thoughtful change while celebrating our past, present and future. In our vision, Silverton maintains its small-town charm, with a vibrant downtown and variety of shops and small businesses that serve locals and visitors alike. A year-round farmers market connects the agricultural bounty of the region to our community, attracting visitors, supporting area farmers, and increasing the availability of fresh, healthy food. Silver Creek and Silverton Reservoir have been enhanced as our community's most prominent natural features with improved access and creek side amenities, including provisions for public safety and environmental protection. Silverton's rich heritage is kept alive through events, programs and experiences, keeping our community's past relevant – and making our future more confident.

HOW WE LEARN AND CREATE

WE ENVISION a Silverton where education at all levels is a top priority for the entire community, providing our students with the best start in life, driving our community's progress, and shaping its future. In our vision, Silverton has established high levels of transparency, communication and trust between schools and the community at large. We apply our collective knowledge, skills and resources to help our schools succeed, identifying funding, improving facilities, and developing educational resources that enable students to thrive. Silverton's schools take full advantage of local resources, including agriculture, arts and culture, while utilizing new tools to advance student learning. They promote learning, career and technology skills that help prepare local students for the labor force and support development of new jobs in the community. Multiple educational and vocational pathways help all Silverton students succeed, regardless of their chosen career track.

HOW WE CARE AND THRIVE

WE ENVISION a Silverton that meets the basic needs of all of its residents, including quality jobs, affordable housing, accessible health care, and community safety. In our vision, Silverton explores and develops new approaches, tools and resources to help ensure that basic community needs are addressed. Critical needs of low-income families, children and the elderly, including housing, nutrition and medical care, are a priority. Equity among our community members is important to us. Silverton's citizens are empowered to assist in meeting special community needs. Neighbors and local organizations look out for our community at the local level, focusing on safety, security and emergency preparedness. We engage, connect and volunteer to assure that a basic quality of life is available to every member of our community.

HOW WE CONNECT AND COORDINATE

WE ENVISION a Silverton that is a connected community with broad citizen engagement, a clear vision for the future, and a detailed plan of action to achieve it. In our vision, Silverton has exceptional civic pride and community involvement. A genuine partnership between citizens and leaders encourages meaningful dialogue that builds trust, lets residents be heard, and results in real solutions. We encourage open, honest communication, with multiple ways to share information, deliberate respectfully on important issues, and seek agreement on key decisions. Good communication and collaboration helps Silverton make tough financial choices and secure resources to fund our priorities. Dedicated volunteers and community giving help address some of our community's unmet needs. Silverton's leadership reflects the entire community and people of all backgrounds are empowered to lead. We see our growing diversity as strength and an opportunity.



ENVISION SILVERTON 2035

VISION AND CITY STRATEGIC PLANNING FINAL REPORT

Section 3 - Community Involvement Activities and Input

One of the project highlights was the community’s willingness to offer their opinions and participate in the process. Recognizing that one outreach technique does not work for all community members, the project team offered three pathways into the project: participation in project-sponsored activities, online activities, or with or in conjunction with activities sponsored by individuals, schools, businesses or community organizations.

The community involvement program sought to hear from more than those community members who are frequently involved in community affairs. Two community-wide workshops provided an opportunity for community members to discuss ideas with one another, and numerous smaller events, activities and presentations captured additional dialogue about Silverton’s strengths, areas for improvement, visions for the future, and potential actions to get there.



Envision Silverton 2035 - Draft Vision Ideas Survey	
The City of Silverton would like your input on Draft Vision Statements for this project.	
<p style="text-align: center;">How We Learn and Create <i>"How We Learn and Create" highlights the roles of education, schools, lifelong learning, recreational opportunities, youth activities and sports in Silverton's future.</i></p>	
Looking ahead to the year 2035 in Silverton, rank the following six statements as they relate to this focus area – "How We Learn and Create". (Add comments and new ideas on the back)	
1	WE ENVISION a Silverton where education is a top priority, providing our students with the best start in life, driving our community's progress and shaping its future. <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
2	WE ENVISION a Silverton that has established a high level of trust between the community and its schools. <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
3	WE ENVISION a Silverton where we apply our collective knowledge, skills and resources to help our schools succeed, by finding funding, improving facilities, and developing educational resources that enable students to learn and thrive. <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
4	WE ENVISION a Silverton where schools take full advantage of local resources, including agriculture, arts and culture, while utilizing 21st century learning tools to advance student learning. <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
5	WE ENVISION a Silverton where schools promote career and technology skills that support development of new jobs in the community – and they fill those jobs with local graduates. <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
6	WE ENVISION a Silverton where multiple educational and vocational pathways ensure that all Silverton students achieve optimal success, regardless of their chosen path. <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
Optional: What is one action or strategy to help achieve this vision?	

Use back for comments and new ideas (if any).

An enthusiastic team of outreach volunteers expanded project awareness and involvement. With their help, at least 25 additional groups and community networks contributed to the project’s community involvement.

Additionally, the project managed online polling to allow community members to participate at their convenience. More than 500 community members participated in the polling, completing nearly 1,200 surveys about the project’s six focus areas.

To keep the city leaders informed and engaged, the project team provided three council briefings over the course of the project in addition to facilitating a Council Work Session.



ENVISION SILVERTON 2035

VISION AND CITY STRATEGIC PLANNING FINAL REPORT

Section 4 - City Council Strategic Planning

The City Council met Saturday, April 23, 2016 for a half-day work session to discuss the project and potential roles and priorities the council could take from the vision project input. The council reviewed the vision and revised and refined the core values for the city, based on input during the vision process.

A community-wide vision cannot be implemented by the city alone. As part of its discussions at the work session, the council discussed the City's long-term role on potential actions that support the vision: it could lead, it could partner with others, it could support in other ways, or it could play no role.

From these council conversations, several areas clearly rose to the top as high priorities for significant city lead roles. While these priorities do not provide definitive direction for all council deliberations, they should provide a starting point in the city's ongoing planning and decision-making, recognizing the city operates with limited resources.

The areas that had full support of the councilors in attendance as a priority direction included:

- *Maintaining and improving public infrastructure*
- *Encouraging meaningful dialogue through a partnership between citizens and leaders that builds trust, lets residents be heard, and results in real solutions.*
- *Encouraging open, honest communication, with multiple ways to share information, deliberate respectfully on important issues, and seek agreement on key decisions.*
- *Utilizing good communication and collaboration to help Silverton make tough financial choices and secure resources to fund our priorities.*

A second tier of Vision statements received high prioritization for either leading or partnership roles, though not to the degree of the first four items. These included:

- *Considering community benefits in zoning decisions.*
- *Pursuing bike- and pedestrian-friendly streets, ample parks, and community spaces.*
- *Funding public amenities that enhance community and family life.*
- *Making effective use of the city's public buildings*

A third tier are areas that have general council agreement on partner or support roles but limited, if any, support to lead potential actions in these areas. These included:

- *Encouraging a diverse mix of locally owned businesses in downtown and other areas supporting Silverton's growth.*
- *Supporting Silverton's arts, culture, and natural attractions supporting Silverton's growth.*
- *Maintaining Silverton's small-town charm, with a vibrant downtown and variety of shops and small businesses that serve locals and visitors alike.*

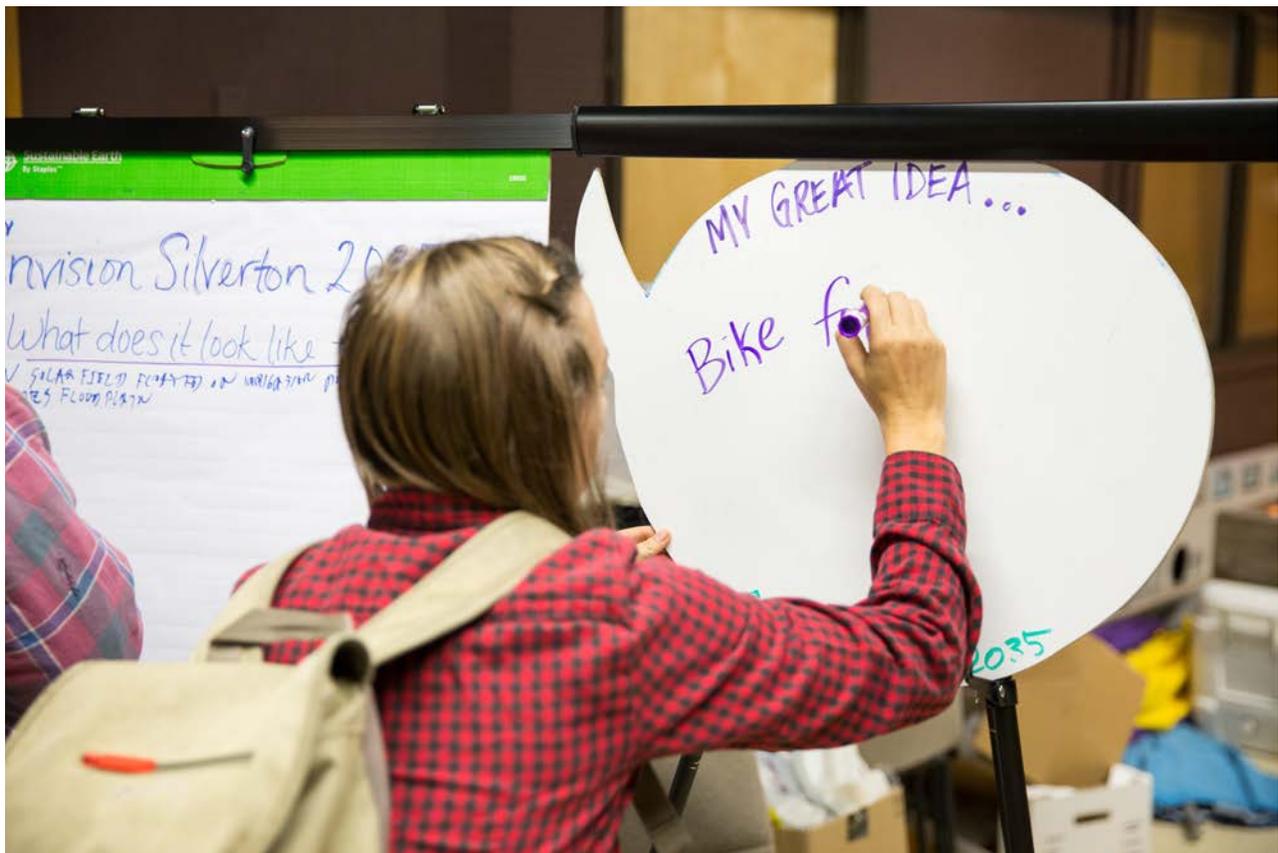
- *Enhancing Silver Creek and Silverton Reservoir as our community’s most prominent natural features, with improved public access and creek side amenities, including provisions for public safety and environmental protection.*
- *Keeping alive Silverton’s rich heritage through events, programs and experiences, keeping our community’s past relevant – and making our future more confident.*

Silverton City Council provided additional consideration in the area of “providing for the needs of our residents and visitors in a sustainable way, keeping our bottom line always attuned to balance.” The council’s prioritization and role would depend on the need.

Councilors had wide disparity in their opinions on only a handful of vision statements, such as “*pursuing affordable housing and senior living options.*” These areas would need further discussion among council to get clearer direction on what the Council’s role should be.

It should be noted that those areas that did not rank as high priority for a council role does not indicate lack of interest or personal support among councilors, only that they’re not seen as high priority for the City of Silverton as an agency. Many of the items in the *Learn and Create* Focus Area, where an agency such as the school district would likely have a leadership role, fell into this category.

The community conversations as part of the vision development process included many, many ideas for pursuing these vision statements. With these vision areas in place and prioritized, the vision is “action-ready.” The action ideas in the database can be linked with each of the vision statements for further and more specific deliberation.





ENVISION SILVERTON 2035

VISION AND CITY STRATEGIC PLANNING FINAL REPORT

Section 5 - Project Team Recommendations for Potential Next Steps

The HDR team offered a Vision and Strategic Plan that would be action-ready in its project proposal. With the robust input from the community and the city's preferred directional roles now in place, the next logical step is to implement.

Based on experience with successful vision implementation in other communities, HDR recommends the following next steps for the City of Silverton:

- Mine the database
- Engage partners
- Maintain community engagement on future projects
- Consider a whole-of community action plan

Mine the database. The input provided during the vision process was rich in content. Though specific actions were not dealt with during this project, thinking about actions helps articulate many participants' visions. As a result, HDR asked about potential actions during the outreach activities. This information is now captured in the database (appendix A) and provides a wide variety of ideas and concept that merit consideration. Many align directly with the priorities that council established at its work session, while others apply directly to current and upcoming planning work. It can be easily coded and pulled from the database using the framework of the Focus Area Vision Statements. Understandably, they are not ready to simply implement; they deserve further vetting with the community and further deliberation among council, but they provide a great starting point.

Engage partners. The vision is a whole-of-community asset and should be shared. The deliberations among council about the vision, roles, and strategic direction toward implementation can be expanded among other organizations in town, such as the Chamber of Commerce, Rotary, the School District, the Historical Society, Silverton Senior Center and others. All these organizations will find components of the vision that apply directly to them. It can be an asset as they make future plans. With other organizations involved, the opportunities for partnerships expand greatly.

Maintain the engagement in the community on future projects. The Vision project established relationships among the community that the city can build upon for other projects. The database and participant lists allow the city to reach out to community members based on their interests, which leads to higher participation and greater satisfaction among participants. If not activated regularly, the community's interest will eventually wane. An obvious opportunity to connect with Vision participants would be to follow up on the Vision status and the city's future plans. Interactive forums worked well with the community during the vision process and should be considered for other city initiatives.

Consider a whole-of-community action plan. While each of the first three suggestions are steps in the right direction in implementing the vision, an action plan would provide a cohesive and central focal point to identify specific actions, create partnerships, and identify timelines and leadership roles to move the vision forward and implement actions. Moreover, it offers an ongoing forum for forward-thinking community dialogue about the future of Silverton.