

**TAKE HOLD OF  
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**GRAND JUNCTION** economic  
PARTNERSHIP

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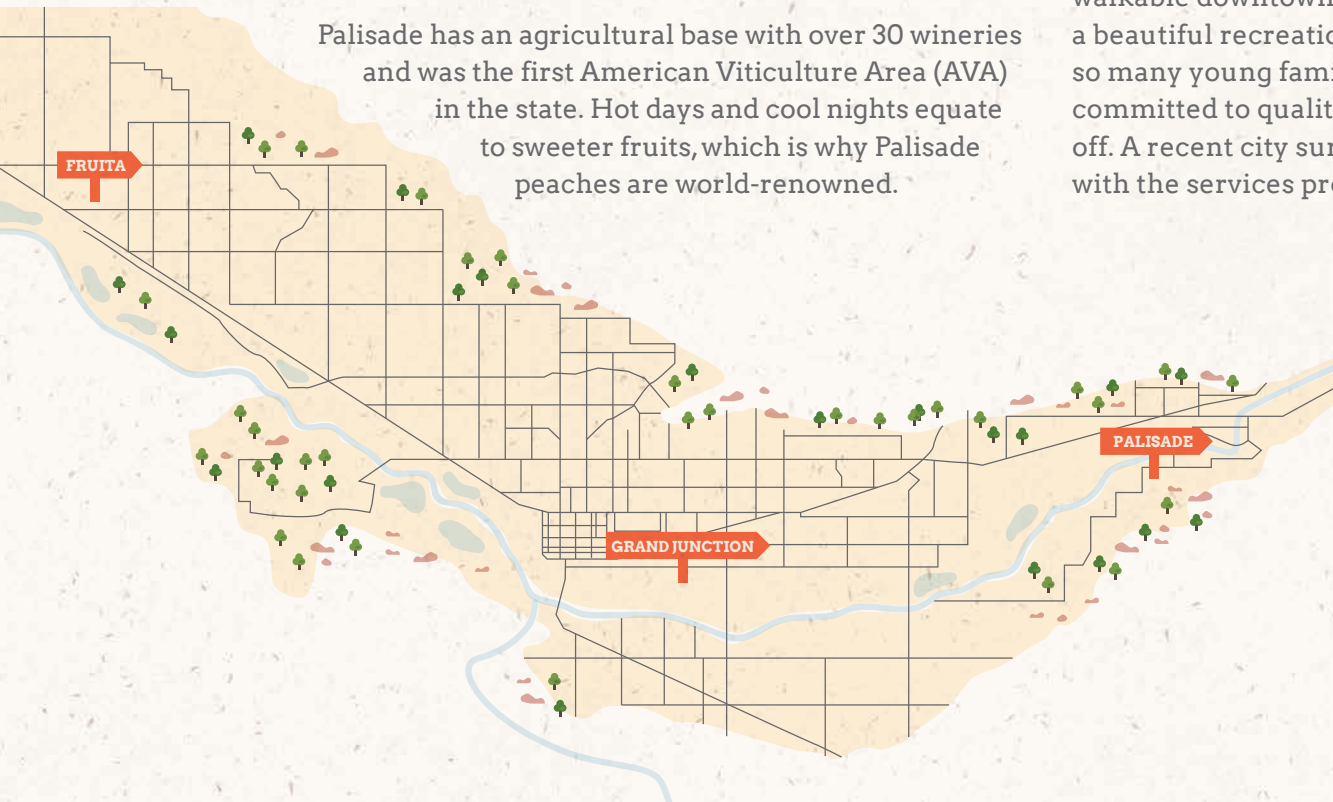
# LOCATION OVERVIEW

Grand Junction, Colorado is the largest metropolitan area in Western Colorado - and the largest city between Denver and Salt Lake City, Utah. Located on I-70, Grand Junction sits in the middle of Colorado's Grand Valley at the junction of the Colorado and Gunnison Rivers. The City of Fruita is situated on the western edge of the valley and the Town of Palisade sits at the base of the Grand Mesa on the eastern edge of the valley. These three municipalities, along with the smaller communities of DeBeque, Collbran, Mesa, Mack and Loma make up Mesa County— population 154,000. Most of the county works in Grand Junction, although they may live in one of the surrounding communities, which each has their own unique culture.

A quaint downtown complete with a local brewery and distillery round out a great tourism experience for anybody visiting the region. USA Today named Palisade's Colorado Mountain Winefest one of the best wine festivals in the country. The Cameo Shooting Complex, near Palisade, recently celebrated its grand opening and will continue to expand into one the nicest shooting complexes in the country, making it a destination for competition and education.

Fruita is very well known in certain outdoor industries and is world renowned among mountain bikers for its first-class singletrack trails. Often ranked among the safest cities in America, with a walkable downtown, a family-friendly summer concert series and a beautiful recreation and community center, it is easy to see why so many young families are moving to Fruita. City leadership is committed to quality of life and outdoor recreation, and it's paying off. A recent city survey showed that 94% of residents were happy with the services provided by the City of Fruita.

Palisade has an agricultural base with over 30 wineries and was the first American Viticulture Area (AVA) in the state. Hot days and cool nights equate to sweeter fruits, which is why Palisade peaches are world-renowned.



# INDUSTRIES

## TOP INDUSTRIES IN OUR REGION:

**AEROSPACE-** Grand Junction has recently begun recruiting the industry to the more affordable side of the state where we have the resources, workforce and available space to grow the suppliers network the aerospace industry relies on.

**AGRIBUSINESS-** The valley boasts over 30 wineries and is well known for its peaches and corn. We have seen substantial growth in recent years in the industrial hemp industry. Hemp farms and CBD oil manufacturing continues to expand throughout the region.

**ENERGY-** Piceance Basin is the second largest natural gas reserve in the US, which has made energy a legacy industry for the region.

**HEALTHCARE-** Our largest local industry, with over 11,000 employees.

**OUTDOOR RECREATION-** A very fast-growing industry in the region, particularly outdoor recreation manufacturing, which makes use of the available labor pool that formerly supported the energy manufacturing industry.

**TECH-** We've seen growth specifically in geospatial and software development companies. The computer science program at Colorado Mesa University works to better prepare graduates for the locally available tech jobs.

# GRAND VALLEY BY THE NUMBERS

154,210

POPULATION

3.2%

UNEMPLOYMENT

\$46,124

AVG. ANNUAL WAGE

76,142

LABOR FORCE

90.75%

HIGH SCHOOL  
DIPLOMA

28.84%

BACHELOR'S DEGREE  
OR HIGHER

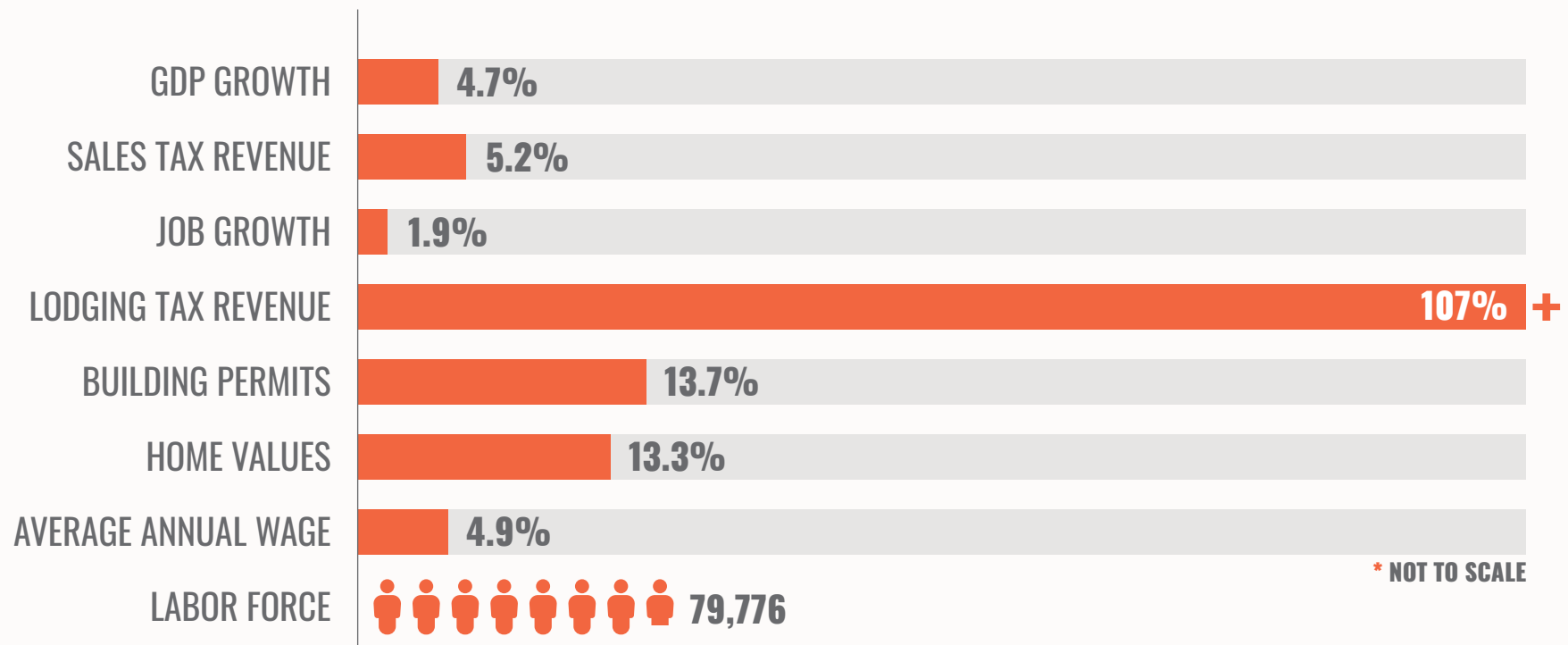
(2019)



# WE ARE GROWING

Mesa County was slow to climb out of the 2008 recession, while the Denver metro area boomed. As a result, leadership across the valley collaborated on a plan to invest in needed infrastructure, streamline efforts and better market the quality of life. Those efforts and the unprecedented growth on the Front Range have resulted in a spillover effect. Grand Junction is the third largest destination for people leaving the Denver metro area (behind Phoenix and Seattle). The Colorado State Demographer's Office estimates Mesa County will continue to grow as much as 60% by 2050.

## THE FOLLOWING NUMBERS REPRESENT THE GROWTH WE SAW IN 2019:



# COST OF LIVING & DOING BUSINESS

	GRAND JUNCTION	DENVER
AVERAGE SINGLE-FAMILY HOME PRICE	<b>\$297,793</b>	<b>\$599,200</b>
MEDIAN PROPERTY TAX	<b>\$1,515</b>	<b>\$3,732*</b>
AVERAGE COMMERCIAL COSTS	OFFICE: <b>\$12.76</b> SHOP/YARD: <b>\$7.94</b> RETAIL: <b>\$12.32</b>	OFFICE: <b>\$28.62</b> SHOP/YARD: <b>\$8.24</b> RETAIL: <b>\$19.64</b>
AVERAGE ROUNTRIP COMMUTE	<b>38 MINS.</b>	<b>50 MINS.</b>

Commercial office space costs in Denver are more than twice as high as in Grand Junction.

Mesa County has the **second lowest** property tax burden in the Mountain West Region—that's second least expensive in Colorado, Idaho, Nevada, Montana, Wyoming, and Utah.

*\*Average assessed across six counties that make up central Denver.*

Get **TWO** houses in Grand Junction for the price of one in Denver!

Residents in Denver spend 48 more hours a year commuting than those in Grand Junction. Imagine what you could do with those 2 extra days per year!

# EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Mesa County is home to Colorado Mesa University. As Colorado's fastest growing university, CMU offers electrical-computer, civil and mechanical engineering programs, a robust nursing program, computer science, cybersecurity, construction management, and a number of other programs that cultivate a highly skilled workforce catered to our local industries.

The Mesa County Workforce Center (MCWC) is the only Work Ready Certified center in Colorado, putting our workforce ahead of every other region in the state. Our Workforce Center and our Department of Human Services have a unique partnership—the only one like it in the country—that allows us to get more people back to work successfully than anywhere else.

We have fostered several collaborations between our workforce center, CMU, the community college and D51 schools that put kids on career tracks at an early age, providing a continuous and qualified workforce to fill local jobs.



## MESA COUNTY VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT 51

**24**  
ELEMENTARY  
SCHOOLS

**8**  
MIDDLE  
SCHOOLS

**1**  
MIDDLE/HIGH  
SCHOOL

**4**  
HIGH  
SCHOOLS

**1**  
K-12  
SCHOOL

**Including:** Dual language elementary and middle schools, International Baccalaureate (IB) for high school students, Waldorf and Montessori education, and a number of non-district charter and private, faith-based schools.



# TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

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Grand Junction is a transportation hub with multiple options for freight and business travel. The Grand Junction Regional Airport has 18 daily direct flights to seven locations, including the Denver Air Connection—a daily charter service, that makes travel to Denver a breeze. It is often faster to fly to Denver from Grand Junction than to drive from one side of Denver to the other.

As roads become more congested across the nation, shipping services are moving back to rail more and more. Grand Junction boasts two Class I rail carriers and a number of sites with rail spurs to take full advantage of the rail lines. Grand Junction has a clear plan for growth as outlined in its Comprehensive Plan. The region also has the room and resources to support that growth. Included in that plan are recent and ongoing investments in transportation infrastructure to help move people more efficiently. The Riverside Parkway project, renovations at all exits off of I-70, the widening of the 24 Road and 29 Road corridors, and adding a fourth exit off of I-70 at 29 Road are some examples of significant projects that are proactive measures to deal with future growth.



# KEY DEVELOPMENTS

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There is abundant room for mixed-use commercial developments, especially along the 24-Road corridor on the western side of Grand Junction. There is open, available, shovel-ready acreage with easy access to I-70 is available surrounding Community Hospital, the region's newest hospital, making this area ripe for medical offices and senior living developments.

A redevelopment of the Mesa Mall into a more open shopping area to include green space and residential is underway. Building permit applications are up and the City of Grand Junction recently added a staff person to deal with the increased demand for services.

The City of Grand Junction invested over \$14 million in a new river district located along the Colorado River in the heart of the valley. A key component of the river district is Riverfront at Las Colonias Park— a 140-acre city park with an embedded commercial business park geared towards the outdoor industry. The park includes a 5,000-seat amphitheater, a zipline across the Colorado River, multiple ponds for stand-up paddle-boarding, and a river park with two standing waves. The Colorado River Trail, which runs from the Town of Palisade to the Utah border, runs right through the park, making the entire valley accessible by bike. Bonsai Design and

RockyMounts are currently building new headquarters within the business park – and several more businesses are following suit.

A little further west, just past the Fifth Street bridge, the City of Grand Junction is reinvigorating the grounds of a former auto salvage yard with a mixed-use commercial and residential park. Alongside high-density housing, Riverfront at Dos Rios will include a bike park, a multi-acre Baja-themed cantina, and multiple pads for retail, office space and light industrial.

The entire river district, including Riverfront at Las Colonias Park and Riverfront at Dos Rios, falls within Mesa County's federal Opportunity Zone tracts.

The City of Fruita has more than 68 acres of shovel-ready sites ideal for outdoor recreation manufacturers or any business seeking land equipped with fiber, as well as direct rail and highway access. The Fruita Commercial & Industrial Business Park offers lakeside sites complete with a cable wakeboard park and panoramic views of the nearby Colorado National Monument. The picturesque landscape is located on a multiuse bike path connecting downtown Fruita and the world-famous Kokopelli mountain bike trail system.

# CONTACT US

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JANUARY 2020