

Town of New Castle Community Profile

Planning Team

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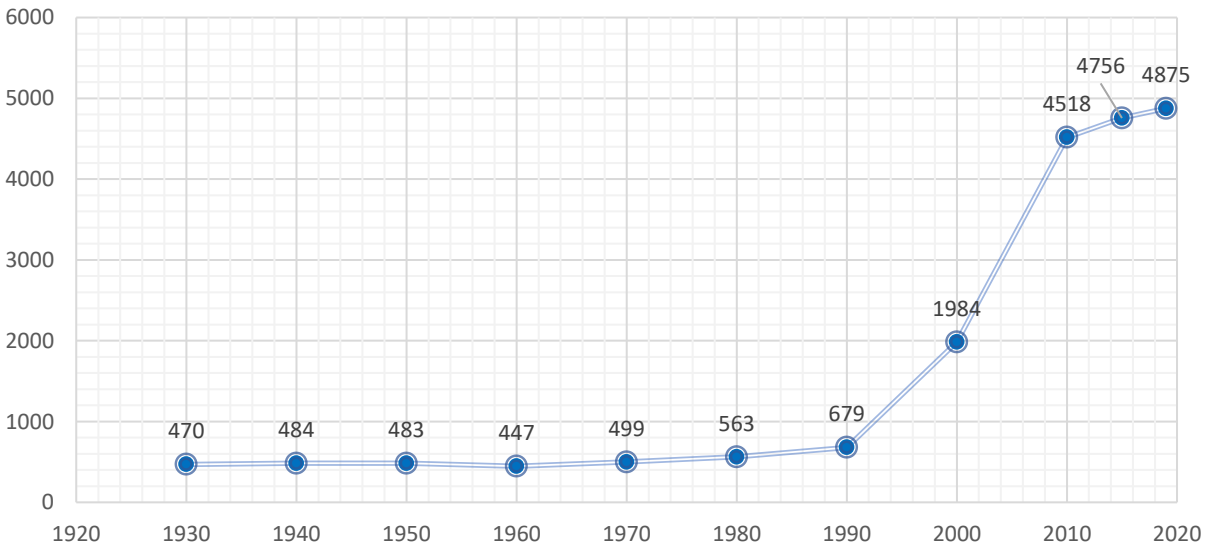
Location and Geography

The Town of New Castle is located in Garfield County, Colorado along Interstate 70 and the Colorado River on the Western Slope of the Rocky Mountains. New Castle is approximately 76 miles east of Grand Junction and 169 miles west of Denver and lies at an elevation of 5,597 feet above sea level. The total land area of the community is 2.69 square miles.

Population and Demographics

New Castle’s population grew from about 4,756 people in 2015 to 4,875 in 2019. However, the local planning team noted the actual population in New Castle is approximately 300 residents greater than reported by the Census Bureau. New Castle provides lower cost alternatives for quality housing compared to other areas of the valley. New Castle provides a family friendly small-town lifestyle that appeals to a large range of area residents. New Castle is seeing an increase in retired adults and work from home professionals moving into town. New Castle’s population accounted for 8 percent of Garfield County’s population in 2019.

Figure NCS.1: Population 1930 – 2019



Source: U.S. Census Bureau¹

¹ United States Census Bureau. "2019 American Fact Finder: S0101: Age and Sex." [database file]. <https://factfinder.census.gov>.

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In comparison to the County, New Castle's population was:

- **Slightly younger.** The median age of New Castle's population was 32.2 years old in 2019, compared with the County average of 36.5 years old. The age-distribution of New Castle's population had decreased since 2015, when the medium age was 32.5 years. New Castle had a larger proportion of people under 20 years old (32.9%) than the County (27.7%).²
- **Less ethnically diverse.** Since 2015, New Castle has grown less ethnically diverse. In 2015, 29% of New Castle's population was Hispanic (1,326 people). By 2019 New Castle's population grew to 22.1% Hispanic (1,079 people). This trend is similar to increasing ethnic diversity in Garfield County, where Hispanic population increased from 28.1 to 28.4 percent of the population between 2015 to 2019.³
- **Lower poverty rate.** The poverty rate in New Castle (5.3% of people living below the federal poverty line) was lower than the County's poverty rate (8.6%) in 2019.⁴

Employment and Economics

Most New Castle residents find employment outside of the community in the Roaring Fork Valley, the Eagle Valley, and the Colorado River Valley.

- **Higher household income.** New Castle's median household income in 2019 (\$93,542) was about \$17,605 more than the County (\$75,937).⁵
- **Fewer long-distance commuters.** About 14.6% percent of workers in New Castle commuted for fewer than 15 minutes, compared with about 27.7% of workers in Garfield County. About 39.9% of workers in New Castle commute 30 minutes or more to work, compared to about 45.4% of the County workers. This is an indicator of the importance of the transportation infrastructure within the City and the connection to County infrastructure for the local economy.
- **Similar mix of industries.** New Castle's major employment sectors, accounting for 10% or more of employment each, were: Retail Trade, Professional and Scientific industry, and Educational Services and Health Care. Garfield County's industries include Construction, Retail Trade, Professional and Scientific jobs, Educational Services, and Arts and Entertainment.⁶

Housing

Many of the houses in the original New Castle town site were built in the early 20th century and are mostly stick-built with very few brick homes. Likely, many are not up to present building codes and may be in poor condition and at a much higher risk compared to newer subdivisions (River Park, Lakota Canyon Ranch, Castle Valley Ranch, Shibui, etc.). There are a few homes and commercial buildings that still stand after over 120 years. Several of the original and newer town site commercial buildings also house people on the second floor which may create the potential for seismic vulnerability should a significant event occur. In town limits, there are approximately 35 mobile homes. Just outside town limits, the Apple Tree & Mountain Shadows communities have approximately 400 mobile homes.

Garfield County has adopted the 2015 International Building Codes as of July 1, 2016. All residential and commercial developments must follow these regulations. However, homes and

² United States Census Bureau. "2019 American Fact Finder: S0101: Age and Sex." [database file]. <https://factfinder.census.gov/>.

³ United States Census Bureau. "2019 American Fact Finder: DP05: ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates." [database file]. <https://factfinder.census.gov/>.

⁴ United States Census Bureau. "2019 American Fact Finder: DP03: Selected Economic Characteristics." [database file]. <https://factfinder.census.gov/>.

⁵ United States Census Bureau. "2019 American Fact Finder: DP03: Selected Economic Characteristics." [database file]. <https://factfinder.census.gov/>.

⁶ United States Census Bureau. "2019 American Fact Finder: DP03: Selected Economic Characteristics." [database file]. <https://factfinder.census.gov/>.

structures built prior to building code adoption may not meet current regulatory standards. In comparison to Garfield County, New Castle's housing stock was:

- **Fewer renter-occupied homes.** Approximately 28.8 percent of occupied housing units in New Castle are renter occupied compared with 33.4 percent of occupied housing in Garfield County.⁷
- **Newer.** New Castle had a smaller share of housing built prior to 1970 than the County (9.0% compared to 17.6%).⁸
- **Fewer multifamily.** About 71.4% of housing in New Castle was single-family detached, compared with 62.4% on the County's housing. New Castle had a smaller share of mobile and manufactured housing (3.5%) compared to the County (9.7%). The newer single-family homes and multifamily dwelling units are mostly stick-frame and are up to present building code standards.⁹ The local planning team noted there are a limited number of mobile homes in the community. There is one privately owned park with approximately 20 lots on it and there is one street in town which has a few manufactured homes.

The local planning team noted that since 2017 there has been a spike in housing and development permits. Average home prices in New Castle are generally more affordable than other portions of the county and state and the city has seen growth in the number of retirees and work-from-home residents moving to or staying in New Castle.

Land Use, Development, and Transportation

The population of New Castle has grown rapidly in the last several decades. This growth is expected to continue as several new developments are planned, including: residential development, offices, and co-housing for seniors. New Castle recently invested \$9 million into their wastewater facility to improve capacity. The town is in the process of updating additional infrastructure such as: the water treatment facility, sewer lines, and raw water irrigation system.

There are no bridges owned or maintained by New Castle. In the event of mass evacuation there are a few notable challenges New Castle and its partners will have to manage. They are:

- The stacking and queuing at the I – 70 interchange is a problem during peak morning and evening hours. Evening traffic queues can extend down the length of the off-ramp from the access bridge intersection. The vehicle stacking is likely to become more severe as New Castle population increase without substantial intersection improvements or an additional interstate interchange.
- The busy intersection at highway 6 & 24 / Castle Valley Blvd. is stressed during morning and evening traffic peaks. The four-way stop and short stacking lanes contribute to frequent congestion. The current level of service (LOS) at highway 6 & 24 / Castle Valley Blvd. intersection is "C" at non-peak hours and "D" during peak hours. Traffic engineers consider a LOS "D" the minimum acceptable LOS and ratings of "E" or "F" are unacceptable because of long intersection wait times. As traffic volume increases due to future commercial and residential development, the LOS will decrease to "E" or "F" unless intersection improvements are completed.
- North-South access from downtown New Castle to Castle Valley Blvd or CR 245 is severely restricted in vehicle movement due to 7th St., which is narrow and winding; it does not have adequate capacity or easy access.

⁷ United States Census Bureau. "2019 American Fact Finder: DP04: Selected Housing Characteristics." [database file]. <https://factfinder.census.gov/>.

⁸ United States Census Bureau. "2019 American Fact Finder: DP04: Selected Housing Characteristics." [database file]. <https://factfinder.census.gov/>.

⁹ United States Census Bureau. "2019 American Fact Finder: DP04: Selected Housing Characteristics." [database file]. <https://factfinder.census.gov/>.

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- The single-lane bridge crossing Elk Creek on the west end of town could incur a bottleneck during a mass evacuation.
- Approximately two miles north of New Castle is another single-lane bridge that could see the same scenario as above if it were the only exit out of town as well. This bridge is located at the intersection of CR 245 and CR 241.

Future development in the Lakota and Castle Valley Ranch have the potential to be in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI). WUI is the land where developed and undeveloped land meets. The city is currently discussing updates to the local building codes between developers and planners for these WUI interface areas. While floodplain mapping efforts are still currently underway for New Castle, the majority of new development is located in higher elevated areas and outside of potential flood risk areas.

Since 2017, the city has also updated and increased its water treatment capacity. In the next five years the city anticipates additional residential development. Three developers are working to add large scale residential developments in the areas surrounding New Castle which will add 100+ dwellings per development. These homes may take place in Castle Valley Ranch, Lakota, and Lakota Ridge areas. Commercial development of up to 200,000 square feet may take place in Lakota and Castle Valley Ranch. New houses have been limited to infill of existing neighborhoods with approximately 61 new homes in town. One small downtown home has been demolished to make way for a larger residential property.

Critical Facilities and Infrastructure

Each participating jurisdiction identified critical facilities vital for disaster response, providing shelter to the public, and essential for returning the jurisdiction's functions to normal during and after a disaster. Critical facilities were identified during the original planning process and updated by the local planning team as a part of this plan update. The following table and figure provide a summary of the critical facilities for New Castle and whether they are in known hazard areas.

Table NCS.1: New Castle Critical Facilities

Number	Name	Generator? (Y/N)	Floodplain	Dam Inundation	Wildfire Hazard	Geologic Hazards
1	Elk Creek Elementary School	N	Yes	Yes	Moderate	Soils Hazard
2	Kathryn Senor Elementary School	N	No	No	Low	Soils Hazard
3	Colorado River Fire Rescue Station 62	N	No	Yes	Moderate	None
4	New Castle Branch Library	N	No	Yes	Moderate	None
5	New Castle Town Hall	N	No	Yes	Moderate	None
6	New Castle Community Center	N	No	Yes	Moderate	None
7	New Castle Post Office	N	No	Yes	Moderate	None
8	New Castle Police	N	Yes	Yes	Moderate	None
9	Riverside Middle School	N	No	No	Low	Soils Hazard
10	Colorado River Fire Rescue Station 64	N	No	No	Moderate	None

Number	Name	Generator? (Y/N)	Floodplain	Dam Inundation	Wildfire Hazard	Geologic Hazards
11	Wastewater Treatment Plant with inlet on Elk Creek	N	Yes	Yes	Moderate	None
12	City Market - Grocery	N	No	No	Low	None
13	Water Treatment Plant	N	Yes	No	High	None
14	RFTA Bus Stops	N	No	No	Low	None
15	Amtrak and Union Pacific RR (not mapped)	N	Yes	Yes	Moderate	None

Other critical facilities or key infrastructure of concern in the city include electrical substations, radio towers, utility structures and major transportation corridors such as Castle Valley Blvd, Midland Ave, Interstate 70, and State Highway 6. While these assets are typically owned and maintained by other agencies, they are key resources for emergency response and mitigation strategies to reduce natural hazard risk. Thus these facilities should be considered when evaluating localized risks and disaster response activities.

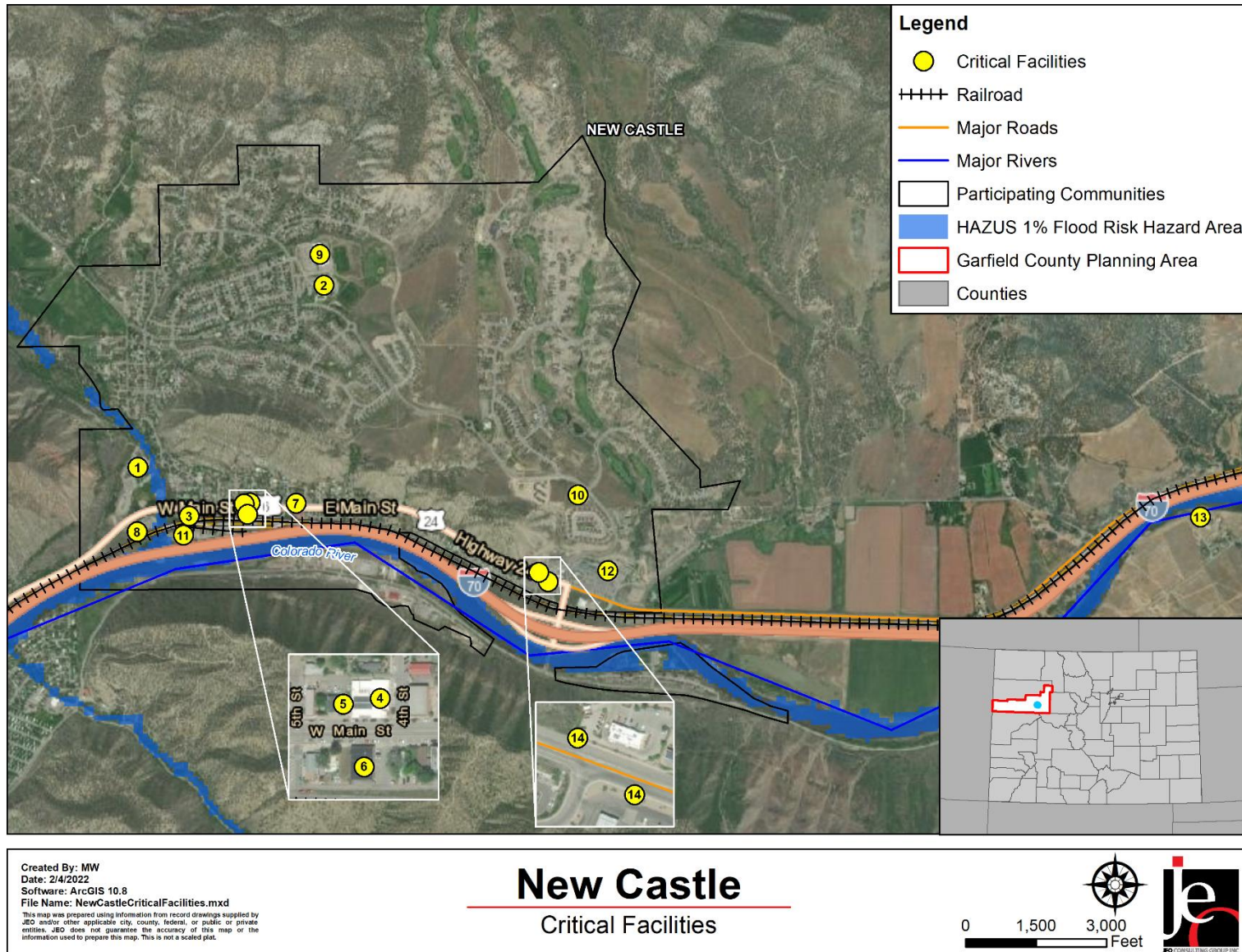
Health and Medical Facilities

There is one clinic located in town: Castle Valley Children’s Clinic. The town also has a dental office in town. The following medical and health facilities are located within the community.

Table NCS.2: Town of New Castle Medical Facilities

Type of Facility	Facility Name	Operating Status
Clinic	Castle Valley Children’s Clinic	Active
Health	Glenwood Medical Associates	Active

Figure NCS.2: New Castle Critical Facilities



Historic and Cultural Resources

The Town of New Castle was incorporated on February 2, 1888. Its Main Street is a designated historic district. Over the years, New Castle’s Historic Preservation Commission, a group of residents and town officials, have been committed to the historic preservation of the Town and the future success of Main Street. Their efforts have focused on “historic style” improvements between 2nd and 8th Streets (old style lamp posts, trees, and benches) and historic landmark designation for selected buildings along Main Street. They sought to embellish Main Street’s existing historic character and building stock. Currently there are no sites in New Castle identified on the National Register of Historic Places.¹⁰

Community Organizations and Programs

The following are groups or organizations with community interest or stake in a rapid return to “normal” should a natural hazard or disaster present itself. These groups are most likely to assist the community, with or without direction:

- New Castle is the gateway to the Flattops region and White River National Forest. A large variety of year-round sporting opportunities present themselves to the sportsman. A strong percentage of the New Castle population is sport oriented and would respond to assist if called to a hazardous situation within the Town.
- A concerted effort to encourage citizen volunteer efforts has been under way for some time. Volunteer groups can be identified through this effort.
- Numerous churches within the Town have considerable membership. Some citizen oriented non-profit groups are also based in New Castle. The River Center is an example of the former; its mission to determine the needs of the community, recruit volunteers and fulfill those needs.
- Other organizations include the Boy Scouts and Lions Club.

Additionally, the town has established several Boards and Commissions to guide decision making and implementation of its programs and services:

- Planning and Zoning Commission
- Historic Preservation Commission
- Parks, Open Space, Trails, and Recreation Committee
- Climate Action and Environmental Initiative

Administrative Structure

New Castle is guided by a 7-member Town Council and includes several departments:

- Administration
- Building and Planning
- Clerk
- Finance/Treasurer
- Police
- Public Works

Hazard Prioritization

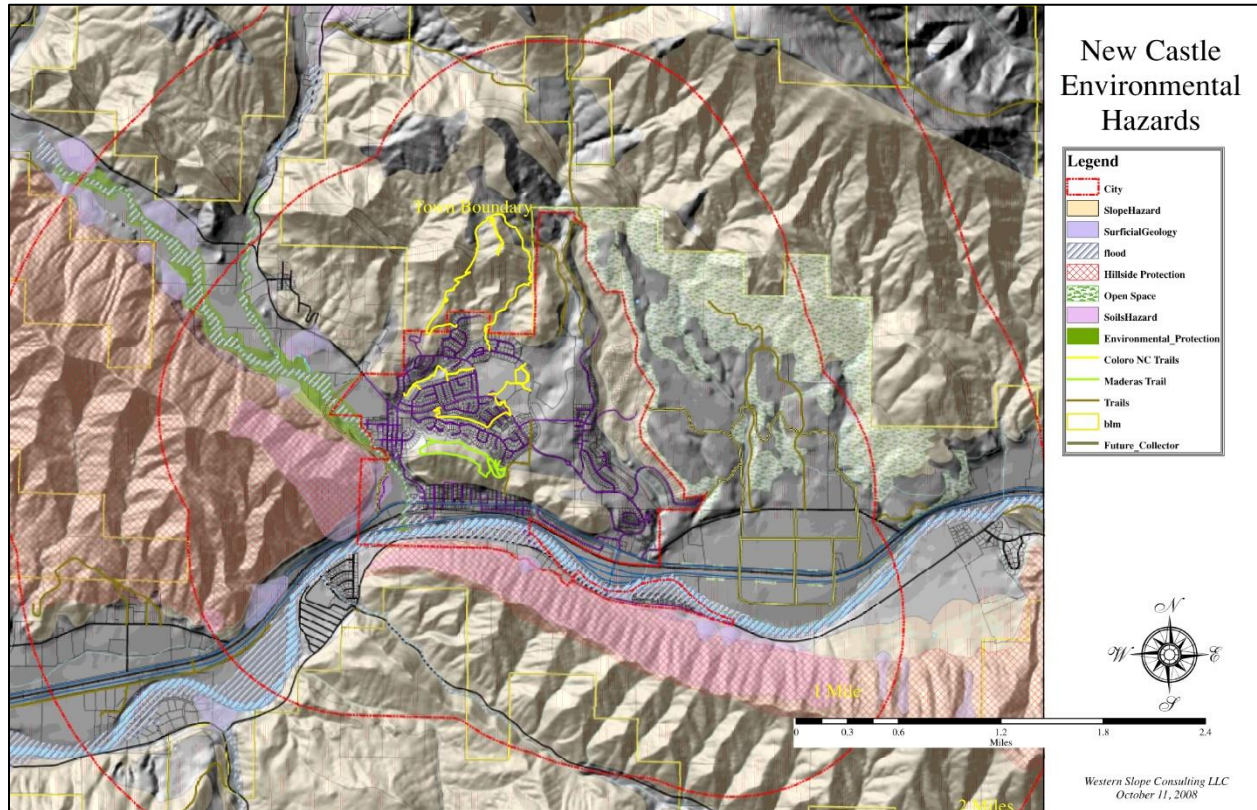
The Garfield County Hazard Mitigation Plan evaluates a range of natural and man-made hazards which pose a risk to the county and communities. However, during the planning process, the local planning team identified specific hazards of top concern for New Castle which required a more nuanced and in-depth discussion of local events, vulnerabilities, and mitigation actions the community wishes to pursue. The following section expands on the hazards of top concern identified by the New Castle local planning team, including:

¹⁰National Register of Historic Places: Garfield County Colorado. 2021.
<https://www.nationalregisterofhistoricplaces.com/co/garfield/state.html>

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- Wildfire
- Flood
- Landslide, Mud/Debris Flow, and Rockfall
- Hazardous Materials

For a review and analysis of other natural hazards, please see the county-wide summary in *Section Four: Risk Assessment*.



Wildfire

The top hazard of concern for the town of New Castle is wildfire. The area surrounding New Castle is prone to severe wildfire, as is much of Garfield County. New Castle acknowledges the following geographic areas and related vulnerabilities in which local risk is greater than the risk described in the County's risk assessment, and in which additional actions are warranted to reduce the risk to life and property:

- In general, wildfire risk is greatest in the northern portion of New Castle, from the area north of Mount Medaris. A small fire was quickly contained in 2020 on Mt. Medaris caused no damage to structures but highlighted local risk.
- Specifically, new development on the northeastern edge of town, accessed via Clubhouse Drive and Faas Ranch Road has had incomplete mitigation to reduce the risk of wildfire, which increases its vulnerability. The golf course at the northeastern edge of town is expected to experience accompanying development of new higher-end housing in the coming years, in areas that have steep slopes and are at risk from wildfires spreading from the adjacent wildland-urban interface. In 2019 a lightning strike caused a small

wildfire northeast of Lakota Golf Course, just outside of town limits. The fire was contained quickly with no property damages.

- Some nearby coalmines, similar to those in other parts of the County have been smoldering underground for over 100 years and provide possible sources of ignition. The Coal Seam fire resulted from the same ignition source.
- Concerns exist for evacuation from the community during wildfire events. Egress from town during a fast-moving fire event will take a coordinated effort on the part of safety personnel and early preparation on the part of residents. Due to the volatile nature of wildfire events, it is difficult to predict and establish evacuation routes prior to events. Safety personnel (fire and police) understand the possible exit routes and will coordinate an evacuation plan based on how and where the emergency unfolds.

New Castle has an annual burn ban code that makes all open fires illegal between the months of April through October. New Castle is working to review the WUI code to understand if and how it may be a useful tool in future development areas. New Castle also has an agreement with the County concerning wildfire mitigation for new development areas. Residents are reminded through newsletters and by other means to be prepared to leave on short notice during fire season.

Flood

The Colorado River runs along the southern edge of New Castle alongside Interstate 70 and State Highway 6. Garfield County and New Castle are currently in the process of updating floodplain maps. The new DFIRMs are anticipated to be effective in 2024.

The Town acknowledges the following geographic areas and related vulnerabilities in which local flood risk is greater than the risk described in the County's risk assessment, and in which additional actions are warranted to reduce the risk to life and property from flooding.

- The Town's potable water head gate, located on East Elk Creek, is vulnerable to flood damage. While it is outside of the Town's limits, it is a town-owned facility.
- A bridge crossing on CR 245 at East Elk Creek (a Garfield County controlled facility outside the Town's limits) is critical to the safe and efficient flow of transportation into and out of the Town.
- A wastewater / effluent discharge on the Colorado River could become blocked in a flood, damaging the Town's ability to effectively manage water.
- Grand River Park along the Colorado River in the southeast portion of the Town is subject to flood events.

Mitigation Success:

The following projects show a track record of success in implementation:

- 7th Street Project (2001): The Town of New Castle used its own funds and equipment to create a diversion structure to protect residents from storm water flooding during heavy rain. Property owners along 7th Street were suffering repeated flood damages (although no repetitive loss properties as defined by the NFIP). The project included construction of a channel at the western base of Mount Medaris. The channel diverts floodwaters away from private property and into the public right-of way. The project has been tested several times by heavy rainfall since its construction and no losses have been suffered. The diversion structure was constructed with limited funds and should be considered temporary. Future improvements should include channel enlargement, bank armament and construction of a storm water detention basin.

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- **N. Wild Horse Project (2007):** The Town of New Castle used its own funds to contract improvements to the N. Wildhorse drainage area. The project is intended to protect future residential development from large and infrequent flooding and debris flows. The project included channeling floodwater under the roadway and into an improved parkland area. The improvements include installation of large galvanized culverts and an armored channel. The improved parkland is designed to act as a water and debris basin.
- **Hwy 6 Project (2002):** At the request of the Town, land developers created a diversion structure to protect businesses and residents from storm water flooding during heavy rain. Property owners along Hwy 6 were suffering repeated flood damages (although no repetitive loss properties as defined by the NFIP). The project included construction of a channel at the eastern base of Mount Medaris. The channel diverts floodwaters away from private property and into the public right-of-way. The project has been tested several times by heavy rainfall since its construction and no losses have been suffered. The diversion structure was constructed with limited funds and should be considered temporary. Future improvements should include channel enlargement, bank armament and construction of a storm water detention basin.
- **C Ave. Drainage Project (2008):** A series of detention basins were created above the downtown district that suffered from repetitive flooding. The basins were constructed by land developers and are located in Castle Valley Ranch PUD, above the C Ave. drainage channel. The basins are designed to fill up and hold excess floodwaters until the system can recover and drain naturally. The project has been tested several times by heavy winter runoff and no losses have been suffered.

The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)

The Town of New Castle participates in the NFIP by adopting and enforcing floodplain management ordinances to reduce future flood damage. In exchange, the NFIP makes federally backed flood insurance available to homeowners, renters, and business owners in these communities. Preliminary Flood Insurance Study (FIS) Flood Insurance and Rate Maps (FIRM) are not available for New Castle. The initial Flood Hazard Boundary Map (FHBM) was identified on 7/25/1975. There are no repetitive flood loss properties in Town of New Castle. As of August 2021, New Castle does not have any active policies in force with the NFIP.

New FIRMs are currently under development for Garfield County and will include the Town of New Castle. To continue to comply with NFIP requirements, New Castle will review and adopt the new FIRMs once approved by FEMA. Planned adoption of new mapping is anticipated for 2024.

Table NCS.3: New Castle NFIP Statistics

Jurisdiction	Policies In-Force	Total Coverage	Total Premiums	Closed Losses	Total Payments
New Castle	0	N/A	N/A	0	N/A

Source: NFIP HUDEX Data by Geography, August 2021

Landslides, Mud/Debris Flow, Rockfall

Several areas within the Town of New Castle experience landslides and debris flows in ways that affect the residents and infrastructure of the Town. The local planning team noted specific concerns exist for local utilities and resources when rockfall/landslide events occur in the surrounding areas. Past landslides which have closed transportation routes have led to mass detours through New Castle. The local gas stations have run out of fuel in the past as residents or travelers have detoured through New Castle, added extensive miles to their route, or are unfamiliar with the area and available fuel resources.

The following geographic areas and related vulnerabilities experience local landslide and debris flow risk that is greater than what is described in the County’s risk assessment. Additional actions are warranted to reduce the risk to life and property from landslides and debris flows in these areas:

- Mount Medaris is a small range with steep slopes that runs through the Town of New Castle from east to west. It is located just to the north of the historic downtown area. This area is subject to debris flows and rock fall that impact downtown New Castle and areas in the immediate vicinity.
- The southern boundary of the Town is flanked by steep slopes and is subject to debris flows and rock fall.

Currently, mitigation is incorporated within the development review process. On a case-by-case basis, an engineering review focused on landslide mitigation is required for new development.

Hazardous Materials

Several hazardous materials transfer routes (most notably I-70 and the rail line) bisect the County; spills or accidents along these lines, which also run near the Colorado River, could result in contamination of the source of drinking water for many communities in the County. In New Castle, the railroad tracks run adjacent to the historic downtown area; spills there from accidents could result in economic loss and impact the health and safety of residents and retail patrons in this area. The Town’s drinking water source is Elk Creek; as a result, spills upstream on the Colorado would not affect the Town’s drinking water source, but would affect wildlife habitat and recreational areas.

Capability Assessment

The capability assessment consisted of a review of local existing policies, regulations, plans, and programs with hazard mitigation capabilities. The following tables summarize the jurisdiction’s planning and regulatory capability; administrative and technical capability; fiscal capability; educational and outreach capability; and overall capability to implement mitigation projects.

Table NCS.4: New Castle Capability Assessment

Survey Components/Subcomponents		Yes/No
Planning & Regulatory Capability	Comprehensive Plan	Yes
	Capital Improvements Plan	Yes
	Economic Development Plan	No
	Emergency Operational Plan	Yes (County)
	Floodplain Management Plan	No
	Storm Water Management Plan	Yes
	Zoning Ordinance	Yes
	Subdivision Regulation/Ordinance	Yes
	Floodplain Ordinance	Yes
	Building Codes	Yes
	National Flood Insurance Program	Yes
	Community Rating System	No
Other (if any)	Source Water Protection Plan (2013)	

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Survey Components/Subcomponents		Yes/No
Administrative & Technical Capability	Planning Commission	Yes
	Floodplain Administration	Yes
	GIS Capabilities	Yes
	Chief Building Official	Yes
	Civil Engineering	Yes
	Local Staff Who Can Assess Community's Vulnerability to Hazards	Yes
	Grant Manager	Yes – Shared
	Mutual Aid Agreement	Yes
	Other (if any)	
Fiscal Capability	Capital Improvement Plan/ 1 & 6 Year plan	Yes
	Applied for grants in the past	Yes
	Awarded a grant in the past	Yes
	Authority to Levy Taxes for Specific Purposes such as Mitigation Projects	Yes
	Gas/Electric Service Fees	Yes
	Storm Water Service Fees	No
	Water/Sewer Service Fees	Yes
	Development Impact Fees	Yes
	General Obligation Revenue or Special Tax Bonds	Yes
Other (if any)		
Education & Outreach Capability	Local citizen groups or non-profit organizations focused on environmental protection, emergency preparedness, access and functional needs populations, etc. Ex. CERT Teams, Red Cross, etc.	Yes
	Ongoing public education or information program (e.g., responsible water use, fire safety, household preparedness, environmental education)	Yes
	Natural Disaster or Safety related school programs	No
	StormReady Certification	No
	Firewise Communities Certification	No
	Tree City USA	Yes
	Other (if any)	

Overall Capability	2017 Plan Limited, Moderate, High	2022 Plan Limited, Moderate, High
Does the jurisdiction have the financial resources needed to implement mitigation projects?	Limited	Limited
Does the jurisdiction have the staff/expertise to implement projects?	Moderate	Moderate
Does the jurisdiction have the community support to implement projects?	Moderate	High
Does the jurisdiction have the time to devote to hazard mitigation?	Limited	Limited

Plan Integration

Plans listed in the following section were reviewed by the local planning team to identify opportunities to integrate the HMP with current planning mechanisms. These documents were also used by the local planning team to assist in identifying risks, vulnerabilities, and potential mitigation actions. The documents directly contributed to the hazard prioritization and mitigation action items sections of this community profile. The documents that been updated since the adoption of the previous HMP, reviewed the HMP during the planning process to ensure the goals, risk data, and actions identified in the HMP were consistent with the updated plans. This applies to the Comprehensive Plan, Downtown Master Plan, and Municipal Code updates. When these plans and other relevant community planning mechanisms are updated, the local planning team will review the HMP for opportunities to incorporate the goals, risk and vulnerability data, and mitigation actions into the plan update as appropriate.

Comprehensive Plan (2018)

The New Castle Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2009 and last amended in 2018. It contains goals aimed at safe growth, directs development away from hazardous areas including the floodplain, encourages infill, encourages the elevation of structures located in the floodplain, and encourages the preservation of open space. Like the hazard mitigation plan, the construction of the comprehensive plan reinforces and builds upon other plans and programs required or supported by the town. The city's future land use plan promotes a mix of land uses and balance of housing types to accommodate varying budgets. It also prioritizes non-motorized access around the city and protects the environment.

Downtown Master Plan (2019)

In 2017, the town of New Castle decided to develop the Downtown Master Plan instead of updating their 2009 Comprehensive Plan. Town officials, planners, and the community agreed that the comprehensive plan was still accurate and could serve as a strong base on which to build the downtown plan. The downtown plan establishes the town's goals for revitalizing New Castle's downtown and surrounding Old Town into a mixed-use and pedestrian friendly environment that promotes economic growth and retains the town's character.

Emergency Operations Plan (2009)

Using an all-hazards approach to emergency planning, New Castle's Emergency Operations Plan offers guidance for preparing for and responding to emergencies and disasters. It outlines the town's chain of command, emergency support and recovery functions, and dictates that all town departments created Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to train staff to carry out emergency responsibilities.

Flood Insurance Study (2003)

New Castle conducted a flood study of the Colorado River and Elk Creek to join the National Flood Insurance Program. The study also was used to support the town's floodplain regulations and FEMA's flood insurance. The study found that New Castle experiences flooding from Elk Creek and the Colorado River after short-duration and high-intensity rain events, as well as from snowmelt runoff from Mount Medaris. As this plan is nearly 20 years old and rain events have grown in frequency and severity due to climate change, the plan's current accuracy should be assessed by the community.

Municipal Code

Amended in 2021, New Castle's municipal codes are designed to uphold the town's comprehensive plan recommendations. The codes work to protect the community against hazards like fire and flood by dictating where and how development and construction can occur. The codes also are intended to reduce traffic congestion, prevent overcrowding, provide reliable public utility service, and support economic success. Additionally, the 2015 International Building Code has been adopted.

The New Castle Municipal Code incorporates mitigation in several ways. The code limits development within special flood hazard areas, restricts the storage of fuels such as dead or diseased trees within corporate limits, and establishes the town engineer's development review process. The development review process includes consideration for hazards such as flooding, slope, geologic hazards, and fire.

Source Water Protection Plan (2013)

New Castle participated in the Source Water Protection for the Colorado River Partnership in 2013. This Source Water Protection Plan identifies potential risks to surface water and groundwater quality within the watershed, promotes management practices to protect and enhance the drinking water supply, and provides for a comprehensive action plan in case of an emergency that threatens or disrupts the community water supply.

Grants and Funding

New Castle's municipal budget is overall balanced for both maintaining current facilities and making minor improvements as needed. While the amount of municipal funds have increased over recent years they are proportional to local costs as well. A large portion of the community budget is going towards the water treatment facility upgrades. A tobacco tax is currently in place which goes toward recreational and youth education programs. New Castle has applied for grants in the past to assist with project implementation such as Greater Outdoor Colorado grants and the Garfield County Federal Mineral Lease District grant.

Plan Maintenance

Hazard Mitigation Plans should be living documents and updated regularly to reflect changes in hazard events, priorities, and mitigation actions. These updates are encouraged to occur after every major disaster event, alongside community planning documents (i.e. annual budgets and Capital Improvement Plans), during the fall before the HMA grant cycle begins, and/or prior to other funding opportunity cycles begin including CDBG, Water Sustainability Fund, Revolving State Fund, or other identified funding mechanisms.

The local planning team is responsible for reviewing and updating the profile as changes occur or after a major event. The local planning team for all future updates should include the following positions:

- Public Information Officer
- Public Works Director
- Town Clerk
- Town Administrator
- Town Planner
- Finance Director
- Police Chief

- County Emergency Management

The local planning team shall review the plan annually alongside the town budget and will include the public in the review and revision process by sharing information through the monthly newsletter and or weekly electronic newsletter.

Mitigation Action Items

Action items identified through the planning process are an important part of the mitigation plan. Action items are detailed recommendations for activities that local departments, citizens and others could engage in to reduce risk. Although not all the actions below fit the definition of mitigation, they add to the overall resilience of the community and are thus included within the hazard mitigation plan.

New and Ongoing Actions:

Action and Description	Hazards Addressed	Goals	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding	Timeline	Priority	Lead Agency	Status
Update Flood Insurance Rate Maps: Update the city's FIRMs as funding becomes available	Flood	1,2,3,4,5	Staff Time	New Castle General Fund	1 Year	High	Floodplain Administrator, County Planning	This is a continued mitigation action. The town, county, and FEMA are currently working to update FIRM maps county-wide. Anticipated completion by 2024.
National Flood Insurance Program: Continue compliance with the NFIP through the enforcement of local floodplain ordinances	Flood	1,5	Staff Time	New Castle General Fund	5+ years	High	Floodplain Administrator	This is a continued mitigation action. New Castle maintains in good standing with the NFIP.
Improve Transportation Access Work with CDOT to evaluate and improve the Elk Creek bridge's capacity. This would be to identify opportunities to increase ingress/egress and implement most effective and cost efficient alternative(s).	All Hazards	1,3	Unknown	New Castle General Fund, CDOT	5+ Years	Medium	Public Works, CDOT	This is a continued mitigation action This project has not yet been started. CDOT will be lead agency in replacing the currently small Elk Creek bridge.
Review Development Codes: Coordinate with Garfield County to review development codes and improve opportunities to	Wildfire	2,5	Unknown	Staff Time	1-2 Years	Medium	Planning	This is a continued mitigation action New Castle's Town Planner has had discussions with the local Fire

Action and Description	Hazards Addressed	Goals	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding	Timeline	Priority	Lead Agency	Status
mitigate wildfires near the communities								Marshall and is studying recommended code changes for wildland-urban interface areas. This will need to be an expanded discussion with local HOAs.
Fire Resistant Building Materials: Install fire resistant building materials in critical facilities	Wildfire	1, 2, 4	Varies by building	New Castle General Fund	5+ Years	Low	Public Works, Planning	This is a continued mitigation action The city is in the process of reviewing and updating local building code requirements to include fire resistant materials and WUI codes. This will need to be an expanded discussion with local HOAs.
Backup Generators: Purchase and install backup generators to provide redundant power to critical facilities. Specifically the water treatment plant is in need of a generator.	All hazards	1,2,3,4,5	Unknown (\$30,000-\$75,000)	New Castle General Fund	2-5 years	Medium	Public Works Department	This is a new mitigation action. A generator for water treatment plant is currently identified in the CIP.
Development Review Mitigation: Require new development in geological hazard areas including (landslide prone areas) to have an engineering review and mitigate risk.	Landslides, Mud/Debris Flow, Rockfall	1,2,3,4,5	Staff Time	New Castle General Fund	5+ Years	High	Planning	Mitigation is incorporated within the development review process. On a case-by-case basis, an engineering review focused on landslide mitigation is required for new development.

Section Seven: New Castle Community Profile

Completed Mitigation Action Items

Action and Description	Hazards Addressed	Goals	Funding	Lead Agency	Status
Continue to educate citizens about ways to weatherize their homes, as well as safe emergency heating equipment	Winter Storms	1,4,5	New Castle General Fund	Public Works, Utilities	This action was originally identified in the 2012 plan. New Castle provides several educational resources via the Town website.
Survey/map areas of critical concern for stream banks on East Elk Creek above the Town's potable water intake as a first step in fortifying the stream banks to reduce the risk to the intake from flooding	Flood	2	New Castle General Fund	Public Works	This action was originally identified in the 2012 plan. Efforts by Public Works have identified that the potable water intake is in good condition with a low chance of flooding.
Comprehensive Plan: Review Comprehensive Plan and development codes for opportunities to more effectively reduce risks to new development and public property	All Hazards	1,5	New Castle General Fund	Planning	Comprehensive Plan updates completed in 2018
Debris Flow Barricades: Construct diversions and barricades to control debris flows from Mt. Medaris and Grand Hogback Mountain	Debris Flow	1,3	New Castle General Fund	Public Works	The Public Works Department has taken an excavator or add new ditch lines and berms in problem areas. This activity has addressed the issue to the best extent possible. Future areas of concern will be addressed as needed.
Expand Response Capabilities: Expand hazardous materials response capabilities	Hazardous Materials	1,3	New Castle General Fund, CRFR, Police Dept Budgets	Police Department, Public Works	New Castle coordinates with Colorado State Patrol and local Fire agencies. New Castle Police Officers are trained in hazardous accident scene management and truck hazmat placards. Officers carry gas masks for hazardous scene responses. Have MAA with State Patrol with a HAZMAT team. Current resources are sufficient.

Removed Mitigation Action Items

Action and Description	Hazards Addressed	Reason for Removal
72-Hour Kits: Continue to encourage citizens to prepare and maintain 72-hour kits	All Hazards	This action was originally identified in the 2012 plan. This action will be led by County Emergency Management.
Undertake wildfire mitigation for the Castle Valley Ranch and Elk Run Areas, including clearing and maintaining fire breaks and other fire defensive areas	Wildfire	This action was originally identified in the 2012 plan. This action will be led by the Colorado River Fire Rescue. New Castle will continue to support the district in these efforts.
Undertake wildfire mitigation for the Lakota Canyon Ranch. Identify, clear, and maintain fire defensive areas and fire breaks	Wildfire	This action was originally identified in the 2012 plan. This action will be led by the Colorado River Fire Rescue. New Castle will continue to support the district in these efforts.
Armor the flood banks surrounding the Grand River Park	Flood	This action was originally identified in the 2012 plan. This action was determined to be no longer needed.
Install Railroad Arm: Install railroad crossing arm at intersection of rail and roadway.	Hazardous Materials	<i>This project is no longer a priority for the community and would the responsibility of the railroad.</i>