

[PHOTO]

TRANSPORTATION

OVERVIEW

Paonia sits to the south of CO State Highway 133, which serves to connect Paonia to Somerset, Crested Butte, and the Roaring Fork Valley to the east/northeast, and to the larger cities of Delta, Montrose, and Grand Junction to the west. Paonia is not connected to any major cities or transportation hubs by public transit, and both public and private transit options to reach community facilities like schools and healthcare facilities are limited. Of particular note, lack of regional and local public transportation makes it challenging to connect Paonia and the North Fork Valley to larger cities where hospitals are located. Paonia, in conjunction with Delta County, is a co-owner of a small regional airport. A significant portion of people employed within the Town of Paonia commute from outside of Town, and a significant portion of people who reside within Town limits commute to work elsewhere.¹

With its compact size and tree-lined streets, the Town of Paonia itself is naturally a walkable and bikeable community. Town residents have indicated that over half sometimes walk and more than 30% sometimes ride a bike when coming to downtown². Like many towns in the rural West, the street system in Paonia was originally a series of dirt or gravel roads with horse access and then a common speed limit for cars and yield signs at key intersections. As roads have been paved the traffic system has not formally evolved to control for speed, stop signs, or passthrough/commercial traffic routes. Neither has it formally incorporated other means of transportation such as cycling or walking. While there are over 40 miles³ of sidewalk area in the Town proper, less than half of this area has sidewalks installed,⁴ and much of the existing sidewalk infrastructure lacks curb ramps and or ends abruptly at the neighboring yard. This means there is no continuous system of sidewalks or routes for residents to walk downtown or for children and youth to walk to school.

However, some streets, in particular 3rd Avenue and the western portion of 5th Street already naturally serve as informal mixed traffic, or shared streets, between multiple modes of transit. Much of Paonia's shared transportation streets are supported by the old characteristics of the dirt road system, narrower lanes, and disrepair. These attributes naturally slow motorized traffic. As street conditions are improved it is essential that the Town simultaneously plan for how to do so in a manner that continues to support mixed use transport in appropriate thoroughfares which also align with access to parks, schools and the downtown commercial district.

VISION

Paonia's streets and sidewalks are well-maintained, safe, and comfortable thoroughfares for multiple modes of transport and support a rural and easy paced quality of life for residents. Clear and

¹ 2023 Town of Paonia Housing Needs Assessment and Housing Action Plan, Urban Rural Continuum.
https://townofpaonia.colorado.gov/sites/townofpaonia/files/documents/20231115_PaoniaHousingNeedsAssessmentandHousingActionPlan.pdf

² CDOT REVITALIZING MAIN STREET, INTERIM REPORT 2021

³ Several different numbers have been used for sidewalk mileage in Paonia in previous reports. This report chooses to cite the most recently published and adopted plan, the 2022 "Paonia in Motion Parks, Recreation & Trails Master Plan" which in turn provides the following citation *Data Source(s): ESRI ArcGIS; MTB Project; and 2022 Town of Paonia Budget*

⁴ CDOT Revitalizing Main Streets Application 2022

differentiated routes for commercial and passthrough traffic and pedestrian and bicycle traffic provide safety and convenience. Paonia residents can access key facilities and services without owning or operating a motorized vehicle. Transportation stakeholders understand and are responsive to the transportation needs of our community.

VALUES

- Well-maintained streets and sidewalks that are safe with ample street tree presence.
- Mixed use routes that are comfortable and safe for all members of our community.
- Non-motorized routes and trails that are comfortable and safe for all members of our community.
- Major thoroughfares and all new roads that accommodate both pedestrian non motorized transport and work with existing and new street trees.

POLICIES

POLICY TRANSPORT-1: Maintain and improve Paonia's streets and sidewalks to support daily travel for all modes of transport and increase alternative transit activity to every day destinations.

POLICY TRANSPORT-2: Identify and support specific transportation routes for shared or multi modal transportation including motorized travel and non-motorized travel (pedestrians, bikes, children, wheelchairs, strollers, and the elderly) through the development of complete streets, yield streets, mixed traffic designated streets and other approaches.

POLICY TRANSPORT-3: Designate appropriate non-motorized routes for the mobility-challenged, children attending school, commuter and recreational bicycling, wildlife, and nighttime safety.

POLICY TRANSPORT-4: Identify and integrate daily and seasonal wildlife corridors and traffic into consideration when planning and developing new streets, pathways, and redesigning Hwy 133 access and in town crossings of motorized streets.

POLICY TRANSPORT-5: Prioritize, plan and execute street and sidewalk repairs in alignment with safe routes for park and school access and mixed use corridors.

POLICY TRANSPORT-6: Ensure that all sidewalk upgrades include ADA on and off ramps at curbside and street crossings.

POLICY TRANSPORT-7: Identify, align and incorporate the use of appropriate materials for sidewalks, trails and walkways that is both ADA compliant and work to support existing trees and stormwater management.

POLICY TRANSPORT-8: Ensure that all public buildings, parks and event venues plan for and include ADA parking and entrances.

POLICY TRANSPORT-9: Encourage, enhance, and promote pedestrian access and walkability to and within the Historic Town Core.

POLICY TRANSPORT-10:: Integrate trail development and non-motorized connectivity into development/land use requirements for properties in key transportation corridors.

POLICY TRANSPORT-11: Increase and maintain safety of Paonia’s motorized gateways to Hwy 133 and include non-motorized access and safety in related planning and updates.

POLICY TRANSPORT-12: Coordinate and communicate with regional transportation stakeholders, both NGO and governmental, to enhance regional transportation services.

POLICY TRANSPORT-13: Work with Delta County and Paonia Regional Airport to identify potential revenue streams and economic development opportunities, and support connectivity with regional commercial airport locations.

POLICY TRANSPORT-14: In accordance with the Delta County Master Plan, proactively plan and coordinate with stakeholders and other government agencies to reuse or convert the existing coal train railroad track to regional rail or trail system that can serve members of the public and visitors.

Text box: “Do everything possible to promote responsible, progressive, growth. Walking-friendly towns tend to promote excellent business opportunities, which is what I want to see more of in this town.”

~Participant in the 2020 CDOT Main St Revitalization Survey

BREAKOUT BOX: Characteristics of Complete Streets:

- Sidewalks
 - Bicycle lanes or wide, paved shoulders
 - Shared use paths
 - Safe and accessible transit stops
 - Frequent and safe crossings for pedestrians, including median islands, accessible pedestrian signals, and curb extensions
 - Identified wildlife crossings that connect with green corridors
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