

## **MEMORANDUM**

TO: City Council  
FROM: Steve Westbay  
DATE: September 16, 2016  
RE: *Non-Motorized Transportation Plan* and Update

### **INTRODUCTION**

The following update provides a summary of non-motorized transportation efforts and implementation to date. Also included are possible future trail segments that could be implemented within the next six years. Trail segments are presented in no particular order; however, consideration may be made by Council on which trail segments are higher priorities. Once trail segment priorities are realized, staff can update the cost estimates and present the phasing priorities back to City Council. The intent is to amend the *Non-Motorized Transportation Plan* with updated descriptions and data.

### **History of Non-Motorized Transportation Planning.**

Local efforts to improve non-motorized transportation functions is tied to the initial work in 2006, where citizens of the City of Gunnison passed a ballot measure approving a 1% sales tax recreation bond. Passage of this ballot measure spurred greater emphasis on non-motorized transportation planning. In 2007 the City received a planning grant from Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) to develop the *City of Gunnison Trails Master Plan* (2008). In 2008, the City received a GOCO grant for \$667,501, which was part of a \$1.3 million capital construction project called the Bridge to Bridge project, resulting in two pedestrian underpasses on the Gunnison River, two bridges and construction of the first segment of the VanTuyl Ranch Trail system, which was later improved to its present configuration. Prior to these events, the first bike lane stripping project was completed on Colorado Street and expanded to other streets.

In 2012, the City revised the original *Trails Master Plan* through the adoption of the *City of Gunnison Non-Motorized Transportation Plan* (2013). During this same time period, City capital improvement projects focused on sidewalk corridor extensions to better serve connectivity to the Community Schools. Bike lanes were further extended and additional expenditures were directed to sidewalk improvements within the city.

**Planning Context.** Planning of the community's non-motorized system is based on several factors, including but not limited to the configuration of the existing street grid, the spatial distribution of land uses and private property, and environmental factors that influence layout and design. The existing street grid system is a fantastic design, providing efficient and safe corridors for all forms of transportation, but the width of some rights-of-way limit the potential for improvements. Understanding the distribution of land uses with nodes of commerce, residential neighborhoods and education facilities, helps to define connectivity needs for the system. Environmental factors play an increasingly critical role in the permitting process for new trail extensions. Focus on these and other factors is essential in developing the transportation system framework.

### **PLAN CONTENTS**

The *Non-Motorized Transportation Plan* is a blueprint directing the future development of sidewalks, bike lanes and multiple use trail systems. It contains narrative descriptions; mapping data sets defining facility types and their spatial layout; and tabular data describing cost estimates and phasing. The plan's table of contents contains six sections as noted below:

1. Introduction
2. Pedestrian Facilities
3. Shared Road Functions
4. Multi-Use Trail System
5. Strategies for Encouraging Non-Motorized Transportation
6. Conclusion

**Pedestrian Facilities.** Pedestrian facility corridors identified in the plan's map data sets depict the existing and desired future conditions of the sidewalk and bike lane systems. The layout emphasizes connectivity between

neighborhoods, retail shopping areas and the Western State Colorado University (WSCU) campus and takes advantage of the street grid. See Enclosure 1.

**Bike Lanes.** The *Shared Road Functions* section also emphasizes connectivity throughout the urban system and defines development standards for street widths, signage, lane marking standards and other related urban design details. See Enclosure 2.

**Multi-Use Trails.** Section 4 builds off of the 2007 *Trails Master Plan*, which introduced the concept of the outer loop and inner loop systems. The plan includes the *Gunnison Rising Transportation Master Plan* and *Gunnison Rising Trails Master Plan*. Extension of the annexation's transportation and trails system master plans address the increased need to focus on non-motorized facilities in the urbanized area. Another focal element for the plan is providing accessibility to VanTuyl Ranch and Signal Peak recreation areas, which were identified in the Gunnison Sage-Grouse Candidate Conservation Agreement (2013). See Enclosure 3.

#### ***NON-MOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION UPDATE***

**Sidewalks.** Sidewalk Connectivity layout focuses on route spacing that proposes connectivity between neighborhoods, commerce areas, and public schools and the university campus. Data from the 2013 Plan established a price-tag of \$818,185 for implementing proposed sidewalk improvements. The plan identifies over 30,000 linear feet of sidewalk improvements. See Enclosure 4.

This year a Capital Improvement Plan request has been submitted to place sidewalks according to the proposed Phase 1 (approximately 9,734 linear feet). Construction would start in 2017 with a sidewalk extension along Highway 135/Main Street adjacent to the VanTuyl Village Subdivision, between Spencer and County Road 13. Other sidewalk extensions proposed are segments of New York Avenue, West Virginia Avenue, Denver Avenue between Main and Taylor, two segments on North Colorado, 11<sup>th</sup> Street on the west side, and sidewalks around Jorgensen Park. Capital improvement funding requests for the next six years for pedestrian facilities, Phase 1, is approximately \$373,000.

**Complete Streets.** The US Highway 50 Crosswalks (part of the Complete Streets Project) proposes the construction of two new pedestrian crossing facilities. The first crossing, connecting Jorgensen Park to Legion Park, also serves as a focal entrance on the east side of the city. The second crossing is located on Highway 50 at 11<sup>th</sup> Street and is crucial for the City's Safe Routes to School planning. Both crossings are essential for safety, connectivity and traffic calming.

A Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) grant has been submitted to the State and if awarded would cover 80% of the construction costs for the crossings. Construction is proposed in 2017 for an approximate total of \$416,805. A decision by the State on the TAP grant will be in October 2016.

As part of the Complete Streets project, a double buffered bike lane on Tomichi Avenue is proposed on Tomichi Avenue from Adams Street to New York Avenue. City consultants, Fox/Tuttle/Hernandez and city staff have been working with CDOT staff to determine how to complete the painted bike lanes in 2017. A webinar with CDOT staff is anticipated within the next two months to discuss engineered details for the project.

**Multi-Use Trails.** In 2015 the City received a \$440,000 grant award by GOCO for the *Rivers to Ridges* trail project. The GOCO grant allows for the development of the east Highway 50 underpass that connects the Gunnison-Tomichi Valley Ditch (cemetery ditch) with the Airport Maintenance Road; improving the new Cemetery Ditch trail; and a single-track from the ditch segment north to the Contour Trail. The grant also includes construction of the VanTuyl Ranch fishing trail extension to the Gunnison River, to the west of Char-Mar Park. Construction of the trails began in 2015 and the east trail improvements will be completed in 2016. The VanTuyl Ranch segment will be constructed in 2017.

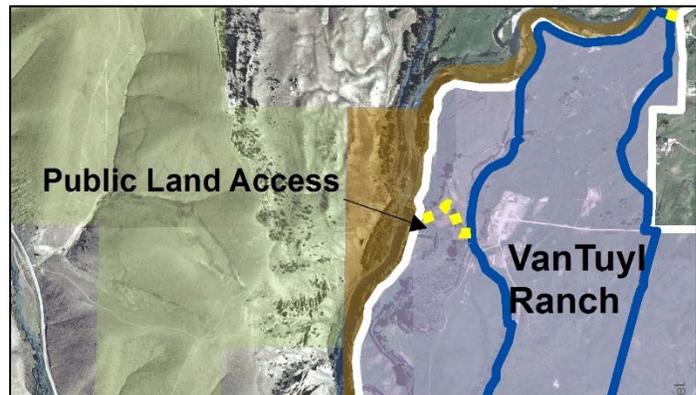
Prioritizing the extension of future multiple use trails is critical to obtaining GOCO grant awards that generally cover about 75% of the project cost. However, the success of these grants is predicated on a significant amount of upfront design and permitting work. It is also prudent to have a degree of flexibility in the priority process



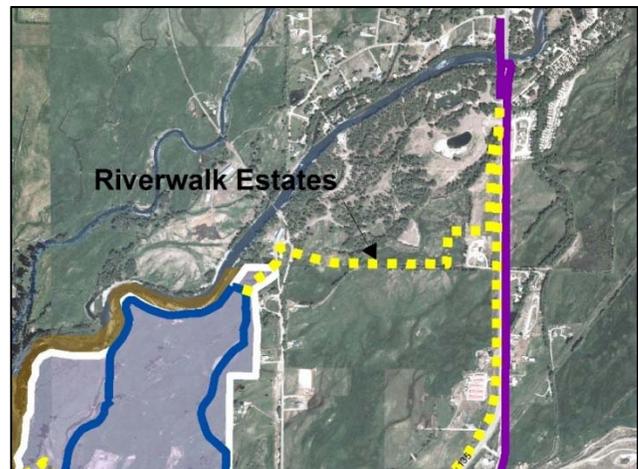
**Rio Grande Extension.** During the scoping process for the *Gunnison Crested Butte Regional Airport Master Plan* update (2016), the city and county discussed potential improvements along Rio Grande Street, to include improvements of visual appeal and non-motorized system connectivity. The forthcoming airport master plan will identify the streetscape improvements, and way-finding improvements as a plan goal. It is also believed the plan will identify the extension of a multi-use path extension along the northeast airport perimeter to connect Rio Grande Street and Jorgenson Park. However, opportunities for improvements are constrained because of street widths, adjacent private property, and airport operations.



**Access to Public Lands (VanTuyl Ranch).** This trail segment would connect the existing VanTuyl Ranch Trail to the Gunnison River edge over a bridge to access public lands west of the Ranch. There would be considerable cost for planning, boardwalks and a bridge spanning the river. This portion would require cooperation between the Colorado Division of Parks and Wildlife, the Army Corp of Engineers, Fish and Wildlife Service and the Bureau of Land Management.



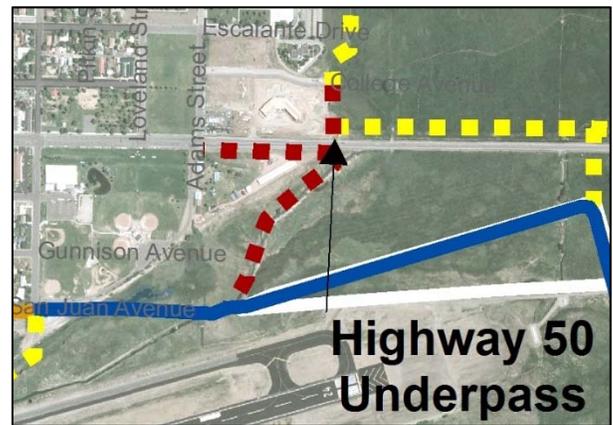
**Riverwalk Estates.** The Riverwalk Estates segment would connect the VanTuyl Ranch trail to the north bridge on Highway 135. An easement has been secured along the south portion of the Riverwalk Estates and completion of this “outer loop” trail segment would provide access to the Ranch and Schools from the Castle Mountain Subdivision area.



**Highway Entrance Corridor Segments.** Improvements to trail system connectivity at the city entrances was not specifically identified in the *Non-Motorized Transportation Plan*, but such improvements would greatly enhance the community’s entrances. Specifically, the western entrance of Highway 50 is a very wide corridor and serves as a connection for access to Hartman’s Rocks. A concrete trail on the south side of the highway would provide a great visual cue for visitors and provide better function for non-motorized commuters.



Completion of the underpass on the east end of the community has also presented an opportunity for improving the visual perception of the city's entrance. Developing a concrete segment adjacent to the Pioneer Museum highway frontage would create connectivity between the new underpass and Jorgenson Park, and could provide for a more appealing streetscape and improved connectivity.



### **Lazy K.**

The City purchased the 15.9-acre parcel on West Tomichi Avenue commonly referred to as Lazy K. The parcel is planned for development of active parkland for residents in the area. A small playground, trail development and fencing to prevent unauthorized access to neighborhood properties is planned for 2017. More significant development is planned and the results of the conceptual designs will be presented in late 2016.

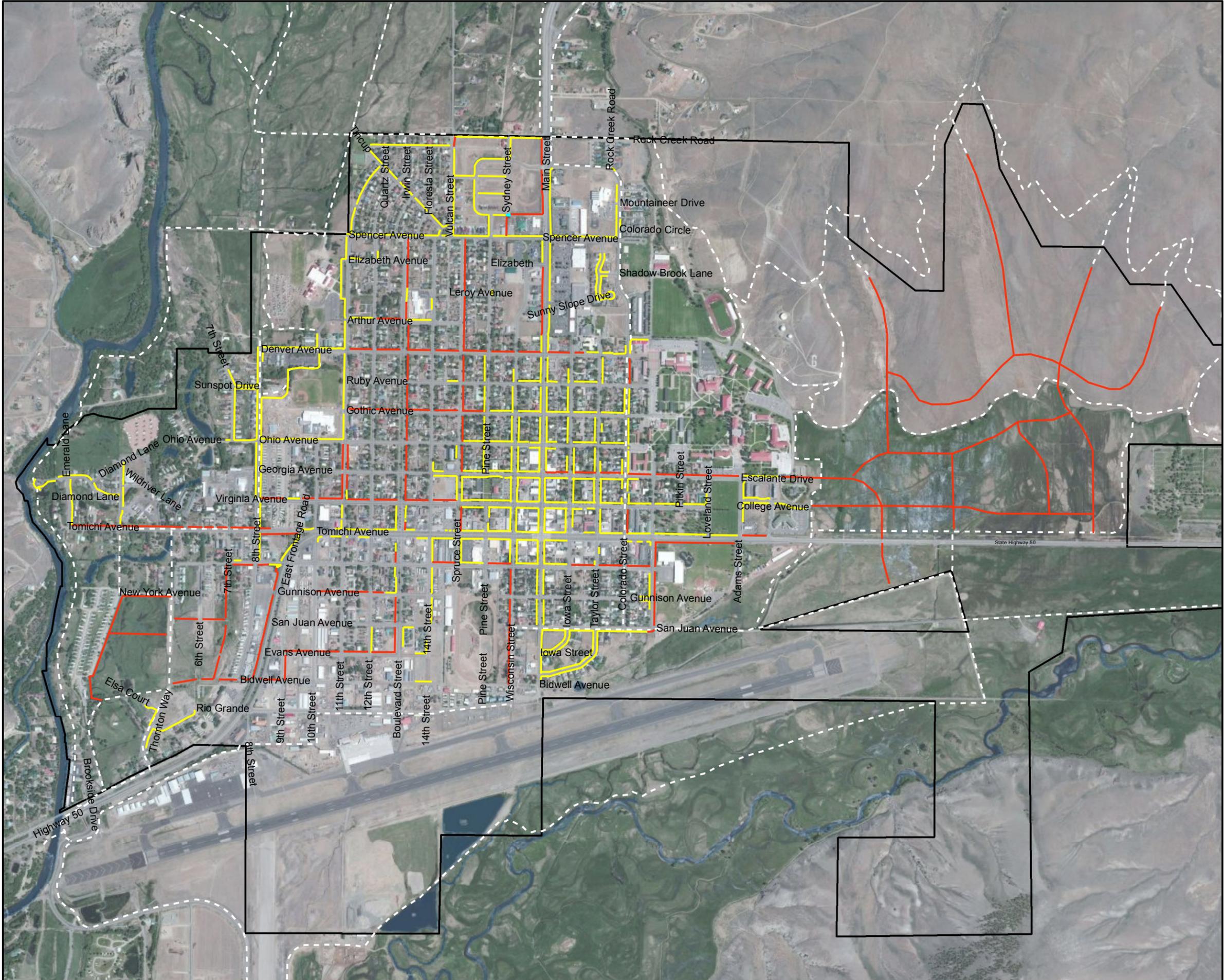


### **CONCLUSION**

The *Non-Motorized Transportation Plan* outlines a framework to improve facilities that accommodate alternative travel modes. The existing plan contents are sound and have been a great benefit for obtaining grant funding. However, some plan modifications seem to be warranted at this time. For example, work on Complete Streets and possibly traffic calming techniques should be integrated into the plan. Defining entrance corridors or entry trail opportunities and wayfinding signage should be addressed in more detail. The sign program should be integrated with the CBG Trails phone app by the Tourism Association. In addition, a revised assessment of phasing priorities and cost estimates would be helpful.

The *Non-Motorized Transportation Plan* provides excellent road map for improving alternative transportation facilities. Ultimately, these improvements are strongly supported by the community, they represent an emphasis for sustainability and they enhance urban function. It is recommended that during the next year, certain amendments as described herein be established for the *Non-Motorized Transportation Plan*.

Enclosure 1  
**PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES -  
 SIDEWALKS**  
 Existing and  
 Future Extensions



**Legend**

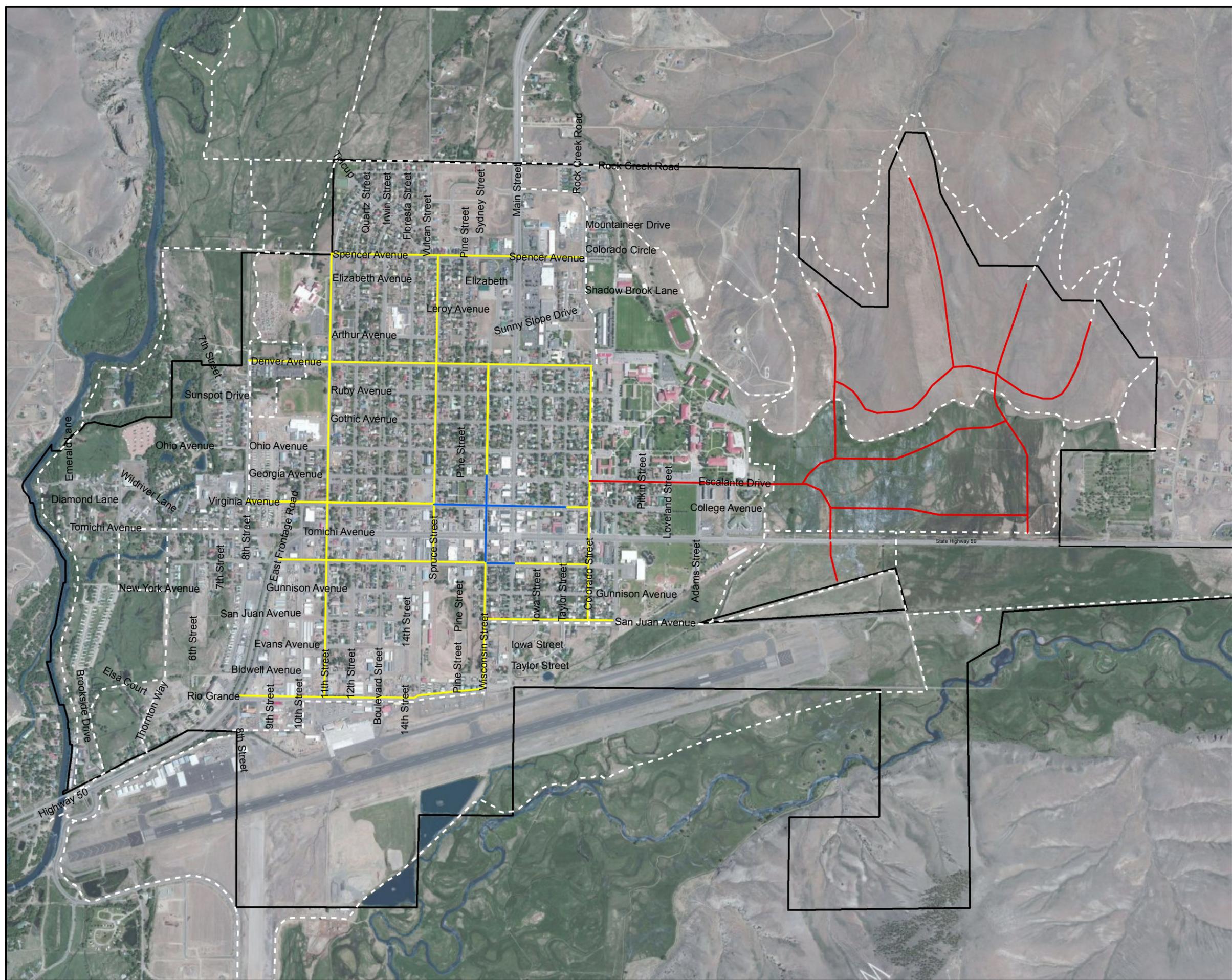
- Proposed
- Existing
- - - Multi-Use Trails
- ▭ City Boundary



Community Development  
 201 West Virginia Avenue  
 PO Box 239  
 Gunnison, CO 81230  
 970-641-8090

October 6, 2011

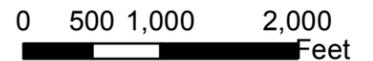
Enclosure 2  
**BICYCLE LANES**  
 Existing and  
 Future Extensions



**Legend**

**Bicycle Lanes**

- Existing Lane
- Shared Lane
- Proposed Lane
- Multi-Use Trails
- City Boundary



Community Development  
 201 West Virginia Avenue  
 PO Box 239  
 Gunnison, CO 81230  
 970-641-8090

October 6, 2011

# MULTI-USE TRAILS

## Existing and Future Extensions

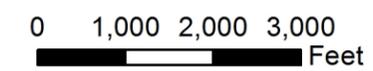
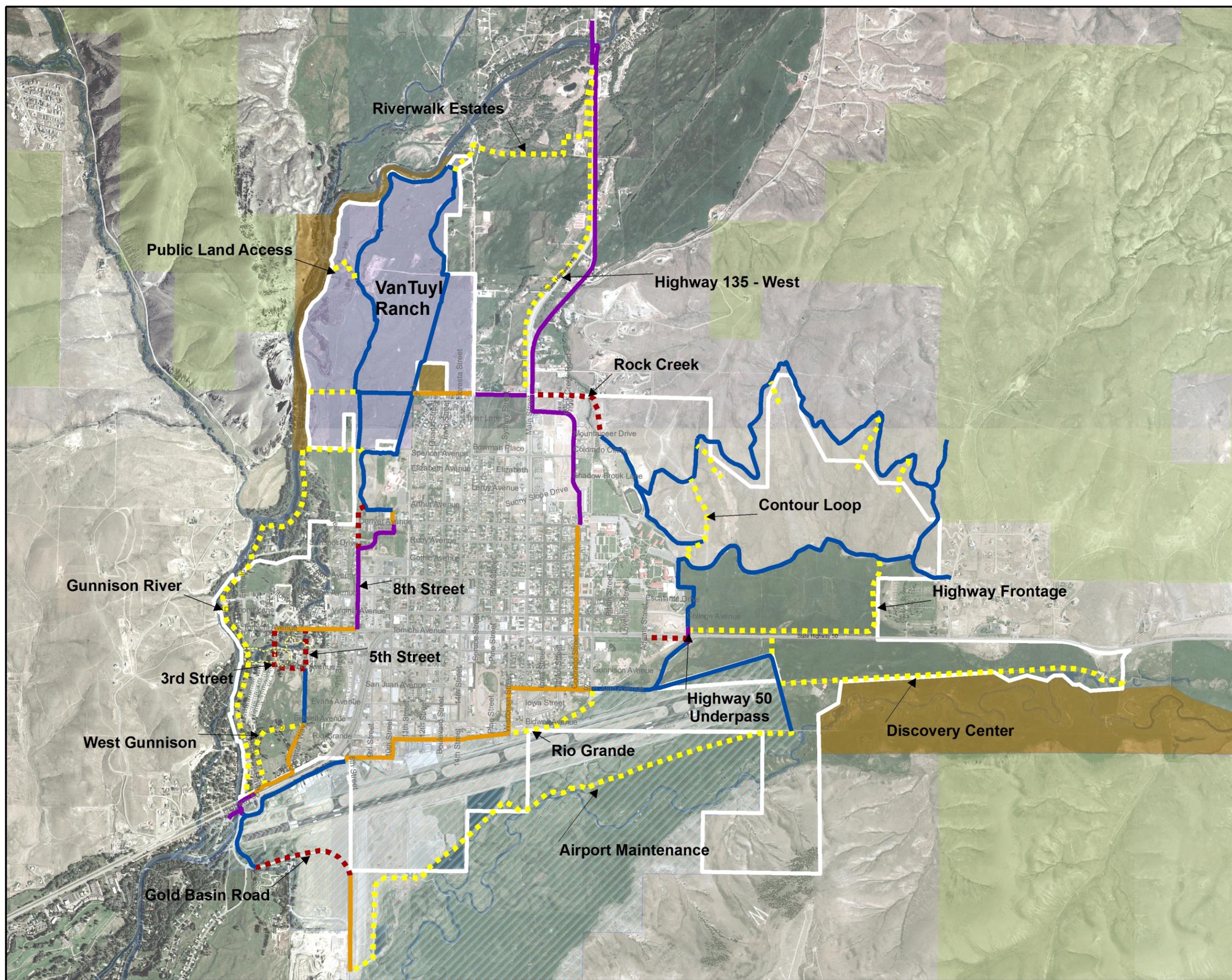
**Legend**

**Multi-Use Trails Surface**

- Capital Trails 2016
- Existing Detached Paved
- Existing Road or Bike Lane
- Existing Gravel Base
- Future Paved
- Future Gravel
- City Boundary
- Bureau of Land Management

**Property Ownership**

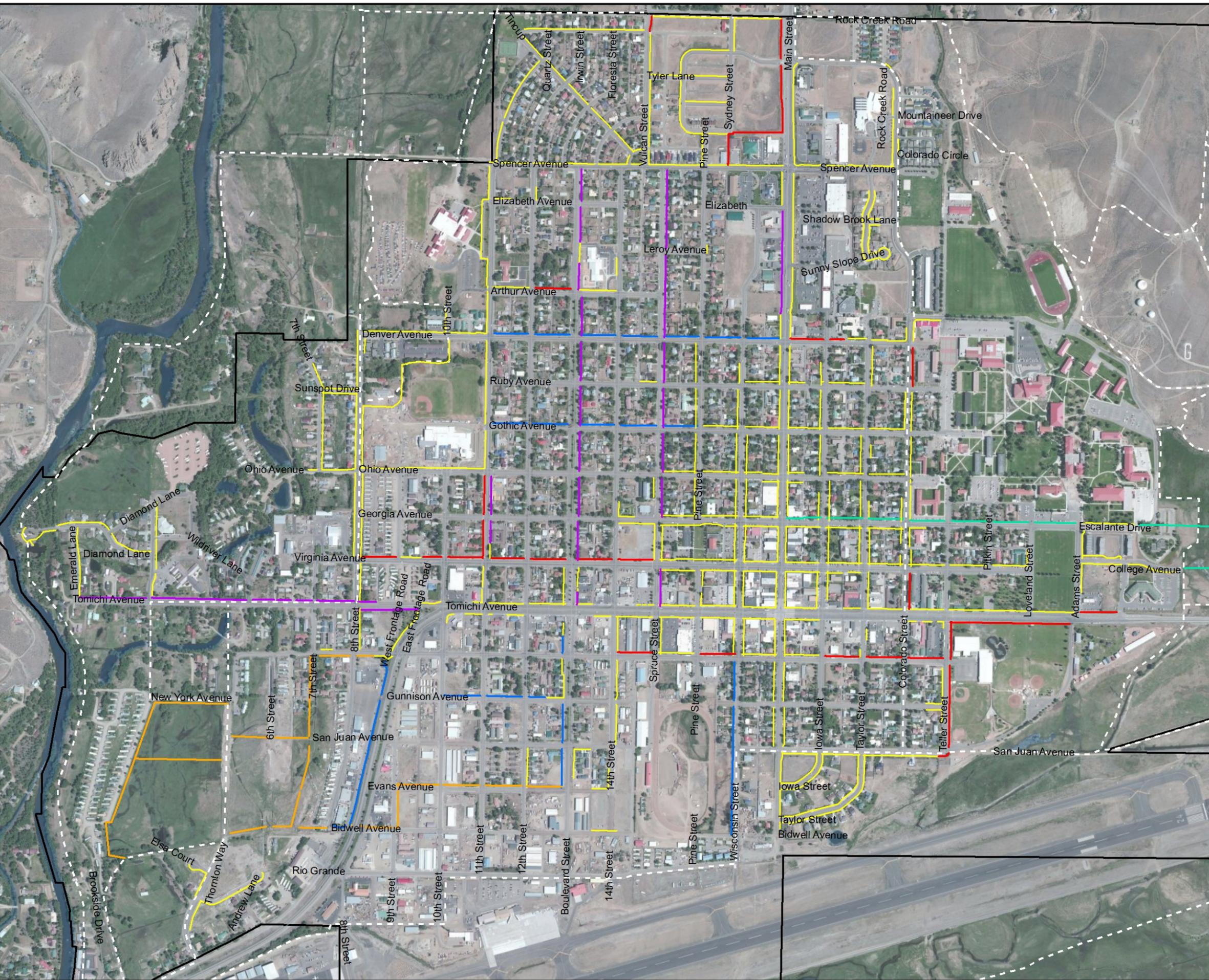
- Division of Parks and Wildlife
- Open Space
- VanTuyl Ranch



Community Development  
201 West Virginia Avenue  
PO Box 239  
Gunnison, CO 81230  
Andie Ruggera  
970-641-8154

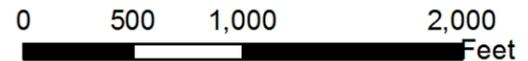
September 15, 2016

# PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES - SIDEWALKS Phasing Plan



## Legend

- Proposed - Phase 1
- Proposed - Phase 2
- Proposed - Phase 3
- Gunnison Rising
- West Gunnison
- Existing Sidewalks
- - - Multi-Use Trails
- City Boundary



Community Development  
 201 West Virginia Avenue  
 PO Box 239  
 Gunnison, CO 81230  
 970-641-8090

October 6, 2011