

**GRAND JUNCTION CITY COUNCIL
WORKSHOP**

**MONDAY, AUGUST 19, 2013, 5:00 P.M.
CITY AUDITORIUM
250 N. 5TH STREET**

To become the most livable community west of the Rockies by 2025

1. **North Avenue Plan and Next Steps Related to Development of an Urban Renewal Authority:** The four mile North Avenue corridor has the highest vacancy rate of commercial buildings and sites of any other area in the City. In an effort to revitalize the corridor, a planning process began in 2007 to create a vision to redevelop and revitalize this area of the City.

Council will also hear from members of the North Avenue Owners Association and representatives from CMU related to the development of an Urban Renewal Authority and Plan for the corridor and the possible formation of taxing districts along North Avenue. [Attach W-1](#)

2. **Grand Valley Trails Master Plan Update:** City Council will review the proposed Grand Valley Trails Master Plan and discuss options for moving the Plan forward. [Attach W-2](#)

3. **Other Business**
 - **Wilsea Drain**
 - **Planning Overlays**

CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT WORKSHOP

Attach W-1

Topic: North Avenue Plan and Next Steps Related to Development of an Urban Renewal Authority

Staff (Name & Title): Tim Moore, Deputy City Manager
Dave Thornton, Planning and Development Supervisor

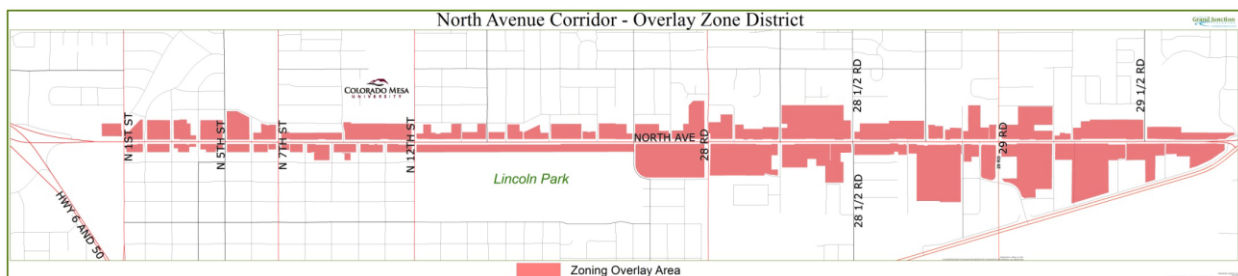
Summary:

The four mile North Avenue corridor has the highest vacancy rate of commercial buildings and sites of any other area in the City. In an effort to revitalize the corridor, a planning process began in 2007 to create a vision to redevelop and revitalize this area of the City.

Council will also hear from members of the North Avenue Owners Association and representatives from CMU related to the development of an Urban Renewal Authority and Plan for the corridor and the possible formation of taxing districts along North Avenue.

Background, Analysis and Options:

The North Avenue corridor was planned in two phases. The North Avenue Plan (phase one), from 12th Street east to the I-70 Bypass, was adopted in 2007. The North Avenue West Plan (phase two), from 12th Street west to Hwy 6 & 50, was adopted in 2011. The North Avenue Overlay was adopted in 2012.



The North Avenue corridor has the highest vacancy rate in the City, nearly double the rate found in other areas of the City. The need to revitalize the corridor became more evident in recent years as more businesses closed or moved to other parts of the community.

With input from the North Avenue Advisory Committee, citizens, property and business owners, guiding principles were developed for the North Avenue corridor. The guiding principles of the North Avenue Plan include the following areas:

Safety: Establishing a multi-modal approach by promoting pedestrian safety and key locations for pedestrian crossings, creating safe access routes for bicycles, constructing bus pullouts and public stops for transit passengers and maintaining an efficient street for all motorized traffic.

Aesthetics: Creating standards that support the vision and corridor as a destination and a crossroad.

Placemaking: Envisioning North Avenue holistically, a corridor that is a destination itself, not simply a street to travel through.

Neighborhood Impacts: Minimize future impacts to existing neighborhoods north and south of the corridor.

Open Houses were held to gather input from citizens, property and business owners along the corridor. This information was used to construct the plan and overlay documents.

A group of interested business owners along North Avenue formed the North Avenue Owner's Association (NAOA) to work with the City to plan and revitalize the corridor, and to promote businesses along the North Avenue corridor. The NAOA is currently working with the City to determine the feasibility of creating an Urban Renewal Authority.

How this item relates to the Comprehensive Plan Goals and Policies:

The North Avenue Plan, the North Avenue West Plan and the Overlay meet the following goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan:

Goal 3: The Comprehensive Plan will create ordered and balanced growth and spread future growth throughout the community.

Policy 3b: Create opportunities to reduce the amount of trips generated for shopping and commuting and decrease vehicle miles traveled thus increasing air quality.

Goal 6: Land use decisions will encourage preservation of existing buildings and their appropriate reuse.

Policy 6a: In making land use and development decisions, the City and County will balance the needs of the community.

Goal 8: Create attractive public spaces and enhance the visual appeal of the community through quality development.

Goal 8a: Design streets and walkways as attractive public spaces

Goal 8f: Encourage the revitalization of existing commercial and industrial areas.

Goal 12: Being a regional provider of goods and services the City and County will sustain, develop and enhance a healthy, diverse economy.

Board or Committee Recommendation:

The Planning Commission recommended adoption of the North Avenue Plan (2007), North Avenue West Plan (2011) and Overlay (2012).

Financial Impact/Budget:

CDBG grant funds used to improve ADA access points along the North Avenue corridor. Federal grant of \$1.19 million to design the four mile corridor street section and construct improvements from 12th Street to N. 23rd Street.

Legal issues:

N/A

Other issues:

N/A

Previously presented or discussed:

N/A

Attachments:

N/A



Date: August 15, 2013
Author: Kathy Portner
Title/ Phone Ext: Econ Dev & Sustainability/1420
Proposed Meeting Date:
August 19, 2013

CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT WORKSHOP

Attach W-2

Topic: Grand Valley Trails Master Plan Update

Staff: Rich Englehart, City Manager
Tim Moore, Deputy City Manager
Greg Trainor, Director of Public Works, Utilities and Planning
Urban Trails Committee Representative

Summary:

City Council will review the proposed Grand Valley Trails Master Plan and discuss options for moving the Plan forward.

Background, Analysis and Options:

An update to the Urban Trails Master Plan is being proposed by the Urban Trails Committee. The first plan was adopted in 1993 as a part of the Multi-modal section of the 2015 Transportation Plan. The Grand Junction Trails Committee, created in 1994, developed a stand-alone Urban Trails Master Plan in 1995. That plan has been updated several times over the years, with the most recent overall update being adopted in 2001. More recently, the 2035 Regional Transportation Plan process received significant public input on non-motorized transportation and the Comprehensive Plan incorporates and recognizes the importance of the Urban Trails Master Plan in the Guiding Principles and Goals and Policies as follows:

- A Grand Green System of Connected Recreational Opportunities—Take advantage of and tie together the exceptional open space assets of Grand Junction, including the Colorado River, our excellent park system, trails and our surrounding open spaces.
- Balanced Transportation—Accommodate all modes of transportation including air, transit, freight, auto, bike and pedestrian.
- Goal 9: Develop a well-balanced transportation system that supports automobile, local transit, pedestrian, bicycle, air, and freight movement while protecting air, water and natural resources.
 - Policy D: A trails master plan will identify trail corridors linking neighborhoods with the Colorado River, Downtown, Village Centers and Neighborhood Centers and other desired public attractions. The Plan will be integrated into the Regional Transportation Plan.

The proposed update to the Grand Valley Trails Master Plan (formerly known as the Urban Trails Master Plan) is the result of a 2 ½ year process with extensive public input. The Plan is a Valley-wide, active transportation and recreation plan that supports

pedestrians and bicyclists. It proposes connections from existing trails, sidewalks and bicycle lanes; provides for safer access to parks, schools and community amenities, such as shopping, entertainment and services; and promotes a healthy community through opportunity for physical activity and reduced emissions that impact air quality.

The proposed Plan builds on the 2001 Plan with updates to areas where development has occurred and measures have been implemented; expanding the planning area to include the valley floor, including the adopted Fruita and Palisade Plans; and incorporating the Old Spanish Trail and Gunnison River Bluffs Trail in the Whitewater area. Of the 1026 total miles of bike-ped paths, bike route and bike lanes depicted on the Plan, 405 miles already exist. Within Grand Junction's Urban Development Boundary, a total of 343 miles of paths, routes and lanes are depicted, with 202 miles already existing. The proposed plan continues to show the opportunity for trails along canals and drainages, as have the prior adopted plans. Adoption of the plan will, in no way, suddenly open up the canal banks for trail use. Just as the Circulation Plan shows future road connections, the Trails Master Plan shows future trail connections that are currently not open for public use.

The Grand Valley Trails Master Plan is a strategic tool to guide the future course of trail and bike facilities development. It provides guidance to developers, decision-makers and the community as to where future connections and routes for pedestrians and bicyclists will be made. Routes shown represent a concept of getting from one point to another rather than the exact location and, therefore, offer flexibility in implementation. Further clarification is noted on the Plan that: **"The Grand Valley Trails Master Plan is not intended to be, and should not be considered, a user's map. Separate maps of non-motorized facilities open for public use are available through various public agencies such as Mesa County and other local government agencies and businesses"**. In addition, the following note from previous plans will be carried forward on the proposed plan: **"Canal banks are generally private property and users of canal banks are trespassing. Any designation of a portion of a canal bank as a trail location will be determined with the written consent and coordination of all owners and canal companies"**.

Board or Committee Recommendation:

The Planning Commission, at their August 13th hearing, recommended denial of the Grand Valley Trails Master Plan, finding that the community or area would not derive benefits from the proposed amendment.

Financial Impact/Budget:

N/A

Legal issues:

According to Colorado law the City may lawfully plan for growth and development C.R.S. Section 31-23-206. Master Plan (1) It is the duty of the commission to make and adopt a master plan for the physical development of the municipality, including any areas outside its boundaries, subject to the approval of the governmental body having jurisdiction thereof, which in the commission's judgment bear relation to the planning of such municipality. The master plan of a municipality shall be an advisory document to guide land development decisions; however, the plan or any part thereof may be made binding by inclusion in the municipality's adopted subdivision, zoning, platting, planned unit development, or other similar land development regulations after satisfying notice, due process, and hearing requirements for legislative or quasi-judicial processes as appropriate. When a commission decides to adopt a master plan, the commission shall conduct public hearings, after notice of such public hearings has been published in a newspaper of general circulation in the municipality in a manner sufficient to notify the public of the time, place, and nature of the public hearing, prior to final adoption of a master plan in order to encourage public participation in and awareness of the development of such plan and shall accept and consider oral and written public comments throughout the process of developing the plan. Such plan, with the accompanying maps, plats, charts, and descriptive matter, shall, after consideration of each of the following, where applicable or appropriate, show the commission's recommendations for the development of said municipality and outlying areas, including:

(a) The general location, character, and extent of existing, proposed, or projected streets, roads, rights-of-way, bridges, waterways, waterfronts, parkways, highways, mass transit routes and corridors, and any transportation plan prepared by any metropolitan planning organization that covers all or a portion of the municipality and that the municipality has received notification of or, if the municipality is not located in an area covered by a metropolitan planning organization, any transportation plan prepared by the department of transportation that the municipality has received notification of and that covers all or a portion of the municipality; (b) The general location of public places or facilities, including public schools, culturally, historically, or archaeologically significant buildings, sites, and objects, playgrounds, squares, parks, airports, aviation fields, military installations, and other public ways, grounds, open spaces, trails, and designated federal, state, and local wildlife areas.

CRS Section 31-23-212. Jurisdiction The territorial jurisdiction of any commission over the subdivision of land includes all land located within the legal boundaries of the municipality and, limited only to control with reference to a major street plan and not otherwise, also includes all land lying within three miles of the boundaries of the municipality not located in any other municipality.

In 2003, Grand Valley Irrigation Company filed a complaint against the City of Grand Junction regarding designation of segments of the GVIC easement as public trails on the City's "Trails Plan." The City filed a motion to dismiss, which was granted in district court on January 22, 2004.

Other issues:

N/A

Previously presented or discussed:

The background of the proposed Grand Valley Trails Master Plan was presented to City Council at the July 1, 2013 workshop.

A public open house was conducted June 4, 2013.

The all-day Trails Summit was held March 8, 2013.

The Grand Junction Planning Commission was briefed on January 3, 2013 about the upcoming Trails Summit and future hearing on the proposed updates to the Urban Trails Master Plan.

The Grand Junction Planning Commission was briefed on January 5, 2012 about work on updating the Urban Trails Master Plan. The Palisade Planning Commission was briefed on January 17, 2012, Mesa County Planning Commission was briefed on January 19, 2012, the Palisade Town Board was briefed on February 14, 2012, the Riverfront Commission was briefed on February 21, 2012 and the Mesa County Board of County Commissioners was briefed March 5, 2012.

Mesa County staff and Urban Trails Committee members met with the canal operators on April 12, 2012.

Attachments:

Grand Valley Trails Master Plan PowerPoint Presentation

Urban Trails Master Plan Update

FMP-2013-224

- Update to the Urban Trails Master Plan -part of the Comprehensive Plan
- Renaming to Grand Valley Trails Master Plan.

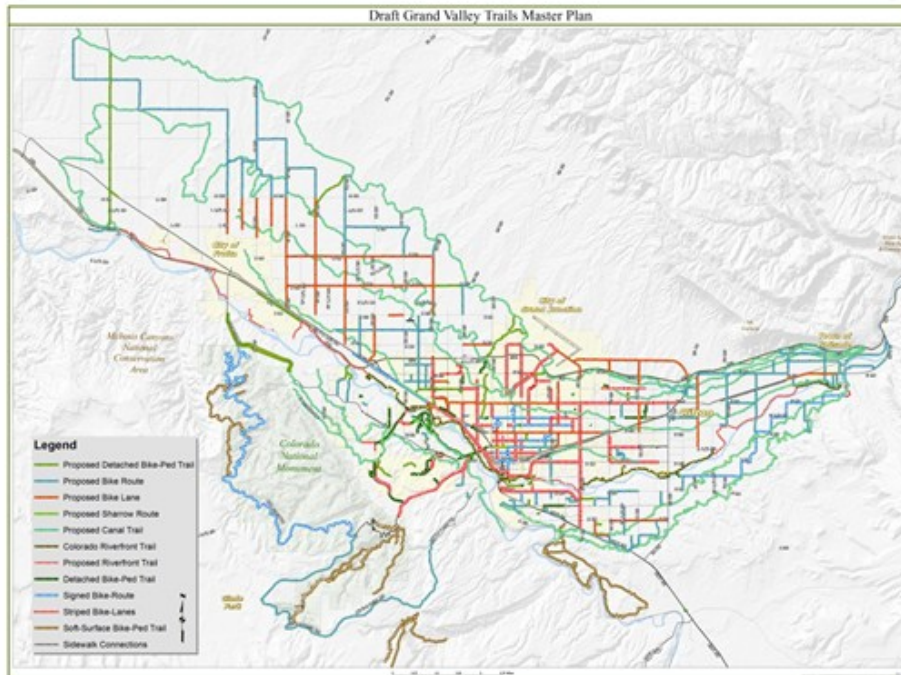
Jody Kliska
Transportation Engineer
August 13, 2013



Public Works, Utilities and Planning Department

Grand Valley Trails Master Plan - 2013

07/23/2013



The Grand Valley Trails Master Plan is a planning document and is not intended to be, and should not be considered, a user's map.

What is an Urban Trail?



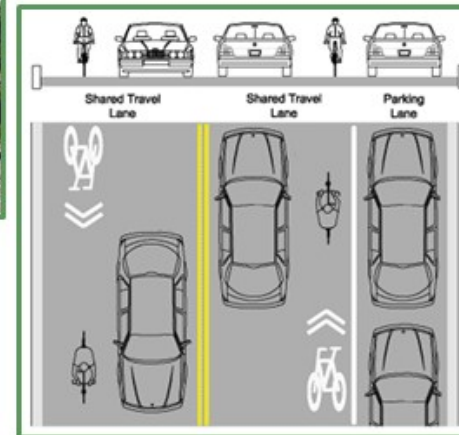
← Bicycle Lane - marked portion of the roadway



← Bicycle Route – Signed shared roadway



↑ Detached Path – Physically separated from roadways by open space or barrier.



↗ Sharrow Route – Shared lane marking

Background

- 1992 – Multi-Modal Plan as part of the 2015 Transportation Plan, adopted in 1993.
- 1994 – Resolution 48-94 creates the Grand Junction Trails Board - the Urban Trails Committee
- 1995 – First Urban Trails Master Plan by the Urban Trails Committee based on the 1992 Multi-Modal Plan
- 1997 – Update to the Master Plan adopted by Mesa County and the City of Grand Junction
- 2001 – Update to the Master Plan adopted by City of Grand Junction
- 2004 – Pear Park Plan included Urban Trails Master Plan updates adopted by Mesa County and City of Grand Junction
- 2010 – RTPO undertakes 2035 Regional Transportation Plan. Significant public input on non-motorized transportation.
- 2010 – Comprehensive Plan adopted, incorporating the Urban Trails Master Plan in both “A Grand Green System” and “A Balanced Transportation System.”
- 2011 – RTPO work plan began updates to the Urban Trails Master Plan, concurrent with a draft plan for the Old Spanish Trail and Gunnison Bluffs Trail. Included briefings to the Grand Junction, Fruita, Palisade, Mesa County Planning Commissions

Comprehensive Plan

Consistency

Goal 9: Develop a well-balanced transportation system that supports automobile, local transit, pedestrian, bicycle, air, and freight movement while protecting air, water and natural resources.

Goal 10: Develop a system of regional, neighborhood and community parks protecting open space corridors for recreation, transportation and environmental purposes

- Proposed Grand Valley Trails Master Plan - valley wide active transportation plan that supports pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Connections from existing trails, sidewalks and bicycle lanes with future facilities
- Provides safer access to parks, schools and community amenities such as shopping and needed services.
- Promotes physical activity and helps protect the environment by reducing emissions that impact air quality.

2035 Regional Transportation Plan

Public input on the non-motorized transportation system plan reflected a desire for:

- increased on-street bicycle lanes and off-street paved trails;
- enhanced bicycle and pedestrian safety through lighting, signage, and driver education;
- additional bicycle connections to activity centers such as schools, parks, downtowns, and shopping areas; and
- consideration of north/south and east/west routes in the Grand Valley that serve commuting needs.

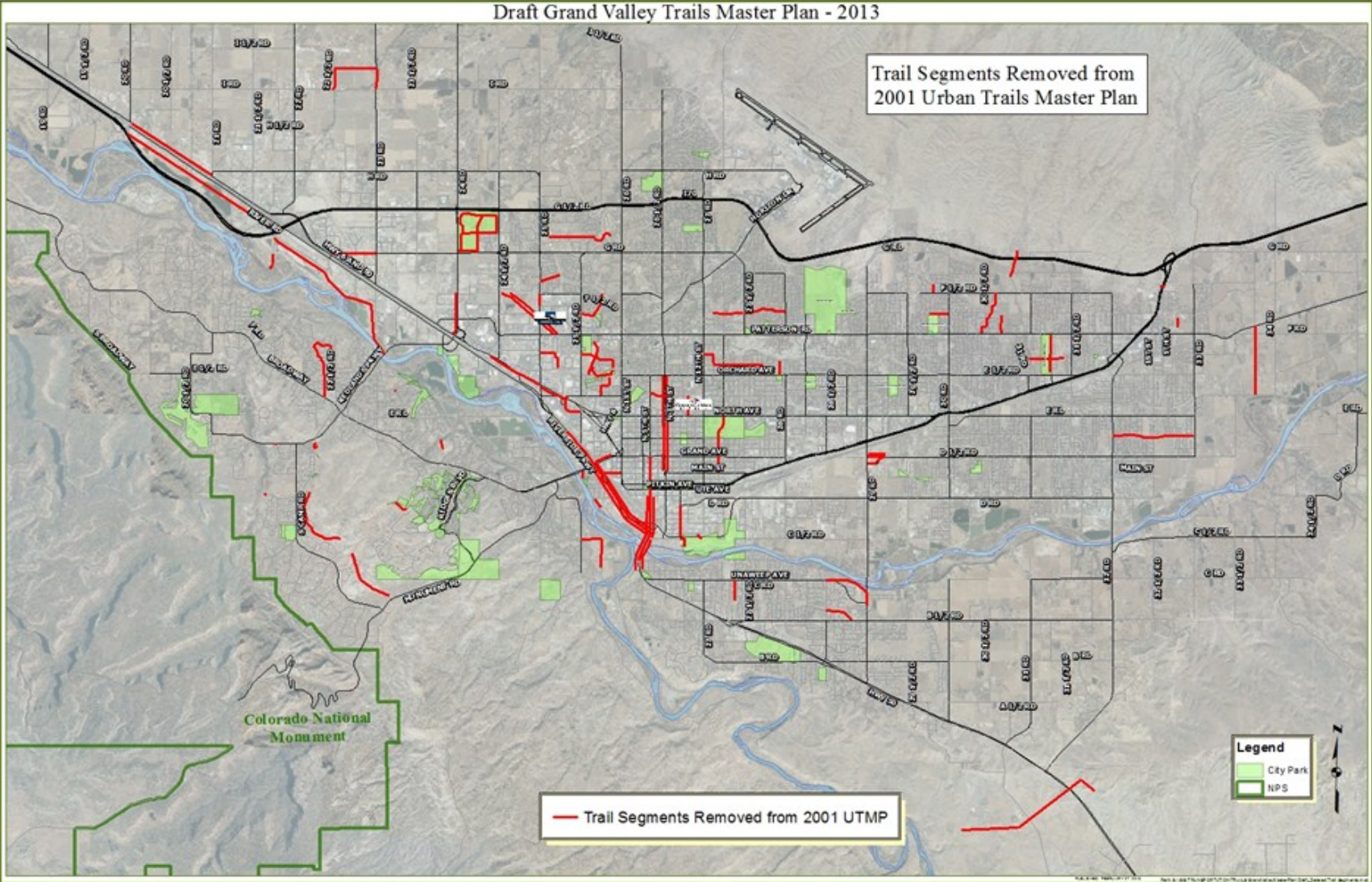
What the Public Said

"Please consider a strong emphasis on expanding bicycle access city and county-wide to encourage biking as a main mode of daily transportation."

What the Public Said

"Please take this opportunity to make Grand Junction the most bicycle friendly community it can be. Terrain and climate are generally conducive to cycling. With gas prices consistently rising, we need to design community infrastructure to support cycling and walking. We need more bike lanes, streetlights that take into account cyclists, public bike racks, etc. Please ensure that the new plan makes Grand Junction the kind of town pedestrians want to reside and spend time in."

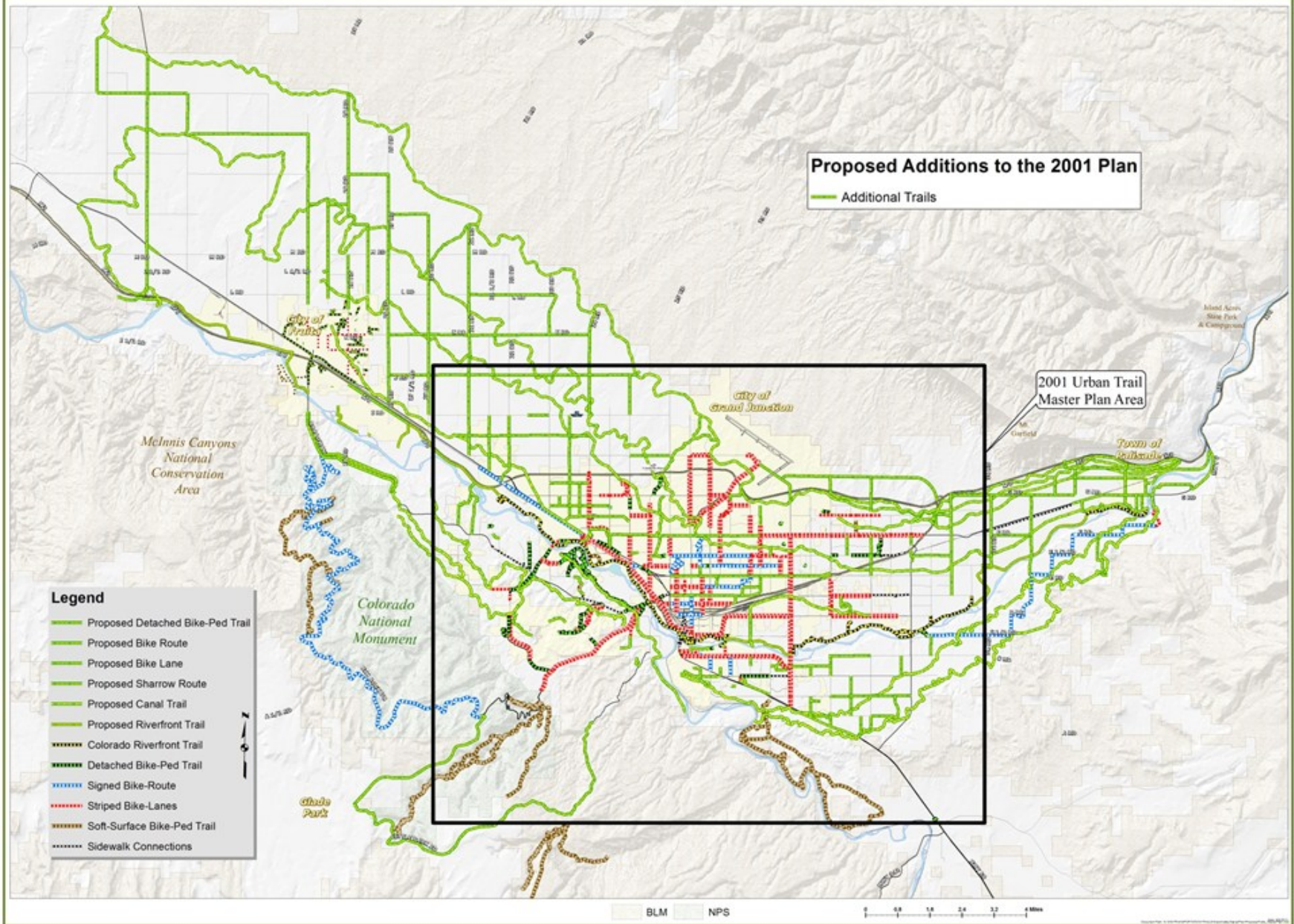
Draft Grand Valley Trails Master Plan - 2013



Trail Segments Removed from 2001 Urban Trails Master Plan

— Trail Segments Removed from 2001 UTMP

Draft Grand Valley Trails Master Plan





Criteria for Comprehensive Plan Amendment

Comprehensive Plan Amendment

(i) There was an error such that then-existing facts, projects, or trends that were reasonably foreseeable were not accounted for;

There was no error. The proposed Grand Valley Trails Master Plan is being amended to anticipate and accommodate future growth patterns for the community at large.

Comprehensive Plan Amendment

(ii) Subsequent events have invalidated the original premises and findings;

- Comprehensive Plan guidance - “it is recommended that Grand Junction and Mesa County work toward developing a primary network of off-street multi-use pathways, complemented by on-street bike lanes where an off-street trail is not possible, to provide pedestrian and bicycle connections throughout the community including connecting where people live to the Colorado River trail system. The trails should be sited to take advantage of greenways, waterways, and natural features. Multiple use trails are the preferred type of trail from a cost/benefit perspective.”
- The proposed plan updates include an expanded area covered by the Comprehensive Plan and gives a broader views of how trails tie together the adopted plans of Fruita and Palisade.

Comprehensive Plan Amendment

(iii) The character and/or condition of the area have changed enough that the amendment is acceptable;

- The existing Urban Trails Master Plan predates the adopted 2010 Comprehensive Plan; therefore, the Urban Trails Master Plan is being updated to reflect how future development will occur as identified on the Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map.

Comprehensive Plan Amendment

(iv) The community or area, as defined by the presiding body, will derive benefits from the proposed amendment;

- In its Healthy Mesa County 2012-2017 Report, Mesa County Health Department has identified the built environment as one of its priority areas. The built environment refers to buildings, roads, parks, mass transit and so on – that support our regular activities. The built environment also includes land-use patterns and is a key determinant of health and influences the behaviors of individuals and communities. According to the Colorado Health Foundation (2012), people who live in neighborhoods that are “walkable” are twice as likely to get enough physical activity as those who don’t. Moderate to vigorous exercise on a regular basis has been shown to decrease a person’s risk for obesity, cardiovascular disease, diabetes and hypertension, as well as have a positive effect on mental health. Additionally, the built environment impacts how safe and connected people feel in their communities. According to the Prevention Institute, 2008, a safe environment increases the likelihood of people bicycling and walking, making use of public transit, accessing parks and patronizing healthier eating venues.

Comprehensive Plan Amendment

(vi) The change furthers the goals for circulation and interconnectivity.

Existing Facilities		Planned/Proposed Facilities			
	2013		2001	2013	Total
	Miles		Miles	Miles	Miles
Bike-Ped Attached	10.33	Detached Path	71.72	23.61	95.33
Bike-Ped Detached	148.45	Canal Path	59.24	129.75	188.99
Bike-Ped Soft Surface	47.90	Bike Route	54.07	115.75	169.82
Bike Route	71.02	Bike Lane	102.47	63.71	166.18
Bike Lanes	128.02	Sharrow Route	0.00	0.529	0.53
	405.72		287.5	333.35	620.85

Comprehensive Plan Amendment

(v) The change will facilitate safe and efficient access for all modes of transportation;

- The existing plan reviewed comprehensively during the past two years and subjected to public scrutiny through the Trails Summit in March, 2013 and the public open house on June 4, 2013. The Trails Summit was attended by 142 people with a breakout session specifically geared toward review of the proposed Master Plan; 102 people signed the following pledge:

"There are many aspects to a vibrant, livable community, not the least of which is creating safe, efficient and enjoyable walking and bicycling opportunities. The Grand Valley's topography and climate are ideal for bicycling and walking as a viable transportation choice and for recreation. A walkable and bike-friendly community has positive impacts on the local economy and stimulates economic development by making the area attractive for business relocation and retention and tourism, as well as for residents who enjoy a healthy, active lifestyle. Walkable/bikeable communities have been shown to improve citizens' health, well-being and quality of life, to boost community spirit and livability, to improve traffic safety, and to reduce pollution and congestion."

- The open house was attended by more than 72 people and received 54 sheets of written comment. Additional comments have been received through the review process.

FINDINGS OF FACT/CONCLUSIONS

- 1.The proposed amendment is consistent with the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.
- 2.The review criteria in Section 21.02.130 of the Grand Junction Zoning and Development Code have all been met.
- 3.City and RTPO staff find that amending the Urban Trails Master Plan will provide a better circulation plan for the community. It will promote alternative means of active transportation for the enhancement of the health, safety and environment of the community.
- 4.The Urban Trails Master Plan shall be renamed the Grand Valley Trails Master Plan to better reflect the area covered by the plan.

“*Life* is like riding a bicycle.
To keep your balance you must keep moving.”
- *Albert Einstein*

