



Whitewater Community Plan

January 11, 2007

Amended July 14, 2011



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Volunteer Subcommittee & Steering Committee Members

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INTRODUCTION

Amended July 14, 2011

Update of the 1999 Plan: This 2007 edition of the Whitewater Community Plan is an update to the 1999 Whitewater/Kannah Creek Plan. The 2005 update of the Mesa County Rural Master Plan anticipated conducting a detailed Whitewater Community Plan in 2006. In the years since the adoption of the 1999 Plan and the initiation of this version, western Colorado and Whitewater in particular have experienced significant growth. The Whitewater Area is comprised of ranching land and BLM open lands. The residential development pattern is low density and rural in character, and there are no community-serving commercial uses. Like many rural areas of Mesa County, Whitewater is now developing into a popular residential community.

Mesa County and Whitewater residents agreed that a new Community Plan was needed to determine and prepare for an acceptable level of growth and development. This plan recognizes the new growth pressures facing the area, and suggests policies that both accommodate the present and anticipate future community needs.

Sanitary Sewer District Election: A major component to shaping the future growth of the Whitewater area is approval of the Mesa County Whitewater Public Improvement District. The district will initially serve approximately 58 homes and may be expanded in the future to service additional residential and commercial developments. The district is necessary to fulfill the goals of creating opportunities for community-serving commercial uses, better fire protection, and local schools.

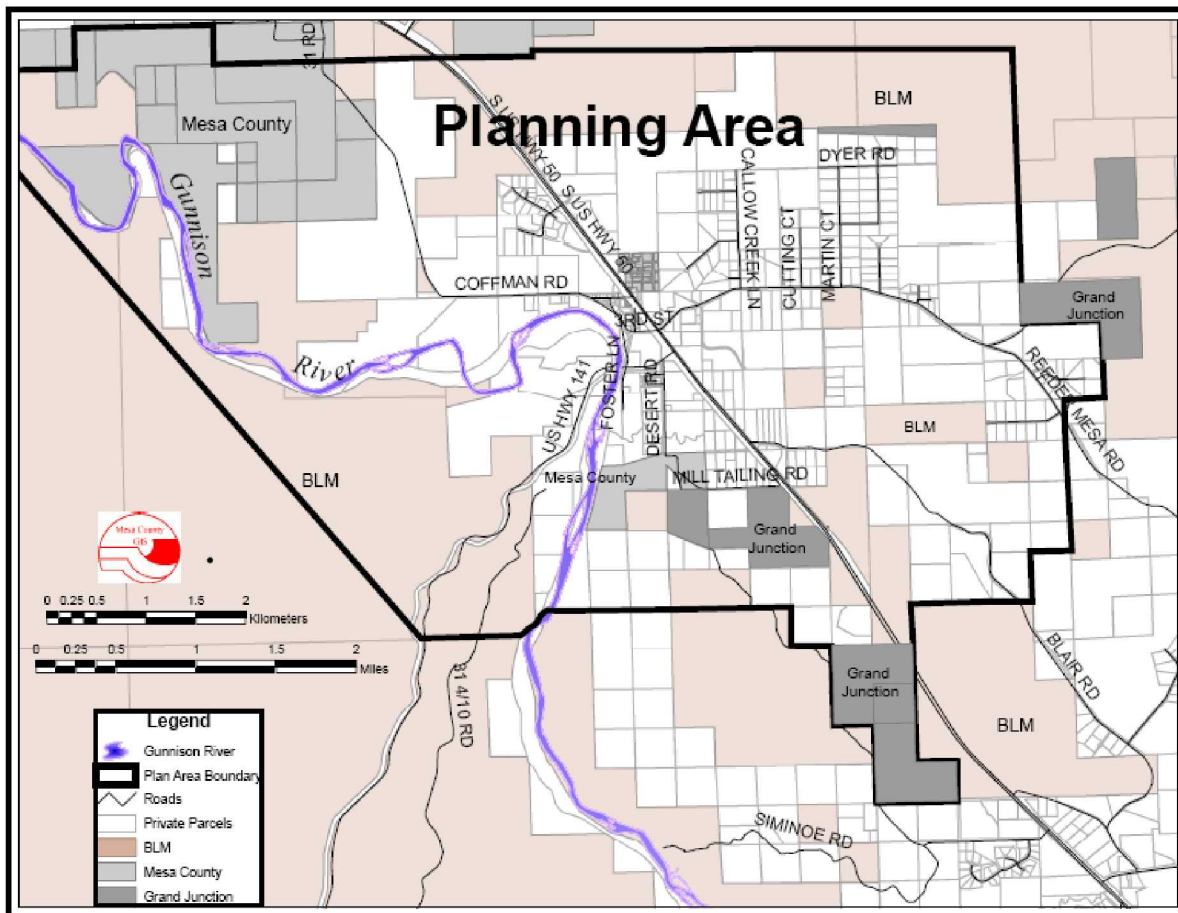


Old Whitewater Hotel

INTRODUCTION

Amended July 14, 2011

Planning Area: Whitewater is located eight miles south of Grand Junction. The planning boundaries are generally, south from Whitewater Hill to Siminoe Road, and from the Gunnison River on the west to a north south line where Purdy Mesa Road and Whitewater Creek Road split. It is one of 6 rural communities in Mesa County. This updated plan focuses only on Whitewater and does not include the Kannah Creek area, which was updated as part of the 2005 Rural Master Plan update. The plan area is included in the Grand Junction Comprehensive Plan's Urban Development Boundary (adopted 2010). The plan's study area covers 18.5 square miles. Generally, land ownership/management is comprised as follows: approximately 49 percent Bureau of Land Management (BLM), 49 percent private, 1 percent Mesa County and, 1 percent City of Grand Junction.



Source: Mesa County

Figure 1 Planning Area Boundary

INTRODUCTION

Amended July 14, 2011

Purpose of the Plan: The 2006 Whitewater Community Plan represents an extensive effort by both Whitewater residents and Mesa County to create a blueprint for future growth and development. This update identifies changed conditions since the 1999 plan was adopted and includes revised goals, policies and action plans. The purpose of this plan is to set guidelines for Whitewater’s growth from a rural area into an urban community with amenities and services to meet the needs of a growing population. Elements of the plan are intended to guide the evolution of the community to self sufficiency, self governance, and create an independent identity.

Currently, the Whitewater Community Planning area has approximately 1,125 residents in 450 households. Population trends in the region, combined with the amount of available land, suggest that the population of Whitewater may grow at a significant rate -- at least tripling the current population. In anticipation of this growth, this updated and focused Plan addresses future land uses specifically for a growing Whitewater community. This document is intended be a roadmap as to how residential and commercial growth and development can be appropriately scaled and sited; transportation and infrastructure needs can be safely and adequately met; open space and recreational areas can be preserved and expanded; and community services and facilities updated or locally created.



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Road Map for the Future: The reason for this update is that many of the underlying premises and driving factors of the 1999 Whitewater/Kannah Creek Plan have changed. Previously, Whitewater wanted to remain a rural, agriculture-based community. At an initial summer 2006 Neighborhood Meeting/Open House, community members shared their ideas and concerns about the future of Whitewater. Overall, the attendees agreed they should be active in shaping how their community will change with new growth. Citizens also agreed that growth is inevitable and subsequently brings the opportunity of commercial development, job creation and greater services, including proposed sanitary sewer district to their community.

Citizen Participation: Citizen participation was organized into three formats; Steering Committee, Subcommittee, and Neighborhood Open House. The Steering Committee was composed of community members, service providers, interested parties, Planning Commissioners, and Board of County Commissioners members. This group kept the appointed and elected officials involved and regularly updated in the planning process.



To better discuss specific items of interest and concern, subcommittees were created. The subcommittee members included property owners, residents, prospective land developers, utility and service providers and members of elected and appointed boards.

The subcommittees were organized around the land use topics of Residential, Commercial & Industrial, Open Space & Recreation, and Infrastructure Utilities & Services. The results of the subcommittees discussions were presented at both the Steering Committee and Neighborhood meetings.

Neighborhood Open Houses were held in the community three times throughout the process. The meetings were well attended and provided opportunity to share ideas and bring up issues and concerns. The information was gathered and summarized and made available to the Steering Committee and public via Mesa County's web page.

Throughout the subcommittee and neighborhood meetings, seven distinct areas or neighborhoods were identified. For purposes of this planning document, these seven areas are utilized to describe future land uses throughout Whitewater. The neighborhoods are:

1. Rancho Dos Rios: This area is on the east side of Highway 50. BLM is the northern boundary and Mesa County owned property is the southern boundary. This area is composed of approximately six parcels of privately owned property.
2. Reeder Mesa Road: This area generally encompasses the Whitewater Planning Area east of Highway 50 with the exceptions of the Rancho Dos Rios and the outer edge of the “Old Town Core” areas.
3. Elk Run Subdivision: This platted subdivision is on the west side of Highway 50 at Elk Run Road, across Highway 50 from Rancho Dos Rios area.
4. Coffman Road Area: This area is north of the Old Spanish Trail trailhead on both sides of Coffman Road; and southerly adjacent to the Mesa County Landfill and general Mesa County owned land. This area covers approximately 480 acres.
5. Post Office Vicinity: This area is between 1st and 3rd Streets, and Coffman Road and Highway 50.
6. Outer Old Town Core: This area surrounds the Post Office Vicinity. The area is on the west side of Highway 50 near 3rd Street South to Highway 141, from Coffman Road to Highway 50. The area also is on the east side of Highway 50 near the intersection of Highways 50 and 141, north including the Mesa County owned properties.
7. Southern Whitewater: South of Highway 141 flanked to the west by the Gunnison River and to the east by Highway 50.

Source: Mesa County 2006

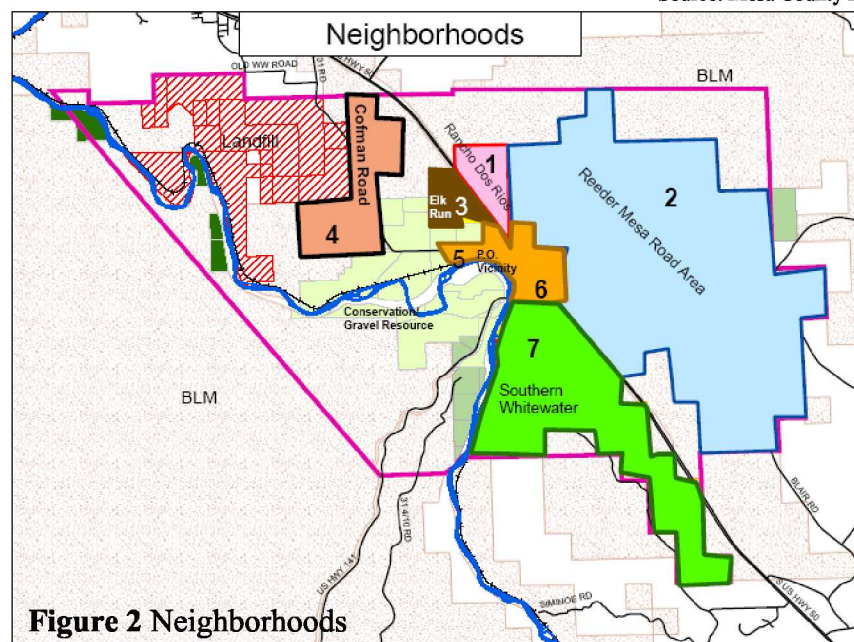


Figure 2 Neighborhoods

Selection of a Preferred Plan: Captured in this plan are the visions and goals of the local community relating to future residential and commercial development, open space preservation, transportation needs, and infrastructure service requirements. Transitioning from a rural area toward an urban community will improve infrastructure, add urban services, and create pedestrian networks. Urban amenities will foster community interaction and assist in creating an identity for the future of Whitewater.

Through a series of public meetings over a three month period, the following alternatives were explored relative to residential and commercial uses. The three alternatives included:

1. **Rural-Low Density Plan;**
2. **Low-Medium Density Plan;** and
3. **Medium-Mixed Use Density Plan.**

During the public meetings one plan prevailed in guiding future development toward the residents' goals -- the **Medium-Mixed Use Density Plan**. Following are summaries of the components of each.



The **Rural-Low Density Plan** was eliminated by the community for one major reason – the limited growth this plan would not support improved infrastructure or services to the area. This plan would maintain the status quo, providing for a total of approximately 2,000 households at full build-out (including existing development). Because this would not support improved infrastructure or the opportunity for commercial development, this plan was not the preferred alternative.

The **Low-Medium Density Plan** was considered viable, as this would allow adequate growth to support improvements to the existing infrastructure, including implementation of a proposed sanitary sewer district. This plan would allow approximately 7,000 households at full build-out (including existing development). The plan provides for a variety of housing types from 5-acre ranchettes to 10,000 square foot lots (or four units per acre).

While this plan did offer commercial zoning, there was limited criteria for creating neighborhood-sized retail and instead invited the opportunity for a strip malls or “big boxes” along Highway 50. This was not consistent with the goals of the community. Modifications to this plan generated the Medium-Mixed Use Plan.

The **Medium-Mixed Use Plan** revised the Low-Medium Density Plan to include a mixed-use zone district applied to the proposed future commercial uses along the Highway 50 corridor.

This alternative creates more housing opportunities; creates opportunities for live/work development; encourages smaller scale commercial development that will contribute to a small town feel; and creates interesting design opportunities.

Schedule of Activities:

Initial Steering Committee Meeting	June 22, 2006
Initial Neighborhood Meeting/Open House	June 29, 2006
Subcommittee Meetings	July 12, 2006
Subcommittee Meetings	July 19, 2006
Steering Committee Meeting	August 3, 2006
Neighborhood Meeting/Open House	August 30, 2006
Final Steering Committee Review	September 14, 2006
Final Neighborhood Meeting/Open House	October 25, 2006
Whitewater Residents Vote on Public Improvement District	November 7, 2006
Mesa County Planning Commission Public Hearing	November 16, 2006
Mesa County Planning Commission Workshop	December 7, 2006
Mesa County Planning Commission Public Hearing	December 14, 2006
Adoption by Mesa County Planning Commission	January, 11 2007
Presentation to Board of Commissioners	February 2007

Action Plans

Consistent with the adopted Mesa County Rural Master Plan, this 2006 Whitewater Community Plan recommends strategies and actions for implementing the goals and policies for this area of Mesa County. This plan is organized into a series of Action Plans:

- Community Services (CS)
Urban Services, Sanitary Sewer Collection, Water Distribution System, Fire Protection, Drainage Facilities, and Schools.
- Community Image/Character (CI)
Design Policies and Guidelines
- Land Use/Growth Management (LU)
Residential, Commercial & Industrial
- Transferable Development Rights/Credits (TDR/C)
- Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PR)
- Transportation (TR)

Each Action plan is organized with the following components:

- 1. Existing Conditions & Findings**
- 2. Goals:** Defined by Community, Economy, and Design & Location issues.
- 3. Policies:** A set of guidelines for enacting the goals.
- 4. Action Items:** Specific actions to implement the goals and policies.

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Existing Conditions & Findings: This section reviews the current conditions and goals for water distribution, sanitary sewer collection, power, fire protection, drainage facilities, transportation and schools.

WATER DISTRIBUTION

The Clifton Water District provides potable water to the Whitewater area. The current 100,000 gallon water tank is located on the top of Whitewater Hill near the intersection of Highway 50 and 32 Road at an elevation of 4,900 feet. The tank's base elevation restricts the area of service to areas lower than 4,800 feet. The Water District has stated that the existing infrastructure is the limiting factor for providing service to future developments. The infrastructure of the water distribution system is mostly 6-inch mains with limited looping. The lack of consistently sized water mains and looping leaves the community without adequate pressure in the system to provide fire protection.

A new one million gallon water tank is being designed for Whitewater. The new tank will provide an increased water supply as well as increased water pressure that will expand the area of service that the Clifton Water District can supply, depending on the final elevation of the tank.

SANITARY SEWER COLLECTION

There is no public sanitary wastewater collection system in Whitewater at this time. All wastewater is treated on-site at each land parcel using individual sewage disposal systems (septic systems). Per Mesa County Health Department regulations, lots one half acre or larger may have private septic systems to service sanitary sewer needs.

A wastewater collection system and treatment facility is in the preliminary stages of design for the Whitewater Community. According to the *Update to Engineering Report, Whitewater Wastewater Feasibility Study* dated November 2004 prepared by WestWater Engineering, the facility can be constructed in two phases. Phase I will have the capacity to treat 50,000-gpd of wastewater serving the equivalent of 270 single family homes. Phase II will have a 133,000-gpd capacity and can serve the equivalent of 740 single family homes. The interceptor and sewage collection mains will likely be sized to service the maximum build out projected flows for the system, if required velocities can be obtained with the lower flows of the initial phases.

POWER

Grand Valley Rural Power representatives have indicated that the power requirements are currently at capacity in the Whitewater area. They are in the process of selecting a site within the Plan area to construct a new substation and increase the available power capacity. This new substation will be built within the next couple of years. Three-phase power is currently available in Whitewater. Electric service consists of overhead and underground facilities.

FIRE PROTECTION

The Land's End Fire Protection District currently consists of a fire protection station approximately five miles south of Whitewater. This station houses seven vehicles and is a volunteer station with no sleeping quarters. According to representatives at the fire district, a satellite station may be located in the Post Office Vicinity of Whitewater to house two vehicles. This would also be a volunteer station.

As with the Clifton Water District, the fire district also has concerns about the fire protection capability of the water network. The existing network does not provide fire hydrant protection. However, some residents have installed sprinkler systems with recent construction for added protection. The long term goal of the fire district is to have fire hydrant protection to all future buildings in the Plan area, as well as many of the existing buildings.

DRAINAGE FACILITIES

The current drainage facilities in the Whitewater area consist of borrow ditches that convey storm runoff from the streets and lots to the existing drainage ways. The two major drainage ways are Callow Creek and Whitewater Creek, which both drain to the Gunnison River.

The Gunnison River runs near the Post Office Vicinity and Southern Whitewater area. This drainage way has not been studied to determine the extent of the major or 100-year flood. It is recommended that a floodplain study be completed for the Gunnison River and the other two major drainage ways to determine the impact the floodplain and floodway will have on future development.

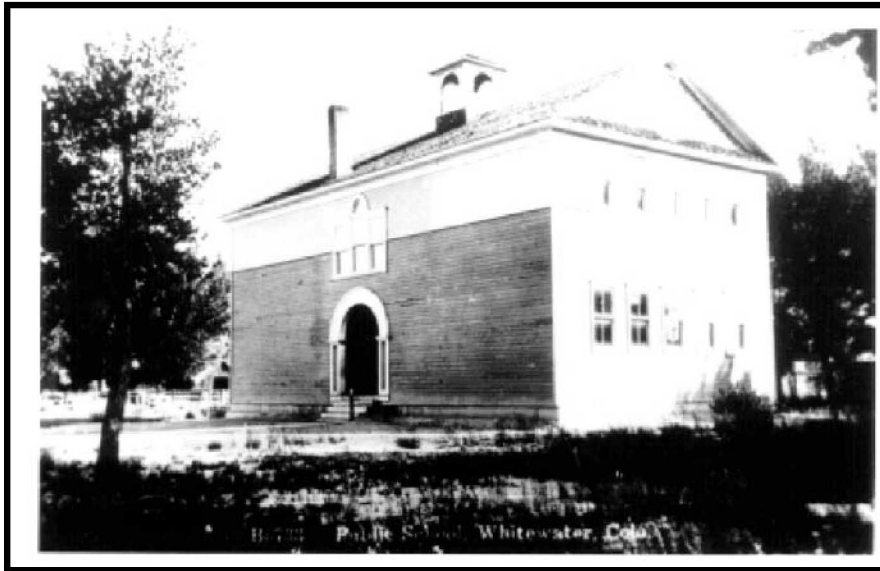
Future road sections will vary depending on the future land use. The higher density residential areas will have curb, gutter and storm sewer conveyance for runoff, while lower, rural density areas may continue with the borrow ditch conveyance system.

Future development shall follow the design criteria set forth in the *Stormwater Management Manual*, Mesa County, Colorado, March 2006. Both detention and water quality best management practices may be required with future development.

SCHOOLS

Presently there are no public schools in the Whitewater planning area. Students are bused to schools outside of the planning area. Students living in the planning area are eligible to ride the public school bus.

There is land available for potential future school and park sites located in numerous locations throughout the planning area. Of specific interest are properties managed by the BLM that are listed on their disposal property list. Also, property owned by Mesa County and the City of Grand Junction are of interest to School District 51. The School District has been actively involved conducting their needs assessment and researching school sites for the area. Land use densities and school site selection should be coordinated to minimize busing and encourage walking to schools.



Source: www.pedbikeimages.org/ Dan Burden

Community Services Goals

COMMUNITY

- Mesa County will continue to ensure adequate public safety services are available to all residents.
- Mesa County and the Lands End Fire Protection District will continue to work together to ensure adequate infrastructure are available to all residents, specifically fire protection.
- Mesa County will work to create a comprehensive multi-modal transportation network for the Whitewater Plan area.
- Mesa County and School District 51 will continue to work together to plan for and develop good schools in the planning area.
- Mesa County will continue to work with service providers to ensure that adequate levels of services (power, water, drainage) are provided to the area.

ECONOMY

- Revenue generated in the Whitewater Community should be redirected to the community to build a self-sustaining community until it determines its own governance.
- Mesa County will work with Whitewater residents and members of the Mesa County Whitewater Public Improvements District to plan for and provide additional urban services as the community grows and is more capable of supporting the additional services.

DESIGN & LOCATION

- Mesa County promotes and supports creative design solutions for new development that respect the integrity of the natural topography and landscape.

Community Services Policies

COMMUNITY

- Infrastructure will be provided to all new development and will not diminish existing levels of service.
- Mesa County, Lands End Fire Protection District, and developers with an interest in the planning area, will work together to ensure that infrastructure will be designed and installed to provide fire protection to existing and future residents, as well as commercial developments.
- The Mesa County Whitewater Public Improvement District will adequately provide infrastructure and services for up to 7,500 additional dwelling units (approximately 16,000 people) expected to be reached in the next 20 – 30 years as depicted on the Future Land Use Map.
- Mesa County will ensure adequate public services are available concurrent with new growth.
- Mesa County and School District 51 will work together to minimize student bussing to be fiscally responsible and encourage school/neighborhood interaction.

ECONOMY

- Mesa County will coordinate Capital Investment Program (CIP) planning and projects with service providers to ensure an effective and efficient development of infrastructure and services.
- Mesa County Whitewater Public Improvement District will periodically evaluate sewer tap fees to ensure fees are consistent with costs of infrastructure. Infrastructure shall be designed and built for full build-out conditions per the new future land use classification map.

DESIGN & LOCATION

- Specific location of infrastructure shall be determined with future studies and analysis and as development is proposed within the planning area.
- Mesa County requires development to use drought-tolerant landscaping materials combined with water-efficient irrigation systems.
- Water-efficient plumbing fixtures and faucets are encouraged to reduce indoor water use.
- Sustainable building practices are encouraged for all new development and remodels.

Community Services Action Items (CS)

Action Items*URBAN SERVICES*

- CS1** Mesa County, the Whitewater Urban Services Public Improvement District, and other service providers will cooperatively develop respective fee schedules for urban levels of service necessary as the community develops at urban densities.

SANITARY SEWER COLLECTION

- CS2** Establish a document of Wastewater Construction and Design Standards to ensure that future utility infrastructure is consistent and of sufficient quality to minimize infiltration and leakage and follows standard design practices.
- CS3** Mesa County Whitewater Public Improvement District will implement a Tap Fee for future customers to pay for the cost of sewer infrastructure.
- CS4** Install service laterals to existing structures within the Mesa County Whitewater Public Improvement District upon completion or in conjunction with the construction of the interception mains.
- CS5** New development will install additional collection mains per the June 2008 Master Plan by Jacobs Engineering Group.

WATER DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

- CS6** Mesa County and Clifton Water will coordinate efforts to create a Master Plan for the water system to provide looping and water line upgrades as needed and as development occurs to provide adequate levels of service, pressure and potentially fire protection pressure.
- CS7** Complete a water system model of the existing network and keep it up-to-date as infrastructure is installed or replaced. As pipes are replaced and the new Clifton Water District water tank goes online, the model will have the potential to define where there is adequate pressure to provide domestic water and fire service.
- CS8** Update the Plant Investment Fee for the Clifton Water District for new developments to contribute to the cost of installation of infrastructure.

FIRE PROTECTION

- CS9** The Clifton Water District and the Lands End Fire Protection District will coordinate provision of fire hydrant protection to buildings in the Whitewater Plan area.
- CS10** Mesa County will work with Lands End Fire Protection District, developers, and others with an interest in the Whitewater community to provide a satellite fire station in the Post Office Vicinity of Whitewater.

DRAINAGE FACILITIES

- CS11** Conduct a floodplain study for the Gunnison River to determine the design parameters for future development. Additional floodplain studies for Callow Creek and Whitewater Creek are also recommended.
- CS12** As development occurs, the design criteria set forth in the *Storm Water Management Manual* for Mesa County shall be adhered to.

SCHOOLS

- CS13** Mesa County will continue to work with the School District 51 long range planning committee and school board to evaluate the needs for schools in the planning area and develop sites that are integrated into neighborhoods so as to promote walkability of students.
- CS14** At the time of school site designation and development, land adjacent to it may be considered for appropriately higher residential density.



Clifton Elementary School

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Existing Conditions & Findings:

Since the 1999 Plan, there continues to be no commercial or retail development that serves the community's needs. Children are bused outside of the community for education. Buildings of former commercial uses along Highway 50 continue to be in disrepair and increasingly derelict. A motel continues to operate, as well as a seasonal fruit stand and a new bed and breakfast on the east side of Highway 50. However, as the population of Whitewater grows, residents are increasingly interested in having basic neighborhood businesses in the area including a grocery store, gas station, and convenience store. Also, there is interest in having retail space for local entrepreneurs to start businesses.

Throughout the 2006 community plan process, participants expressed interest in the proposed sanitary sewer district:

- to improve the quality of life in Whitewater;
- to achieve commercial development that would both serve the needs of the residents as well as create a focal point in Whitewater; and
- to manage growth in the various neighborhoods throughout Whitewater.

Participants of the planning process also expressed desire for:

- environmentally sensitive future commercial and residential development;
- a regional park at the former Mill Tailings site;
- identified BLM parcels for community uses including a potential school site;
- appropriate location, size and scale of future development (no big box commercial development);
- appropriate adjacent land uses;
- design guidelines to reduce the image of clutter or debris; and
- developing Whitewater into an attractive entryway into the Grand Valley.



Source: [www.pedbikeimages.org/Dan Burden](http://www.pedbikeimages.org/Dan%20Burden)

COMMUNITY IMAGE/CHARACTER ACTION PLAN (CI) Amended July 14, 2011

As stated in the 1999 Whitewater Plan: “The Highway 50 corridor is a major entryway to the Grand Valley. The image many people have of Mesa County and the Grand Junction area is based on their visual perception of the landscape and human built features they see from the road. Desert-like conditions along the highway and wide-open vistas give a distinct impression of the area. Low growing, sparse vegetation makes screening outdoor storage difficult. Development in the highway corridor should be particularly sensitive to this circumstance.”



Source: Mesa County

Community Image/Character Goals



Pedestrian-oriented shopping plaza Source: www.pedbikeimages.org/ Dan Burden

Goals:

COMMUNITY

- Establish amenities and services that support an emerging urban community.
- Mesa County will promote and support design standards for all development that will result in a positive image of the community and reflects positively on the County.
- Mesa County recognizes that Whitewater will be an attractive gateway into the community and new development will create a positive image of not only Whitewater but for the larger community of the Grand Valley and Mesa County.
- To create a self-directed and independent community with adequate urban services, facilities, and amenities.
- Mesa County Code Enforcement will assist with the improvement and maintenance of the aesthetic appearance, health and safety of the Whitewater community.
- Mesa County Code Enforcement will identify key issues and concerns in the planning area and work with residents to prioritize and remedy them.

ECONOMY

- Higher density residential development that can support future commercial uses.
- To create a balance between residential and commercial development that will move Whitewater toward a self-sufficient community.
- Commercial development that will foster a focal point and identity for the emerging urban community.

COMMUNITY IMAGE/CHARACTER ACTION PLAN (CI) Amended July 14, 2011

- To create a desirable environment for local and entrepreneurial businesses in the plan area.
- A business park (similar to Foresight Park) type of industry in the area.

DESIGN & LOCATION

- To protect and enhance trail access for recreation opportunities including the Old Spanish Trail, Gunnison Bluffs Trail, and the Gunnison River.
- Future development will respect and compliment existing residents and development patterns in the core area of Whitewater, in particular in the neighborhood between 1st and 3rd Streets.
- To assist with the improvement and maintenance of the aesthetic appearance, health and safety of the Whitewater community through code enforcement activities.
- To create a stable, long-term, viable, and self-supporting community of seven distinctly individual neighborhoods as depicted in this plan.
- To protect and maintain the unique features and characteristics of the Whitewater Community which are significant links to the past, present, and future of the community.



Source: [www.pedbikeimages.org/Dan Burden](http://www.pedbikeimages.org/Dan%20Burden)

Community Image/Character Policies

Policies:*COMMUNITY*

- Establish and maintain a well-defined community center to provide a focal point as an emerging urban community.
- Mesa County recognizes and supports local services and commercial activities that will benefit the existing residents and contribute to a positive public image.

ECONOMY

- Mesa County supports public/private partnerships to help create a strong commercial base to support a growing population.
- Mesa County will encourage commercial, mixed-use, and light industrial uses to generate local employment opportunities and encourage a self-sufficient community.
- Mesa County will work with the Grand Junction Economic Partnership, Business Incubator, and others with an economic development interest to plan for and develop a diverse, sustainable economic climate in Whitewater.
- Mesa County will periodically evaluate economic development opportunities and barriers as the area grows and evolves into a self-sufficient community.

DESIGN & LOCATION

- Mesa County, developers and others with an interest in the Whitewater Community will work together to protect important rural features, scenic vistas/corridors, and natural areas impacted by proposed development (e.g. large trees, washes, riparian areas, historic structures, farming practices, balance of visual and traffic impacts on location of accesses, etc.) and mitigate such impacts where avoidance is not practicable.
- Mesa County encourages the protection of paleontologic, historic, and cultural resources of Mesa County.
- All new development will be designed to protect critical or sensitive lands (productive agricultural land, floodplains, wetlands, riparian corridors, and important wildlife habitat). Additionally, new development will include measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate threats from wildfire when located in wildfire hazard areas.*
- Continue to protect natural areas/resources through incentives and flexible options for land development by providing a list of available, voluntary tools and techniques.*
- Continue to coordinate planning efforts with public land management agencies on land uses and land use activities.
- Continue to provide information about alternative development tools and techniques that further the goals of this plan and are compatible to the landscape and character of the area.*
- Establish and promote the historical pride and heritage of the Whitewater Community.

COMMUNITY IMAGE/CHARACTER ACTION PLAN (CI) Amended July 14, 2011

- Document potential historic sites and structures as a means for designating properties on local, state and/or national registers.
- Preserve, appropriately reuse, and respect the setting of historic buildings/sites within the Whitewater Community.
- Mesa County Code Enforcement will work with landowners, businesses, and others to improve public perception of the area.

**Source: 1999 Whitewater/Kannah Creek Rural Community Plan.*



Source: www.pedbikeimages.org/Dan Burden

Community Image/Character Action Items (CI)

Action Items:

- CI1** Adopt a new zoning map that includes more residential, commercial, and industrial uses.
- CI2** Adopt Residential and Commercial/Industrial design guidelines as stated in the Land Use/Growth Management Action Plans to ensure that new development is designed appropriate to location and the environment.
- CI3** Mesa County will establish mixed-use standards and incentives in a mixed-use zone district to intensify activity within the Whitewater community center (including those that may take advantage of tourist or highway traffic).
- CI4** Mesa County will ensure that mixed-use and commercial facilities are mutually supportive and attract people to complimentary activities (e.g. churches, services, businesses/residential, post office, non-traditional home businesses, etc.).
- CI5** Mesa County will include Code Enforcement staff in on-going neighborhood planning, assistance to neighborhood organizations, and assistance with creating citizen watch groups in specific neighborhoods.
- CI6** Code Enforcement will work with neighborhood groups to prioritize cleanups with cases involving junk as the highest priority in this effort.
- CI7** Code Enforcement staff will continue to talk with and educate residents about available services, staffing limits, and what can be done relative to residents' expectations.
- CI8** Mesa County will provide Home Owners Association (HOA) options on how to assist property owners with clean-up of properties, e.g., remove and dispose of and/or recycle large junk items, keep weeds mowed, information on upcoming annual free day at the landfill, household hazardous materials programs, how to keep restrictive covenants up-to-date, etc.
- CI9** Mesa County will publish information on Code Enforcement issues, definitions, processes, successes, etc. in homeowner association newsletters and/or insert in utility billings and/or newspapers.
- CI10** Mesa County will provide options to encourage and assist neighborhoods with community pride and self-help cleanup programs will be pursued.
- CI11** Mesa County will study and assess the potential of a new process where the Pest Inspector hands over valid (i.e. already checked out) noxious weed complaints to the Code Enforcement staff to pursue.
- CI12** Implement the Whitewater Transportation Plan.
- CI13** Revise the Development Code to require development applicants to demonstrate that "critical or sensitive lands" are protected through the use of design criteria and standards. Avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts.
- CI14** Create and adopt design criteria and standards for critical and sensitive lands in the Whitewater Planning area.

COMMUNITY IMAGE/CHARACTER ACTION PLAN (CI) Amended July 14, 2011

- CI15** Work with public land/resource managers to adopt consistent mitigation standards, review procedures, and criteria for development.
- CI16** Evaluate and revise existing incentives /guidelines to protect natural areas specifically in the Whitewater Planning area.
- CI17** Encourage the use of xeriscape or dry landscaping for all new developments.

Residential Existing Conditions & Findings: Whitewater is envisioned as an “urban community” where people live, work, and play in harmony with each other and the environment. It affords the people a secure and comfortable place to raise children and to enjoy being with friends. The residents take great pride in their community and work together to make it a pleasant place to live. Future land uses proposed in this plan include actions to transform Whitewater from a rural community into an urban community.

Whitewater has remained a rural, low-density community largely due to the lack of infrastructure in the area, including undersized water lines, the absence of sanitary sewer service, and the lack of storm water management. The opportunity for sanitary sewer service through a public improvement district was approved by the voters of Whitewater in November 2006. An urban community, with urban amenities such as day-to-day service needs (laundromat, coffee shop, daycare center, medical offices, etc.) and greater housing opportunities, requires public sanitary sewer service.

The Mesa County Whitewater Public Improvement District will initially provide sewer service to a limited area of existing residential structures in the core of Whitewater. The district can be expanded to allow varied residential development relative to size, sales price, location, density, and available services. The future land use plan is based on future provision of sanitary sewer by the district. Future residential land uses reflect an attempt to address a variety of needs as well as maintain existing characteristics valued by the community.

This plan promotes the goals of providing for a large enough population to support infrastructure and service improvements while at the same time allowing for acceptable levels of residential density. Without the Mesa County Whitewater Public Improvement District the rural, large parcel residential development pattern would have continued with limited population growth. However, urban levels of public services such as fire and police protection, parks and recreation, street lighting, and street sweeping will continue to be limited unless services to be provided by the Whitewater Public Improvement District are expanded.

LAND USE/GROWTH MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN (LU) Amended July 14, 2011

As of 2006, Whitewater has a population of approximately 1,125 people in approximately 450 households. As the population of Whitewater continues to grow, the community will transform from an agricultural/ranching community to a predominately residential area, with homes outnumbering ranching and agricultural uses. Whitewater is also experiencing a changing profile of homeowners.

Whereas homeowners were once described as a married family with two children, the residential market is now more diverse with multiple household groups who have a variety of needs and interests, i.e. retirees, young professionals, singles, etc. This diversity can be generally understood realizing the aging baby-boomer generation and an increasing immigrant population in both Mesa County and nationally. In planning for future growth, it is important to consider the assorted needs of future homeowners by allowing a range of residential development.



Whitewater Post Office located at 1st and Short Streets. June 2006

LAND USE/GROWTH MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN (LU) Amended July 14, 2011

The Whitewater planning area is approximately 18.5 square miles, with an historic community core of about one square mile, surrounded by federal lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management with views of the Grand Mesa. Bisected by Highway 50, Whitewater is easily accessed from Grand Junction (8 miles north) and Montrose (50 miles south). Whitewater is also the access point to Highway 141 (the Unaweep/Tabeguache Scenic and Historic Byway) which eventually ends at the historic mining camp of Placerville in San Miguel County, Colorado. Future residential and commercial development must respect the proximity of Whitewater to these scenic and historic resources.

Throughout the planning process, stakeholders informally identified areas of Whitewater relative to their unique characteristics defined by location, existing development, topography, and residential neighborhood. This plan recognizes these neighborhoods as shown in Figure 2 and Figures 4-10, and as follows:

1. Rancho Dos Rios
2. Reeder Mesa Road
3. Elk Run Subdivision
4. Coffman Road Area
5. Post Office Vicinity (1st to 3rd Street)
6. Outer Old Town Core (primarily east side of Highway)
7. Southern Whitewater (south of Highway 141)

Residents of the existing community and Mesa County officials have agreed that the Whitewater area is facing the development pressures of increasing housing demand. They have agreed there is a need to plan for and embrace an acceptable level of growth – particularly in respect to future residential uses.

Existing residential development is mostly rural or low density. The residential development pattern is generally 2 – 5 acre lots, with the exception of the Post Office Vicinity where the existing lots are roughly 10,000 square feet in size.

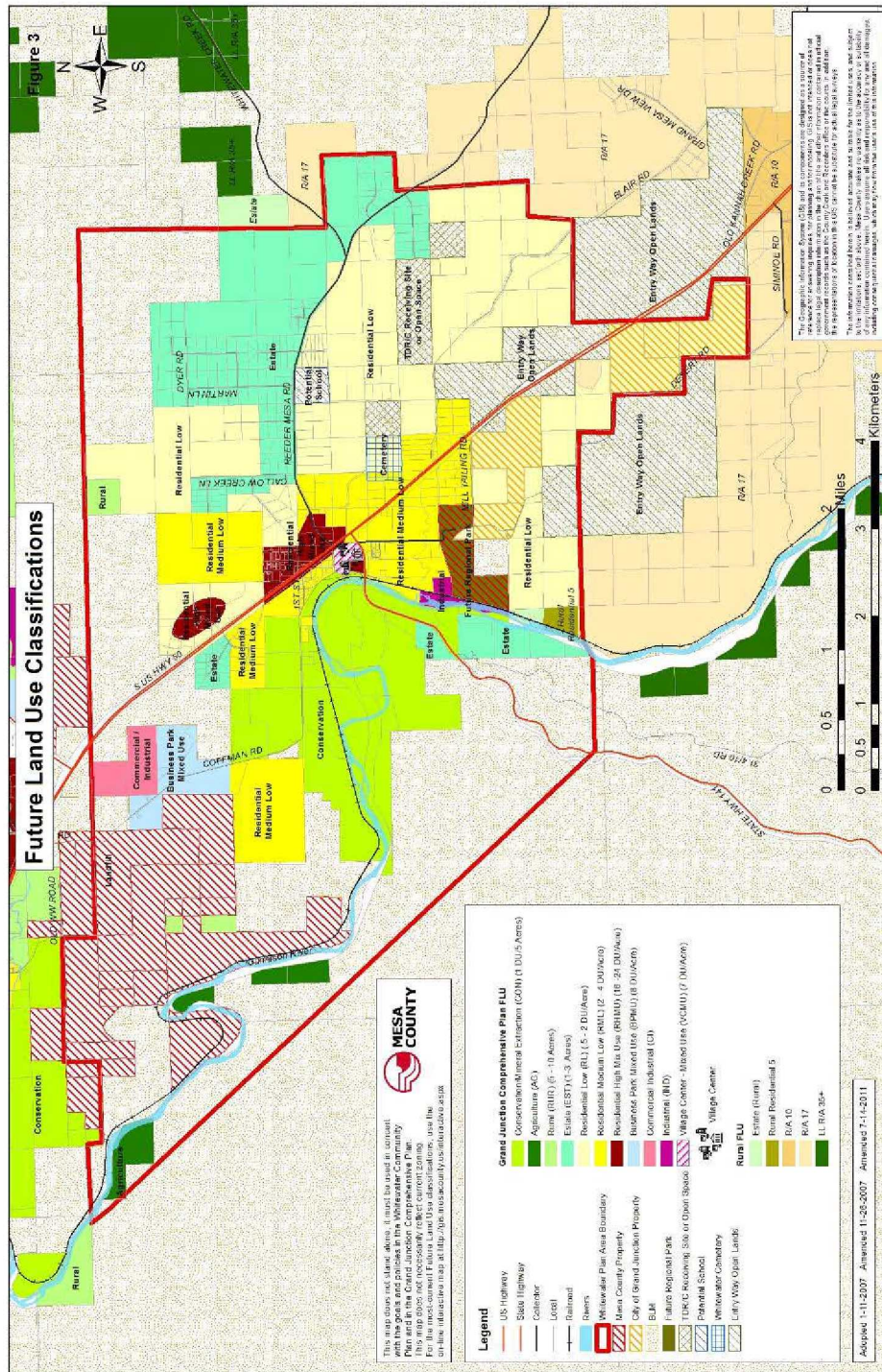


Figure 3 Future Land Use Classifications (For the most-current Future Land Use Classifications, use the on-line interactive map at <http://gis.mesacounty.us/interactive.aspx>.)



Easterly view of 1st Street depicting multiple drive ways on 10,000 square foot lots. Note the urban quality of the front yards with landscaping and fencing, but lack of a safe pedestrian connection between neighbors. June 2006

Lack of services is particularly evident in regards to sanitary sewer, fire protection, school facilities, and neighborhood-oriented retail such as grocery stores and gas stations. In particular, lack of a sanitary sewer system is the primary reason that residential development has continued on a large parcel, rural scale.

No public sanitary sewer service exists in any area of Whitewater. All existing land uses are serviced by individual sewage disposal systems (ISDS). ISDS is a common method of sewage treatment in rural communities, but not an efficient or practical means of service for a growing community. Individual septic systems are becoming increasingly problematic particularly in the Post Office vicinity where the water table is high and frequently causes flooding affecting the septic tanks in this area.

For future residential and commercial development to meet the increasing demand for housing and services, sewer service will need to be implemented. The Whitewater Public Improvement District will allow not only appropriate sanitary sewer service, but at some point in the future, may also provide an opportunity to improve existing infrastructure and additional services. Adequate infrastructure will promote increased services to Whitewater including a potential fire station, local school(s), recreation facilities and neighborhood serving commercial uses.

A critical mass of future residents is needed to achieve a general enhancement of services available to Whitewater. This critical mass could be achieved by rezoning portions of the Whitewater area following the Future Land Use Map depicted in this plan. The map

LAND USE/GROWTH MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN (LU) Amended July 14, 2011

recommends the following land uses: estate (1,387 acres), residential low density (2,840 acres), residential medium density (883 acres), and some mixed-use development (121 acres) to specifically allow higher density near commercial uses. If implemented through updated zoning, approximately 7,500+ households could be achieved (including existing households) in the Whitewater Community.

Land Use/Growth Management – Residential Goals

Goals: Whitewater as a community has created the following goals for increased residential density and the services necessary to support a growing population.

COMMUNITY

- To follow the Whitewater Community Plan as a means to implement the community's vision and goals.
- To build on the existing character and sense of community.
- To create places and opportunities for social interaction, lifestyle diversity, and foster unique neighborhoods.
- To create a stable, long-term, viable, and self-supporting community of distinctly individual neighborhoods.
- To provide adequate public safety services to the entire Whitewater community.

ECONOMY

- To create a mix of housing types, densities and neighborhoods with intent to manage infrastructure costs.
- To ensure concurrent public utility and safety services are provided to all new development.
- To plan for school sites in close proximity to neighborhoods so as to encourage student walkability.

DESIGN & LOCATION

- To promote a standard of design that is of high quality and compatible with historic features of the environment and community
- To utilize existing natural features, topography, and vegetation to capture the natural conditions of the area (color, texture, massing, etc.), so as to accentuate the image of the community.
- To reduce night lighting pollution.



Photo of Castle Peak Mixed-Use Building, Eagle, CO



Source: www.pedbikeimages.org/Dan Burden

Land Use/Growth Management – Residential Policies

Policies: The above goals are to be accomplished through the residential policies and action plans serving as guidelines for future development and redevelopment projects.

COMMUNITY:

- All new development will be consistent with the plan.
- Future development and redevelopment will form an organized well-planned community.
- Mesa County will periodically evaluate the Future Land Use classifications to ensure they are achieving the desired results and conditions and amend or modify as necessary based on community and decision-makers direction.
- Encourage a variety of housing types and densities as a critical component to implementing the plan and shaping the community.
- This plan is based on the medium, mixed-use density alternative.
- New development, infrastructure, and amenities will create a sense of place, belonging, and community unique to Whitewater.
- Site planning shall create places where residents can have casual interactions such as at central mailboxes, pathway intersections, coffee shops, and the like.
- Mesa County will work with residents to expand neighborhood watch programs throughout the planning area as it grows and changes and requires higher levels of service.
- Evaluate emergency response and coordination issues.

ECONOMY:

- Mesa County will support implementation of infrastructure and service improvements to transform Whitewater from a rural area to an urban community.
- Mesa County will continue to coordinate with service providers such as Clifton Water District, Grand Valley Rural Power, SourceGas, Whitewater Public Improvement Districts, and School District 51 to ensure infrastructure improvements are calculated and scheduled with future land uses and development.
- Mesa County will continue to work with the Lands End Fire Protection District to ensure they have the capacity to meet the needs of the community as it grows.
- Improve the quality of living and economic self-sufficiency for the community through a variety of residential neighborhoods and housing types including mixed-residential and commercial/business uses.

LAND USE/GROWTH MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN (LU) Amended July 14, 2011

DESIGN & LOCATION:

- Use the Mesa County owned properties near the Road Department's maintenance building site (approximately 25 acres) to begin a new development blueprint along Highway 50 that will initiate the proposed mixed-use zoning district with an emphasis on associated higher density residential uses.
- Protect and respect the visual backdrop of the Uncompahgre Plateau, Colorado National Monument, Grand Mesa, and Gunnison River corridor through design criteria and standards that include height restrictions, reflective material limitations, and use of colors consistent with the environment of the planning area.



Source: www.pedbikeimages.org/ Dan Burden



Source: www.pedbikeimages.org/ Dan Burden

Land Use/Growth Management – Residential Action Items (LU)

Residential Action Items: The following residential action items are contingent on the provision of sewer service and other urban services to the community.

- LU1** Establish and adopt a document of Residential Design Standards in the Land Development Code to implement the Policies of this Community Plan. The Design Standards shall address at a minimum:
- a flood plain map of the Gunnison River and major washes of the planning area;
 - sustainable design incorporating site-orientation guidelines to maximize solar gain for renewable energy opportunities as well as maximize natural ventilation opportunities for better living conditions in this desert climate;
 - pedestrian-oriented design to encourage reduced vehicle trips; utilization of provided pathways and trail connections and greater neighbor interaction;
 - designed to reflect the arid conditions of the area, creating aesthetic solutions to outdoor storage, utilities, and similar uses;
 - architectural character of new buildings and remodeled exteriors;
 - protection of natural resources, the Gunnison River, and views of the Grand Mesa;
 - create a Pattern Book to assist homeowners and builders as they build, repair or expand their houses and neighborhoods. A Pattern Book would identify the various building styles found in different neighborhoods within Whitewater and Western Colorado and illustrate key appropriate architectural components such as the shape of windows and doors, roof pitches, eave details and types of porches;
 - neighborhood entry features to create a sense of arrival and neighborhood identity; and
 - landscaping and irrigation design appropriate to the arid climate, soil conditions, and limited availability of water;
- LU2** Establish a Mixed-Use (MU) zone district that allows development to include employment, residential, and open space. Retail commercial uses may be appropriate as a secondary use, integral to other uses and structures or as small nodal development. Two variations are suggested – one with an emphasis on residential uses and the other with an emphasis on commercial uses.
- LU3** Implement the Future Land Use Map for the Whitewater Community through zoning. The intent of the specific neighborhood future land uses are as follows (See Figures 2 - 10):
1. “Rancho Dos Rios area” – Figure 4. Respects existing residential and commercial land uses.
 2. “Reeder Mesa Road Area” – Figure 5.

3. “Elk Run Subdivision” – Figure 6. Respects existing development.
4. “Coffman Road Area” – Figure 7. Supports commercial and business park development in this area.
5. “Outer Old Town Core,” including Mesa County-owned properties – Figure 8. Respects existing small lots and promotes neighborhood-oriented commercial and retail uses. As a landowner, Mesa County has the opportunity to develop the first mixed-use development in the area – creating a design standard for future mixed use developments. *(Note: The area between Coffman Road, Highway 50, Highway 141 and 3rd Street is designated as a Village Center in the Grand Junction Comprehensive Plan.)*
6. “Post Office Vicinity” – Figure 9. Respects existing neighborhood development pattern and uses.
7. “Southern Whitewater” – Figure 10. Recognizes proximity to Highway 50, the intersection of Highways 50 & 141, future commercial uses, and future recreational uses at the Mill Tailings Site. (Boat Launch Regional Park site)



Residential Development Source: [Source: www.pedbikeimages.org/Dan Burden](http://www.pedbikeimages.org/Dan%20Burden)

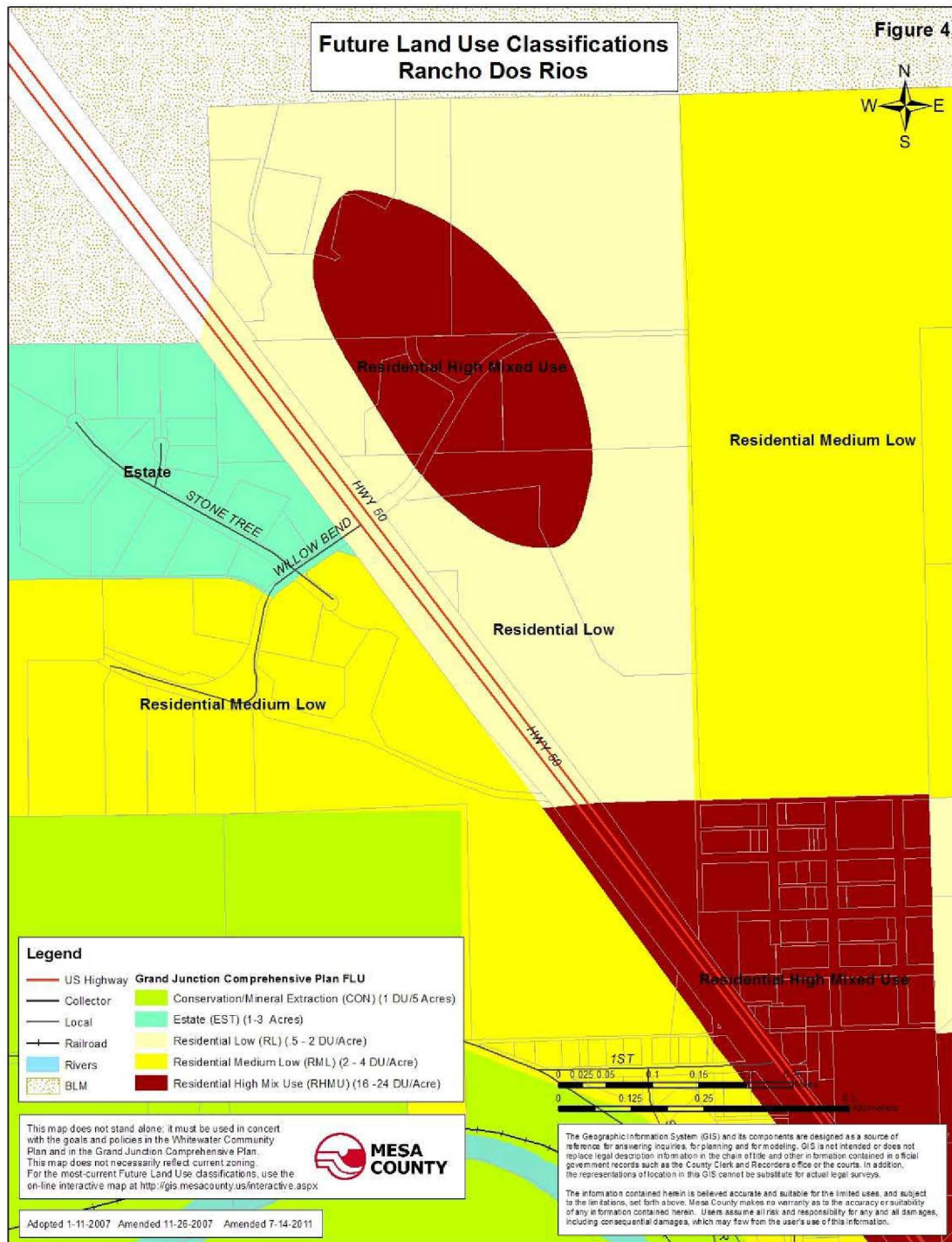


Figure 4: Rancho Dos Rios

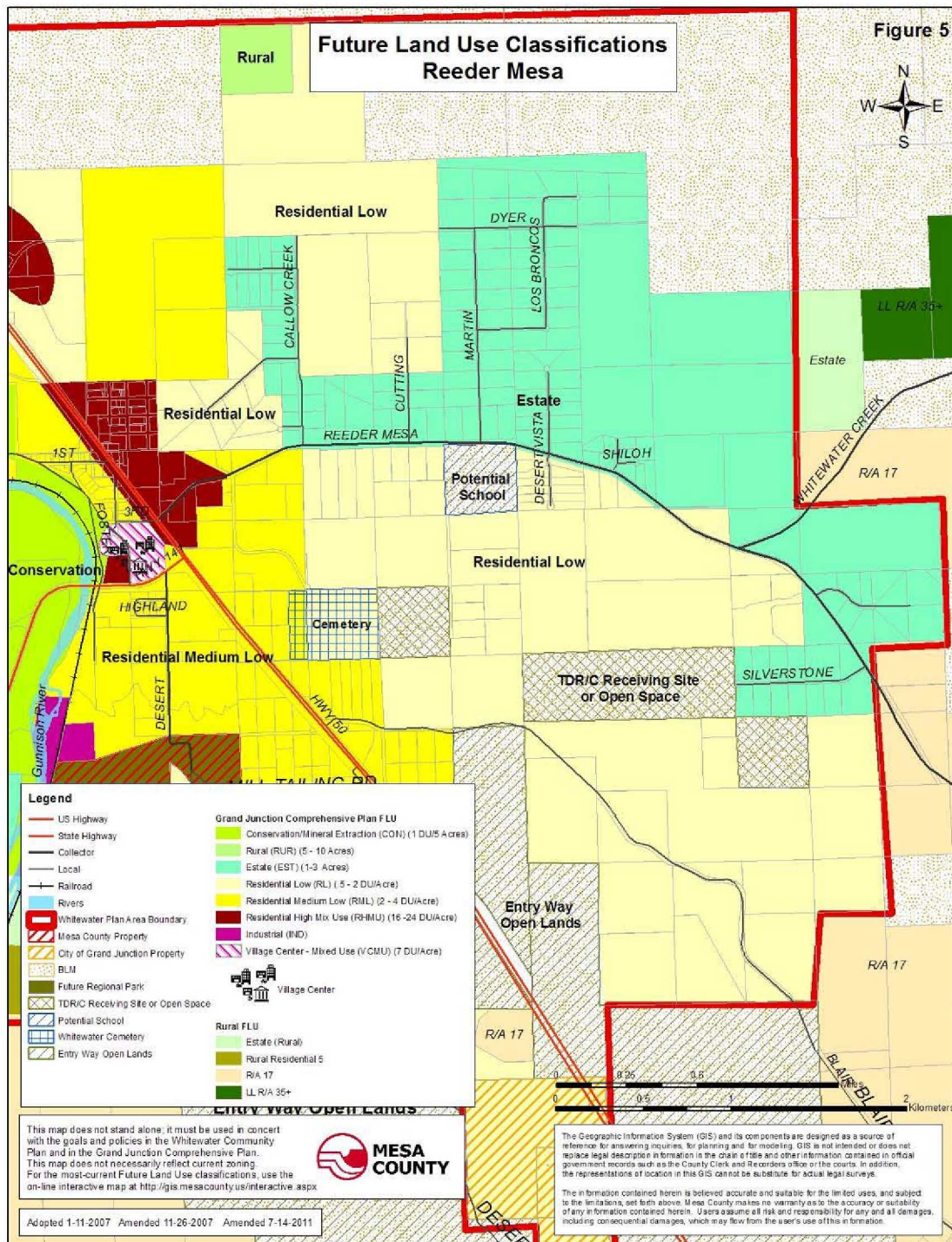


Figure 5. Reeder Mesa Road

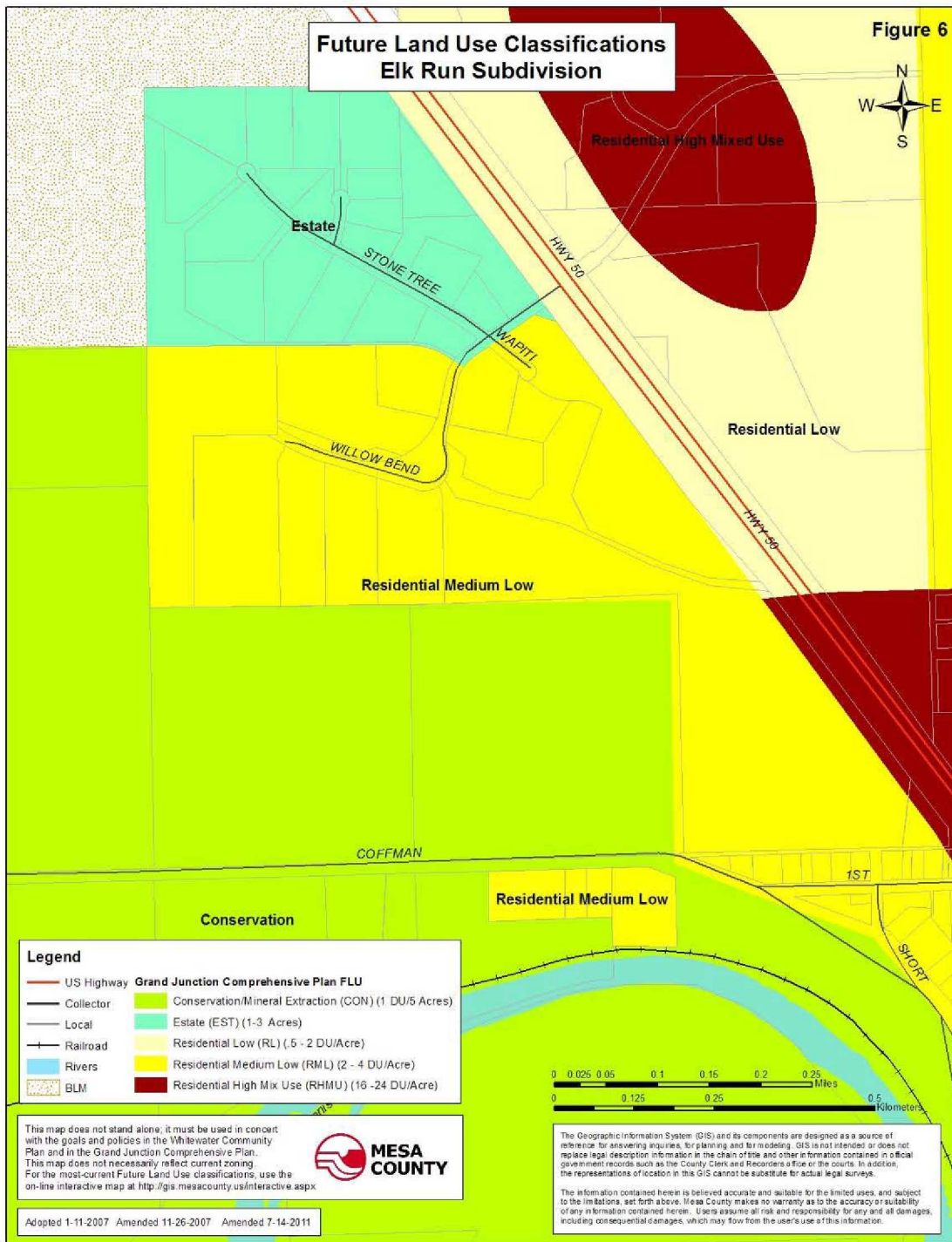


Figure 6. Elk Run Subdivision

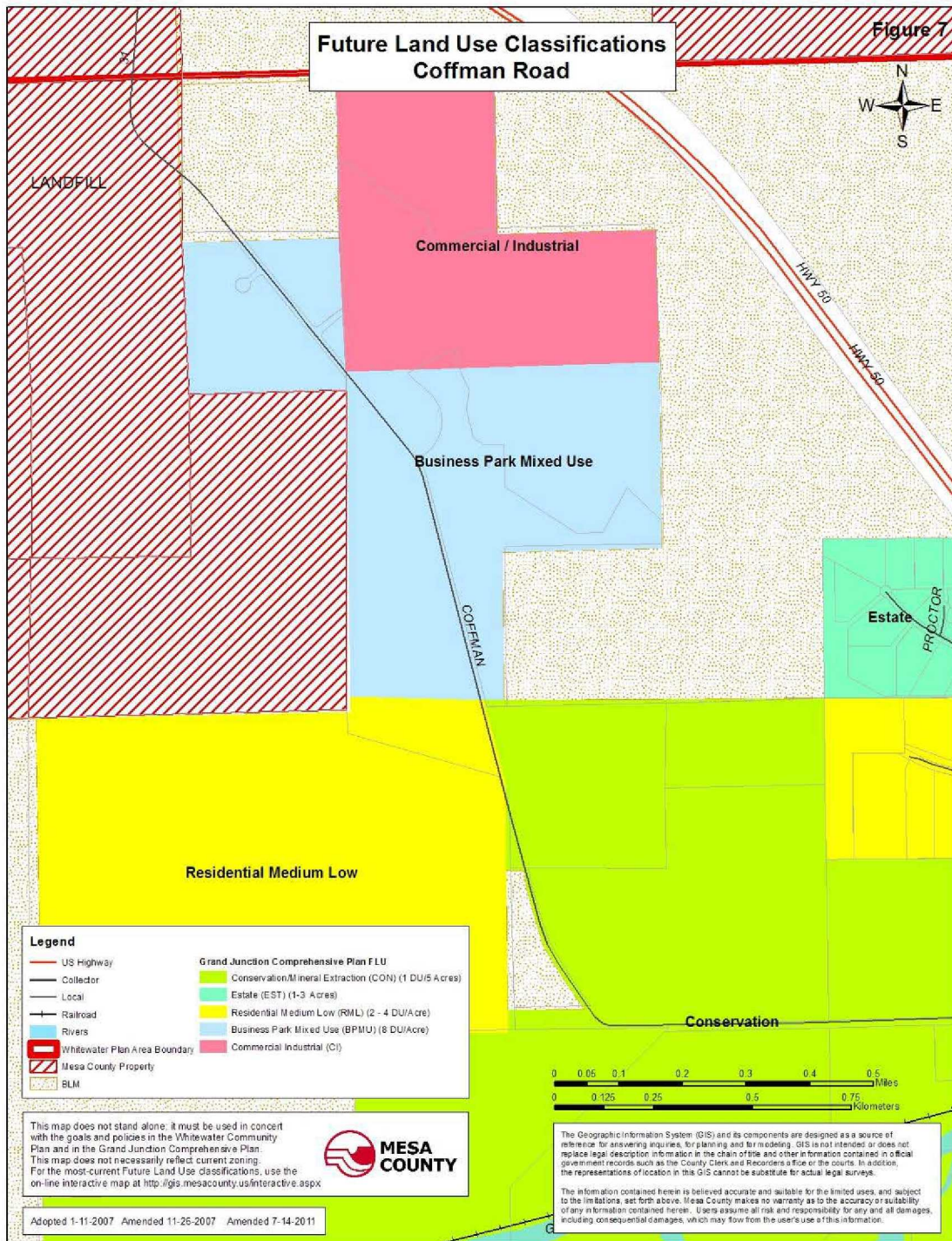


Figure 7. Coffman Road Area

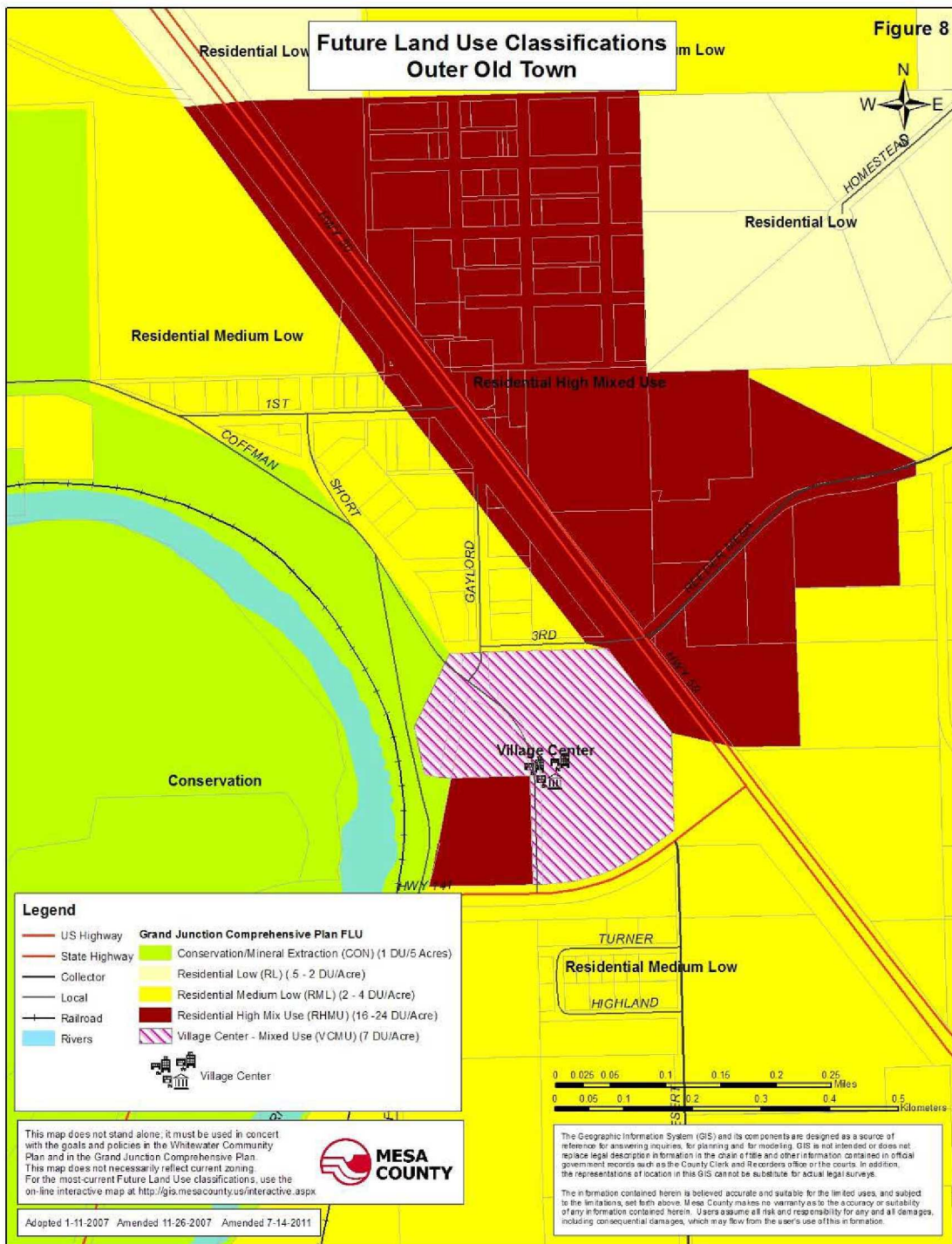


Figure 8. Outer Old Town Core

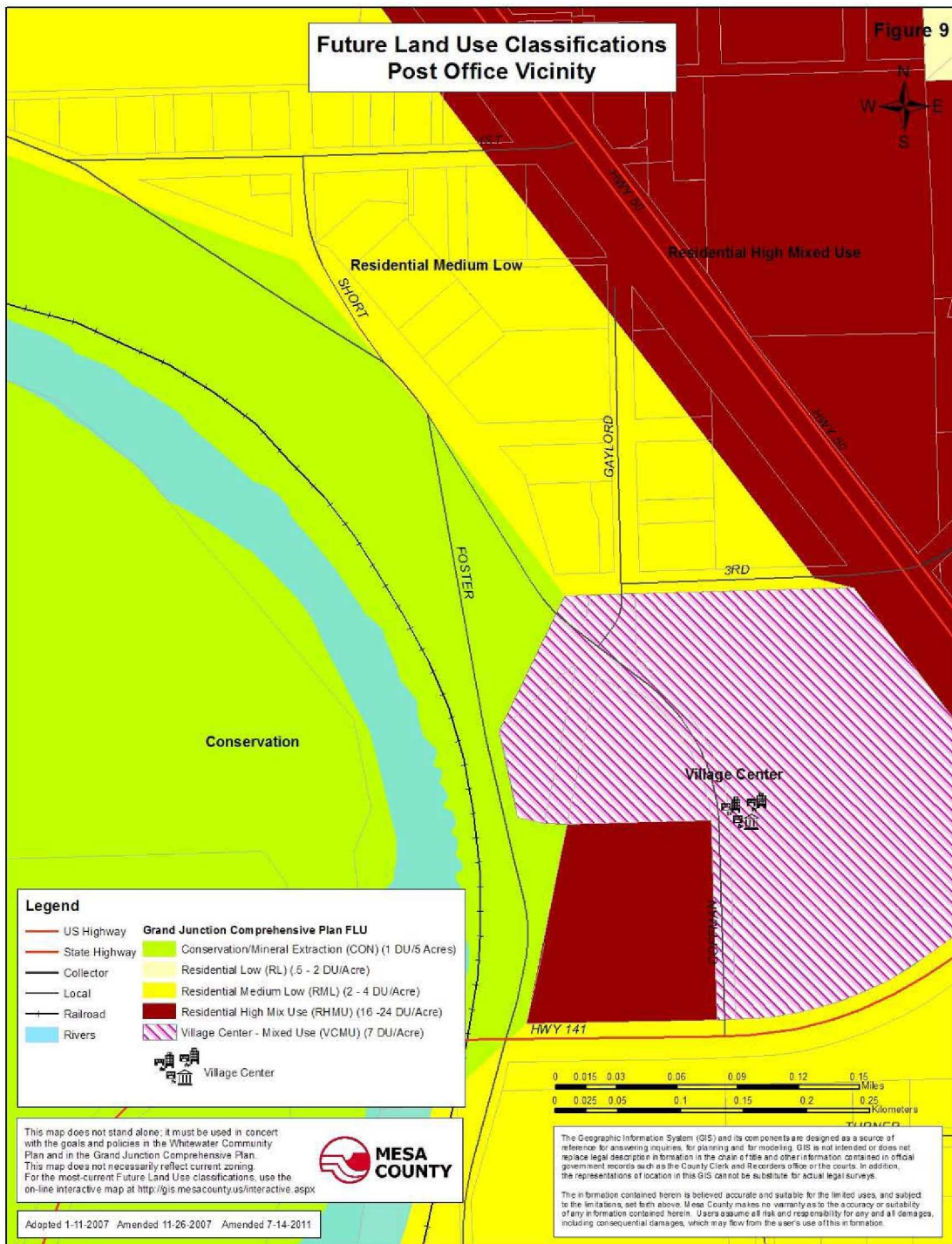


Figure 9. Post Office Vicinity

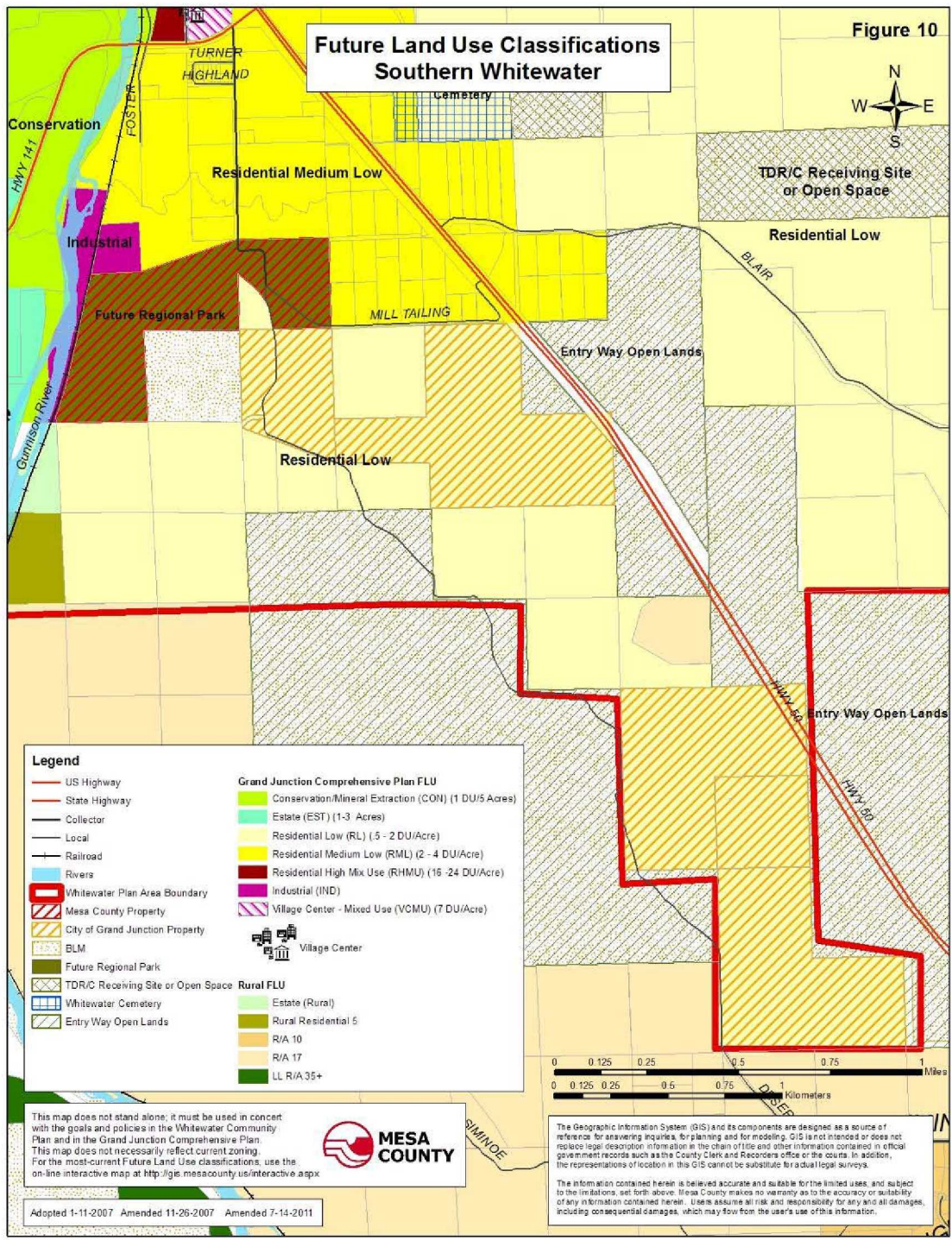


Figure 10. Southern Whitewater

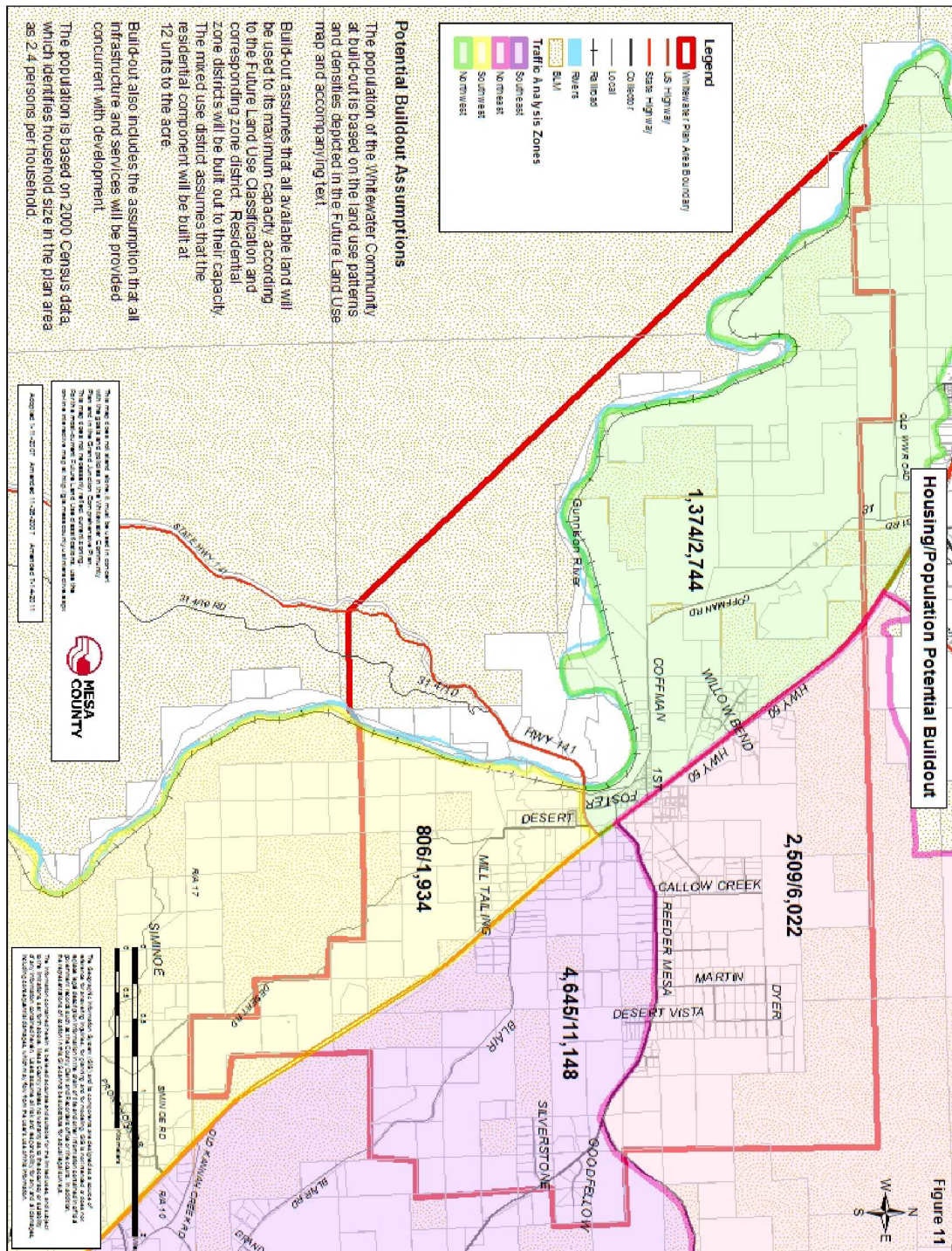


Figure 11. Housing/Population Potential Buildout

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Commercial and Industrial Existing Conditions & Findings

The residents of Whitewater currently commute to neighboring communities for basic needs. The only commercial uses or services currently available are the post office, a seasonal fruit stand, a bed and breakfast, and a motel. The lack of commercial and other services results in very limited opportunities for neighborly, social interaction among existing residents. This is in part due to inadequate infrastructure to support commercial development, such as sanitary sewer and water service sufficient for fire protection. The possibility of future commercial development will be heavily dependent on the services that can be provided in the future by the Whitewater Public Improvements District which was established in November 2006 to initially provide sewer service to a limited area.

A commercial center or natural gathering place would help to foster a sense of place and community identity. Through a combination of mixed-use and commercial uses, neighborhood-scale shopping opportunities may be developed.



Source: [www.pedbikeimages.org/Dan Burden](http://www.pedbikeimages.org/Dan_Burden)



Small-scale commercial uses will create places for social interaction and help the community grow from its current role as a rural bedroom community to that of an urban community. Commercial additions such as a grocery store and pharmacy, will serve immediate resident needs. Other small-scale commercial development might relate to the recreation and tourism potential of the Whitewater area.

Heavy commercial and light industrial development may be appropriate for certain areas adjacent to gravel extraction areas or the Mesa County Landfill. Commercial/Industrial Design Standards will ensure that future industrial development is appropriately designed to reduce impact to the community. Any heavy commercial or light industrial development will be carefully reviewed for its impacts to ensure that it does not detract from the residential and recreational qualities of the area. It's anticipated and expected that commercial and/or industrial development will generate local employment opportunities and in turn will be an important component of creating a self-sufficient community.



Source: [www.pedbikeimages.org/Dan Burden](http://www.pedbikeimages.org/Dan%20Burden)



Source: [www.pedbikeimages.org/Dan Burden](http://www.pedbikeimages.org/Dan%20Burden)

The landfill vicinity, in particular, presents opportunities for commercial and/or industrial development. In 1994, Mesa County acquired approximately 1,500 acres from the Bureau of Land Management. Upon acquisition, the 1994 Solid Waste Management Plan was implemented. While the landfill currently uses only 60 acres, the plan allows for expansion to a total of 126 of the 1,500 acres. The remaining land will be used for various appropriate purposes including buffers to adjacent land uses and recreational trails.



Figure 12. Mesa County Landfill Site



Currently, most residents of Whitewater commute to Grand Junction for work and basic necessities, contributing to environmental and traffic impacts. Businesses serving local needs may reduce trips out of Whitewater and, in many cases, be within walking distance for many residents. Residents shopping in Whitewater will enjoy the convenience and should be willing to invest in their community.

Area residents repeatedly indicated that commercial uses should contribute to a sense of place by providing areas where residents can have regular informal interactions. Commercial uses should therefore be designed with walk-able outside areas that invite shoppers to spend more time in these public oriented areas. Commercial uses should specifically serve the immediate community needs. Retail and office spaces should be smaller and/or located in mixed-use buildings that make local entrepreneurship feasible. Inviting pathways should connect commercial uses to provide easy navigation and quick access to storefronts and outdoor spaces.

Throughout the planning process, community members acknowledged that there is market demand for land zoned to accommodate heavy commercial and industrial uses. However, as Whitewater grows, future development should reflect the character of the community. Along Coffman Road, immediately adjacent to the Mesa County landfill, an area has been identified on the Future Land Use map as a potentially acceptable site for light industrial uses. Development of light industrial uses in this vicinity should be heavily screened so as not to impact the natural gateway to the Grand Valley (via Orchard Mesa to the north), the Whitewater Community at the intersection of Highway 50 and 32 Road, and the existing residential uses at the Elk Run subdivision.

A section in the southern portion of the Whitewater planning area, adjacent to the railroad tracks and abutting a proposed regional park at the former Mill Tailings Site, was zoned in the 1980s for planned industrial uses and does have some limited industrial activities.

Land Use/Growth Management – Commercial/Industrial Goals (LU)

Goals:

Future commercial and industrial uses in Whitewater should serve a dual purpose – contribute to defining a sense of place and character of the area, as well as serving the needs of the residents. Quality of life would improve in the Whitewater Community by it becoming more than simply a residential community. Residents require places that support greater connection to their neighbors through regular interaction at a grocery store, neighborhood shops, schools, community center, or other natural gathering places and local employment.

COMMUNITY

- To strengthen Whitewater as both an urban community and a potential area for recreation and tourism.
- To develop, enhance and protect the aesthetic image of the Whitewater community.



Source: [www.pedbikeimages.org/Dan Burden](http://www.pedbikeimages.org/Dan%20Burden)

ECONOMY

- To improve and promote economic sustainability and development as a vital role in improving the quality of life for the Whitewater community.
- To create small business developments to serve the Whitewater community.
- To create a healthy and diverse economic base that supports the local economy and potential tourist industry.
- Economic sustainability through diversified commercial, mixed-use and industrial development that pays careful attention to environmental, cultural, aesthetic, and social impacts.
- To periodically monitor economic development in the area and respond to opportunities and barriers as they arise.

- Efficient use of mineral resources with minimal impacts to related natural resources and adjacent neighborhoods.

DESIGN & LOCATION

- To create places and opportunities for social interaction and lifestyle diversity.
- To create a standard of design that is of high quality and compatible with historic features, the environment, and community.
- Commercial uses that will set a tone (through the design of landmark buildings) that identify places in the community and enhance the identity of the community as a whole.
- To eliminate, minimize, or mitigate significant drainage collection and conveyance problem areas.



Source: [www.pedbikeimages.org/Dan Burden](http://www.pedbikeimages.org/Dan_Burden)

Land Use/Growth Management – Commercial/Industrial Policies

Policies:

COMMUNITY

- Commercial uses shall be designed on a scale that directly serves Whitewater residents.
- Commercial uses shall be limited in physical size to encourage local businesses (no “big box” development).
- Commercial uses shall support and promote local tourism, such as convenience needs of cyclists, river users, hunting, fishing, historic ranching operations, etc.

- Commercial uses shall include connections to a pathway system encouraging pedestrian activity, multi-modal transportation options, and human interaction.
- Non-residential development shall not detract from or diminish the community character or scenic values of the area.
- A concentrated business district (B-2) zoning may be appropriate to implement mixed use designations on the Future Land Use map in the “Outer Old Town”.

ECONOMY

- Encourage commercial and industrial uses that generate employment opportunities for the Whitewater community.
- Mesa County and its economic development partners will evaluate strategies and opportunities for assistance and program development in the Whitewater area; foster economic development opportunities that encourage private investment within the planning area; encourage employment (especially that offering higher wage jobs at or above the County average); and encourage development of employment opportunities.
- As the community grows Mesa County will evaluate opportunities and barriers to business retention and expansion in the Whitewater area.
- Capture revenues generated by commercial and industrial uses and direct them to reinvestments in the Whitewater community to improve community services, amenities and overall image.
- Non-retail (such as professional offices, medical clinics, etc.) as well as retail businesses are encouraged rather than service jobs.
- Commercial and industrial uses will reflect the long term goals of Whitewater in addition to responding to current market trends.

DESIGN & LOCATION -- Commercial

- Commercial uses and structures shall be designed to create a destination and sense of place within Whitewater.
- Commercial uses shall be pedestrian-oriented, ideally with parking located behind buildings.
- Commercial uses on either side of Highway 50 shall be linked with an improved pedestrian underpass between 1st and 3rd Streets.
- Commercial uses shall be located at nodes which utilize existing intersections.
- Frontage roads along the east side of Highway 50 are preferred over multiple access points from Highway 50. Limited signalized intersections will maintain circulation and safety (see transportation).
- Implement “Commercial Design Guidelines” to ensure that buildings are designed to a scale and character compatible with the existing community and its location as a gateway to the Grand Valley.
- Mixed-use zoning will allow integration of residential uses with opportunities for commercial or retail businesses.
 - An emphasis on commercial uses with subordinate residential uses is appropriate east of Coffman Road.
 - An emphasis on residential uses with subordinate commercial uses is appropriate east of Highway 50.

DESIGN & LOCATION -- Industrial

- Industrial uses will be located where traffic and visual impacts will be minimized.
- Industrial traffic will be encouraged to use the future intersection at Coffman Road and Highway 50 and minimize traffic in the “Post Office Vicinity.” (see Transportation section)
- Coffman Road and Mesa County owned property near the Landfill may be an appropriate location for an area of limited industrial uses, heavy commercial uses if adequately screened from Highway 50.
- Industrial uses are appropriate in South Whitewater where rail access is feasible. (see Future Land Use map)
- Implement “Industrial Design Guidelines” to ensure that such uses are designed to a scale and character compatible with the existing community and its location as a gateway to the Grand Valley.
- The County will collaborate with gravel mining interests to develop innovative approaches to reclamation that will provide wildlife habitat, restoration of native landscapes, recreational opportunities, limited development, and other public values.



Source: [www.pedbikeimages.org/Dan Burden](http://www.pedbikeimages.org/Dan_Burden)

Land Use/Growth Management – Commercial/Industrial Action Items (LU)

Commercial/Industrial Action Items:

- LU4** Mesa County will work with the Grand Junction Economic Partnership, the Industrial Development Inc., Business Incubator Center, and Whitewater area landowners to explore the potential to develop a business park in the Whitewater area.
- LU5** Establish Mixed-Use Zones in the Mesa County Land Use Code; one which emphasizes residential uses; and one which emphasizes commercial uses.
- LU6** Implement the Future Land Use Map for the “Outer Old Town” Neighborhood through zoning.
1. “Outer Old Town” area – Figure 8. Respects existing commercial and residential uses on the east side of Highway 50 (from approximately Highway 141 & Highway 50 intersection) north to “Rancho Dos Rios” area; near 3rd Street to Highway 141. Respects existing small lots and promotes neighborhood-oriented commercial and retail uses. *(Note: The area between Coffman Road, Highway 50, Highway 141 and 3rd Street is designated as a Village Center in the Grand Junction Comprehensive Plan.)*
- LU7** Maintain land use status of Mesa County owned property surrounding Landfill. Similar types of uses may be considered in the future, however no action is suggested as part of this update.
- LU8** Mesa County and developers will work to eliminate, minimize, or mitigate significant drainage collection and conveyance problem areas.
- LU9** **Commercial Design Standards** will be created to insure that site planning, architectural design and landscaping are compatible with the desired commercial/ industrial Community Image goals. This document will address, at a minimum:
- Community Image
 - Neighborhood Character
 - Linear, “strip” development
 - Architectural theme
 - “Franchise” architecture
 - Relationship of buildings
 - Variation in building height, roof form, wall planes
 - Screening and mechanical equipment
 - Entrances
 - Building and site signage
 - Site furniture
 - Trash enclosures
 - Screen walls
 - Landscaping design
 - Landscaping
 - Reclamation water
 - Right-of-way maintenance
 - Lighting



Source: [www.pedbikeimages.org/Dan Burden](http://www.pedbikeimages.org/Dan_Burden)



Source: [www.pedbikeimages.org/Dan Burden](http://www.pedbikeimages.org/Dan_Burden)

LU10 Industrial Design Standards will be created to minimize visual, noise, and other impacts. These standards will address, at a minimum:

- Site planning
- Setbacks
- Landscape buffer strips
- Parking
- Fencing
- Berms
- Drainage
- Lighting
- Architectural style and massing

- Materials and colors
- Landscape features and minimum requirements
- Building signage
- Traffic control and directional signage
- Drainage conveyance and collection areas.





Source: [www.pedbikeimages.org/Dan Burden](http://www.pedbikeimages.org/Dan%20Burden)

Introduction: Transferable Development Rights/Credits (TDR/Cs) are the reassignment of building rights from a preservation site to a receiving site where development is appropriate. TDR/Cs is a voluntary means of managing growth. The TDR/C program is available to landowners wanting to limit development on their property. It encourages greater development where higher density is appropriate and has best access to infrastructure.

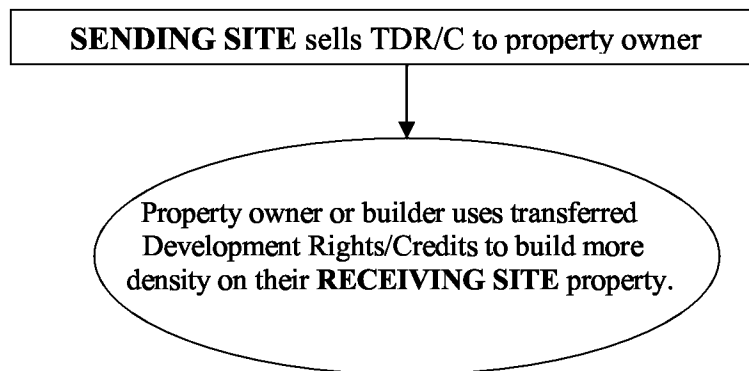
Purpose: TDR/C programs allow landowners to sever the development rights from a particular piece of property and transfer them. Purchasers are usually other landowners or developers who want to increase the density of their developments.

TDR/C programs strive for two main goals. First, communities can use TDR/C programs to preserve open space, agriculture, historic buildings or housing. And TDR/C programs make such preservation more equitable and politically palatable by compensating landowners who choose to limit their right to develop their property.

Developers benefit from the clarity and consistency that TDR/C programs offer. Developers can achieve higher density simply by purchasing development rights from other property owners willing to limit their development potential.

Mesa County has a TDR/C program in place and implemented through the Land Development Code. Each TDR/C sub-program has unique sending and receiving areas defined for each specific area. For example, the Fruita/Mesa County TDR/C program, the Mack Rural Community TDR/C program and the Clifton/Fruitvale TDR/C program.

It is in the interest of the Whitewater community to make identified BLM sites receiving sites for TDR/Cs. With TDR/Cs, the BLM properties can be developed into private residential developments.



Transferable Development Rights/Credits Area: To be a successful TDR/C program the community must encompass enough land to have sufficient sending and receiving areas. Therefore, for the Whitewater TDR/C program, the sending area will be the Whitewater/Kannah Creek area as described in the 1999 Plan, as generally mapped below. Sending sites must be within the designated Large Lot Rural Agricultural 35+ (LL R/A 35+) classification as depicted on the Mesa County 2006 Rural Area Future Land Use Map to be eligible as a sending site.

This sending area includes rural areas that are well outside of infrastructure services; are in environmentally fragile areas; or are surrounded by open space or conservation areas.

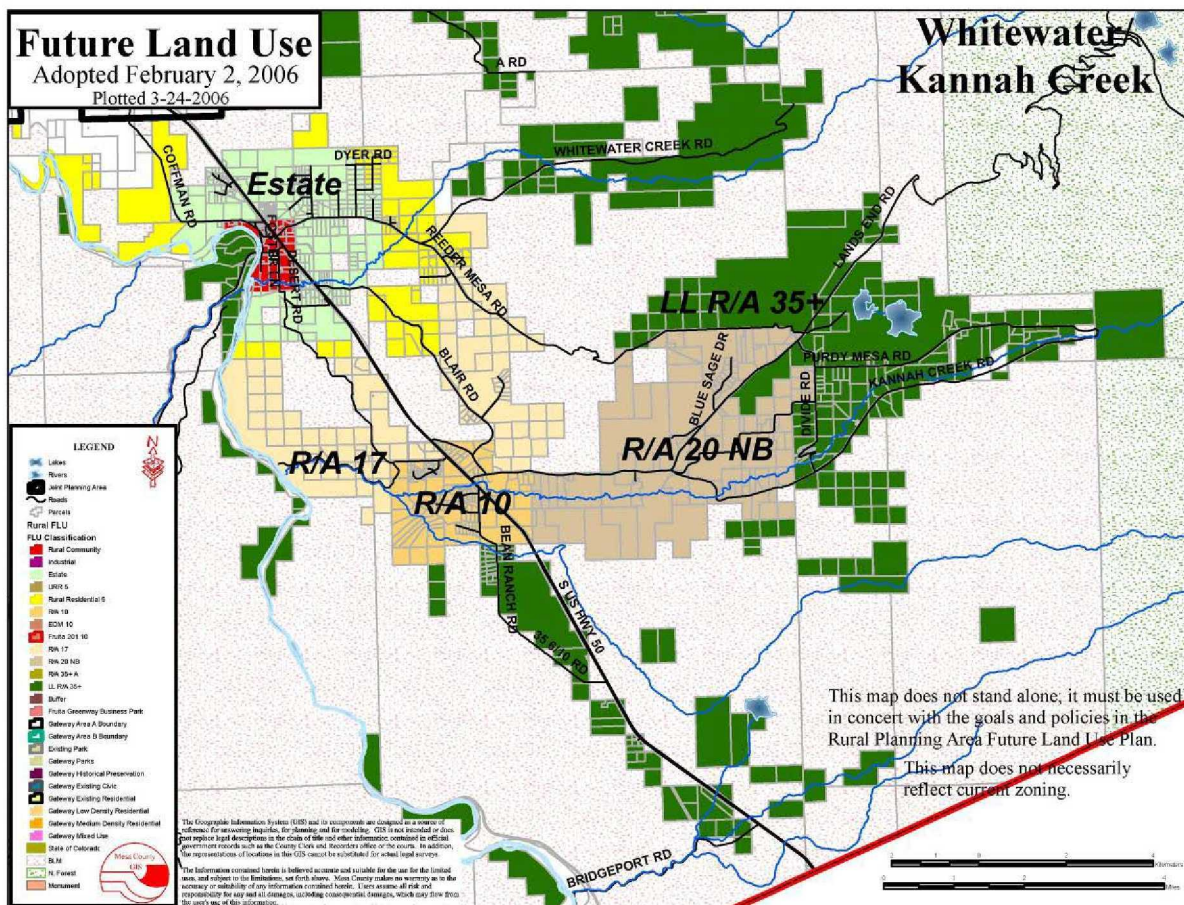


Figure 13: TDR/C Sending Area

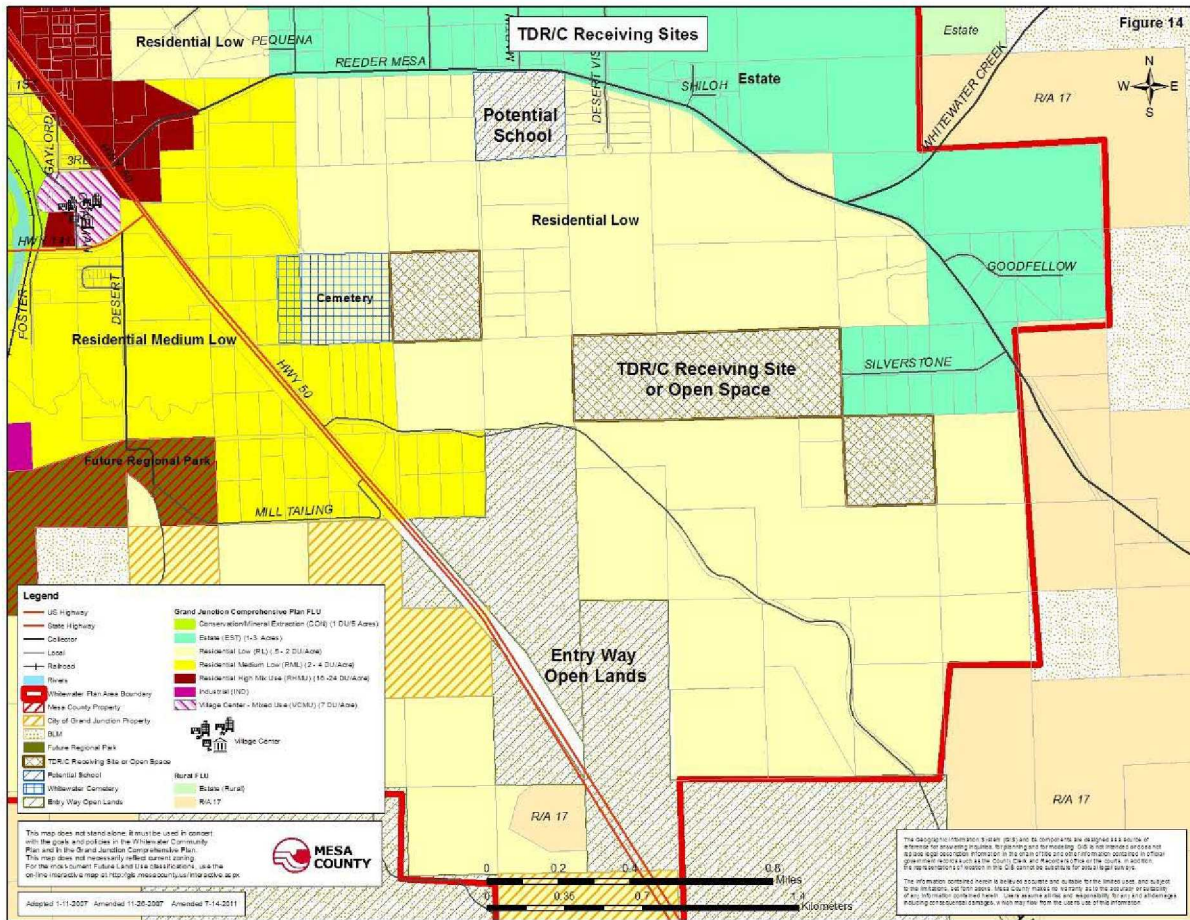


Figure 14: TDR/C Receiving Sites

Sending and Receiving Sites: Whitewater has the unique feature of being surrounded with BLM properties that both provide significant recreation opportunities as well as contribute to the rural character of the area. These sites are also opportunities for development of schools, hospitals, open space, or similar community-benefiting uses.

As the energy market and other real estate markets grow in Western Colorado, it is not a given that these community benefiting BLM properties will continue to be available to the citizens of Whitewater. Many of these BLM properties are “disposal properties.” One use of the available disposal properties is the applicability of the Recreation and Public Purposes Act (68 Statute 173; 43 United States Code 869 et. seq.). The act authorizes the sale or lease of public lands for recreational or public purposes to State and local governments and to qualified nonprofit organizations. Examples of typical uses under the act are historic monument sites, campgrounds, schools, fire houses, law enforcement facilities, municipal facilities, landfills, hospitals, parks, and fairgrounds.

As the Whitewater Community grows the BLM disposal lands will play an important role in shaping its character and appearance, therefore the specific TDR/C receiving sites should remain open to all uses that best benefit the community including open lands. The uses of the lands should be directed by residents of the Whitewater Community.

Transferable Development Rights Action: Amend the Mesa County Land Development Code creating a Transferable Development Rights (TDR/C) overlay program for the Whitewater Community Plan as described above.

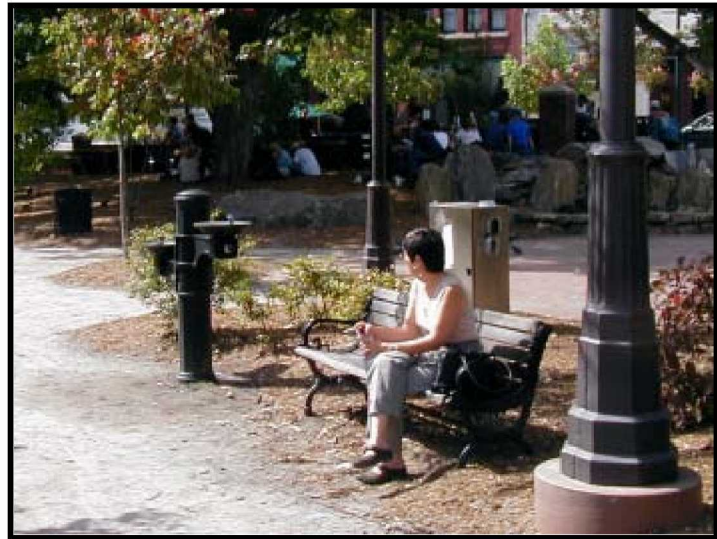
Introduction: Whitewater is situated in an 18.5 square mile area, surrounded primarily by BLM land as well as internally dotted by BLM “disposal” properties. There are over 2,500 acres of BLM properties within the Plan Area. The open space and recreation opportunities provided by these BLM lands define a significant part of the rural character of Whitewater as well as the edges of the Community.

The existing low density residential development, number of undeveloped parcels and surrounding BLM properties lend to the rustic, open and rural qualities of the area. Whitewater is increasingly being recognized for housing opportunities and the amount of undeveloped property that is diminishing. As future residential development occurs at higher densities in response to increasing housing demands, these rural qualities will be challenged. It is important that as development progresses, targeted park, recreation, and open space parcels are conserved to continue to foster this quality of life for existing and future Whitewater residents.

Existing Conditions & Findings: As an historically rural area, the only part of Whitewater officially designated for open space or recreation are the boat launch site at the Mill Tailings Site, the Old Spanish Trail and the Gunnison Bluffs Trail. There are no organized or designated neighborhood or community parks. This lack of designated areas for public open space or recreation uses limits opportunities for casual neighbor interaction or gatherings. There is no community focal point (park or community center) which defines the Whitewater Community.

In addition to the surrounding BLM lands, Whitewater has excellent trails for hiking, biking, equestrian and off-road vehicle uses. There are outstanding opportunities within Whitewater to connect to surrounding trail systems. Currently the Old Spanish Trail, Gunnison Bluffs Trails, and the Tabeguache trails are mostly independent of any surrounding area trails including the Delta County Trail System.

The Gunnison River is popular for boating activities. The existing Mill Tailings Site currently acts as river access for boaters. The residents of Whitewater have identified Highway 141 as being another river access point where no formal parking area exists. Parking and related traffic accessing the river often burdens Highway 141.



Source: www.pedbikeimages.org/Annie Lux

PARKS, RECREATION & OPEN SPACE (PR)

Amended July 14, 2011

Mesa County owns approximately 1,500 acres surrounding the current Mesa County landfill. This land was acquired from BLM in 1994. The actual landfill is planned for 126 acres, although only 60 acres are currently in such use. The remaining 1,300+ acres are currently used for recreation and buffer other land uses. As Whitewater grows into an urban community, is it appropriate that sections of this property are used for open space and recreation, commercial, industrial.

South of the landfill is an area referred to as the Gunnison Bluffs. In the Gunnison Bluffs are two major trails – the Old Spanish Trail and the Gunnison Bluffs Trail. These trails offer non-motorized recreation activities including hiking, biking and horseback riding and connect Whitewater to the northerly located Intermountain Veterans Park on Orchard Mesa. Protection of trailheads and amenities is highly encouraged.

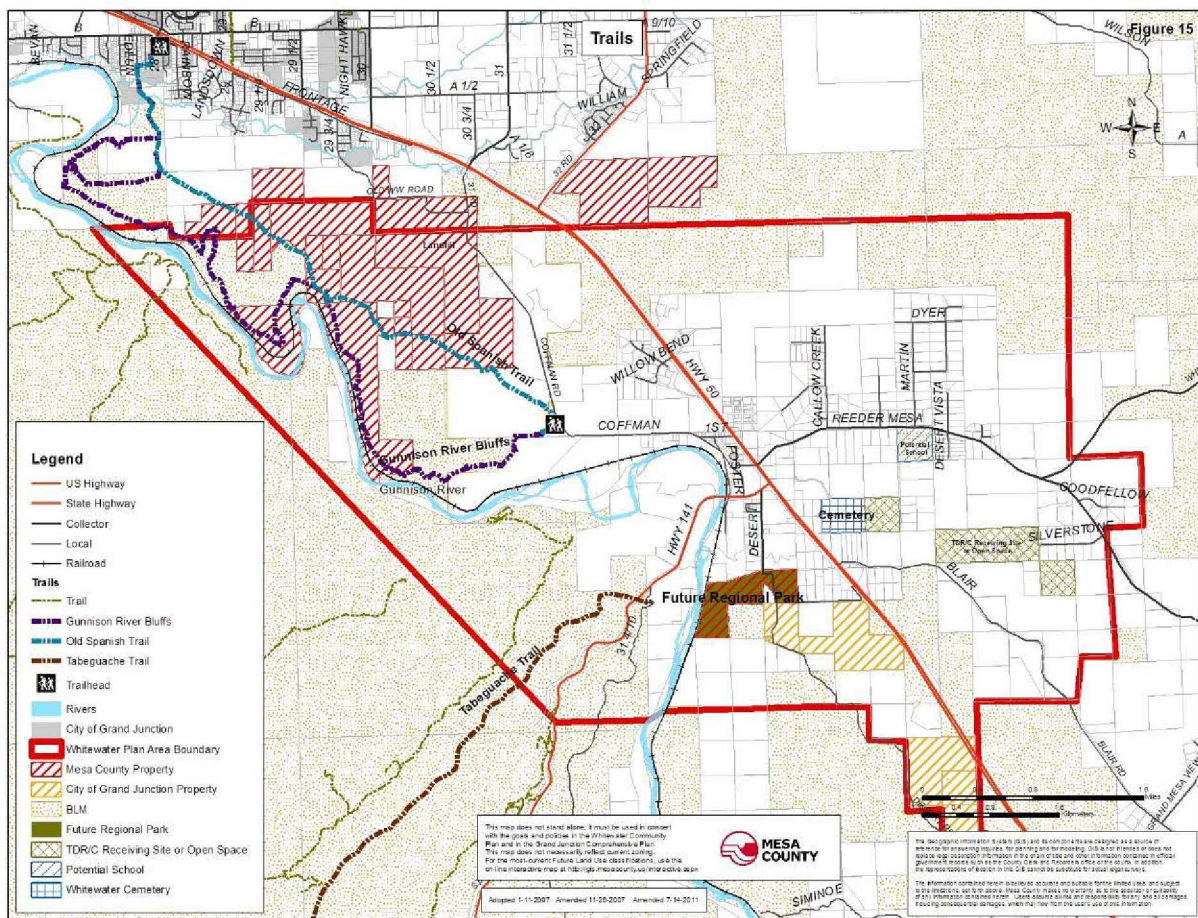


Figure 15 Trails: Gunnison River Bluffs and Old Spanish Trails

Parks, Recreation & Open Space Goals

Goals:

As Whitewater grows, future development will define the character of the community. Commercial and mixed-use development will create services and more formal areas for community gathering. Outdoor community spaces are equally as important to contributing to a sense of place including passive and active open spaces, recreation facilities and a comprehensive pathway system. Whitewater is abundant with outdoor recreation opportunities and future development of parks or conservation of open space shall respect and build on these qualities.

COMMUNITY

- To ensure adequate community parks and recreation services and facilities are provided to the Whitewater Community in a manner that enhances the appearance and character of the Community.
- To provide adequate public school and park sites with trail linkages to residential areas to serve the Whitewater Community.
- To promote recreation areas to serve as gathering places and host public activities to encourage social interaction and a sense of community.
- To provide adequate and appropriate direction for park, open space and trail development within the community.

ECONOMY

- Growth and development of outdoor recreation shall be furthered through expanded partnerships among government agencies, non-profit organizations, private sector businesses and area residents.
- To ensure development of recreation and tourism opportunities in Whitewater.

DESIGN & LOCATION

- To ensure recreational facilities are designed and built to preserve, enhance, restore, and compliment the natural beauty of local environmental features.
- To protect important rural features, scenic vistas/corridors, and natural areas impacted by proposed development (e.g. large trees, washes, riparian areas, historic structures, etc.) and mitigate such impacts where avoidance is not practicable.

Parks, Recreation & Open Space Policies

Policies: Multiple open space and planned recreation sites are encouraged throughout the Whitewater community. Different amenities should be offered at each site. This will encourage residents to visit different sites and neighborhoods increasing neighbor interaction and social commerce.

COMMUNITY

- Mesa County will work with School District 51 to plan for, acquire, and develop school and parks sites for the benefit of all residents.
- Continue to work cooperatively with BLM, the Riverfront Commission, RTPO, and others with an interest in trails to plan and build trails in the Whitewater community.
- The future recreation facility at the Mill Tailings site shall provide opportunities for all types of recreation, for example; river access, hiking, biking, equestrian and off-road vehicle trails as well as traditional playgrounds including a possible skateboard park.
- Neighborhood parks shall be developed and made available to urban residential areas as development occurs.



Source: [www.pedbikeimages.org/Dan Burden](http://www.pedbikeimages.org/Dan%20Burden)



Source: [www.pedbikeimages.org/Dan Burden](http://www.pedbikeimages.org/Dan%20Burden)

- Mesa County will evaluate this plan periodically to ensure that it is providing adequate and appropriate direction for park, open space and trail development within the community.
- Mesa County will continue to work cooperatively with BLM, the Riverfront Commission, RTPO, and others with an interest in trails to plan and build trails in the Whitewater community.

ECONOMY

- Coordinate with BLM for use and development of BLM disposal parcels.
- Mesa County will coordinate with BLM and School District 51 to evaluate and identify disposal properties that may be of interest to the School District for future school sites.
- Developers and residents of the community who benefit most directly from urban amenities, such as parks, open space and recreation will play an important role as partners in providing those amenities as development occurs.



Source: www.pedbikeimages.org/Michael King

DESIGN & LOCATION

- Scenic vistas shall be protected from future development.
- Gravel mining is a reality in the Whitewater area for the foreseeable future. At the end of mining operations, these resource extraction areas shall be redeveloped into open space, recreation areas, and other appropriate uses.
- Pathway connections shall be created to link the existing Old Spanish Trail and Tabeguache Trail to surrounding trail opportunities.
- Pathway connections shall be created separate from motor vehicle traffic when feasible.

- Pathways shall be of a multipurpose, pervious surface that is suitable for hiking and mountain biking. Such paths should be a minimum of 10 feet wide. Separate equestrian paths and road-biking lanes may also be considered.
- To encourage use, pathways shall be constructed of light colored, pervious materials that reflect sunlight rather than absorb its heat, helping to reduce the buildup of heat. Permeable paving materials allow rainwater to pass through them into the ground, reducing the volume of runoff and potentially recharging underground aquifers.
- Drought tolerant shade trees or similar vegetation shall be planted to reduce heat along the pathways and encourage more use.
- Neighborhood parks shall be designed for maximum use by using design methods that encourage and promote their use.

Parks, Recreation & Open Space Action Items (PR)

Action Items:

- PR1** The 150+ acre Mill Tailings Site will be renamed and redeveloped as a Regional Park.
- PR2** The Regional Park should include the adjacent BLM property of +/- 40 acres, if feasible, and shall serve as a focal point for recreation in Whitewater.
- PR3** Mesa County will revise the Land Development Code to require all new residential subdivisions and PUDs to dedicate private open space/park(s) within the development. A minimum of 50% of the dedicated land area will be for active recreational uses as recommended in 1999 by the Mesa County Planning Commission.
- PR4** Mesa County, CDOT, and others with an interest in the Whitewater community will look into the types and feasibility of making improvements to the existing underpass between 1st and 3rd Streets.
- PR5** Mesa County, Riverfront Commission, State Parks, and whitewater river enthusiasts will work together to enhance river access & activities along the Gunnison River.
- PR6** Create a variety of activities including playground, picnic area, skateboard park, etc.
- PR7** Create amenities to service park users, for example restrooms, shade structure, picnic tables, trash cans, etc.
- PR8** Designate trails for non-motorized & motorized activities.
- PR9** Locate appropriate commercial nearby.
- PR10** Currently, the City of Grand Junction pipes raw water through the Whitewater area north to Grand Junction. An agreement between the City of Grand Junction and Mesa County should be evaluated to access the potential use of non-potable water to use for irrigation of regional and neighborhood parks.
- PR11** Link the Gunnison River Bluffs Trail to Reeder Mesa Road.

- PR12** Link the Old Spanish Trail to the Regional Park future recreation site with a designated non-motorized path (pedestrian and bicycle) from Coffman Road to Mill Tailings Road. Identify an appropriate equestrian trail connection.
- PR13** Link the Old Spanish Trail to Reeder Mesa Road with a designated non-motorized path (pedestrian and bicycle) from Coffman Road to Reeder Mesa Road. Coordinate the crossing of Highway 50 with the Access Control Plan. (Figure 17)
- PR14** Coordinate with the Mesa County Whitewater Urban Services Public Improvement District to provide parks and recreation facilities and services.
- PR15** Evaluate the feasibility of enhancing signage for the Old Spanish Trail with the participants of the Grand Mesa Slopes and other interested groups.
- PR16** Mesa County and others with an interest in the community should provide interpretive signage within the historical Whitewater town site (the Post Office Vicinity) for key buildings and past activities.



Source: Mesa County

- PR17** Grand Mesa Slopes participants and others with an interest in the Whitewater community will work together to explore partnerships to create and improve trail amenities (parking lots, signage, trailheads, etc.) in the area.
- PR18** Mesa County, BLM, Grand Mesa Slopes participants and others with an interest in the Whitewater community will work together to provide more visible signage for non-motorized or off-road vehicle trails.
- PR19** Work with School District 51 to evaluate the feasibility and desirability of using the BLM 40 acre disposal parcel (Gd207) at Reeder Mesa Road (NE ¼ of the NE Quarter, Section 13, T2S, R1E) for a school site.
- PR20** Mesa County and the BLM will explore the desirability and feasibility of using disposal parcel (Gd214) near Blair Road (on the east side of Highway 50) as an open

lands buffer to protect the aesthetic appearance of the community as a gateway into Mesa County.

PR21 Work with BLM to designate disposal sites as TDR receiving sites.

PR22 Continue to work with the BLM, Grand Mesa Slopes participants and other interested groups to implement actions of the plan including fencing and providing trash pick-up to improve the Gunnison River Bluffs Trail appearance.

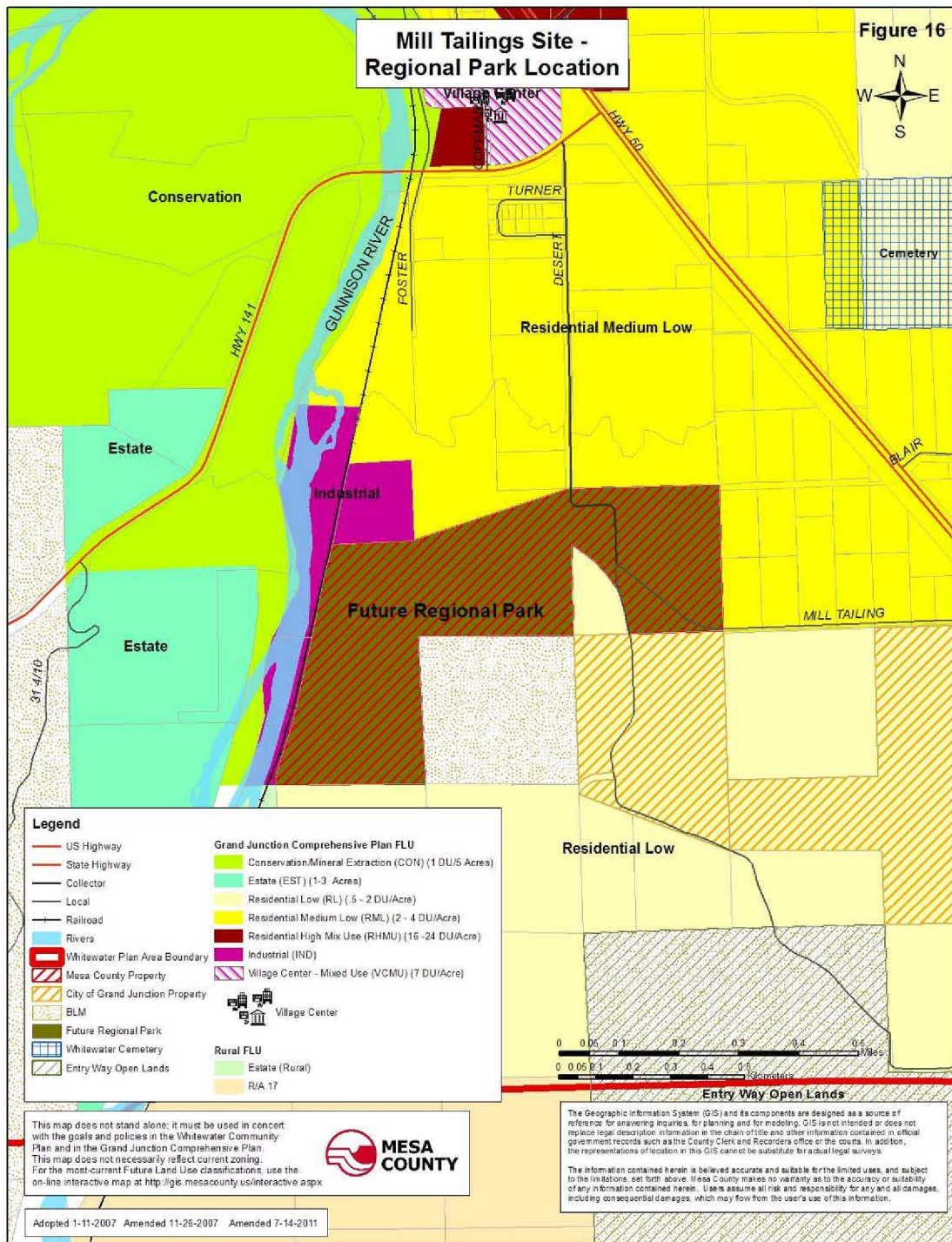


Figure 16 Mill Tailings Site – Regional Park Location

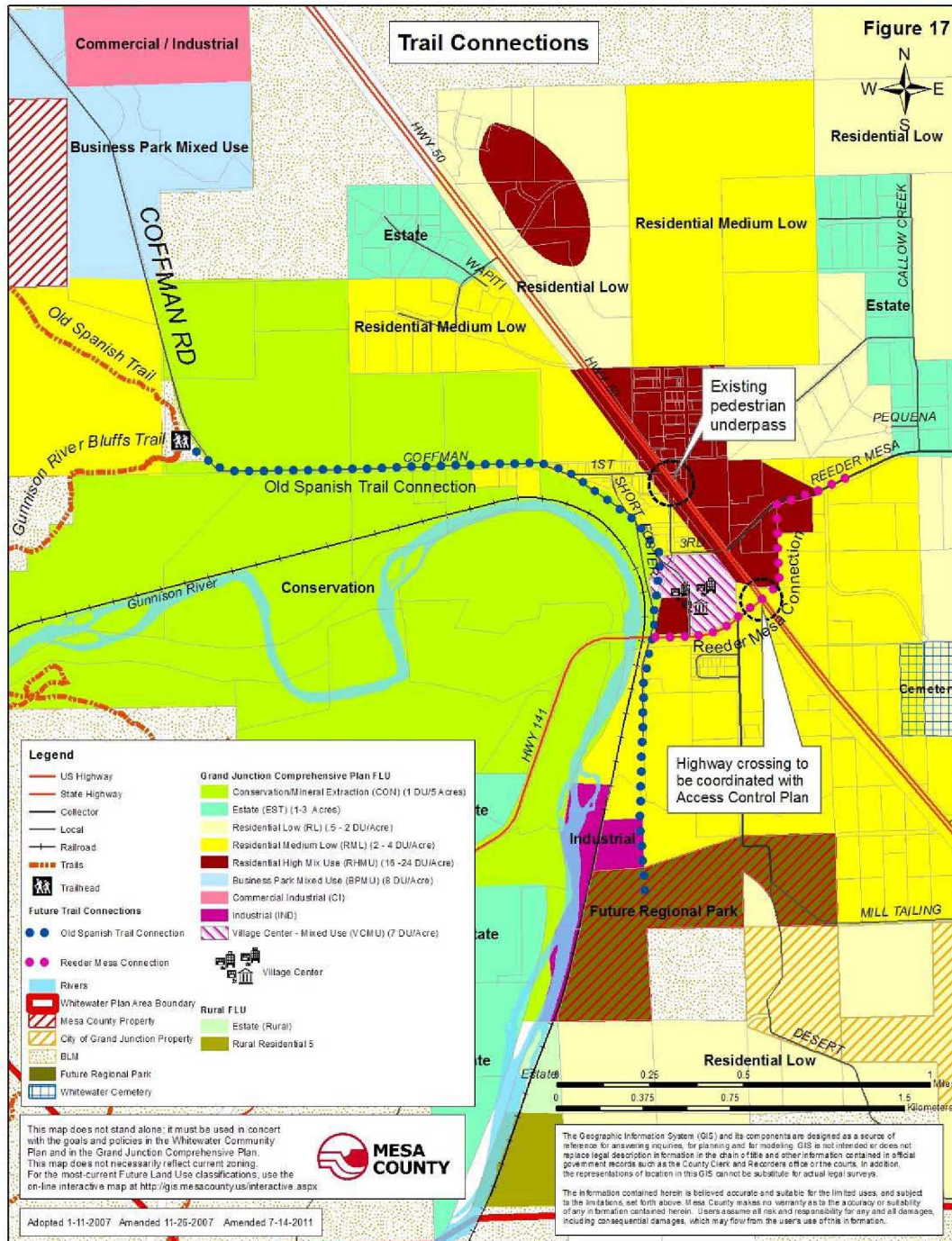


Figure 17 Trail Connections: Proposed paths linking the Old Spanish Trail and Gunnison River Bluffs Trail to the Whitewater community

The current means of travel in Whitewater is by individual, private automobile trips. The nature of agricultural and ranching operations that once dominated the area necessitated private automobile travel. Similarly, when Whitewater was primarily agricultural and ranching uses, there were fewer property owners and less traffic. This unincorporated area of Mesa County has historically not had the need or the population to support transit services to this area.

As Whitewater grows, so too will the traffic. It is important to plan for the potential impacts of a larger population in the area including safer intersections on Highway 50 and an hierarchy of streets to provide safe, efficient travel throughout the community as well as contribute to a sense of place.

Existing Conditions & Findings: The current transportation facilities in the Whitewater area consist of two State Highways and multiple paved and unpaved local roadways. U.S. Highway 50 is the primary connection to Grand Junction to the north, and Delta to the south. The Unaweep/Tabeguache Scenic Byway, State Highway 141, connects to U.S. Highway 50 on the south side of Whitewater and winds southwest through the historic mining communities of Gateway, Uravan, and Naturita and ends at the mining camp of Placerville in San Miguel County. Other than an existing underpass at First Street and U.S. Highway 50, there are no formal pedestrian or bicycle facilities in Whitewater.

The transportation network must be improved to accommodate planned growth. Given the proposed land uses within Whitewater, long-range traffic projections were calculated considering Mesa County's current roadway classification system to develop a Whitewater Transportation Plan.

The Whitewater/Kannah Creek Circulation Plan (*Figure 18*) identifies long range goals and objectives for the transportation system and prioritizes how and when the transportation network will be developed as Whitewater grows. Future road sections will vary depending on the roadway capacity required for the new zoning and appropriate street classifications will be assigned to accommodate the distribution of traffic across the transportation network. Future transportation infrastructure development will follow the design criteria set forth in the *Road and Bridge Specifications*, Mesa County, Colorado.

Transportation Goals

Goals:

COMMUNITY

- To develop and implement a multi-modal transportation network in Whitewater.
- Promote safe and inviting pedestrian, bicycle and other non-vehicular circulation and connectivity to increase social interaction, contribute to a sense of community and enjoy the surrounding natural environment.
- Mesa County, Regional Transportation Planning Office, Colorado Department of Transportation, developers and others with an interest in the Whitewater area will work to provide the residents and visitors of Whitewater with a responsive transportation system to ensure the safe and efficient movement of people and goods.



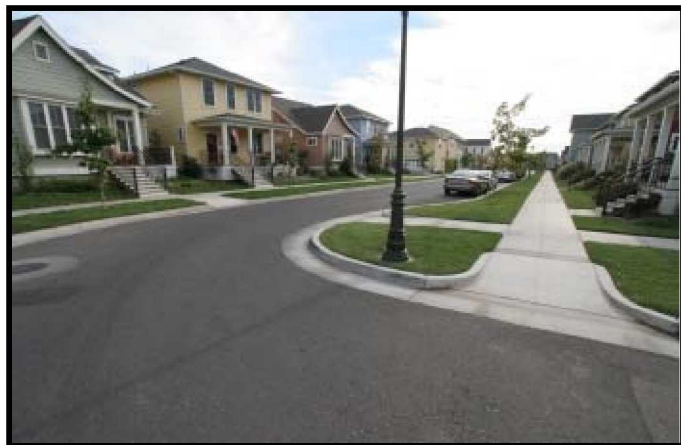
Source: [www.pedbikeimages.org/Dan Burden](http://www.pedbikeimages.org/Dan_Burden)

ECONOMY

- Promote commercial development that supports neighborhood needs thereby reducing traffic to neighboring communities for basic needs.
- Mesa County and the Whitewater Urban Services Public Improvement District will be fiscally responsible for infrastructure and amenity improvements/development in the planning area.

DESIGN & LOCATION

- To protect, enhance, and mitigate the aesthetic appearance of the community through sensitive circulation and access planning, design, and development.
- To create circulation routes that are both functional and lend to a sense of place.



Source: [www.pedbikeimages.org/Dan Burden](http://www.pedbikeimages.org/Dan_Burden)

Transportation Policies

Policies:

COMMUNITY

- Pedestrian activity and safety will be an integral part of transportation planning.
- Mesa County will work to create a comprehensive pathway system to connect the various neighborhoods on both the east and west sides of Highway 50.
- Construction of roads shown on the Whitewater/Kannah Creek Circulation Plan will provide reasonable and adequate traffic circulation for the community.
- Mesa County will coordinate recommended road closures shown on the Whitewater/Kannah Creek Circulation Plan and the Highway 50 Access Control Plan with the construction of new facilities in the area as development occurs.
- Mesa County will periodically evaluate the Whitewater/Kannah Creek Circulation Plan for changes and updates that may be needed.
- Mesa County will continue to coordinate transportation planning with CDOT.



Source: [www.pedbikeimages.org/Dan Burden](http://www.pedbikeimages.org/Dan_Burden)

ECONOMY

- Mesa County will work with CDOT, developers and others with an interest in the Whitewater area to maximize and efficiently use limited resources to build adequate public infrastructure.

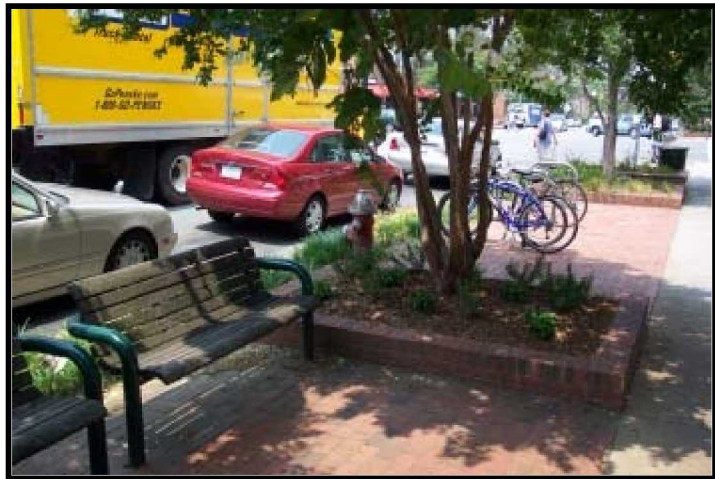
DESIGN & LOCATION

- Directional signage shall be located at all key arterial and highway entries.
- Parking shall be less prominent and located in the back of buildings when possible, for both commercial and residential uses.
- Comprehensive access management will reduce the noise and pollution of accelerating and decelerating vehicles.
- Urban streets shall include formal curb and gutter and a storm water drainage system to mitigate the drainage from impervious surfaces. A less formal swale system is not acceptable for this area due to maintenance requirements.
- Accessible vehicular parking that does not dominate the entry to either residential or commercial uses.

Transportation Action Items (TR)

Action Plan:

- TR1** Expand the Urban Trails Planning area to include the Whitewater Community and include the trail recommendations of this plan into the Urban Trails Plan.
- TR2** Develop an interconnected system of local roads, as shown on the Whitewater/Kannah Creek Circulation Plan, that will provide access to commercial uses along the east side of Highway 50 where multiple highway access points are undesirable, consistent with the Highway 50 Access Control Plan.
- TR3** Mesa County will coordinate with the Whitewater Urban Services Public Improvement District to make the improvements suggested in the Whitewater/Kannah Creek Circulation Plan using funds budgeted in Capital Investments Programs to leverage grants and other funding sources to the maximum extent possible.
- TR4** All development shall adhere to the requirements of the Mesa County Road Access Policy and the Whitewater/Kannah Creek Circulation Plan.
- TR5** Future industrial uses along Coffman Road will use the Highway 50 and Coffman Road intersection for access and be discouraged from travel through the residential Post Office Vicinity area.
- TR6** Mesa County, CDOT, and others with an interest in Whitewater will work to improve the underpass located between 1st and 3rd Streets to promote safe pedestrian and bicycle crossing of Highway 50 when feasible and practicable.
- TR7** Mesa County and School District 51 will coordinate efforts to ensure potential school locations and bus routes are accommodated in transportation planning.
- TR8** Continue to coordinate transportation planning with land use planning in the development review process.
- TR9** Site specific, detailed transportation studies and traffic analyses will be needed as individual parcels develop.



Source: www.pedbikeimages.org/Dan Burden

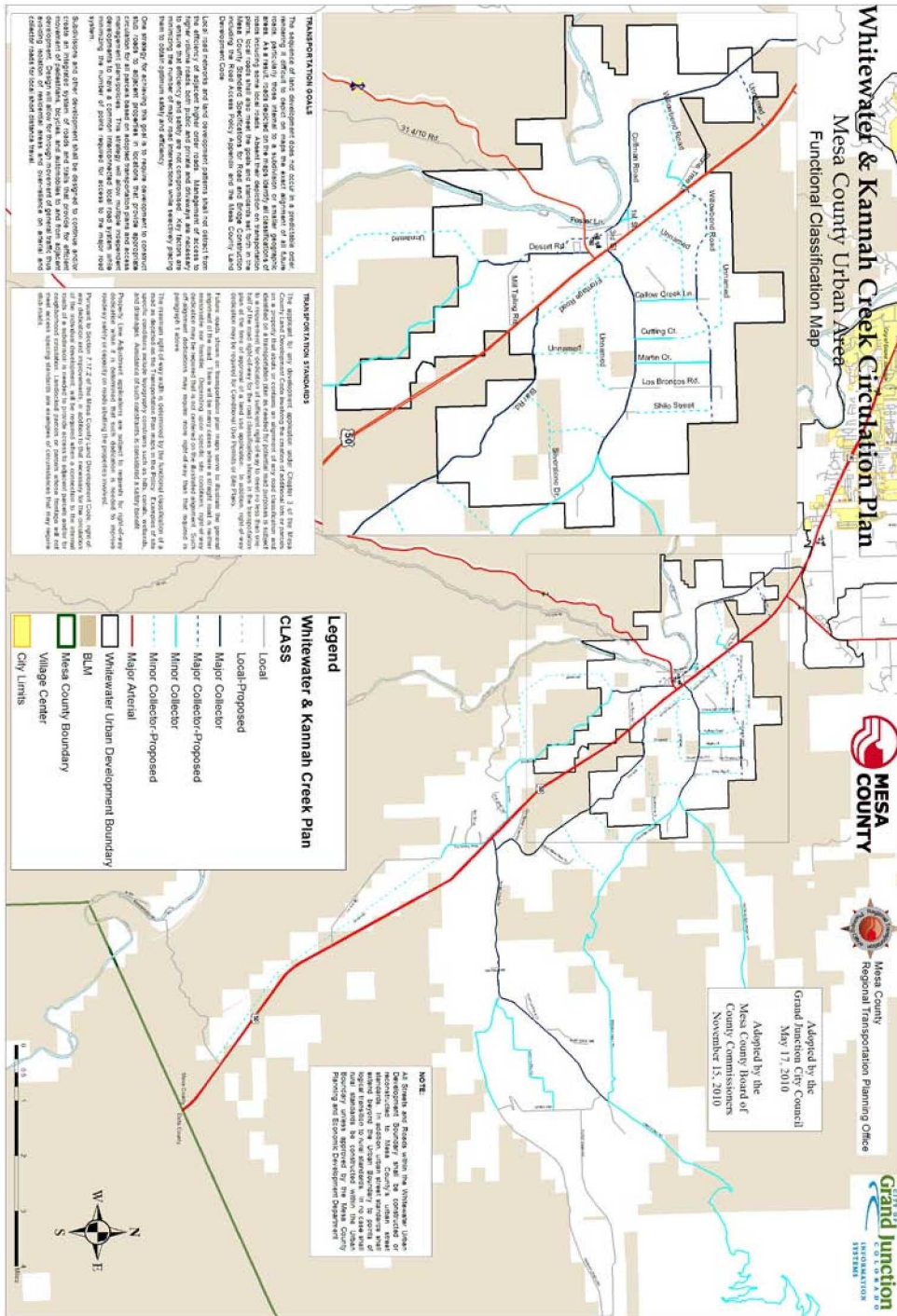


Figure 18 Whitewater/Kannah Creek Circulation Plan; the “Whitewater/Kannah Creek Circulation Plan” is part of the *Mesa County Road Access Policy*. It is provided herein for reference.