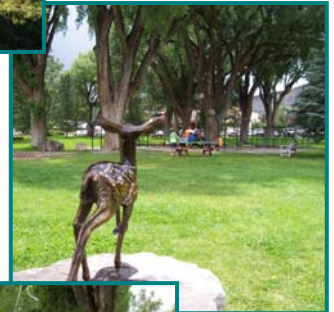


RIDGWAY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

PARKS, TRAILS, OPEN SPACES, and FACILITIES ELEMENT



Town of Ridgway
February 8th, 2012

Adopted by the Planning Commission: January 31st, 2012

Adopted by the Town Council: February 8th, 2012

Many Ridgway area residents, parents, students, elected and appointed officials and local government employees from the Town of Ridgway and Ouray County deserve great thanks and credit for the development and completion of this plan, which was started in the early 2000s and put on hold for a number of years due to exponential growth and demands on the proprietors of these public lands. With the significant economic recession that hit in the later part of the decade, the completion of this plan was prioritized. This plan was completed entirely from start to finish by community volunteers and local government employees. For this significant gratitude is extended to:

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. Plan Purpose

This Element of the Town of Ridgway Comprehensive Plan will guide the development of a system of interconnected parks, trails and open spaces. This plan will identify diverse beneficial uses and gathering places for the community, with consideration for the preservation, restoration and enhancement of environmentally sensitive and historically significant areas. In addition, the plan will promote quality of life and economic development values.

B. Current Environment

This plan was developed and completed during a very interesting time economically and socially for the Town of Ridgway. In 2007 the Town saw the beginning of a significant decrease in growth and development. By the end of 2008 this growth plummeted (*there was nearly a 90% decrease in new construction in 2008 from the construction peak in 2005*), and it had become more evident by the end of the year that the nation was entering an economic recession. By 2011 new development reached the lowest level of the decade and remains completely flat in the beginning of 2012. Refer to Table 1.

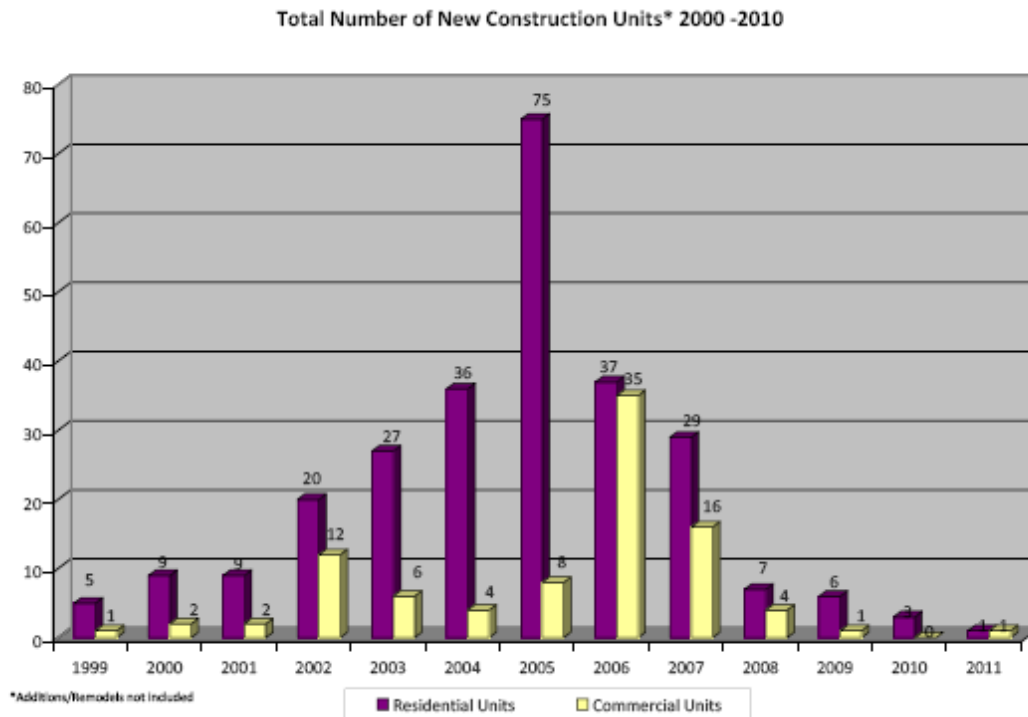
Over the last decade, from 2000 through 2010, the Town welcomed 211 new people and 193 additional housing units (60.7% increase). Since 2002, 174 new residential utility users and 43 new commercial users have tapped into the Town's infrastructure. The Town now has an additional 80 acres of public parks, trails and open spaces than it had in 2000, and many new facilities have been constructed in these spaces for public use (*soccer fields, tennis courts, skate park, river access area with in-stream features, gazebo, restroom facility, bicycle pump track, memorial meditation park, and numerous new sidewalk and primitive trail systems linking the various facilities*). This growth is very significant for a community just over 900 residents¹.

While the last few years have seen limited growth, the overall increases in population, public spaces and users combined with a dramatic decrease in revenues and funding resources have created new and increasing demands on local government services. Refer to Table 2. Infrastructure funds have been rescinded from local governments to balance the state budget, and other financial resources have simply disappeared.

At this time, there appears to be a sluggish outlook for growth in the Town of Ridgway. The last couple of years have seen a high level of community interest in economic development and numerous efforts continue to this end. This plan has been developed to address the short and long term objectives and actions for the Ridgway community. One primary recommendation is to establish a standing, volunteer committee that will assist in moving these identified goals, objectives and action items into the future while staffing and financial resources remain slim.

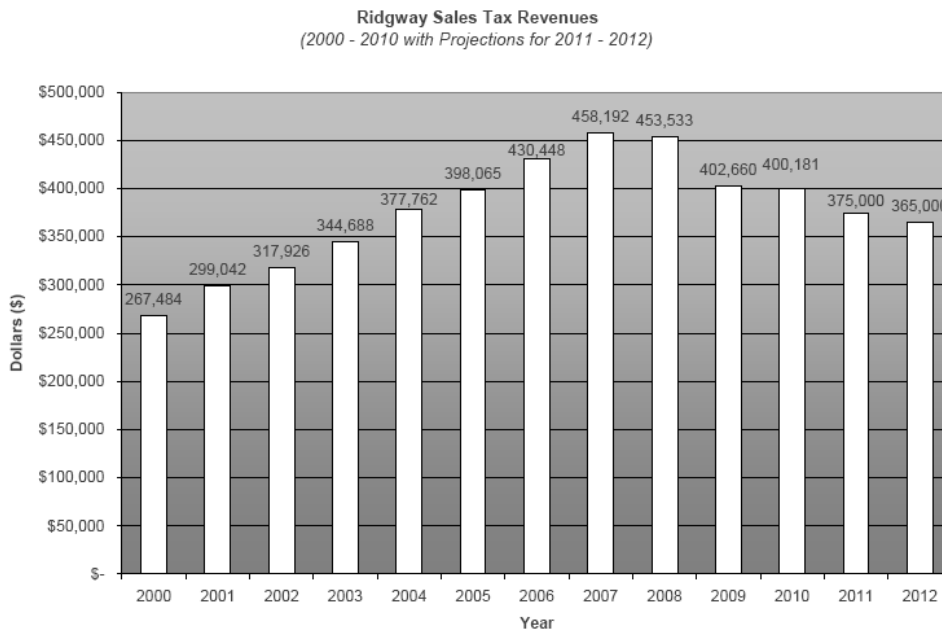
¹ Unites States 2010 Census Data retrieved on September 3, 2011 from:
<http://dola.colorado.gov/dlg/demog/2010censusdata.html>

Table 1: New Construction (1999 – 2011*)



**2011 figures are through October 2011*

Table 2: Sales Tax Revenues (2000 – 2012*)



**2011 and 2012 figures are year end estimates*

C. History of Ridgway Parks, Trails, and Open Spaces

Hartwell Park²



The Ridgway Townsite was formalized shortly after the creation of the Railroad Company. The Articles of Incorporation of the Ridgway Townsite Company were signed on May 22, 1890 by D.C. Hartwell, Frederick Walsen and Charles Nix. The Town was then formed after Hartwell and Walsen had acquired much of the land needed for the original townsite. When the original townsite was first mapped the streets were given the

first names of the founders, their wives and railroad executives. Hartwell Park was named after D.C. Hartwell.



Hartwell Park is approximately 120 years old as of the time of this writing. It has seen considerable usage through the decades by families and visitors, and provided venue for such events as the travelling Chautauquas in the 1920s. The Park was initially built by the Townsite Company, and in 1892, during Arbor Day, over 100 trees were planted. Today, some of these trees still stand³, giving the Park its inviting character and providing much needed relief from the hot sun during summer months.

In 1898 the Ridgway Town Board requested that the Townsite Company deed the park to the Town and the Town at that time assumed ownership and maintenance responsibilities. Shortly thereafter, the Townsite resumed ownership as the Town could not afford to maintain the facility. Then once again, in 1904, the Park was conveyed back to the Town.

The Park saw considerable expansion in the late 1980s, when Clinton Street was closed and the playing field and restroom facility was constructed, with connecting trails. Today, Hartwell Park may very well be the icon of the Ridgway community, with its tree crowns towering above the historic core of Town. It continues to see year-round usage by citizens and visitors, who frequently stop to enjoy its shaded picnic tables, playgrounds and gazebo.



² The Parks, Open Space and Trails Task Force hosted a public discussion with historian Doris Gregory on December 12, 2003. Ms. Gregory is the author of "Ridgway, Colorado, The Town that Refused to Die", as well as numerous other books which detail the history of the Ouray and Colona areas. The history of Hartwell Park (also known as "Town Park") is largely obtained from Ms. Gregory and her publications, and the author has been kind enough to review this summary for accuracy.

³ Many of the standing 120-year old trees consist of Bigleaf Cottonwood and Narrowleaf Cottonwood, two species that seem to do well in the Ridgway climate.

Race Track and Fair Grounds

Horse racing was the original focus at this location. This was a natural attraction in the early years as Ridgway was surrounded by ranches and there were plenty of experienced horsemen and horses. The first races here held on July 4, 1892. The race track property was originally owned by the Ridgway Townsite Company. On April 28, 1898 the Townsite Co. deeded the property to the Town of Ridgway with restrictions that the town must beautify the area. The grandstand was constructed during that same time by private individuals, at a cost of \$139.

The Town did not fulfill the requirements to perform the beautification projects, nor was the cost of the grandstand reimbursed, so the property was conveyed back to the Townsite Co. on March 14, 1903. On Dec. 15, 1903, seventeen acres and the grandstand arena / racetrack were deeded back to the town, this time with no restrictions other than that the lands would not be used for anything other than public uses. The fairgrounds and grandstand area are now subject to lease by the Town to the County. In addition, the County owns adjoining land which now comprises the entire Fairgrounds facility.

The first Labor Day celebration at the rodeo site occurred on Sept. 6, 1920. It was a cattleman's Rodeo celebration spanning three days, which included horse racing, large dance balls, a large barbeque and an aeroplane exhibition. The Labor Day Celebration ultimately grew in popularity with added features such as baseball and boxing.

The grandstands were rebuilt in the 1940s, and the racing and rodeo events continued through the years. Today, the annual rodeo celebration still continues. Recent additions to the facility include the 4-H Event Center, constructed in 2003.⁴, 4-H Barn, Railroad Museum, Ridgway Area Chamber of Commerce business operations, and a primitive but well-used Park and Ride area.

Ridgway State Park

Soon after the settlement of the Uncompahgre River Valley in the 1880s and 1890s, farmers and ranchers recognized the need to augment the river's flow with a dependable source of summer irrigation water. In the 1940s, interest developed in storing spring and summer snowmelt from the upper Uncompahgre River for irrigation use. At about the same time, a plan was being developed to control the flow of the Colorado River and some of its major tributaries. In 1956, the Colorado River Storage Project, one of the most extensive river developments in the world, became a reality. The Dallas Creek Project, which produced the Ridgway Reservoir, was authorized in 1968. The original plan was much more extensive than the existing reservoir, and included flooding the Town of Ridgway. The townspeople lived in the shadow of the impending flooding of their town for many years, until the Bureau of Reclamation made public their scaled back version of the water project in the 1970s. The dam was completed by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation in 1987.

The Bureau of Reclamation continued to develop the land around the reservoir after it was completed because studies indicated the need for a water-based recreation facility south of Montrose. Federal funding continued for eight years and paid for all the recreational development in the park. Today, partners in the project include the Bureau of Reclamation, the Tri-County Water Conservancy District (which manages water distribution), and Colorado State Parks (which manages the recreation facilities). The recreation facilities at the Ridgway State Park include three campgrounds which offer an array of

⁴ The building was built through a private donation by Victoria Hearst, and donated to the County of Ouray.

amenities, three yurts, a swim beach, marina and boat ramp, 1,000 surface acres of water for boating and fishing, 14 miles of developed hiking trails, picnic areas and shelters, and three playgrounds.

Uncompahgre RiverWay Trail



Efforts to build the Uncompahgre RiverWay Trail, which now connects Ridgway Town Park with Ridgway State Park, began in 1989. The original “rails to trails” idea to convert the old abandoned Denver and Rio Western railroad grade to a trail and greenbelt along the river was initially intended to extend the existing trail from Montrose to the south toward Ridgway.

The original concept was presented to the Montrose Chamber of Commerce “Blue Ribbon Committee on Recreation and Tourism” in 1989. The Uncompahgre RiverWay, Inc., a non-profit organization, was established to champion the idea. The mission of Uncompahgre RiverWay, Inc. was to connect Montrose’s existing trail along the Uncompahgre River and abandoned railroad grade to Ridgway State Park, which was just coming on line with its state-of-the-art recreation facilities at the reservoir.

The Town of Ridgway was very enthusiastic about the prospect of the trail and greenbelt and the group members were very encouraged by the cooperative attitude of private landowners adjacent to the proposed trail.

In 1994, Uncompahgre RiverWay, Inc. implemented the first of two Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) enhancement awards,⁵ as well as a Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) Grant, a grant from the National Park Service Rivers, and construction assistance from the AmeriCorps program. The RiverWay trail was constructed from Ridgway Town Park to a 40-acre parcel of land administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) north of Ridgway. A year later, in 1995, the BLM and a partnership consisting of the Town of Ridgway, Ouray County, Uncompahgre RiverWay, Inc., Volunteers For Outdoor Colorado (VOC), and numerous other donors and volunteers, worked together to construct the walk-in park and “watchable wildlife” area, located approximately one mile north of town. Additional funding through ISTEA and GOCO allowed for completion of the trail connection to Ridgway State Park in 2000.



In the past ten years, Uncompahgre RiverWay, Inc. negotiated six separate easements with private land owners along the trail and raised approximately \$700,000 in actual-construction grant dollars for the project. All planning, negotiations, design, oversight, and maintenance required for the project was undertaken by Uncompahgre RiverWay, Inc. Currently, the Town of Ridgway, BLM, Ouray County, Delta Correction Center, Uncompahgre RiverWay, Inc., and various volunteers are working cooperatively to monitor and maintain the RiverWay Trail.

⁵ Provided by the Federal Highway Administration and through the State Dept of Transportation

Regional Athletic Park

The park area now known as the Ridgway Regional Athletic Park represents a very unique adaptation of land. This parcel, consisting of approximately eighteen acres, has witnessed dramatic change in the landscape environmentally and culturally over the past two centuries. The land has changed hands from Native American Ute occupation to U.S. Federal Government occupancy, to the deeding of, and ultimate use by cattle ranchers in the Ridgway community, and then subject to purchase by the developers of the Solar Ranches project.

A very strange turn of events occurred in the year 2000 that may explain, at least in part, the ultimate usage of this parcel as a Town park. This turn of events also corresponds with a resounding testament to the legitimacy of the 'curse' placed upon the land by Ute Chief Ouray.⁶ According to the curse, the land would have no fruitfulness of any measure, until such time as the curse would be lifted by Ute authority. In July of 2000, through the efforts of volunteers from Ouray, San Miguel and Montrose Counties, amends were made between the Southern and Northern Ute tribes. The event marked the first time that the two tribes were united since Ouray had placed his curse. The tribes danced and drummed on the land now named Ridgway Regional Athletic Park, near the Chipeta Sun Lodge⁷.



Perhaps, with the curse now lifted, a clear purpose could emerge for use of the land to benefit future generations of community inhabitants and visitors. The eighteen-acre parcel, which had previously been designated for commercial and residential development, had been deeded to the Town for park purposes.⁸

The park was then planned for multi-use sports fields, baseball diamonds, public restrooms, connecting trails, basketball and tennis courts, and parking areas. The Town was successful in obtaining grant funding for the first phase of the park from GOCO,⁹ which together with Town matching funds and resources, was used to complete Phase I in 2002 and 2003.¹⁰ Also of significance is the fact that the Town was awarded additional funding through the Energy Impact Assistance to install a raw water irrigation line to the park, which now provides untreated irrigation water to the playing fields.

Phase II of the Ridgway Regional Athletic Park commenced in 2008. The improvements for Phase II included new tennis courts to replace the aging courts in Hartwell Park, whose fate is to be determined with the road realignment of North Railroad Street, a new gazebo, water fountain, connecting and accessible sidewalks, drainage improvements, and landscaping. Phase 2 of the skate park, inclusive of irrigation and landscape improvements was completed in part in 2011 and is planned for completion in

⁶ Supposedly, Chief Ouray wished his ill will upon the area surrounding what is now named "Orvis Hot Springs". The stretch of land, inclusive of the Solar Ranch area, represented one of the last holdings of a once vast Ute territory.

⁷ Named after Chipeta, wife of Chief Ouray.

⁸ The property was deeded to the Town in 1998 as a gift.

⁹ Approximately \$175,000 was awarded in late 1999, and extended into 2001 when the project commenced.

¹⁰ Phase I now includes two soccer fields, a baseball diamond, two parking lots, a public restroom, a concrete trail a basketball court and significant landscaping and turf.

2012. In 2011 the restroom facility was tied into the Town's wastewater system decreasing prior maintenance concerns. Finally, the Plan includes development of a third soccer field, a sand volleyball court, on-street parking along Chipeta Drive, and a tot lot playground facility. This Plan was developed by local Ridgway High School students in 2008 with the guidance of a local landscape artist and inputs from the Parks, Trails, and Open Spaces Committee.

Skate Park

The Town, in response to submitted petitions and expressed interests before the Town Council is pursuing the construction of a skate park in FY 2005. The proposed site for this facility is the vacant ground north of the public parking lot and Ridgway Library. The skate park will be designed for future additions, with the first phase being suitable for intermediate level usage.

In FY 2005, the Council budgeted \$25,000 as cash match for possible grant funding to see the project designed and constructed. The estimate for the first phase of the skate park was approximately \$135,000. Along with the Town's cash match, \$90,000 was sought through GOCO funds, \$10,000 through privately raised contributions, and \$5,000 attributed to in-kind donations (earth moving and landscaping).

The Town submitted its grant application in December, 2004 and was fully awarded the \$90,000 through GOCO in June, 2005. The project was designed and constructed in 2006. The Town received a mini grant award from GOCO to design and construct Phase 2 in 2011, with irrigation and landscaping planned for completion in this area in 2012. A former local resident contributed funds to incorporate a memorial piece at the southern aspect of the park and a local artist/designer is now crafting a memorial plaque for incorporation into this section of the park. The skate park from start to finish has been a true community effort and now has the look and feel of a true community park.

Figure 1: Coept Plan for Northern Aspect of the Regional Athletic Park



Cottonwood Creek Park

Cottonwood Creek is an intermittent creek that flows eastward through the Town and confluences with the Uncompahgre River near Liddell Drive. The drainage receives its headwaters from Happy Hollow Canyon, south of Miller Mesa. Cottonwood Creek is partly fed through spring waters and partly fed through surface runoff.



The drainage is not large in terms of total drainage area. It lies primarily within a steep and narrow canyon. As such, its discharges are somewhat erratic, changing quickly in storm events that typically occur in the later summer months. The 25-year storm event in this particular basin exceeds 430 cubic feet per second, according to data supplied by the Colorado Water Conservation Board. The drainage is indicated in the 100 year flood plain on the FEMA Federal Insurance Rate Map within the Town.

As the creek finds its way through Town, it travels underneath Amelia Street, Lena Street, and an alley way east of Lena Street. The culverts at these particular crossings appear to be inadequate in size, and some flooding has occurred during significant rain events. In 2003, the Town was successful in seeking some outside funding through a Mineral Impact Assistance Grant to help construct two large culverts at both the Lena Street and Alley crossings. The construction of these culverts commenced in the Fall of 2004. There are two pedestrian bridges crossing Cottonwood Creek near Mary and Cora Streets that were constructed coincident with the Solar Ranches Subdivision. Both bridges were recently reconstructed in 2009 and 2011, respectively.

Some improvements to the Creek channel have also been performed, removing excess vegetation and dead and diseased trees, to better enable the handling of increased flows from storm events. Much work is still needed, however, and will be phased over a period of years.

Improvements to mitigate flood occurrences also serve to enhance the overall appearance of the creek, and its use by the public for passive recreational purposes. Much of the corridor that passes through Town has been donated or dedicated to the Town and is inclusive of creek habitat as well as adjoining open areas that constitute a significant “strip” of parkland lying between County Road 23 and Charlotte Street. This strip of parkland is known as “Cottonwood Creek Park”. It consists of earthen trails and a number of pedestrian crossings, grassy open areas and dense pockets of Narrowleaf Cottonwood and Box Elder trees along the drainage. In 2009, an irrigation system was installed on the stretch of the park from Lena Street to the western aspect abutting the Le Ranch Subdivision near what would be the extended stretch of Charlotte Street.

Cottonwood Creek is frequently used by wildlife, notably deer and elk which travel to and from the River corridor in the evening hours. The dense coverings along the Creek provide some shelter and protection for smaller species. The trees in Cottonwood Creek Park are in a state of decline as they are heavily infected with fungus and disease. Much care is needed in terms of thinning and pruning to better enable the stand to survive in good health and this is planned for late 2011 and 2012. Plantings of more diverse species may also be recommended. An Urban Forest Management Plan will organize and facilitate the care and maintenance this park needs.

Because much of the water in Cottonwood Creek is diverted for irrigation purposes during summer months, the resulting intermittent flows may also be having some negative impact upon the vegetation in the Creek basin. Long periods of dry conditions are typically followed by significant flows during storm events, creating log jams and erosion along the channel, and at times flooding conditions. The Town is exploring means of keeping some residual flows in the Creek channel during most of year, to help mitigate flood impact and maintain a better health of the plant and tree species along the corridor.

Recently, the community trails group approached the Council with a request to develop bike trails through the drainage in Cottonwood Park. This discussion continues and may provide one more additional multi-modal feature on public property.

Green Street Park

This is a 7 acre park that was gifted to the Town with the development of the Parkside Subdivision in 2007. The park is situated west of Green Street in the northwest area of Town, and has connecting pedestrian sidewalk from the Ridgway Industrial Park and River Park Subdivision to the Ridgway Schools. Currently the park is in its native and organic form, with mowing and some weed management efforts comprising the bulk of maintenance for this park. The Ridgway Schools pump house is situated within this park, and includes irrigation system controls for the Town to water the trees lining both the east and west sides of Green Street as well as controls for the Parkside Subdivision for trees along Laura Street within the Subdivision.

Dennis Weaver Memorial Park



This 60 acre active and passive use public park was dedicated to the Town by the Dennis Weaver Family in 2009 with the development of the first phase of the RiverSage Planned Unit Development. The Dennis Weaver Memorial Park is home to multi-use trails along the Uncompahgre River, a developed memorial park with medicine wheel, xeriscape garden, eagle statue, and picnic area along the west side of the Uncompahgre River, all honoring Dennis Weaver. The Colorado Youth Corps contributed to trail construction along the west side of the river, and in 2011 additional bike and pedestrian trail building has been proposed by the Ridgway Area Trails Group.

Cedar Creek Minor Park

This is a one half acre park situated on the north side of County Road 5, just west of South Amelia Street, and was dedicated to the Town for “parks and utilities” as part of the Cedar Creek Minor Subdivision in 1997. The park is undeveloped, and remains in its native, organic state.

Vista Terrace Open Spaces

There are two public spaces within the Vista Terrace Subdivision that were dedicated to the Town subsequent to the subdivision of the property in 1994. One open space is approximately 5.4 acres and the other is about .3 acres. The latter is dedicated for the sole purpose of “common land”, pursuant to the warranty deed. Currently these spaces are in their native, organic state with passive use only.

BMX Park

This loosely developed portion of park is situated at the northern aspect of Hartwell Park along the Uncompahgre River Trail and at the southwest aspect of the intersection Otto and North Railroad Streets, near the Town’s Wastewater Treatment Facility. The BMX park was developed by Town’s Public Works Crew many years ago, and was “re-built” in the early 1990s under the supervision and oversight of the Town Public Works employee, Mike Jenkins. While some noxious weed management continues throughout this park, there are no other imminent plans for improvements to this area, although it does see significant use by local youth. The improvements in this park require little maintenance; however noxious weeds have moved in over the years and the Town Staff has tried to manage the infestations using non-chemical (except for some vinegar treatments) methods. If the park is to remain in its current location, some improvements including irrigation may need to be had to control the weeds.

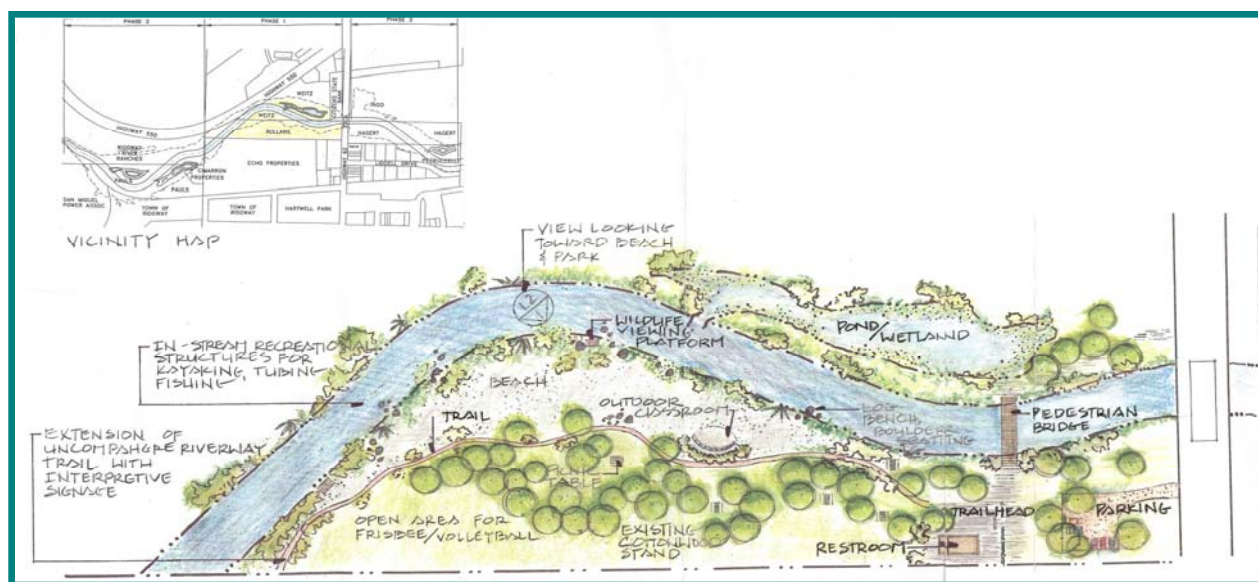
Rollans Park, River Bank Minor Outlot A, and Triangle Subdivision Lease Purchase Parcel

The headwaters of the Uncompahgre River are in the Red Mountain Mining District of southern Ouray County, which includes the famous Idarado Mine, which has seen significant reclamation activities since the early 1990s. The River runs through the three communities in the County and also through Ridgway State Park, where it feeds the Ridgway Reservoir.

Construction of the River Corridor Project commenced in 2002, as a restoration project focusing upon over a mile of corridor within the Ridgway Town limits. The project was designed to improve water quality by stabilizing riverbanks and reducing sediment pollution. It is also designed to re-establish a flood plain and enhance aquatic, riparian, wetland and floodplain habitat by re-establishing a stable river morphology and native vegetation.

The Project is planned for completion in three phases. Phase One of the project involved development of the river park and considerable in-stream re-channelization and improvements. The park now has a natural trail, wetlands area, parking lot and river access. Phase One is located a block from the Town Park, Town Hall, Community Center, County Fairgrounds and historic core of Town.

Figure 2: Uncompahgre River Restoration Project



Phase Two of the Project is downstream of Phase One, and will allow for the ultimate connection of the River Park with the existing Uncompahgre RiverWay Trail – a 2.3 mile recreation path that connects the Town of Ridgway with the Ridgway State Park. Unfortunately, the Town encountered resistance from a private property owner, which has stalled the implementation and completion of Phase Two, resulting in a short, dead-end trail along the western aspect of the River, terminating at the end of the Town-owned Rollans Park. Phase One and Two are both quite visible from Highways 550 and 62 -- the gateway to the Town and a part of the San Juan Scenic Byway Loop. Phase Three is upstream of the highway bridge on HWY 62, and involved continued river restoration. It also included construction of a pedestrian bridge, which now connects the Town core with the development east of the river, including the County Fairgrounds. Phase Three did not include any additional parkland as currently envisioned.

The Town began Phase One of the project in the Fall of 2002. Re-vegetation of the river banks was provided through the assistance of the Southwest Youth Corps – a youth conservation corps located in Durango. The Corps were on site twice in 2003 to do the plantings. Phase Two commenced in the Spring, 2004, and for reasons stated earlier, is not completed. The pedestrian bridge was funded largely through CDOT Enhancement monies and was installed in the summer of 2004.

The most impressive element of the Project is the multiple partnerships and generous contributions that have materialized in recent years. The Project is subject to considerable participation and partnership at all levels, with the following notable contributions:

- Over \$947,000 in grants from Nat'l Park Service, Great Outdoors Colorado, El Pomar Foundation, TEA 21 Colo. Dept of Transportation), Nat'l Fish and Wildlife Foundation.
- In-Kind contributions valued in excess \$379,800
- Over \$75,000 contributed by the Town of Ridgway for project costs; additional \$200,000 for land acquisition

- Private Contribution of \$200,000 from Ed and Linda Weitz for project start
- Private land donations of over seven acres by James Rollans and Citizens State Bank valued in excess of \$460,000.

From an aesthetic standpoint, a visual corridor has been created, which serves as the gateway to the Town and along the San Juan Skyway Scenic Loop. The site is readily accessible and visible to passers by and people seeking a quick stop or picnic area while they tour the area. The River Park will greatly improve the view corridor of the San Juans from the Highway 550 corridor. The San Juan Scenic and Historic Byway, a Colorado Scenic Highway, is traveled by an estimated peak number of approximately 11, 512 vehicles daily (per Colorado Department of Transportation figures).



The River Corridor Project offers profound educational opportunities. The Ridgway School District will continue to use the site as a living classroom for earth and environmental science classes focusing on collection of data related to vegetation, water quality, stream biota and morphological changes.

With regard to wildlife, the project site is visited by many native species including deer and elk. It is used by waterfowl including blue heron, mallards, Canadian geese, and during the winter months, bald eagles. With the restoration of the native biotic community fish will again thrive in the river, including the spawning Kokanee Salmon, which travel upstream to the project site from Ridgway Reservoir in the Fall months.

The Project is primarily in a maintenance mode with some gravel excavation and river channeling needed. Emphasis will remain on re-vegetation of the wetlands and riparian areas, noxious weed mitigation and native plant restoration.

There is currently discussion of some reconfiguration of the upper in-stream structure, which is being pursued. The Council recently discussed the desire for an Uncompahgre River Master Plan that would stretch the length of the river through Town. It is likely this will happen in the near future.

Solar Ranches Pedestrian Trails

When the Solar Ranches Subdivision was developed in the late 1990s, primitive pedestrian trails were developed throughout the subdivision. Some of these trails were dedicated back to the Town as public trails, while others are private for the use of the subdivision residents. These trails link in to the Regional Athletic Park to the east, and Cottonwood Park to the north.

Pump Track

In the summer of 2011 a local resident approached the Council requesting public space for the construction of a pump track. There was a community fundraising event and funds were utilized to secure the services of a professional pump track designer. Working with the Parks, Trails and Open Space committee, Town Staff including the Public Works Department, and local volunteers the pump track was constructed at the southern aspect of the Ridgway Athletic Park and an irrigation system for track improvement and noxious weed mitigation is planned for installation in 2012.

40-Acre BLM Parcel

This federally owned parcel is situated outside of the Ridgway municipal boundary although it integral to the Town's connecting trails system as it is surrounded on three sides by the Town boundary, as well as being home to a critical and existing linkage for the Uncompahgre River Way Trail. The parcel also contains a primitive hiking and biking trail network that connects into trails within the Dennis Weaver Memorial Park, the River Way Trail, and future trail linkage within the RiverSage Planned Unit Development.

During the recent scoping period and plan update process for the BLM's Uncompahgre Field Office, the Town formally expressed an interest both verbally and in writing, to eventually acquire this parcel of land if and when the BLM is prepared to convey it. At this time the property is home to key amenities including a picnic area with restrooms situated on the east side of the river, as well as a bald eagle roosting area when the salmon are present.

County Road 10, BLM and State Parks Trails Network

The federally-owned BLM lands are on the east side of Highway 550, adjacent to the Town boundary and provide approximately 20 miles of multi-purpose trails, recently developed through efforts of the Ridgway Area Trails Group in conjunction with the BLM. In the spring of 2011, the BLM initiated a public scoping process to further develop this recreational area at the Request of the Ridgway Trails Group (RTG) and Colorado Plateau Mountain Bike Association (COPMOBA), inclusive of additional single-track trails, a formal trailhead and parking area at County Road 10, just east of the Ridgway Town Boundary, but connecting into the Town's trail system. The Town Council provided a letter of support in March 2011 to the BLM for the development of this parcel as proposed by the RTG and COPMOBA. During the scoping process it was revealed that Ouray County is licensed for gravel pit operations within this BLM property, which is subject to a mining permit and associated regulations.

In 2011 the Colorado State Parks came to the table after significant delay with the BLM project and the trail network construction is now focused on coordination with the Colorado State Parks. The Town is supportive of the efforts to develop the trails in this area, both BLM and State Parks properties, which will link in nicely with the Uncompahgre River Way Trail system and ultimately into the Town of Ridgway.

The Community has expressed a great need for a safe and clear crossing at Highway 550 from the Uncompahgre RiverWay Trail on the west side of the highway to the trail networks on the east side of the highway. The Town has envisioned for sometime an underpass from the Triangle Subdivision to the Ridgway Land Company property within the Town. There is also a culvert under the highway to the

north of Town that is potentially an opportunity for developing safe pedestrian, bicycle and wildlife access with the State Highway Department. Working with the owners of Angel Ridge Ranch (currently Second Chance Humane Society) is another opportunity to gain access on the east side of Highway 550.

II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

A. Summary of Existing Parks, Trails, and Open Spaces

TABLE 3: Public Property – Parks, Trails, Open Spaces

Town Property (parks, trails, open spaces)	Park	Open Space	Other
Hartwell Park (includes BMX area)	8.38		
Vista Terrace OS		0.27	
Vista Terrace OS		5.37	
Rollans - Park Subdivision Tract B (est. acres)	7		
Parkside (Green Street Park)	6.98		
Parkside (Open Space)		0.803	
Cottonwood Park in Solar Ranches Flg 1	3.328		
Cottonwood Park in Cottonwood Subdivision	0.716		
Cottonwood Park in Le Ranch Subdivision	0.115		
Regional Athletic Park	18.4		
Triangle Subdivision Lot 1 (Weitz Parcel)		3.756	
River Bank Minor Outlot A		0.43	
Fairgrounds Tracts E/K and Heritage Park			14.42
Dennis Weaver Memorial Park	60.78		
Cedar Creek Minor (parks and utilities)			0.51
SUBTOTALS:	105.699	10.629	14.93
TOTAL (PUBLIC, in ACRES):	131.258		

Private Open Spaces, Parks, Land Trusts	Park	Open Space	Other
Solar Ranches HOA		18.473	
RiverSage HOA OS-1		4.323	
RiverSage HOA OS-2		1.784	
RiverSage HOA OS-3		3.434	
RiverSage HOA OS-4		0.819	
RiverSage HOA OS-5		23.95	
RiverSage HOA OS-6		9.941	
County-owned Fairgrounds Property			6.09
River Park HOA OS-1 (roundhouse park)	2.322		
River Park HOA OS-2		1.246	
River Park HOA OS-3		0.09	
River Park HOA OS-4		0.074	
River Park HOA OS-5		0.47	
River Park HOA OS-6		0.217	
Cottonwood Park HOA		0.086	
Baseball Field (County & School) Blk 3 & 10			1.85
Secondary School Soccer Field			5.11
Sweetwater Land Trust (est)			20.15
Cedar Creek Minor Land Trust (existing home)			28.07
Solar Ranches Trails (Public & Private)			6.586
SUBTOTALS (acres):	2.322	64.907	67.856
TOTAL (PRIVATE, in ACRES):	135.085		

B. Short-Term Improvements:

Uncompahgre River Master Plan

As mentioned previously, after a number of community requests for additional public access areas and pursuant to the dedication of a large parcel with a developed community park along the river in the northern aspect of Town, the Council has expressed a desire to develop a Master Plan for the river as it runs through Town and as a centerpiece for the community. A property owner at the southern aspect of Town recently approached the Parks Committee offering a donation of property abutting the river for a dog park. The value of the river corridor received significant comment and attention during the 2011 Land Use Plan Update process, recognizing the river as a significant community gem and resource requiring protection and care for quality of life as well as economic development opportunities.

Soccer Field

Demand for a third soccer field at the Ridgway Athletic Park has been increasing, with considerable and increasing spring and fall usage on the existing fields, as well as increasing use of the combined soccer / baseball athletic field. The Ridgway School District constructed an additional soccer field although it is currently not available for use and the school teams are using the public fields at the Athletic Park further increasing demand. The School District is planning on improving the school field and is hopeful it will be usable in 2012 or 2013 although it is likely the addition of one more field at the school will not meet the current demand.

The Master Plan for the Regional Athletic Park provides for a third field, and an additional baseball field. The location of these playing facilities are depicted in the site plan for the Athletic Park (*see Figure 1*).

The Town and the Ridgway / Ouray Soccer Club partnered together in 2004 to pursue possible grant funding through the Colorado State Youth Soccer Association (CSYSA). A grant of \$7,000 was provided to help fund initial ground work and drainage work for the third field.

Volleyball Court

A soft surface volleyball court is planned for the northeast aspect of the Regional Athletic Park near the tennis courts, basketball court and skate park. Parking will be improved along Chipeta Drive, and the existing parking lot will be converted into a volleyball court. This amenity was proposed by the high school students during the park planning process and was received with much support.

Dog Park

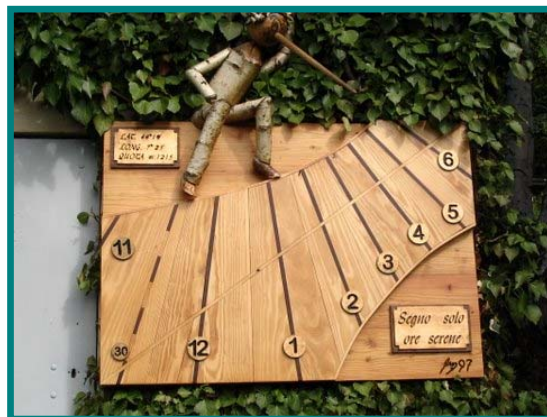
During the development of this plan in 2011 a local property owner approached the committee offering to donate land along the Uncompahgre River to the Town for use as a community dog park. The opportunity was presented to the Town Council during the 2012 budget and strategy process and the Council prioritized the property acquisition for 2012. The committee is proposing that fundraising efforts commence after the acquisition to build a fence, shade shelters and other amenities as needed for the property. Trail connectivity along the river to the park and connecting to other Town Parks (Rollans, Dennis Weaver Memorial Park, and Hartwell) is also a priority.

Trail Connectivity and Designated Bike and Pedestrian Routes

With recent grassroots efforts toward trail development and multi-modal access town-wide and into Ouray County, the planning and construction of connecting multi-modal trails is a priority for existing trails and sidewalks as well as new development. Highway crossings for both Highways 550 and 62, inclusive of underpasses where feasible, are a priority development to insure safe passage for people and wildlife regardless of the mode of transportation. Likewise, context-appropriate way-finding and mapping will facilitate multi-modal objectives and encourage trail development and use for the community. As new trails develop in the region bringing more people to the area for recreation and quality of life, safe highway passage and designated way-finding are paramount.

Neighborhood Playgrounds and Creative Industry Improvements

With many families moving to Ridgway and the development progressing from the core of Town to the perimeter, additional neighborhood playgrounds are desired. The playgrounds should be context appropriate and diverse to provide for livable neighborhoods and unique experiences for our children. During the planning process, the committee was approached by a resident mom with the request to consider and prioritize interactive artistic playgrounds. Recommendations included hand-crafted musical instruments and sculptures on which the children will learn a variety of skills and interact not only with the functional art but with other children. Likewise another resident presented photos of organic art including sundials that could be incorporated into the natural landscape. These concepts fit well with the community's desire for local art and creativity as reflected in the 2012 Land Use Plan and also the Town's pursuit of Creative District certification with the State of Colorado Creative Industries initiative in 2012.



Bouldering Area



For many years the community has discussed the development of a bouldering area for various users of all ages. In 2011, the Town Council discussed a GOCO grant application for this improvement in Town Park to provide a play area during summer concert and festival events.

Performing Arts Stage

In 2009 the local government initiated a free Summer Concert Series in Town Park. The Series has blossomed over the last 3 years into a true community event in partnership with Pickin' Productions of Paonia, CO. With successful fundraising efforts for the event, the Town is in the process of raising funds and working with students from the University of Colorado-Denver to design and construct a permanent performing arts stage in the central Town Park. The stage is planned for design in the fall of 2012 and construction in 2013.

C. Definitions:

Neighborhood Parks

Less than five acres in size, typically serving a specific neighborhood; usually designed with open areas, playgrounds, landscaping and trails. Intended to be easily accessible by foot or bike. These parks serve as good buffer areas, with limited use and generally little or no public amenities.

Community Parks

Usually between five and fifty acres, designed primarily with open areas, playgrounds, trails restrooms and other public amenities. Sports activities and recreational facilities may be included, such as tennis, basketball, and playing fields.

Community parks should be focal points for the community, providing common meeting places and higher-intensity usage than smaller neighborhood parks. These parks are generally diverse in nature, but are also designed for high-intensity uses such as ball fields. Since these parks attract a large number of people, they require easy access and extensive parking facilities. Community parks require a high degree of planning and management.

Regional Parks

Usually greater than fifty acres, and designed primarily for a variety of uses by regional users, as well as community members. Regional parks are often centered around natural attractions such as water bodies, rivers, wetland areas and views. Access should be easy, by both vehicular traffic and multi-modal.

Special Use Facilities

Special use areas and facilities play an important role in fulfilling community needs for special outdoor and indoor recreational activities. These activities are provided for the benefit of the community, but for various reasons have not been incorporated into the community park setting. Examples may include single purpose recreational activities like golf, amphitheaters and skate parks.

Open Spaces

Open spaces can be generally described as natural areas set aside for preservation of significant natural resources, landscapes, and visual buffering. These lands consist of natural amenities such as water bodies, river corridors, and lands that may be unsuitable for development (steep terrain, storm water

management areas, etc). In general, open space areas are only readily accessible by trails and paths, with limited parking or vehicular access. They are not intended for intensive human use. Open space within the community is both publicly owned (i.e. Cottonwood Creek) and privately owned (i.e. Solar Ranches open space).

D. 2009 Ridgway Community Survey Results

In 2009, the Town completed a community survey in preparation for the land use update to the master plan. A number of questions and responses germane to this plan development include water conservation, environmental preservation and specific questions regarding the acquisition and financing of parks, trails, and open spaces. Below is a summary of the responses received for these related questions, as it appears in the final survey report dated January 6, 2010:

Question 24 - The Town has had considerable success in acquiring park lands and open spaces without a strong policy in place regarding park land development. Which of the following options for new parks and open spaces is most important to you? (Please select only one option below)

The acquisition of strategically located, neighborhood parks and open spaces including a large community park received the most support (44%, 154 respondents), followed by the acquisition of smaller neighborhood parks under 5 acres in size to serve new neighborhoods (21%, 76). Acquisition of a larger 'community park' received the least support (7%, 26 responses). 15% (52 respondents) feel the Town has sufficient parks and open spaces to accommodate new growth. Open spaces and light use areas received 10% support (36 responses). Responses are relatively consistent regardless of where the respondent lives.

Question 25 - How should the acquisition and maintenance of additional parks and open spaces be paid for? (Select all that apply)

Requiring new residential subdivisions to provide parks and open space (69%, 245 support) and the Town pursuing grant dollars (66%, 233 support) for acquisition and maintenance of parks and open spaces received the most support from all respondents. A cash payment to the Town from new residential subdivision developments for acquisition and maintenance of parks and open spaces received moderate support (45%, 158). New taxes received the least general support (16%, 58) although 27% (94 responses) indicated additional tax revenues as an acceptable option. Responses are relatively consistent regardless of where the respondent lives.

Question 33 – What is your opinion on the following approaches to water conservation?

There appears to be significant support for a variety of water conservation efforts with 83% (283) of the respondents supporting provisions for conservation devices and education. Restructuring of rates and mandatory restrictions received majority support (57%, 195 and 53%, 183, respectively), although a representative number of respondents do not support these measures (37%, 125 and 41%, 141, respectively). 78% (218) disagree with the idea of doing nothing about water conservation. Responses track across populations regardless of residency in the Town or County, although Ouray County respondents are closely divided on implementing mandatory watering restrictions.

Q40 - Rate the importance of each of the following areas where development should be restricted because of environmental impact or other constraints.

There is significant support from all respondents, greater than 75%, for restricting development in environmentally sensitive areas, with the river corridor and wildlife habitats receiving the most support. Responses across the varied respondents are similar. Of 28 'other' responses, 21 generally agree that some restriction is good, and some reference preservation of agriculture, river, wetlands, ridges and wildlife habitat/corridors, etc.

Q41 - Preservation of physical features in and around Ridgway is one way to retain existing community qualities. Which of the following local features do you feel should be preserved or enhanced? (Check all that apply)

There is significant support for preservation and enhancement of all stated local features. 93% (319) of the respondents identified the river corridor, followed by 81% (281) supporting ridgelines and hilltops. All of the options received greater than 60% support (more than 200 respondents indicated the feature should be preserved or enhanced). Of 28 comments on this question, about 1/4 speak generally to cleaning up the Town, and some to improving the Town gateways, and preserving or enhancing parks, trails and open spaces.

E. Ouray County Land Use Code and 1999 Ouray County Master Plan

While the Ouray County regulations and master plan document do not directly address the creation of parks and trails, it does speak to preserving open space, visual and scenic quality, wildlife corridors, and unique environmental and ecological assets, while providing for context sensitive residential and recreational development.

Ouray County Land Use Code – Section Six: Planned Unit Developments

“The Planned Unit Development concept is intended to allow for development of land, subject to those development regulations set forth in this Code. It is intended to allow development of land while protecting unique environmental and/or ecological assets and to allow for residential and recreational developments in which various uses and structures may be grouped in appropriate relationship to each other, to open spaces and to common facilities (Section 6.2).”

“The applicant shall provide common open space as required by the provision of section 6.7. All open space provided within the PUD, including those spaces designated as public and private recreation sites, shall be protected by adequate covenants running with the land or by conveyances or dedication in a manner acceptable to the County (Section 6.6.C).”

The common open space and building/non building requirements stipulate that open space should maintain the visual and scenic quality of Ouray County, be designed to coincide with wildlife corridors and other environmentally critical areas, provide trails parks, or other recreational facilities for current and future residents, have reasonable access, and maintain natural topography, vegetation, and other characteristics. (Section 6.7.A).

The ownership and maintenance of open space must be laid out in a Common Open Space Plan, to be included with the application for a PUD, and should establish an organization for the ownership and maintenance of the common open space or make acceptable provisions for ownership and maintenance (6.7.C).

The PUD requirements and procedures detail that the plan should include a description of the areas to be set aside for permanent open space, and the proposed ownership, maintenance, and use of such areas (6.8.B.4.g). A written and graphic description of the areas to be preserved for community or public uses and all areas dedicated to the County should also be submitted with the plan (6.8.B.4.h).

1999 Ouray County Master Plan

Goal ‘F’ of the Master Plan suggests maintaining the rural character of Ouray County. One policy to support this goal states, “Create open space or low-density development areas around the town, city, and future unincorporated areas to intergovernmental agreements that further the objectives of this master plan.”

Goal ‘H’ of the Plan hopes to promote a transportation network that allows for the orderly flow of traffic on roads in Ouray County and is supported by the policy: “Evaluate the feasibility of accommodating non-motorized modes of transportation, including horse, pedestrian and bicycle, in order to provide multiple modes of mobility to all segments of the population.”

Goal 'J' of the Ouray County Master Plan states a need to preserve visually significant and sensitive areas of the county that provide scenic backdrops and vistas that both residents and visitors enjoy. Suggested policies support evaluating programs and incentives that encourage placement of land into conservation easements or other protected status.

Goal 'K' advocates for recognition of the importance of protecting all species and habitat types currently found in Ouray County and maintain healthy and diverse wildlife and plant habitats. Supporting policy also suggests evaluation and consideration of programs and incentives that would encourage placement of lands into conservation easements.

F. Economic Benefits of Parks, Trails, and Open Spaces



It is widely reported that the natural environment and outdoor recreation activities contribute significantly to healthy and vibrant local and regional economies. The Ridgway community believes in and supports outdoor recreation as a key contributor to develop and sustain a diverse local economy. In the valley of the San Juan Mountains, our community is extremely wealthy in natural recreation resources. The community has done great work in acquiring public

properties for parks, trails and open spaces. The community has also succeeded in preserving and developing public spaces to improve the quality of life for residents while providing a variety of amenities, facilities and events that attract visitors who will help sustain the local economy. One objective of this plan is to provide facts and information on the economic benefits of well-planned public spaces. *Photo: Ridgway Rendezvous Arts and Crafts Festival in Hartwell "Town" Park, courtesy of Gary Woods, San Juan Balloon Adventures*

The Outdoor Industry Foundation published a report in 2006¹¹ entitled "The Active Outdoor Recreation Economy", stating the following about the recreation economy:

- Contributes \$730 billion annually to the U.S. economy
- Supports nearly 6.5 million jobs across the U.S.
- Generates \$88 billion in annual state and national tax revenue
- Provides sustainable growth in rural communities
- Generates \$289 billion annually in retail sales and services across the U.S.
- Touches over 8 percent of America's personal consumption expenditures—more than 1 in every 12 dollars circulating in the economy

The report further asserts that over \$622 billion is directly infused into the local economy with more than 3 out of 4 Americans participating in "simple, healthy outdoor activities such as hiking, biking, camping or wildlife viewing", and provides the following "Economic Contributions" for the Mountain West (AZ, CO, ID, NM, MT, UT, NV, WY):

- Total Contributions: \$61,496
- Jobs Generated: 617,186
- Gear Retail Sales: \$4,790
- Trip-related Sales: \$34,940
- Taxes (federal,state): \$8,906

¹¹ Retrieved on December 12, 2011 from the Fall 2006 report from the Outdoor Industry Foundation
<http://www.outdoorindustry.org/images/researchfiles/RecEconomypublic.pdf?26>

Case studies in the report include Fruita, CO and Moab, UT, with the BLM attributing outdoor recreation as contributing \$1.5 million per year to the local economy in Fruita.

AmericanTrails.org¹² reports the following statistics on real property values and expenditures:

Real Property Values

Many studies demonstrate that parks, greenways and trails increase nearby property values, thus increasing local tax revenues. Such increased revenues often offset greenway acquisition costs.

- A. California's Secretary for the State Resources Agency estimated that \$100 million would be returned to local economies each year from an initial park bond investment of \$330 million (Gilliam, 1980).
- B. A greenbelt in Boulder, Colorado increased aggregate property values for one neighborhood by \$5.4 million, resulting in \$500,000 of additional annual property tax revenues. The tax alone could recover the initial cost of the \$1-5 million greenbelt in three years (Cornell, Lillydahl, and Singel, 1978).
- C. In the vicinity of Philadelphia's 1,300 acre Pennypack Park, property values correlate significantly with proximity to the park. In 1974, the park accounted for 33 percent of the value of land 40 feet away from the park, nine percent when located 1,000 feet away, and 4.2 percent at a distance of 2,500 feet (Hammer, Coughlin and Horn, 1974).

Expenditures by Residents

Spending by local residents on greenway related activities helps support recreation related business and employment, as well as businesses patronized by greenway and trail users.

- A. Residents are increasingly spending vacations closer to home, thus spending increasing amounts of vacation dollars within the boundaries of the state (NPS 1990).
- B. In 1988, recreation and leisure was the third largest industry in California. More than \$30 billion is spent each year by Californians on recreation and leisure in their state. This amounts to 12 percent of total personal consumption (California Department of Parks and Recreation, 1988).

The local government should also be aware of development and maintenance costs associated with public properties, and the benefits of preserving key areas as open spaces. AmericanTrails.org reports the following on public cost reduction:

The conservation of rivers, trails, and greenways can help local governments and other public agencies reduce costs resulting from flooding and other natural hazards. While greenways have many economic benefits it is important to remember the intrinsic environmental and recreation value of preserving rivers, trails and other open space corridors. Greenways along rivers can help reduce the cost of repairing flood damage and improving water quality.

¹² Retrieved on January 28, 2012 from AmericanTrails.org <http://www.americantrails.org/resources/economics/GreenwaySumEcon.html>

- A. In a study of major land uses in Culpepper County, Virginia, it was found that "for every dollar collected from farm/forest/open space, 19 cents is spent on services' "(Vance and Larson, 1988).
- B. In Yarmouth, Maine, an analysis of costs of providing municipal services to a specific parcel proposed for parks showed that the annual costs of those services exceeded revenues generated by taxes by \$140,000 annually. This was compared to an annual cost of \$76,000 over 20 years to purchase the property (World Wildlife Fund, 1992).
- C. In Boulder, Colorado, the 1988 public cost for maintaining developed areas was estimated to be over \$2,500 per acre. The cost for maintaining open space in the city was only \$75 per acre, or less than three percent the cost of non-open space (Crain, 1988)

There is recognition that preservation and development of public spaces is appropriate and beneficial to not only the quality of life for the Ridgway community but also as a sustainable and diverse economic development driver. However, the community will want to identify opportunity areas and strike a balance between these sometimes competing priorities.

III. GOALS, OBJECTIVES and ACTION ITEMS

GOAL 1 - EXISTING CONDITIONS

Understand and identify existing conditions for parks, trails, and open spaces within, surrounding and linking to the Town of Ridgway.

Objectives

1. Understand and identify needed trail linkages and recreation paths that provide integrated access to existing and future parks, open spaces, public facilities and schools within the Town.
2. Establish areas of environmental and cultural significance to be prioritized for conservation and preservation, including environmentally sensitive areas, view and wildlife corridors, riparian areas and wetlands, river corridor, natural filtration and storm water drainage areas, and other community-valued natural resources.
3. Identify community needs and desires to inform and prioritize new and expanded recreation facilities and amenities.

Action Items

1. Inventory and map existing parks, trails, open spaces, facilities and amenities, to understand linkages and gaps required for an effective interconnected system.
2. Evaluate the 2011 Land Use Map to understand sensitive areas, view corridors, wildlife corridors, riparian areas and wetlands, river corridor and setbacks, natural filtration and storm water drainage areas, and other community-valued natural resources. Utilize this map in the planning and development of parks, trails, open spaces, and facilities.
3. Create and distribute a local survey for the community to understand current use and demand for recreational facilities and amenities, and to identify priority infrastructure projects for development.

GOAL 2 – SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Implement mechanisms and opportunities for developing, constructing and acquiring, desired parks, trails, open spaces and facilities.

Objectives

1. Convey a clear and consistent message regarding community needs and desires for the development and/or preservation of parks, trails, open spaces and facilities.
2. Identify and share the economic benefits associated with the development and/or preservation of parks, trails, open spaces and facilities.
3. Establish an equitable basis for dedicating parks, trails, and open spaces associated with new and proposed development including annexations and subdivisions, with “payment in lieu” and land donation options for dedicated parks, trails, and open spaces that considers land values and park land development costs.
4. Provide for and encourage increased development density including compact, mixed uses when the development allows for the dedication of open space(s) that preserves sensitive areas, view and wildlife corridors, riparian areas and wetlands, river corridor, natural filtration and storm water drainage areas, and active consideration of other community-valued natural resources.
5. Preserve open spaces by understanding and investing in the rural economy.
6. Understand and participate in local and regional efforts outside of direct local government actions, and support public-private partnerships that further this goal of a sustainable future.
7. Involve the community in the preservation and care of existing facilities and amenities and support efforts to connect existing pathways and trails where appropriate.
8. Observe, monitor and respond to the Town’s growth and community demands for increased or improved services, including the functions and duties of Town personnel to insure efficient and effective operations.

Action Items

1. Establish and define sustainable development standards and guidelines for new development incorporating community values such as low-maintenance obligations, low-water irrigation systems, noxious weed management, long-term financing, tree and native plant preservation, and other good stewardship and conservation oriented standards. Development should clearly understand the requirements and benefits of developing parks, trails, open spaces and facilities. Development standards should be codified and include options and alternatives (payment-in-lieu, etc) for context appropriate development and competing demands. Guidelines should be clear and readily available to inform the process.

2. Develop a quick guide or small brochure containing facts and information for the community and future development regarding the economics associated with developing parks, trails and facilities and preserving open spaces.
3. To the extent feasible and possible with existing resources, apply new development standards to existing facilities and amenities (eg: installation of low-water irrigation systems in areas currently requiring hand-watering, etc.) and encourage the construction of trail connections.
4. Continue to pursue outside funding including grant opportunities to supplement efforts for the acquisition and development of desired facilities and amenities.
5. Consult the 2011 Land Use Plan, Land Use Map and the Parks, Trails and Open Spaces map to assist in evaluating development patterns and promoting appropriate development of parks, trails, open spaces and facilities, as well as priority connections.
6. Work with the Ouray County Land Use Department to identify, understand and support the rural economy including small-scale agriculture and farming operations and implementation of appropriate, context-sensitive land uses at the perimeter of the municipal boundary that contribute to a local and regional sustainability.
7. Support the local trails group(s) as appropriate with acquisitions of property and easements for trail development and expansion opportunities and that provide context appropriate linkages into existing and future trails.
8. Identify individual and group partners and organizations to implement community-involvement programs including an "Adopt A Park" program.
9. When appropriate, increase personnel resources including a Parks Department Supervisor/Director and explore the feasibility of a establishing a Special District.

GOAL 3. MAINTAIN AND SUSTAIN

Insure sustainable, long-term care and maintenance of existing and future Town parks, trails, open spaces and facilities.

Objectives

1. Insure new development understands and incorporates long-term management and financing in the planning and development process.
2. Insure community and town staff understanding of long-term maintenance and financing needs for safe and healthy parks, trails, open spaces and facilities, including urban forest management, appropriate noxious weed management to insure healthy and diverse indigenous and native plant populations and to nurture healthy native wildlife populations.
3. Continue monitoring and strive to understand and adapt to the dynamic natural environment and changing demands for healthy spaces.
4. Explore opportunities to create a diverse income portfolio for the acquisition, development and maintenance of parks, trails, and open space amenities and facilities.

Action Items

1. Inventory the Town's urban forest and implement priority management for these valuable assets, from hazard removal and mitigation to public outreach and education on proper tree care for trees in the rights-of-way adjoining private property, to planting for the future.
2. Adopt development regulations to incorporate long-term management and financing for new parks, trails, open spaces and facilities, including but not limited to the acquisition and/or dedication of irrigation and water rights when possible and feasible. These regulations should include low-maintenance priorities so as to keep future maintenance costs as low as possible and within reason for the Town.
3. Develop a quick guide to preferred trees, native plants and vegetation to inform new development and parks planning efforts for environmentally appropriate plantings and inclusive of low-water management demands.
4. Insure the Town Parks personnel understand, implement and monitor the Noxious Weed Management and Native Plant Restoration Master Plan, and update the Plan as appropriate to meet the changing demands of a dynamic environment.
5. Provide continuing education and training of parks staff to assess and care for existing flora and trees in public parks for health and longevity, and plant new flora and trees accordingly to insure long-term growth and healthy canopies.
6. Perform annual evaluations of public spaces and pay attention to fluctuations in the health of flora and urban forests, evaluating these changes over time, making adjustments as

appropriate in response to transformations in climate, environment, or other factors influencing the health of the flora.

7. Insure regular monitoring of existing and future infrastructure occur and that improvements needed for safe and attractive facilities are appropriately conveyed, budgeted and completed.
8. Offset maintenance costs through:
 - a. Pursuit of outside funding from the State of Colorado, private foundations, and trust funds
 - b. Supporting land trust partnerships and initiatives
 - c. Community and fundraising events (eg: parks appreciation)
 - d. Implementation of a sales tax, impact fee and/or user fee options. *User fees should be for private reserved events only (e.g.: weddings, soccer tournaments and practices, private use of the gazebos or pavilion, etc.). Otherwise, public spaces for general public use should be at no cost.*
 - e. Engage in the free market through the sale of parks related products, merchandising of specific goods, collecting a portion of the sale of public art pieces, and the establishment of formal donation opportunities through Region 10 Enterprise Zone Tax Credit opportunities, and others.
9. Identify individual and group partners and organizations to implement community-involvement programs including an “Adopt A Park” program.

GOAL 4 – QUALITY OF LIFE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Improve the quality of life for residents and visitors in the region through the development, management and care of parks, trails, open spaces and facilities and utilize these community-building improvements as economic drivers for the Town and the region.

Objectives

1. Understand community desires to capitalize and develop quality of life improvements.
2. Consistently market and promote parks, trails, and open spaces using diverse and various mechanisms for public outreach and education.
3. Identify and establish effective regional partnerships to address increasing demands.
4. Provide educational information and resources on the economic benefits of parks, trails and open spaces for property owners and developers.
5. Install appropriate and easy way-finding for residents, businesses and visitors.

Action Items

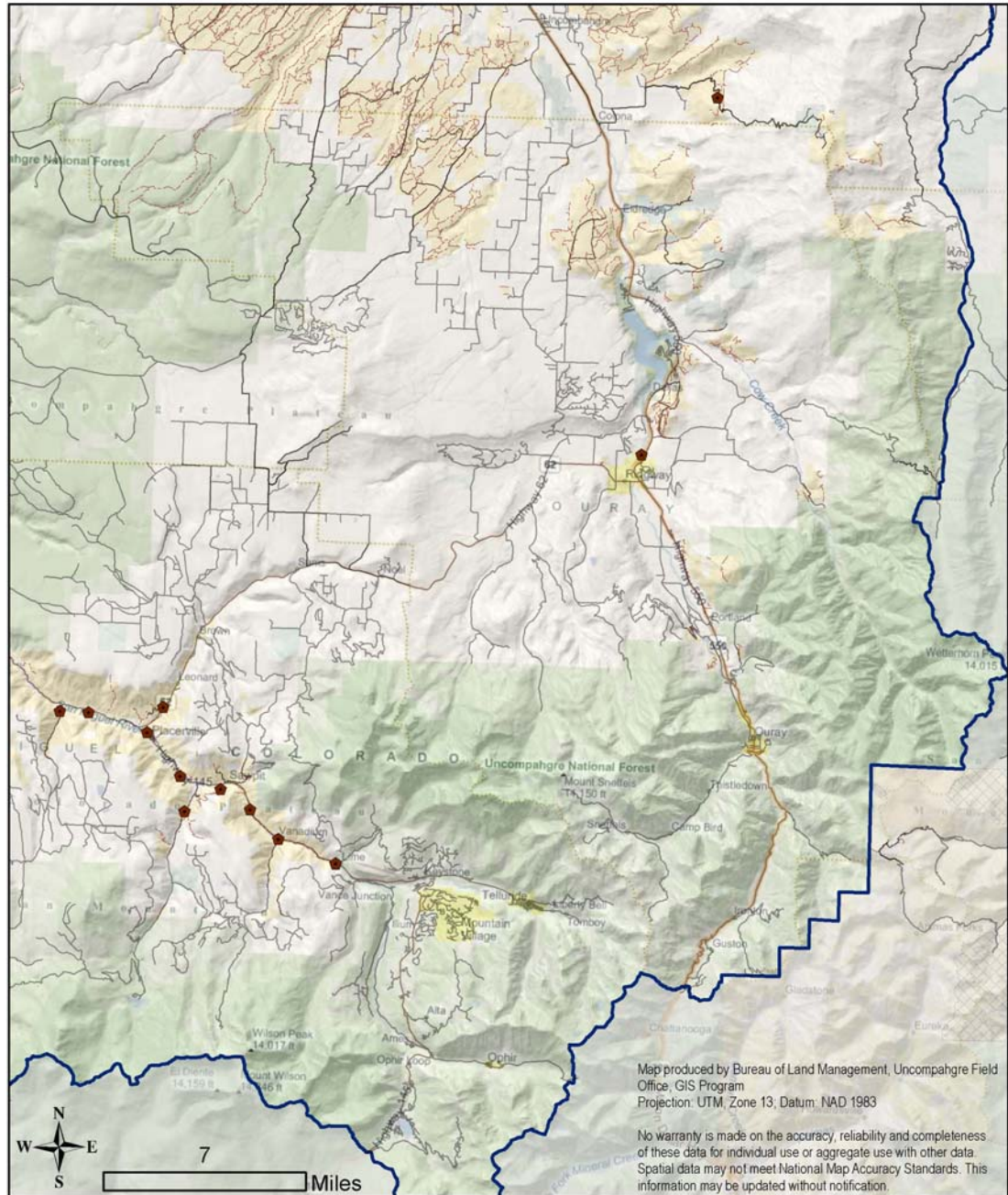
1. Continually survey the community through various mechanisms to understand priorities and needs for developing parks, trails, open spaces, and facilities.
2. Continue to orchestrate and promote community events and festivals.
3. Work with the Ridgway Area Chamber of Commerce, City of Ouray/Ouray Chamber Resort Association, Ridgway State Parks, Ridgway Area Trails Group, Bureau of Land Management, Forest Service, private enterprise and others to promote recreational facilities and amenities within the Town and throughout Ouray County, including the collaborative development of outreach materials and mapping.
4. Develop and distribute brochures, pamphlets and online resources that convey a consistent theme and message and include with all proposed development applications.
5. Create and make readily available throughout the Town a public parks and trails user map showing amenities and facilities within each park and existing connectivity within the Town and region. Maps and way-finding should be available at the Town gateways, public spaces, and private businesses.
6. Work with community residents and businesses to install appropriate signage and way-finding throughout the Town, targeting gateway areas such as Highways 550 and 62, the Uncompahgre RiverWay Trail, the Regional Athletic Field, Hartwell Park and Town Hall, and other local parks and trails locations. Involve the State Highway Department to the extent reasonable and feasible to locate and install way-finding along the state highways within the Town.

7. Continually monitor existing, changing resources and increasing demands and when appropriate, explore opportunities for the development of a regional Recreation Special District.

IV. EXHIBITS

A. Ouray County Map

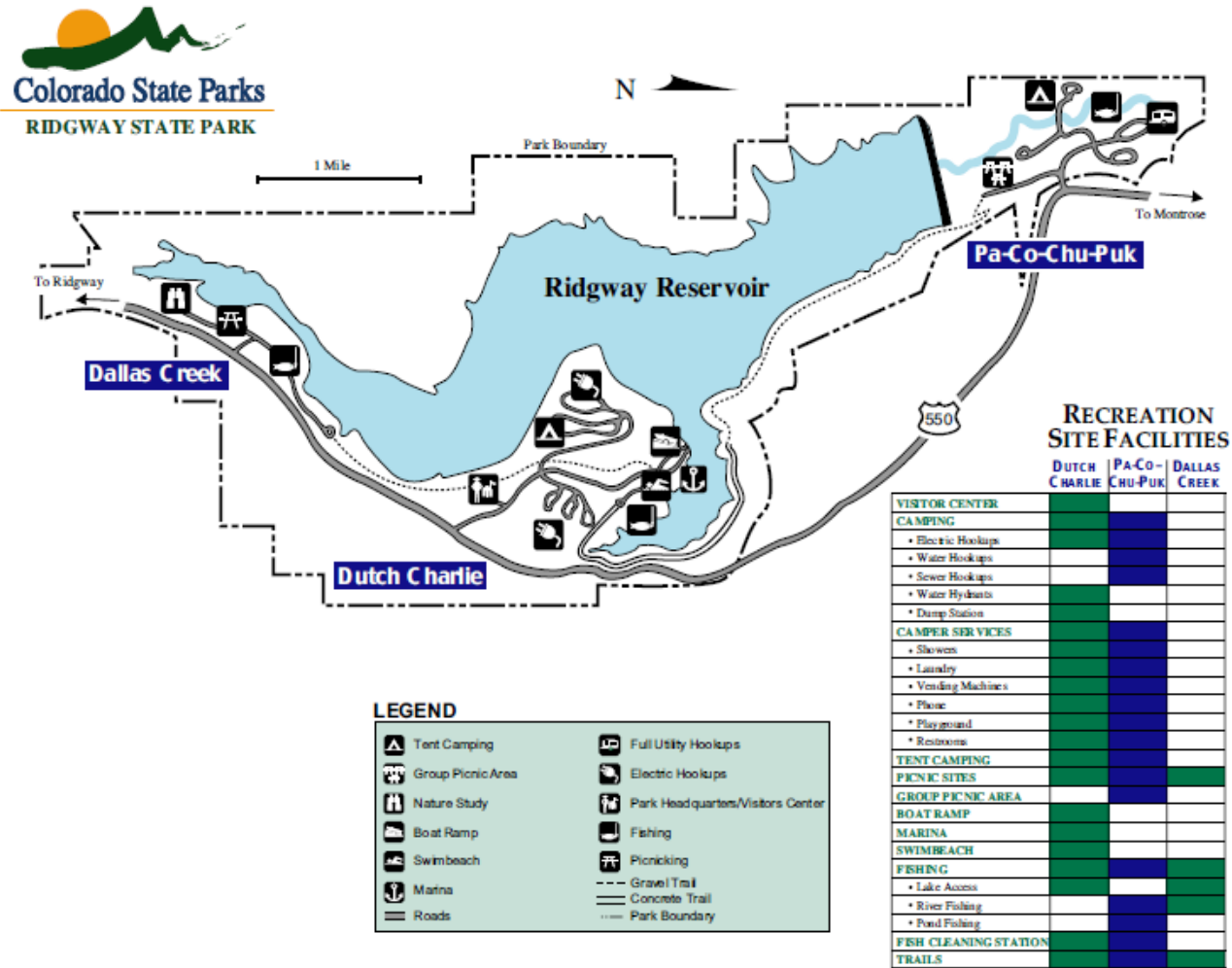
Ouray County Map



Legend

- | | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|
| Recreation Sites | Uncompahgre Field Office Boundary | National Park Service | US Forest Service |
| BLM Existing Routes | Bureau of Land Management | State | Private |
| County Roads | Bureau of Reclamation | State, County, or City Areas | |

B. Ridgway State Park Map¹³



¹³ Retrieved on October 10, 2011 from: <http://www.parks.state.co.us/parks/ridgway/Pages/RidgwayStateParkHome.aspx>

C. Informal Community Survey

Special use facilities and recreational facilities are intended to fulfill the specific needs of the Ridgway Community. Citizen input into this process is critical in determining additional needs and planning the implementation of future facilities. The Parks, Trails and Open Space Task Force developed the following list as a starting point for the discussion.

	Improvement	Priority Ranking
1.	Climbing Wall	
2.	Ice Skating Rink	
3.	Additional Soccer Field	
4.	Additional Tennis Courts	
5.	More Playground Areas	
6.	Aquatic Center	
7.	Recreation Center	
8.	Additional Baseball Fields	
9.	Amphitheatre/ Performing Arts Stage	
10.	Interactive Children's Park/ Places (music, art, etc.)	
11.	Connecting pedestrian and bicycle trail network	
12.	Climbing/ Bouldering Area	
13.	Community Gardens	
14.	Hiking and Biking Trails	
15.	Pump Track	
16.	Skate Park – Phase 3	

On October 20, 2011 the Town Council met with students at the Ridgway secondary school (grades 6-12) and distributed a brief questionnaire regarding desired facilities for the community. Students were provided a paper copy of the above list and were asked to rank their priorities and add desired facilities if they were not listed on the questionnaire. Here is a brief summary of the survey results:

Rather than trying to total up the "ranking" of each of the 18 improvements on each of the 166 responses the priorities are ranked by the number of times each one was identified as a number one priority. Here are the results based on this methodology:

1. Aquatic Center
2. Recreation Center
3. Amphitheater/Performing Arts Stage
4. Skate Park Phase 3
4. Climbing/Bouldering Area

The aquatic center got 40 first place votes and was identified as a number 1 or 2 priority on more than 70 of the responses (the recreation center received 27 #1s and 50 combined mentions as #1s or 2s). It is noted that if you were to combine the rankings of both the skating rink and the hockey rink this option would move up into the tie at #4 (and it moves up to #3 if you look at the total of #1 and 2 rankings). A number of responses identified multiple #1s so that is reflected in the totals and if a "ballot" used check

marks or an "x" that were interpreted as a #1 and each of those are also in the totals. Thanks to Doug Canright for compiling these results and who reported there were no "hanging chads".

Also mentioned and given at least a #1 or 2 priority were the following:

- volleyball courts
- a running track around the soccer field
- airsoft or paintball
- frisbee golf
- a sledding hill
- a shopping mall(!)
- paving town and/or county roads

D. Standards to Determine Needs of the Community

National Recreation and Park Association standards are commonly used as general guidelines when considering current and future park needs for a community. These standards should not become absolutes, but rather guidelines, as there will be many variables from one community to the next. The standards do, however, provide a useful benchmark for further analysis, and for formulation of more specific standards to be implemented within the Town's Municipal Code.

	Regional Park	Community Park	Neighborhood Park	Special Use Facilities
Group Served	Entire Community	Entire Community	Neighborhood	Entire Community
Area per 1,000 persons	7.5 acres per 1,000 (County-wide population)	6 acres per 1,000 persons	4 acres per 1,000 persons	Not Applicable
Service Area	Region	1-mile radius	¼ mile radius	Not Applicable
Desired Size	50+ acres	10-50 acres	2-10 acres	Depends upon Facility Type
Location	Should be centered around natural attractions such as lakes and rivers; pedestrian /bike trail and vehicular access; educational and cultural opportunities	Centralized; accessed by pedestrian / bike trail and vehicular access; flat areas for general recreation; scenic sites and natural features;	Near intensely developed areas; along recreation paths; dispersed throughout town; easy access for children;	Depends upon use of facility. Central location is desired, with compatibility to nearby uses
Facilities and Features	Wide diversity of uses and recreational features; open lands and natural areas; parking facilities and recreational trails; restroom facilities	Play apparatus and active athletic areas including multiple play fields; some natural areas for walking, picnics, and general recreation;	Playgrounds, waling paths, gardens, benches, turf areas. May include restrooms and shelters; limited parking	Swimming facilities; skate park; climbing walls; rinks; amphitheatres

E. Meeting Notes

AGENDA

Committee Meeting
Parks, Trails, and Open Spaces Plan

Tuesday, May 3, 2011

Ridgway Town Hall
5:30-7:30 PM

Committee Members: Deb Cokes, Deb Read, Deb Willits, Eric Johnson, Joe Ramsey, Kimah McCarty, Rich Durnan, Stephanie Wallin, Wade Parkinson, Jen Coates

- I. Introduction and Meeting Purpose
- II. Community Presentations
The presentations are limited to 10 minutes with 5 minute Q&A
 - a. Interactive Playgrounds - Kellie Day
 - b. Trail Construction in the Dennis Weaver Memorial Park - Rich Durnan
 - c. Public Art and Sundials – Jen Coates
- III. Review Draft Plan dated May 1, 2011
- IV. Meeting Schedule and Plan Completion Timeline
- V. Adjourn – 7:30 PM

MEETING NOTES
PARKS, TRAILS, OPEN SPACE MEETING #1
TUESDAY, JUNE 14TH
5:30 – 7:30 PM
RIDGWAY TOWN HALL

In Attendance: Jen Coates, Sara Ballantyne, Kimah McCarty, Eric Johnson, Rich Durnan, Doug Canright, Rick Weaver, and Paul Donegan

Sara Ballantyne is interested in developing a pump track somewhere in town for public use

- Could be placed at current BMX track, but may be temporary due to Fire Department plans for relocation
- Community interest is there according to a petition at the Peak to Peak bike shop (many are interested in helping build), developed by Sara
- Project could be completed with minimal funding: community involvement, town donation of land, and a design/construction donation from an individual in Telluride
- The committee discussed a more permanent location for the pump track in the undeveloped Green Street Park adjacent to the Parkside Subdivision and or the south side of the Regional Athletic Park
- The southern most end of the Athletic Park is a favorable due to proximity to parking and agglomeration of sporting opportunities, and some separation from the skate park
- The issues of accommodating space for the BMX park relocation, irrigation, and weed management were brought up

Review of Draft Map and Draft Plan dated June 9, 2011

- Committee reviewed and updated the vision statement for the Parks, Trails, and Open Spaces Plan, inclusive of a reference to the economic development component of the plan
- Review of the Parks and Recreation Map brought up need for more detail to provide more information about current uses in Athletic, Hartwell, and Rollans Parks
- Additional cycling trails were pointed out along east side of Uncompahgre River between River Sage, Eagle Hill, and behind the Secondary School; Jen will provide maps to the committee for editing to include other existing trails and linkages
- The idea of developing a town-wide Parks and Trails map similar to the Montrose Parks Map was suggested, which would be for distribution to tourists and to support economic development
- The Committee recommended adding a goal to promote the concept of economic development for recreational amenities, including both outdoors tourism and long term improvements that enhance quality of life (encouraging development of parks and trails with annexations and new development)
- The issue of how parks, trails, and open spaces would be integrated into new developments was raised and also maintenance and care of existing parks. It was recommended that information be developed and made available to developers about town parks needs and their economic benefits to development

The Committee agreed to the following meeting schedule, which will be posted on the Town Website. Meetings will be held on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 5:30-7:30PM at Town Hall, as follows:

- 🔗 **Meeting #1:** (June 14): Review of Plan Draft and prior recommendations - Schedule, Plan Outline/Review, Maps and Vision, and Review and Develop Goals and Objectives
- 🔗 **Meeting #2** (July 12): Review and Develop Goals and Objectives; review the updated map...
- 🔗 **Meeting #3** (August 9): Develop Action Plan – Goals 1 and 2 (*What is it that we want?*)
- 🔗 **Meeting #4** (Sept 13): Develop Action Plan – Goal 3 and 4 (*How to achieve needs/desires*)
- 🔗 **Meeting #5** (Oct 11): Develop Action Plan – Goal 5 and Other... (*Maintain and Monitor, and...?*)
- 🔗 **Meeting #6** (Nov 8): Finalize Plan
- 🔗 Present Plan to Planning Commission – **Nov 29, 2011**
- 🔗 Present Plan to Town Council – **Dec 14, 2011**

Follow Up:

Sara will work on documents to propose the pump track idea to the Town Council inclusive of a draft plan for the track, proposed locations, and public works staff resources desired.

The Committee will review and provide feedback to Jen including additional information on existing trails, etc. to update the draft map prior to the next meeting

The Committee will review the existing Goals and Objectives in preparation for discussion and finalization of the goals and objectives during the July 12th meeting.

PARKS, TRAILS, OPEN SPACE MEETING #2
MEETING NOTES
TUESDAY, JULY 12TH
5:30 – 7:30 PM
RIDGWAY TOWN HALL

Committee Members Present:

Stephanie Wallin, Sara Ballantyne, Rick Weaver, Doug Canright, Bryan Sampson, Jen Coates

The meeting was called to order at 5:40 PM.

- I. Quick Review of June Meeting
Jen provided a quick review of the June 14th committee meeting. Doug Canright commented that the discussion of an ice rink should be added to the meeting notes. Jen indicated that there will be additional opportunity for discussing the specific improvements recommended, and those improvements will be incorporated into the final plan element.
- II. Review Revised Map
Parks and amenities should be added to the map. Trails and sidewalks should be designated as such on the map. Private trails and public trails should be noted as well. The committee

agreed that some trails along private properties would be discussed in the plan, and that trail linkages surrounding the town should also be incorporated into the plan. Trails in the Dennis Weaver Memorial Park need updated.

III. Review and Develop Goals and Objectives

Goal 1 - remove long term management, financing and resource allocation; Local and regional trails should be included in the plan, identifying linkages outside of the town as well as within the town; Discern between existing and future improvements in the objectives.

Goal 2 – call out recreation facilities and amenities only; understand what we have and what we want; Rick expressed a need for a restroom facility in the Dennis Weaver Memorial Park

Goal 3 – Establish and define required standards (not acceptable); incorporate ‘parks, trails, and open space’ consistently throughout the document (ie: not just trails, not just parks, not just open space); incorporate maintenance planning and funding within the standards required for development; combine with Goal 4 (acquisition of parks, trails, and os)

Goal 4 – incorporate into Goal 3

Goal 5 – develop a plan to address Urban Forest Management, including long term care and maintenance; plant trees to replace aging ones; insure inclusion of management plans with new parks; include tree trimming and maintenance, and noxious weed management; be proactive with maintenance.

Goal 6 – incorporate economic development information; installation of signage for wayfinding; education of community and visitors; increased awareness of amenities.

The committee requested adding some concepts from the “Better Living Through Trails” presentation should be included in the economic development section of the plan.

IV. Meeting adjourned at 7:30 PM

Next Meeting – August 9th: Develop Action Plan for Goals 1 and 2

PARKS, TRAILS, OPEN SPACE MEETING #3

MEETING NOTES

TUESDAY, AUGUST 9TH

5:30 – 7:30 PM

RIDGWAY TOWN HALL

TO: PARKS, TRAILS AND OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE / PUBLIC PARTICIPANTS
FROM: JEN COATES
SUBJECT: MEETING #3: AGENDA AND OBJECTIVES
DATE: AUGUST 9TH, 2011
EST TIME: 2 HOURS

Committee Members: Stephanie Wallin, Randy Charrette, Bryan Sampson, Kimah McCarty, Doug Canright, Sara Ballantyne, Eric Johnson, Rich Durnan, Rick Weaver, Paul Donegan, Jen Coates

Attending: Rich, Rick, Eric, Brian, Jen, Doug, Deedee Decker

I. Discussion of Dog Park Opportunities – Deedee Decker

- owns 3 acres near Adobe Inn with river frontage
- looked at dog park in Cortez (fenced with gates, tables, shade, etc.)
- would like to donate her property to be used as a dog park

Discussion

- fencing and gates, amenities, water, irrigation?, access, parking

Follow-up

- get more info on parks in Cortez, Colorado Springs
- get more info on Decker parcel (actual location, configuration, adjacent properties)

II. Quick Review of July Meeting

III. Review and Finalize Updated Goals and Objectives

Committee was OK with current Goals & Objectives as revised by Jen

IV. Objectives (action plan) for Goal 1 and Review Revised Map

Discussion of current trails map

- still issues with configuration of some trails (Weaver existing and proposed, BLM)
- need more clarification of "public" vs "private" trails in and adjacent to Solar Ranch

Follow-up

- Rick and Doug to walk Weaver trails with gps to document actual configuration

Discussion of Goal #1 Objectives

- Eagle Hill HOA might be agreeable to connection from Eagle Hill roadway to Weaver Phase II trail loop
- Dallas Meadows HOA probably not receptive to connection to Weaver trails
- possible linkage across Angel Ridge to BLM
- possible linkage from Vista Terrace to Town

Follow-up

- Brian to check with CDOT on status of 550 access to Angel Ridge
- Rich will contact Sarah re Vista Terrace access

Discussion of online poll

- Rich might have time to work on this in the fall

V. Next Meeting – September 13th: Goal 2 objectives

VI. Adjourn – 7:30 PM

PARKS, TRAILS, OPEN SPACE MEETING #4
MEETING NOTES
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13TH
5:30 – 7:30 PM
RIDGWAY TOWN HALL

TO: PARKS, TRAILS AND OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE / PUBLIC PARTICIPANTS
FROM: JEN COATES
SUBJECT: MEETING #4: NOTES
DATE: SEPTEMBER 13TH, 2011
EST TIME: 2 HOURS

Committee Members: Stephanie Wallin, Randy Charrette, Bryan Sampson, Kimah McCarty, Doug Canright, Sara Ballantyne, Eric Johnson, Rich Durnan, Rick Weaver, Paul Donegan, Jen Coates

Attending: Stephanie Wallin, Rick Weaver, Rich Durnan, Eric Johnson, Doug Canright and Jen Coates

I. Report from Concert Committee on Stage Construction and Placement or Location in Hartwell Park – Rich Durnan

- general discussion about the need to maintain a parks committee after the PTOS component is completed.

Rich/Concert Committee report

- should the concert committee be formalized or be made a subcommittee of the PTOS committee?

- members moving forward with plans for a permanent stage in Hartwell Park and four locations are being considered:

1. just west of town hall

2. south of picnic pavilion and bathrooms
3. east of the True Grit along Lena
4. on the east side of the park after the Railroad realignment

- the committee currently has \$6K on hand for construction and is working on fundraisers for the fall and next spring.

- tax credits may be available for donations for stage construction

At this time the PTOS committee relocated to the park to look at and discuss the four locations. It was agreed that site number one was the best choice as this was convenient to the town hall facilities utilized by performers, the embankments adjacent to the post office could be used as seating and the playground and other portions of the south half of the park would not be impacted. The committee also felt that the possible impacts of the setting sun could be dealt with in the stage design.

II. Review of August Meeting

a. *Dog Park and Decker Property/ Access (Jen)*

- discussion of potential dog park on Decker parcel
 - timing of land transfer
 - need for access along north side for boat launching

b. *GPS of Weaver Trails (Doug and Rick)*

- existing River Sage trails
 - per Rich new trail almost complete
 - Doug and Rick to follow-up on GPS documentation

III. Goal 2: Objectives (action plan)

- discussion of objective #2. How would "standards be applied to existing facilities and amenities"?
- committee in agreement with other objectives as proposed

IV. Next Meeting – October 11th: Goal 3 Objectives, or...

- look at priorities from 2007 draft plan prior to this meeting
- Goals 3 and 4 objectives will be discussed.

V. Adjourn – 7:30 PM

PARKS, TRAILS, OPEN SPACE MEETING #5

MEETING NOTES

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 11TH

5:30 – 7:30 PM

RIDGWAY TOWN HALL

TO: PARKS, TRAILS AND OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE / PUBLIC PARTICIPANTS
FROM: JEN COATES
SUBJECT: MEETING #5: NOTES
DATE: OCTOBER 11TH, 2011
EST TIME: 2 HOURS

Committee Members: Stephanie Wallin, Randy Charrette, Bryan Sampson, Kimah McCarty, Doug Canright, Sara Ballantyne, Eric Johnson, Rich Durnan, Rick Weaver, Jen Coates

Attending: Stephanie Wallin, Doug Canright, Eric Johnson, Rich Durnan, Rick Weaver, Jen Coates

- I. Review of September 13th Meeting
 - c. *Feedback on priority amenities and facilities*
 - d. *Review of Goal 2 Objectives*

The committee discussed the structure and format of the goals and objectives, and determined some re-working of the goal, objective, action item format is appropriate. General comments include:

Goal 1 is existing circumstances
Goal 2 is future development and maintenance
Goal 3 is management and maintenance
Goal 4 is quality of life, community building and economic development

Regarding the survey completed by some community members and to be completed by students of the Ridgway High School, the committee would like to have a future survey in the plan as an action item but the "results" of the preliminary survey could be an addendum to the plan, which is periodically revisited

General discussion included:

- breaking out objectives and action items separately
- staffing for maintenance and operations of the expanded PTOS and facilities inventory
- the continued need for the PTOS committee as preliminary review and recommendation before Town Council action is requested
- special districts, fundraising, legal issues, etc.

- Rec center – the committee talked about options for a recreation center in Ridgway for the region and determined this would not be a stand alone goal, but that a Special District may be considered in the future.

The Committee also discussed how we can move forward without major budget commitments and identified the utilization of public/private partnerships (adopt-a-park, volunteers, CSU extension) as an opportunity for the Town.

Jen will re-work goals, objectives, and action items based on inputs today and the Committee will review again in November.

II. Goals 3 and 4: Objectives (action plan)

-Discussion of Goals 3 and 4 was wrapped into the overall goals, objectives, action items discussion above.

III. Next Meeting –

November 8th: Finalize Plan; Discussion of permanent Parks, Trails, OS Committee

The Committee discussed the need to have an additional meeting in December and then present the final plan to the Planning Commission in January and the Town Council in February 2012.

IV. Adjourn – 7:25 PM

PARKS, TRAILS, OPEN SPACE MEETING #6
MEETING NOTES
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 8TH
5:30 – 7:30 PM
RIDGWAY TOWN HALL

TO: PARKS, TRAILS AND OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE / PUBLIC PARTICIPANTS
FROM: JEN COATES
SUBJECT: MEETING #6: AGENDA AND OBJECTIVES
DATE: NOVEMBER 8TH, 2011
EST TIME: 2 HOURS

Committee Members: Stephanie Wallin, Randy Charrette, Bryan Sampson, Kimah McCarty, Doug Canright, Sara Ballantyne, Eric Johnson, Rich Durnan, Rick Weaver, Jen Coates

In attendance: Doug Canright, Brian Sampson, Rich Durnan, Rick Weaver, Eric Johnson, Jen Coates

I. Quick Review of October Meeting

e. Student survey on facilities

Discussion of recently completed PTOS public comment forms

-some forms were collected by PTOS committee members from the general public with additional forms filled out by Ridgway school students.

-Doug will compile results of these surveys and forward to Jen for review by the committee.

II. Finalize Goals, Objectives, and Action Items

-Jen presented revised goals and objective. After quick review committee found no issues but members will contact Jen with any comments prior to the next meeting

-plans documents now total about 50 pages including all maps, surveys, lists, appendices, etc.

-Jen will insert goals and objectives into plan prior to the next meeting.

Discussion of permanent stage

-CU architecture school may consider stage for design/build project. If this happens stage will not be built until 2013.

-delay of permanent stage may impact some events planned for 2012.

-fundraising going very well.

Discussion of possible action items for 2012 to include in the 2012 strategy - available funding may limit big ticket items, items to be considered:

- formal survey
- trail/park maps
- install signage
- dog park acquisition
- create adopt-a-park program
- additional planters
- apply for grants

The committee agreed on recommending to Council the following for 2012:

- Complete community survey as defined in plan
- Put together 'adopt a park' program
- Complete signage installation and mapping
- Pursue acquisition of property for dog park

The committee discussed the importance of consistency with branding of the parks, trails and open spaces

The committee expressed a desire for more parks signage (ie: Town entry sign on the RiverSage easement, Cottonwood, Hartwell and Athletic Field signage to be installed (signs are in the Public Works yard).

III. Review Revised Map

f. In-town/ out-of-town

The committee discussed the draft map and discussed the pros and cons of trying to identify all potential linkages within and adjacent to the Town. It was suggested that existing

pathways, parks and open spaces would be included in the map and where possible linkages and other features will be noted, concrete sidewalks removed, the aerial photo removed, the map will be simplified, and a separate layer of future trails will be created but not shown. The plan text will include guidance on linkages and future improvements. The committee expressed a desire to have a map for the public art sculptures in town.

IV. Next Meeting – December 13th: Review and Finalize Plan and Map; Discuss role of Committee into the future

g. January 31st – Present to Planning Commission

h. February 8th – Present to Town Council

The committee agreed that the standing committee needs to be diverse and broad with representation including a range of individuals: moms, students, Council, Ouray County resident(s), etc.

V. Adjourn – 7:30 PM

PARKS, TRAILS, OPEN SPACE MEETING #6
AGENDA AND MEETING OBJECTIVES
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 13TH
5:30 – 7:30 PM
RIDGWAY TOWN HALL

TO: PARKS, TRAILS AND OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE / PUBLIC PARTICIPANTS
FROM: JEN COATES
SUBJECT: MEETING #7: AGENDA AND OBJECTIVES
DATE: DECEMBER 13TH, 2011
EST TIME: 2.5 HOURS

Committee Members: Stephanie Wallin, Randy Charrette, Bryan Sampson, Kimah McCarty, Doug Canright, Sara Ballentyne, Eric Johnson, Rich Durnan, Rick Weaver, Jen Coates

Present – Joanne Fagan, Doug Canright, Jessi Marlatt (Plaindealer); Stephanie Wallin, Eric Johnson, Rich Durnan, Tyler Schultz, Sara Ballentyne, Jen Coates

I. **Proposal to construct bike trail in Cottonwood Park – Rod Fitzhugh**

Rod proposed trail construction from Lena to Mary in Cottonwood Creek primarily on the south side of the creek. The committee had some discussion of wetlands in the drainage. Joanne indicated there are certain criteria that need to be met and they may or may not be present. Tyler indicated that cutting into the slope may impact some trees in the park; Eric indicated support for walkthroughs in the spring. Tyler offered to flag some of the healthy

trees to avoid; Rod will give it some more thought and plan for a walkthrough with a plan in the spring with the Committee. Rich suggested potentially installing.

II. Urban Forest Management Discussion – Jen Coates and Tyler Schultz

Tyler discussed hazard mitigation and the ability to trim or remove trees and presented information to the committee about recent management and tree removal that has been completed in the street rights-of-way and town properties. Tyler posed the question to the committee about saving trees with structural defects and pruning/maintaining trees or removing them.

Cottonwood Creek –

Tyler discussed the large trees on the east side of Cottonwood Park with some structural defects at the base. Tyler indicated some of the stress is due to lack of water. Joanne indicated there is some water in the creek from Mary down to Lena from the non-potable water line. Tyler recommended managing the new sprouts to become the next good trees instead of having to plant so many new trees. Tyler recommended a tree inventory in GIS and CO Forest Service would be a resource to have this done. Tyler estimated loss of 30% of trees in the next 10 years. Upper foot of soil (mulching) will greatly benefit trees in the long run.

River Corridor – Rollans Park

Tyler recommended caring for new tree sprouts with small diameter fencing in this area as a number of the larger trees are in decline. The area sees a lot of browsing and could benefit from additional care.

Street Rights-of-Way

Tyler recommends mulching of trees in the rights-of-way as well, and pursuant to the Town's regulations encouraging adjoining property owners to care for and mulch the trees in rights-of-way. Tyler reported quite a bit of lighting damage in Town.

Dennis Weaver Memorial Park

Cottonwood tree down by the river is declining pretty quick. It could be pruned and kept (die-back at tips) or could be removed.

Discussion

Eric recommended pursuing an inventory of the trees in Town to understand the existing circumstances, and recommended re-plantings of trees for those that need to be removed in the near future and support with mulching and fencing. Eric also recommended educational component and outreach to community for maintaining the tree health.

Tyler recommended: International Society of Agriculture at Treesaregood.com and Isa.com. Tyler also suggested possibly passing an ordinance (Telluride since 1995, Lake City, Aspen, Delta, Grand Junction). American National Standards Institute (ANSI) has a guide for tree care and the ISA has small brochures to distribute to the community. TCIA has a small brochure on identifying hazard trees that could be distributed.

Eric recommended community workshops for tree management and tree care. Doug indicated the “Adopt a Park” program could also benefit from this training. Eric asked about a “Master Gardener” –style program for tree management. Tyler offered that he could assist with a similar program. Tyler recommended the Town work with the Forest Service in Montrose or Grand Junction.

Rich also recommended baseline inventory to understand the existing circumstances and development of criteria on development of criteria and suggested that if a tree can live an additional 10+ years then maintain it and plant a new tree, or ‘under-planting’. Rich also stressed the importance of public education and outreach.

Tyler stressed the right trees in the right spot. Tyler offered support to the Town for assisting with community outreach efforts.

Philosophy... if longer life (10+) years can be maintained, then maintain it and do or maintain under-planting.

Priorities – hazard management, inventory, outreach, parks, rights of way... (community outreach for trees in rights of way); Tree recommendations – outreach to utilities “don’t top trees”;

III. Quick Review of November Meeting

Discussion of final goals, objectives, action items

IV. Review Draft Plan

The committee reviewed the draft plan and commented on various components to update.

V. Upcoming Meetings

- i. January 31st – Present to Planning Commission*
- j. February 8th – Present to Town Council*

VI. Adjourn – 8:00 PM