

The background of the slide is a high-quality photograph of a natural landscape. It shows a deep valley with a river or stream winding through it. The surrounding hills and mountains are covered in dense, green forest. The lighting suggests a bright, sunny day, with some areas of the forest appearing slightly overexposed or washed out, creating a sense of depth and atmosphere. The overall tone is natural and serene.

# RECREATION AND TRAILS

10.1 Introduction

10.2 Current  
Conditions

10.3 Parks and Open  
Space

10.4 Trails

10.5 Camping and  
RV's

10.6 Funding and  
Partnerships

10.7 Goals and  
Strategies

## 10.1 Introduction

**G**unnison City's location in central Utah provides residents and visitors alike with abundant access to public lands and the great outdoors. This access supports local recreation, promotes interaction between the community and nature, and increases opportunities for a healthy lifestyle. Gunnison City can position itself to serve as a gateway to these natural areas and has the potential to support local tourism and a growing statewide outdoor recreation industry. This chapter will focus on the current conditions, vision, and improvements to Gunnison City's trails, public amenities, and open spaces within the city limits and surrounding areas.

Community input was gathered during two open houses held in October and November of 2018. Residents recorded goals, improvement ideas, concerns, and opportunities on large maps and paper surveys. This input added to a list of recreational assets and opportunities to guide the development of future trails, programs, and recreational opportunities in Gunnison City. Areas of focus included diversifying motorized and non-motorized local and regional trails, expanding and improving the Riverwalk trail system, and improving coordination with state and federal land management agencies. The

ideas are listed in the following goals:

1. Expand and improve existing motorized and non-motorized trail systems, trailheads, and connections.
2. Identify Gunnison City as a destination for outdoor recreation opportunities.
3. Create overnight recreational facilities within Gunnison City.

## 10.2 Current Conditions

**G**unnison City maintains a quality system of parks and recreational facilities for benefit of the community. This includes the Sanpitch Riverwalk and Gunnison Park, in addition to privately managed facilities such as the BMX park and remote controlled plane airfield. While these are well maintained and used facilities, public input indicated a desire to improve these community amenities.

Gunnison City residents have long enjoyed connections to local open space through a network of unofficial trails and paths linking town to adjacent public lands. There are many opportunities to formalize and improve access to local sites such as G Hill, as well as regional destinations such as the San Pitch Mountains, Sevier Bridge Reservoir, and Yuba State Park to the north; the Manti-La Sal National Forest, Twelve



Mile Canyon, and Chalk Cliffs to the east; the Pahvant Range of the Fishlake National Forest to the south; and the Valley Mountains to the west. These areas provide a myriad of motorized and non-motorized recreational opportunities, such as off highway vehicle touring, mountain biking, hiking, equestrian riding, geocaching, and rock climbing.

These trails are in need of formal adoption to improve maintenance and signage while reducing liability and potential user conflicts. Improved trailheads would increase capacity while reducing impacts to established trails and neighborhoods and provide better amenities for users such as restrooms and signage. Increased signage could improve trail recognition and formalize a trail system that can be advertised to attract tourism and improve safety.

## 10.3 Parks & Open Space

**P**arks give variety and needed recreational space to cities and neighborhoods. Gunnison Park offers a skate park, picnic areas, a large pavilion, historical cabin and markers, nine-hole disc golf course, and large amounts of multi-use open space. There are currently 3.7 acres of city maintained parks in Gunnison

City, not including the Riverwalk or G Hill area. Public surveys described a desire to increase the number of parks and maintain the high quality of existing parks in the city.

The primary request for new park facilities from residents was for the development of park facilities along the Riverwalk trail. A 5.2 acre site located along the river at 400 South between 100 East and 200 East has been suggested as a potential future park. Public feedback suggested the design of the park could provide both traditional park amenities such as fields and sports courts and complement the natural state of the riverside area. Wilderness parks seek to conserve the natural landscape by incorporating unpaved trails, exploration areas, native species, and opportunities for education about the natural world. Future community input and visioning should be conducted into the design of such facilities to incorporate local needs, culture, history, and amenities.

## 10.4 Trails

**L**ocal trails provide opportunities for residents to recreate, exercise, and explore the outdoors. Gunnison City has many opportunities to expand its current trail system to increase recreational

opportunities for its residents and visitors. Careful planning will be needed to design and implement a comprehensive trail system to accommodate various users' needs and establish partnerships to build, maintain, and manage those trails. As pressure on trails increases due to local population growth, trail activity participation, and tourism, Gunnison City should be proactive in developing new trails, maintaining existing trails, and building cooperative partnerships. The City should pursue the creation of a trail system with separation of users in order to reduce user conflicts, maintain safety, and improve the overall quality of the trail system. Increasing the accessibility and extent of the trail system will make Gunnison City more attractive and further its reputation of exemplary outdoor opportunities.

## *10.4.1 Non-Motorized Trails*

The natural landscape and geography of Gunnison City create many unique recreational opportunities for its residents. One challenge to improving the local trail system is the lack of public ownership of much of the land around Gunnison City. Significant portions of the land to the north and west of Gunnison City is managed by the School and Institutional Trust Land Administration (SITLA) who manages the land on behalf of the State of Utah to raise

funding for higher education facilities. Further beyond, the US Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and US Forest Service (USFS) administer federally-owned lands in much of the Sanpete County area. Comprehensive planning will be necessary to meet the regulatory requirements of these agencies and provide a complete trail system to serve all users' needs. This process should also explore opportunities for Gunnison City to develop trailheads to improve access of both local residents and visitors to local trails. Trailheads should include parking, hydration stations, restrooms, trash receptacles, and information signs and maps.

## *San Pitch Riverwalk Trail*

The Sanpitch Riverwalk Trail is the only paved non-motorized trail in Gunnison City. The trail is approximately one mile long and runs on the north bank of the Sanpitch River. The trail features exercise equipment spaced at intervals and access to the river. Strong community support was shown for the improvement and extension of the Riverwalk Trail to the east and west. Residents expressed interest in seeing the Riverwalk Trail extended to the Chalk Cliff area to the east and to the Farmer's Freeway and G Hill area to the west. The development of future trail should seek to create a comprehensive system that connects



to various neighborhoods throughout the city, city parks and destinations, schools, and links to regional trail systems. The City should develop a multi use system to accommodate all types of non-motorized uses, including families, children, cyclists, walkers, and others.

Residents also expressed interest in the following improvements to the Riverwalk Trail:

- 1.** The addition of lighting to improve safety along the trail. Any additional lighting should seek to limit the amount of nighttime glare to neighboring residences. Low maintenance solar lighting alternatives should be sought to reduce long term maintenance obligations.

- 2.** A larger supply of dog waste bags and trash cans at shorter intervals along the trail to help maintain water quality and reduce trash accumulation.

- 3.** The addition of interpretive signage along the Riverwalk Trail to provide information about native species, regional history, geology, etc.



*Figure 10.1: San Pitch Dragon mosaic*

## 10.4.2 Motorized Regional Trails

Off-Highway Vehicles (OHV) and All-Terrain Vehicles (ATV) provide opportunities for a wide demographic of people to access the outdoors with convenience and speed. The Gunnison area currently has several miles of unofficial regional trails that are well-known and well-used by local residents. Citizen input suggested a complete network of motorized trails to go around the town, with access to G Hill and the Chalk Cliffs. There is significant interest to better connect Gunnison City to the Arapeen Trail regional OHV trail system and Twelve Mile Pass located to the east of Gunnison City on BLM and USFS lands. Coordination with state and federal land management agencies will be necessary to facilitate the regional trail planning process. With the increased use of G Hill by local schools and residents, careful consideration should be taken when planning for future OHV trail use of the area to limit the threat of harm to non-motorized users and damaging the trail system and

G Hill area. A specific G Hill Area Plan may be explored to balance motorized access and safety in the G Hill area and see how this area fits into a regional OHV trail system.



*Figure 10.2: ATV trail use signage in 12-Mile Canyon*

Regional Motorized Trail System SWOT Analysis	
Strengths	Weaknesses
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Close proximity to state and federal public lands</li> <li>2. Broad community support to improve recreational facilities</li> <li>3. Strong working relationships between local institutions, residents, and business leaders</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lack of city ownership of close public lands and open space</li> <li>2. Lack of current facilities (restrooms, picnic tables, signage) to accommodate tourism and recreation.</li> <li>3. Lack of funding to improve facilities</li> </ol>
Opportunities	Threats
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Partnerships with recreation-based user groups to develop, adopt, and advertise local recreation amenities</li> <li>2. Partnerships with state and federal funding and planning grant opportunities</li> <li>3. Improvements to Sanpete County Class B &amp; D roads for OHV trail system</li> <li>4. Developing tourism marketing strategies with Sanpete County and Utah State tourism offices</li> <li>5. Stewardship and management partnerships with South Sanpete School District and local schools</li> <li>6. Formalizing Gunnison City Trail Committee</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lack of funding to purchase land and/or secure easements</li> <li>2. State and federal land management policies, priorities, or barriers</li> <li>3. Lack of resources for long term maintenance of facilities</li> </ol>



## *The G Hill Area*

G Hill, also known as Rocky Point, is among the most prominent physical landmarks in the community. The large “G” for Gunnison was whitewashed on the eastern face of the hill in the early 1930s and has become a prominent visual feature and point of pride. The “G” is painted by the freshman class at Gunnison Valley High School (GVHS) annually on “G Day” - a local day of service held each May, and the “G” is lit every year for homecoming in the fall. GVHS has a long tradition of ownership of G Hill and will continue to be a vital partner in its long term maintenance.

The area around G Hill has long been a popular recreation site for local hikers, runners, dog walkers, mountain bikers, and others. The area remains popular with OHV and motorcycle users as well. GVHS has also increased its use of the area as a training site for its athletic teams and physical education classes. Local K-12 schools have begun to explore opportunities to utilize G Hill as a way to teach local history, geology, ecology, and other topics in an outdoor class setting. The area currently has several different informal and unmaintained trails on and around the area. Additional users and a wider array of uses has put growing pressure on the area, and a plan to formalize and maintain

the area is necessary moving forward to maintain the character, safety, and pleasantness of G Hill.

Gunnison City residents provided significant input into how they would like to see G Hill developed in the future. The community appreciates the current condition and experiences on the Hill, but has shown a desire for improvements and increased amenities. Some of these suggestions include:

- » Permanent lighting for the “G” for regular celebrations, holidays, and community events.
- » Picnic tables or gathering places on the top of G Hill.
- » Improvement of existing trails and alignments, potential grading or more regular maintenance on major routes.
- » A designated and signed trail system that separates motorized and non-motorized uses.



*Figure 10.3: G Hill road*

- » Improved trailhead facilities with bathrooms, water, maps, trash cans, etc.
- » Monuments or other memorials of community value.
- » Interpretive signing to education users on the scientific, historic, cultural, and natural elements of the area.

Since G Hill has a multitude of users, plans should be made to accommodate the community as a whole. Trails should designate user groups for a particular trail as to prevent user conflict and increase the serenity and scenic value of the area without sacrificing personal solitude and quiet. Trail designation should also be used to prevent the accelerated erosion of the area due to inappropriate uses on the hill. Furthermore, G Hill provides a unique opportunity to act as a trailhead that would link residents and downtown business directly with a regional motorized trail complex.

## 10.5 Camping & RV's

Gunnison can explore opportunities to provide a wider range of accommodation to support local tourism and recreation activities. Overnight recreation provides significant economic benefits to communities who can provide amenities and supplies to visitors, such as fuel, gear, food, entertainment, and lodging. Two simple ways identified by the public to

increase Gunnison Cities accommodation capacity include the development of camping and RV facilities. These facilities would allow visitors to spend more time exploring trails and recreational opportunities around Gunnison City while supporting local businesses. The City should explore locations, zoning ordinances, and development alternatives for local businesses to develop such facilities that would provide the necessary amenities, such as RV hookups, dumping stations, shower facilities, etc. Connections to the trail system should be heavily considered when locating potential facilities to reduce congestion in established neighborhoods and increase the attractiveness of Gunnison City's recreational opportunities.



Figure 10.4: Manti-Lasal National Forest entrance

## 10.6 Funding and Partnerships

### *10.6.1 Funding Sources*

There are many funding and partnership opportunities to develop future trails, camping areas, trailheads, and other recreational amenities. Local, state, federal, and nonprofit grants and support programs are available to provide initial funds, technical support, best practices, or long term maintenance agreements for outdoor recreation facilities. Gunnison City should seek out grants and assistance programs to increase its capacity to develop and maintain such facilities. Potential grant sources include the following programs:

**Utah Outdoor Recreation Grant:** This grant funds the construction of outdoor recreation facilities such as trails, trailheads, campgrounds, etc. that promote tourism opportunities throughout Utah. The grant expanded in 2018 with additional funding from the Transient Room Tax and provides an estimated four million dollars in annual grants. Communities can work with their local tourism offices to apply. This is a 50-50 matching grant.

**Recreational Trails Program (RTP) Grant:** The RTP grant is funded through the federal highways gas tax and provides funding to support motorized and non-motorized trail projects. The grant will support the

purchase of easements or property for trail development, the purchase of trail building tools, signs, amenities, and trail construction. It is a matching grant program. The grant is administered in Utah by Utah State Parks.

**Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF):** LWCF is funded through royalties from gas and mineral extraction on federal public lands. This grant supports the purchase of land for or development of outdoor recreation facilities, such as city parks, playgrounds, sports fields, etc.

### *10.6.2 Partnerships*

Government partnerships provide opportunities to learn best practices, leverage support, and develop long-term maintenance plans for recreational sites and areas in and around Gunnison City. Such partnerships could provide funding, technical support, and resources for future development and improvements. Potential partner agencies include:

- » Sanpete County
- » Utah Department of Tourism
- » Utah Division of Forestry, Fire, and State Lands



- » Utah Office of Outdoor Recreation
- » Utah State Historic Preservation Office
- » Utah School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration (SITLA) – Richfield Office
- » Utah State Parks Off Highway Vehicle Program
- » US Bureau of Land Management – Richfield Field Office
- » US Forest Service – Sanpete Ranger District
- » US National Park Service – Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance (RTCA) Program

- » American Hiking Society
- » Backcountry Horsemen of Utah
- » Center for Outdoor Ethics
- » International Mountain Bicycling Association
- » Trails Utah
- » Utah High School Cycling League
- » Utah ATV Association

Nonprofit organizations and groups provide excellent resources from specific user groups with extensive knowledge and experience. These groups focus on availability and quality of the resources for these activities and can provide the necessary support for future plans for Gunnison City's recreation. This support can come in the form of maintenance, awareness, monetary support, and advocacy. Nonprofit groups are ideal partners in assisting in the success of Gunnison City recreation and for the surrounding area. Some potential partners include:

## 10.7 Goals and Strategies

1. Expand and improve existing motorized and non-motorized trail systems, trailheads, and connections.
2. Identify Gunnison City as a destination for outdoor recreation opportunities.
3. Create overnight recreational facilities within Gunnison City.

Goal 1: Expand and improve existing motorized and non-motorized trail systems, trailheads, and connections.

## Strategies

» Complete a G Hill Area Plan to define recreational opportunities, trailhead improvements, stewardship needs, and funding opportunities.

» Establish a Gunnison City Trails Advisory Committee to organize citizen input and support city efforts in developing and maintaining a regional trail system.

» Expand the Sanpitch Riverwalk to connect to regional recreational amenities such as G Hill and the Chalk Cliffs.

» Strengthen partnerships through agreements with the BLM, SITLA, and Sanpete County to expand the regional OHV trail system and connect it with existing trail.



Goal 2: Identify Gunnison City as a destination for outdoor recreation opportunities.

## Strategies

» Create branding materials to identify Gunnison as a destination and launching point for outdoor recreation activities.

» Coordinate with local businesses to support the needs of the outdoor recreation community visiting Gunnison City.

» Work with the Utah Office of Tourism, Sanpete County, and other agencies to promote tourism opportunities in Gunnison City.

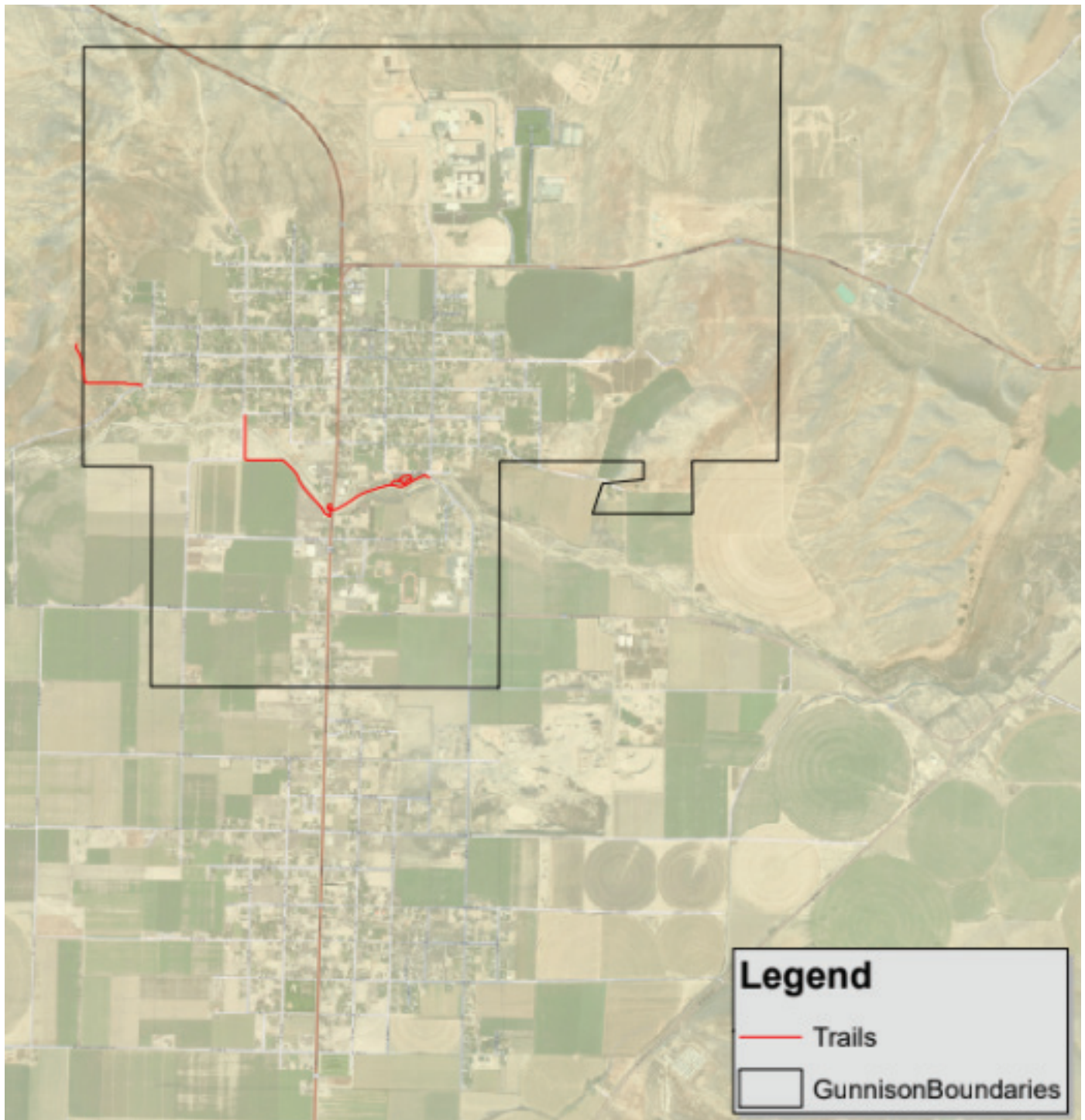
## Goal 3: Create overnight recreational facilities within Gunnison City.

### Strategies

» Identify suitable locations for potential outdoor recreation accommodation facilities, such as campgrounds and RV parks.

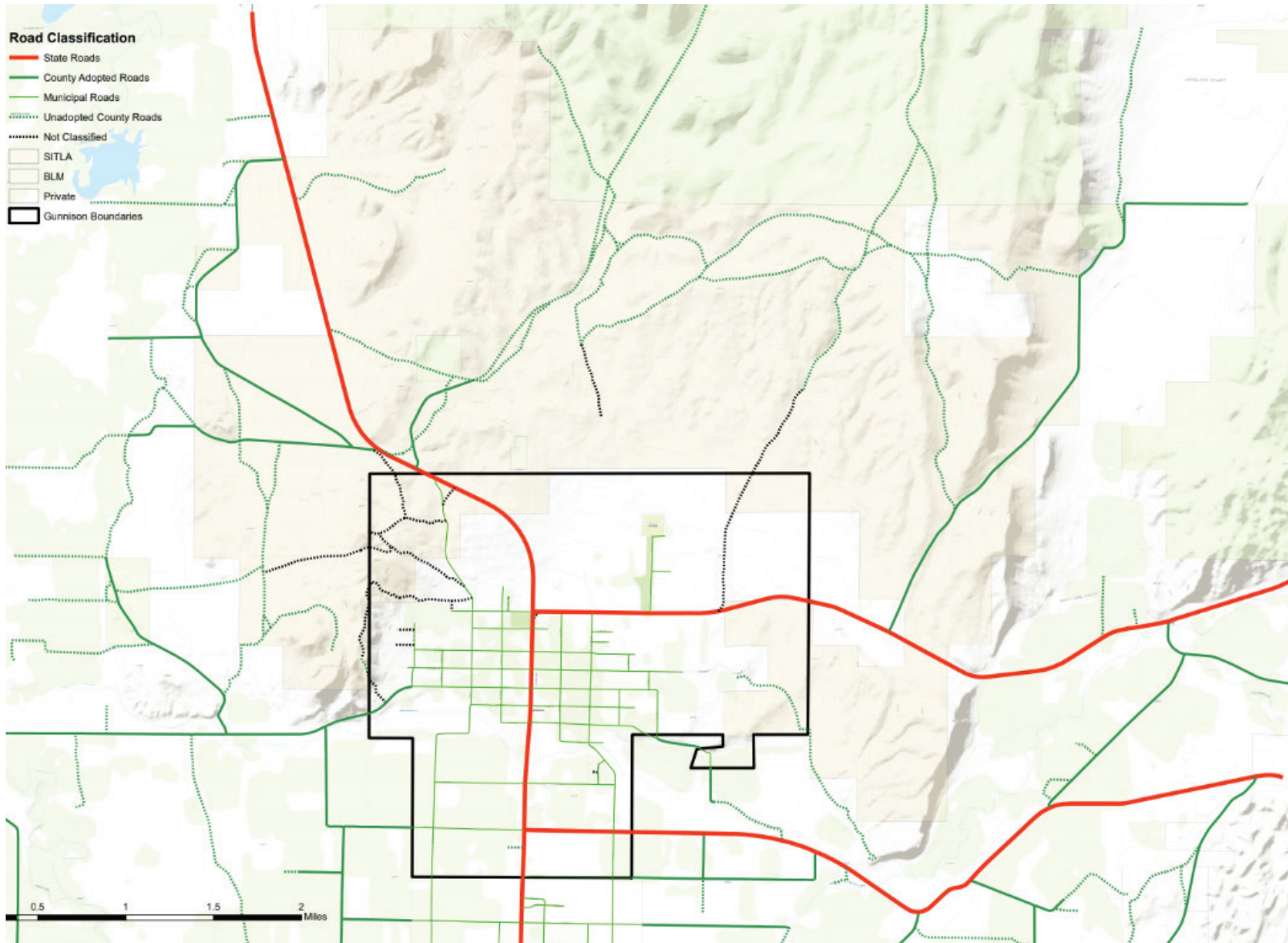
» Update land use policies and ordinances to support the development of overnight accommodation facilities and recreational vehicles in Gunnison City.

*Map 10-1: Current Trails in Gunnison City*

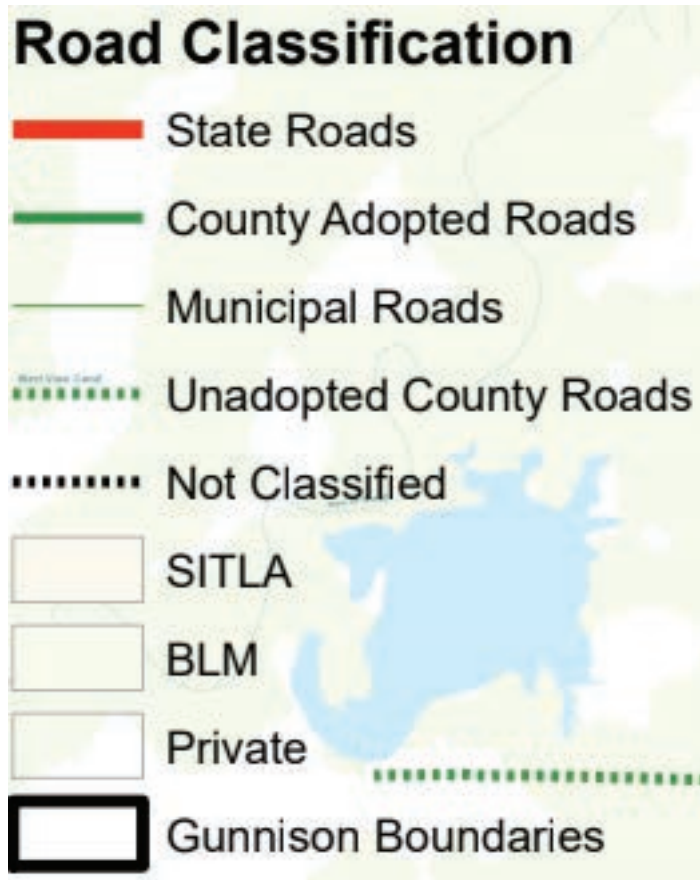




*Map 10-2: Road Classifications in Gunnison City*



## *Legend:*















# ANNEXATION

A photograph of a desert landscape. In the foreground, there are green and brown shrubs. In the middle ground, a hillside is covered in similar vegetation. On a higher, more exposed part of the hill, a large white letter 'G' is painted. The background shows more hills under a clear blue sky.

11.1 Overview

11.2 Guiding Principles  
& Community Input

11.3 Goals & Strategies

11.4 Maps

## 11.1 Overview

**A**nnexation plans prepare for growth by identifying suitable areas for growth to occur. The plan outlines an ideal direction for future growth. Typically specific annexations are proposed only when a landowner approaches the city desiring to have their property annexed by the city. Upon receiving an annexation request, the city then makes an annexation policy plan according to Utah state code 10-2-401.5, whereby affected entities are notified and the property is evaluated for suitability. Refer to Appendix A for the state requirements for an annexation policy plan.

According to the U.S. Census, Gunnison City had a population of 1,776 in 2010

(without the Central Utah Correctional Facility). Based on Census growth rates, the estimated population in 2017 was 2,028. Population forecasts indicate that the number of people in Gunnison City will be approximately 2,256 by 2030 and will reach 2,495 by 2040. If the population continues to grow at its current rate, then there will be about 467 more people by 2040 than currently live in Gunnison City, growing at a rate of about 20 people per year. The 2010 US Census data reported that the average household size in Gunnison City is 3.07 people. With these data, approximately six houses will need to be built each year to accommodate growth. To prepare for this growth, annexation policies and plans need to be in place.

---

## 11.2 Principles & Community Input

**D**evelopment should first be encouraged within current city boundaries to fully utilize existing infrastructure. Annexations should only be approved based upon an overwhelming benefit to the community as a whole. Usually, landowners initiate the annexation process, but in instances where there are islands or peninsulas of unincorporated land surrounded by

incorporated land, the city may initiate an annexation proposal process. Annexations should be made only when the City has sufficient resources to provide public facilities to newly annexed land. When an annexation is made, the City should zone the property to match the current use until there is a need to change the designation. The Planning and Zoning Board and City Council noted that Gunnison City

is surrounded mostly by Centerfield to the south and undevelopable land on the other sides. Through public hearings and meetings, potential annexation areas were identified. One area identified was located northeast of current Gunnison City boundaries that has existing residences that are already receiving some public services from Gunnison City. This area could potentially be annexed in the future. Another area identified was an extension of existing Gunnison City boundaries along Highway 89, northwest of Gunnison City. Although this area has some steep terrain, given its proximity and accessibility to the main highway it could potentially lead to further development and increased economic opportunities for the City.

Currently, the G Hill is outside of city boundaries. If this area was annexed, the City could manage the maintenance of this area more fully. The areas of east and west of Gunnison City are primarily in flood plain zones, thus, making these areas a less ideal location to annex. The planned annexation areas are shown on Map 11-1.





## 11.3 Goals and Strategies

1. Prepare for long-term growth by planning to extend city services to specific future growth areas.
2. Plan for future annexations outside of city boundaries by guiding growth within city boundaries.

Goal 1: Prepare for long-term growth by planning to extend city services to specific future growth areas.

## Strategies

» Inventory public services that are being extended to properties outside of city boundaries.

» Identify public infrastructure that is near capacity and make plans to upgrade those systems to accommodate future annexations.

» Evaluate annexation proposals to determine if the City has sufficient resources to supply public services to the newly annexed areas.



Goal 2: Plan for future annexations outside of city boundaries by guiding growth within city boundaries.

## Strategies

» Guide growth within current city boundaries in the direction of potential annexation areas. Public infrastructure will follow this guided growth.

» Encourage developments along existing corridors of public infrastructure, slowly extending outward into annexation areas.

**Annexation Area**

The map displays the Gunnison City Boundary (yellow), the Annexation Area (yellow with diagonal lines), and the Centerfield City Boundary (gray). Key streets include S Highway 28, N Main St, E Highway 89, W Center St, E Center St, W Bulldog Blvd, and S Dairy Rd. Landmarks such as Gunnison Cemetery and Axtell Cemetery are also shown. A scale bar indicates distances from 0 to 1 mile, and a north arrow is present in the top right corner.

Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community









