# Gunnison Rising

Concept Plan | October 2018

Authentic Community // Gunnison Colorado

# A New Vision

Early in 2018, Gunnison Valley Properties (GVP), the owners of Gunnison Rising, decided it was time to take a fresh look at the master plan for the 633-acre site in East Gunnison. A valley-wide vision, called One Valley Prosperity, had just been completed and Gunnison residents were thinking big about their future. The time was right for a new vision for Gunnison Rising also.

GVP had a strong desire to produce a new, forward-thinking plan in partnership with local leaders from the City, County and Western State Colorado University. Leadership at the City, County and Western recognized this as a unique opportunity to help shape the long-term future of their community. They unanimously agreed to partner on a joint Conceptual Planning process, including contributing towards a portion of the planning costs.

The Project Partners, as the 4-party group was called, met over 8 months to define shared project goals and development priorities, identify major catalyst projects, and strategize on overcoming obstacles. This Concept Plan is a summary of that shared effort and vision. The Concept Plan is intended to inform the next phase of work in which GVP will seek progressive changes to the existing Planned Unit Development (PUD) through a formal City process. The Concept Plan will also be provided as input into the upcoming city-led Comprehensive Plan process in Gunnison.

# Once in a Lifetime Opportunity

Gunnison Rising presents a once in a lifetime opportunity to help shape the future of the entire Gunnison Valley. Rarely is there an opportunity to craft a shared vision for an area this large, well-positioned for success and with such natural beauty. This plan represents a blueprint for the long term prosperity for the entire community.

## Shared Goals

- A logical and smart plan for Gunnison's future growth
- Walkable neighborhoods with safe streets, trails and parks in all directions
- Housing for locals, newcomers and the Western community
- Strong connections to and integration with downtown and Western
- A State Park on the 458 acres surrounding Tomichi Creek sold at discount to the State by GVP
- Trail connections from Signal Peak to Hartmans Rocks through Gunnison Rising
- Preserved ridge lines for trails, open space and lookout points
- A Maker District to support local entrepreneurs and business growth
- A year-round events center with conference space and the possibility of a new and expanded rodeo grounds to showcase Gunnison's cultural heritage
- A multi-agency government office campus at the gateway to the new State Park

"Make no little plans; they have no magic to stir men's blood and probably themselves will not be realized. Make big plans; aim high in hope and work, remembering that a noble, logical diagram once recorded will never die, but long after we are gone be a living thing, asserting itself with ever-growing insistency."
*– Daniel Burnham, architect and urban planner*

# A Brief History

## In the Beginning...

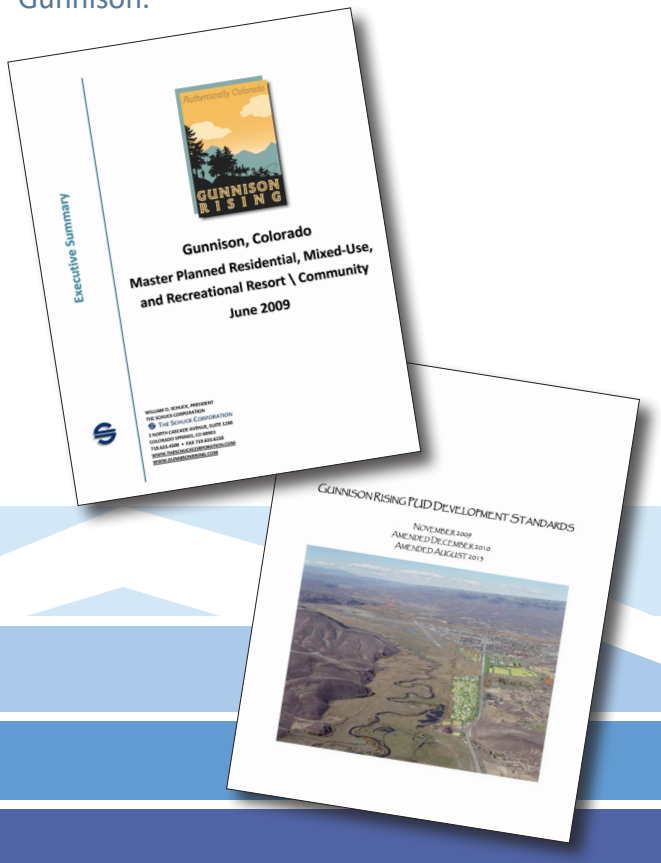
In 2009, the City of Gunnison approved a plan for Gunnison Rising and annexed the 633-acre area into the city limits. The plan and development regulations are laid out in a set of Planned Unit Development (PUD) regulations and an Annexation Agreement. Not long after City approval, the Great Recession stalled the development of Gunnison Rising.

## An Opportunity for a New Approach

### Infeasible Infrastructure Costs

Even if the Recession had not put the original project on hold, the Annexation Agreement likely would have. It requires the land owner to pay for any and all public infrastructure costs associated with the development. The cost to build all roads, parks, sewer and water lines are simply too high for the private sector to feasibly pay in order to develop the plan.

The idea that development should "pay its own way" sounds appealing, but that is not how American cities have ever been built. It has always been a partnership between the public and the private sector. Neither one can do the expensive work of city-building alone. The Project Partners recognize the need for fairness and collaboration when it comes to paying for the infrastructure to support the community's future growth. This commitment to collaboration and willingness to partner on solutions will be a key to the success of this project - and to the long term prosperity of Gunnison.




### Planning for the Future, Not the Past

The old plan for Gunnison Rising includes mostly single family homes, "big box" commercial and office parks. This type of disconnected, auto-oriented development pattern has fallen out of favor with Millennials and Baby Boomers - the largest and fastest growing segments of the housing and retail market. What is desired today are walkable neighborhoods with housing options for a wide range of people, great outdoor amenities like parks and trails, small neighborhood schools and local businesses within a short walk from home. In short, neighborhoods the way we used to build them.

### Back to Basics: Traditional Neighborhood Design

The Planning Partners agreed that the new plan should create new neighborhoods that were safe, walkable, interesting, family-friendly places that include a wide range of housing options. This should be an authentic and vibrant extension of the community, rather than an island. In other words, the tried and true principles of traditional neighborhood design.

# Design & Development Principles

## Traditional Design

Design neighborhoods like we used to, with a traditional gridded block structure, sidewalks, street trees, buildings facing the street, front porches – the elements that support a strong sense of community.

## Walkable & Connected

Safe neighborhood walking streets and lively sidewalks in the neighborhood centers. A strong, walkable and bikeable connection to downtown with a great Georgia Avenue design. A system of trails that runs throughout the neighborhoods, connecting all residents to parks and nature.

## A Vibrant Place

An exciting mix of catalyst projects and amenities for the entire city, including community gathering places, hiking and biking trails, creative spaces for local entrepreneurs, small neighborhood shops and regional destinations such as a year-round conference center with a new, expanded rodeo grounds.

# Design & Development Principles

## Broad Housing Options

Gunnison's historic neighborhoods serve as a model for the new neighborhoods in Gunnison Rising because they have housing options for the entire community: families, singles, college students, and retirees. Walkable neighborhoods with housing options, including workforce housing, and quality design are a cornerstone of Gunnison Rising.

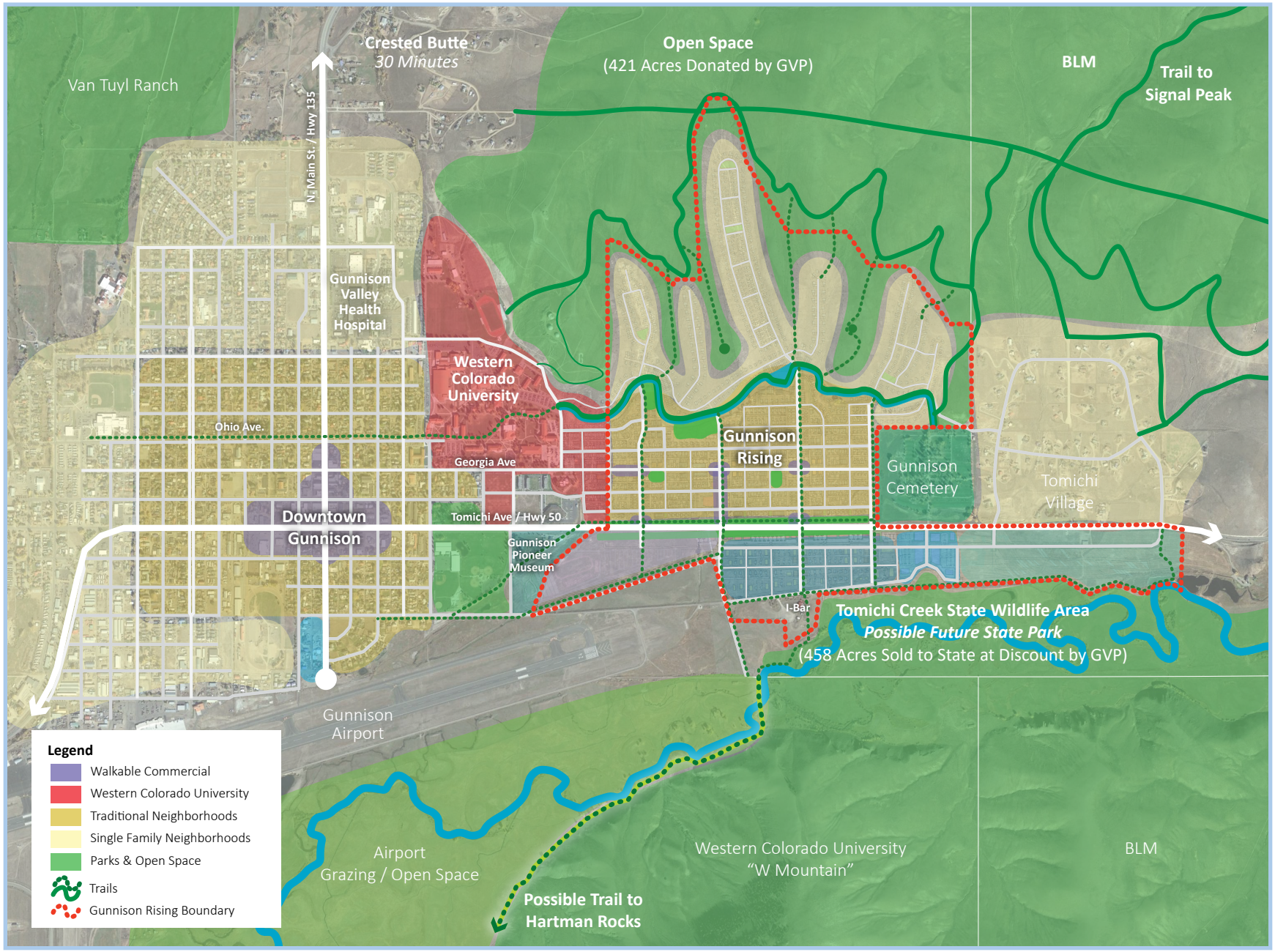
## Integrated Open Space

Whether strolling with your family to an evening movie in the park, mounting up on bikes to tackle Hartmans Rocks, or casting your fly rod on Tomichi Creek, Gunnison Rising is designed to maximize the outdoor lifestyle Gunnison has to offer. The plan brings nature to your front door with large regional parks, vista viewpoints and small pocket parks within a 5-minute walk of every home. Trails connect to the great outdoors that surround Gunnison Rising: the new Signal Peak trail system to the north, a future trail connection south to Hartmans Rocks Mountain Bike Park, and into a future Tomichi Creek State Park, with endless fishing, hiking and cross-country skiing opportunities.

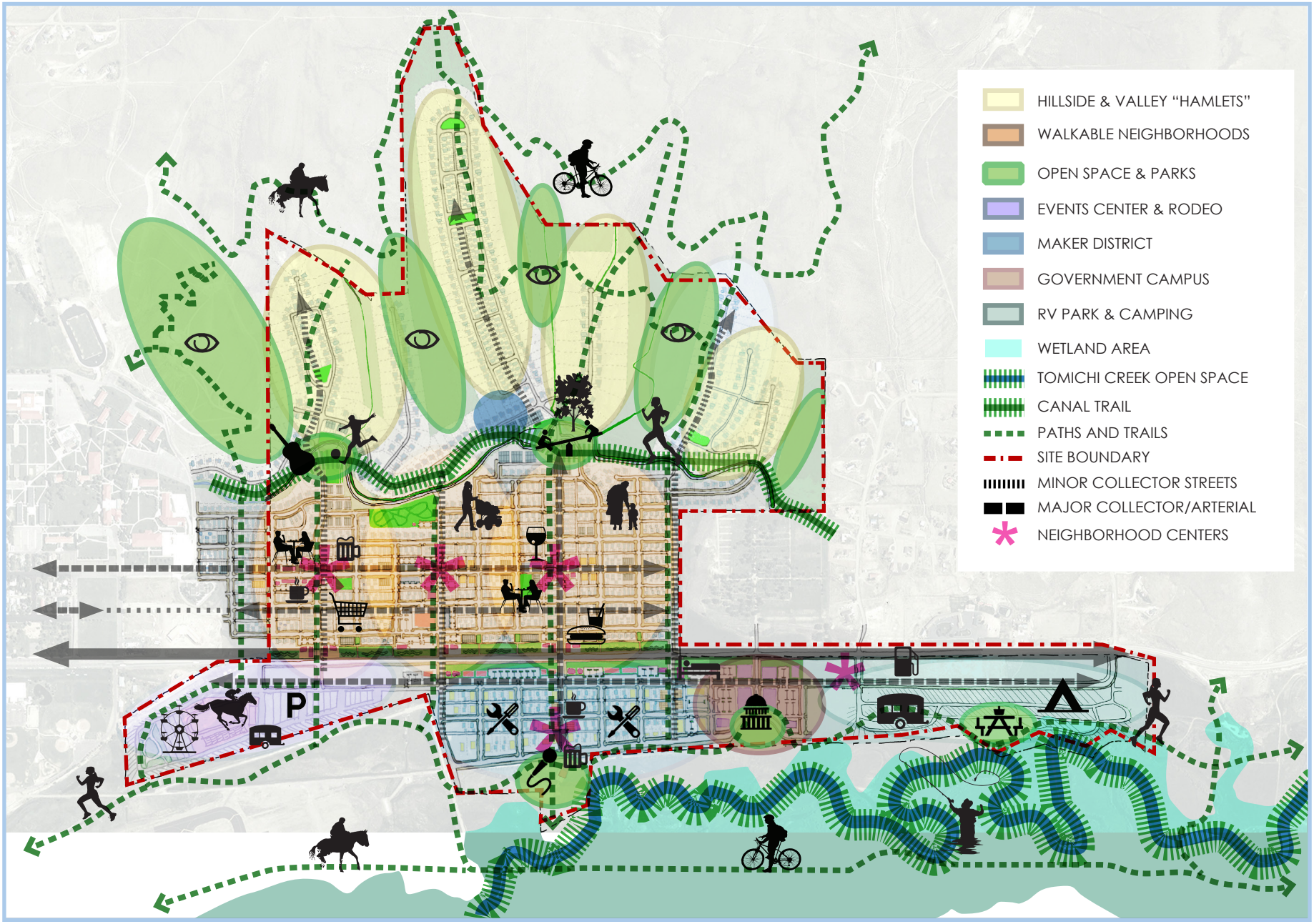
## Financial Feasibility & Resiliency

A project of this scale and quality requires a design that draws people in, careful phasing, and a strong partnership between the public and private sectors, including infrastructure financing tools and a fair sharing of the public infrastructure costs. GVP, the City, County and Western have demonstrated an extraordinary level of commitment to build something truly special together.

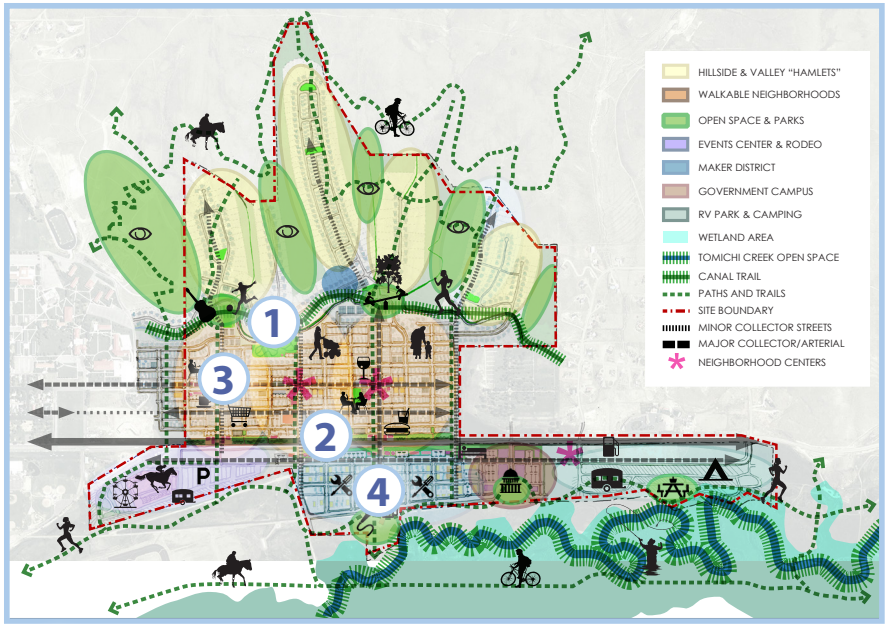
# Conceptual Design - In Context



# Conceptual Design



# Big Ideas

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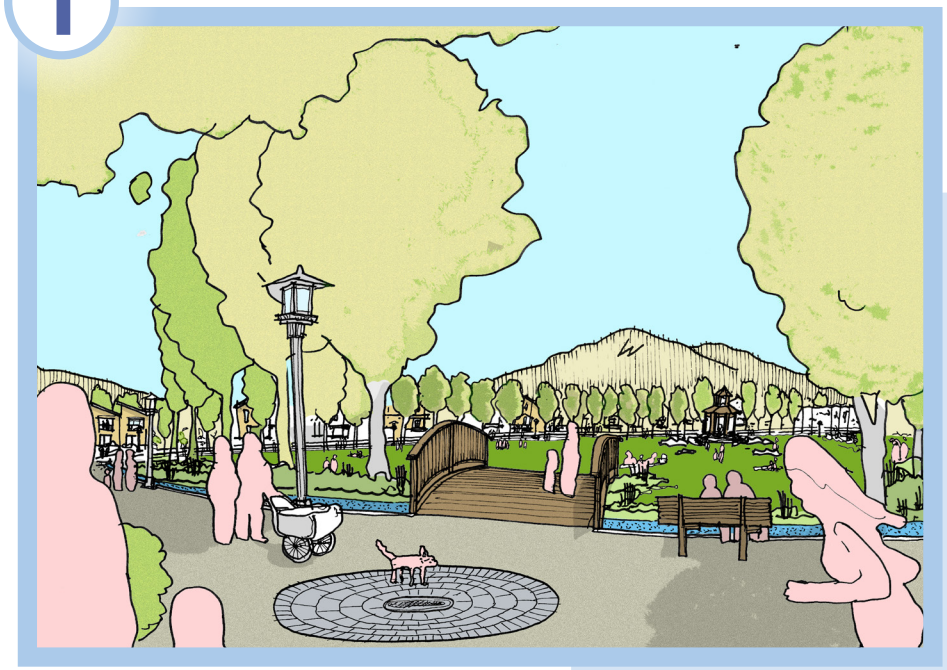


## The Canal Trail

The irrigation canal will be enhanced to serve as a central pedestrian and recreational spine - connecting all neighborhoods of Gunnison Rising to parks, trails, Western and into downtown Gunnison.

## Gateway to Town

The plan seeks to avoid long stretches of highway commercial along Tomichi Ave / Hwy 50 by limiting commercial frontage to 3 primary intersections. In between these intersections landscaped berms, with ranch-style pole fencing, landscaping and trails will line the highway. Gateway features at these intersections will help strengthen the identity of the community.

# Big Ideas

## The Barn

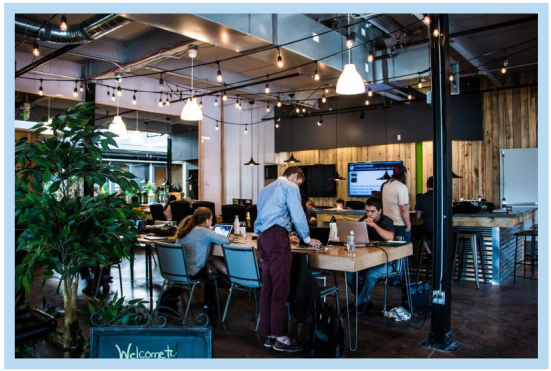
A community gathering place, cafe, bar, food hall and marketplace. A vibrant space supporting entrepreneurs and businesses with creative offices and flexible work space. Pole barn design with garage doors that open onto a small plaza.

Rayback Collective // Boulder, CO

The Lot // Bend, OR

Tahoe Mill Collective // Tahoe, CA

Thrive Workspace // Denver, CO



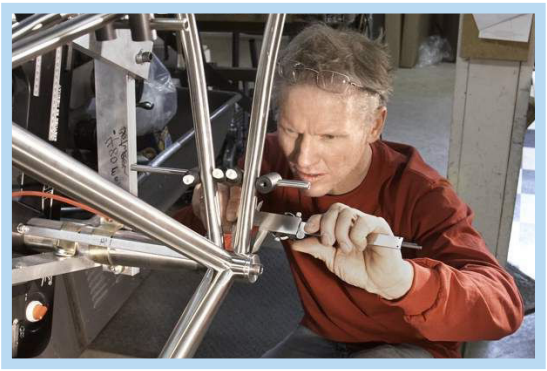
# Big Ideas

## Maker's District

A home for small-scale makers and tinkerers. Ski makers, bike builders, brewers, distillers and creatives. A short walk to I-Bar's music and dancing, and hiking, biking, fishing and skiing in a potential new Tomichi Creek State Park.

Wagner Ski // Telluride, CO

Kent Eriksen Cycles // Steamboat Springs, CO



North Street Bags // Portland, OR

Boneyard Brewing // Bend, OR

# Acknowledgments

This Concept Plan is the result of the tireless efforts of a dedicated group of local leaders from the City, County, Western Colorado University in partnership with the landowner, Gunnison Valley Properties (GVP).

## Project Partners

### City of Gunnison

Russ Forest, City Manager
Jim Gelwicks, Mayor

### Gunnison County

John Messner, Commissioner
Cathie Pagano, Community and Economic Development Director

### Western Colorado University

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### Gunnison Valley Properties

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Gunnison Rising