
Cottonwood Riverfront Trails and Recreation Master Plan

July 19, 2016





Acknowledgments

This plan has benefited from the knowledge and insight from City officials and Citizens of Cottonwood. We would specifically like to acknowledge the beneficial contributions of the following:

Cottonwood City Council:

Mayor Diane Joens
Vice Mayor Karen Pfeifer
Councilmember Kyla Allen
Council Member Linda Norman
Councilmember Ruben Jaurequi
Councilmember Terence Pratt

The City of Cottonwood Parks and Recreation Commission

The Nature Conservancy, who provided grant funding for the study

Casey Rooney, Economic Development Council Director

Richard Faust, Parks and Recreation Department Director

Charles Scully, Community Development Planner

Stakeholders and Members of the Public who participated in meetings, completed surveys, and helped guide the development of this Plan



Table of Contents

- 1. Introduction.....5
- 2. Master Plan Context.....7
- 3. Integration with Relevant Planning Efforts.....11
- 4. Case Studies.....15
- 5. Public Outreach.....21
- 6. Final Trail/Path Alignment.....29
- 7. Signs, Wayfinding and Monumentation.....41
- 8. Recommendations.....47







Introduction

Introduction

The City of Cottonwood Riverfront Trails and Recreation Master Plan serves as a blueprint for the development of a high quality, interconnected, multimodal, regional trail system in Cottonwood, Arizona. The plan was a result of a River Recreation Planning Grant from The Nature Conservancy. The project capitalizes on the very special Verde River, and identifies future pathways and trails throughout Cottonwood and regional destinations. This non-motorized system is envisioned to serve a diverse range of users, providing safe and well-maintained linkages to important natural, cultural and civic destinations and other points of interest within and outside of the city.

An important focus of the Cottonwood Riverfront Trails and Recreation Master Plan is the Verde River Jail Trail and its critical connection to Cottonwood's Old Town. This important junction as well as other important trail alignments have been evaluated and discussed in detail during the development of the Master Plan. For each trail alignment, several prospective connector routes were identified and assessed based on their opportunities and constraints. In the end, a preferred trail alignment with several cross-sections and trail types were developed. As a complete system, these trails and community connections will provide users with a variety of trail experiences and provide an overall benefit to the system users, visitors, land owners and the community as a whole.

This Master Plan includes trail types and cross-sections to serve as a resource and reference guide for city agencies, local communities, trail groups, and stakeholder groups with regard to planning, design and construction of Cottonwood's trail network.

The Recommendations section of the City of Cottonwood Riverfront Trails and Recreation Master Plan provides focus for the City and local trails groups and identifies future action items to help insure progress and implementation of the trails plan. Additionally, various funding resources are identified in the plan, serving as a foundation for future grant applications and funding requests.

Appendix A contains trail system maps to support long-range implementation of the approved Cottonwood Riverfront Trails and Recreation Master Plan. Maps

in Appendix A include: Trail System Alignment Map - Regional Context (regional context of trails master plan); Trail System Alignment Map - Overall Alignment (community-wide trail alignment with identified natural surface trails and hard surface paths); Trail System Alignment Map - North Section (northern section); Trail System Alignment Map - South Section (southern section); Trail System Phasing Map - Overall Phasing (phased development priorities); Trail System Signage Plan - North Section (northern sign types and trail connections); Trail System Signage Plan - South Section (southern sign types and trail connections); and, Trail System Signage Types.

The preparation of this plan was a collaborative effort involving local citizens, stakeholder input, advisory groups, and the City of Cottonwood. Also participating were representatives of federal and state land management agencies.

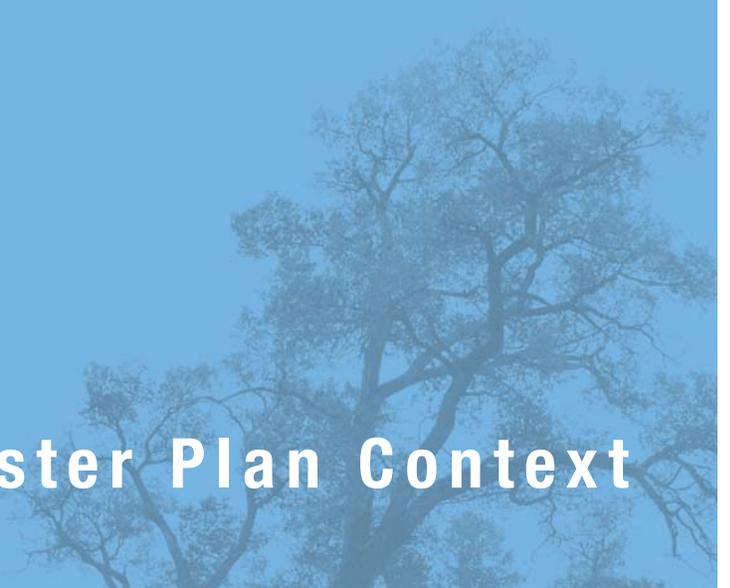
This Master Plan report includes the following elements:

- Master Plan Context
- Integration with Related Planning Efforts
- Case Studies
- Public Outreach
- Final Trail Alignment
- Focus Areas
- Signage, Wayfinding and Monumentation
- Recommendations

Each of these elements and supporting elements are described in more detail within each of the relevant chapters of this report.



Master Plan Context



Regional Context

The City of Cottonwood is centrally located in the Verde Valley, a scenic region of over seven hundred and fifteen (715) square miles. The Verde Valley is located in the north-central portion of the State of Arizona and includes a vibrant riparian area and an array of recreational and leisure activities. The region contains two National Forests, five State Park facilities, three National Monuments, a large amount of State Trust Land, Native American lands, mountains, canyons, and the Verde River. In addition, the region has an extensive existing trail network both regionally and locally, and throughout the Federal and State lands in the area.

Multi-Agency Collaboration

The Verde Valley contains a variety of local, state and federal lands and agencies. Therefore, multi-agency coordination and collaboration is essential for creating an effective trail network.

A history of multi-agency collaboration exists in the area. For example, the Jail Trail represents a successful collaboration between a state agency and local municipality. The trail is accessed through the City of Cottonwood but passes largely through Arizona State Park land. The newly constructed loop back into town leads visitors to Historic Old Town, and contributes to the widespread popularity of the trail. Another example of multi-agency collaboration is the Cliff Rose Trail. The City of Cottonwood contributed materials for the Cliff Rose trail and trailhead in 2013, while Yavapai County provided the labor.

While regional trail connectivity and multi-agency collaboration have been a focus of the Cottonwood community for many years, there are trail connections

that are challenged by land ownership. A route between Old Town Cottonwood and Tuzigoot National Monument does exist, but the trail is unmarked and incongruous, traveling through City, State and Federal Land. Trail users are required to pay a \$3 per person entry fee to Dead Horse Ranch State Park because a portion of the trail goes through State land. Trail connections from the Jail Trail to Riverfront Park exist as well, but there are multiple trail offshoots with very limited trail signage. A multi-level system will be better able to reduce redundancy and confusion, and will better meet the diverse needs and interests of the community.

Collaboration has already been a component of the Riverfront Trails and Recreation Master Plan. A steering committee consisting of members of the community and various interest groups met with the Master Plan design team in order to guide trail alignment. Stakeholder groups working in collaboration on this plan included :

- The Cottonwood Chamber of Commerce;
- Cottonwood City Council;
- Cottonwood Parks and Recreation;
- The Nature Conservancy;
- Old Town Cottonwood Merchant's Association;
- The Sierra Club;
- Verde River Valley Nature Organization; and,
- The Stewards for Public Land.

The following text includes a description of each agency with jurisdiction and land ownership in the Verde Valley.



Adjacent Federal Lands

The Verde Valley is home to adjacent federal lands. Two National Forests are located adjacent to the City of Cottonwood; Prescott National Forest abuts Cottonwood directly to the southwest, and Coconino National Forest lies to the northeast. Both National Forests contain existing trails, however only existing trails in the Coconino National Forest connect directly to Cottonwood. One of these trails is the Lime Kiln Trail that transverses National Forest land to connect to the Sedona trail network.

National Monuments are significant in the region. Montezuma Castle and Montezuma Well are located in nearby Camp Verde and Rimrock. Tuzigoot National Monument lies directly to the North of Cottonwood and east of neighboring Clarkdale. Tuzigoot National Monument preserves a Sinagua pueblo ruin on the Verde River Floodplain for visitors to explore.

Several areas of sovereign tribal land lie in the region. The Yavapai-Apache Nation tribal land consists of six hundred and forty-two (642) acres in five non-contiguous parcels located primarily in Camp Verde, with smaller areas in the town of Clarkdale and the community of Lake Montezuma.

Adjacent State Lands

The State owns a significant amount of land within the Verde Valley. Adjacent State Land in the region includes: Arizona State Trust Lands, State Parks, and State Natural Areas. The Arizona State Land Department owns and manages State Trust land to the east of Cottonwood, some of which is leased out for grazing livestock.

Two State Parks also serve the Cottonwood area. Dead Horse Ranch State Park is a four hundred and twenty-three (423) acre park that provides important recreational opportunities to the community such as camping, mountain biking, hiking, canoeing, picnicking, fishing, and horseback riding.

The Verde River Greenway State Natural Area preserves land in its natural state, with no modern camping facilities. This area is six miles long, with a total of four hundred and eighty (480) acres. Its most prominent feature is the perennially-flowing Verde River, made up of a dense forest of riparian trees and shrubs along its banks, creating an oasis unique to the region.

Existing trails within each of the two State Parks connect and intertwine with other trails and destinations within the region. The Forest Loop Trail in Dead Horse Ranch State Park, for example, connects to the Verde River Greenway, providing access to the dense trail system on the north and south sides of the Verde River.



Yavapai County and City of Cottonwood Lands

Yavapai County and the City of Cottonwood maintain a variety of trails, with the Jail Trail being the most popular. This easily-accessible trail begins on Main Street in Old Town Cottonwood, takes visitors and residents into the Verde River riparian area and floodplain, and follows the river for approximately one mile. Eventually, hikers can choose to continue on to Dead Horse Ranch State Park, Riverfront Park, or loop back into Old Town Cottonwood. In addition to the Jail Trail and other marked and maintained trails, there are many informal “social” trails along the Verde River riverbank providing connectivity and recreation for surrounding neighborhoods and visitors to the region.

Additionally, Riverfront Park, a City of Cottonwood managed park, effectively intertwines existing trails to connect users to the dog park, skate park, athletic fields, disc golf course, and other trails along the Verde River.

Neighboring Community Trail Plans

Many communities adjacent to Cottonwood have well-developed trail systems, some of which connect on a regional scale through state or federal land. It's important to understand these plans in order to most effectively and efficiently work regionally to provide connections to existing and planned trail systems.

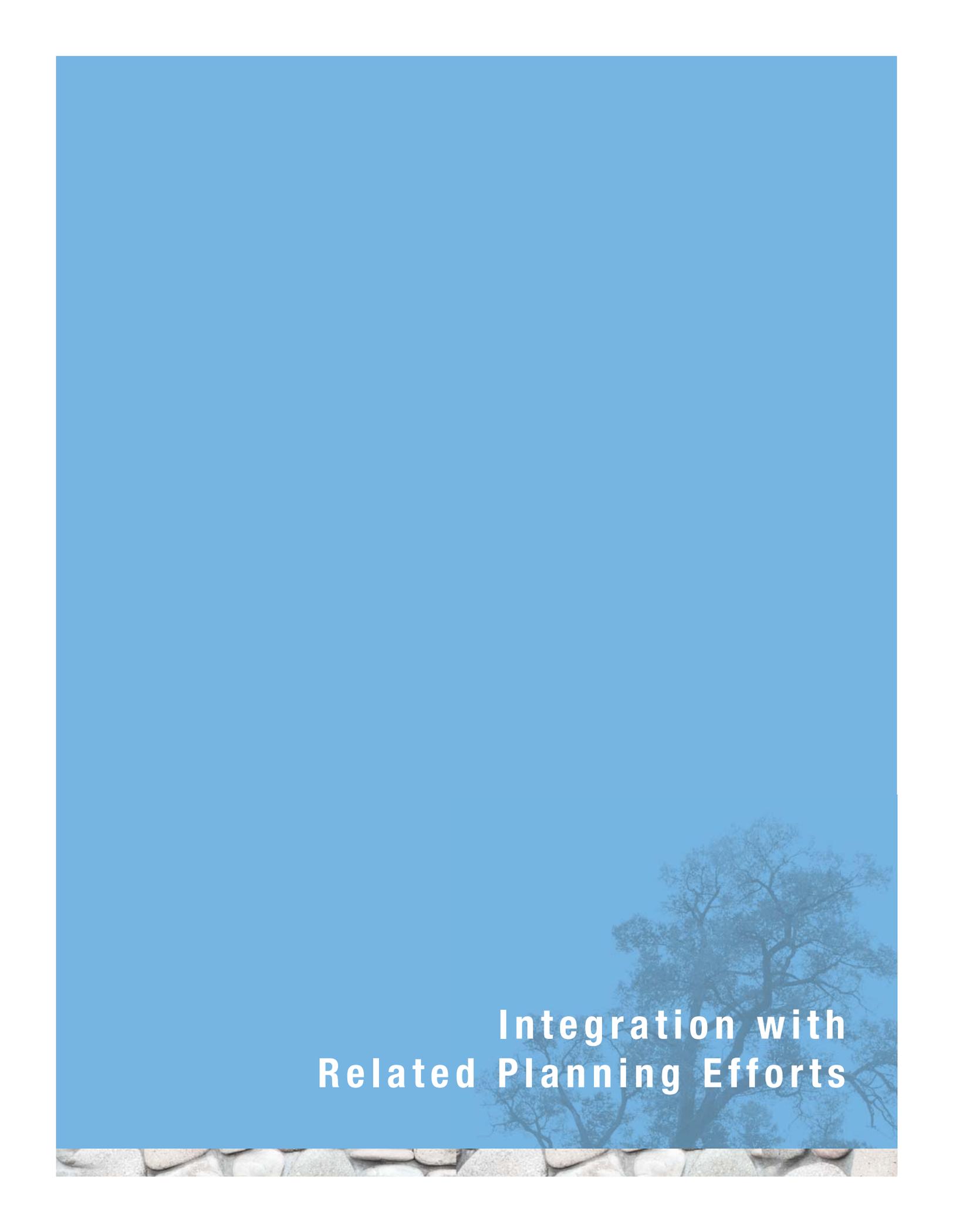
Camp Verde, a town to the southeast of Cottonwood, has a trails plan with “dedicated” and “non-dedicated” trails. As with most communities in the Verde Valley, the Camp Verde trails plan provides regional trail connections, such as trails from the northwest corner of Camp Verde towards the City of Cottonwood.

Clarkdale, the community immediately northwest of Cottonwood, is also focusing attention on developing recreation associated with the Verde River. As a community, it is focused on opening up additional River Access Points to the Verde River, and using the river itself as a “blue trail”. A Blue Trail is a river adopted by communities that are dedicated to improving family friendly recreation such as fishing, boating, hiking, and wildlife watching, and conserving rivers and lands. Clarkdale also has trails along the Verde River which may provide important connections to Cottonwood’s Jail Trail.

Cornville, Arizona has historically been a small agricultural community, but in recent years has attracted retirees and residents who commute to work in Cottonwood or Sedona. Trails that connect to Cornville may provide recreational or commuting opportunities to residents who travel between the two areas.

Sedona lies to the north east of Cottonwood. The Cliff Rose Trail, which originates near the Verde Valley Botanical Area, provides access to the Lime Kiln Trail, an unmarked, but well-established, 15-mile travel corridor between Cottonwood and Sedona. Trails in Red Rock State Park and Slide Rock State Park offer further opportunities for trail connections. The Lime Kiln trailhead originates on property owned by Yavapai County within the City of Cottonwood jurisdiction. Both governments contributed to its development.





Integration with Related Planning Efforts

Overview

The City of Cottonwood is part of an interconnected and inter-dependent region that includes the immediately surrounding communities of the Verde Valley region and Yavapai County. At each level there are unique issues that tie the region together through common interests. Parks, open space and trails, in many cases, act as the connection between the various communities within the Verde Valley region. Regional and local planning documents provide insights, correlations, and shared visions for each community and the region as a whole. A review of pertinent local and regional planning documents in relation to parks, open space, and recreation planning is an integral component of the Cottonwood Riverfront Trails and Recreation Master Plan.

This review, in conjunction with conversations with representatives from Cottonwood and other agencies, provides a comprehensive understanding of common goals and resources in order to improve key partnerships for parks, open space, recreation and trail connections within the City of Cottonwood. The planning documents highlighted in this section provide a wealth of information at a regional and community level. However, only the portions most relevant to the City of Cottonwood are discussed in detail within this Master Plan. The timing of this Master Plan is optimal for thoughtful planning, sustainable programs and operations because many complimentary planning efforts are currently underway for the region. An important part of this process was to analyze and integrate this Master Plan with current and previous planning projects, enabling the City to streamline planning efforts and maximize resource use. This master plan has taken the following documents into consideration during its development:

- City of Cottonwood General Plan 2025;
- 2009 and 2015 Cottonwood Economic Development Plans;
- Cottonwood Parks and Recreation Commission Five-Year Plan; and,
- Yavapai County Comprehensive Plan.

Cottonwood General Plan 2025

The City of Cottonwood Community Development Department, in conjunction with the Planning & Zoning Commission and Parks & Recreation Commission, developed the “Open Space & Parks” section of the Cottonwood General Plan through 2025. Adoption of the Plan was authorized by the City of Cottonwood City Council in 2015.



Key issues identified through the planning effort included:

- Regional Cooperation;
- Private Property Opportunities;
- Planned Development strategies;
- Verde River Preservation;
- Open Space Preservation;
- Recreation Planning; and,
- Environmental, Social and Economic Benefits of Open Space Preservation.

A community public forum process identified Parks and Recreation priorities such as a multi-leveled parks system, recreational trails, and trails access. The plan focused on trail design issues and trail-type based locations, with the trail planning process as a priority. The Plan highlights the complex inter-agency coordination that takes place within the City of Cottonwood between the City, surrounding towns, the county, the Arizona State Land Department, Arizona State Parks, the United States Forest Service, and the National Park Service. Each of the above entities has an interest in how parks, open space, and natural resources are managed throughout the community. Collaborative activities have included ongoing participation with various planning efforts, and enactment of joint resolutions and intergovernmental agreements to accomplish specific goals. Discussion, development and implementation of regional open space objectives in the Verde Valley are ongoing concerns. Recommendations included in the General Plan provide support for a multi-agency coordinating council, neutral facilitation, on-going contact with key stakeholders and the financial and technical resources to ensure that such ongoing regional efforts are successful.

2009 and 2015 Cottonwood Economic Development Plans

Under the umbrella of Arizona Public Service’s Focus on Success program, the City of Cottonwood felt that completing a formal strategic economic development plan would be beneficial to their community and thus submitted an application for funding. The planning process employed in drafting the strategic plan for Cottonwood relied heavily on the insight of the community and local stakeholders. Input and feedback were solicited from a Technical Advisory Committee, the general public, and interviews with local business owners. Recommendations included in Cottonwood’s Strategic Economic Development Plan were divided into seven focus areas. These focus areas represent key areas vital to the success of Cottonwood’s economic development efforts and include:

- | <u>2009</u> | <u>2015</u> |
|------------------------------------|--|
| • Education and Workforce; | • Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, and Visitor Industries; |
| • Innovation and Entrepreneurship; | • Agribusiness; |
| • Tourism; | • Health Care and Biomedical; |
| • Old Town; | • Manufacturing; and |
| • Sustainability; | • Transportation and Logistics. |
| • Leadership; and, | |
| • Quality of Place. | |

Many of these focus areas do not explicitly speak to parks, trails, and open space, but directly apply to this City of Cottonwood Riverfront Trails and Recreation Master Plan. Trails, trail connections, open space and parks all contribute to quality of life, which helps to attract, retain, and create new business and balanced economies.

Tourism is of particular interest in the Cottonwood Economic Development Plan. The first strategy in developing tourism is to develop river access points and multi-use trails leading from Old Town and other

areas in town to the river. Highlighting this connectivity between the river and amenities in Old Town Cottonwood will encourage additional tourists to visit one of the main attractions in the City - the Verde River. Another strategy is to better promote Cottonwood as a destination for outdoor recreation, including riparian activity, bird watching, hiking, climbing, biking, boating, hang gliding, sky diving, canyoneering, ballooning, etc. This Master plan supports the Economic Development Plan by providing logical connections to these features.

An updated plan was produced in 2015 that not only expanded on a strategic focus on tourism and agribusiness, but there was also a strong desire to enhance the economy through the creation of jobs in higher wage industries. This new economic development plan for the City of Cottonwood spans over a 5-year time horizon and is anchored by the community’s vision and designed around six key initiatives with overarching goals and strategies. As a part of the 2015 plan, industry clusters were identified that have the greatest potential to improve the economic performance of the region (see list above).

Cottonwood Parks and Recreation Commission Five-Year Plan

In preparation for the creation of a Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the City of Cottonwood Parks and Recreation Commission has created a five-year plan that identifies funding priorities for specific park related projects across Cottonwood. Funding for each project is either identified or has been earmarked for future funding. This plan lists several trail segments and connections important to the Cottonwood Riverfront Trails and Recreation Master Plan. Specifically, the 5th Street Trail Connection, the trail master plan study, and the urban trail system.

Yavapai County Comprehensive Plan

The guiding vision for the Yavapai County Comprehensive Plan is to provide a flexible and adaptable approach to managing growth while respecting the values of the past, to achieve common goals, and to plan for a future that enhances a high quality of life while protecting a permanently sustainable natural environment.



The County's vision is to protect the unique quality of life characteristics within each of Yavapai County's diverse communities, to preserve Western rural and ranching traditions, and to responsibly manage the process of urbanizing communities, when desired, through sensible planned growth and the sustainable use of finite resources.

The County's vast recreational and outdoor opportunities, abundant natural beauty, scenic vistas, clean air, forests, grasslands, healthy rivers and bio-diverse riparian areas are protected and preserved through the implementation of the Yavapai County Comprehensive Plan's goals and objectives. Through these goals and objectives, the County recognizes the importance of safeguarding natural resources for future generations, including treasured rivers, streams and other resources. The Comprehensive Plan supports conservation and re-use whenever possible, incorporates smart design standards, and supports public policies that effectively protect open space, the County's rural character, and the viability of working ranches.

As a part of the Open Space Element of the Comprehensive Plan, the County expressed a need for trails, especially for hiking and equestrian use. In the plan, the County notes that alternative transportation policies have been adopted in the municipal areas, such as bicycle and multi-purpose lane installations on major streets or in separated pathways, for the purpose of connecting routes within regions. For example, the Town of Chino Valley is currently working on a Master Trails Plan, in which they intend to link trails to trail systems in surrounding communities, such as to the Verde Valley.

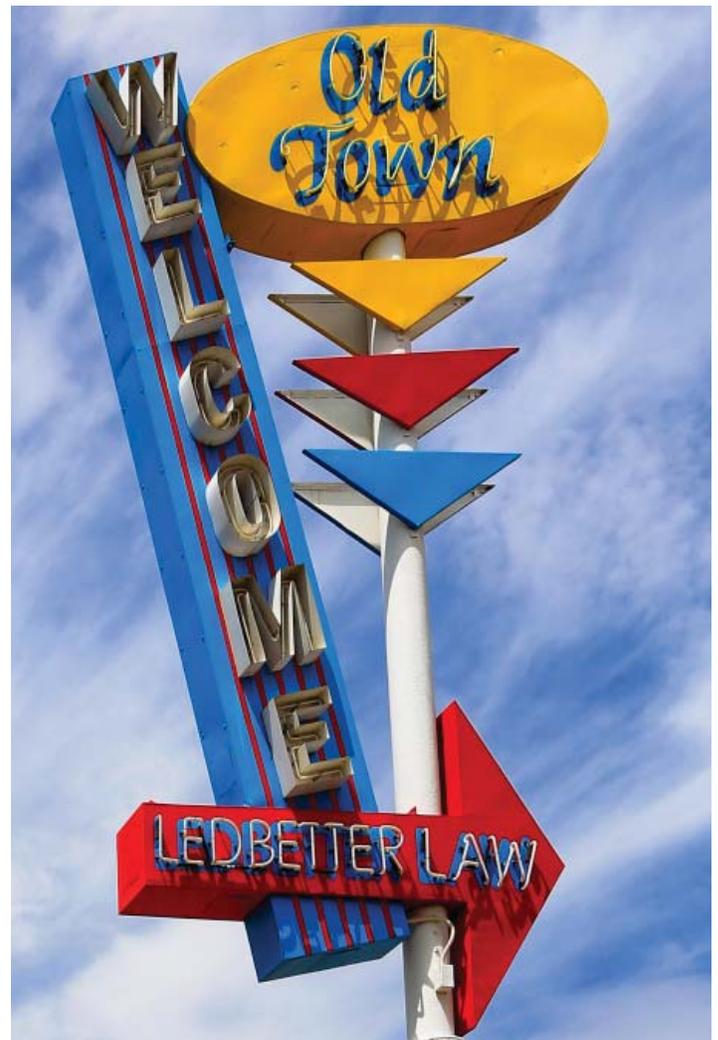
As noted in the plan, creating regional trails systems involves partnerships of Federal, State, County and municipality organizations. Three regional trail systems exemplify these partnerships; the Prescott Circle Trail, Black Canyon Trail and the Dead Horse Trail System. The Dead Horse Trail System, in the Verde Valley and adjacent to Cottonwood, is administered by the Arizona State Parks Department and Coconino National Forest. The trail system begins along the Verde River Greenway in Dead Horse State Park, a scenic, water-based park which offers access to the Verde River. The Park provides picnicking, full-service camping, canoeing,

fishing, hiking and equestrian trails. The State Park trails connect to the Dead Horse Trail System in a 7.2-mile loop around the Raptor Hill, Thumper and Lime Kiln Trails, as well as to other trails in the Coconino National Forest, providing a regional trails network. Currently, there are proposals with the Coconino National Forest to expand this trail system.

Specific goals pertaining to open space, trails, and recreation areas include:

- Enhance open space and recreational opportunities; and,
- Preserve the open space character of the county.

Overall, the County's Comprehensive Plan supports the development of the Cottonwood Riverfront Trails and Recreation Master Plan in coordination with the ongoing efforts currently being conducted across the County by various municipalities and trails groups.



The image features a solid blue background. In the bottom right corner, there is a silhouette of a large, leafy tree. At the very bottom of the page, there is a horizontal strip showing a stone wall. The text 'Case Studies' is written in white, bold, sans-serif font, positioned in the lower right area of the blue background, partially overlapping the tree silhouette.

Case Studies

1. Methods in Trail Planning and Development

Several components are necessary to envision and implement a successful urban trails network. These components include public input, collaboration with non-jurisdictional groups, formal design guidelines, a master plan with clearly defined short and long-term goals, and clear communication and coordination between stakeholders. Outlined below are several examples of how different municipalities have applied these components to plan and develop trail systems.

Flagstaff, Arizona

The City of Flagstaff's Urban Trails System (FUTS) currently consists of over fifty miles of existing trails, and more than eighty additional miles of planned trails. The FUTS program is managed by the Flagstaff Metropolitan Planning Organization (FMPO), which receives funding from various federal, state and local governments, including the City of Flagstaff, Coconino County, and the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT). The success of this project is largely due to the result of over a decade of planning and preparation, as documented through various reports, policies, and city documents.

The City of Flagstaff Regional Plan was last updated in 2015. The overarching goal of this plan is to create a balanced system of open lands, natural areas, wildlife corridors and habitat areas, trails, greenways, parks and recreational facilities.

Some of the relevant goals and policies of the Regional Plan include:

- Goal WR.5. Manage watersheds and stormwater to address flooding concerns, water quality, environmental protections, and rainwater harvesting.
 - Policy WR.5.2. Incorporate pedestrian access, trails, and watchable wildlife opportunities into natural watercourses when practical.
- Goal CC.1. Reflect and respect the region's natural setting and dramatic views in the built environment.
 - Policy CC.1.1. Preserve the natural character of the region through planning and design to maintain views of significant landmarks, sloping landforms, rock outcroppings, water courses, floodplains, and meadows, and conserve stands of Ponderosa Pine.
 - Policy CC.1.4. Identify, protect, and enhance gateways, gateway corridors, and gateway communities.

- Goal LU.10. Increase the proportion of urban neighborhoods to achieve walkable, compact growth.
 - Policy LU.10.1. Prioritize connectivity within all urban neighborhoods and activity centers.
- Goal LU.12. Accommodate pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and private cars to supplement downtown's status as the best-served and most accessible location in the region.
 - Policy LU.13.9. Use open space and FUTS trails to provide walking and biking links from residential uses to employment, shopping, schools, parks, and neighborhoods.
- Goal T.5. Increase the availability and use of pedestrian infrastructure, including FUTS, as a critical element of a safe and livable community.
- Goal T.6. Provide for bicycling as a safe and efficient means of transportation and recreation.
 - Policy T.6.2. Establish and maintain a comprehensive, consistent, and highly connected system of bikeways and FUTS trails.

Pima County, Arizona

The Pima Regional Trail System Master Plan consists of eight hundred and fifty-three (853) miles of existing and proposed trails, paths, greenways, river parks, bicycle boulevards, and enhanced corridors that connect regional destinations, parks, schools, and natural preserves. In addition, there are 1,422 miles of single-track trails. The planning process included analysis of existing and potential trail routes, public meetings, Advisory Group input, City and County Parks and Recreation Commission presentations, as well as City Council and County Board of Supervisors presentations.

Austin, Texas

The City of Austin, Texas has an Urban Trails program that is part of the Public Works Department. Various City of Austin departments including Parks and Recreation, Watershed Protection, the Austin Water Utility, Planning Development and Review, Transportation, and Public Works, all have an interest in Urban Trails from different perspectives and different funding considerations. Private and nonprofit groups like The Trails Foundation or the Hill Country Conservancy also promote Urban Trails through various means.



Arizona Volunteer Groups

The goals and policies of these projects are dependent on volunteer groups that are willing to provide maintenance and stewardship for the trails. A few groups in Arizona are: Friends of Arizona Trails and Arizona Trail Association. These groups are important in garnering support and funding for trail and path networks, and often contribute valuable assets to Federal, State, County and City trails.

Key Points

Successful implementation of a long range, regionally connected Cottonwood Riverfront Trails and Recreation Master Plan is dependent on an agency's organizational approach to planning and delivering trails segments incrementally over time as funding becomes available. A formalized process for collaborating with community partners and trails advocates is key to maintaining community support and informed planning and development. Identified staff positions and an agency's internal task force identify and deliver priority trail segments and pursue funding. Stakeholder and community involvement provide oversight from an on-the-ground perspective while building documented community support that strengthens grant funding applications or potential bond issues.

2. Urban and Wilderness Trail and Path Types

Locating context-appropriate trails and paths is a goal of the planning process. Urban trails are typically geared for non-motorized transportation and provide access for bicyclists, runners, walkers, and equestrians. The condition of each trail will vary depending on location and user group. Urban multi-purpose trails are designed for accessibility and have a paved surface, whereas soft surface paths are appropriate in wilderness areas. Figure 1 shows design guidelines from The Pima Regional Trail System Master Plan, which may be used as reference.

Figure 1: Pima Regional Trail System Master Plan Trail Design Guidelines

TYPE	LOCATION	SIZE
PATH	PATH CORRIDOR ADJACENT TO A ROAD	10' - 12'
PATH	PATH CORRIDOR ADJACENT TO A RIVER	10' - 12'
PATH	PATH CORRIDOR IN A GREENWAY	10' - 12'
GREENWAY	GREENWAY WITH A TRAIL AND PATH	50' CORRIDOR WIDTH
TRAIL (SINGLE-TRACK)	TRAIL IN A GREENWAY	2' - 3'
TRAIL CORRIDOR	TRAIL CORRIDOR ADJACENT TO A ROAD	8'
PEDESTRIAN CORRIDOR	ENHANCED PEDESTRIAN CORRIDOR	8' - 12'

**From The Pima Regional Trail System Master Plan*

Key Points

A community-wide trail system contains a variety of trail cross sections to meet the diverse recreational needs of residents and visitors. Natural resource trails are soft-surfaced except for accessible segments at trail heads where appropriate. Urban multi-purpose paths are hard-surfaced paths that include sidewalks, road-side asphalt paths or asphalt paths that follow the route of an urban water course.

3. Funding

Tennessee: Tax Driven Funding

The history of Tennessee's Real Estate Transfer Tax dates to 1986 when it was first designated to protect wetlands. In 1991, the tax was renewed and increased with passage of the "State and Local Parks and Recreation Partnership Act." This created a dedicated fund (generated from the .08 cent tax on \$100 of assessed value for realty transfers) to conserve land for parks, wildlife areas, and greenways, and to provide cost-share incentives to farmers for clean water projects. These dedicated funds generated from the transfer of real estate work to preserve the natural beauty of the Tennessee countryside. As real estate is developed and new residents move to Tennessee, a small portion of the transfer tax is re-invested in protecting a Forever Green Tennessee. However, in 2003 and again in 2008, this fund was reallocated to help balance the State's general budget.

Acadia Nation Park: Fundraising

Acadia Trails Forever is a joint effort of Friends of Acadia and Acadia National Park, ME to rehabilitate a 130-mile foot-trail system, restore 11 miles of abandoned trails, create five connector paths linking communities to the park, and endow maintenance of the trail system in perpetuity. The project began in 2000 and will be completed by 2010. Acadia Trails Forever was publicly launched in July 1999 with a \$13-million fundraising campaign to benefit the trails of Acadia National Park. Friends of Acadia raised \$9 million in private donations, and the National Park Service committed \$4 million

in federal funds, mostly from the Acadia National Park entry fee program, in which 80 percent of the revenue collected remains with the park to fund repair, maintenance and resource rehabilitation. Fundraising goals were met in July 2000, two years earlier than anticipated.

Bear Creek: Host an Event

Founded in 1986, the non-profit Bear Creek Greenway Foundation has developed a network of partnerships to help achieve the goals of completing an 18-mile trail that connects five cities in southern Oregon and broadening community involvement in protecting and restoring the creek corridor. As a way of funding this trail, two annual events are held every year by the foundation. The Greenway Gala offers auction items, dinner and dancing for about 200 people each year, and the Classic offers a 13-mile bike course, a 10k run, and a two-mile walking event.

Poudre River: Trail Amenity Donations

The Memorial Miles Program links the Weld County community in fundraising efforts for the Poudre River Trail and Hospice of Northern Colorado, Inc. Individuals can give a gift of trees, benches, sculpture, wildflowers, bridges, and "watchable wildlife" facilities in memory of loved ones.



Marin County: Community Support

The Salida, CA Trail System's "Adopt-a-Trail" program, the purpose of which has been both maintenance and beautification, has been so successful that the nine original maintenance sections have had to be subdivided in order to accommodate all those who want to participate.

Figure 2: Economic Benefits of Trails

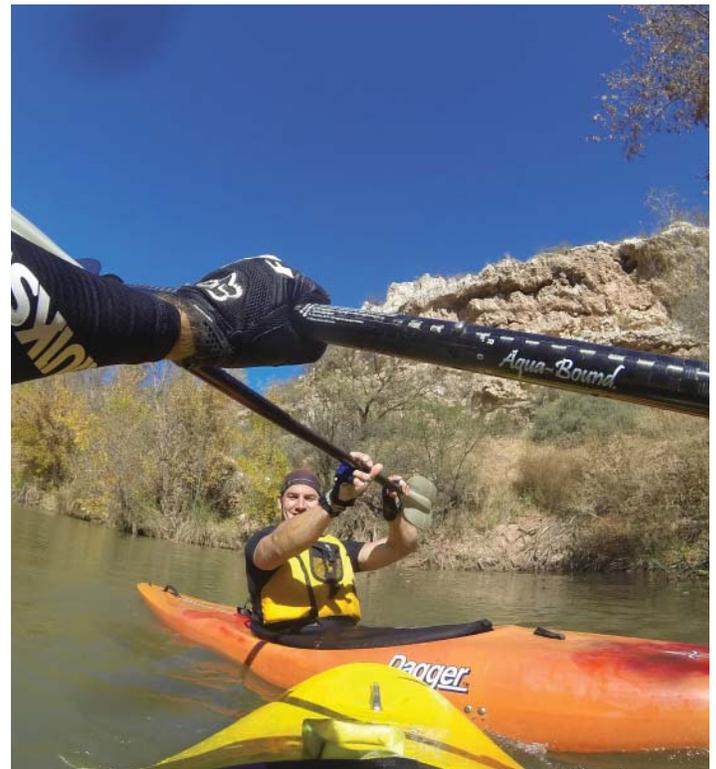
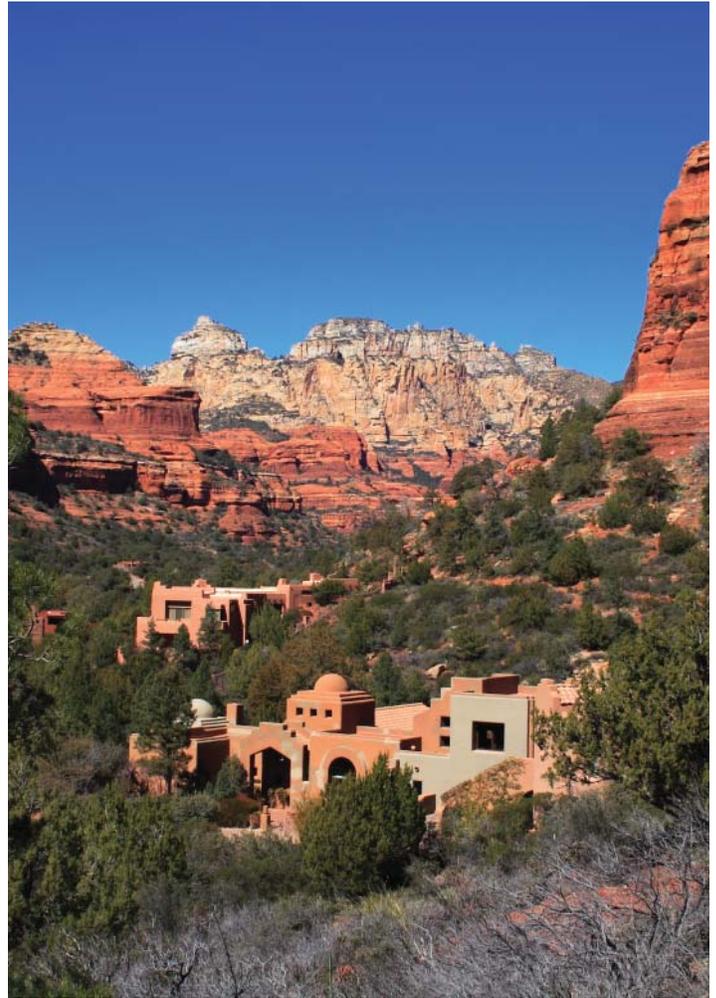
Location	Trail or Path	Economic Benefit
Damascus, VA	Virginia Creeper Trail	At the Virginia Creeper Trail, a 34-mile trail in southwestern Virginia, locals and visitors spend approximately \$2.5 million annually related to their recreation visits. Of this amount, visitors contribute approximately \$1.2 million to Washington and Grayson County economies
Outer Banks, NC	Network of multi-use paths	Bicycling is estimated to have an annual economic impact of \$60 million and contribute 1,407 jobs as a result of the 40,800 visitors for whom bicycling was an important reason for choosing to vacation in the area. The annual return on bicycle facility development in the Outer Banks is approximately nine times higher than the initial investment.
Morgantown, WV	Mon River Trail	The 45-mile Mon River trail system is credited by the Convention and Visitors Bureau for revitalizing an entire district of the city, with a reported \$200 million in private investment as a direct result of the trail.
Leadville, CO	Mineral Belt Trail	In the months following the opening of the Mineral Belt Trail, the city reported a nineteen percent (19%) increase in sales tax revenues.
Apex, NC	Regional Greenway	The regional green way has directly affected home sales and values. Despite a \$5,000 price increase to the 40 homes adjacent to the regional greenway in the Shepard's Vineyard housing development, those homes were sold first. These sales demonstrate the desirability of living near a regional trail amenity.
Front Royal, VA	Easement	Similar to Apex, North Carolina, a developer who donated a 50-foot-wide, seven-mile-long easement along a popular trail sold all 50 parcels bordering the trail in only four months.
Salem, OR	Greenbelt	In Salem, land adjacent to a greenbelt was found to be worth about \$1,200 per acre more than land only 1000 feet away, demonstrating that the benefits of owning land near trails reach further than health and fitness.
Multiple	Greenways	Many communities have found that by restoring developed floodplains to their natural state and protecting them as greenways, many riverside communities are preventing potential flood damages and related costs.

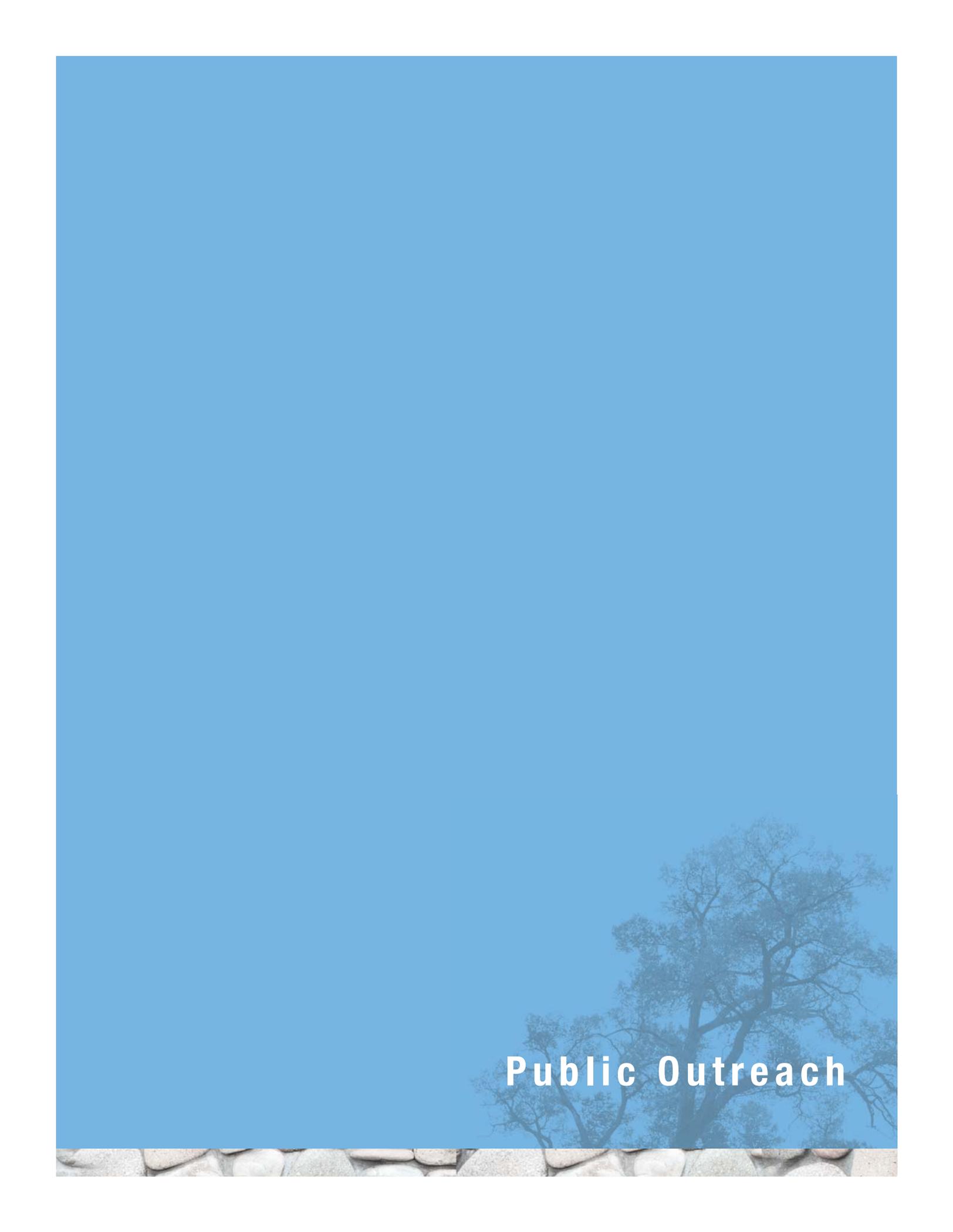
**Trust for Public Land's Economic Benefits of Parks and Open Space, and the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy's Economic Benefits of Trails and Greenways (listed below) illustrate how this value is realized in property value across the country.*



Key Points

The implementation of a trails master plan requires multiple funding types and the integration of the master plan into planning community-wide. Priority segments of the trail system are identified for development and matched with available funding sources based on the conditions of spending those funds. In Arizona, communities have had success with creating a development fee or impact fee program that is approved by the local jurisdiction's governing board and meets the guidelines mandated by the State of Arizona as a steady source of funding for trail development. Trail development and connections that are identified in a governing board approved master plan can become conditions for approval of proposed planned area developments. Federal Land and Water Conservation Funds are distributed through the State of Arizona and are grant opportunities for trail segments where a natural area can be set aside for conservation in perpetuity. Community Development Block Grants are federal funds that are appropriate for trail development in areas of low to moderate household income. Trail segments can be developed as part of regional or local transportation projects. Once the development of trails based on the community-supported master plan has resulted in multi-purpose trail opportunities that are used by residents, a bond issue or sales tax issue is more likely to be supported by voters.





Public Outreach

Community Engagement

A primary goal of the City of Cottonwood Riverfront Trails and Recreation Master Plan is to integrate a comprehensive public engagement approach. Community engagement with the residents of Cottonwood, key stakeholders, and City staff throughout the assessment process has resulted in the identification of residents' concerns, needs, and priorities regarding the operation and quality of trails and pathways. A diverse representation of interests and user groups participated in the needs assessment process through a series of forums including a public open house, stakeholder meetings, and social media based outreach.

Public outreach for the Riverfront Trails and Recreation Master Plan has been varied and multifaceted to collect opinions from as many participants and stakeholders as possible. Overall, there were eight (8) in-person meetings consisting of four Stakeholder Focus Groups, a city-wide Public Open House, two Parks and Recreation Commission Presentations, and a City Council Presentation. The Stakeholder Focus Groups were conducted with four separate groups: City of Cottonwood staff from Parks and Recreation, Planning and Economic Development; facilities users; environmental advocates; and trail users. Combined, 117 individuals have participated in outreach. These participants submitted 72 questionnaires.

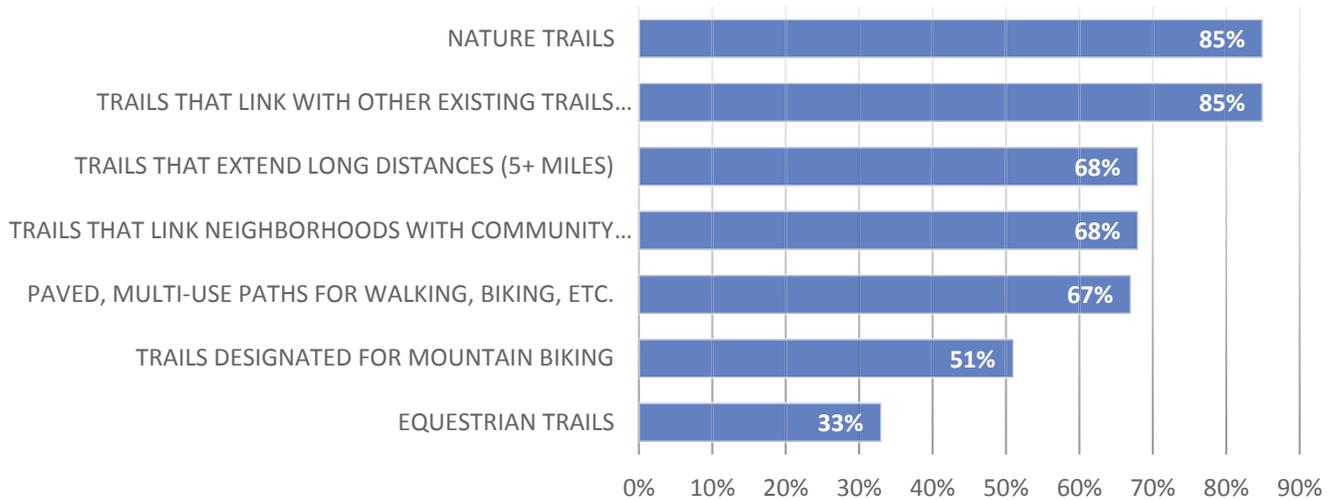
Outreach Event	Number of Meetings	Stakeholder Group Representation	Number of Attendees / Respondents
Stakeholder Focus Groups	4	12	20
Public Open House	1	10	25
Questionnaires	2 sites	N/A	72
Total	7	22	117



Questionnaire Results

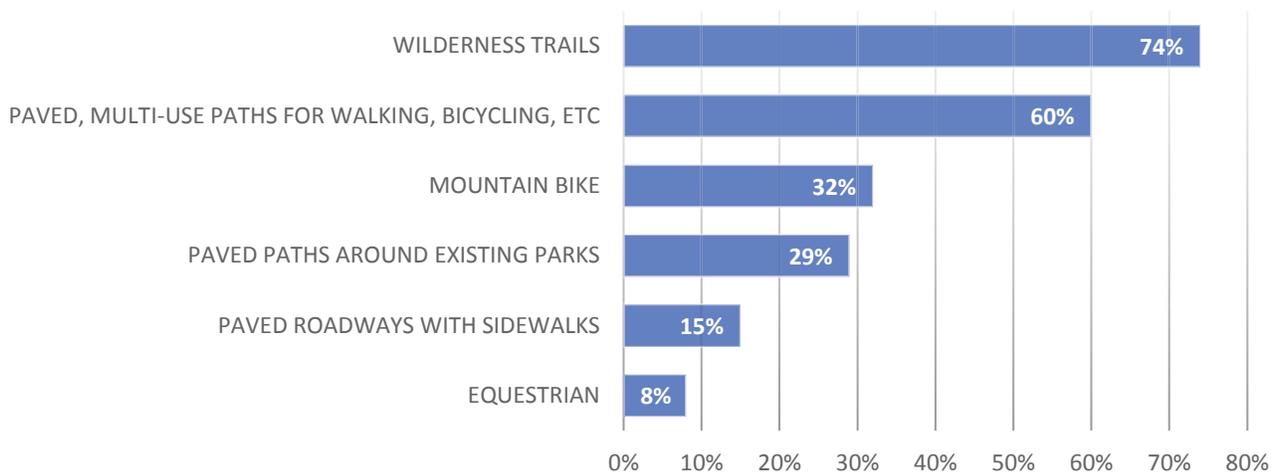
At each Stakeholder Meetings and Public Open House event, questionnaires were distributed to attendees, who were encouraged to complete and return the questionnaire. Each questionnaire included nine questions and took less than five minutes to complete. The questionnaire results were then analyzed to identify trends and verify data. Questionnaire results are outlined below:

1. The Cottonwood Riverfront Trails and Recreation Master Plan will incorporate a variety of trail/path types. Which of the trail/path types below do you support being included? (Select as many as needed)



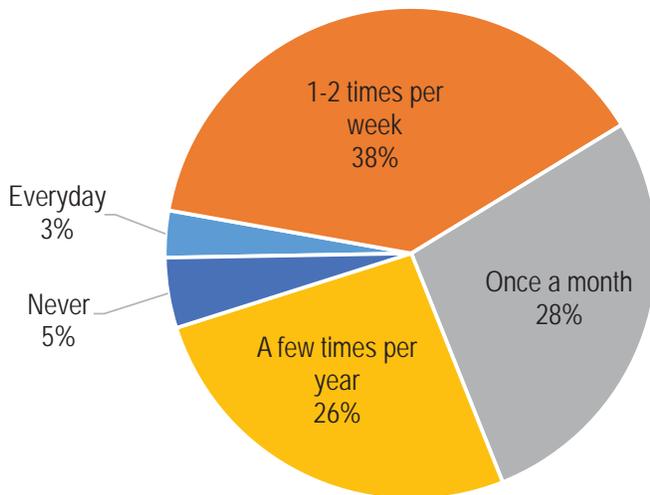
Overall, the most popular trail/path types among the public who filled out the questionnaire were nature trails and trails that link with other existing local and regional trails, followed by trails that extend long distances, and trails that link neighborhoods with community destinations.

2. What types of trails/paths in the final master plan would you be most likely to use? (Check your top two choices.)



As shown above, 74% of participants responded that they would be most likely to use wilderness trails as one of their top two choices for types of trails and paths. 60% of participants would be most likely to use paved, multi-use paths as one of their top two choices.

3. How often do you use the Verde River recreational trail system? (Circle one.)



When asked how often they use the Verde River recreational trail system, respondents were split roughly into thirds; 38% use the trail system 1-2 times per week, 28% once per month, and 26% a few times per year. Only 3% of respondents use the trail system every day, and another 5% never.

This question may reflect a significant population of visitors who travel from other areas to use the trails. Additionally, two respondents wrote in that they use the trail system 3-4 times per week.

4. Where do you see opportunities to link or make path/trail connections between existing trails and destinations in Cottonwood?

In addition to the multiple-choice questions, the questionnaire also asked participants to identify opportunities to make trail or path connections between existing trails and destinations in Cottonwood.

Connections between trails and other trail systems and connections between trails and community destinations were mentioned frequently in public open houses as well as in stakeholder focus groups; participants supported inclusion in the Master Plan of trails that link with other existing trails locally and regionally, and trails that link neighborhoods with community destinations. Additionally, when asked what types of improvements would benefit the existing trail system, 63% of participants selected trail connections and increased access.

Participants had many suggestions on linkages that could be made in order to create a fully interconnected trail system. Suggestions for opportunities to link or make connections between existing trails and destinations in Cottonwood were focused on areas near the Riverfront and Old Town. The trail connections that were most frequently mentioned were:

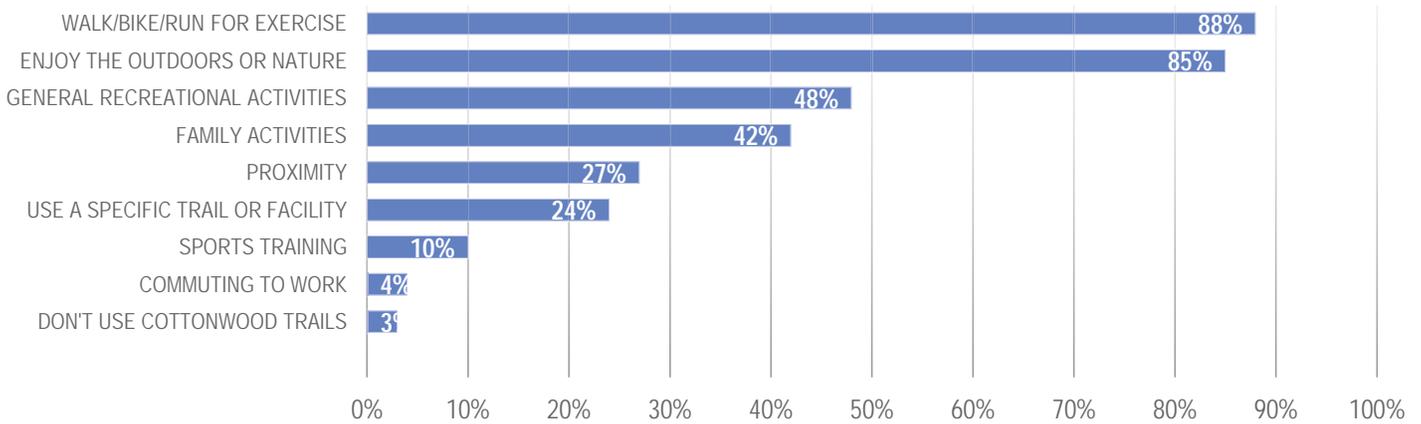
- Old Town, Riverfront Park and Jail Trail
- Connections to Dead Horse Ranch State Park
- Linking to Tuzigoot

Other frequently proposed linkages and connections included:

- Connect to Cliff Rose and Lime Kiln Trails
- Social trails through neighborhoods
- Connect to Prescott National Forest
- Connect the trail system to Sedona
- Connect to river access points

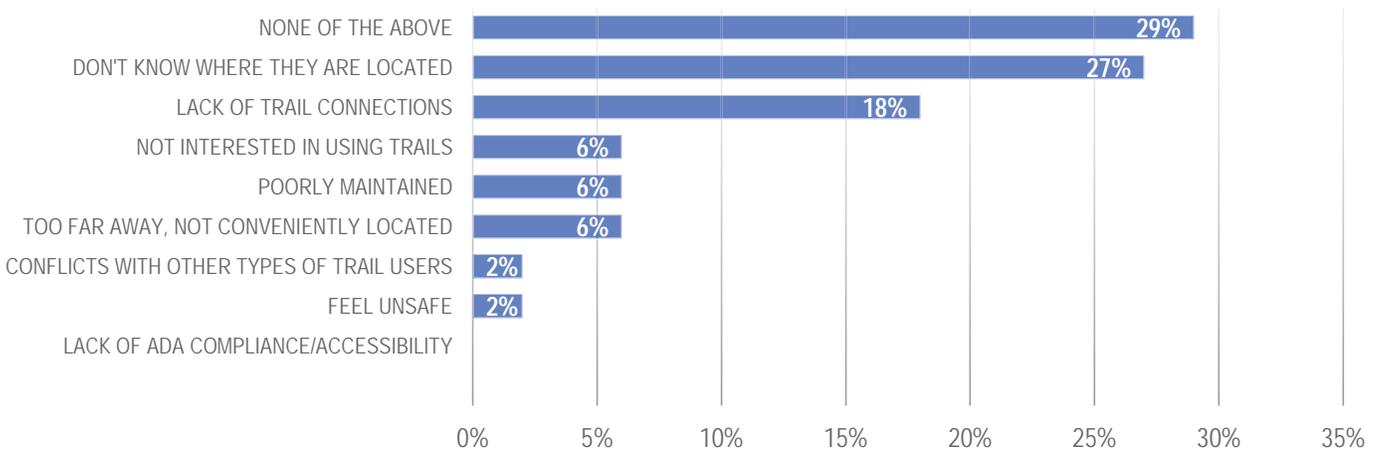


5. What are the primary reasons that you would use the future, community-wide Cottonwood trails system? (Check all that apply.)



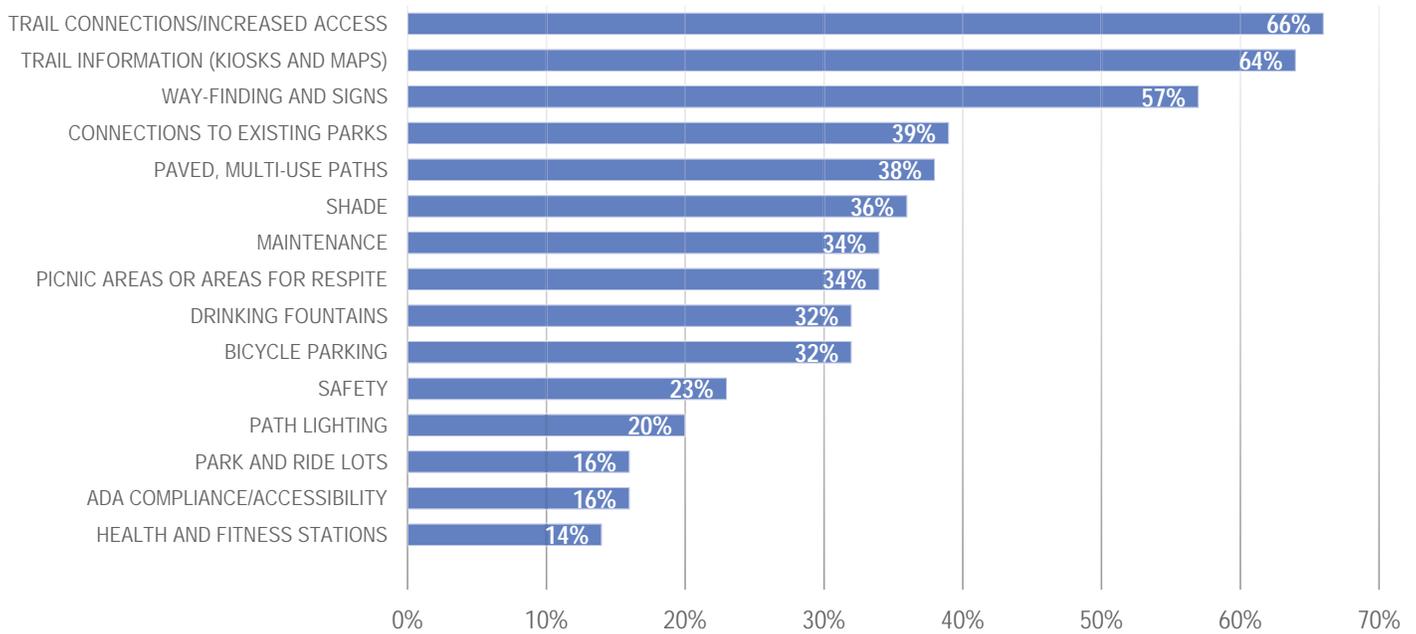
When asked for the primary reasons that participants would use the future community-wide trails system, exercise was chosen by 88% of respondents and enjoying nature by 85%. General recreation, such as dog walking, skateboarding, and roller blading, and family activities were also important to questionnaire participants.

6. If you do not currently use pathways or trails in Cottonwood, what are your primary reasons?



This figure above shows the number of respondents who chose each barrier to trail use. Many respondents did not answer this question, indicating that they do use pathways or trails in Cottonwood. According to questionnaire results, the most frequent reason why participants don't use the pathways or trails is that they don't know where trails are located. Lack of trail connections also prevents some respondents from using trails, as well as some concern about maintenance, location, and lack of interest.

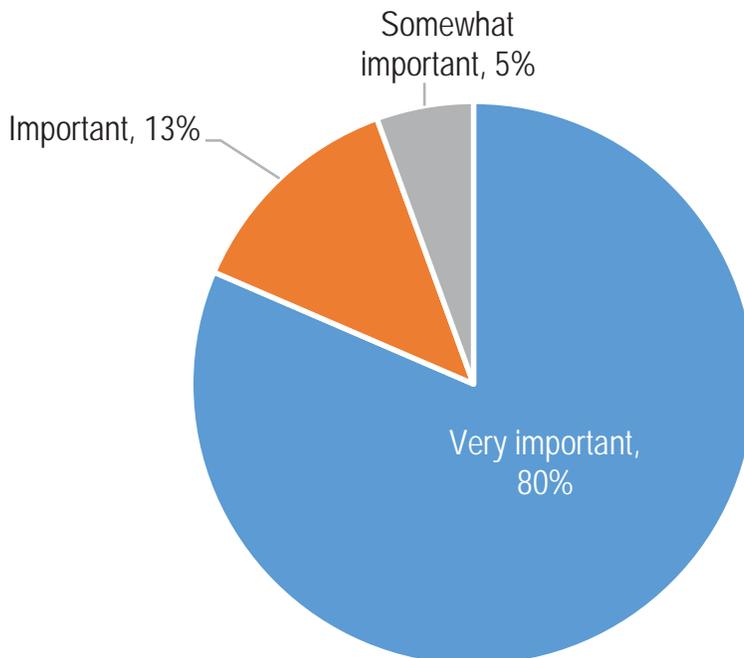
7. Which of the following would improve the existing trail system? (Check all that apply.)



Overall, survey participants are supportive of a variety of improvements to the existing trail system, such as increased access, trail connections and trail information. Wayfind and sign are also important to participants, as are connections to existing parks and paved multi-use paths. ADA compliance and fitness stations are least important to participants, but are still supported by 14-16% of those surveyed.

8. How would you rate the importance of natural open space and recreation to the community?

As shown above, most survey participants (80%), feel that natural open space and recreation is “very important” to the community. 13% found it “important”, and 5% “somewhat important”. No participants ranked natural open space and recreation as “not very important,” or “not at all important” to the community.



Questionnaire Findings

Overall, citizens that participated in this questionnaire value open space and recreation; 89% of participants rate natural open space and recreation as “very important” to the community. Questionnaire results indicate that community members support trails that link neighborhoods, community destinations, and other local and regional trails. Participants are supportive of an accessible and pleasant trail system, which they can take advantage of through exercise (88%), enjoyment of nature (85%), recreation (48%) and family activities (42%). A Cottonwood Riverfront Trails and Recreation Master Plan that creates connection to community destinations and incorporates adequate marketing and publicity has the potential to draw users to the trail system, foster a sense of community pride, and enhance citizens’ and visitors’ overall health and well-being.

Response to Preliminary Alignment

Stakeholders and residents made their passion about the Riverfront Trails and Recreation System clear throughout the public outreach process that and their strong support of the benefits a good trail system can provide.

Participants were eager to share their ideas for making the trail system the best it can be, with the focus on key trail connections and linkages.

Another theme that came up throughout the Stakeholder Meetings and Public Open House was the need to match path type with site context. Participants value the feeling of being out in the wilderness, and want trail improvements to enhance their experience and enjoyment without endangering the naturalness of the area. Therefore, trails that go through natural areas should be constructed of packed dirt or decomposed granite, with subtle signage and minimal impact, whereas pathways through more urban settings may be paved pathways with safety railings, where necessary.

Key Findings

- Questionnaire participants were supportive of the inclusion of nature trails, trails that link to existing trails, and paved multi-use paths in the Master Plan, and they will be most likely to use wilderness trails and paved multi-use paths.
- Participants currently use trails primarily to exercise or enjoy nature.
- If participants do not use pathways or trails in Cottonwood, it is most likely because they do not know where they are located. Increased awareness through marketing outreach may bring new users to the trail system and current users to more trails.
- Participants believe that trail connections, trail information and wayfinding signs would improve the existing trail system, but they also value the feeling of wilderness in natural areas.

Questionnaire Comments

“Communities that have trails find that they are heavily used which increases public health and tourism!”

– Dr. Tom Heffernen

“I am a strong advocate for preserving open space and providing access to outdoor recreation for our citizens.”

– Terrence Pratt

“Awesome Stuff!”

– Amanda Large

“We need some paved multi-use trails for road bikes, mothers with strollers, elderly people...we have nothing like this!”

– Terri Clements

“Very Excited!”

– Heather Klomparens

“This is great work for the community!”

– Gabriela Gatto



Final Trail/Path Alignment



Land Ownership

The trail network passes through areas owned by several different organizations, including the City of Cottonwood, Arizona State Parks, and private landowners. Much of the trail network is located in and around Riverfront Park, a City-owned asset. Other trails, such as the alignment along Willard Street and 10th Street, propose a trail beside an active roadway, and will employ the public right-of-way. Other portions of the trail network, such as those along the Verde River, utilize State Parks land, and will therefore require coordination and partnership with Arizona State Parks. Additionally, the trail segments along Blowout Creek and Cottonwood Ditch pass through parcels of land belonging to many different private land owners. While the City doesn't plan to purchase or acquire land for this network, presenting a long term vision will help guide the City in future decision-making, and can establish a desirable corridor that may become feasible in the future.

Points of Connection/Destination

Considerable attention was given to public and stakeholder input, which created trail alignments of a regional nature, intended to connect core trails to nearby destination areas such as other trails networks, Dead Horse State Park, Tuzigoot National Monument, Tavaschi Marsh, the Cottonwood Recreation Center, and other destination points within the City.

Other noteworthy destinations within the trail network include the City-owned Riverfront Park, an area that has several different specific use areas, such as two 4-plex ball field complexes, a frisbee golf course, a skate park, a veterans' memorial site, ramadas, a playground, a dog park, a community garden and sand volleyball courts. A new wastewater treatment plant and interpretive center adjacent to the park is currently under construction. There is potential for educational story-telling elements associated with this treatment plant. The open lot west of the new wastewater treatment plant and the open space area south of 10th Street and north of the community garden is planned to offer open-space amenities including the possibility of soccer fields.

Additional destinations that can be reached from the trail network include the Cottonwood Recreation Center and Garrison Park, Cottonwood Elementary School, Cottonwood Middle School, Lions Club Park, City Hall Park, Cottonwood Kid's Park and Rodeo Arena, and Mingus Union High School.

Alignment

The primary goal of the Trail Master Plan is to connect Cottonwood community assets to the existing network of surrounding trails. The proposed alignment was based on existing trails, specific destinations and public land availability. It strives to create a variety of loops, trail types and lengths within the trail network. The trail system will be attractive to a wide range of users while capitalizing on available scenic, recreational and activity areas throughout the City. The system addresses many facets of an urban and natural resource trail system. The Master Plan is separated into three phases for implementation. Each of these phases achieve separate goals for different portions of the City. Phase I, the core of the trail network, connects the Verde River to Riverfront Park and Old Town Cottonwood, a district of restaurants, retail, and civic buildings along Main Street. Phase II seeks to connect major community assets to the elements in Phase I. Phase III activates existing transportation corridors to enhance multi-modal connections throughout the City. As a whole the phasing of the final trail alignment will allow the City of Cottonwood to prioritize development, pursue funding and allocate resources for years to come.

Phasing

Phase I: Tourism and Natural Trail Connections

Phase I, featuring tourism and natural trail connections, will be a starting point for tourist and residents to explore the Verde River and surrounding recreation areas. (See Appendix A: Trail System Phasing Map - Overall Phasing). Phase I consists of soft-surface trails in natural areas and hard surface paths along existing neighborhood streets linking Riverfront Park, Old Town Cottonwood, Dead Horse Ranch State Park, the Verde River and Tuzigoot National Monument. These trails will serve walkers, hikers, mountain bikers, anglers, kayaker, bird watchers and equestrian users. Phase I connects to several existing trails within Dead Horse Ranch State Park to the north that lead to many recreation opportunities. It also connects to the larger regional trail system via the Lime Kiln Trail. Coordination with Arizona State Parks will be key for the development of Phase I.

The goal of Phase I is to connect Old Town to the Verde River, Riverfront Park to the Verde River and Old Town to Riverfront Park. Primary coordination items are:

- Jail Trail Loop connection;
- New trails along neighborhood streets;
- Tuzigoot trail connectivity; and,
- The connection of Riverfront Park to Verde River.



A critical connection for Phase I is the development of Yavapai Street between 1st Street and 2nd Street as a paved path dedicated to pedestrian use. This dedicated street segment will act as a transitional boundary between the natural resource portion of the trail system and the urban area to the south. It also will provide a low stress bicycle and pedestrian connection between Riverfront Park and Old Town Cottonwood. This section of Yavapai Street could be used as a special event area. It will also finish a larger loop of Jail Trail via 2nd Street and Pinal Street.

Phase II: Community Connections

The primary goal of Phase II is to connect the Cottonwood Recreation Center, a busy, recreational hub of the Cottonwood community, to Phase I of the master planned trails development, i.e. Old Town, Riverfront Park and the Verde River connections. Phase II, featuring community connections, will extend the connections made in Phase I to major community destinations such as the Cottonwood Middle School, Cottonwood Elementary School, Verde Valley Medical Center, and the Verde Valley Fairgrounds. This system will consist of paved trails, bicycle lanes and enhanced sidewalks to serve the urban portion of the trail system. Pedestrians and other off-street recreation user types will use the paved trails and enhanced sidewalks separate from traffic. Confident bicyclists will use bike lanes on roadways to traverse this portion of the trail system. Phase II will connect existing recreational infrastructure to the community at large. The alignment provides access to Garrison Park, Cottonwood Recreation Center, Cottonwood Public Library and Cottonwood Kids Park. Two critical connections to Phase I will be 10th street and Willard Street. 10th street will be the primary connection to River Front Park

and its developed amenities. Willard Street will provide a connection to Phase I and Old Town Cottonwood from the south.

Phase III: Urban Corridors

Phase III, featuring urban corridors, will consist of enhanced transportation corridors to facilitate pedestrian and bicyclist movement in the southern portion of Cottonwood. This phase connects urban and residential areas of Cottonwood to community destinations and the other trail system phases. Additionally, Phase III links the trail system to the natural areas southwest of the City, connecting to existing unmapped trails in Prescott National Forest. Two important trail alignments are the Blowout Creek to Mingus Avenue and the Camino Real connection to Mingus Union High School. The Blowout Creek alignment provides a natural trail that runs along Blowout Creek on the exterior of Cottonwood Ranch and connects to Mingus Avenue. Cottonwood Ranch, an existing residential development, has its own existing trail system and community park within the subdivision. The trail along Blowout Creek will connect Cottonwood Ranch to the rest of the Trails Master Plan system. The Camino Real to Mingus Union High School connection will solve a major need for area residents. Currently there is no sidewalk along Camino Real. Students using this corridor to commute to Mingus Union High School have to walk along the undeveloped right-of-way. The proposed trail along Camino Real will provide a safe and efficient route for students to walk or bike to school. The proposed trail ends at the city limits south of the high school. Further development of this trail will need to be coordinated with Yavapai County.



Cross Section Types in Different Segments of Alignment

Section 1: Pinal Street between 3rd and 4th Street



Section 1 shows a typical cross-section along Pinal Street between 3rd and 4th Street. The addition of a paved path creates a neighborhood trail that enhances wayfinding and access to the Riverfront area and Old Town as well as to other trailheads and trail connections in the area.

Section 2: Cottonwood Ditch



Section 2 shows an area of the path within Riverfront Park that runs along Cottonwood Ditch. Users can take this trail to the baseball fields, make a loop back around toward Old Town, or connect with existing trails along the Southern bank of the Verde River. A vegetated buffer creates a pleasant microclimate for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Section 3: 10th Street at South Park Entry



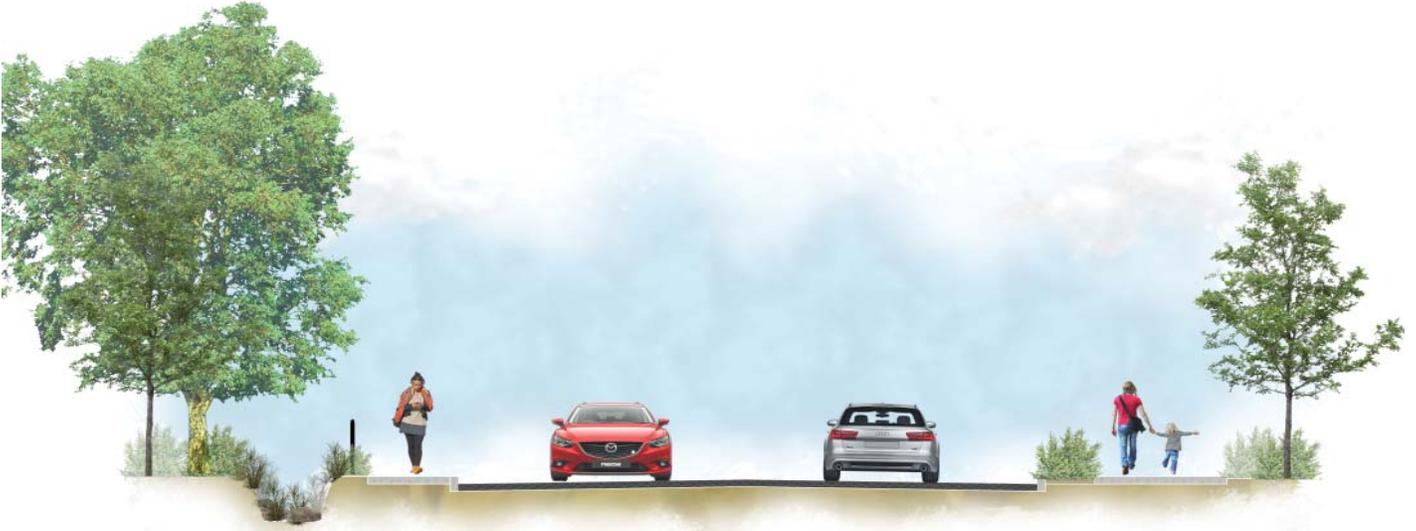
Section 3 shows a portion of 10th Street near the Southern entrance to Riverfront Park. A separated hard surface path allows recreational users such as roller bladers, skateboarders, pedestrians and bicyclists to safely enter the park and access other trails. A vegetated buffer provides shade and visual interest.

Section 4: 10th Street North



Section 4 shows 10th Street toward the North of Riverfront Park near where a trail crossing takes recreational users to the Verde River. Enhanced sidewalks on the Southern side of the road provides access to trail connections, and a vegetated buffer provides shade and ecosystem services.

Section 5: Mingus Ave



Section 5 shows Mingus Ave adjacent to Cottonwood Middle School where an enhanced pedestrian area allows users to navigate to community destinations or to other paths and trails around the City. Sidewalks that are 8-12 feet wide allow pedestrians, bicyclists, wheelchairs, and strollers to share the space in safety and comfort.

Section 6: Camino Real at Mingus High School



Section 6 is located along Camino Real, adjacent to Mingus Union High School. This trail gives users separation and safety from vehicles on the road.

Section 7: Blowout Creek at Cottonwood Ranch



Section 7 is located along Blowout Creek, adjacent to the Cottonwood Ranch residential development. This path connects residents to the natural assets in their community, giving them access to a wide range of recreation opportunities other local destinations.

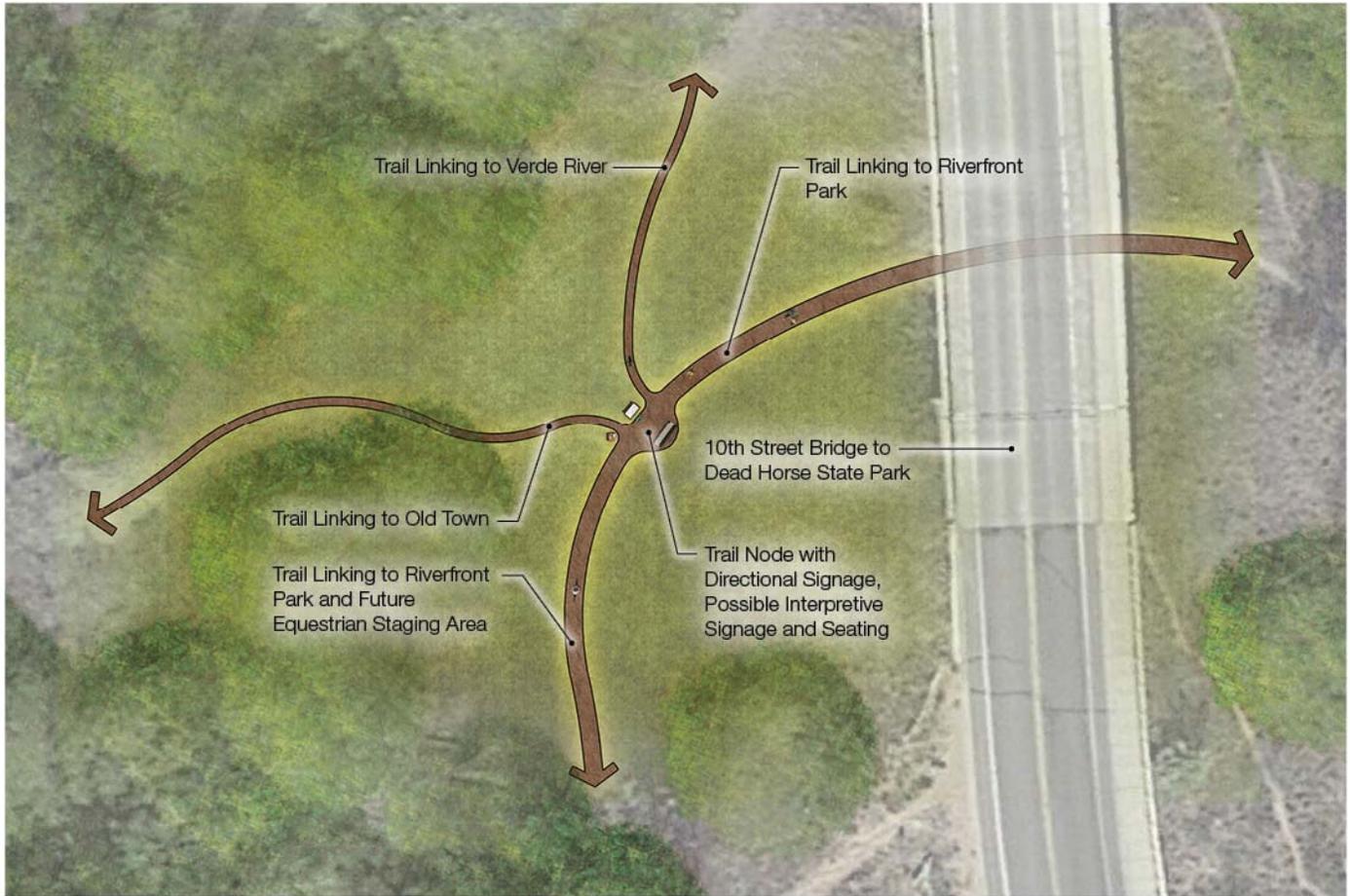
Section 8: Willard Street



Section 8 shows a typical cross-section along Willard Street between Cottonwood Elementary School and Main Street. The enhanced sidewalk would allow safe passage for pedestrians and bicyclists despite the steep grade, but would require a portion of the hillside to be filled to create a stable surface.

Trail/Trailhead Focus Areas

Soft Trail Node



SCALE



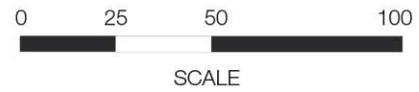
Existing



Proposed

Trail/Trailhead Focus Areas

Trailhead at Pinal and 4th Streets



Existing



Proposed

Trail/Trailhead Focus Areas

Entrance to Riverfront Park at 10th Street



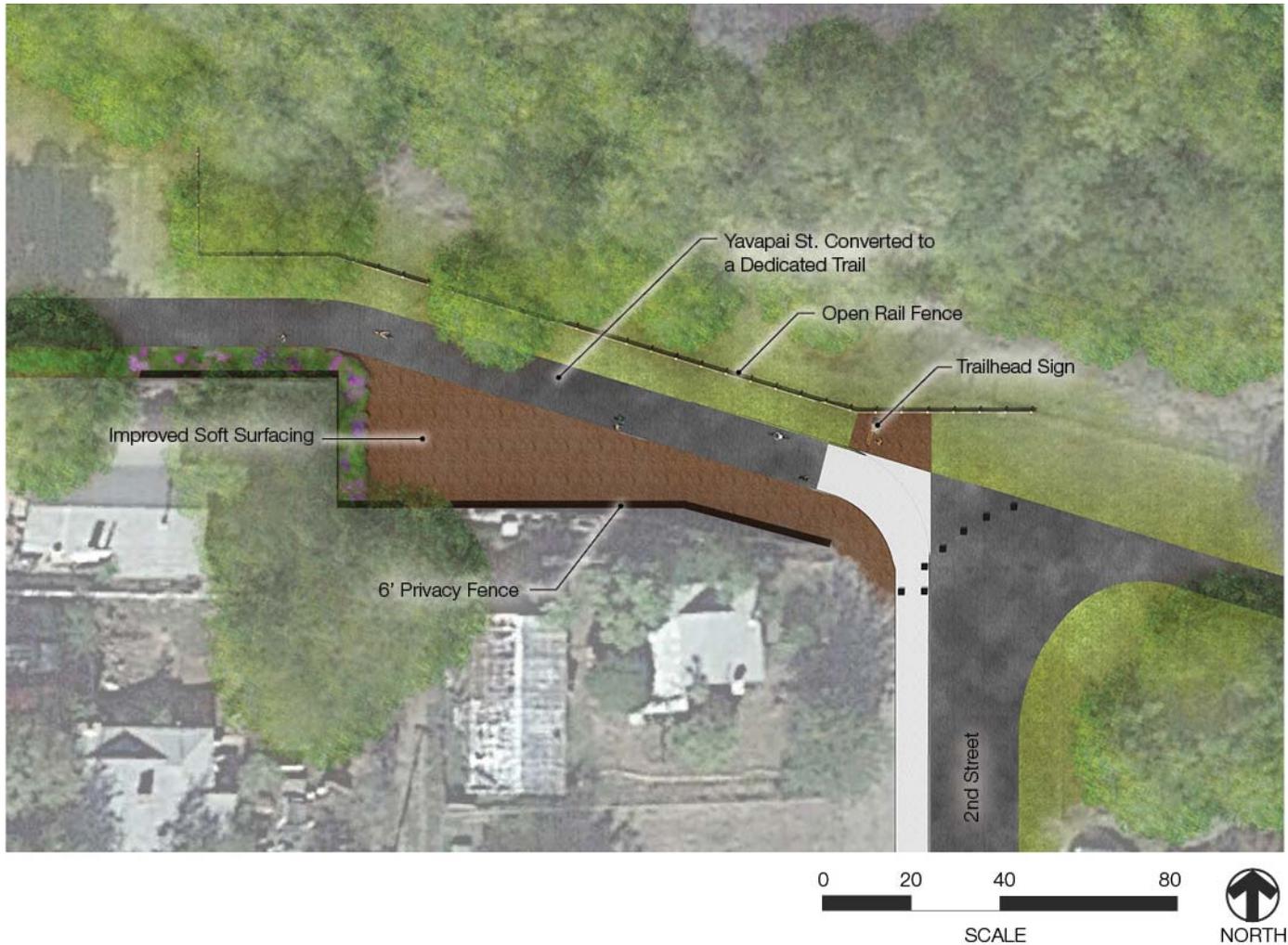
Existing



Proposed

Trail/Trailhead Focus Areas

Trail Connection at Yavapai Street

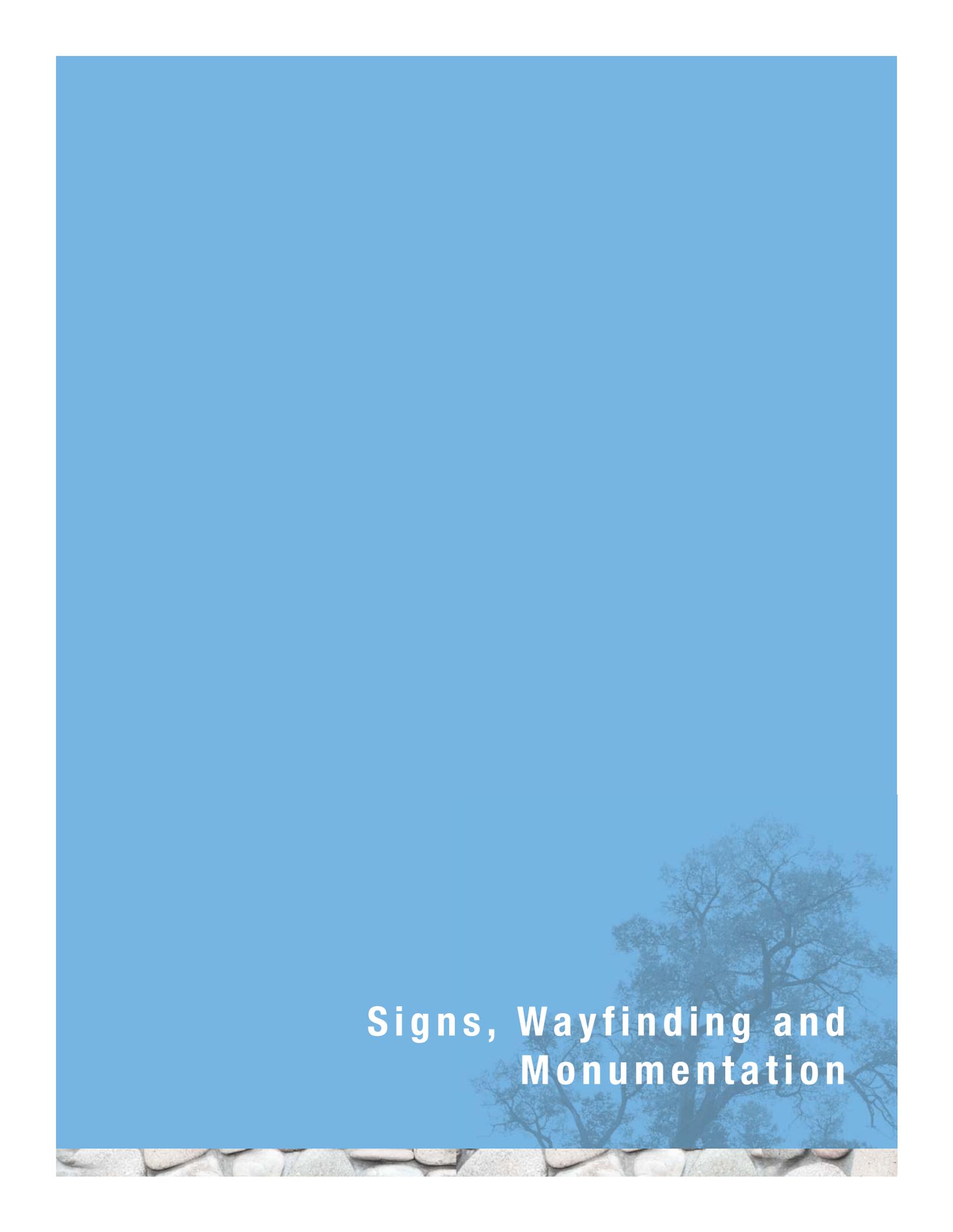


Existing



Proposed





**Signs, Wayfinding and
Monumentation**

Introduction

A family of signage, wayfinding and monumentation specific to the City of Cottonwood and the adjacent trail system has been developed to promote trail use, branding of the trail system, community support and visitor participation. An easily identifiable trail system with a consistent theme will serve as the glue for the Cottonwood Riverfront Trails and Recreation Master Plan.

The City of Cottonwood has a strong design vernacular made up of an eclectic composition of red and buff sandstone, dark basalt and light limestone river rock from the nearby Verde River. These locally sourced river rocks have been used as a regional building material for over a century. The proposed signage and monumentation incorporates this stone as well as weathered steel and concrete accents. These materials have been used, and can be seen, in the historic buildings and mining operations around town, but have also been included as part of The City of Cottonwood's recently constructed signage and streetscape enhancements. The proposed trail signage pays homage to the City's past and present design vernacular.

Signs and monumentation have been located along the community-wide trail system for long-range planning. Suggested locations are found in Appendix A, Trail System Signage Map - North Section and Trail System Signage Plan - South Section.

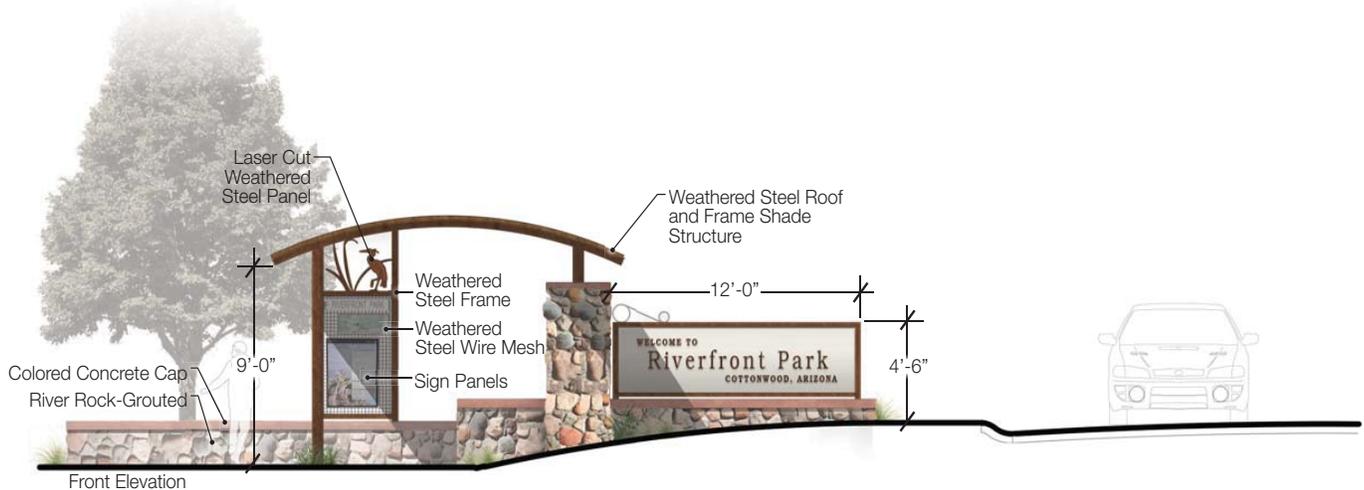
1a: Park Entry Trailhead and Sign

The Park Entry Trailhead and Sign will be located at the south park entry on 10th Street. This important location is where the future Cottonwood Ditch Trail intersects with the future trail along 10th street. It will greet and orient visitors entering Riverfront Park by vehicle, bike, and foot. This trailhead will include a park welcome sign, shade structure, picnic table, litter receptacle, bicycle parking, and signage including maps to create a great inviting and informative space for trail users.

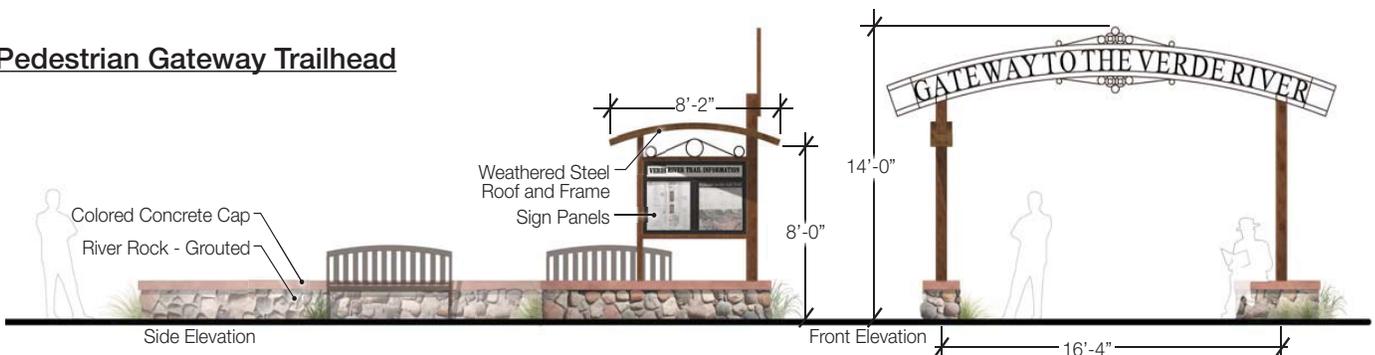
1b: Pedestrian Gateway Trailhead

This fourteen foot arched gateway will be able to be seen from Pinal Street, just off of Main Street and will greet visitors arriving by foot and bicycle. Seating and shade elements allow users to examine the trail map or rest and plan a route before crossing the ditch on a new pedestrian bridge connecting to a widened trail that leads to Riverfront Park. Vehicular parking and bike parking shall be available at this trailhead.

1a. Park Entry Trailhead Sign



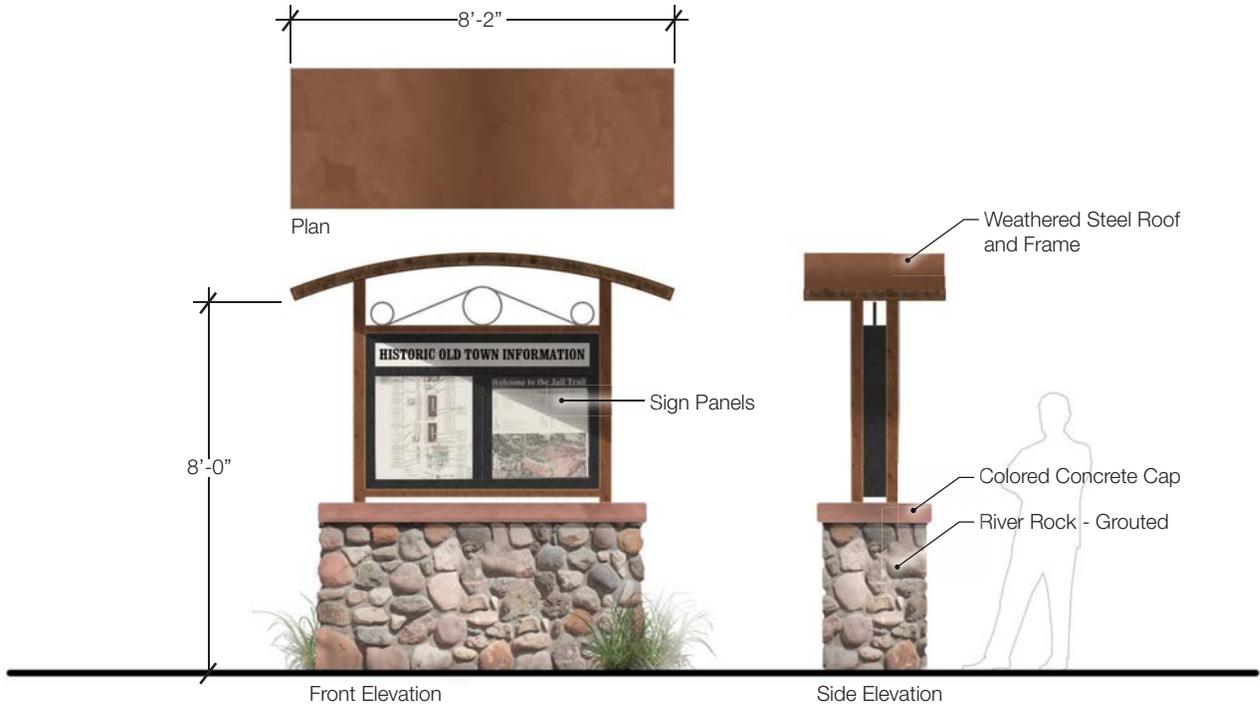
1b. Pedestrian Gateway Trailhead



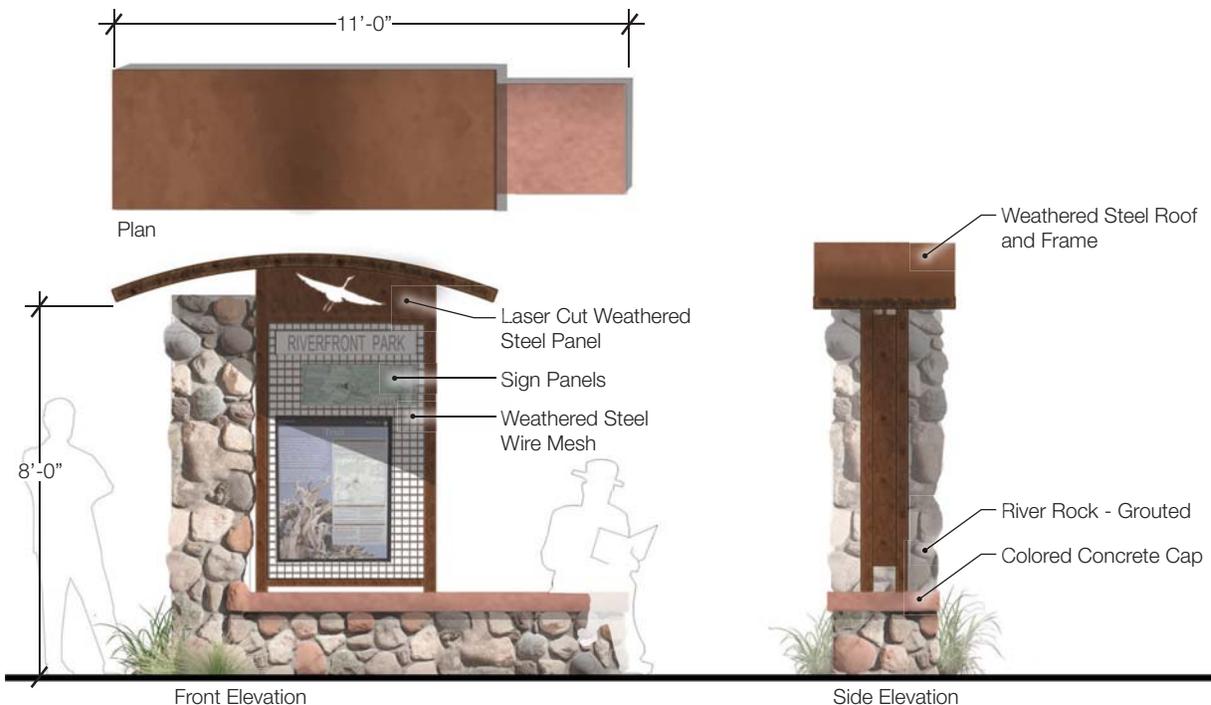
2a and 2b: Major Trailhead Signs

These signs will be located at the entrance to major trailheads. Two variations are illustrated here, and either may be considered at a trailhead depending on the location. Sign type 2a is more urban in character and may be considered in urban settings. Sign type 2b is less urban in character and may be considered in more natural settings. Both signs shall serve as major trailhead monuments and shall provide trail maps and other pertinent information depending on the location of the sign.

2a. Major Trailhead Sign A



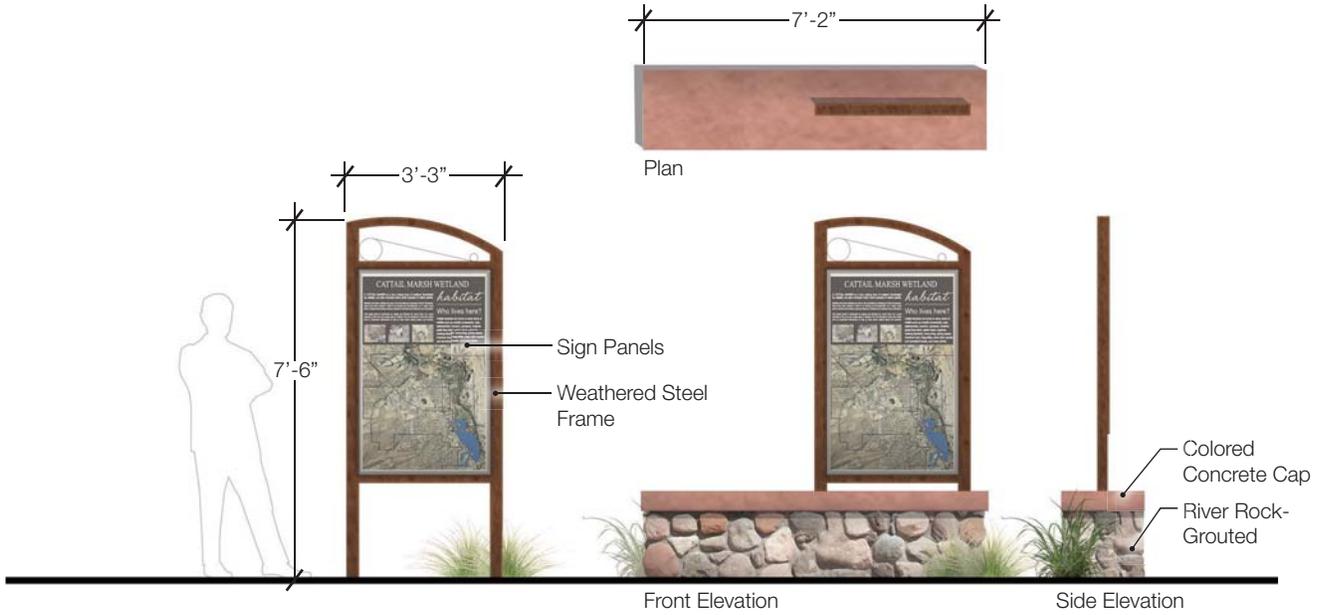
2b. Major Trailhead Sign B



3a and 3b: Minor Trailhead Signs

Signs 3a and 3b will be located at minor trailheads. Sign 3a is anticipated to be in more urban areas and Sign 3b is anticipated in more natural settings. The signs are large enough to incorporate maps as well as interpretive information and small enough to fit in tight areas. They are also tall enough to be seen from long distances.

3a. Minor Trailhead Sign A



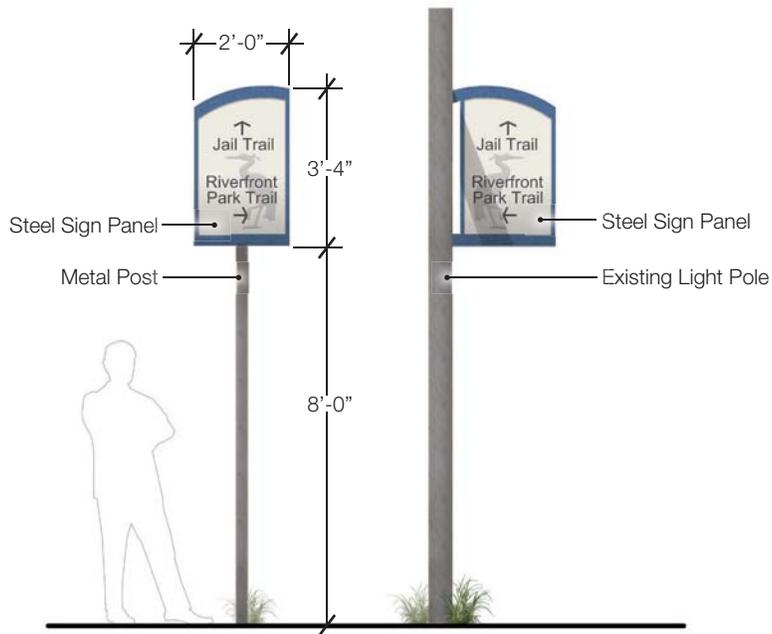
Note: Several variations of the signs are illustrated. These variations may be considered depending on the location.

3b. Minor Trailhead Sign B



Note: Several variations of the signs are illustrated. These variations may be considered depending on the location.

4. Directional Sign



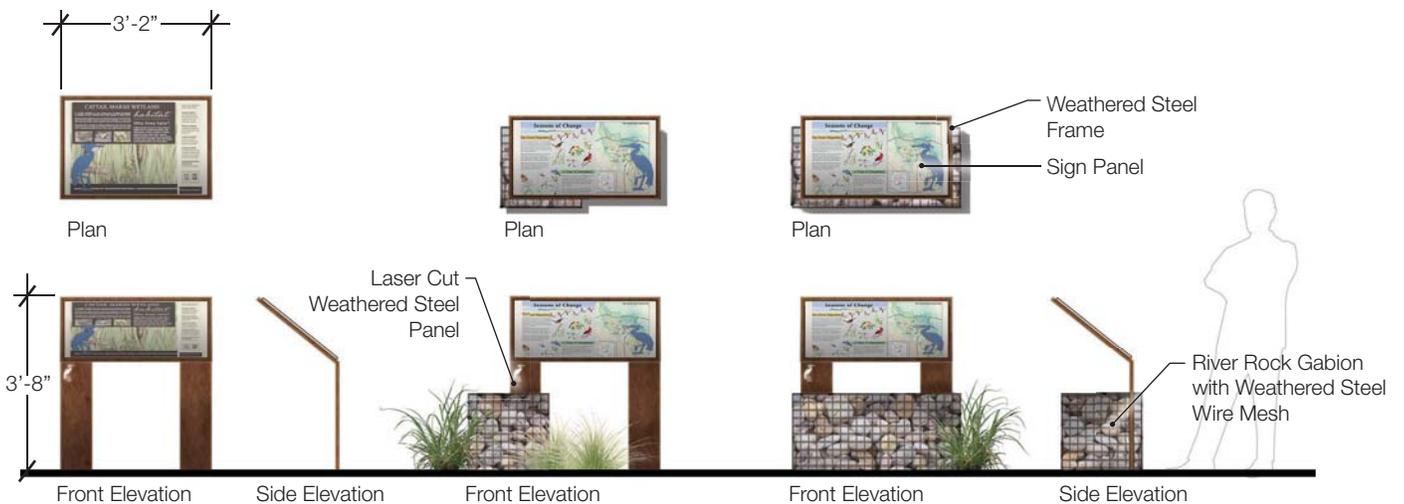
4: Directional Signs

Directional signs are meant to orient trail and path users. These may lead users from nearby areas onto a trail or path, or they may warn users of a change-of-direction in a trail or path they are already on. These signs shall have a special character (shape, color, logo and font) that trail users will easily recognize as a dedicated trail sign.

5: Interpretive Signs

Interpretive signs provide a high-quality educational experience without the maintenance that may be required or other signage types. Additionally, interpretive signs have a consistent message that is available to many visitors at one time, can be viewed at the visitors' convenience, and are available 24 hours a day. On the Jail Trail along the Verde River interpretive signage may include information on the Cottonwood Ditch, the native plants and animals, fishing information, the Verde River history, and human impacts on this rare Arizona riparian area. Several variations are illustrated here. The versions that include gabion are envisioned to be in the natural areas.

5. Interpretive Sign



Note: Several variations of the signs are illustrated. These variations may be considered depending on the location.

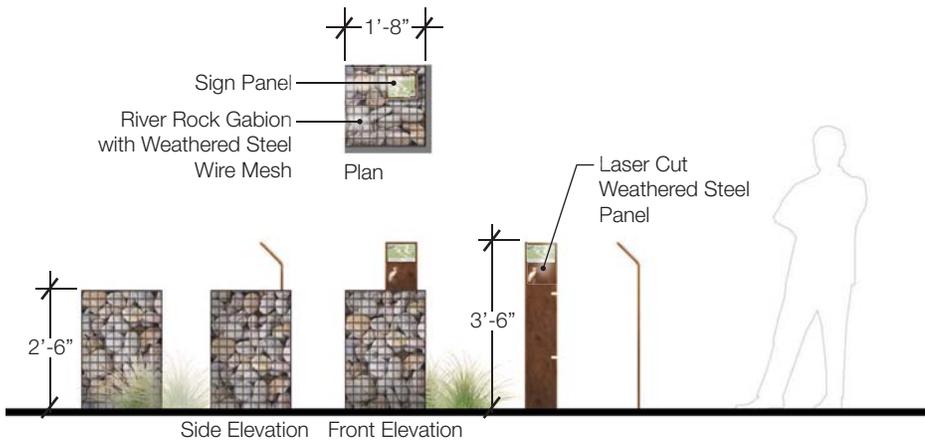
6: Map Sign

A map sign is a subtle, low-impact way to orient users along a trail or path. Several variations are envisioned. The sign without the gabion may be used in tight urban locations, the sign/gabion combination may be used in more rural locations in need of clear direction, the simple gabion without the sign, may be used to simply indicate a trail location in areas where the trail is hard to follow.

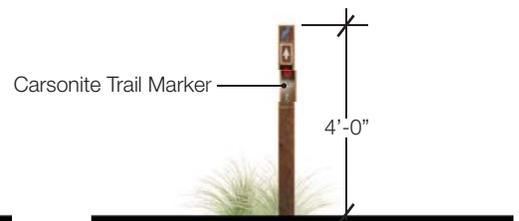
7: Trail Marker

Carsonite trail markers are a simple and inexpensive way to help guide people through the maze of trails along the Verde River corridor and other natural trail areas. It is anticipated that these markers shall be installed wherever there is a question of the trail direction and at minor natural trail intersections. They may be used for directional signage or for indicating areas that are off limits. A cottonwood leaf or Blue Heron may be used as a symbol at the top of the marker for familiarity and consistency.

6. Map Sign



7. Trail Marker



Note: Several variations of the signs are illustrated. These variations may be considered depending on the location.

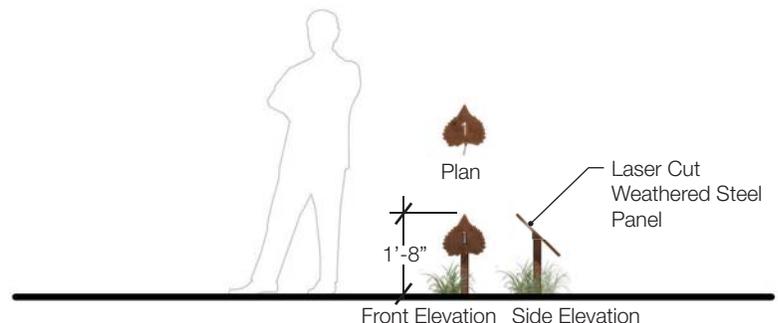
8: Interpretive Key

Interpretive numbered keys made of weathered steel in the shape of cottonwood leaves once dotted the Jail Trail. Educational pamphlets referring to these numbered keys were available for self-guided tours to learn about the unique plants, animals and history of the area. Major flooding and vandalism have since taken out many of these signs. This plan proposes a reintroduction of this sign system. Instead of paper pamphlets, however, it is envisioned that people will be able to use their smart phones to access a link off of the City of Cottonwood's website that will provide the keyed information. This information may be text and/or a narrative.

Key Findings

This sign family designed specifically for the City of Cottonwood and the adjacent areas shall assist in the creation of a cohesive, dynamic trail system that will be enjoyed for generations to come. With a multitude of options, this sign family will help to meet the needs of all the users of the trail system.

8. Interpretive Key





Recommendations

Recommendations

The prioritized action plan and funding recommendations included in this section are aimed specifically at providing a means to implement the Cottonwood Riverfront Trails and Recreation Master Plan over time, and address the following issues: incremental trails development as funding becomes available, critical connections, parks master planning, community assets, transportation improvements, new development, regional partners, and funding mechanisms.

Action Priorities

The list below prioritizes the recommended actions needed to develop and implement the City of Cottonwood Trails Master Plan.

1. Secure funding for trails development

- a. Develop an impact fee/development fee program as a funding source for trail development.
- b. Pursue Land and Water Conservation Fund and federal transportation fund grants for trails through the State of Arizona.
- c. Pursue federal Community Development Block Grants for trail development in areas of low to moderate household income.

2. Connect Old Town to the Verde River

- a. Develop and market the Jail Trail as a major feature for Old Town Cottonwood.
 - i. The trail is an important recreation gateway to Verde River, Dead Horse Ranch State Park, Tuzigoot National Monument and Regional Trail System.
- b. Advertise the Jail Trail in Old Town Cottonwood with signage and a public awareness campaign.
- c. Continue to improve the Jail Trail and its trailhead facilities.
 - i. Improve connections to the Verde River.
 - ii. Make the initial section of the trail accessible to users of all physical abilities.

3. Connect Riverfront Park to the Verde River

- a. Make trail connections to existing trails in Dead Horse Ranch State Park.
- b. Improve recreation facilities and their connection to the existing trail system through the development of a City Council approved Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
- c. Create connections for urban residents to the south of Riverfront Park via trails along Cottonwood Ditch.

4. Connect Riverfront Park to Old Town Cottonwood

- a. Develop trail improvements connecting Yavapai Street, 2nd Street, Pinal Street and 5th Street to Riverfront Park.

5. Develop a comprehensive and City-wide Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

- a. Maximize park facilities' integration with trail system.

6. Create connections to community assets

- a. Establish trail connections to the following destinations:
 - i. Cottonwood Recreation Center
 - ii. Verde Valley Medical Center
 - iii. Cottonwood Elementary School
 - iv. Cottonwood Middle School
 - v. Verde Valley Fairgrounds.

7. Integrate trail development with transportation improvements.

8. Work with new development to create the trail system through the City of Cottonwood's planning process.

9. Coordinate with regional partners to develop trail connections outside of Cottonwood City Limits

- a. Focus on connections to Prescott National Forest and recreation areas to the south and west.



Funding Recommendations

There are many ways to fund trail development. There are a variety of grants at the state and national level that support these initiatives. In addition to grant funding, partnerships with local organizations and businesses build community support. The following grants opportunities are available to help develop the Cottonwood trails system:

1. The Recreational Trails Program

In late 2015 the federal Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act was passed. There are three components to FAST. One is the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) that uses fuel tax for trails programs. Eligible projects include: maintenance and restoration of existing recreational trails; development and rehabilitation of trailside and trailhead facilities and trail linkages for recreational trails; purchase and lease of recreational trail construction and maintenance equipment; construction of new recreational trails (with specific requirements when federal land is involved); acquisition of easements and fee simple title for recreational trail corridors; and assessment of trail conditions. States are encouraged to work with qualified youth and conservation or service corps.

RTP is the foundation for state trail programs across the country and awards are given in the following categories:

- Maintenance and Rehabilitation – maintaining, repairing damage to, or upgrading the quality of a trail to improve the trail experience, increase user safety, and/or enhance protection of the environment, including wildlife.
- Construction and Design – planning and building a trail, portions of a trail (e.g., a bridge), or trail-related facilities (e.g., a trailhead, shelter, etc.).
- Public-Private Partnerships and Access to/Use of Public Lands – facilitating and/or encouraging cost-effective partnerships between public and private entities, especially to increase access to and use of federal, state and local public lands, including parks, forests and wildlife refuges.
- Community Linkage – providing and/or enhancing opportunities for trail-based recreation and transportation within or near local communities.
- Education and Communication – using a variety of established and/or technologically innovative communications tools (e.g., web sites, social media

and peer-to-peer information sharing) to increase environmental awareness, promote trail-related safety, encourage trail-related outdoor recreation and, overall, enhance trail use and enjoyment.

- Multiple-Use Management & Corridor Sharing – facilitating and/or encouraging the use of a trail corridor by more than one type of trail enthusiast, particularly those enthusiasts that do not ordinarily share trails or trail-related facilities.
- Accessibility Enhancement – facilitating and/or encouraging increased access to trail-related recreation opportunities for people with disabilities.
- Youth Conservation/Service Corps and Community Outreach – making effective use of the services and skills of qualified youth conservation or service corps and other community organizations as project partners and supporters.

Nomination forms are available early each year. Award winners are selected from projects nominated by public agencies, trail administrators, or other project sponsors. Projects must be completed in order to receive an award. The average project received approximately \$25,000 from the RTP program.

2. Transportation Alternatives Funds

The Transportation Alternatives component of FAST funds a variety of transportation-related community projects in 12 categories: Provision of facilities for pedestrians and bicycles; Provision of safety and educational activities for pedestrians and bicyclists; Acquisition of scenic easements and scenic or historic sites (including historic battlefields); Scenic or historic highway programs (including the provision of tourist and welcome center facilities); Landscaping and other scenic beautification; Historic preservation; Rehabilitation and operation of historic transportation buildings, structures, or facilities (including historic railroad facilities and canals); Preservation of abandoned railway corridors (including the conversion and use of the corridors for pedestrian or bicycle trails); Inventory, control, and removal of outdoor advertising; Archaeological planning and research; Environmental mitigation to address water pollution due to highway runoff or, reduce vehicle-caused wildlife mortality while maintaining habitat connectivity; Establishment of transportation museums. Trails and pedestrian/bicycle facilities have historically accounted for about half of TE funding.

Projects should do the following:

- Enhance a community socially, health wise, economically and culturally through recreational, educational, and cultural opportunities and experiences.
- Provide improved accessibility for persons with disabilities.
- Redevelop and re-purpose tracks and rails into a bicycle and pedestrian hub transformation from a disused single track rail line to a first class trail.
- Improve important ecological habitats.
- Linkage networks and connections – of communities and systems created from the various modes of transportation, multipurpose and interconnected.
- Provide safety for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Cooperate and Collaborate on various levels including coalition building.

The City of Cottonwood is a beautiful community with tremendous potential for an integrated trail system that promotes economic development through outdoor recreation-driven tourism as well as every day, multi-purpose recreational use for Cottonwood residents. The unique opportunity in Cottonwood to connect the Verde River to the urban fabric of the community and the parks and recreation system is one that community members and leaders over the last decade have recognized and promoted. The approved Cottonwood Riverfront Trails and Recreation Master Plan will support the community's development and investment in a regionally connected, locally supported trails system by leveraging the community's vision and support to draw in funding over the long term for prioritized trail development, to promote partnerships with local advocacy groups for trails planning insight and maintenance agreements and to build a long range vision that promotes Cottonwood as a high quality city for living, working and playing.







)))
NORRIS DESIGN



Appendix A

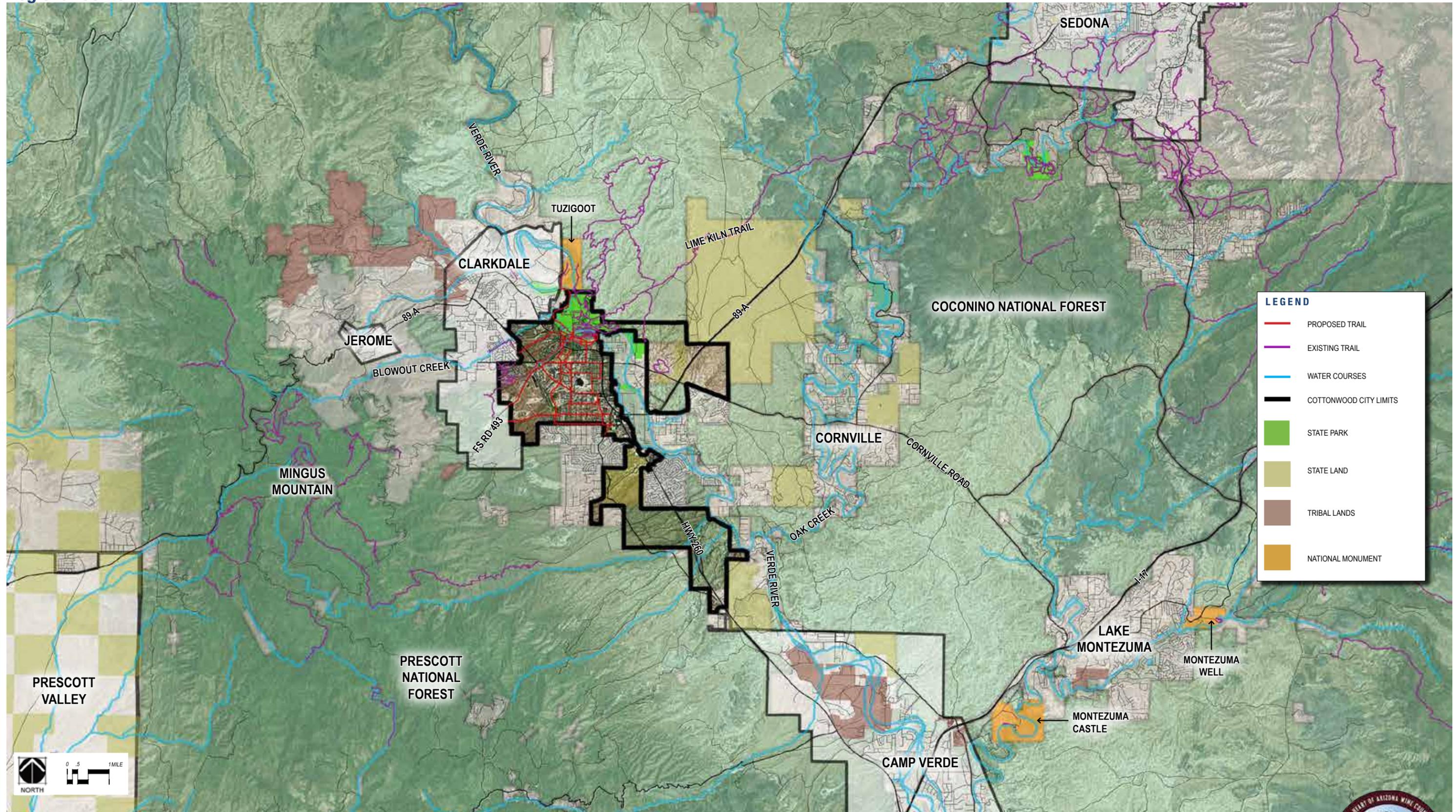


Map Index

1. Trail System Alignment Map - Regional Context
 2. Trail System Alignment Map - Overall Alignment
 3. Trail System Alignment Map - North Section
 4. Trail System Alignment Map - South Section
 5. Trail System Phasing Map - Overall Phasing
 6. Trail System Signage Map - North Section
 7. Trail System Signage Map - South Section
 8. Trail System Signage Types - Park Entry Trailhead and Sign & Pedestrian Gateway Trailhead
 9. Trail System Signage Types - Major Trailhead Sign A and B & Minor Trailhead Sign A and B
 10. Trail System Signage Types - Directional Sign, Interpretive Sign, Map Sign, Trail Marker, & Interpretive Key
-

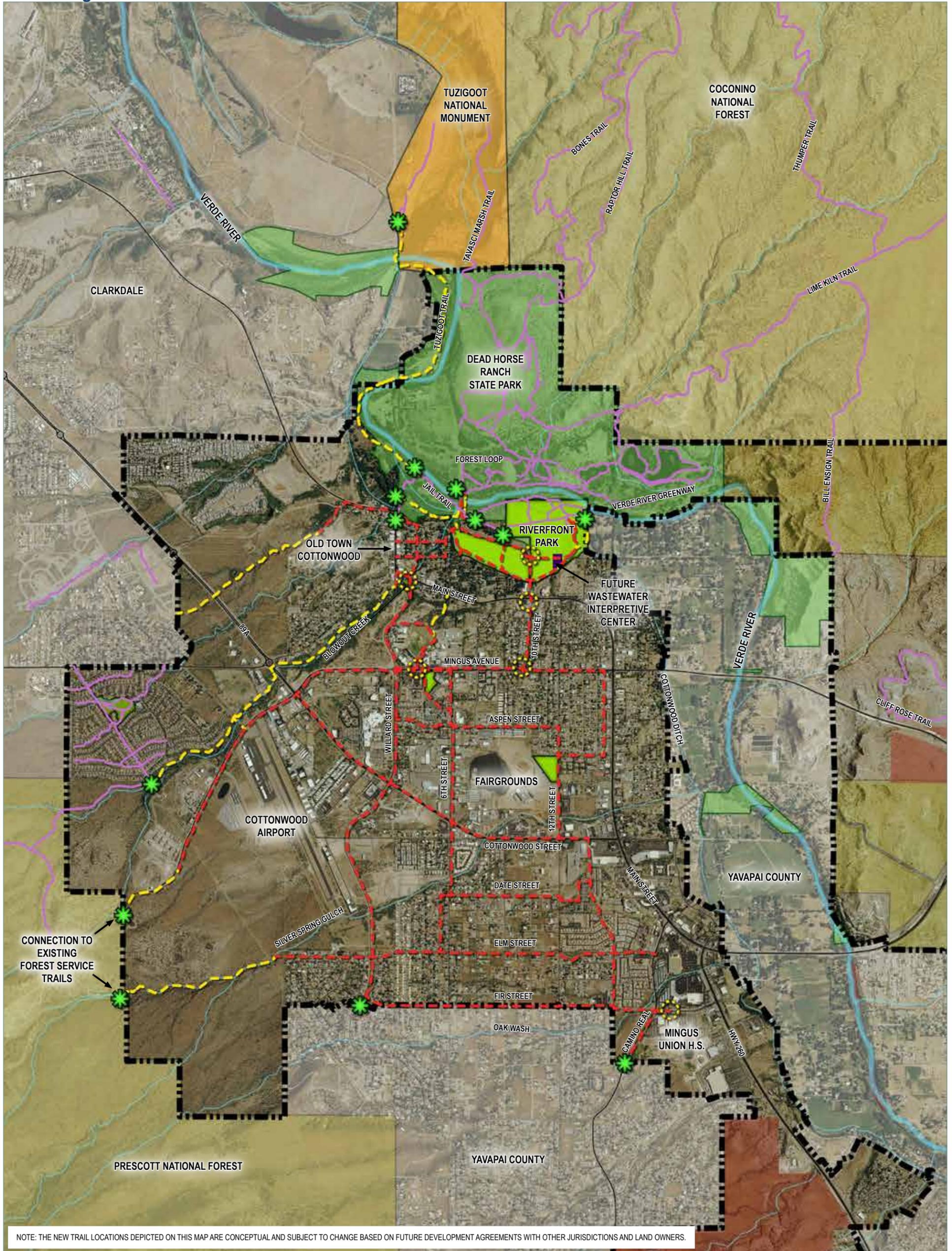
TRAIL SYSTEM ALIGNMENT MAP

Regional Context



TRAIL SYSTEM ALIGNMENT MAP

Overall Alignment



LEGEND

- | | | | | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|------------|-------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|
| PROPOSED HARD TRAIL | COTTONWOOD CITY LIMITS | STATE PARK | NATIONAL MONUMENT | NATIONAL FOREST | TRAIL CONNECTION |
| PROPOSED SOFT TRAIL | WATER COURSES | CITY PARK | STATE LAND | | ENHANCED PEDESTRIAN CROSSING |
| EXISTING TRAIL | | | | | |



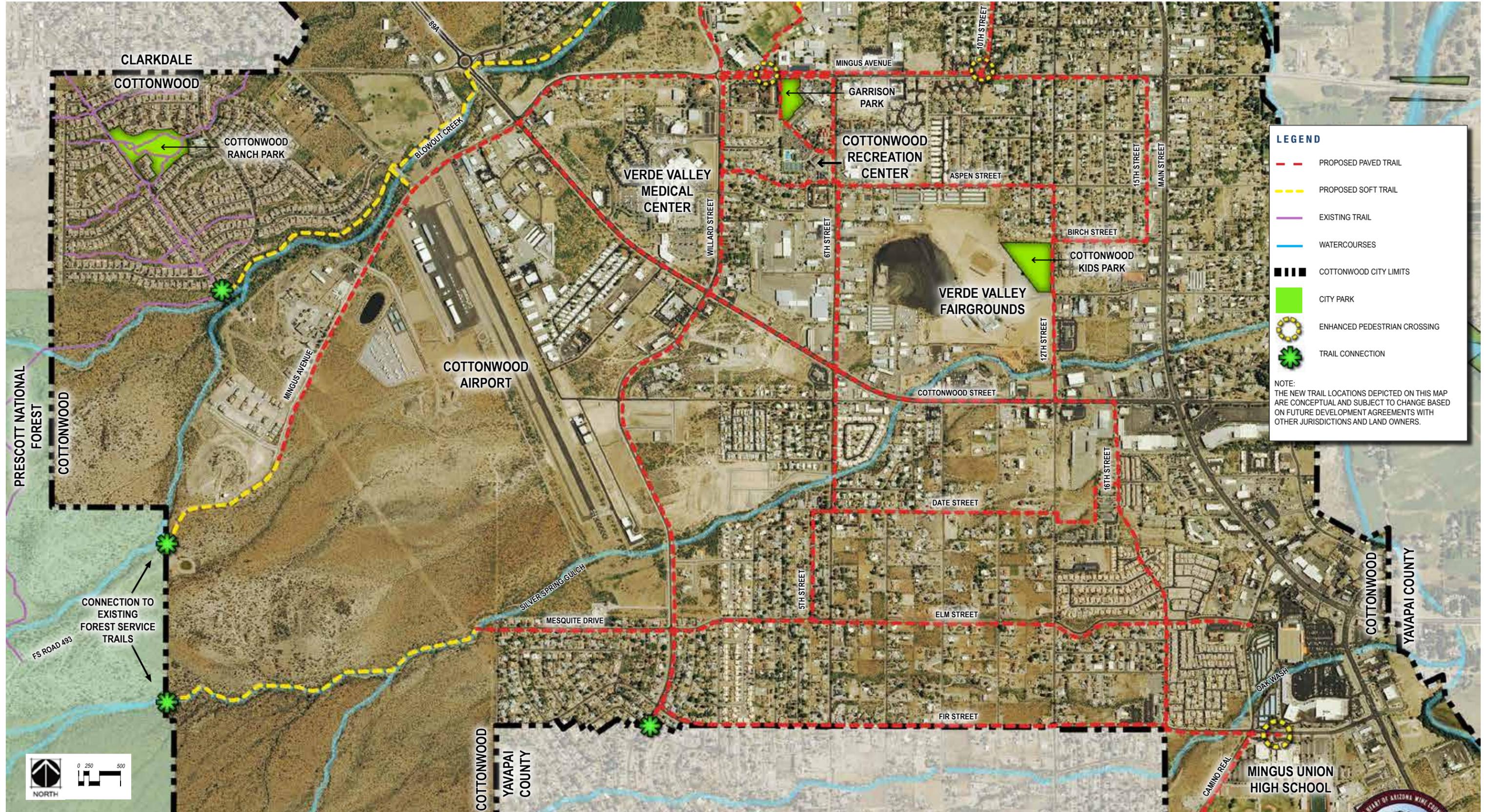
TRAIL SYSTEM ALIGNMENT MAP

North Section



TRAIL SYSTEM ALIGNMENT MAP

South Section



LEGEND

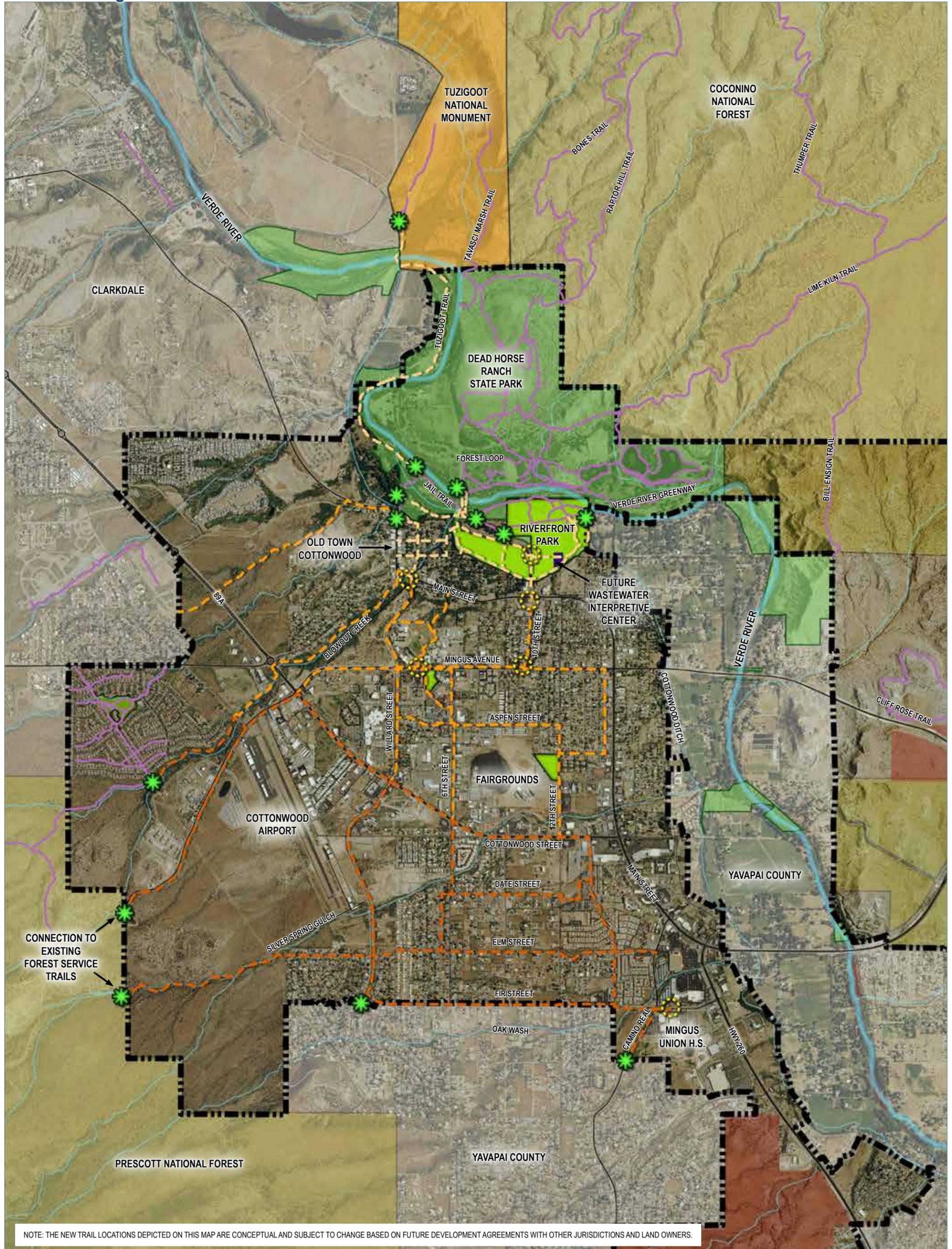
- PROPOSED PAVED TRAIL
- PROPOSED SOFT TRAIL
- EXISTING TRAIL
- WATERCOURSES
- COTTONWOOD CITY LIMITS
- CITY PARK
- ENHANCED PEDESTRIAN CROSSING
- TRAIL CONNECTION

NOTE:
THE NEW TRAIL LOCATIONS DEPICTED ON THIS MAP ARE CONCEPTUAL AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE BASED ON FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENTS WITH OTHER JURISDICTIONS AND LAND OWNERS.



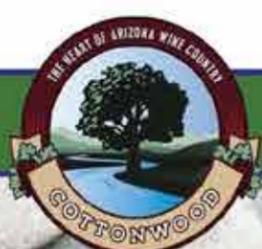
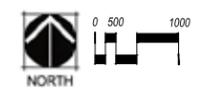
TRAIL SYSTEM PHASING MAP

Overall Phasing



LEGEND

PROPOSED TRAIL - PHASE 1	EXISTING TRAIL	STATE PARK	NATIONAL MONUMENT	NATIONAL FOREST	TRAIL CONNECTION
PROPOSED TRAIL - PHASE 2	COTTONWOOD CITY LIMITS	CITY PARK	STATE LAND		ENHANCED PEDESTRIAN CROSSING
PROPOSED TRAIL - PHASE 3	WATER COURSES				



SIGNAGE AND MONUMENTATION LOCATION PLAN

North Section



LEGEND

- PROPOSED PAVED TRAIL
- PROPOSED SOFT TRAIL
- EXISTING TRAIL
- WATERCOURSES
- COTTONWOOD CITY LIMITS
- STATE PARK
- CITY PARK
- ENHANCED PEDESTRIAN CROSSING
- * TRAIL CONNECTION

SIGN LEGEND

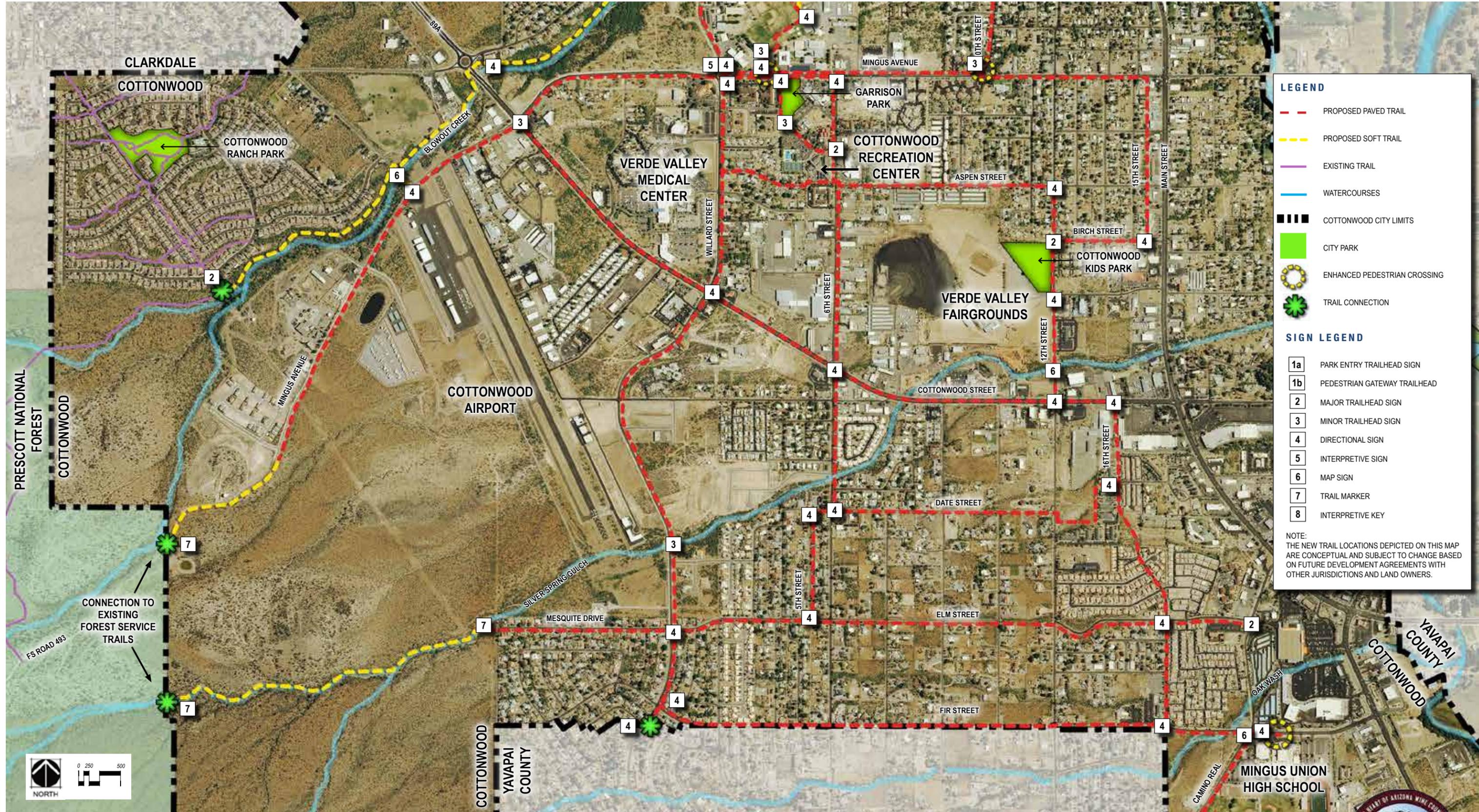
- 1a PARK ENTRY TRAILHEAD SIGN
- 1b PEDESTRIAN GATEWAY TRAILHEAD SIGN
- 2 MAJOR TRAILHEAD SIGN
- 3 MINOR TRAILHEAD SIGN
- 4 DIRECTIONAL SIGN
- 5 INTERPRETIVE SIGN
- 6 MAP SIGN
- 7 TRAIL MARKER
- 8 INTERPRETIVE KEY PLACED STRATEGICALLY ALONG THE JAIL TRAIL LOOP

NOTE: THE NEW TRAIL LOCATIONS DEPICTED ON THIS MAP ARE CONCEPTUAL AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE BASED ON FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENTS WITH OTHER JURISDICTIONS AND LAND OWNERS.



SIGNAGE AND MONUMENTATION LOCATION PLAN

South Section



LEGEND

- PROPOSED PAVED TRAIL
- PROPOSED SOFT TRAIL
- EXISTING TRAIL
- WATERCOURSES
- COTTONWOOD CITY LIMITS
- CITY PARK
- ENHANCED PEDESTRIAN CROSSING
- TRAIL CONNECTION

SIGN LEGEND

- 1a PARK ENTRY TRAILHEAD SIGN
- 1b PEDESTRIAN GATEWAY TRAILHEAD
- 2 MAJOR TRAILHEAD SIGN
- 3 MINOR TRAILHEAD SIGN
- 4 DIRECTIONAL SIGN
- 5 INTERPRETIVE SIGN
- 6 MAP SIGN
- 7 TRAIL MARKER
- 8 INTERPRETIVE KEY

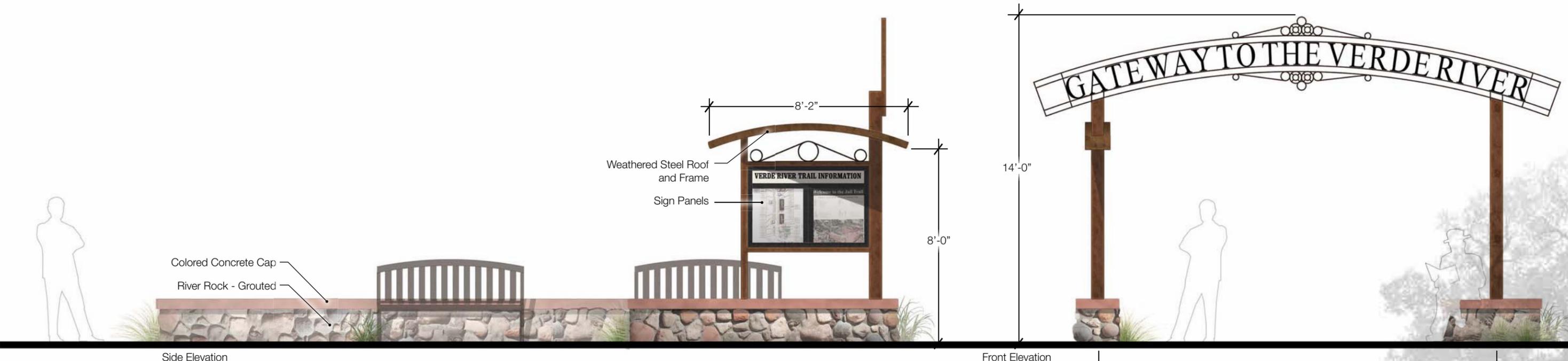
NOTE:
THE NEW TRAIL LOCATIONS DEPICTED ON THIS MAP ARE CONCEPTUAL AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE BASED ON FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENTS WITH OTHER JURISDICTIONS AND LAND OWNERS.



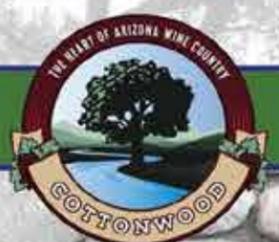
TRAIL SYSTEM SIGNAGE TYPES



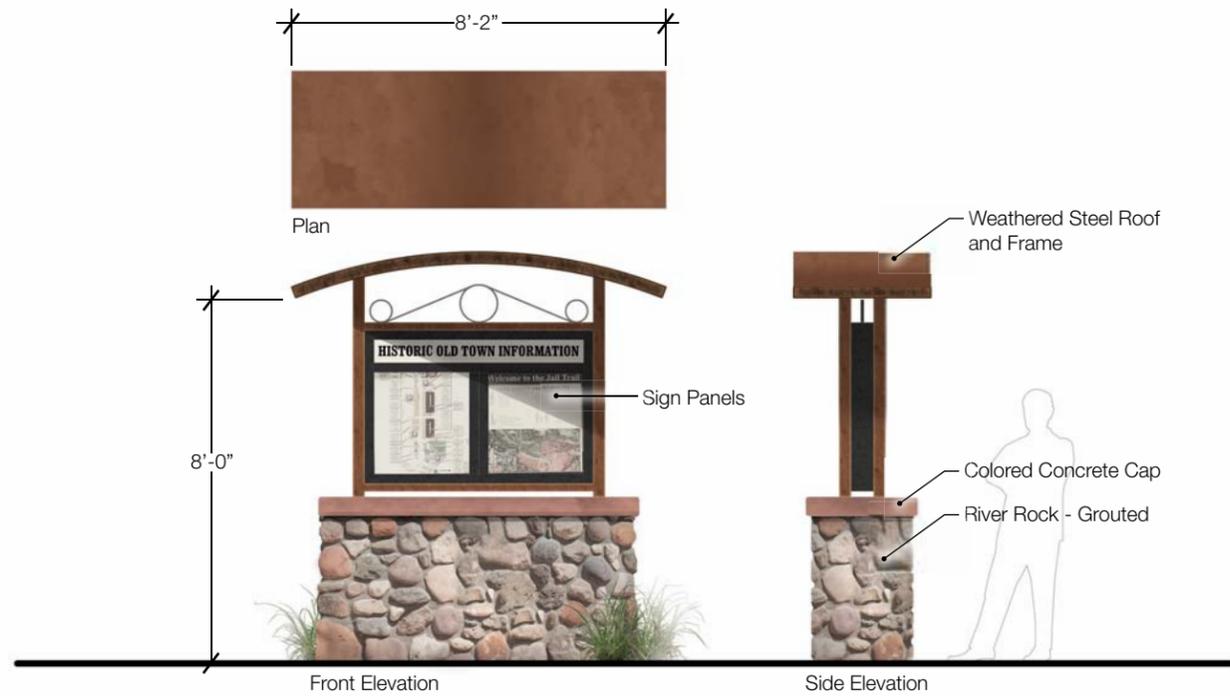
1a Park Entry Trailhead and Sign



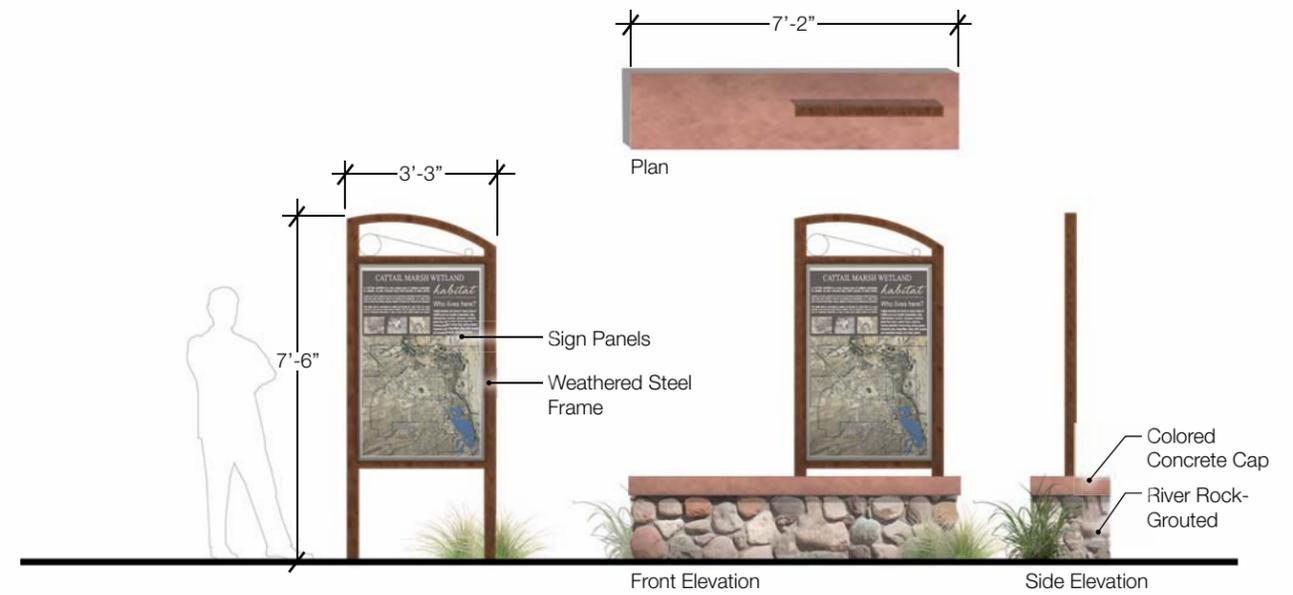
1b Pedestrian Gateway Trailhead



TRAIL SYSTEM SIGNAGE TYPES

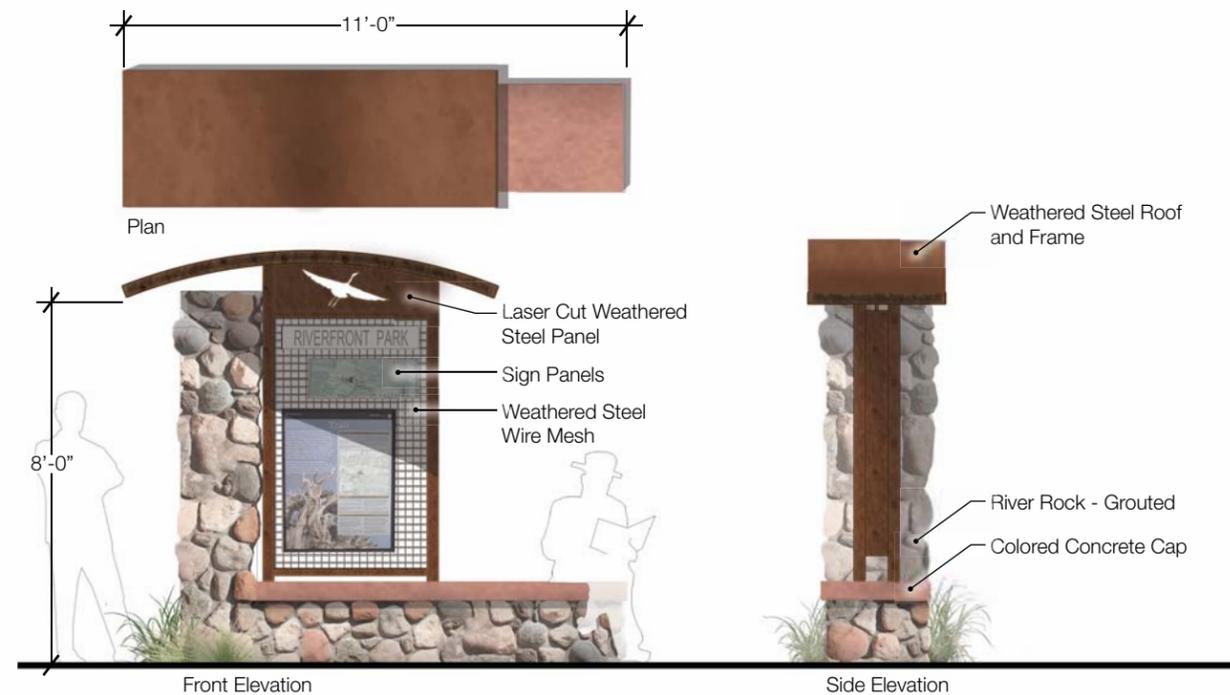


2a Major Trailhead Sign A

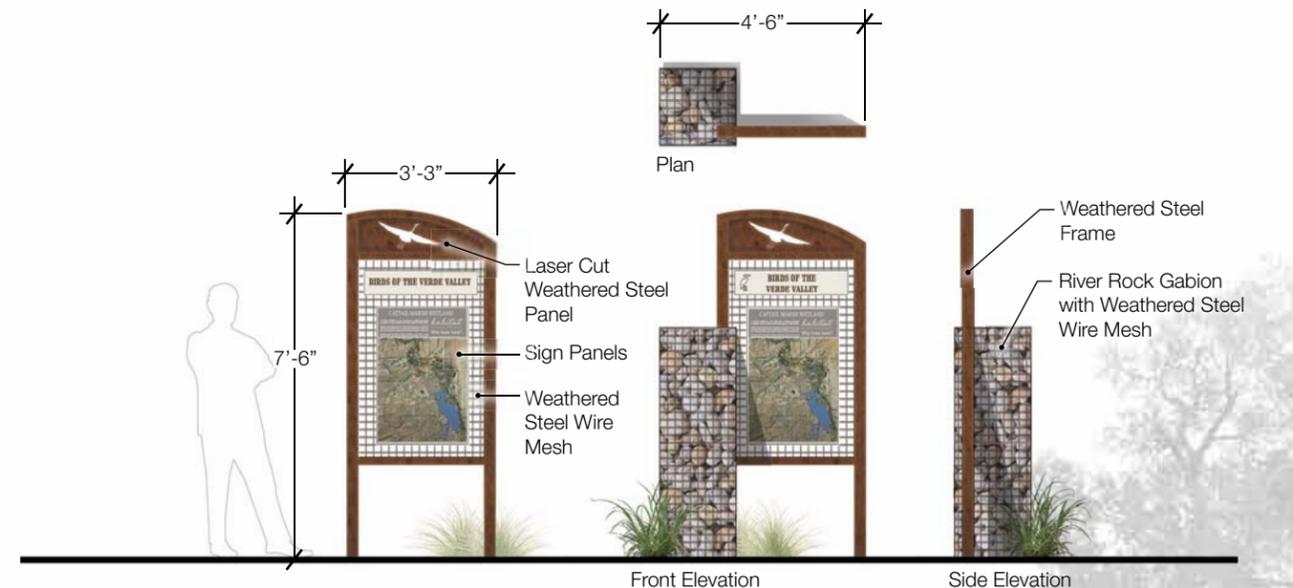


3a Minor Trailhead Sign A

Note: Several variations of the signs are illustrated. These variations may be considered depending on the location.



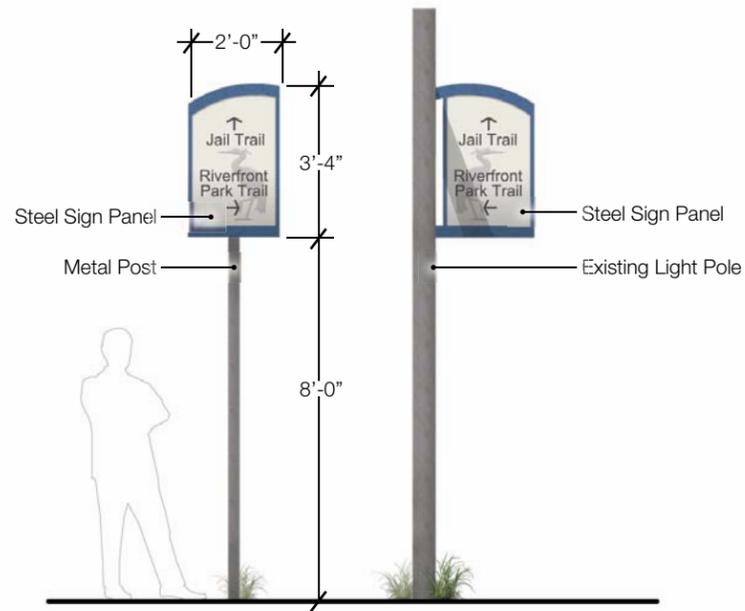
2b Major Trailhead Sign B



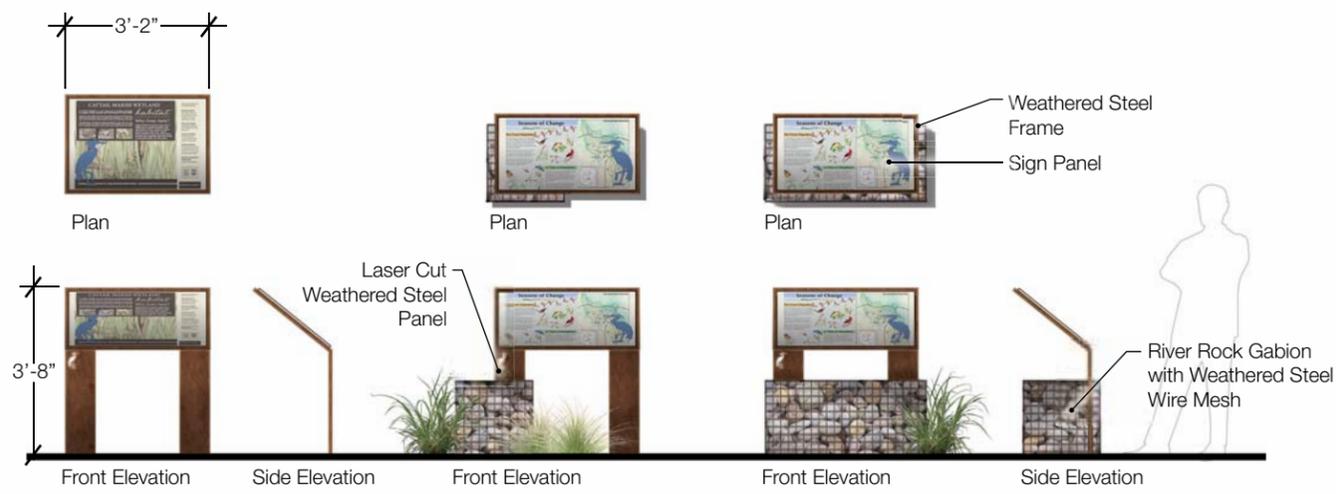
3b Minor Trailhead Sign B

Note: Several variations of the signs are illustrated. These variations may be considered depending on the location.

TRAIL SYSTEM SIGNAGE TYPES

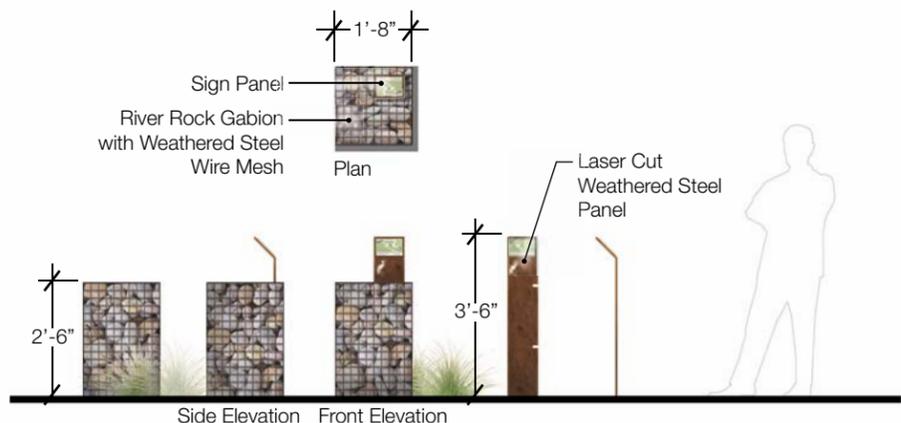


④ Directional Sign



⑤ Interpretive Sign

Note: Several variations of the signs are illustrated. These variations may be considered depending on the location.

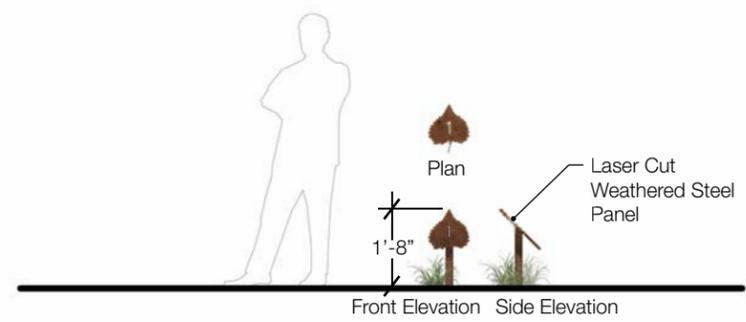


⑥ Map Sign

Note: Several variations of the signs are illustrated. These variations may be considered depending on the location.



⑦ Trail Marker



⑧ Interpretive Key