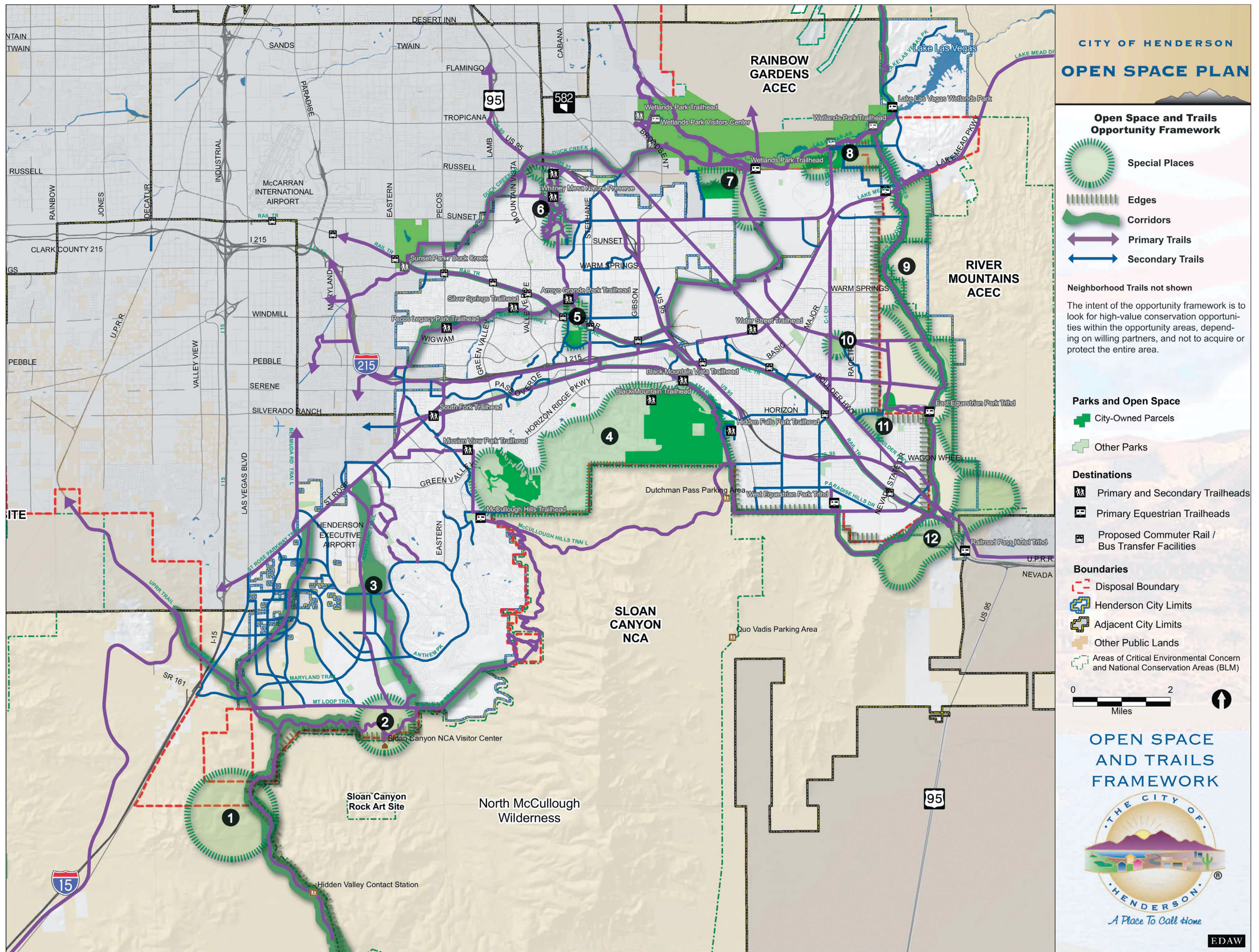


CHAPTER 3: TOMORROW



“Look forward a century, to the time when the city has a population of a million, and think what will be their wants. They will have wealth enough to purchase all that money can buy, but all their wealth cannot purchase a lost opportunity, or restore natural features of grandeur and beauty, which would then possess priceless value, and which you can preserve for them if you will but say the word and save them from the destruction which certainly awaits them if you fail to utter it.”

Horace Cleveland
The 1882 Minneapolis Park System Plan



Map 3-1. Open Space and Trails Framework Map



Black Mountain in the Spring.

INTRODUCTION

Open space improves our quality of life, provides an escape from the urban setting, promotes awareness and respect for our desert environment, and defines a buffer for growth. As described in this Chapter, the City aims to respect and protect sensitive lands with distinguishing hillsides and ridgelines, natural drainages and wetlands, wildlife habitats and corridors, or historic and cultural features.

This chapter presents the framework, principles and policies for open space and off-street trails in the City of Henderson (the City). This Open Space and Trails Framework and supporting projects are based on the inventory of existing resources, threats, and the needs and priorities identified by City Council, Planning Commission, Parks and Recreation Board, a citizen's advisory committee, and the public (see Chapter 1). Implementation actions and other recommendations such as conservation tools and trail design standards are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 5.

This chapter is organized into three sections.

- I. **Open Space and Trails Framework:** The Framework includes an open space and trails vision, followed by a map of conceptual open space and trail opportunities, and a discussion of different trail types and functions.
- II. **Principles and Policies:** The purpose of the vision, principles and policies is to capture, at the most general level, the community's values, intentions, and aspirations for the physical growth and development of the City. They form the building blocks for the implementation recommendations and standards found in Chapter 5. Many of the principles and policies were developed in tandem with the Draft 2005 Comprehensive Plan Update. They are not intended to be absolute requirements, but rather they state the optimal outcome if feasible and appropriate.
- III. **Landmark Projects:** A list of potential open space and trail projects identifies several short-term opportunities to assist in achieving the vision.

I. OPEN SPACE AND TRAILS FRAMEWORK

City of Henderson
Open Space and Trails Vision

Our vision is to create an interconnected system of protected desert environments throughout the built environment with parks, off-street trails, and open spaces for recreation and education, and compatible cultural programs, to enhance our community's unique image and sense of place. Henderson will have one of the most connected, safe trail systems in the Las Vegas Valley for both recreation and alternative transportation.

The Framework Map (Map 3-1) identifies opportunity areas and potential projects based on community needs, and presents a system for classifying open spaces (Table 3-1) in order to define an appropriate planning, acquisition, and management strategy for various types of properties that the City acquires. As open space is part of a spectrum of parks and common areas, many natural and interpretive areas can be combined successfully with active parks.

Special Places, Edges, and Corridors

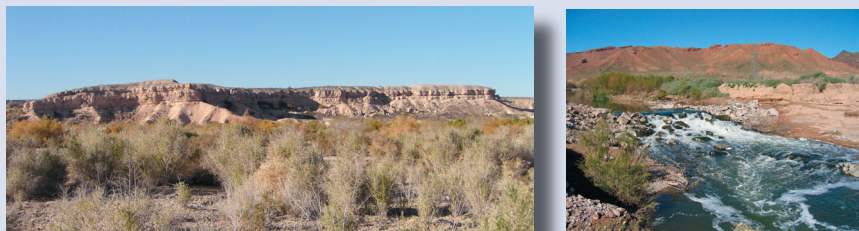
The City of Henderson is fortunate to have many high-value natural resource lands within and adjacent to its boundaries. These sensitive lands are both environmentally and culturally significant features. The Framework Map identifies many of these sensitive lands as Open Space Opportunity Areas, or significant special places, corridors, and desert edges where protection efforts can accomplish a number of benefits to the community – such as community separation, hillside preservation, conservation of wildlife habitats, education, and public recreation – at one location. These strategic areas are identified conceptually without identifying specific privately-owned

Special Places

Nature Preserves: Larger areas (100 acres or more) intended to protect natural values of community-wide significance while also providing opportunities for nature-oriented, outdoor activities.



Natural Areas: These are areas intended to protect natural values on parcels smaller than a park preserve while also providing opportunities for nature-oriented outdoor activities.



Special Resource Areas: These are areas with important natural, cultural and other community values. Given the resource protection emphasis in these areas, public access may not be provided or may be limited.



Table 3-1. Open Space Classification System

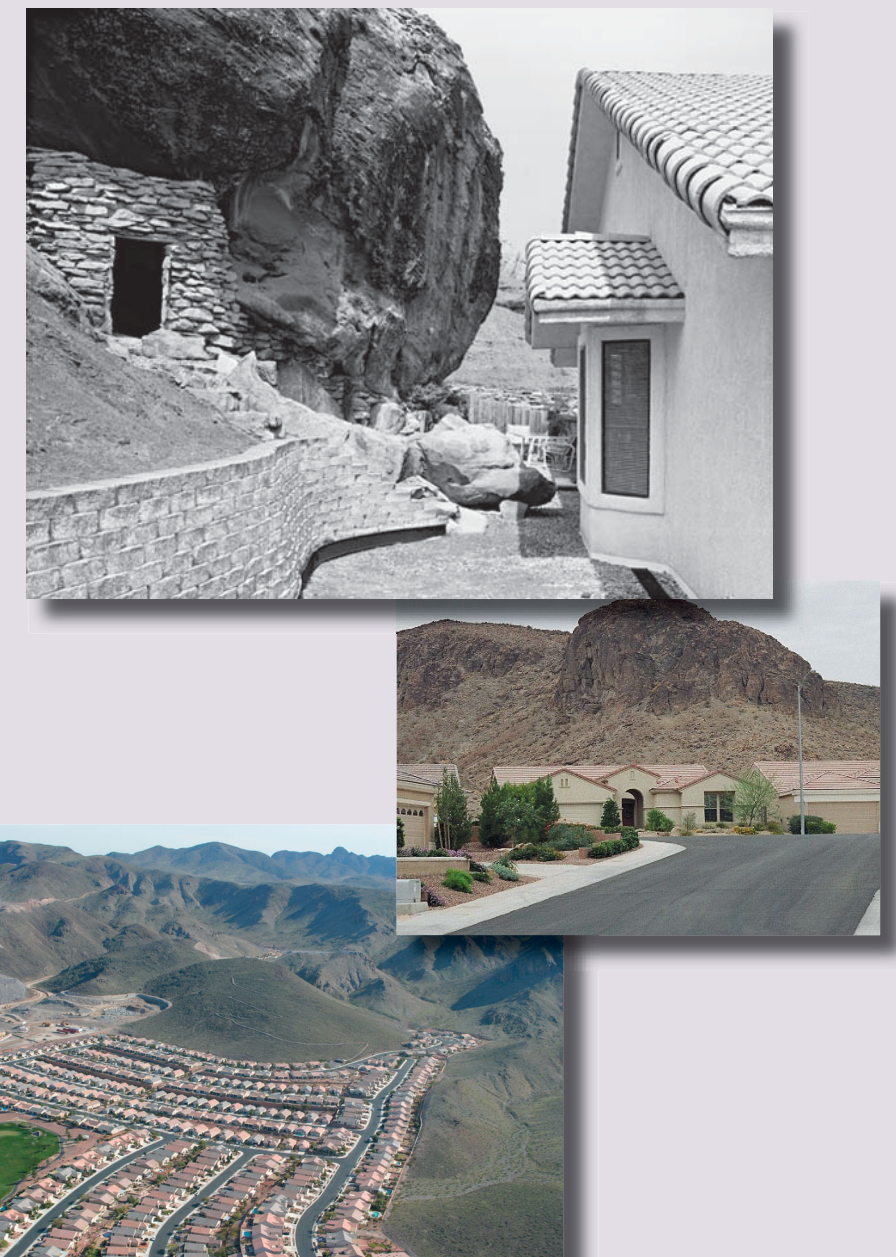
Corridors

Trails and open space corridors that serve recreational, wildlife, scenic, and other conservation purposes.



Edges

The “Edge” is the zone where existing or future urban development meets protected desert – whether it be federally managed land, like Sloan Canyon National Conservation Area, or land in the City’s Open Space system, such as the Bird Viewing Preserve. These edges could accommodate urban requirements and provide appropriate public access while preserving scenic resources, and maintaining ecological functions.



parcels. The intent of the Framework Map is to look for high-value conservation opportunities within the opportunity areas, depending on willing partners, and not to acquire or protect the entire area.

Special Places

These Open Space Opportunity areas should be connected to one another by corridors that perform trail, drainage, or wildlife functions. In the face of continued habitat loss and cultural isolation from nature, the need for providing landscape connectivity is critical. Stream and wash systems are corridors of exceptional significance in a desert landscape. A few large patches of natural vegetation, and vegetated corridors along major washes are “indispensable,” i.e., no known or feasible alternative exists for providing their many ecological and social benefits. Maintaining their ecological integrity in the face of intense human use is both a challenge and an opportunity.

Edges

Treatment of the Desert Edge, or the transition zone between urban development and open spaces, greatly impacts the recreational experience and protected resources. In particular, the recreational, wildlife, and aesthetic resources currently enjoyed by Henderson residents at Clark County Wetlands Park, the River Mountains Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC), and Sloan Canyon National Conservation Area (NCA) could be compromised by nearby urban development. By creating appropriate transitions between urban and public land, the City can maximize the benefit of adjacent public lands to its citizens without incurring direct management responsibilities and costs.

Corridors

As stated in the Open Space and Trails Vision, Henderson aims to have one of the most extensive regional trail systems in the Las Vegas Valley; a system that would safely connect neighborhoods to community destinations, adjacent communities, and surrounding recreation and leisure opportunities. Trails provide critical connections between recreational, civic and neighborhood uses, while creating corridors that pre-

Landmark Corridors (Greenways) Primary Trails Secondary Trails Neighborhood Trails / Paths Equestrian Trails Soft-surface Trails

serve wildlife habitat and other special places. Well connected trail systems have become an expectation of home buyers in many communities because they increase property values, provide easy recreation access and afford an option to travel on foot or bicycle rather than in an automobile. A successful trail system accommodates a wide variety of users, allows access without getting into a vehicle, and provides connections to key community destinations such as Sloan Canyon NCA, the River Mountains ACEC, Black Mountain and Lake Mead National Recreation Area (NRA).

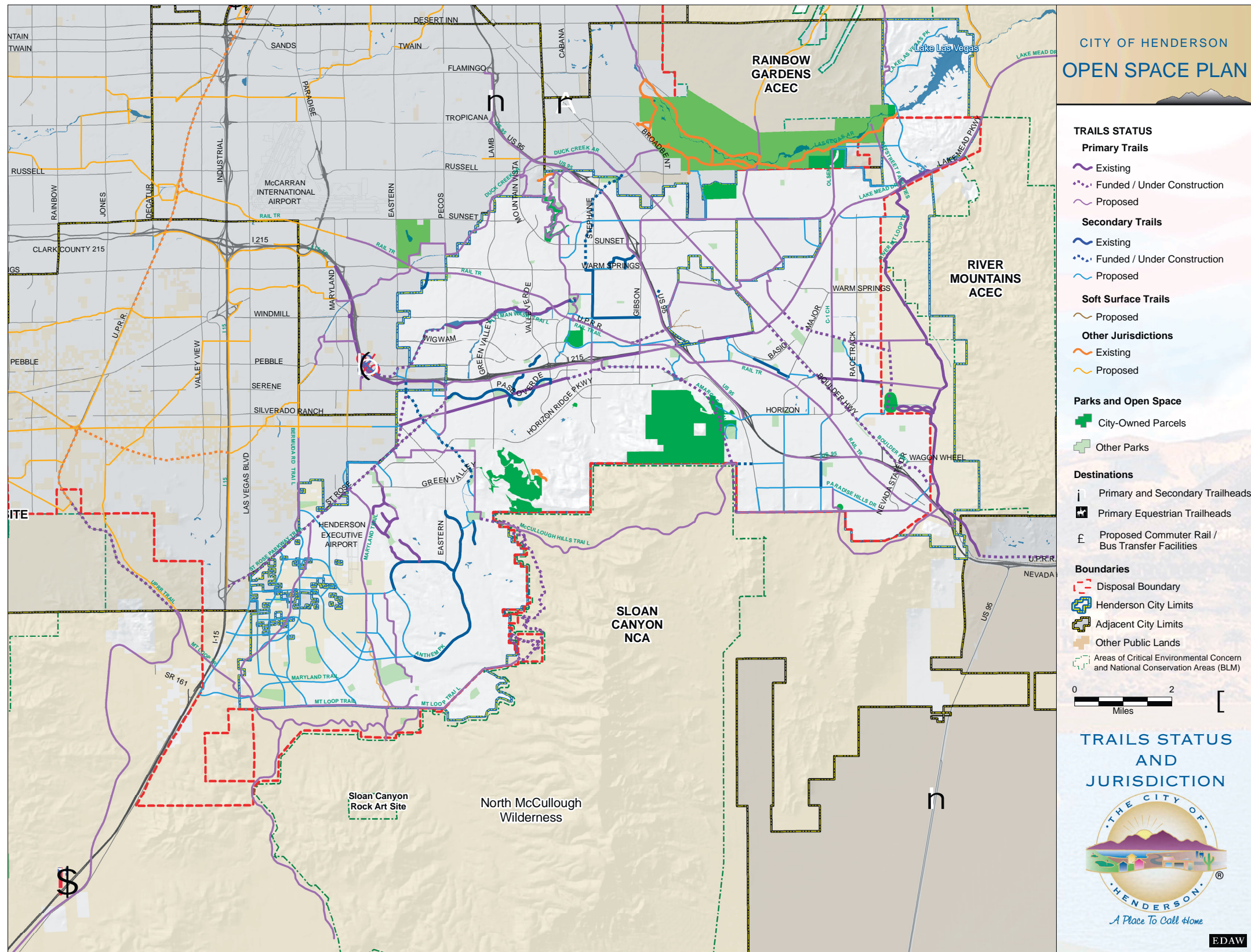
The purpose of this section is to provide a City-wide off-street trail classification system that guides the City’s decision process in creating a functional, interconnected trail system as development and infrastructure improvements occur. Trails – by their very nature – optimally occur in non-vehicular corridors with appropriate pedestrian amenities, aesthetic enhancements and connections. As noted in Chapter 1, this plan addresses trails that are primarily recreational in nature, although trails also support alternative transportation goals. Bicycle, pedestrian, and other on-street facilities are addressed in the City’s Master Bicycle Plan Map, Master Streets and Highways Plan, and Regional Transportation Commission’s Non-motorized Alternative Transportation Mode Conceptual Master Plan documents. In combination with a full suite of bicycle and pedestrian facilities (bike lanes, parking areas, sidewalks, end-of-trip facilities, etc.), residents will be able to easily access the off-street trails system from within their own neighborhoods without driving to a trailhead. Special use paths such as raised boardwalks should be designed to meet site-specific conditions and, as such, are not included in the following classification system.

The Open Space and Trails Framework Map identifies trail corridor locations based on existing and future community needs, and connections to open space



Pittman Wash Landmark Corridor performs recreational, ecological, and storm drainage functions. It is the focus of Project GREEN (Green Valley Ecology, Environment, and Nature), a 2.5 mile community restoration project directed by a citizen’s steering committee assisted by City staff and a technical advisory committee.

The existing Pittman Wash Trail, approximately four miles in length, is located along the Pittman Wash drainage channel, connecting the Arroyo Grande Sports Complex, Silver Springs Recreation Center and Park, Pecos Legacy Park, Cactus Wren Park, and Amargosa Trail. Grants received from SNPLMA and the Nevada State Division of National Parks Service Recreational Trails (RecTrail) program have allowed the City to complete three undercrossings.



Map 3-2. Primary and Secondary Trails Status

opportunities. The intent of the map is to show conceptual alignments and identify critical linkages. Map 3-2 shows existing trails with a solid line, while conceptual alignments for future trails are shown with a dashed line. Conceptual alignments require detailed analysis and design prior to construction, especially in cases where trails are proposed in developed areas in order to determine exact locations and designs for all trails, underpasses and crossings.

Conceptual alignments are found in one of two conditions: 1) trails that need to be constructed within existing developed areas (i.e., retrofitted), and 2) trails in future growth areas that will be constructed in tandem with new development. For future growth areas, it is critical that the connections be made to the general areas shown. Primary trails in these developments should be located in open trail corridors and not along streets. It is critical that designs in areas requiring underpasses and trails along flood control channels be coordinated in advance with the appropriate governing agency to ensure that the trail connectivity goals are met.

Trails Classifications

The trails classification system shown on the Framework Map is described in Table 3-2 on page 11. Design criteria for each classification is determined by its primary users, volume of use, location and desired trail experience. These criteria are intended to apply to developing areas only. *Criteria for trails in existing developed areas may not be met in some instances due to existing constraints* such as narrow corridor widths, flood control channel configurations or narrow right-of-ways. Although not preferred, some primary trails are shown on the Trails Framework Map within roadway corridors as they allow the only means for making some primary connections.

Current AASHTO, MUTCD, ADA and other local guidelines and codes for trail designs should be incorporated into final trail designs. These may include horizontal and vertical curve allowances, frequency, size and placement of signage, underpass clearances, safety criteria and design speeds.

Landmark Corridors

A Landmark Corridor for trail users is equivalent to a scenic byway for motorists. Primary trails located in Landmark Corridors have regional significance, and will attract users from all communities in the Las Vegas Valley. They are recreational destinations in and of themselves, or lead to destinations such as Wetlands Park, Lake Mead, or Sloan Canyon NCA. Landmark Corridors do not suggest specific design criteria, but rather a unique user experience.

In order to provide this unique experience, Landmark Corridors must be carefully planned and designed. In Landmark Corridors, greater emphasis is given to interpretation, vehicular separation (underpasses and bridges) and larger corridor width. In Landmark Corridors, users will be encouraged to learn about, appreciate and experience the natural environment of the desert. Trail corridor width greatly influences the user experience, especially when enclosed on both sides by development. Ideally, Landmark Corridors should be located in non-motorized corridors with a minimum width of 75 feet, although this may not be feasible in many areas.

Key Landmark Corridors with recreational trails, as identified on the Framework Map, include:

- Mountain Loop Trail
- River Mountains Loop Trail
- Duck Creek Trail
- Pittman Wash Trail
- McCullough Hills Trail
- Amargosa Trail
- Wetlands Park Trail (Clark County)

Additional Landmark Corridors should be planned for and designed as the City grows.

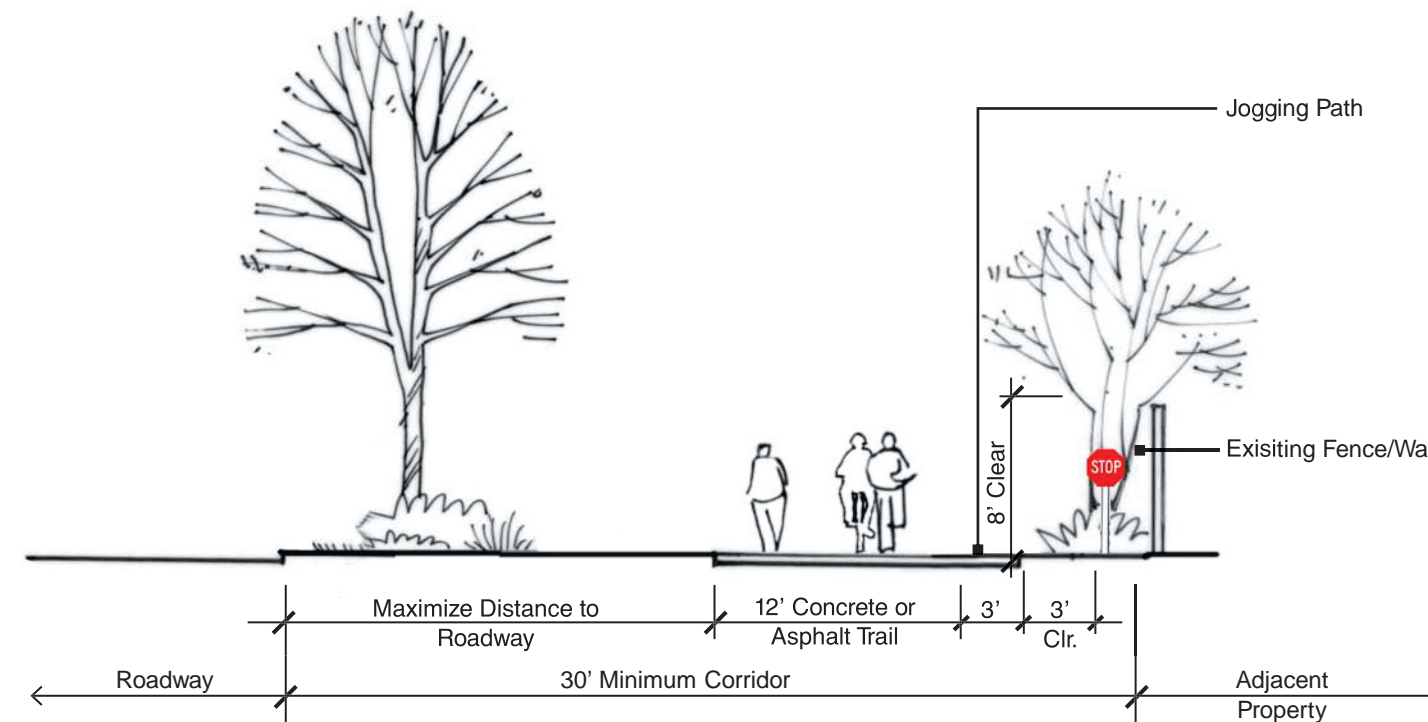


Figure 1 Primary Trail Adjacent to Roadway.

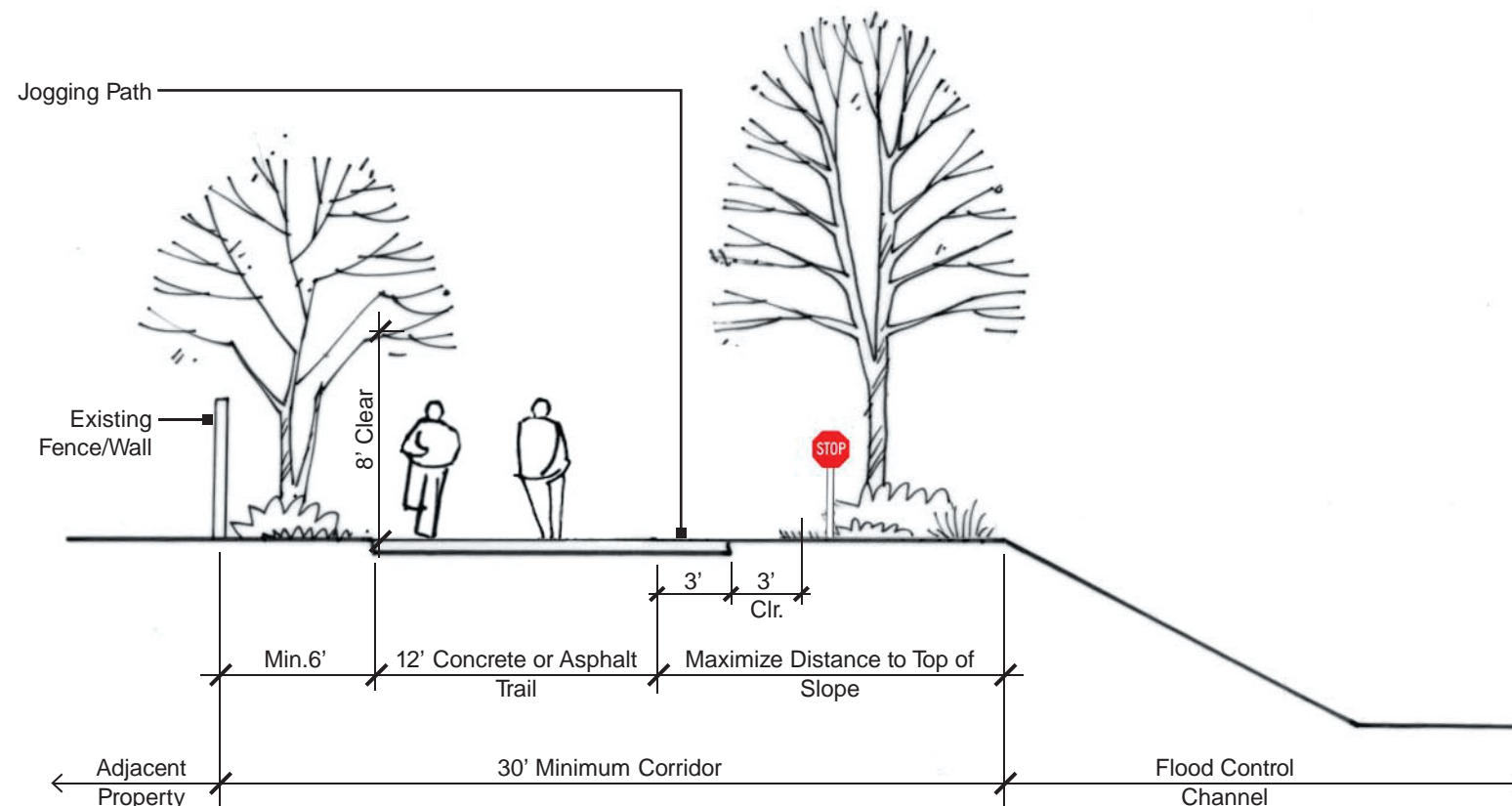


Figure 2 Primary Trail Adjacent to Flood Control Channel.

Primary Trails

Purpose – Primary trails are recreational destinations where users can spend a day or several hours exploring the trail. They accommodate a large number of daily users and generally are designed for higher speed use than secondary trails. This intense use requires an appropriate sign system and that other design criteria be met, in order to make the trail a fun and safe experience for all types of users.

Primary Trails provide access to key community destinations and connect the City of Henderson to surrounding communities in the Las Vegas Valley. They accommodate trail users, including walkers, joggers, in-line skaters, and recreational and commuter cyclists. Where appropriate, equestrian users may also be accommodated within the same trail corridor. Some examples of existing Primary Trails include the Amargosa Trail, St. Rose Parkway Trail, and Lake Mead Trail.

Design Standards – Trail corridor width greatly influences the user experience, especially when the trail is enclosed on both sides by development. Ideally, Primary Trail corridors should be located along drainageways, utility easements, or other linear features where maximum corridor and separation from roadways can be achieved. Parallel equestrian trails or soft surface jogging shoulders may be provided, where appropriate. Intersections and other areas where users must stop or dismount should be minimized. Below grade crossings should be used as much as possible, especially at arterial streets, in order to minimize pedestrian-vehicle conflicts. Trail-heads, trail waysides and interpretive signs should be provided at strategic locations throughout the corridor. Preferred design standards are shown in Figures 1 and 2.

Secondary Trails

Purpose – Secondary Trails support the Primary Trail system by providing connections to neighborhoods, parks, open spaces, and activity centers that are not on the primary system. Like Primary Trails, these trails are designed to accommodate all trail users including walkers, joggers, and recreational and commuter cyclists on the same trail. Secondary trails are generally not destination trails, have lower travel speeds and require slightly more narrow corridors than Primary Trails. Secondary Trails will most often occur within roadway corridors and may have more at-grade vehicular crossings.

Design Standards – Trail corridors should maximize separation from vehicular travel lanes. Landscape buffers become more essential to enhancing the user experience in the more narrow corridor width and provide critical separation from adjacent uses. Preferred design standards are shown in Figures 3 and 4.

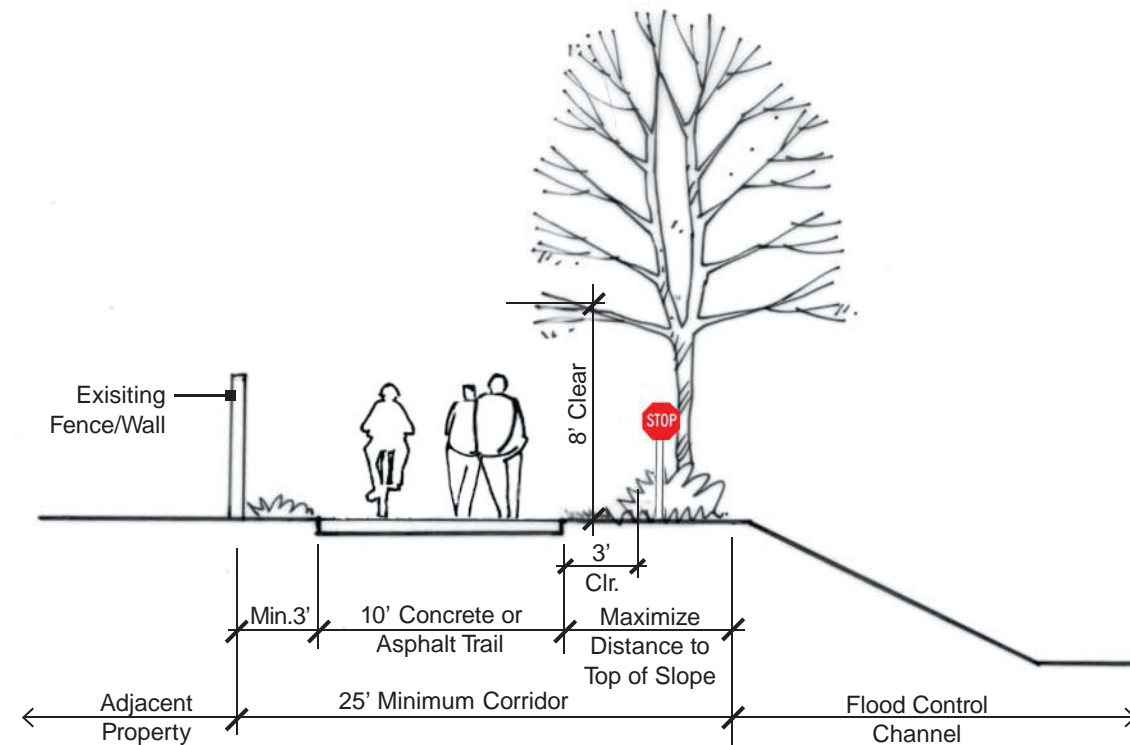


Figure 3 Secondary Trail Adjacent to Flood Control Channel.

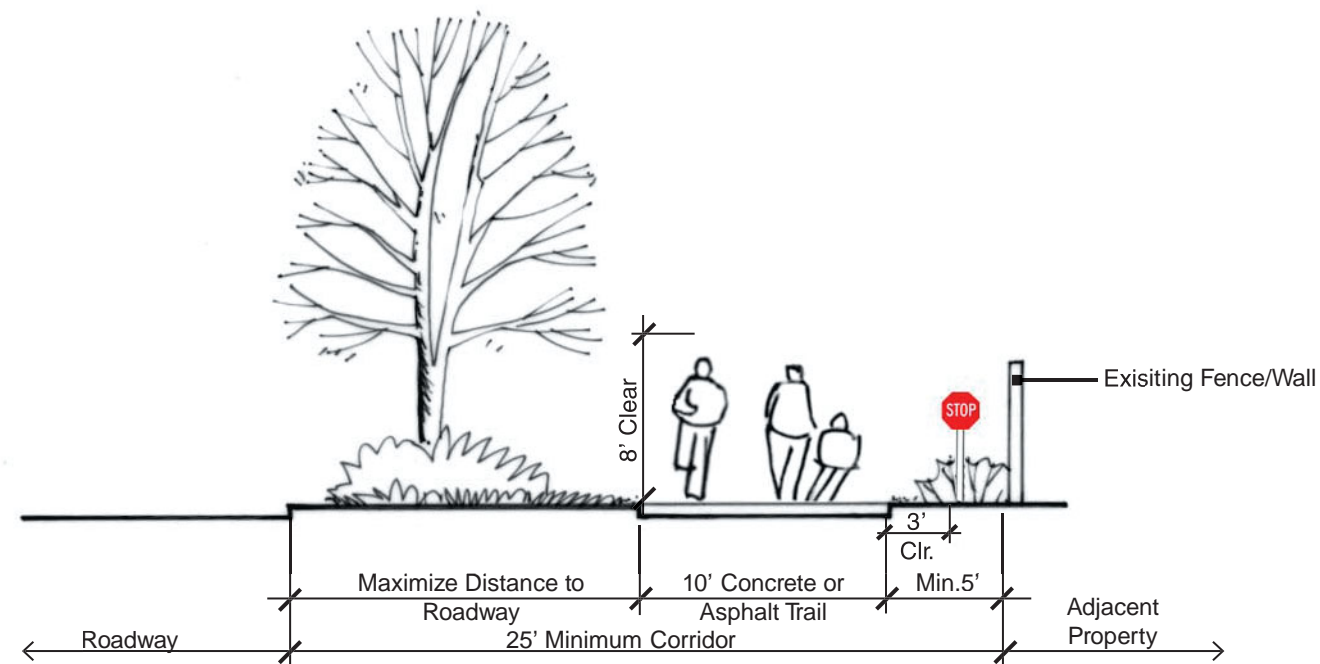


Figure 4 Secondary Trail Adjacent to Roadway.

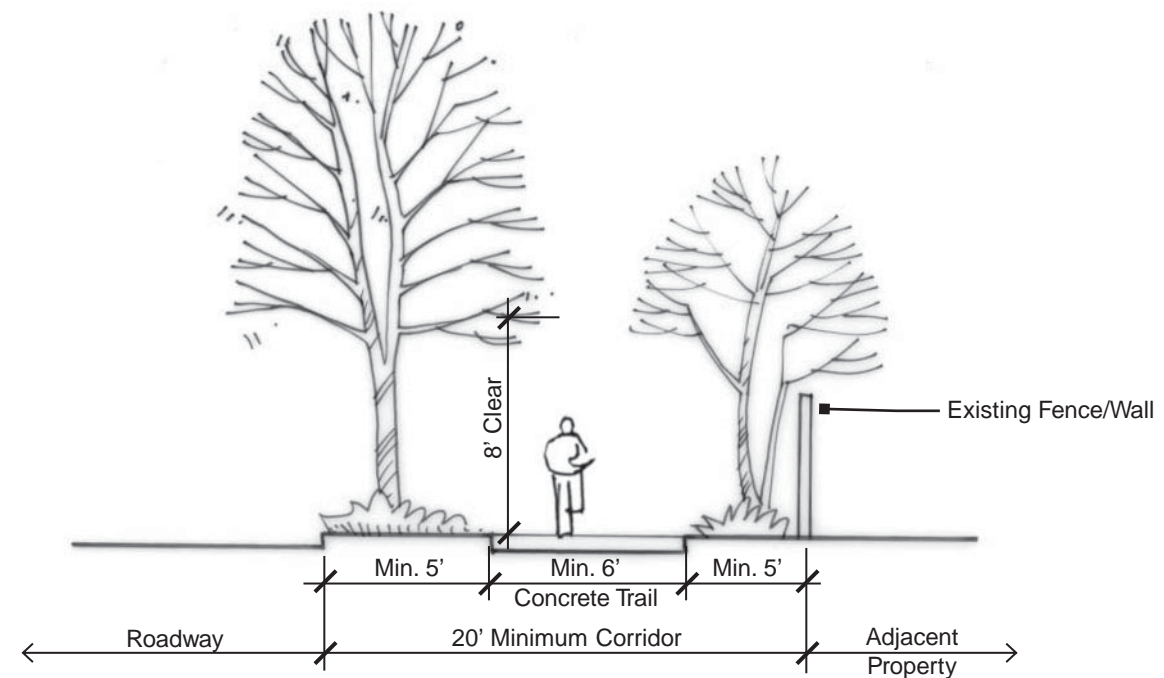


Figure 5 Neighborhood Trail.

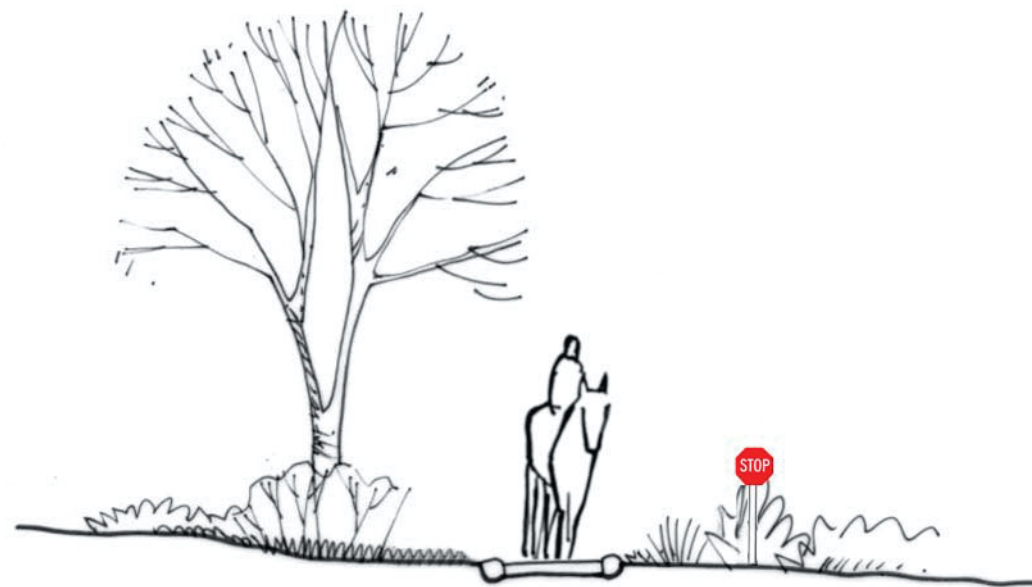


Figure 6 Equestrian Trail.

Neighborhood Trails / Paths

Purpose – Neighborhood trails are not shown on the Framework Map as they do not provide city-wide connectivity. These “trails” are wide sidewalks within residential or commercial developments, and provide connections to Secondary and Primary Trails while also providing some level of recreational opportunities within the neighborhood itself. In most cases, Neighborhood Trails are to be provided by the project developer and should connect users to neighborhood parks, schools, libraries and shopping centers, as well as provide internal circulation within the development. These types of trails are encouraged in the City of Henderson Municipal Code: “To the maximum practical extent, subdivisions shall be laid out and designed to provide walkways and paths that connect with destinations such as parks, schools and shopping areas,” (19.10.9).

Design Standards – Where possible, sidewalks should be detached from roadways. Sidewalks should be designed per appropriate street standards. Preferred design standards are shown in Figure 5.

Equestrian Trail

Purpose – Soft-surfaced, parallel trails allow equestrians to share the same user experience as pedestrians on Primary or Secondary Trails. As many rural areas become urbanized, trails used by equestrians in the past are becoming unsafe for equestrian use. Adding parallel trails in these areas will allow equestrian use to continue. Specific locations of equestrian trails are not identified on the Framework Map. Exact locations for equestrian trails need to be evaluated based on proximity to other equestrian facilities and user demand.

Design Standards – Where equestrian use is desired in the same corridor as a soft surface pedestrian trail, both uses should share the same surface and the equestrian design criteria will take precedence. If an equestrian trail runs parallel to a paved Primary or Secondary Trail, the equestrian trail should be separated by a landscaped clear zone of 5 feet minimum to avoid conflicts with cyclists and other users. Preferred design standards are shown in Figure 6.

Soft Surface Trails

Purpose – Soft Surface trails are gravel, fines or natural surface trails within mountain or foothill open spaces. They are designed for slower speeds and lower volumes of use. Targeted users include hikers and mountain bikers. Soft surface trails are destination trails which provide an alternative experience to the urban and suburban trails of Primary and Secondary Trails.

Design Standards – Surfacing may include crushed granite, gravel, fines, or native material. Soil hardener may be required in some areas to help prevent erosion and mitigate dust. Although minimum width is required, additional width (10') may be necessary for vehicular access depending on how maintenance will be completed. Water bars, rolling dips and drainage culverts will be required to maintain proper trail drainage. Preferred design standards are shown in Figure 7.

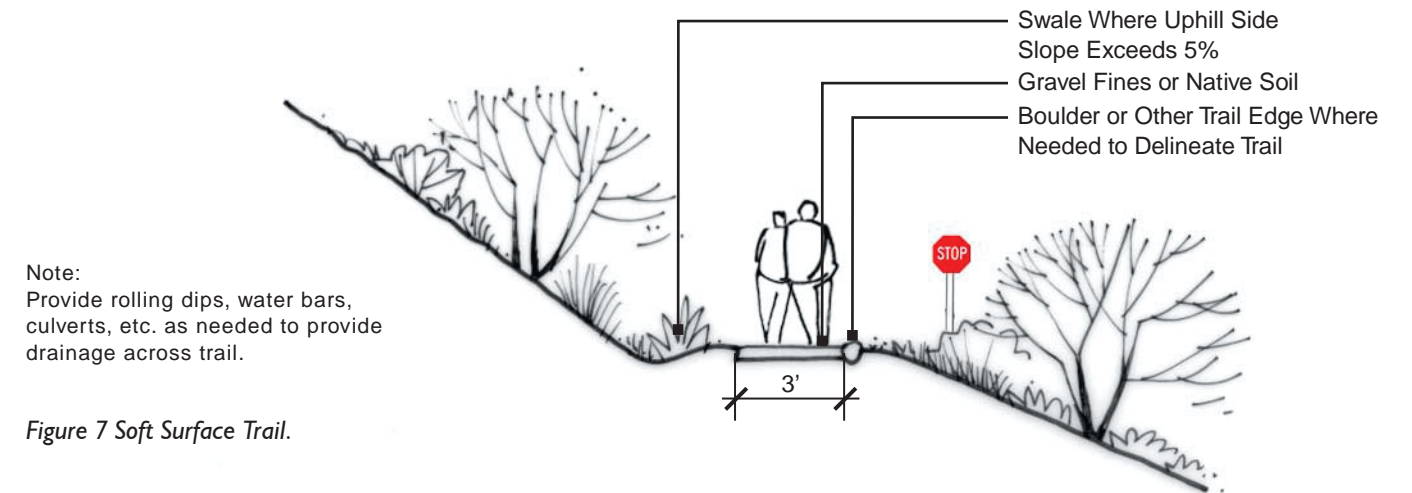


Figure 7 Soft Surface Trail.

	Primary Trails	Secondary Trails	Neighborhood Trails	Equestrian Trails	Soft Surface Trails
Uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connect community destinations, parks and open space Recreation destination for pedestrians, bicyclists and other non-motorized users Commuting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connect community destinations, neighborhoods, parks and open space Recreation Commuting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal connection within neighborhoods Connects neighborhoods to Primary and Secondary Trails 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trail specifically designed for recreational equestrian use Parallels other trail classifications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recreation destination for pedestrians, bicyclists and other non-motorized users
Preferred Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transit, open space, greenway or drainage corridors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roadway corridors Detached sidewalks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roadway corridors Detached or attached sidewalks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open space, greenway or drainage corridors Undeveloped backcountry, open space or rural areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undeveloped backcountry, open space or rural areas Natural setting
Preferred Corridor Width	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 75 feet optimal width, 30 feet minimum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 25 feet width minimum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Per development code 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Per parallel trail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NA
Trail Width	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12 feet Parallel 3 foot jogging path 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 feet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 feet minimum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 feet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 feet 10 feet where maintenance vehicle access required
Trail Surface	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asphalt (preferred) or concrete Crushed gravel jogging path 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concrete 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concrete 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crushed gravel or native soil with dust inhibitors and soil hardener 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crushed gravel or native soil with dust inhibitors and soil hardener
Vertical Clearance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 feet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 feet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12 feet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NA
Horizontal Clearance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Min. bridge width 10 feet Min. 3 feet both sides 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Min. bridge width 8 feet Min. 3 feet both sides 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Min. 5 feet both sides 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Min. 3 feet both sides
Landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Per development code 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Per development code 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Per development code 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Per development code 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Per development code
Guardrails and Handrails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Per AASHTO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Per AASHTO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Per AASHTO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Per AASHTO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Per AASHTO

Table 3-2. Trail Classifications

	Primary Trails	Secondary Trails	Neighborhood Trails	Equestrian Trails	Soft Surface Trails
Lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At trailheads and access points At underpasses At crosswalks and intersections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At trailheads and access points At underpasses At crosswalks and intersections Utilize adjacent roadway lighting where appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize adjacent roadway lighting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Per parallel trail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At trailheads and access points
Trail Waysides	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major waysides one per mile or as utilities are available Minor waysides every ½ mile Combine with trailheads where possible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor waysides every ½ mile Combine with trailheads where possible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Per parallel trail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor waysides at areas of visual or interpretive interest, no utilities
Grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5% max. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5% max. or per adjacent roadway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5% max. or per adjacent roadway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Per parallel trail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5% max. for trails designated as universally accessible Steps may be required on slopes exceeding 10%
Signs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Per MUTCD Trail distance markers every 0.10 mile 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Per MUTCD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Per MUTCD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Per MUTCD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Per MUTCD
Markings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 inch center stripe per AASHTO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None
Trailheads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At major access points Use parks and open space parking areas and facilities where possible Restroom, shaded seating and picnic areas Regulatory, informational and entry signs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At major access points Use parks and open space parking areas and facilities where possible Shaded seating and picnic areas Regulatory, informational and entry signs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Per parallel trail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At trail access points Use parks and open space parking areas and facilities where possible Restroom, shaded seating and picnic areas Regulatory, informational and entry signs

Trails In Existing Developed Areas

Discussion

The classifications in Table 3-2 outline preferred locations and design criteria for new trails. However, throughout Henderson, there are many trails which must be fitted into existing environments with conditions which prevent the trail from being built to preferred standards.

Recommendations

Trails in these locations will need to be evaluated on a site specific case-by-case basis. As-built conditions, available corridor widths and other constraints must be examined and a course of action decided that best implements the goals of the overall trail system. Figures 8 through 19 show existing constraints and provide examples of how some problem areas may be addressed. Some improvements may entail significant costs that would not have been necessary if the trail corridor had been considered during the original design process. Many proposed modifications will require approval, cooperation and coordination with other City departments or government agencies, such as the Federal Highway Administration, Nevada Department of Transportation, and Clark County Flood Control District.

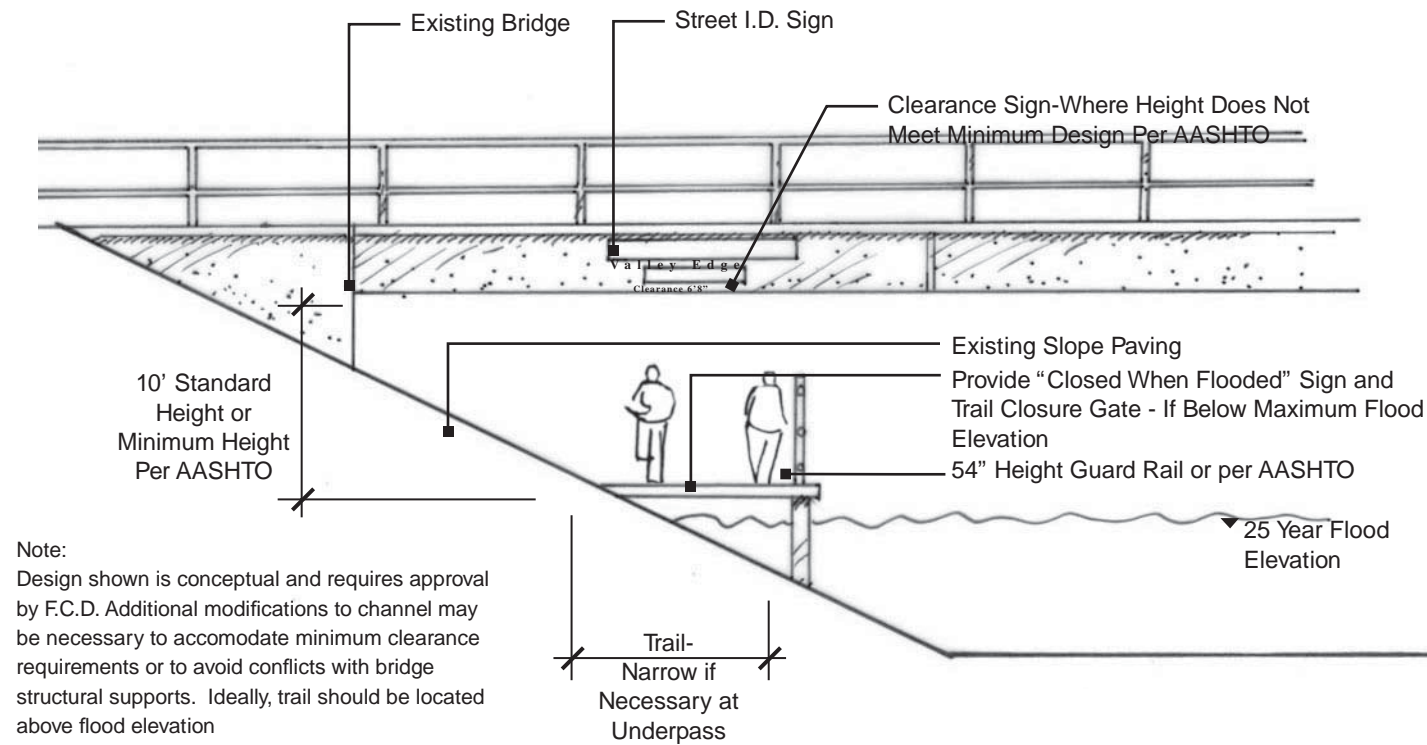


Figure 9 Trail Underpass - Option A (preferred)



Figure 8 Duck Creek Underpass - Existing Conditions

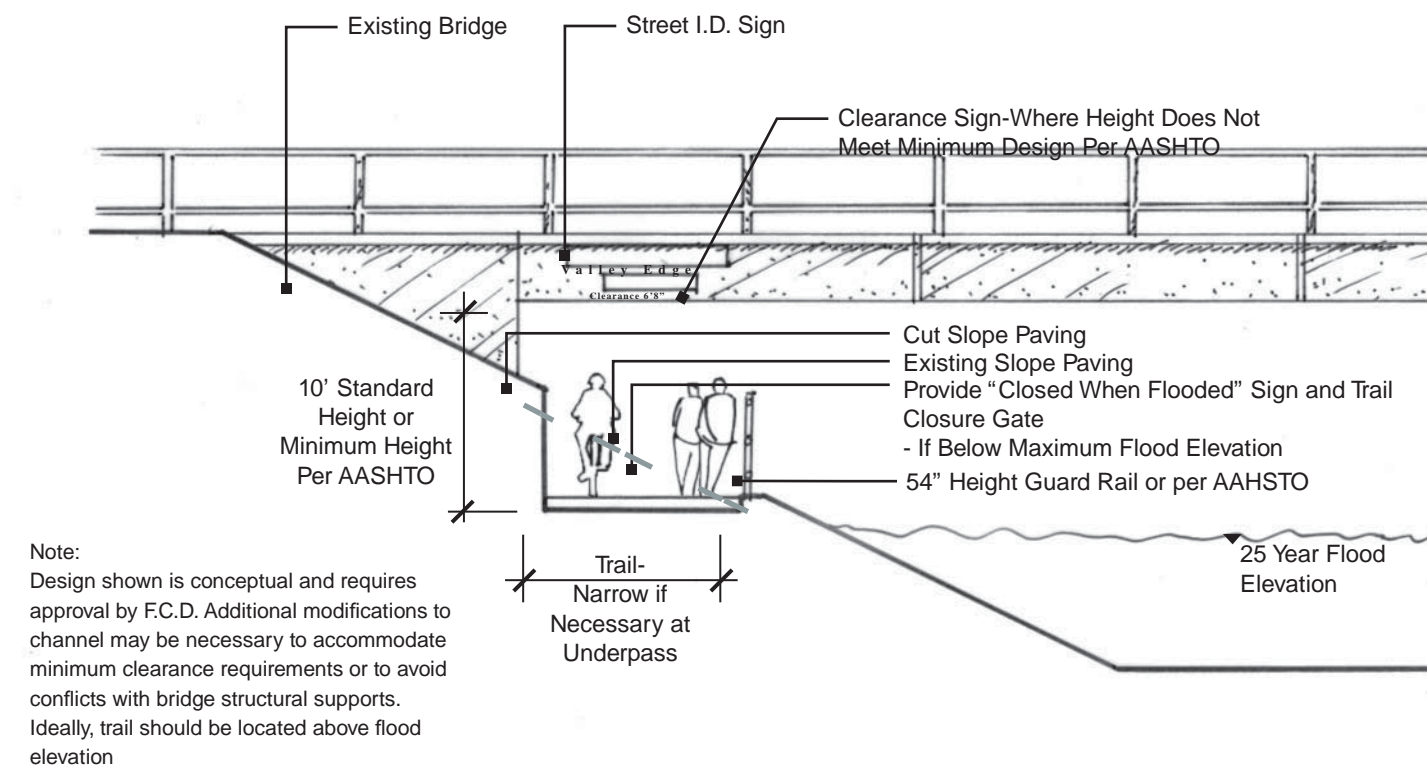


Figure 10 Trail Underpass - Option B



Figure 11 Rail Corridor - Existing Conditions

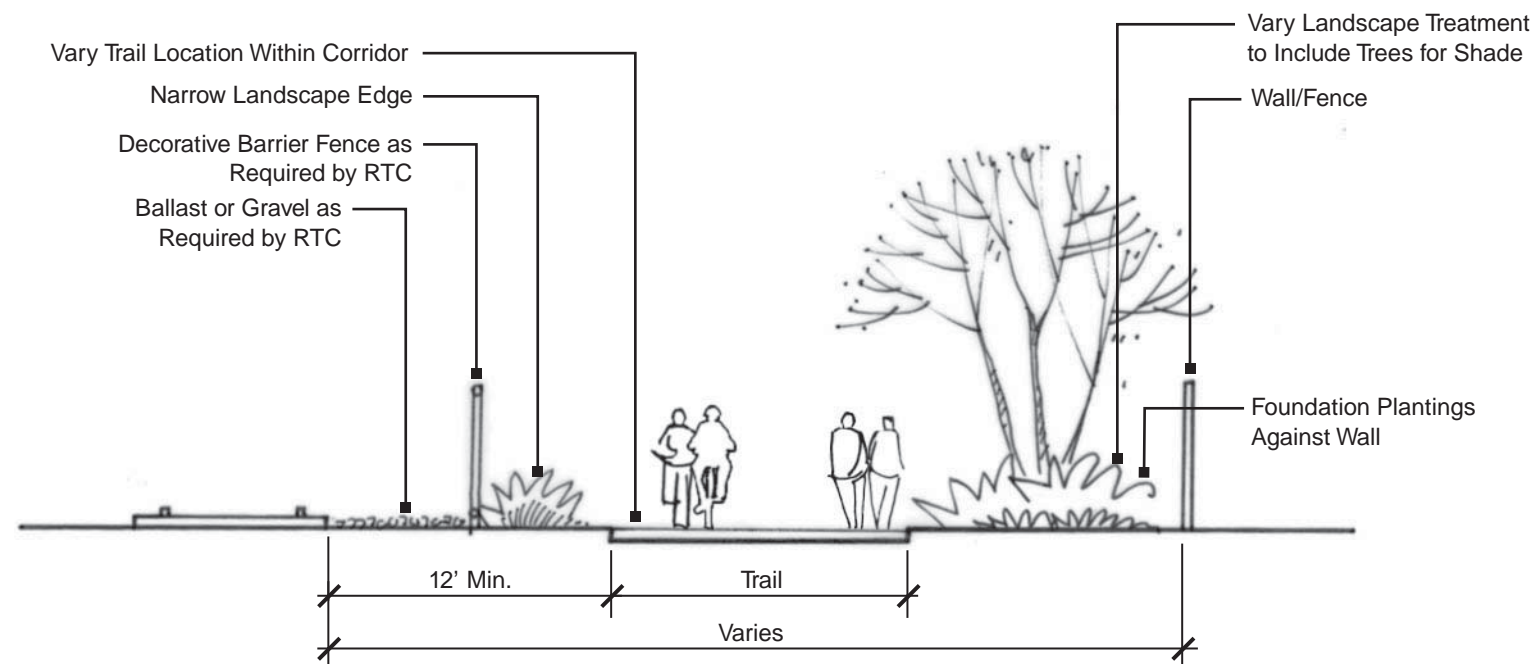


Figure 12 Trail in Rail Corridor - Elevation

DESIGNING AND PLANNING A SUCCESSFUL TRAIL SYSTEM

Several specific components that will contribute to the success of Henderson's trail system include:

1. Intersections and other areas where users must stop or dismount should be minimized. Primary trails should take precedence as a main transportation feature just like any road system, and pedestrian underpasses should be incorporated into any planned roadway or bridge improvements. Separated grade crossings should be used as much as possible, especially at arterial streets, in order to minimize pedestrian-vehicle and bicycle-vehicle conflicts. Minimize or eliminate mid-block crossings at non-controlled intersections to increase user safety and reduce conflicts.
2. The trail experience should take advantage of landscapes and environments unique to the area, providing opportunities to interpret and experience different desert environments.
3. The distance of the trail from edges of drainages and other features should vary throughout the length of the trail, creating a meandering, interesting alignment rather than a straight parallel alignment.
4. Slopes and directional changes make for a more interesting trail experience.
5. Connections to community destination points encourage non-vehicular travel to civic events.
6. Take advantage of historical features along the trail corridor.
7. Provide for proper drainage under trails to minimize flooding.
8. Trail corridors should be considerate of wildlife habitat and other sensitive areas. Keeping the trail adjacent to, but outside of the habitat area often creates a better user experience and encourages more abundant wildlife.
9. Utilize existing flood control, powerline and other easements to create trail corridors rather than paralleling roadways.
10. Strategically locate trailheads at activity centers.
11. Provide benches, overlooks and interpretive areas at activity centers and other strategic locations throughout the corridor.
12. Communicate early in the design process with affected property owners if trails will be retrofitted into existing areas.
13. Trails should not be located in vehicular corridors, except as a last resort.



Figure 13 Pittman Wash Near Broadbent

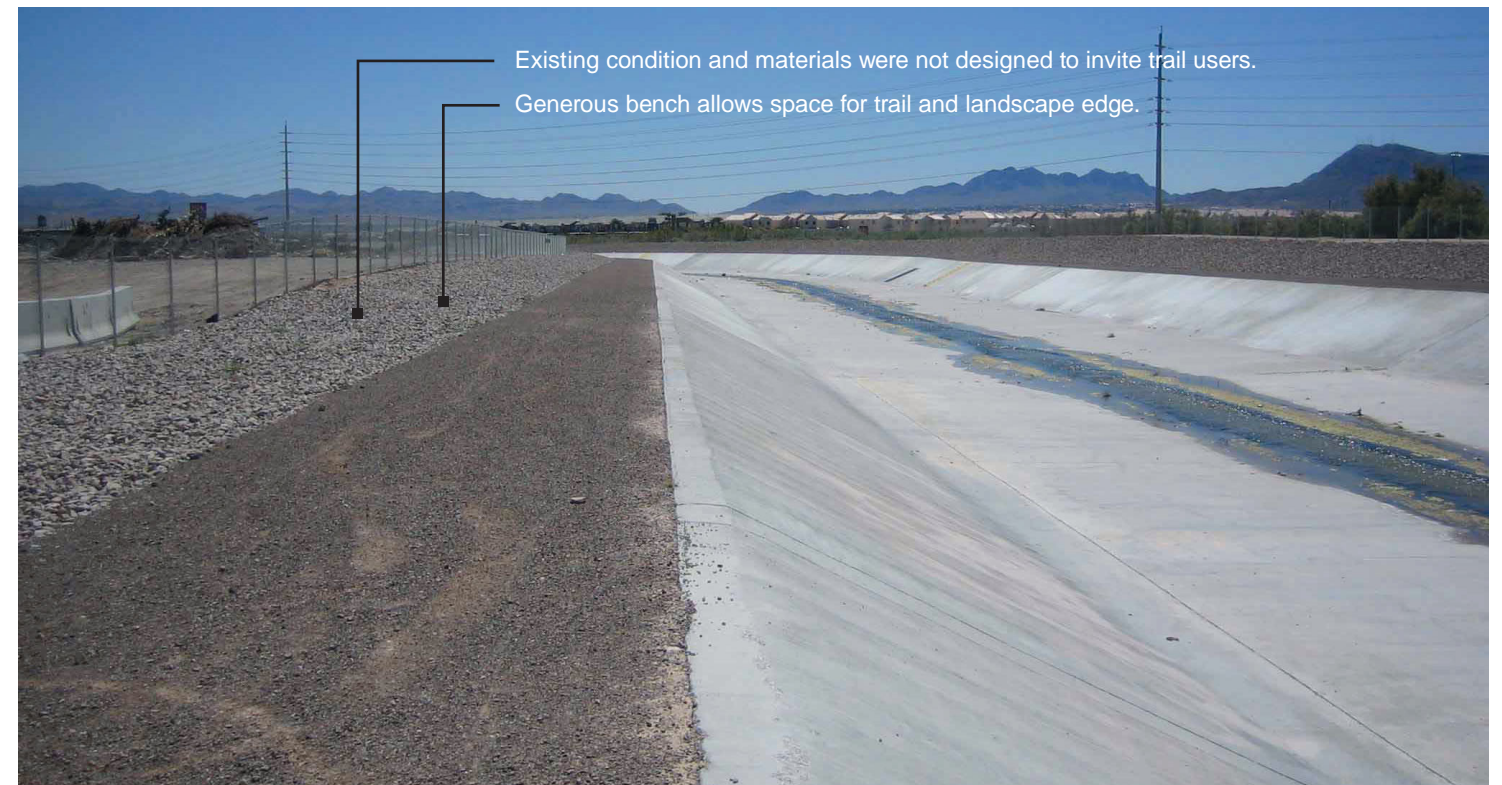


Figure 15 Existing Conditions

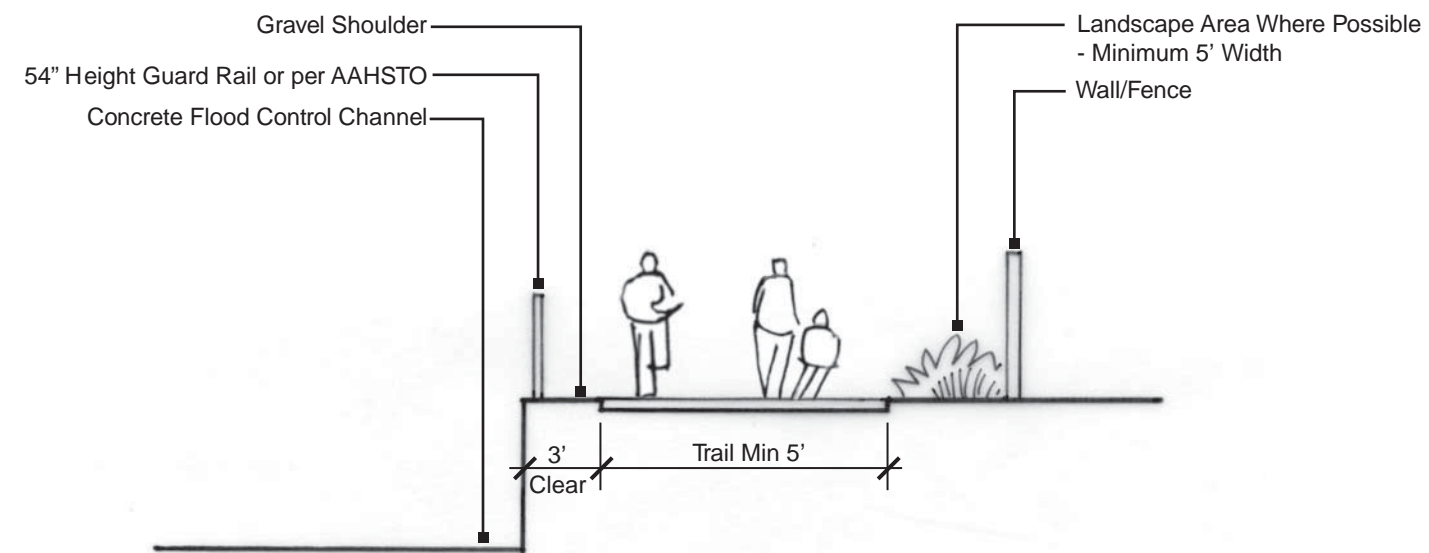


Figure 14 Trail at Broadbent.

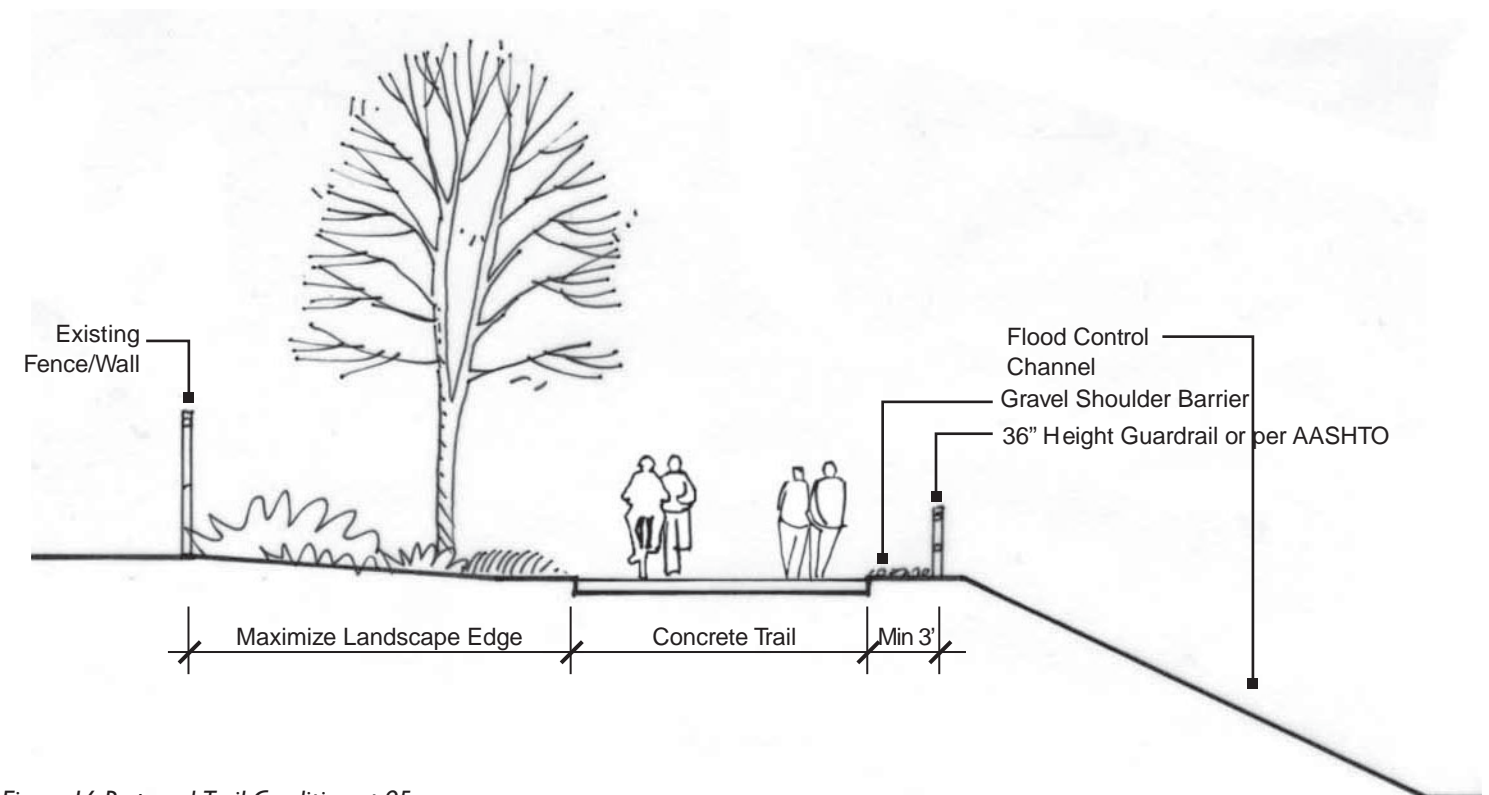


Figure 16 Proposed Trail Condition at 95.

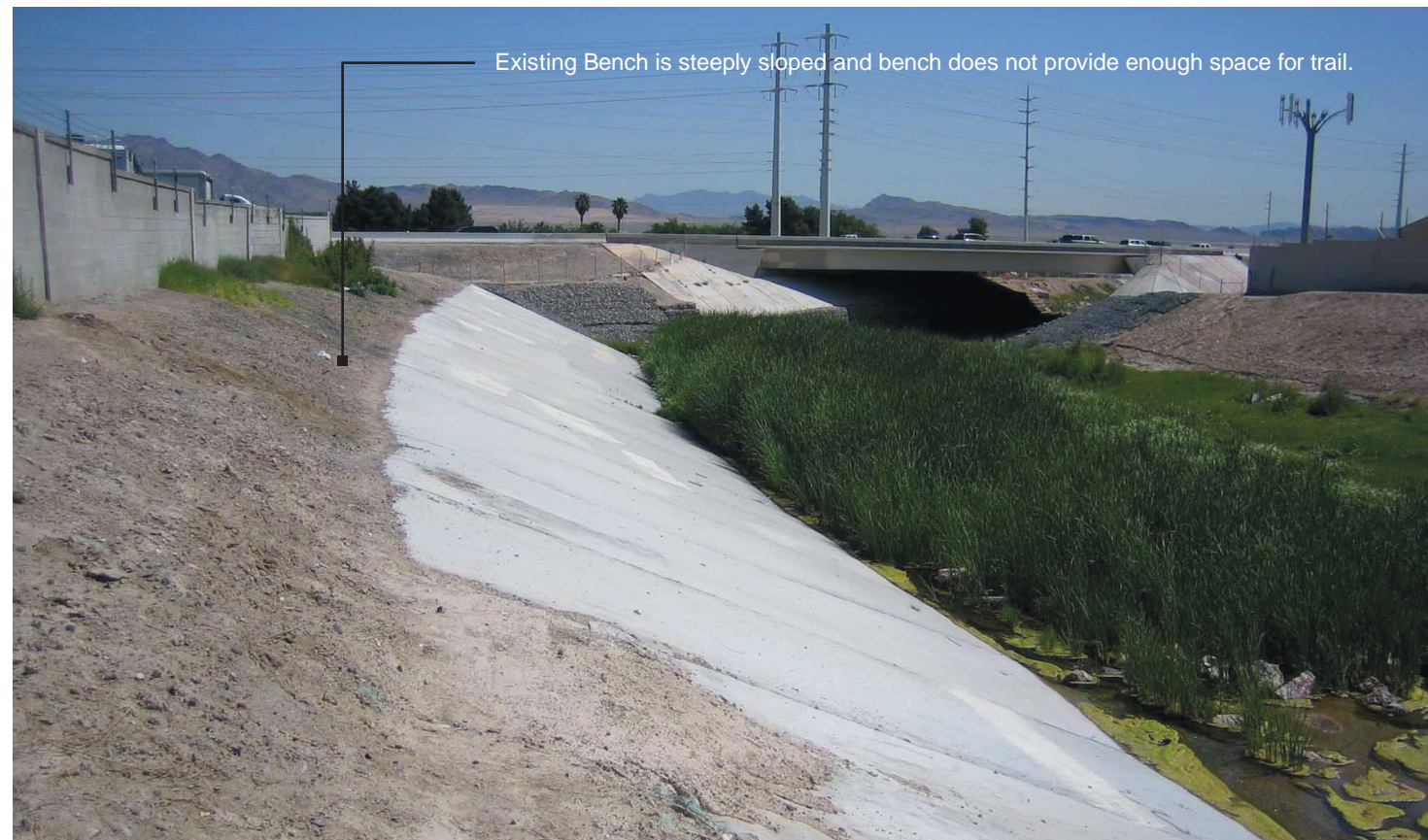


Figure 17 Existing Conditions

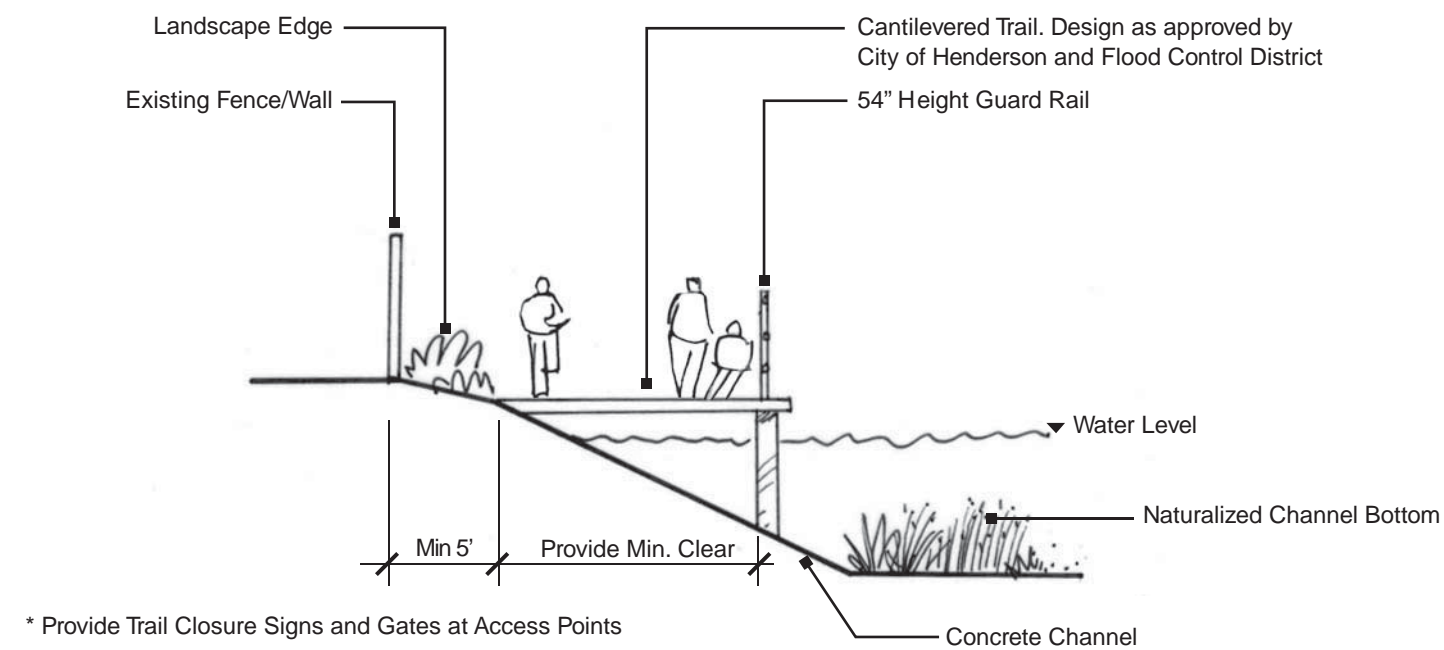


Figure 18 Constrained Flood Channel Condition.

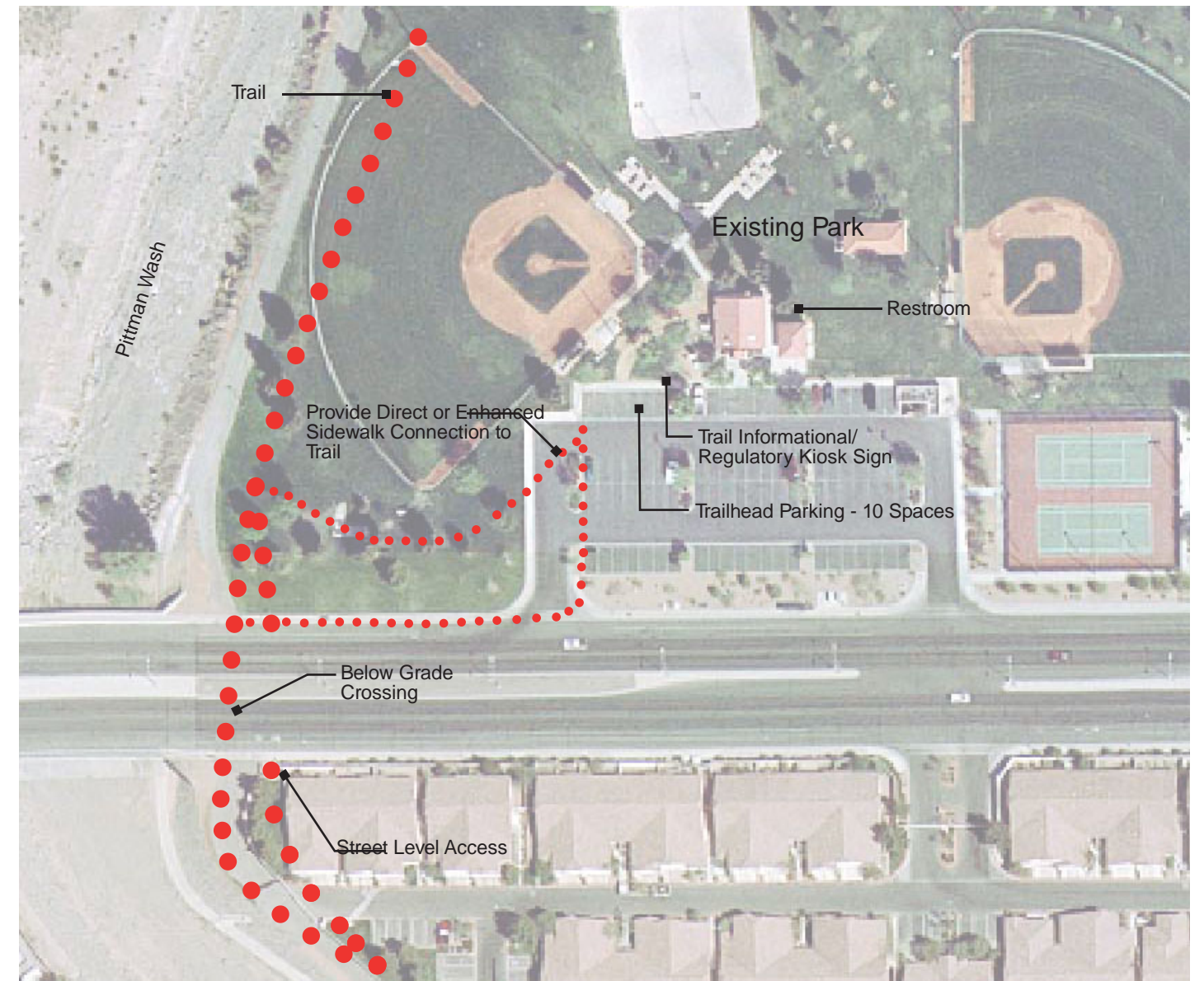


Figure 19 Trailhead at Existing Park

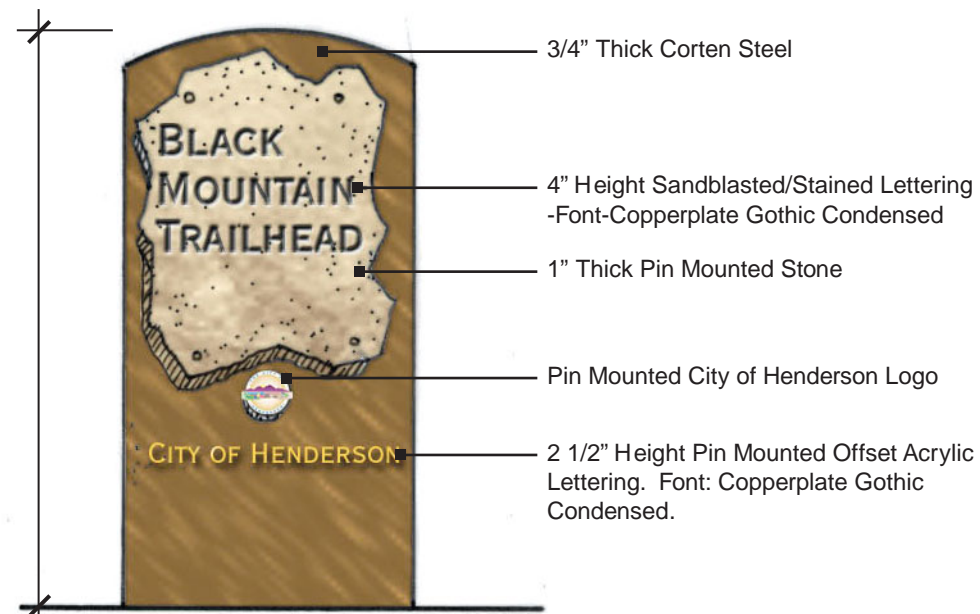


Figure 20 Entry Sign

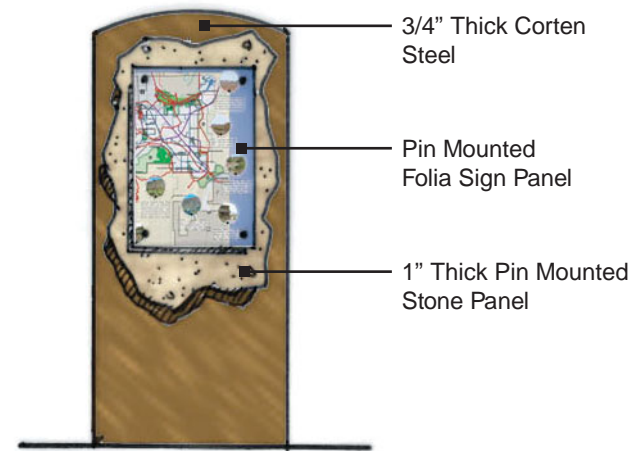


Figure 21 Kiosk/Regulatory Sign

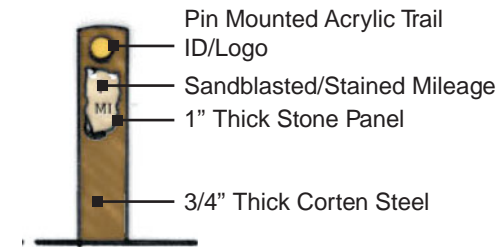


Figure 22 Distance Marker

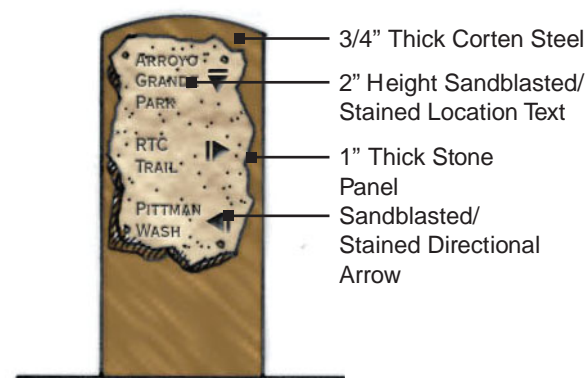


Figure 23 Wayfinding Sign

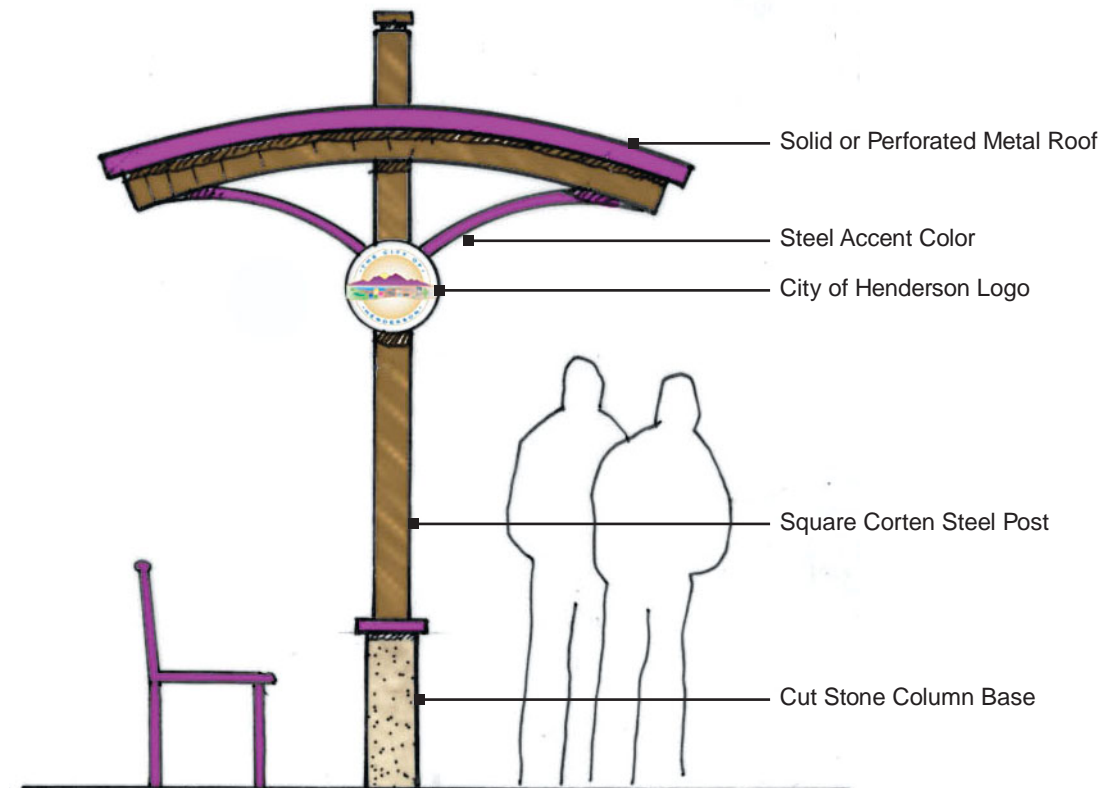


Figure 24 Shade Structure

Trail System Amenities - Design Recommendations

Site Furnishings

In addition to functional uses, site furnishings reinforce the overall theme of the trail system, using colors, materials and forms. Site furnishings should be simple, durable and low maintenance. If custom furnishings are used they should be readily available for new projects and replacements. It is most cost effective to maintain the same site furnishings throughout the entire trail system. Additional custom identifiers can be added for Landmark Corridors.

Signs

A standardized trail sign system is key to the success of the trail system. Signs can carry one theme throughout the entire trail system while still allowing for unique identities for specific trail segments. Legacy trails should have a distinct identifier demonstrating the unique characteristics of the trail. A complete identification system includes entry signs for use at trail access points, shade structures for use at trail waysides, informational and regulatory signs for display at trailheads, trail wayfinding signs and trail distance markers. Use of low maintenance and native materials is recommended. Figures 20 through 24 demonstrate how these materials may be applied throughout the sign system.

Design Theme

Figures 25 through 28 illustrate the cohesive use of materials and elements themed to complement the design intent.



Figure 25 Example barrier fencing. Design uses durable materials, successfully contains users and minimally intrudes visually on the trail experience.



Figure 26 Example custom bridge elements. Identifying channel crossing creates awareness and appreciation for the natural drainage users are crossing. Sculptural element at bridge approach can be tied into other themed elements throughout the trail system.



Figure 27 Railings. Railings and guardrails can still meet safety criteria while minimally intruding on the trail experience. Custom railing details at key locations can be tied into the overall theme of the trail system.

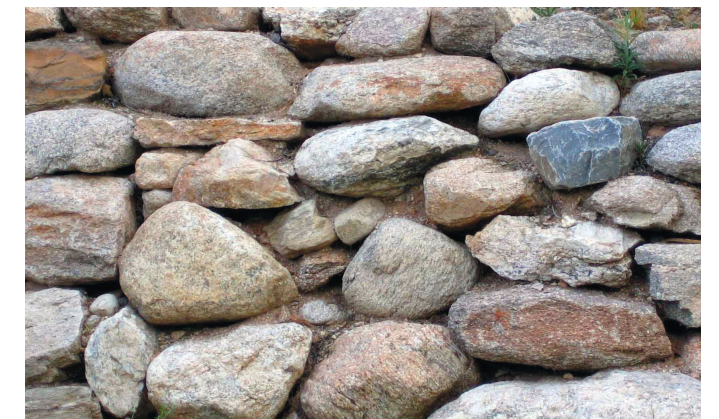


Figure 28 Native materials. Use of native materials for walls ties the trail system into the natural environment.

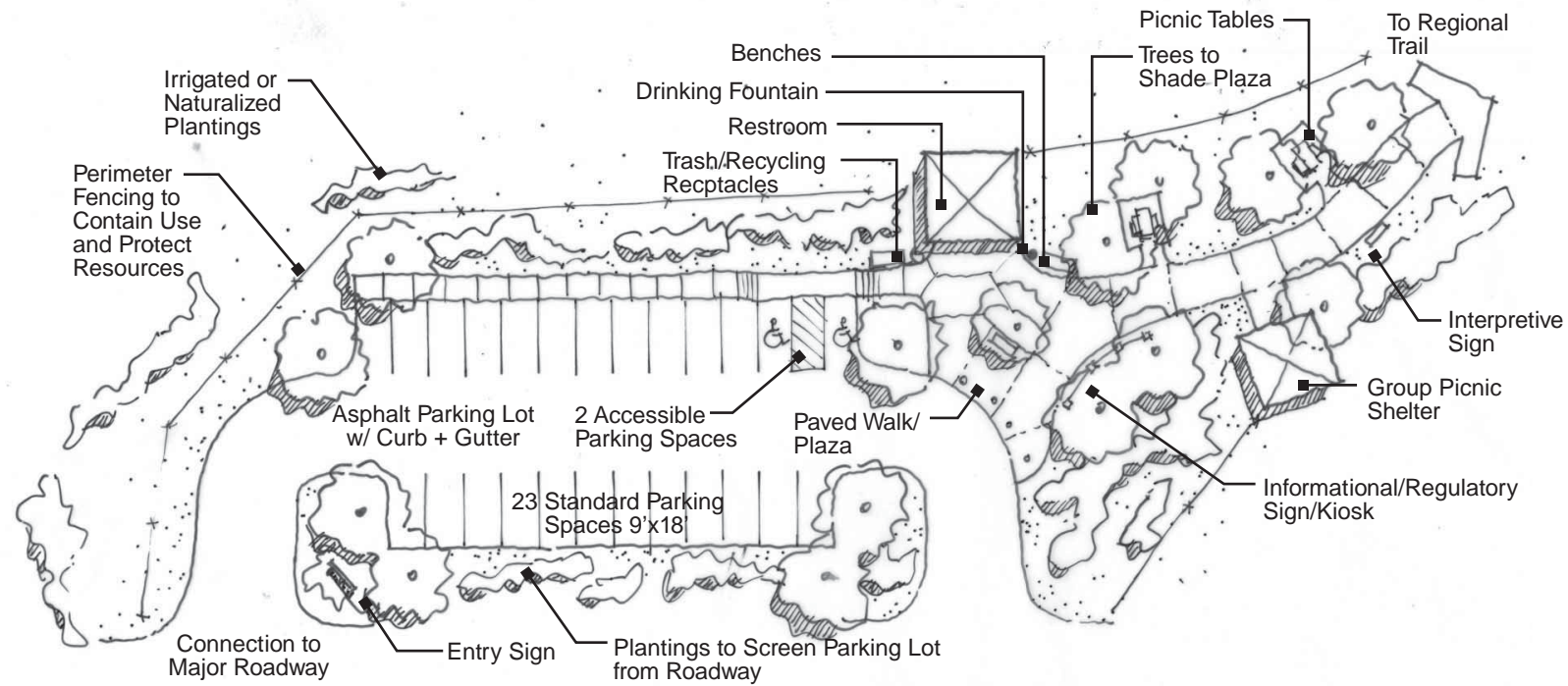


Figure 29 Primary Trailhead with Standard Parking

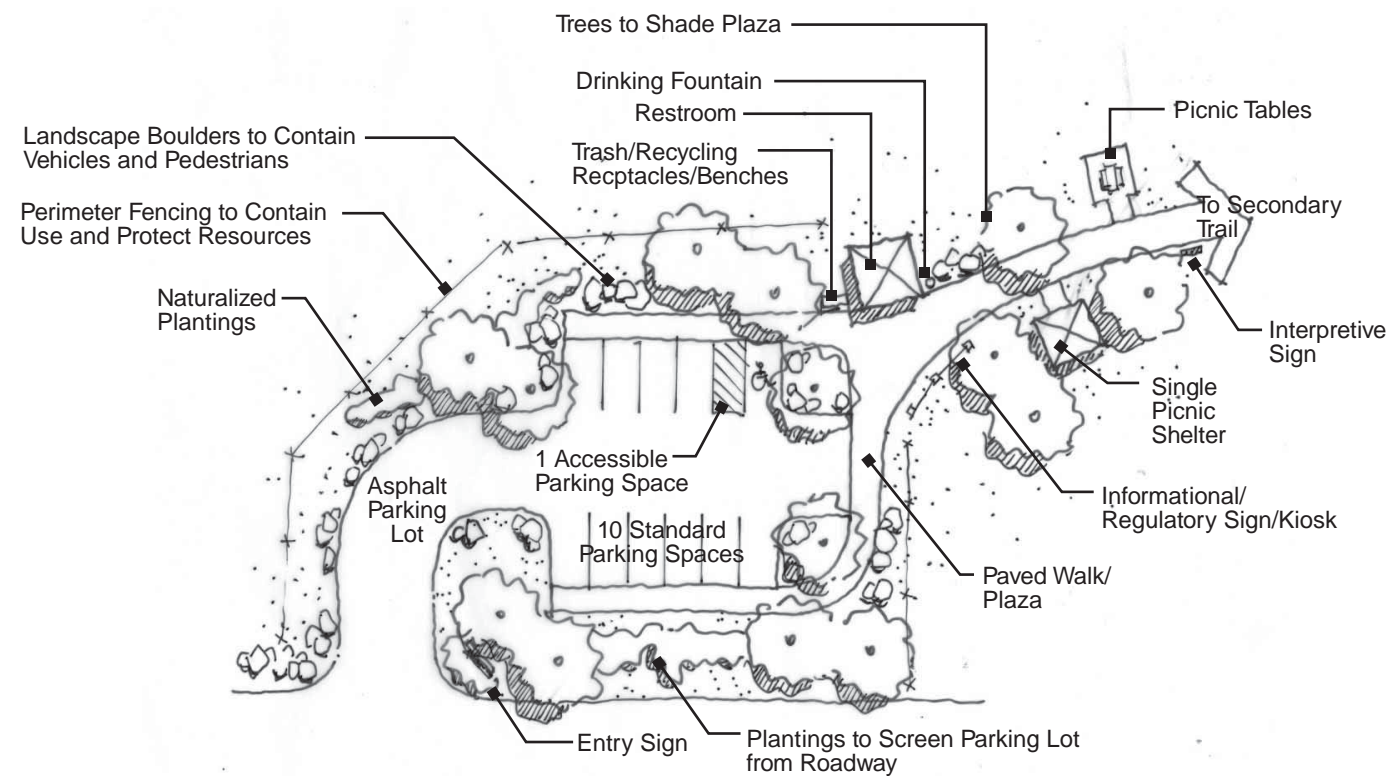


Figure 30 Secondary Trailhead

Trailheads and Trail Waysides

Trailheads provide the first impression for users as they access the trail system. Trailhead locations and sizes are determined by level of anticipated use, classification of trail being accessed, spacing of trailheads and available area for the trailhead itself. In an urban setting, trailheads may often be incorporated into existing parks with only minor physical improvements (see Figure 19). In outlying areas, trailheads should be constructed as stand alone access points. Frequency and location of trailheads should be determined once the trail use and available access points are identified. Access to a primary roadway should be a priority consideration when selecting trailhead locations. Intersections of major drainages and major roadways are often ideal locations for trailheads.

Primary Trailheads should be incorporated where a large number of users are anticipated and should include amenities such as restrooms, picnic shelters, drinking fountains, interpretive and regulatory signs, seating and bike parking (Figure 29).

Secondary Trailheads should occur where a smaller number of users will be accessing a secondary trail (Figure 30). Amenities should include restrooms, picnic tables, drinking fountains, interpretive and regulatory signs, seating and bike parking.

Equestrian parking can be included in trailheads where equestrian use is anticipated, but requires substantially more space than standard parking areas (Figure 31). Hitching posts, water spigots, additional shade and washing areas are other amenities that should be provided at equestrian trailheads (Figure 32).

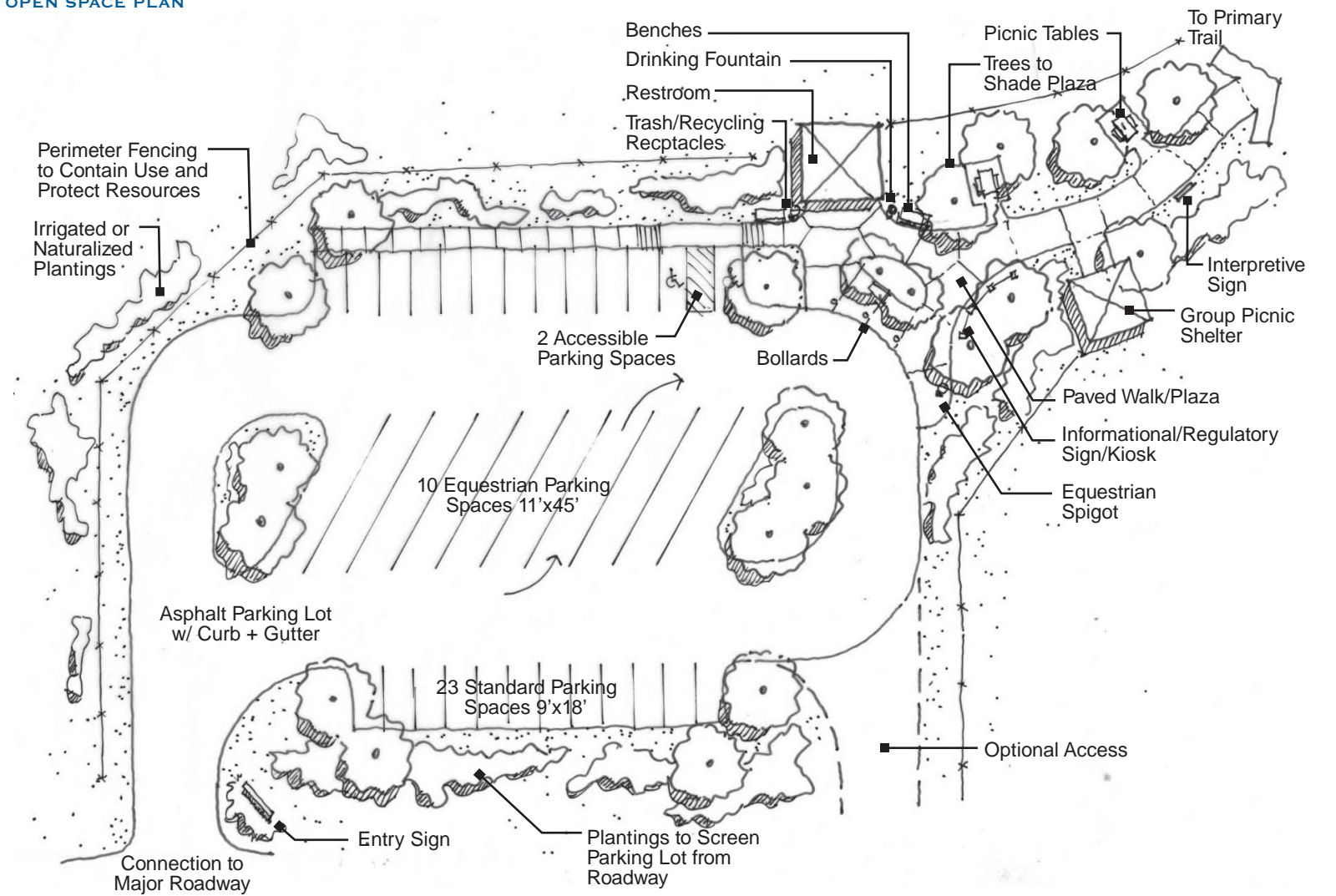


Figure 31 Primary Trailhead w/ Equestrian Parking



Figure 32 Example equestrian amenities. Drinking fountains with jug fillers, spigots and equestrian tie-offs can enhance the equestrian user experience.

Trail Waysides serve as comfort stations along the trail system, but do not provide parking. They are intended to be accessed as a user makes his/her way through a trail system. Waysides provide shade, bike parking, seating and drinking water at intervals that are easily accessed by most users (Figures 33 and 34).

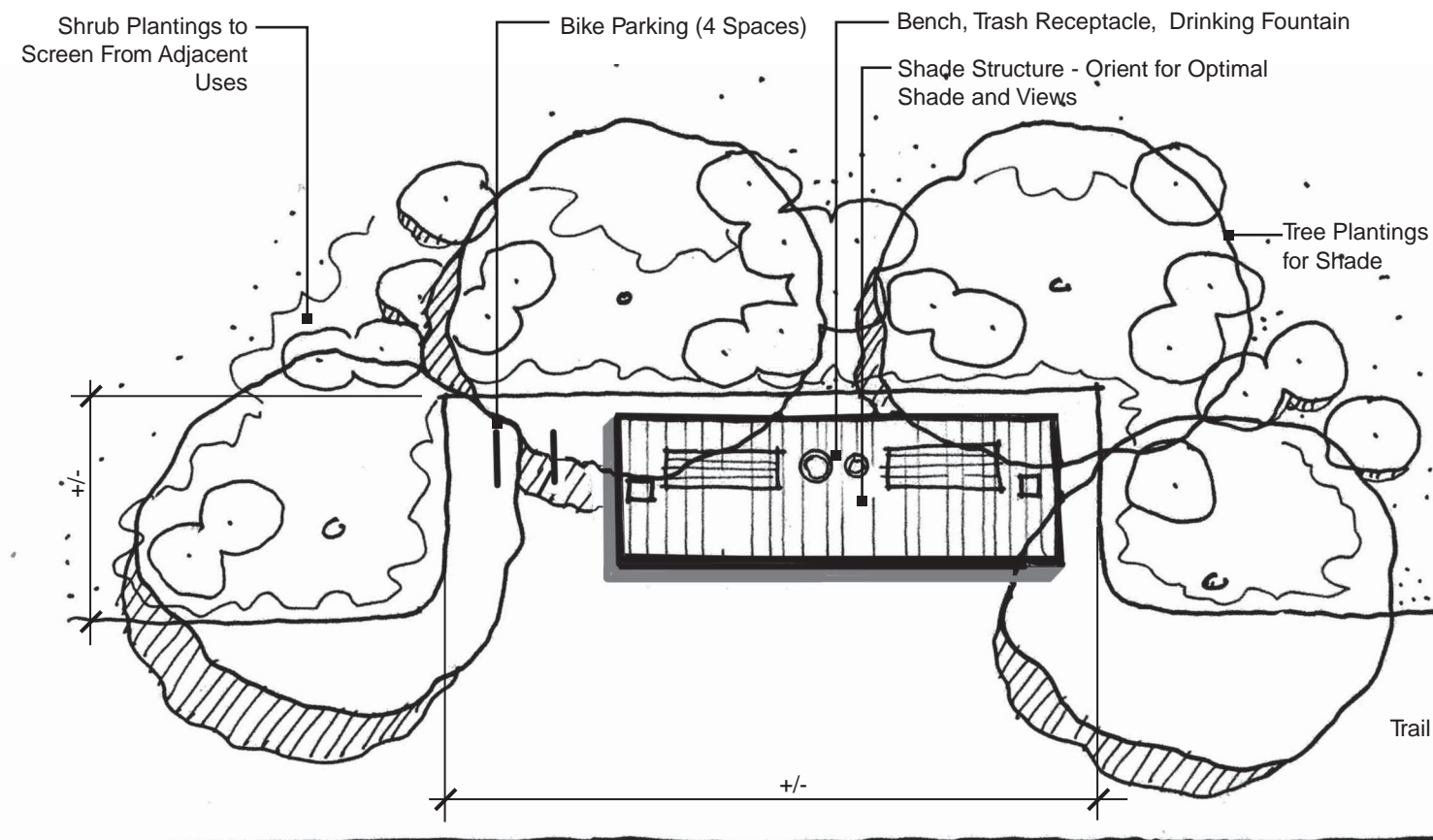


Figure 33 Trail Wayside-Major

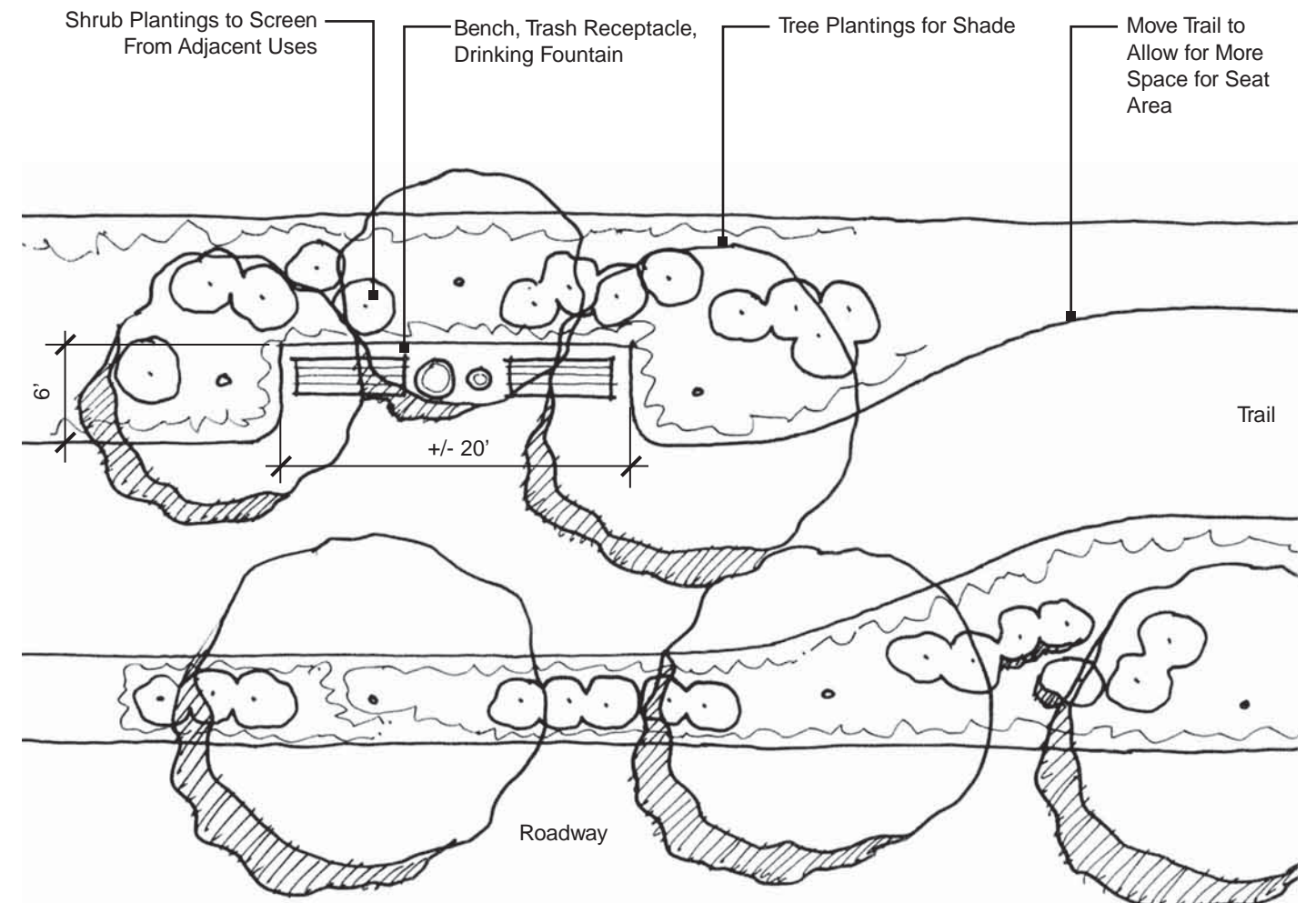


Figure 34 Trail Wayside-Minor

Crossings

Although the trail system will attempt to minimize crossings, especially on Primary Trails, crossings will still exist on collector and local roads at secondary trails. Separated grade crossings will be provided where Primary Trails cross arterial roads and highways (Figure 35). Crossings should be designed to maximize lines-of-sight and visibility for trail users and vehicles. If fully signalized crossings are not possible, pedestrian activated signals are safest and should be used at all higher road classifications or areas where large number of crossings are anticipated (Figure 36). Proper visibility and signage will ensure that non-signalized crossings are also safe (Figure 37).



Figure 35 Separated grade crossings

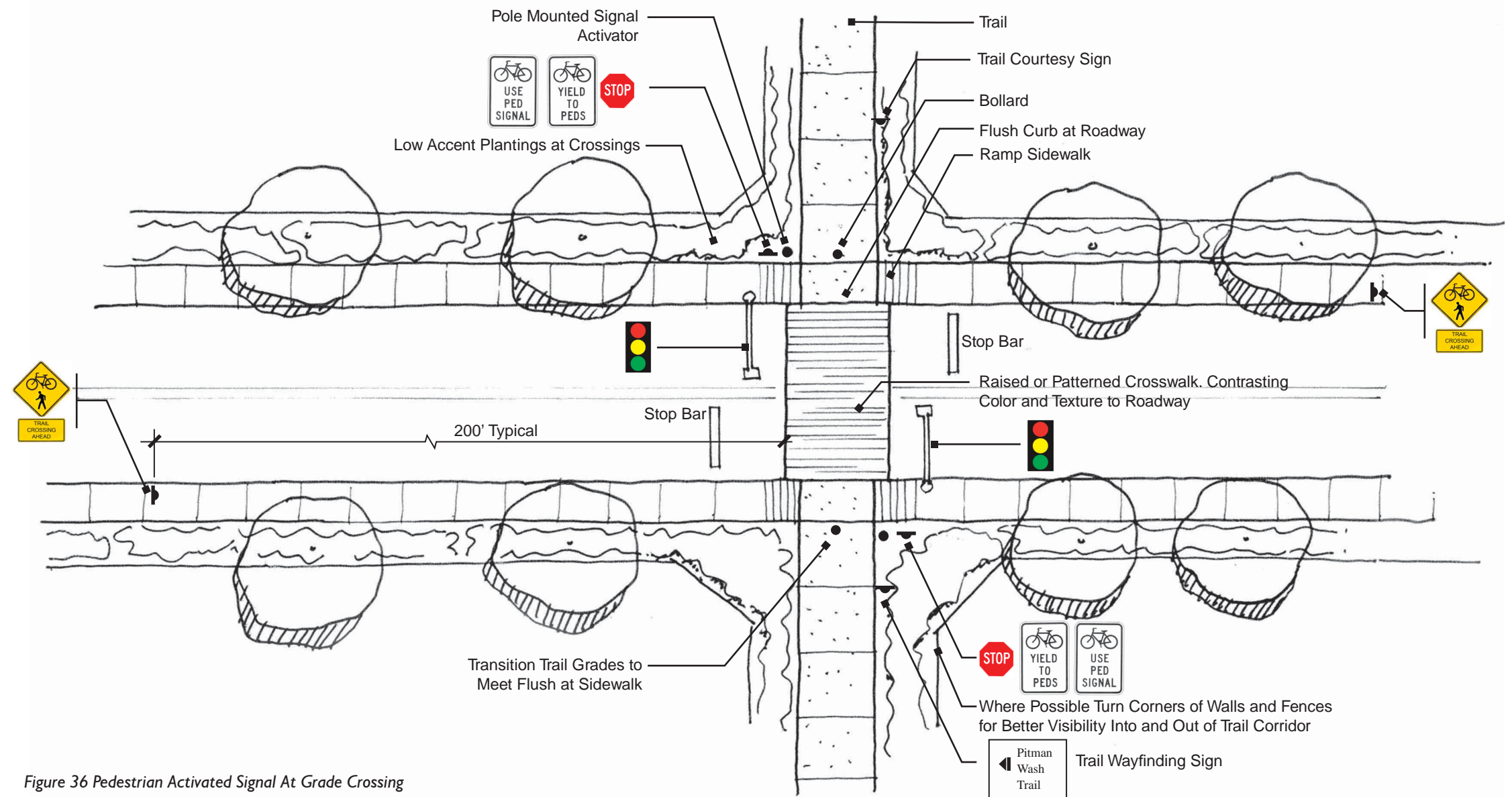


Figure 36 Pedestrian Activated Signal At Grade Crossing

Trail Corridor Landscape

Trails pass through a variety of environments from urban roadsides to suburban neighborhoods and natural desert corridors. Different types of landscape treatments are appropriate for each of these areas. The amount and type of landscape material along a trail greatly impacts the trail experience. The placement of trees at strategic locations provides much needed shade in Henderson's hot desert environment.

Corridors along arterial and other developed roadways should meet and comply with appropriate streetscape requirements. Additional plantings should enhance and compliment the planting concept along the street. The use of native plants and plants requiring minimal water is encouraged.

Open space, drainage, and rail corridors allow for additional flexibility in creating a landscape experience. Generally, these corridors should mimic the natural landscape, including large, irregular, masses of trees and shrubs, rather than formalized rows. Where possible, corridors that have been previously damaged or impacted by development may be reclaimed to convey the natural landscape. Within master-planned communities, homeowners associations typically maintain trail landscaping treatments.

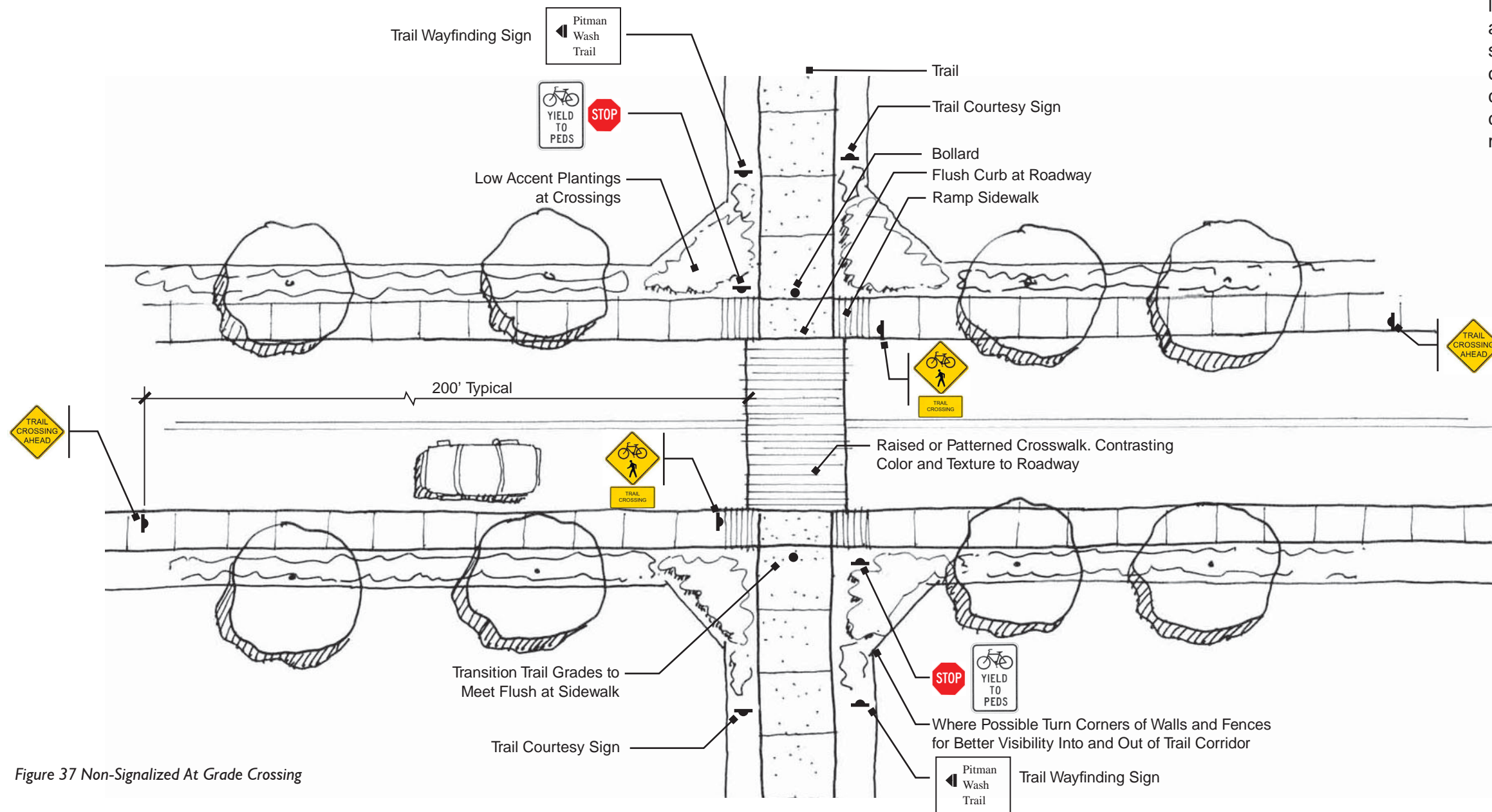


Figure 37 Non-Signalized At Grade Crossing

II. OPEN SPACE AND TRAILS PRINCIPLES AND POLICIES

This section contains decision-making principles and policies that were developed by consensus through worksessions with staff, a Citizens Steering Committee, City Council, Planning Commission, and Parks and Recreation Board, and three public meetings. General concepts from these statements will be incorporated in the 2005 Comprehensive Plan Update.

Like other City programs, ultimate effectiveness of open space and trails efforts is dependent first upon leadership and initiative, and secondarily, upon resources allocated for projects. Principles and policies in this section, and the strategies and action plan in the following chapter are based on the following fundamental assumptions regarding plan implementation:

- City strives to achieve a fair and proper balance among conflicting interests, maintaining a pro-business attitude towards development while protecting natural resources and landscapes of regional and community-wide value.
- Public commitment is long-term and the City will encourage public participation in joint decision-making processes.
- City leadership commitment is long-term (i.e., that findings and strategies will be enforced and supported by Council and public policy).
- The City will collaboratively involve the County, the BLM, and other agencies in joint decision-making processes.
- Neighborhoods and stakeholders most impacted by change will be involved early on in the development process to adapt proposals as needed.
- Support organizations are extensively involved, with advocacy entities empowered to implement projects to further the vision.

Principle 1: Henderson's Open Space System Serves Multiple Purposes

Our community recognizes that the desert environment and natural landscapes add natural beauty to our community, are home to unique wildlife and plant communities, provide ecological functions such as floodways, and provide opportunities for recreation and education for people. Our open space system will conserve resources (including cultural, visual, wildlife, and recreational benefits), provide relief from urban development, and also provide recreation and educational opportunities.

Policy 1.1: Variety of Open Space Types

Henderson has and will continue to plan for a variety of open space types throughout our community, including the "Special Places" (i.e., Regional Preserves, Natural Areas, and Special Resource Areas), "Corridors," and the Desert "Edge" (see Map 3-1: Open Space and Trails Framework Map and Table 3-1: Open Space and Trails Categories).

- **Regional Preserves** are larger areas intended to protect natural, scenic, and recreational values that have community-wide significance (e.g., the Clark County Wetlands Park or Black Mountain).
- **Natural Areas** are smaller protected areas (e.g., the Whitney Mesa Nature Preserve) and other small washes and wildlife habitats.
- **Special Resource Areas** emphasize protection of a specific biological or cultural resource. Public access may be limited or restricted (e.g., the Airport Safety and Noise Attenuation Buffer Area).
- **Corridors** serve recreational, wildlife, and other connectivity goals.
- The **Desert Edge** is the zone where existing or future urban development meets protected desert.

Policy 1.2: Sensitive Lands Protected

Protecting sensitive lands, or lands with distinguishing hillsides and ridgelines, natural drainages and wetlands, known wildlife habitats and corridors, or historic and cultural features, is a priority. These areas should be protected on developing and future development lands, to the greatest extent possible.

Policy 1.3: Recreation Use of Open Space

Allowed recreational uses vary on open space parcels, dependent upon resource sensitivity and management objectives, but some open spaces should accommodate nature-oriented outdoor activities (i.e., hiking, wildlife viewing, photography) and facilities such as trails, trailheads, overlooks, rest areas, and interpretive signage.

Policy 1.4: Open Space as Edges and Community Separator

Open spaces should offer relief and separation between concentrations of development and should provide a natural edge for urbanized areas.

Policy 1.5: Open Spaces Adequately Sized and Configured for Purpose

Open space properties should be of adequate size and configuration to support natural vegetation, wildlife movement and habitat needs, accommodating outdoor recreation needs where appropriate.

Policy 1.6: Open Space Well Distributed to Serve Henderson's Population

Open space properties should be planned in locations and distributed to ensure that the multiple needs of our diverse population are met. Open space, natural areas, and trail corridors should weave through the City's built areas.

Principle 2: Henderson will Have an Interconnected System of Protected Desert Environments

Our open space and trails system should be interconnected, linking natural areas and wildlife habitat areas to parks, schools, neighborhoods, and employment areas through trail corridors and other open space properties. This allows the beauty of our desert environment to become fully integrated into our built environment as the City grows.

Policy 2.1: Connected Natural Areas Instead of "Islands"

The City will work to create a connected system of open space properties, to the extent possible, that follow drainageways, ridgelines, connect habitat areas and other sensitive lands, to avoid "islands in the sky" where parcels are isolated and inaccessible for both wildlife and people.

Policy 2.2: Trail Corridor Connectivity

The City will continue to ensure that trails connect local and County trail facilities, open space properties, neighborhoods, and adjacent Federal Lands, including the Sloan Canyon National Conservation Area.

Policy 2.3: Trail Classifications

Henderson has and will continue to develop a classification system of trails throughout our community, with Primary Trails, Secondary Trails, Equestrian Trails, and Soft Surface Trails.

- **Landmark Corridors** are regionally-significant recreational destinations in and of themselves or lead to recreational destinations (e.g., the Clark County Wetlands Park or Black Mountain). The intent is to provide a unique user experience, as trails of any class (e.g., Primary or Soft Surface) can occur within a Landmark Corridor.
- **Primary Trails** provide access to key community destinations and surrounding communities, most often in non-vehicular corridors. They are meant to accommodate a large number of daily users

and generally are designed for higher speed use than secondary trails.

- **Secondary Trails** support the Primary Trail system by accommodating all users, and often occur within vehicular corridors.
- **Equestrian Trails** occur separately or in parallel with other trail types, allowing equestrian users to safely access trail corridors and recreation destinations.
- **Soft Surface Trails** target hikers, mountain bikers, or equestrian users in mountain or foothill open spaces.

Principle 3: Henderson will Consider Multiple Values in the Design of Storm Drainage Improvements

Henderson seeks ways to better integrate a system of storm drainage channels with a system of trails, parks, open spaces, and other landscapes in our neighborhoods and built environment, without compromising public safety and the proper functioning of the drainage facilities.

Policy 3.1: Coordinated Planning

The planning, design, and construction of storm drainage improvements, trails, parks, and open spaces should occur in tandem, rather than separate events to identify and take advantage of multiple use opportunities afforded by flood control facilities.

Policy 3.2: Adequate Trail Width

In most cases, flood control channels will be designed to provide adequate width for a safe trail and pedestrian amenities.

Policy 3.3 Aesthetic and Recreational Benefits of Flood Control Facilities

Flood control projects will complement and enhance the beauty of our desert environment by providing a combination of aesthetic and recreational amenities, such as natural-appearing channels, wetlands, and native vegetation, as well as traditional park features.

Policy 3.4. Natural Channel Protection

Significant natural washes, arroyos, and waterways will be conserved in their natural state in future growth areas. Explore policies that encourage reduced runoff. On-site detention policies and facilities should be explored to reduce the need for oversized channels.

Policy 3.5: Public Participation in Planning Storm Drainage Improvements

Residents and business owners affected by storm drainage improvement projects will have opportunities to participate in the planning and design process to provide input on recreational opportunities and aesthetics.

Principle 4: Development will Respect the “Desert Edge”

The edge is the zone where existing or future urban development meets protected desert (either Federal, such as Sloan Canyon, or City-owned such as Bird Viewing Preserve). The City will encourage appropriate development at the edge to preserve scenic resources, allow for public access to open space areas, provide “soft” transitions between developed areas and the desert landscape, and maximize the benefit of adjacent public lands to citizens.

Policy 4.1: Desert Edge/Urban Transitions

Land use plans for future development should accommodate urban requirements, encourage context-sensitive design, preserve scenic resources, and set aside sensitive lands at the edge to the extent possible. By creating appropriate transitions between urban and public land, the City can maximize the benefit of adjacent public lands to its citizens without incurring direct management responsibilities and costs.

Policy 4.2: Access to Public Lands at the Desert Edge

Land use plans for future development should accommodate public access from developed neighborhoods to the public lands. New neighborhoods

and commercial areas should either maintain historic access to adjacent public lands that will remain public or provide new access.

Principle 5: Our Community will Provide Long-Term Stewardship of our Open Space System

Environmental stewardship is part of our civic consciousness and municipal responsibility. Henderson seeks to integrate washes, floodplains, and steep slopes into future development as natural, open areas and protect and preserve these natural resources for future generations.

Policy 5.1: Natural-Appearing Desert Condition of Open Spaces

Open spaces should be conserved in their natural state, restored, or improved with appropriate native landscaping to retain a natural-appearing condition to preserve the pre-development character of the Mojave Desert.

Policy 5.2: Resource Inventory for Future Growth Areas

In collaboration with local, regional, state, and federal agencies, the City will identify sensitive lands and trail corridor opportunities in future growth areas in order to ensure their protection in the annexation and land use planning process.

Policy 5.3: Variety of Open Space Stewardship Approaches

The City will manage its open spaces through a variety of approaches, including establishing Management Plans, establishing adequate funding, and fostering volunteerism, partnerships, and non-profits, and enforcement.

Policy 5.4: Public Education about Mohave Desert and Stewardship

The City will promote public education about open space issues and the desert landscape, including sensitive lands, cultural landscapes, native plants, drainage systems, and other functions of natural

and open space areas through interpretation and programming. In particular, the Landmark Corridor system will encourage users to learn about, appreciate, respect, and experience the Mojave desert and access the adjacent Sloan Canyon National Conservation Area

Policy 5.5: Safety in Open Spaces

The City will ensure public safety and appropriate uses on open spaces and trails through proper planning and design, education, monitoring, and enforcement, with emergency access provided in open space areas.

Viewing platform at the Clark County School District Whitney Mesa Preserve. For the past 10 years, Boy Scout, Girl Scout, and other civic groups have partnered with the school district to install trails, overlooks, and teaching areas in the northernmost canyon of Whitney Mesa south of Russell.



III. LIST OF LANDMARK PROJECTS

The illustrated Framework Map identifies a number of priority short- and long-term open space and trail opportunities to assist the community in achieving the open space vision (see Figure X). In particular, these projects will increase quality of life by integrating the beauty of the desert environment into the built environment, contributing to a sense of place, and providing unique recreational experiences. These opportunities were developed, refined, and prioritized through numerous staff and public workshops. While opportunities were not prioritized in statistical model, three opportunities were consistently identified as a subject of great public interest. They are as follows (as numbered on the illustrated Framework Map rather than by order of priority):

- **Sloan Canyon Visitors Center (2)**
- **Black Mountain Regional Preserve (4)**
- **River Mountains (9)**

Detailed descriptions of these three projects are found in the following section, and priority actions for each are outlined in the Action Plan in Chapter 5.

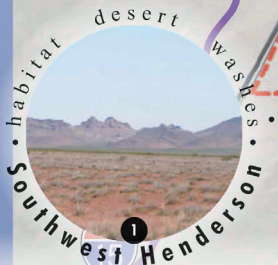
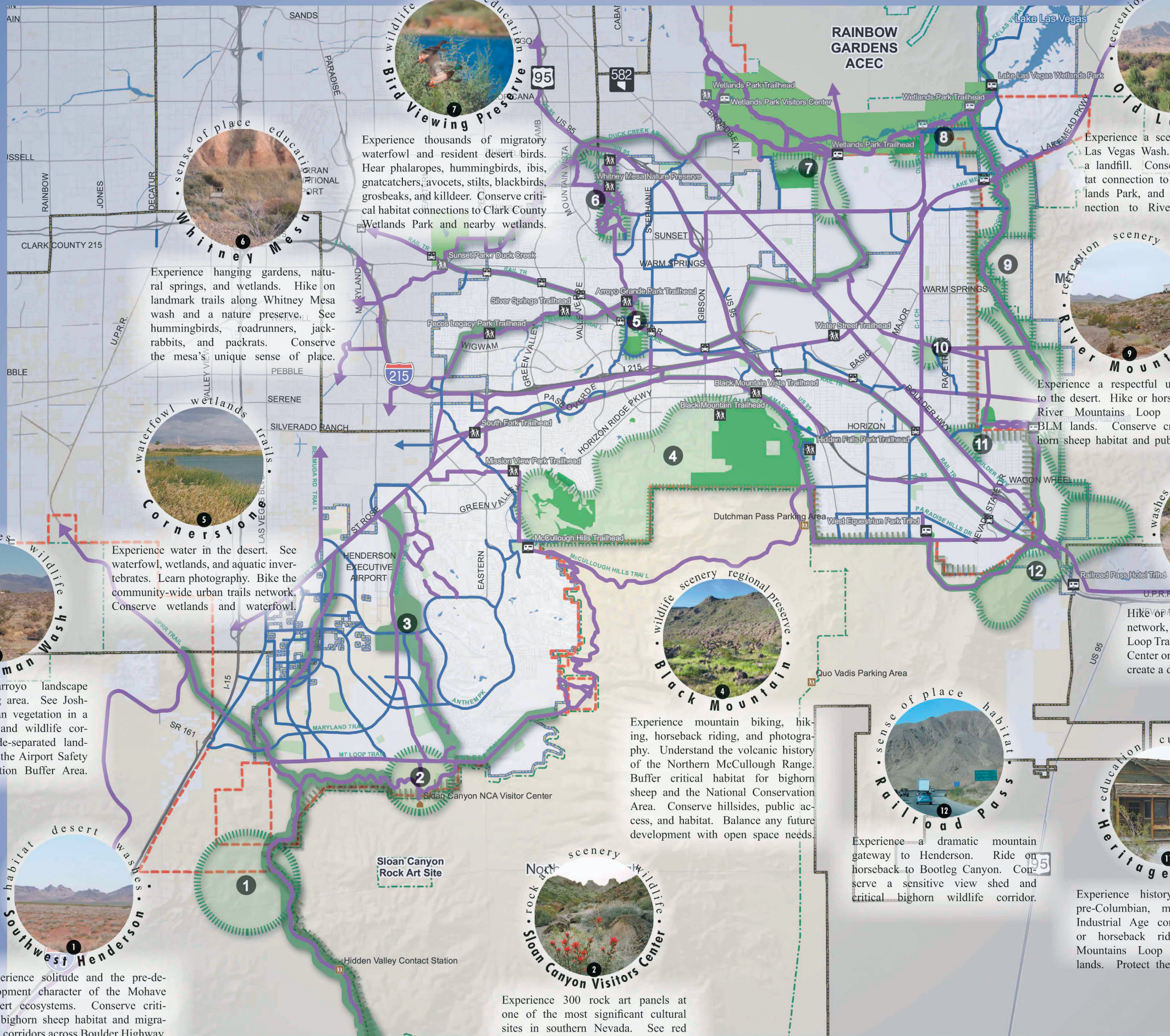
Other landmark projects are listed below. This list is not meant to be all inclusive. New projects should be identified and prioritized annually. Each landmark project includes a brief description of the potential public use opportunities and natural resources to be conserved.

- **Southwest Henderson (1)**
- **Upper Pittman Wash (3)**
- **Cornerstone (5)**
- **Whitney Mesa (6)**
- **Bird-Viewing Preserve (7)**
- **Old Landfill (8)**
- **BLM Quarter Section (10)**
- **Heritage Museum (11)**
- **Railroad Pass (12)**

Considerations for Future Open Space Projects

There are often more opportunities to protect sensitive lands than there are partners, staff and funding available. The following questions should be utilized to enable staff to fully assess and prioritize conservation opportunities, while allowing flexibility in implementing the plan. They are intended to serve as a basis for comparing different resource areas in order to determine the priority of acquisition or conservation easement.

1. What is the ecological and cultural value of this property?
2. What are the potential recreational or educational opportunities for this property?
3. What is the threat to the integrity of the property's natural, cultural, or scenic values?
4. What are the estimated long-term stewardship costs for this property?
 - a. Initial clean-up
 - b. Recreation and Education
 - c. Restoration
 - d. General maintenance
5. What is the current owner's interest in partnering with the City?
6. What are the potential liabilities or conflicts that may be absorbed by the City or its partners?
7. Based on questions 1-6, explain why conservation of this property would be of significant public benefit to the citizens of the City of Henderson.



Experience solitude and the pre-development character of the Mohave Desert ecosystems. Conserve critical bighorn sheep habitat and migratory corridors across Boulder Highway.



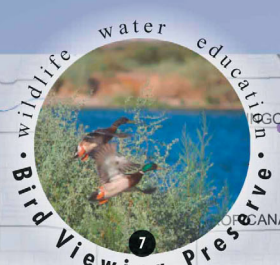
Experience an arroyo landscape within a developing area. See Joshua trees and riparian vegetation in a historic floodplain and wildlife corridor. Create grade-separated landmark trails through the Airport Safety and Noise Attenuation Buffer Area.



Experience water in the desert. See waterfowl, wetlands, and aquatic invertebrates. Learn photography. Bike the community-wide urban trails network. Conserve wetlands and waterfowl.



Experience hanging gardens, natural springs, and wetlands. Hike on landmark trails along Whitney Mesa wash and a nature preserve. See hummingbirds, roadrunners, jackrabbits, and packrats. Conserve the mesa's unique sense of place.



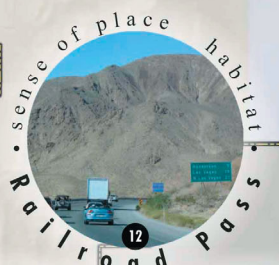
Experience thousands of migratory waterfowl and resident desert birds. Hear phalaropes, hummingbirds, ibis, gnatcatchers, avocets, stilts, blackbirds, grosbeaks, and killdeer. Conserve critical habitat connections to Clark County Wetlands Park and nearby wetlands.



Experience 300 rock art panels at one of the most significant cultural sites in southern Nevada. See red tail hawks, chuckwallas, quail, and migratory birds and gila monsters. Protect the wilderness experience.



Experience mountain biking, hiking, horseback riding, and photography. Understand the volcanic history of the Northern McCullough Range. Buffer critical habitat for bighorn sheep and the National Conservation Area. Conserve hillsides, public access, and habitat. Balance any future development with open space needs.



Experience a dramatic mountain gateway to Henderson. Ride on horseback to Bootleg Canyon. Conserve a sensitive view shed and critical bighorn wildlife corridor.



Experience history. Learn about pre-Columbian, mining, and post-Industrial Age communities. Hike or horseback ride to the River Mountains Loop Trail and BLM lands. Protect the aesthetic context.



Hike or bike an off-street urban trails network, linking to the River Mountains Loop Trail. Play at Heritage Recreation Center or Basic High School. Possibly, create a desert interpretive opportunity.



Experience a respectful urban edge to the desert. Hike or horseback ride River Mountains Loop Trail and BLM lands. Conserve critical bighorn sheep habitat and public access.



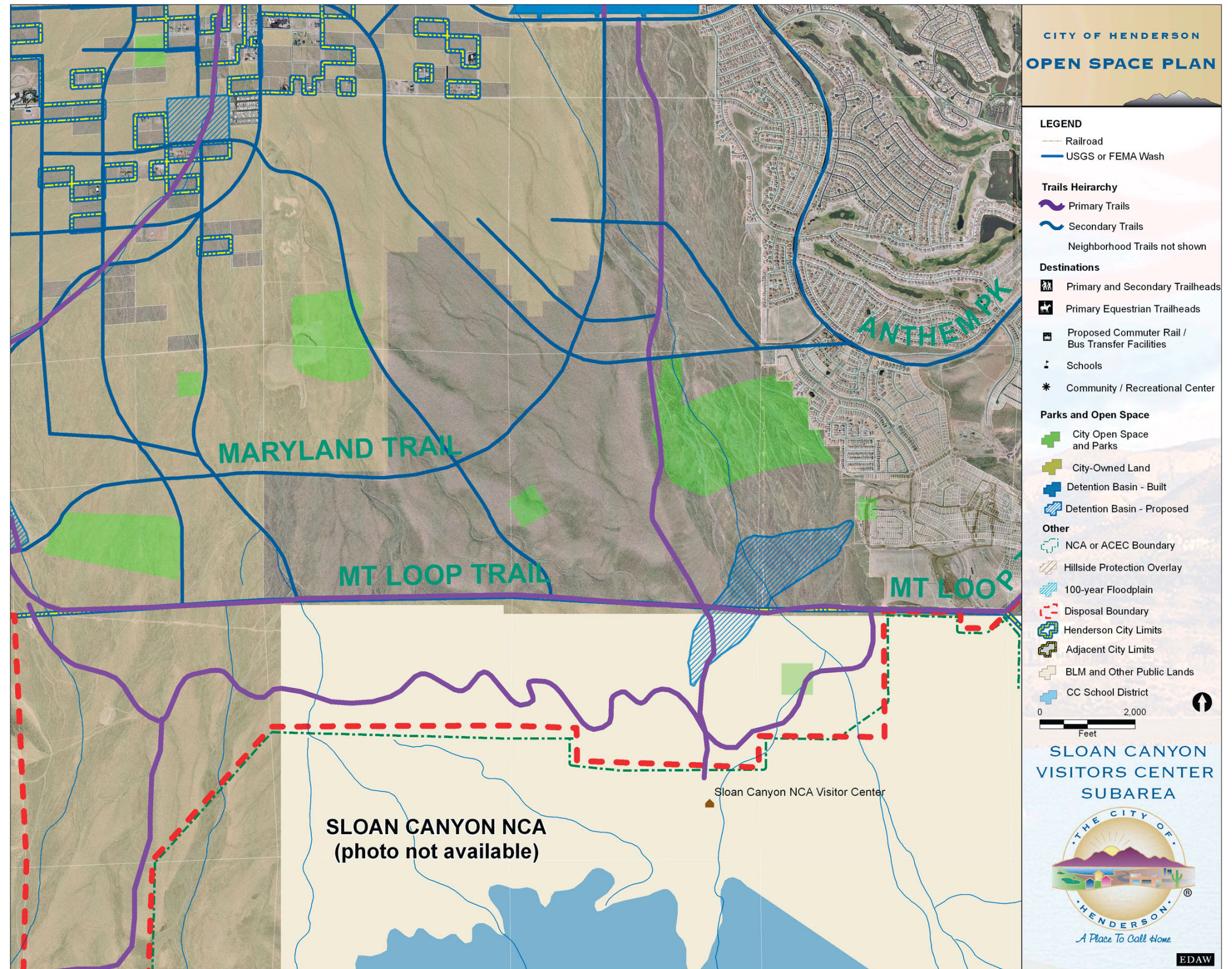
Experience a scenic drive along the Las Vegas Wash. Restore habitat at a landfill. Conserve a critical habitat connection to Clark County Wetlands Park, and landmark trail connection to River Mountains Trail.



Access road leading to mouth of Sloan Canyon Rock Art Site.



Boulders, waterfalls, and wildflowers cascade down Sloan Canyon walls in the spring.



Sloan Canyon Visitors Center Subarea
Open Space Category: *Special Place (Natural Area), Edge, Corridor, and Landmark Corridor*



Experience 300 rock art panels at one of the most significant cultural sites in southern Nevada. See red tail hawks, chuckwallas, quail, migratory birds and gila monsters. Protect the wilderness experience.

Description

In 2002, the Sloan Canyon National Conservation Area (NCA) was established “to conserve, protect, and enhance for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations its cultural, archeological, natural, wilderness, scientific, geological, historical, biological, wildlife and scenic resources,” (Clark County Conservation of Public Land and Natural Resources Act of 2002). The NCA encompasses more than 48,000 acres of BLM land in the McCullough Mountains, within which 14,763 acres comprise the North McCullough Wilderness Area, an area containing a variety of unique geological features and plant communities. The NCA’s pronounced ridgelines, which span from 2,000 feet at the eastern base of the range to 5,092 feet at Black Mountain, offer excellent views of the City of Henderson, the entire Las Vegas Valley, and beyond.

The NCA is proposing that their primary entrance and Visitors Center be located at the southern border of West Henderson, where the steep escarpment of the volcanic northern McCullough peaks transition

into a gradual western slope. The Visitors Center will be sited at the mouth of Sloan Canyon in order to control access and prevent vandalism. This canyon contains one of the most significant cultural sites in southern Nevada, over 300 rock art panels with 1,700 individual design elements. Archaeologists believe the petroglyphs represent native cultures dating from the Archaic to the historic era.

As visitors approach their recreation destination, research shows that visitors have heightened expectations for the context surrounding the destination. Currently, land within the Disposal Area boundary (adjacent to the Visitors Center site) is BLM-owned, but is anticipated to be released for development in the near-term and the area is identified as a Future Growth Area by the City, with uses prescribed in the West Henderson Plan. This provides an opportunity to create residential and/or commercial areas that enhance the entrance to the historic site. Sensitive viewsheds and unique landforms such as ridgelines and washes should be given high priority during the development review process. Context-sensitive design of City streets, lighting, and other infrastructure should be encouraged. Like Red Rocks National Conservation Area, the Sloan Canyon Visitors Center has the potential to be a major tourist destination and economic driver for the City of Henderson.

Public Use Opportunities

The facilities and activities offered at Sloan Canyon Visitors Center will be elaborated in the final Sloan Canyon Resource Management Plan, to be completed in the fall of 2005. Guided tours will likely be offered to view the petroglyphs in Sloan Canyon. Located within a 15 minute drive from McCarran International Airport, the Visitors Center campus may likely accommodate a library, research laboratories, university offices, and a restaurant in addition to interpretive exhibits. The natural and aesthetic setting in which these facilities are located should be a prime consideration in land use planning.

Within Henderson, a Landmark Corridor is planned east-west south of an existing powerline corridor, as well as one vehicular collector road and non-motorized trail leading south to the Visitors Center. Due to

the sensitive resources in Sloan Canyon, other motorized and non-motorized access points south into the NCA will be discouraged except as identified on the Sloan Canyon NCA Resource Management Plan. Photography, wildlife and wildflower viewing, and other passive interpretive activities will be encouraged at the Visitors Center.

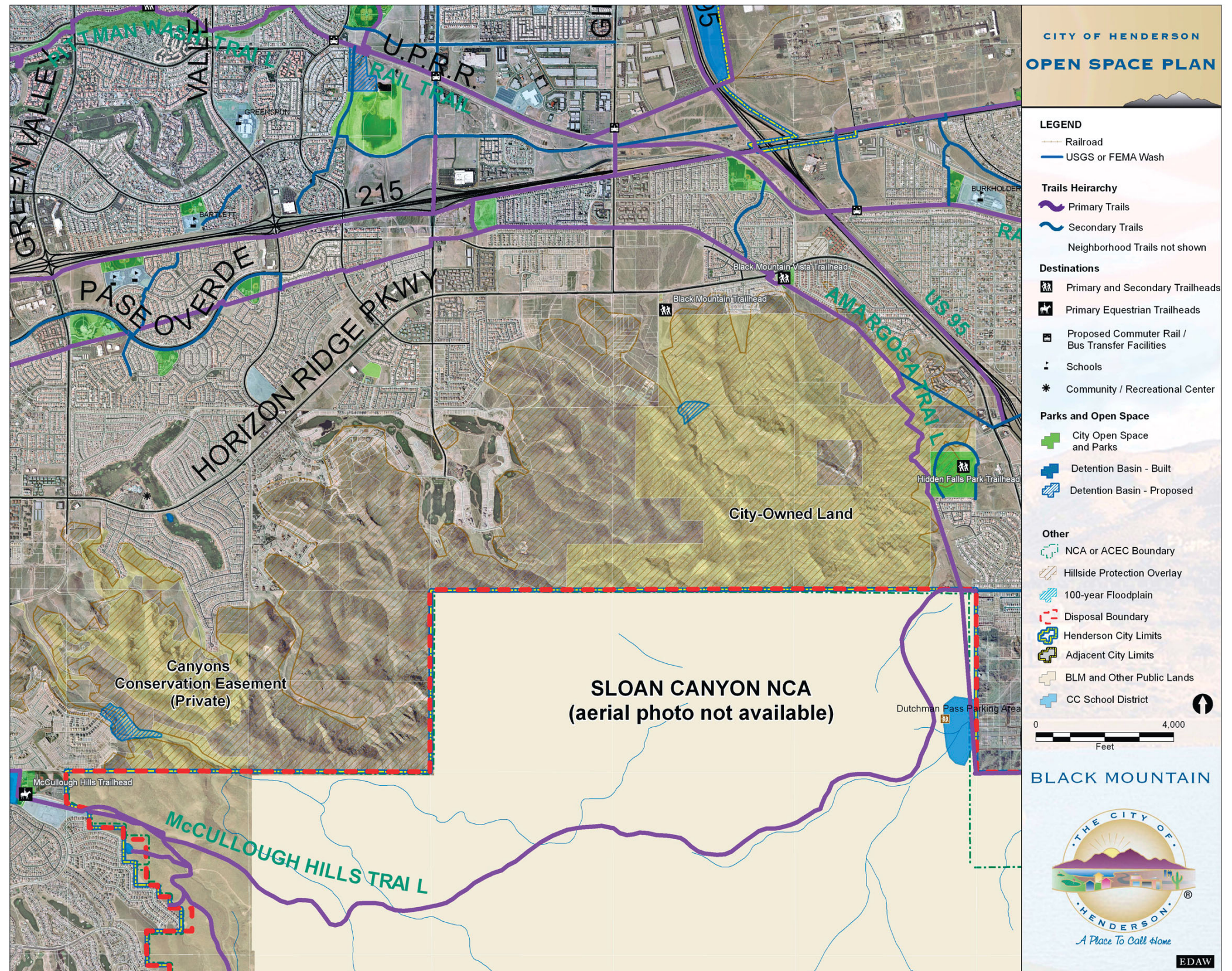
Resource Conservation Opportunities

The Visitors Center area supports a unique combination of plants from the Mohave, Sonoran Desert and Great Basin ecosystems. The primary vegetation is a creosote-bursage community with barrel cactus, Joshua trees, cholla and prickly pear with areas of well-developed desert pavement. The NCA supports black gramma grass, which is not known to occur anywhere else in Nevada and stands of teddy-bear cholla, which is at the northernmost extent of the species. Several special status plant species potentially occur near the Visitors Center, such as White-Margined Beardtongue Penstemon and Rosy Twotone Beardtongue Penstemon. The Nevada Natural Heritage Database contains records for some special status species, and additional populations and species are likely to be located with further surveys.

Images of Sloan Canyon proper. Anthem in West Henderson can be seen in the distance on the lower right.



City-owned land at Black Mountain as seen from a proposed trailhead off of Horizon Ridge.



Black Mountain Regional Preserve

Open Space Category: *Special Place (Regional Preserve), Edge, and Landmark Corridor*



Experience mountain biking, hiking, horseback riding, and photography. Understand the volcanic history of the Northern McCullough Range. Buffer critical habitat for bighorn sheep and the National Conservation Area. Conserve hillsides, public access, and habitat. Balance any future development with open space needs.

Description

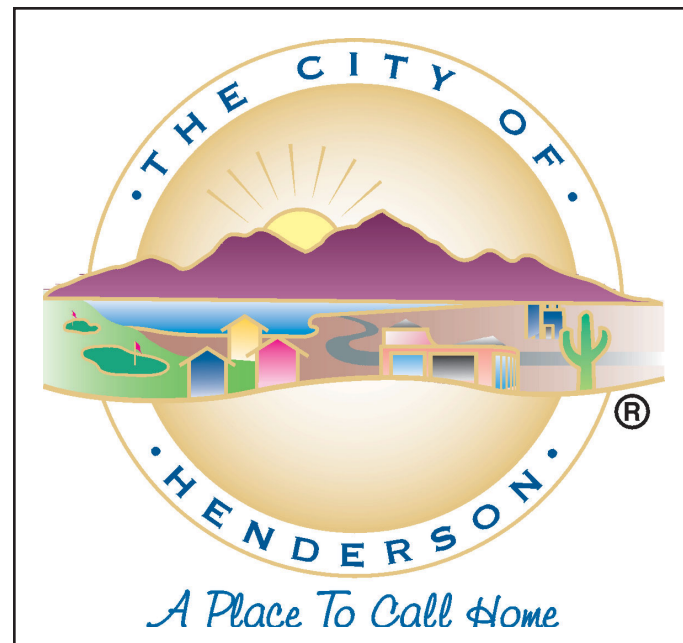
The northern McCullough Range is the most distinctive, visible landscape feature in the City of Henderson, and forms the backdrop to the City's logo. The northwestern slopes of Black Mountain are visible throughout the Las Vegas Valley, and it is a central focal point for tourists approaching the City on I-215 and U.S. 95. It is also one of the only areas within the City limits where one can view bighorn sheep for several months of the year. For this and its other qualities, Black Mountain was repeatedly identified in public meetings as a priority conservation site.

The City owns approximately 1,377 acres of vacant land on the northeastern side Black Mountain within the corporate boundaries adjacent to the Sloan Canyon NCA. Portions of this land were dedicated to the City as "open space" by past developments.

Significant opportunities exist to expand City-owned land in this opportunity area through dedications and conservation easements as well as acquisition of buildable private lands in partnership with willing sellers.

The western half of Black Mountain is identified as a Future Growth Area and is zoned to permit residential uses, with several subdivisions at varying stages of completion. Most of the western half of the mountain is privately owned. However, McDonald Ranch, a major landowner, has expressed interest in transferring ownership of unbuildable lands to the City. The remainder of Black Mountain, including City-owned land, is zoned as Development Holding.

Formalizing a management plan for large-scale City-owned lands such as Black Mountain and maximizing opportunities to expand them protects natural and aesthetic values of community-wide significance while also providing opportunities for nature-oriented, outdoor activities. As recreational facilities are developed in Sloan Canyon National Conservation Area, this buffer between private and federal lands will experience increased demands for recreation and access.



City of Henderson logo featuring Northern McCullough Range as backdrop.

Public Use Opportunities

This regional preserve holds a number of unique recreational and interpretive opportunities, such as hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, photography, and wildlife viewing. Two miles of a Landmark Corridor, the Amargosa Trail, pass through the northeast corner of the opportunity area, and trail improvements are scheduled through recent SNPLMA funding allocations. However, gated communities and limited access points pose a significant challenge to fully accessing Black Mountain.

Convenient, yet controlled, public access to Black Mountain is critical to the success of this regional opportunity. Two City-owned parcels and an easement adjacent to Horizon Ridge Parkway are essential to guaranteeing public access to more remote City-owned lands. These include Hidden Falls Park, Black Mountain Vista Trailhead, and an easement on the south side of Horizon Ridge east of Gibson Road. The Green Valley and nearby neighborhoods of southeast Henderson (further west of these three access points) are underserved by current park facilities. Obtaining ownership or conservation easements of private land from willing landowners in the western portion may permit additional recreational connectivity for these neighborhoods.

Hidden Falls Park is 60-acre park currently under construction, which includes neighborhood and community park amenities in the fast-growing area of Mission Drive. Both passive and active recreational opportunities are planned. The proposed 7.5-acre Black Mountain Vista Trailhead Park is bisected by the Amargosa Trail on Horizon Ridge Parkway east of Paseo Verde. The third City easement lies on a piece of land ideal for a trailhead, with excellent access to gentle slopes and washes.

Resource Conservation Opportunities

This opportunity area has been previously identified as a priority conservation site, such as in the Nature Conservancy's 2001 study, Ecoregion-Based Conservation in the Mojave Desert. The majority of Black Mountain is subject to the Hillside Overlay Zone due to steep slopes and several sensitive ridgelines, as



City-owned land at Black Mountain above a proposed trailhead off of Horizon Ridge.

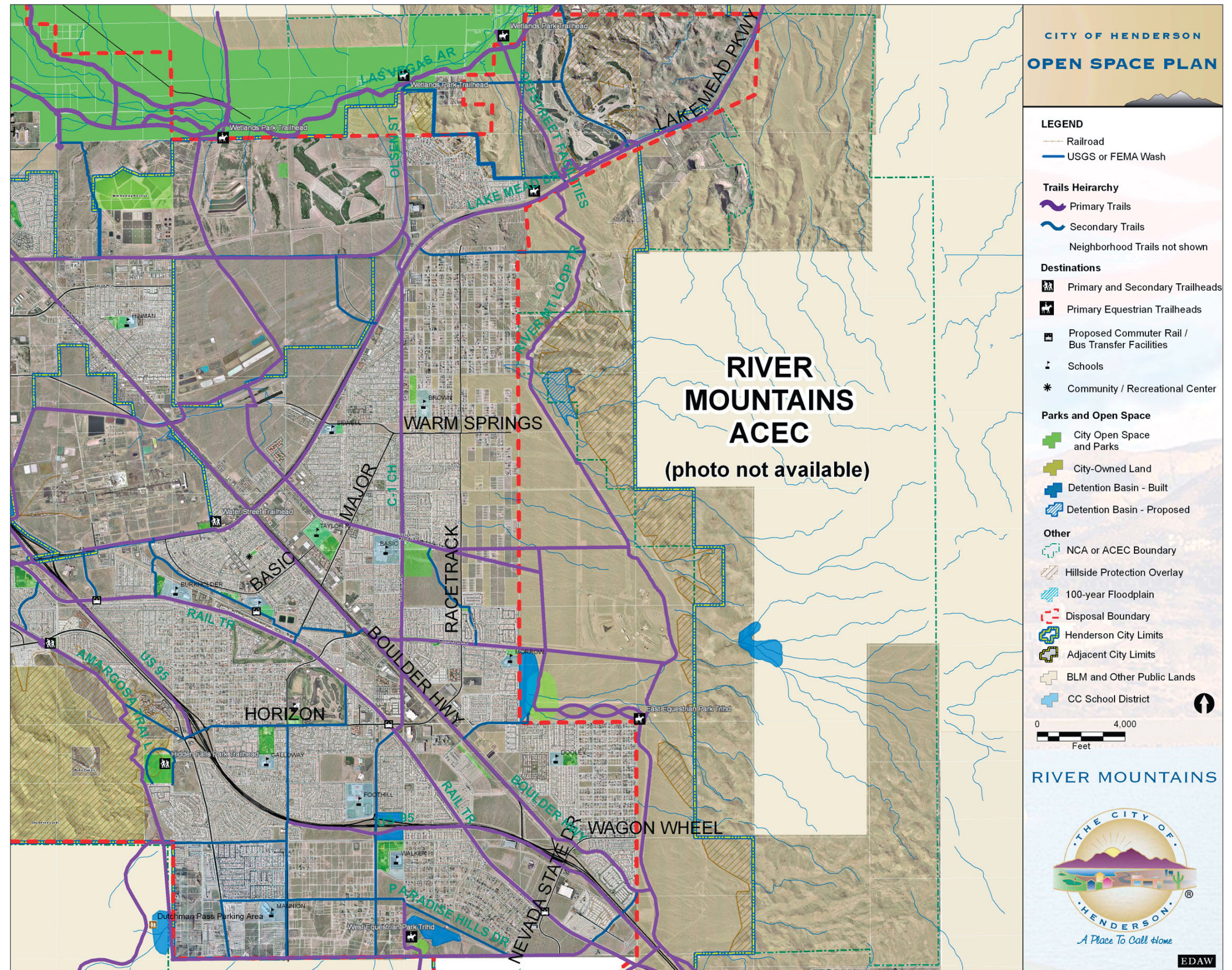
indicated on the 2002 Hillside Overlay Zoning District Map. Black Mountain also meets many of the criteria of the Clark County Environmentally Sensitive Lands Study.

Due to its size, elevation, and varied landscapes types, Black Mountain represents a landscape-scale habitat conservation opportunity in addition to providing an aesthetic backdrop to the City. It provides potential habitat for Gila Monster, Chuckwalla, Desert Tortoise, as well as critical Bighorn Sheep Winter Range. It also creates a critical buffer between the intense urban uses of the Valley and critical habitat contained within the NCA. Trails and other recreational facilities should be designed and located so as to minimize locations to these critical habitats. Continued coordination with the BLM will be necessary to direct trail users to designated entry points to the Sloan NCA.

The River Mountains Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) provides critical habitat for bighorn sheep, desert tortoise, and a number of other species of concern.



The River Mountains Loop Trail - when completed - will be approximately 35 miles in length and will surround the River Mountains connecting Lake Mead National Recreation Area, Hoover Dam, Henderson, Boulder City and the rest of the Las Vegas Valley. The segment nearest Henderson opened in 2005, shown here at Lake Mead Boulevard.



River Mountains

Open Space Category: *Special Place, Edge and Landmark Corridor*



Experience a respectful urban edge to the desert. Hike or horseback ride River Mountains Loop Trail and BLM lands. Conserve critical bighorn sheep habitat and public access.

Description

Eastern Henderson includes land that is designated as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) by the BLM. The River Mountains ACEC comprises approximately 11,000 acres of land, of which 640 acres extend into the eastern part of the City. The River Mountains were formed by lava erupting from small volcanoes nearly 5 million years ago and were shaped by water down-cutting its way to the Colorado River. Today, the River Mountains provide the scenic viewshed for Henderson and Boulder City and the ACEC protects valuable habitat for the Desert Tortoise and Desert Bighorn Sheep.

Public Use Opportunities

The River Mountains provide neighboring communities with a suite of recreation opportunities. Photography, bird-viewing, biking and hiking are among the most popular activities in the River Moun-

tain. In 1996, the River Mountains Trail Partnership began planning and development for a 35-mile loop trail to surround the River Mountains connecting Lake Mead National Recreation Area, Hoover Dam, Boulder City, Henderson and the rest of the Las Vegas Valley, thereby expanding recreational and alternative transportation opportunities for the region's growing population. The trail, portions of which are completed nearest Henderson, is intended to be multi-use, multi-jurisdictional, and non-motorized. Upon completion, the trail will link residential areas to local and regional parks and trails, and will also link natural and cultural resources while providing outdoor education opportunities focused on the uniqueness of the River Mountains landscape. The completed trail will accommodate mountain bikers, horseback riders, and hikers (www.rivermountainstrail.com).

Nearby Bootleg Canyon features a world-renowned 36-mile network of cross-country and downhill mountain bike trails, most built along the slopes of an ancient volcano cone, which challenge both beginner and expert cyclists. Users include local residents and international visitors. Just as Bootleg Canyon provides wonderful recreation opportunities for Las Vegas and Boulder City residents, the River Mountains and River Mountains ACEC could provide numerous recreational experiences for the City's residents (www.bootleg.org).

Resource Conservation Opportunities

The River Mountains ACEC supports a number of sensitive resources which led to its federal designation. Within the ACEC, approximately 6,000 acres are designated for conservation of the federally threatened Desert Tortoise. Clark County completed a Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan and Environmental Impact Statement that outlines the management guidelines for tortoise habitat within the ACEC. In addition, the ACEC supports one of the largest desert bighorn sheep populations in the region as part of the McCullough Range. Calico Ridge also supports unique and endemic plants. Finally, the River Mountains, in their entirety, forms the scenic backdrop for the eastern side of the Las Vegas Valley.



Quail along a wash in northeast Henderson

Other Opportunity Areas

Southwest Henderson (Ivanpah Valley)

Open Space Category: *Special Areas (Regional Preserve), Edge, Wildlife and Trail Corridor*



Experience solitude and the pre-development character of the Mohave Desert ecosystems. Conserve critical bighorn sheep habitat and migratory corridors across Boulder Highway.

Description

With future growth constrained by Wetlands Park to the north, River Mountains ACEC to the east, and Sloan Canyon to the south, the remaining developable land in West Henderson and Southwest Henderson will likely accommodate the majority of Henderson's future population. This future growth area of influence includes the area surrounding the Rinker Site, the I-15 corridor Las Vegas Boulevard, and the northernmost portions of Ivanpah Valley and Hidden Valley beyond Henderson's corporate limits.

To the visitor, little has changed between the Las Vegas Valley and unincorporated village of Jean (population 125) in the last 100 years, or so it seems. Bordered by I-25 on the west and Sloan Canyon NCA to the east, the area's flat valley and steep mountain character is reminiscent of Henderson's presettlement times. With the exception of casino and airport

development near Jean, the area has historically been hidden from Valley development, aptly named Hidden Valley. With the exception of distant rumble of mining trucks and interstate traffic, Ivanpah and Hidden Valley's landscapes – like most of the Mojave Desert – are vast, open, and surprisingly quiet with the exception of distant rumble of mining trucks and interstate traffic. The area's flat valley and steep mountain character is reminiscent of Henderson's presettlement times. The creosote-dotted landscape runs to the horizon, broken only by utility corridors, off-road vehicle roads, and gravel mining. In addition to the mountaineous horizon, notable landmarks in each valley are ephemeral lakes (Dry Lake and Jean Lake) which can completely inundate close to 2.5 square miles during a single 100-year storm event and often attract playa waterfowl in the early spring.

Recreational Opportunities

This is a newly developing area where open space and trail connectivity opportunities can be addressed up front and integrated into the development plan. Enhanced trail connectivity will be provided in this area, including links to the regional system via St. Rose Parkway and through future trail development to Sloan Canyon via the Mountain Loop Trail. The Sloan Canyon NCA Resource Management Plan proposes a visitor's center south of West Henderson and a contact station and trailhead in Hidden Valley as a secondary access for Sloan Canyon's main rock art trail system.

As this area forms the southernmost boundary to the Las Vegas Valley, it is an important visual gateway into the Las Vegas and West Henderson for tourists and residents alike. Many open house attendees have called for growth in the Las Vegas Valley to not sprawl uninhibited into these adjacent valleys, but instead should be defined by the preservation of important open space that provides a boundary to each community.

Resource Conservation Opportunities

Portions of this future growth area were identified as a priority conservation sites in The Nature Conservancy's 2001 study, Ecoregion-Based Conservation in the Mojave Desert, and Clark County's Environmentally

Sensitive Lands Advisory Committee Report in 2004. These environmentally sensitive lands should be incorporated into land use plans as they are updated. Generally, lands that are environmentally sensitive can best be protected by remaining in public ownership.

Mountains and hills in Southwest Henderson are quite steep – most exceeding 15% slopes or more – and provide nesting grounds for raptors and the McCullough herd of bighorn sheep. During the hot summer months, bighorn sheep rely on Department of Wildlife maintained water developments and rarely travel more than five miles from available water.

Preserving connectivity between these water developments and to the Spring Mountains west of I-15 is critical to maintaining viable populations of bighorn sheep. Rosy two tone beardtongue penstemon, white-margined beardtongue penstemon, and desert tortoise are known to occur throughout the area. This area also contains habitat for chuckwalla, quail, and gila monster.

Hidden Valley (above) and Ivanpah Valley with Jean Lake (below)



Upper Pittman Wash (Airport Safety and Noise Attenuation Buffer Area)

Open Space Category: *Special Resource Area and Corridor*



Experience an arroyo landscape within a developing area. See Joshua trees and riparian vegetation in a historic floodplain and wildlife corridor. Create grade-separated landmark trails through the Airport Safety and Noise Attenuation Buffer Area.

Description

This opportunity area is the result of the proximity between the Henderson Executive Airport, Pittman East Detention Basin, a 102-acre BLM parcel, and the upper Pittman Wash floodplain.

As described in Chapter 2, the BLM will be managing a 102-acre Bearpoppy Conservation Area of unimproved land adjacent to the Henderson Executive Airport for the noise and safety buffer purposes for a minimum of 30 years. To the east of the BLM parcel lies the 180+ acre Pittman East Detention Basin along the headwaters of Pittman Wash. Approximately half of the site is developed as a detention basin, and the remainder features intact vegetation.

According to the draft conceptual land use planning for this area, a business park is planned south of the airport and Bearpoppy Conservation/Airport buffer area. To the west, residential and industrial uses are planned.

For 2 ½ miles, upper Pittman Wash flows virtually unimpeded north through the Airport Overlay Zone. Pittman Wash enters the BLM parcel and detention basin on the south; further north it acts as a buffer between the Henderson Executive Airport and the Anthem community. according to the Executive Airport Plan (adopted 2004), much of this land will remain open for public uses. The Clark County Flood Control District Master Plan and West Henderson Plan propose channelizing upper Pittman Wash in order to maximize the development potential of the adjacent floodplain.

Public Use Opportunities

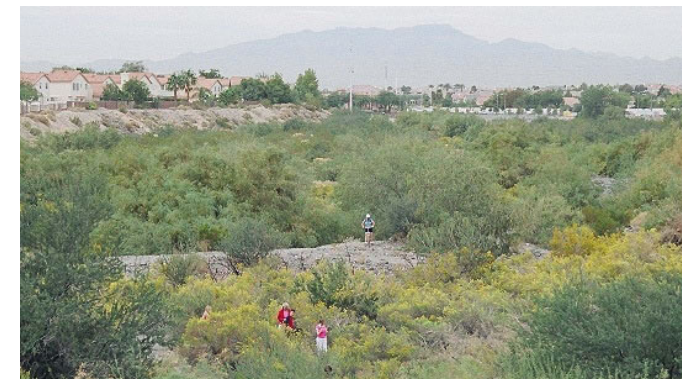
Large washes in West Henderson, especially those that comprise the 100-year floodplain such as upper Pittman Wash, offer a logical opportunity to maintain trail and habitat connectivity as development occurs in this rapidly-growing subarea of the City. Protection of the wash's landscape features can provide an open space spine connecting throughout the community to parks, neighborhoods, and employment centers.

Together, the BLM land, detention basin, and airport overlay zone can create a significant open space node along this Landmark Corridor. At first glance, the hard-edged detention basin is unlikely to provide a recreational experience, and public access near the airport must also be controlled. However, together they form a large, unique node of open land along what could be a contiguous Landmark Corridor in what will soon be a highly urbanized subarea. Consultation with the BLM, Henderson Executive Airport, Anthem Development, the Flood Control District, and other developers will be required in order to maintain the continuity of a community-wide recreational experience afforded by this opportunity.

Resource Conservation Opportunities

With the exception of the Henderson Airport and Rural Preservation neighborhoods, this region of the City is predominantly undeveloped and contains large tracts of undisturbed vegetation. It currently provides habitat for Desert Tortoise and likely contains potential habitat for species found in nearby Sloan Canyon, such as White-Margined Beardtongue Penstemon and Rosy Twotone Beardtongue Penstemon.

As development envelopes the area, the Airport Safety and Noise Attenuation Buffer Area, Pittman East Detention Basin, and the Henderson Executive Airport will take on an elevated importance ecologically and visually as a distinctively open patch of habitat. Its ecological value can be enhanced by ensuring contiguity between each use, as well as habitat corridor connectivity south to the NCA and north to Pittman Wash.



Vegetation at the BLM Bear Poppy Conservation Area.



Upper Pittman Wash's floodplain scours a 1000' wide swath through West Henderson. This floodplain and others in future growth areas form the skeleton of a city-wide landmark corridor system - connecting to lower Pittman Wash at Pecos, shown above left.

Cornerstone Lake Redevelopment Area

Open Space Category: *Special Place (Natural Area), Corridor, and Landmark Corridor*



Experience water in the desert. See waterfowl, wetlands, and aquatic invertebrates. Learn photography. Bike the community-wide urban trails network. Conserve wetlands and waterfowl.

Description

The Cornerstone Redevelopment Area stretches from U.S. 215 north across the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) to Arroyo Grande Community Park. Infrastructure is currently being installed to prime the site for redevelopment, including grading around the 20-acre Cornerstone Lake which will be transformed into a community park with SNLMPA funding. A preliminary concept plan for Cornerstone Lake Park has been prepared, but will require additional public input and engineering prior to being finalized. Approximately one-third of the redevelopment area lies within the 100-year floodplain. In addition to Cornerstone Lake, which will mitigate flooding, a 16 acre detention basin is planned between the lake and the railroad. Wetland edges along the lake attract a variety of migratory and native waterfowl, which in turn attract neighboring residents and birdwatchers.

Regional Fixed Guideway stations are proposed along the UPRR at Arroyo Grande and Stephanie.

The Cornerstone Redevelopment Area land use plan indicates commercial uses along Stephanie and residential uses to the west adjacent to existing neighborhoods, several of which are at various stages of development. While the 2004 land use plan does not reflect the Cornerstone Lake Park or detention basin, it does recommend a linear semi-public area that connects the lake to the railroad continuing north to Arroyo Grande Park. The City Parks Department owns two parcels north of the UPRR which would enable a critical off-street north-south connection between these two parks.

Public Use Opportunities

The Cornerstone Lake Area concept is an example of a less formal natural area within an actively programmed park. Residents currently use Cornerstone Lake for bird watching and photography despite its incomplete status; this reinforces the interpretive learning opportunities available. A perimeter trail could encircle the lake, and a boardwalk trail could be developed to provide access to a portion of the wetlands. Uses and facilities should be designed to provide an appropriate transition between the natural area and active uses. Due to water quality concerns, swimming and wading will likely be prohibited at Cornerstone Lake.

In addition to these active recreation uses, the Cornerstone vicinity should form a hub for this district's trail system. These trails (from north to south) include the Pittman Wash Landmark Corri, UPRR (Primary), American Pacific Drive (Secondary), Wigwam Trail (Secondary), Wigwam Parkway (Secondary), and Amargosa Trail (Primary). It will be important to identify a safe bicycle-pedestrian crossing over I-215 in order to connect Cornerstone with the Amargosa Trail. Most of these trails can feed directly into the proposed Regional Fixed Guideway transit stations. The undeveloped nature of the area provides an excellent opportunity for off-street trail alignments and connections for those trail segments still in the planning stage.

Resource Conservation Opportunities

As a community park is developed, preserving and restoring the existing wetland edge to the lake should be a priority in order to provide a unique lake experience. In this desert environment, these wetlands are

highly valuable to waterfowl, and offer opportunities for habitat conservation and wildlife observation, featuring unique habitat for both aquatic and terrestrial species. An appropriate buffer distance will be maintained around the edge of the lake and a series of observation platforms provided with interpretive signage. While maintaining a more natural-appearing edge to the lake poses some new challenges, safety and accessibility can be accommodated through the proper design and maintenance of facilities.



Trail users can connect between Cornerstone Lake and Arroyo Grande Park under an existing UPRR bridge (above right). Waterfowl and wetlands at the in-process redevelopment site gives an indication of the future potential of this waterbody for habitat and interpretation.



Whitney Mesa Subarea

Open Space Category: *Special Area (Natural Area), Corridor, and Landmark Corridor*



Experience hanging gardens, natural springs, and wetlands. Hike on landmark trails along Whitney Mesa wash and a nature preserve. See hummingbirds, roadrunners, jack-rabbits, and packrats. Conserve the mesa's unique sense of place.

Description

Whitney Mesa is a highly-visible, environmentally-sensitive area that is rich in historic and cultural resources, wildlife habitat, unusual geology, and natural springs. Prehistoric remains, characteristic of the Pinto-Gypsum Period (7000-1500 B.C.) and the Virgin Anasazi Period (100 B.C. to present), as well as early Euro-American settlement remains, are present in the Whitney Mesa area.

Most notably, Whitney Mesa is distinguished for its unusual geologic formation stretching from Sunset Road north to Russell Road in an otherwise highly urbanized area of the Valley. As a result of the uplift, seeps and springs stain its canyons with green, red, and grey vegetation, and year-round flows maintain highly productive riparian zones, attracting a wide variety of wildlife. Beehives and bird nests in the cliffs, raptors soaring overhead, and frequent mammal sightings such as packrats and jackrabbits make this area a favorite for wildlife enthusiasts. Wetlands, a

high water table, and shallow bedrock are present on the southern end of the mesa near Sunset Road.

Due to its unusual geology, the Clark County Comprehensive Plan Conservation Element designates the area as having severe to moderate foundation stability limitations. The Hillside Protection Overlay Map identified sensitive ridgelines and slopes over 15% along the mesa. This Zoning Overlay was established to preserve the scenic quality of the hillside terrain by promoting development compatible with the natural characteristics of hillside terrain, such as degree of slope, significant landforms, soil suitability and existing drainage patterns.

The effects of urbanization are evident along the mesa. Illegal dumping has left car bodies mangled at the bottom of slopes, and off-road vehicle use has destroyed vegetation along the escarpment. Development has also occurred at the mesa, including schools, churches, and neighborhoods line the base of the mesa and industrial and office buildings line its top. In 2004, the City approved a commercial office park south of Southern Nevada Vocational and Technical College Campus along the rim of the mesa, and rezoned 60 acres adjacent to Sunset Drive for residential use at its base.

Public Use Opportunities

As shown in Table 3-3, 8,870 students attend school within walking distance of the Whitney Mesa's interpretive opportunities. Clark County School District owns and maintains 307 acres of the northern portion of Whitney Mesa, of which 100 acres lie within

Table 3-3. Schools within walking distance of Whitney Mesa (2002-2003 Clark County School District enrollment figures).

School	2002-2003 Enrollment
Green Valley High School	2,976
Cowan Academic	378
Southern Nevada Vocational Technical Center High School (SNVTC)	1,795
Thurman White Middle School	1,701
Harriet Treem Elementary (3-5)	658
Jim Thorpe Elementary (K-2)	693
McDoniel Estes Elementary	579
Total	8,780

the city limits. Since 1991 the school district has led cleanup efforts to remove old cars, trash, and invasive species such as tamarisk from the canyons nearest Truman White Middle School. Over the past 10 years, Boy Scout, Girl Scout, and other civic groups have partnered with the school district to install trails, overlooks, and teaching areas in the northernmost canyon of Whitney Mesa south of Russell, called the Whitney Mesa Nature Preserve. The School District has prepared field trip tours, a curriculum guide and an informational CD about the learning objectives available at the site. The students' interest in the natural area has been highlighted in numerous newspaper and television spots.

In 2003, the City received \$1,673,250 in Round 4 SNPLMA funding to protect another canyon (also named Whitney Mesa Nature Preserve) from further damage and future development pressures in this growth area. The Preserve, approximately 6 acres in size southwest of Thurman White Middle School, would include a network of nearly one mile of recreational biking and hiking trails. The project would provide educational opportunities for area students, residents and visitors. Photography and geology field trips and programs could also be accommodated.

Between the proposed 60-acre residential area and the existing neighborhoods along Sunset Road is a City-owned park of 20 acres that is in the master planning phase. In addition to providing activity facilities, it is envisioned that the park will embrace the existing natural features of the site including its hydrological and topographical challenges.

Resource Conservation Opportunities

As existing residential and institutional uses already have consumed most of the developable land at

Whitney Mesa, and the northernmost portion is managed by the Clark County School District, the primary opportunity lies in protecting and restoring aesthetic, biological, and hydrological resources as residential and office development occurs near Sunset Road. These vacant lands are highly visible from Sunset Road and are frequently used as a "commons" by residents from nearby neighborhoods. Of particular concern is the impact of development to the sensitive ridgeline as visible cuts may be necessary in order to accommodate the proposed uses. A Landmark Corridor with accessible grades north-south along the base of the mesa should be accommodated. The City-owned 20-acre park site, like Cornerstone Lake, should accommodate passive and active uses with appropriate transitions between each.

Portions of this southern area are dominated by riparian vegetation as they lie with a 100-year floodplain. Whitney Mesa Wash, a steady flowing perennial stream, is bordered in some areas by wetlands. Preliminary studies indicate that flood control improvements, including up to two detention basins, may be necessary in order to protect proposed development. Sensitivity to the site's unique wetlands and riparian vegetation should be a given high consideration as surface water is one of the defining characteristics of the area.

As mentioned earlier, office uses have been approved for the summit of Whitney Mesa. Ample setbacks, colors, and site planning should minimize the visual dominance of new buildings along the rim per the Hillside Overlay and sensitive ridgeline requirements. There is also an opportunity to coordinate with Clark County (Whitney) and the Clark County School District to conserve the sensitive ridgelines and slopes northwest of the City limits.



Whitney Mesa with riparian corridor and wetlands in the foreground.

Bird-Viewing Preserve

Open Space Category: *Special Place (Natural Area), Wildlife and Landmark Corridor, Edge*



Experience thousands of migratory waterfowl and resident desert birds. Hear phalaropes, hummingbirds, ibis, gnatcatchers, avocets, stilts, blackbirds, grosbeaks, and killdeer. Conserve critical habitat connections to Clark County Wetlands Park and nearby wetlands.

Description

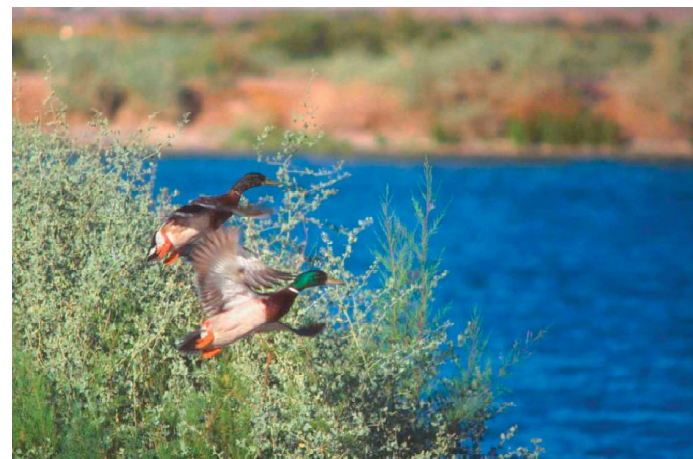
Officially dedicated in May 1998, the approximate 90-acre area includes lagoons, ponds, and reclaimed water facilities that provide a protected nesting and feeding habitat for over 200 resident and migratory bird species. The Preserve utilizes the City Wastewater Reclamation Facility's (WRF) evaporation ponds. As the third largest body of water in Southern Nevada, the ponds provide irresistible habitat to a wide variety of native and migratory birds. The Preserve is the culmination of over 20 years of use of the facility by birders and the effective combination of public and private interests working together for mutual community and environmental benefits.

Public Use Opportunities

There are nine ponds available for birding, surrounded by both paved and dirt paths. The paved path is approximately 3/4 of a mile long. The dirt paths are level and allow for easy walking. The City has printed a brochure for the visitors, with a list of species sighted at the ponds, in order to make the viewing experience more enjoyable. The Preserve provides the public with an opportunity to see and learn about birds and an opportunity to educate visitors on wastewater treatment and ecology.

Resource Conservation Opportunities

The Preserve is home to thousands of migratory waterfowl as well as numerous resident desert birds. The Preserve has created safe bird habitat and provided naturally occurring food sources for resident, migratory, and nesting birds. The Preserve supports a great diversity of birds including seasonal migrants and desert resident species. Several bird species were identified as having migrated to the tip of South America and back each year. The evaporative ponds, among the largest water bodies in the state, also provide habitat to a number of other aquatic species. The surrounding desert environment makes these ponds an area of exceptional habitat value. The Preserve provides a wonderful opportunity to educate visitors on birds, as well as the importance of and enjoyment associated with conservation (<http://www.cityofhenderson.com/parks/facilities/BVP/php/BirdPreserve.php>).



School children and bird enthusiasts flock to the Henderson Bird Preserve. Protecting and restoring additional lands around the Preserve will enhance its connectivity to the Clark County Wetlands Park.

Old Landfill

Open Space Category: *Special Place (Natural Area), Wildlife and Trail Corridor*



Experience a scenic drive along the Las Vegas Wash. Restore habitat at a landfill. Conserve a critical habitat connection to Clark County Wetlands Park, and landmark trail connection to River Mountains Trail.

In addition to golf course opportunities, the site may also provide for trails access to the Wetlands Park. Trails are planned around the perimeter of the golf course site and adjacent to the C1 Channel. Additionally, a shared-use path is planned adjacent to Sunset Park to provide for additional access.

Resource Conservation Opportunities

The Wetlands Park Master Plan suggests that properties located within 1000-feet of the wash should include a greater emphasis on habitat conservation. Since the landfill site is located within 1000-feet of the Park, restoration efforts to encourage habitat should be explored. Additionally, the City's plans to partner with the Audubon Society to provide for restoration and habitat areas should be furthered.



Areas south of Wetlands Park near the Old Landfill hold tremendous scenic, recreational, and wildlife value.



Description

The Henderson Landfill site was closed during the mid-1970's and preliminary assessment and site inspections were completed during 1991-1996. The State of Nevada Department of Environmental Protection is leading a clean-up effort on the site in coordination with the City Environmental Management and Property Management Divisions.

Public Use Opportunities

As done in other communities across the country, the landfill site may be redeveloped to provide a future recreational opportunity for the city. The City has explored the feasibility of a golfcourse at the site and preliminary plans have been developed. Due to the existing drought conditions in Southern Nevada, the development of a golf course may not occur during the immediate future.



El Centro

Open Space Category: *Special Place (Natural Area), Landmark Corridor*

Description



Hike or bike an off-street urban trails network, linking to the River Mountains Loop Trail. Play at Heritage Recreation Center or Basic High School. Possibly create a desert interpretive opportunity.

A portion of one quarter-section will likely be transferred to the City for public uses between S. Pueblo Boulevard and Racetrack Road at Coronado Drive. The quarter-section is across from Basic High School, which has two baseball fields, a multi-use sports field, and track-and-field facilities. Cinnamon Ridge Neighborhood Park, an existing 7-acre park directly to the north, provides a playground, picnic areas, basketball courts, multi-purpose fields, tennis courts, and restrooms.

Despite some off-road vehicle use, the majority of the site features undisturbed creosote-shrub cover, with a wash extending northwest through the site from Bureau of Reclamation lands.

Public Use Opportunities

The proposed alignment of the Burkholder Trail crosses the northern portion of the site within the Nevada Power utility corridor. It would provide a necessary four-mile connection from a proposed multi-use path at Lake Mead Drive to River Mountains Loop Trail and adjacent federal lands. The City received \$1,606,710

from SNPLMA Round 4 funding to construct the 12-foot wide primary trail which will include landscaping, lighting, signage, and other trail amenities. A near street secondary trail along the C-1 Channel is planned north-south along S. Pueblo Boulevard. Duran Trail, an existing secondary trail, enters the site at the south along the wash and can connect Burkholder Trail to Hoover Basic Trail, a primary trail ½ mile south. Emphasizing off-street connectivity to the Burkholder Trail would provide an option for alternative transportation with an economically disadvantaged area.

The City received \$7,392,000 in 2004 SNPLMA funding for Heritage Community Recreation Area, and a number of uses are proposed for the site although a master plan has not been developed. Potential uses include a 60-acre active park that may include an indoor sports complex and aquatic center, sports fields, equestrian uses, a dog park, group ramadas, picnic areas, parking areas and lighting, outdoor water features, and restrooms. Residential development and public facilities such as fire and police buildings may also be located in the vicinity according to the East Side Land Use Plan. Even with these uses, ample area remains for a more passive, natural experience that requires less maintenance and infrastructure. Capitalizing on the wash, trail system, and views of the River Mountains to the east should be considered. Consideration should further be given to a discovery park or botanical garden, such as X found in North Las Vegas. The site's adjacency to Basic High School will allow students and teachers to maximize learning opportunities at the site, similar to programs currently conducted at Whitney Mesa.

Resource Conservation Opportunities

Historically, a 900 foot, 100-year floodplain flowed freely from south to north across the site, and the soils and vegetation show signs of recent flooding. Today's floodplain may be more confined due to construction of the Equestrian Detention Basin at Magic Way. This provides an opportunity to conserve the wash as a landscape feature and provide an enhanced experience by extending Duran Trail north along the wash. Large existing creosote and arroyo plant communities can also remain in a natural state as already disturbed portions of the site accommodate more intense uses.

Undisturbed lands on the BLM Quarter-Section hold potential as an interpretive site, located across the street from Basic High School's 2,000 students.



Heritage Museum

Open Space Category: *Special Place (Natural Area)*



Experience history. Learn about pre-Columbian, mining, and post-Industrial Age communities. Hike or horseback ride to the River Mountains Loop Trail and BLM lands. Protect the aesthetic context.

Description

The Clark County Heritage Museum offers a look into the humble beginnings of southern Nevada. Prehistoric dioramas, an ancient pueblo, Native American collections, and a walk-in mine filled with desert minerals allow the visitor to learn about and experience southern Nevada before the Age of Entertainment. Visitors can also discover informative exhibits on mining, transportation, business, and gaming. The gaming exhibit features historical photos of the Strip and gaming-related merchandise, including matches, ashtrays, Keno cards, name tags and a collection of swizzle sticks.

Outside, on "Heritage Street", historic buildings have been restored. Highlights include: the Townsite House, one of 1,000 built for the Basic Magnesium Inc. employees who built the city of Henderson as a bomb production plant during World War II; the 1931 Boulder City train depot which supposedly sees more traffic now than in the year it was open; vintage automobiles; and a half-mile nature trail to a resurrected ghost town.



Ancient creosote communities provide a fitting context for the Heritage Museum's interpretive program. The Museum also features a garden representing plant species endemic to the Mojave Desert.

The Museum lies in an infill area and is surrounded by tracts of publicly-held, yet unprotected land that adds greatly to the historical context. The Museum also could be an interpretive node along the City's trail system (linking to the River Mountains Loop Trail) if adequate signage and trail connectivity were provided.

Public Use Opportunities

The Clark County Heritage Museum provides tourists and local visitors with a relaxing, education alternative to the Strip while still maintaining the gaming theme that has come to define the greater Las Vegas area. Special exhibits, group tours, self-tours, and presentations are offered; exhibits are constantly changing.

Resource Conservation Opportunities

The Clark County Heritage Museum provides and opportunity to preserve historical and cultural resources. For example, the museum recently acquired the historic Grand Canyon Airlines Ticket Office. The office will be joined by thirteen railroad cottages used to house railroad workers. The museum, through its existing exhibits, acquisition of new artifacts, and its efforts to educate visitors, ensures that the cultural heritage of southern Nevada will be preserved.

For more information, visit http://www.vegas.com/attractions/outside_lasvegas/ccmuseum.html?f=m0at&t=outvegas or http://www.co.clark.nv.us/parks/Clark_County_Museum.htm.



Railroad Pass

Open Space Category: *Special Place (Natural Area), Edge*



Experience a dramatic mountain gateway to Henderson. Ride on horseback to Bootleg Canyon. Conserve a sensitive view shed and critical bighorn wildlife corridor.

Description

When approaching from Boulder City, a visitor's first image of Henderson is framed by the towering peaks at Railroad Pass. Railroad Pass is an important part of southern Nevada's history as a mining center and early community encampment. It historically has produced minor amounts of gold, silver, and lead. Alunite is also present in the district, but has not been successfully developed. The steep terrain and dramatic entry experience form a natural and logical urban edge to the City and Las Vegas Valley.

The Pass is also one of the only wildlife corridors between the McCullough Mountains and River Mountains for bighorn sheep and other large mammals. The Nevada Department of Wildlife is investigating installing a wildlife crossing at Boulder Highway in order to facilitate wildlife movement.



The Vineyards Conservation Easement (29 acres) protects the scenic and wildlife resources at the gateway to Henderson. Additional lands can be conserved to maintain bighorn movement across Boulder Highway.

