

Chapter 11: Transportation, Trails, and Mobility

Vision

Pagosa Springs will be served by an interconnected, multi-modal transportation system, ensuring that existing and future residents, employees, and visitors enjoy a true choice of travel options, including transit, walking, and bicycling, as well as the private automobile.

Currently Pagosa Springs relies on Highway 160 as its “main street” spine. All local streets connect to this main corridor through the town, and most trips must utilize at least some portion of Highway 160. In the downtown, the local street system is fairly well-connected internally, allowing vehicles to have multiple routes of travel. However, the majority of local streets in the downtown and elsewhere funnel onto Highway 160. This creates traffic difficulties, particularly during busy tourist seasons and at peak traffic times during the day, such as school drop-off and pick-up times. As the community grows and tourism and second-home ownership increases, traffic will worsen.

The town will work to offer residents and visitors a transportation system that is efficient, safe, and convenient. Because automobiles are the most dominant form of transportation in the town, new and improved roads will continue to be important to serve new development. The town will maintain



Highway 160 serves as the main street for the town.

roads and work with the development community to provide roads with strategic timing and location. The town will also promote alternatives to the automobile, by making the town more walkable or accessible by bicycle with a continuous and connected sidewalk system and trails. Given the anticipated mismatch between potential buildout land use and available roadway capacity, this Plan also supports expansion of transit. Finally, through this Comprehensive Plan, the town will integrate land use and transportation.

Goals and Policies



Many roads in town are still very rural, with no curb, gutter, or sidewalk.

Goal T-1 The town will coordinate its land use and transportation decisions to ensure that transportation facilities are provided in conjunction with new development.

The town will plan for land use along Highway 160, taking into account access management and impacts on the transportation network and plan to increase viability of alternatives to automobile use. Likewise, the town should consider transportation decisions in the context of its impact on neighborhoods and how they may affect future growth and development.

Transportation Model

To better understand the anticipated impacts of future town development, the town modeled the transportation system for the year 2020 and at buildout of the Future Land Use Plan. The model results are explained in detail in Appendix E. They provide the following conclusions:

1. Additional east-west connections are necessary to accommodate anticipated development by 2020.
2. Land use beyond 2020 will further require construction of a Highway 160 Bypass and implementation of four lanes along Highway 160 through Pagosa Springs.

These overall conclusions are articulated in the policies and actions below.

Policy T-1(a) Land Use and Transportation Coordination

Integrate land use and transportation planning to increase the viability of alternative transportation types and to minimize automobile trips. Higher density development should be located where transportation facilities are adequately sized and designed to serve it.

Figure 11-1 documents the transportation system necessary to accommodate land use in the year 2020. The figure shows the conceptual starting points for new, east-west roadways running generally parallel to existing Highway 160. While it is premature to more specifically identify the potential routes, the arrows provide a general sense of starting and ending points for the east-west connectors.

These roadways will be necessary to provide acceptable traffic conditions within Pagosa Springs. Implementation of these roadways will require close coordination between the development review process and roadway network development. (Note: Figure 11-1 is located at the end of this chapter.)



Roadway design features calm traffic and enhance the streetscape.

Policy T-1(b) New Development Pays for Transportation Facilities that Serve It

The town will ensure that new development provides adequate roadway facilities at the time of development. Adequacy of street design and capacity will be determined by a transportation plan and level of service standards. Many of the new roadways shown on Figure 11-1 will provide community-wide benefit, and should be funded from fees collected throughout the community.

Actions

- T-1.1 Work proactively with the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) to ensure that local needs and objectives are carefully balanced with regional travel needs.
- T-1.2 Work with Archuleta County to develop joint street standards.

- T-1.3 Adopt impact fees for streets.
- T-1.4 Ensure that new development applications do not preclude the implementation of the east-west connector street system envisioned on Figure 11-1.
- T-1.5 Ensure that new development construct applicable components of the east-west connector street system envisioned on Figure 11.1.
- T-1.6 Coordinate the location of proposed mixed-use centers with multi-modal transportation options. This will maximize transit, bicycle, and pedestrian use.



Dependence on Highway 160 as a main east-west corridor results in periods of heavy traffic, especially related to school drop-off and pick-up times.

Goal T-2 Pagosa Springs will provide safe and efficient travel on all public streets.

The town aims to continue to build and improve streets to make them safe and to reduce traffic. The town recognizes that local traffic will increase with growing population, and that transportation mobility is highly linked to quality of life. Acceptable mobility can only be achieved, in part, by expansion of Highway 160 and a future Highway 160 Bypass.

Policy T-2(a) Highway 160 Expansion and Alternate Routes

The town will continue to explore solutions to allow local motorists to bypass Highway 160 traffic “bottlenecks” and to solve traffic problems in the downtown, including possible parallel streets. Such solutions should minimize the intrusion of through-traffic on residential streets.

Figure 11-2 documents transportation conditions at buildout. In addition to the east-west connector roads envisioned on Figure 11-1, Figure 11-2 shows the starting and ending points for a Highway 160 Bypass. Additionally, land use at buildout will necessitate expansion of Highway 160 within Pagosa Springs from its current two-, three-, and four-lane sections into a continuous four-lane facility. (Note: Figure 11-2 is located at the end of this chapter.)

Policy T-2(b) Continue Implementation of the Highway 160 Access Management Plan

Traffic signal locations have been identified to ensure safe and efficient access along Highway 160. Acceptable levels of and safe side-street access will be dependent on ongoing implementation of the Highway 160 Access Management Plan.

Actions

- T-2.1 Work with the CDOT to examine and plan for the possibility of a Highway 160 alternative route.
- T-2.2 Work with the CDOT to widen existing two-and three-lane segments of Highway 160 to four lanes.
- T-2.3 Include Highway 160 widening among projects funded by community-wide funding sources.
- T-2.4 Include Highway 160 traffic signalization efforts among project funded by community-wide funding sources, and from adjacent development projects.
- T-2.5 Implement street design standards for Highway 160 and the proposed east-west connectors to emphasize multi-modal mobility whenever possible and feasible.

Goal T-3 Pagosa Springs will support convenient, connected, and efficient transportation for all modes of travel.

The town aims to better connect the network of roads, sidewalks, trails, and transit routes that address our current and future needs to provide viable and efficient ways to travel through town. The current sidewalks are somewhat discontinuous and in disrepair. Pagosa Springs aims to maintain and expand sidewalks in both commercial and residential areas.

Policy T-3(a) Connected Transportation through New Developments

New developments should contain connected streets, sidewalks, and trails as identified on Figure 11-1, as updated from time to time. The east-west connector streets are anticipated to include sidewalks and or trails, with the intent of carrying transit vehicles, bicycles, pedestrians, and private motor vehicles.



Streets with connected sidewalks and appropriate lighting foster safe and convenient pedestrian movement.



The transportation system should be designed for bicycles also.

Policy T-3(b) Viable Transit System for Both Local and Regional Travel

Archuleta County currently runs the Mountain Express transit system. The town would like to see this service expand to a more frequent service and regional circulation.

Figures 11-1 and 11-2 indicate that planned roadway improvements alone will not address all anticipated level of service issues, and that local and regional transit service must be part of the overall mobility solution.



Example of transit in another mountain community.

Policy T-3(c) Trails and Sidewalks Network for Recreation and Transportation Purposes

Pagosa Springs aims to maintain and expand the existing trails system to connect our neighborhoods, schools, civic centers, and shopping areas and to connect east and west Pagosa Springs, as shown on the Trails Plan. (See Figure 11-3: Trails Plan, at the end of this chapter.)

Policy T-3(d) Trails System Connected

The town will continue to maintain and build on the existing trails system and expand the system to include trails as shown on the trails plan map, including east-west town connections. (See Figure 11-3.)

Policy T-3(e) Connected Sidewalks Along Roads

Future new developments should include internally connected roads and sidewalks and should connect to adjacent sidewalks.

Actions

- T-3.1 Implement the system of east-west connector roadways in conjunction with applicable development applications. The proposed east-west connector roadways should include bicycle lanes, and sidewalks or trails.
- T-3.2 Further prioritize trails on the Trails Plan for funding and work toward implementation.
- T-3.3 Seek funding for trails through grants and other sources (e.g., TEA 21 funding, state trails, etc).

- T-3.4 Identify funds for trail construction in the Capital Improvements Plan and other potential funding sources, including impact fees.
- T-3.5 Coordinate with Archuleta County to plan for and provide transit and to expand it.
- T-3.6 Plan for transit in development projects, including bus pull-out, shelters, and buses. Higher density commercial and residential areas should have access to transit.
- T-3.7 Study the feasibility of expanding a regional transit service to link regional destinations such as Durango, Farmington, and Wolf Creek Ski Area.
- T-3.8 All new commercial and residential development should provide sidewalks. Review the town’s policy on maintaining and constructing sidewalks in the LUDC.
- T-3.9 Allocate funds for sidewalk expansion and improvements in the CIP.
- T-3.10 Provide incentives or “grants” for existing owners to complete sidewalk improvements.

Goal T-4 Parking downtown will support a thriving, pedestrian-oriented downtown business district.

Downtown is currently the most inviting place for people to walk in Pagosa Springs. The town aims to make it even more safe and inviting for people by planning for and providing safe and connected sidewalks and crosswalks, and other features such as appropriate outdoor seating, lighting, and signs. As new private development occurs, it should provide sidewalks and pedestrian amenities and buildings should be focused toward the street. In addition, the town will make walking safer and more inviting by making improvements to public rights-of-way (e.g., crosswalks), to parking areas, and to public outdoor spaces and plazas (e.g., add benches and seating and other amenities).



Benches, trash receptacles, and lighting are amenities that help foster a pedestrian-friendly environment.

Policy T-4(a) Walkable New Developments

New developments in downtown should provide sidewalks. Buildings should relate to the street and provide outdoor public spaces and pedestrian amenities and meet the needs of patrons and employees.

Policy T-4(b) Pedestrian-Friendly Parking Design

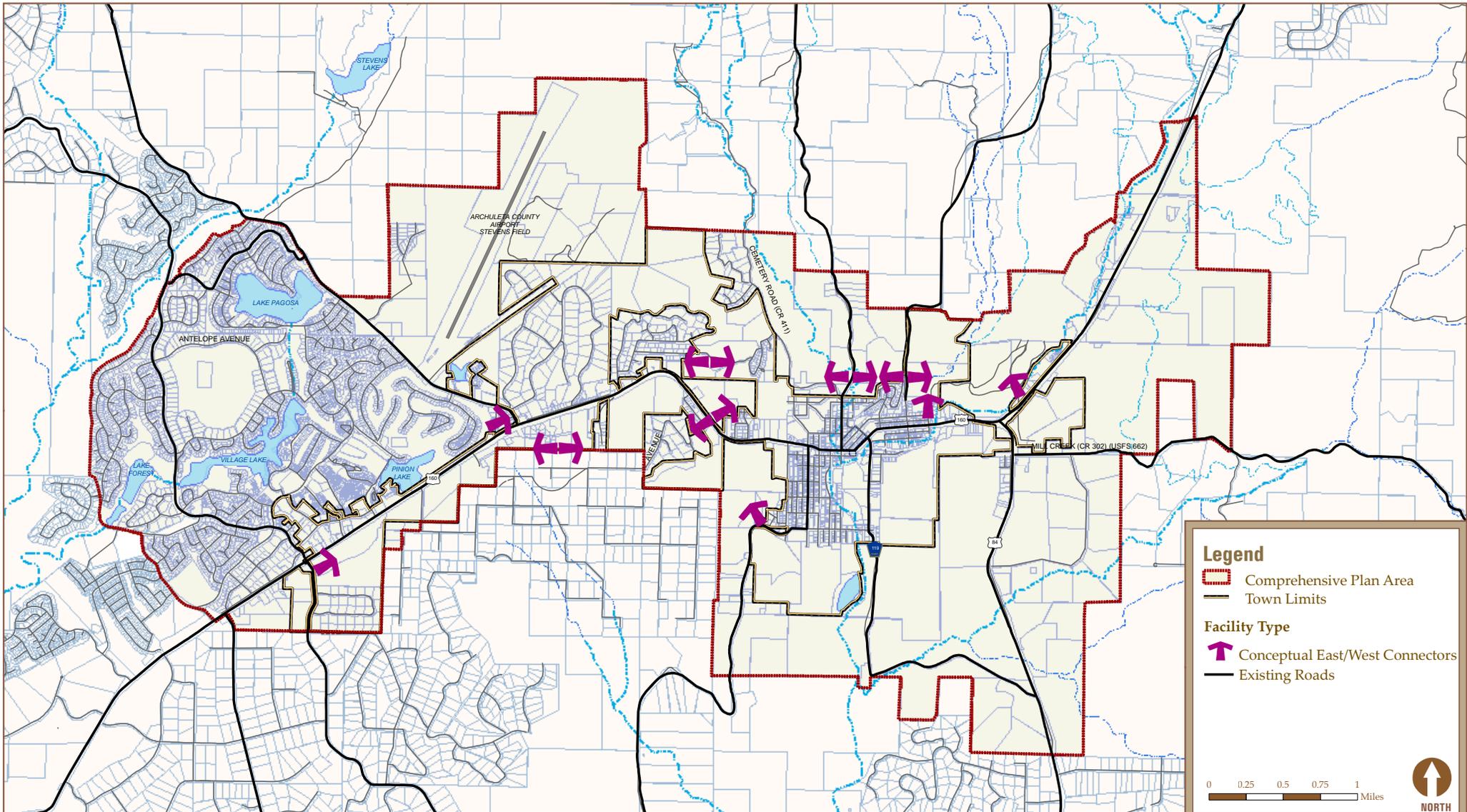
Parking facilities are likely to be a combination of surface parking lots with one or more parking structures. In either case, parking facilities should focus on maximizing safety and convenience for downtown patrons and employees.

Policy T-4(c) Highway 160 Not to Hinder Pedestrians

Highway 160 should not hinder commerce or walkability of the new or existing “main street” areas of town.

Actions

- T-4.1 Work with CDOT to plan for a better system of crosswalks, medians, and traffic-calming devices to make walking across Highway 160 safer.
- T-4.2 Explore alternative parking solutions that optimally locate parking and pedestrian traffic in the downtown.
- T-4.3 Explore alternative parking requirements for downtown, given that is a very different development pattern from other parts of town.
- T-4.4 Consider fee in lieu of parking standards for the downtown area.
- T-4.5 Examine width, alignment, and other physical features of Highway 160 for appropriate alterations.



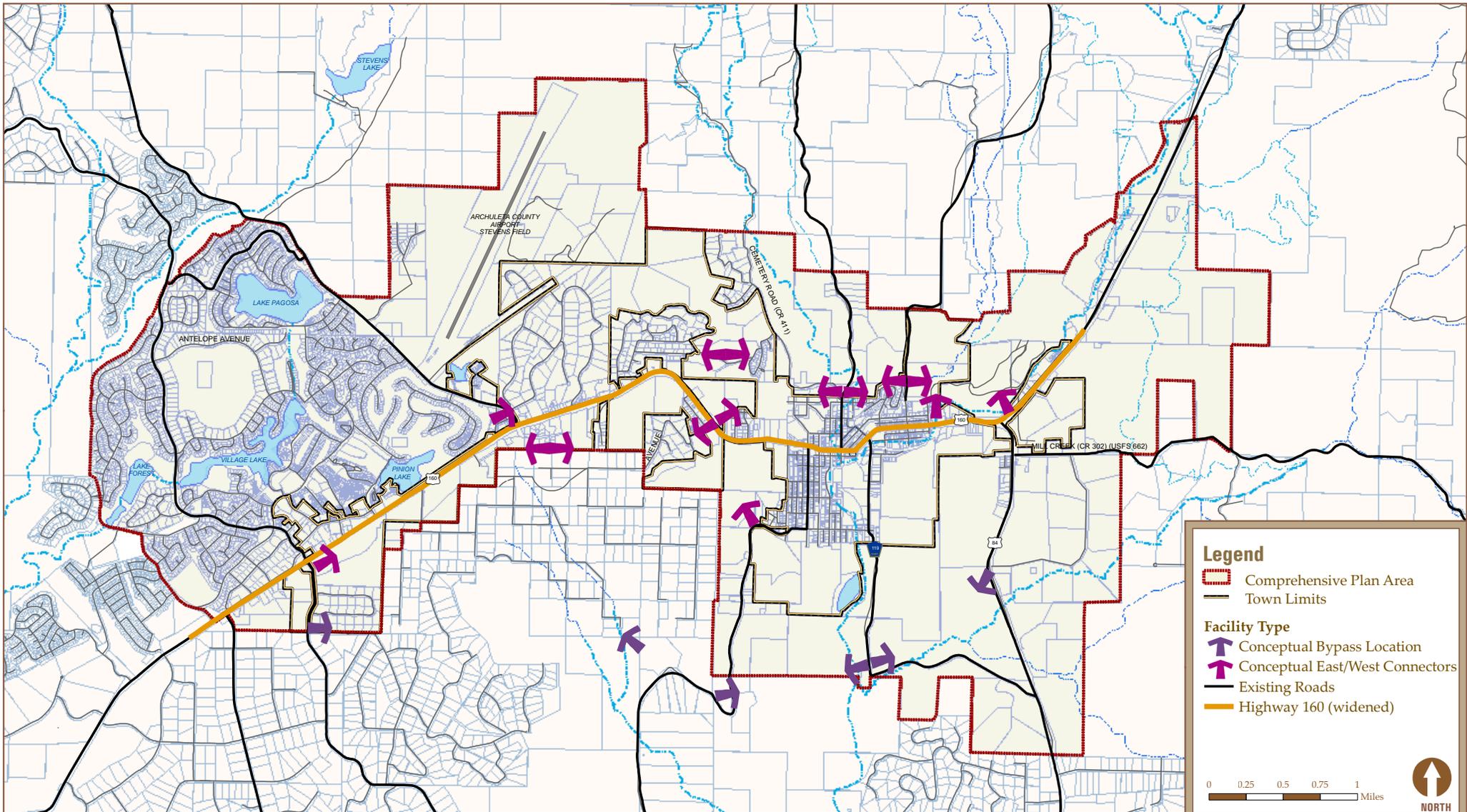
2020 ROADWAY NETWORK

PAGOSA SPRINGS

Comprehensive Plan

Figure 11-1:
2020 Roadway
Network





Legend

- Comprehensive Plan Area
- Town Limits

Facility Type

- ↑ Conceptual Bypass Location
- ↔ Conceptual East/West Connectors
- Existing Roads
- Highway 160 (widened)

0 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 Miles

↑
 NORTH

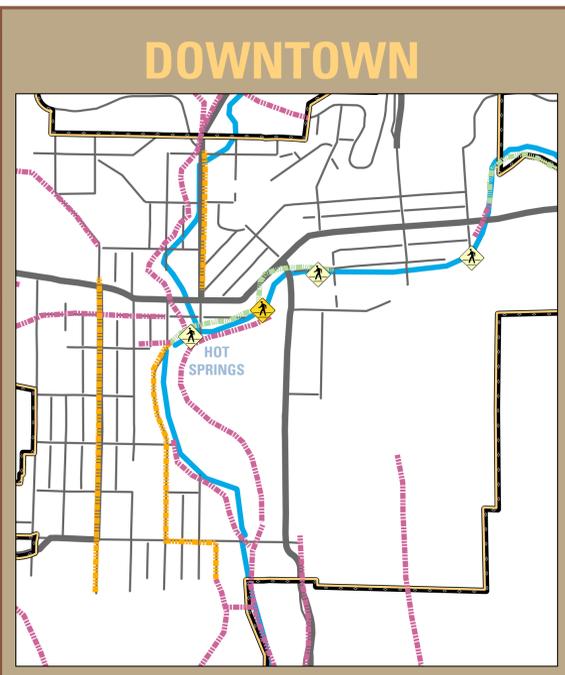
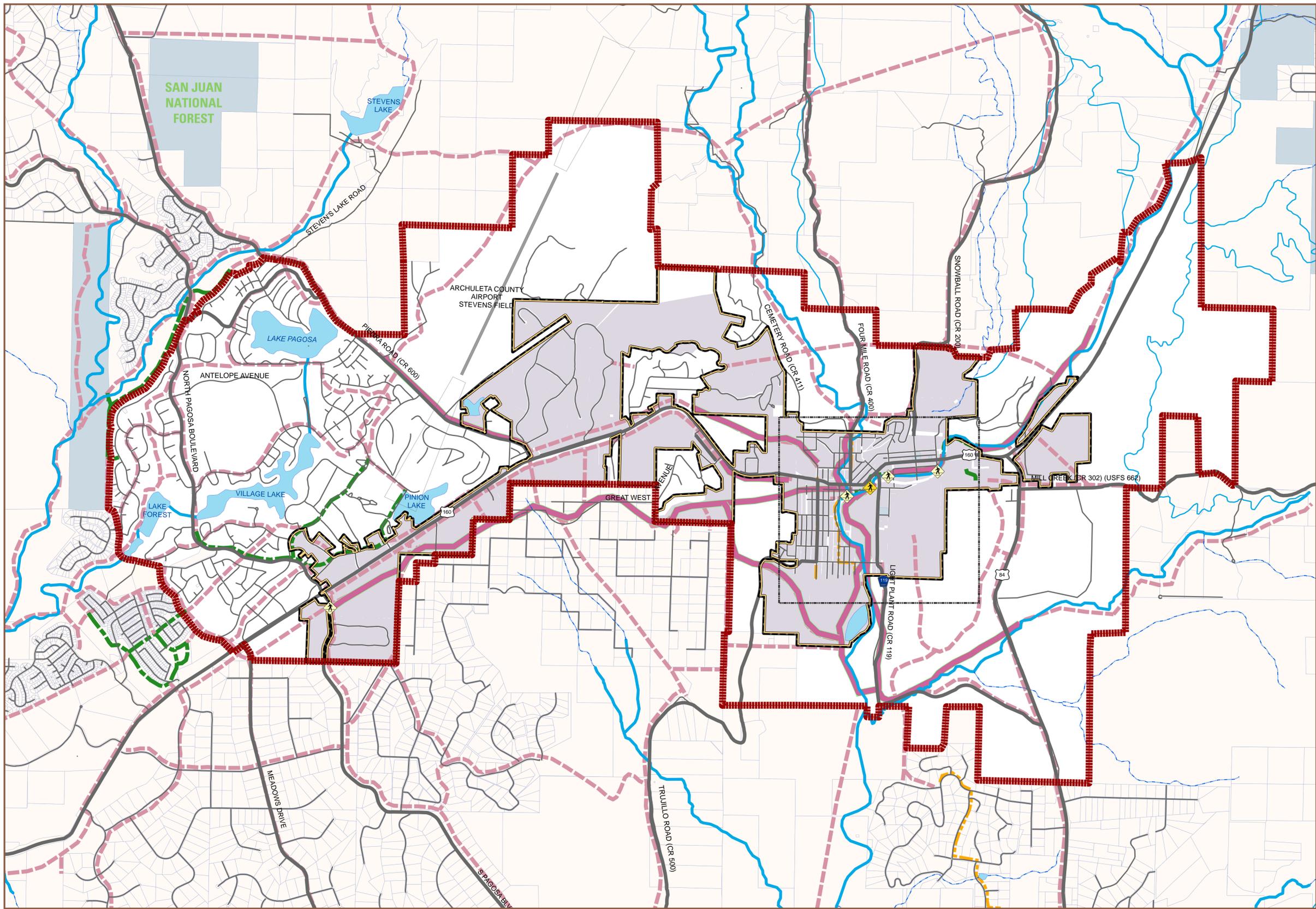
BUILDOUT ROADWAY NETWORK

PAGOSA SPRINGS

Comprehensive Plan

Figure 11-2:
 Buildout
 Roadway Network





Legend

- Planning Area
- Town Limits

TRAILS

- Sidewalk/Street
- Existing Trail
- Proposed/Future Trail
- Priority Trail
- Existing Pedestrian Bridge
- Proposed Pedestrian Bridge

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

NORTH

TRAILS PLAN

PAGOSA SPRINGS

Comprehensive Plan

Figure 11-3:
Trails Plan



