

RIDGWAY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

TRAFFIC FLOW ELEMENT

A Supplement to the 2007 Transportation Element



**Town of Ridgway
June 2, 2011**

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Purpose
- B. Scope
- C. Background Information

II. GOALS, OBJECTIVES and ACTION ITEMS

- A. Mobility
- B. Safety
- C. Efficiency

III. ROADS NOT TRAVELLED

IV. TRAFFIC FLOW PLAN

- A. Map of Existing and Proposed Conditions

V. CONCLUSIONS

I. INTRODUCTION

A. PURPOSE

This Downtown Traffic Flow Plan is intended to be a supplement to the Town's 2007 Transportation Plan and is designed to provide guidance on the identification and placement of traffic control devices for streets and intersections to create a safe, smooth, and effective flow for multi-modal traffic in the historic downtown area. The plan considers all modes of traffic, including vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists, with the goal of creating a connected and safe walk-able community. The Marshal's Office and Public Works Department have observed limited compliance with stopping at the existing stop signs around Town. With increasing pedestrian and bicycle traffic, there is some concern for pedestrian and vehicle safety. In addition, over the years, the placement of signage has been reactive to citizen complaints and requests, which is costly and ineffective. With an increasing number of traffic control devices, there is an apparent decreasing regard for their existence and function.

B. SCOPE

This plan encompasses the downtown Historic Business and Residential Districts from Otto Street to Moffat Street, and Railroad Street to Amelia Street. Over time, stop signs have been placed at intersections in the Historical business and Residential pursuant to complaints by home owners living at particular intersections. The more random placement of control devices, in particular stop signs, has resulted in an excess number of signs and an inefficient traffic flow pattern. While this plan does not focus on walk/bike-ability or complete development of a pedestrian/bicycle network (*see the Transportation and Parks, Trails, Open Spaces Plan Elements*), it does strongly consider creating a walk-able Town through traffic flow and movement, and should be considered in conjunction with the Town's Transportation and Parks, Trails, and Open Spaces Plan Elements.

C. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In 2007 the Town adopted a Transportation Element Master Plan, which identifies major and minor thoroughfares throughout the Town.

Downtown Ridgway currently has a slightly random layout of signs to direct and manage vehicular traffic. Traffic control devices have been traditionally placed pursuant to citizen requests to the Town Council and staff, and other less than scientific approaches. As the town has grown in population and multi-modal traffic, there has arisen a need to address signage placement and location, in particular stop signs and also some speed limit signs, within the town core.

This past year, traffic flow and signage have been analyzed on paper, and in the field, based upon mobility, safety, and efficient traffic flow. There are 4 marked pedestrian crossings at Highway 62 (Amelia Street raised median, two on each side of



Lena Street, and at the raised median near the County Fairgrounds/ River Bank Minor Subdivision). There is one pedestrian crossing at the northern aspect of the Hwy 550/ Hwy 62 intersection. In 2012, the Town is working with CDOT to realize two additional crosswalks on Highway 62 at Cora and Railroad Streets. There are two school zones: elementary (Amelia Street) and secondary (Green Street). While these recommendations are put forth after much input and consideration, the proposed solutions may not be perfect in every situation. The Downtown area is in need of a multi-modal transportation network that considers safety, mobility and efficiency for the citizens and visitors of Ridgway.

Special thanks to the Public Works and Marshal's Department for developing the traffic flow and core concepts of this plan.

II. GOALS and OBJECTIVES

A. GOAL I – Multi-Modal Safety

Objectives and Action Items:

1. Reduce the 20 mph speed limit in front of the business areas and Post office on North Lena Street to 15 mph. This area is very busy with pedestrian and vehicular activity, including various, unmarked street crossings that access many businesses and the post office.
2. Increase the speed limit on North Railroad Street from Sherman St. to Otto Street to 25 mph. Observations of the Ridgway Marshal is that this is necessary to keep this very busy collector street flowing.
3. Pursue additional highway crossings at Highway 62. It is understood that two additional crossings in the Historic Business Core at Railroad Street and Cora Street are to be completed in 2012, which is key to establishing safe connectivity between north and south Ridgway. An additional crossing at Laura Street is planned with the 2006 Downtown Streetscape Plan.
4. Continue to work with the Colorado Department of Transportation in identifying and constructing pedestrian corridors across the state highways 62 and 550 that intersect the Town of Ridgway.
5. Reduce the overall number of signs within the Town to insure appropriately placed signs call the attention of all persons by removing and placing stop signs at targeted locations. For pedestrian bridges at Moffat Street, insure appropriate barrier or other obstacle is installed to put pedestrian or bicycle traffic on notice that they are entering a vehicle intersection. *Note: Signs indicating pedestrian crossings are determined to provide a false sense of security for non-vehicular travelers.*
6. Improve vehicle and pedestrian visibility at key intersections by establishing a setback area from the intersection, where parking is not permitted. Placement of temporary, seasonal, raised planter boxes at the intersection of North Lena Street and Highway 62, as well as each intersection of North Cora and Clinton Streets in the Downtown Historic Business Core will also more clearly define traffic flow in these two locations by narrowing the driving lanes. The boxes will be removed during the winter snow season to provide for efficient and effective plowing of

the streets. Planter boxes at the intersection of North Lena Street and Highway 62 are a priority.

7. Improve community outreach and education through increased Marshal's presence and patrolling at controlled intersections.
8. Insure school zones are appropriate controlled and monitored for safety.
9. Place a stop sign at each road intersection accessing Highway 62 to reinforce a full stop prior to entering the highway.
10. Establish defined Truck Routes through Town. Commercial trucks shall remain on collector and arterial streets, and are allowed on local streets only for local delivery. Arterial and Collector streets in the downtown area are: County Road (CR) 23, South Lena Street, Highway 62, North and South Amelia Street, North Railroad Street. Signage indicating truck routes shall be placed at the CR 23 and CR 5 accesses to Town.
11. Replace existing street identification signs (eg: Cora Street, Lena Street, etc.) at each intersection with attractive signs that have appropriate reflectivity for night visibility. Existing signs are aging and the limited street lighting in Town combined with the non-reflective signage makes street identification difficult in the dark. With sign replacement, it is recommended that more appealing signage be placed, possibly with the Town logo or other identifying photo or image. Work with the State Highway Department on replacement of signage along Highway 62.

B. GOAL II – Multi-Modal Mobility and Efficiency

Objectives and Action Items:

1. Direct vehicular traffic primarily to Highway 62 and collector streets in order to minimize traffic on local streets.
2. Insure all signs have an effective purpose to convey specific, appropriate, and clear instruction through established placement and location procedure as follows:
3. All collector streets run for two blocks without a stop sign in order to keep the traffic flowing more efficiently. Every 2 blocks, a stop sign should be sited. Exceptions are identified in the Traffic Flow Map (Section IV).
4. Remove eighteen stop signs and re-plant nine stop signs in specified locations to establish uniformity in the core of town, resulting in more efficient traffic flow, and safe pedestrian and bicycle connectivity.
5. Continue to work with the Colorado Department of Transportation in identifying methods to keep traffic moving at a reasonable speed throughout the Town along highways 62 and 550.
6. Clearly identify and place RV Parking Signage signaling RVs and oversize vehicle to park along the north side of Highway 62 at Hartwell Park and also behind library off of North Railroad Street.
7. When stop signs are scheduled for replacement after exhausting their time in the sun (illegible, poor reflectivity, etc.), Town Staff may consider and re-evaluate the intersection and desired control, and replace the stop sign(s) with yield sign(s) or no signage at all.

C. GOAL III – Environmental Performance

Objectives and Action Items:

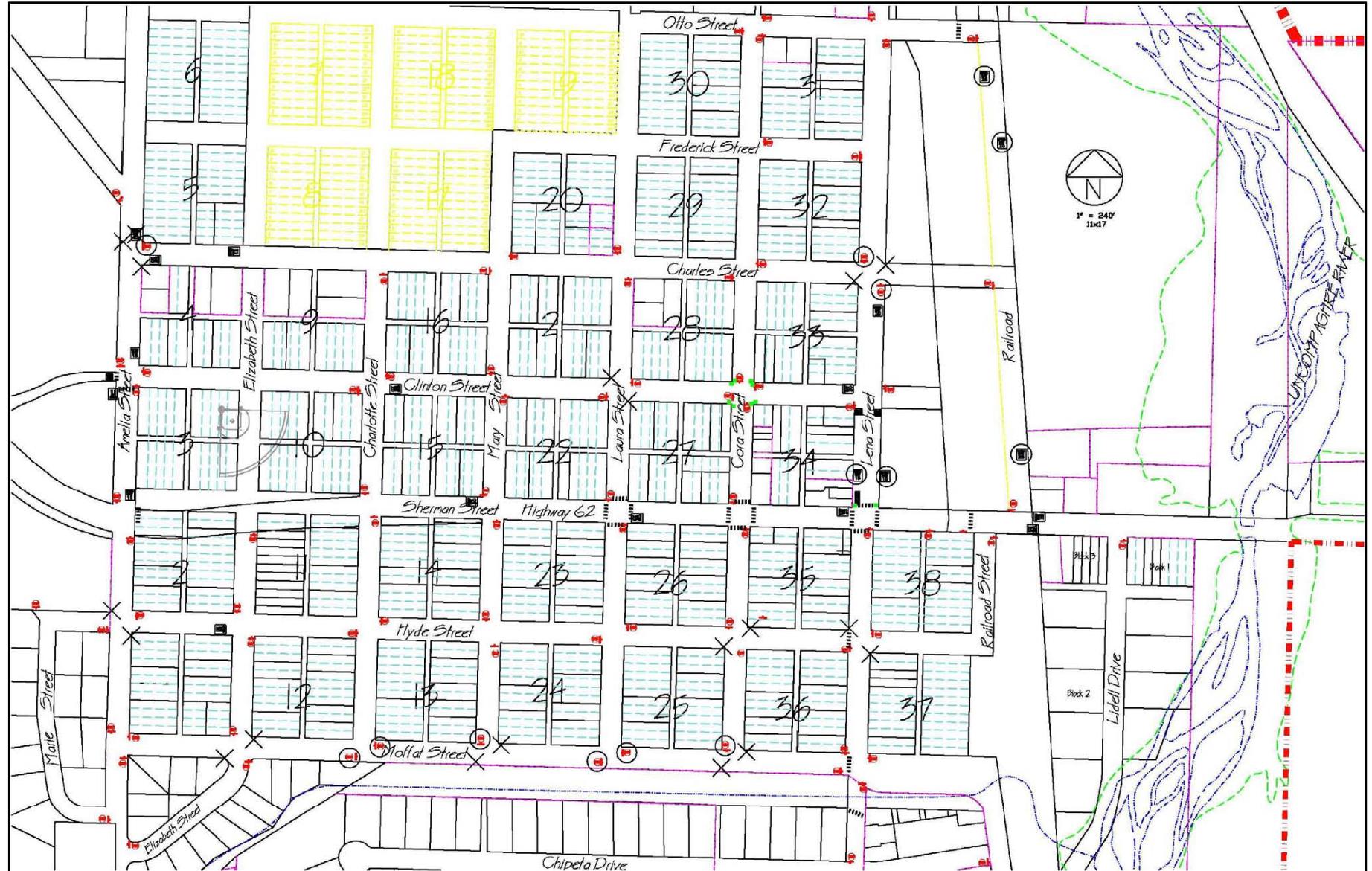
1. Limit stop-and-go traffic through calculated and limited placement of traffic control devices only where necessary and appropriate.
2. Provide bike parking stations around the downtown area, and insure new development allows sufficient space and provides for bike parking.

III. ROADS NOT TRAVELLED

- A. Various scenarios for controlling and managing traffic in this downtown area were explored and not implemented for numerous reasons. A few are mentioned here:
- B. Strict adherence to the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) When it comes to traffic control, the MUTCD is the rule. The downtown area is just not large enough in scope to apply the rules and warrants identified within the MUTCD on sign placement and traffic control, although the concepts and premises under the MUTCD were considered, such as providing for traffic control in a single direction at every other block.
- C. Replace all stop signs with yield signs While this may be a traffic control option for the project area, the resources required (staff and financial) appear to be far beyond what is desired to be expended toward realization of this plan although it is acknowledged within the plan that targeted replacement of stop signs with yield signs may occur as the life of the signs expire.
- D. Removal of all stop signs in the downtown core The idea with this plan was to introduce a calculated method for sign placement and traffic control, while discouraging any new sign placement. As stop signs near the end of their useful life, consideration may be given as to whether or not a control device is required; however, some control while maintaining flow is appropriate.
- E. Implement a one-way street system, including making Moffat Street one-way There is a one-way traffic flow planned with the Historic Business Streetscape Plan from North Lena to Clinton (north bound), Clinton to North Laura (westbound) and Laura to Highway 62 (southbound). Currently only one block of North Lena is one-way. It was determined that any one-way street must be matched with another one-way street in the opposite direction. For example, if Moffat were to be designated as one-way eastbound, then consideration will need to be given to designating Hyde Street as one-way westbound. In this largely residential area and heavy traffic usage in the alleys, this was determined to be undesirable as it would encourage more driving as households are forced to circumnavigate the block. In addition, the narrowness of the built Moffat Street and existing 2-way traffic should assist in traffic-calming in this location as opposed to a larger single lane arrangement.
- F. In-street vehicle diversions and forced-turn devices With gravel roads, in-street diversions and forced-turn devices are difficult but may be considered with hard-surfacing of the roads in the future.

IV. TRAFFIC FLOW MAP

A. Ridgway Street Map: Existing and Proposed



V. CONCLUSIONS

The proposed logical and effective pattern of controlled intersections and traffic routes is intended to provide for the safe, effective, and efficient movement of multi-modal traffic in and through the downtown area. The Traffic Flow Plan is a guide for Town Staff to consider traffic control and flow through Town, and is designed to mitigate the random placement of traffic control devices, placing an emphasis and importance on the control devices that do exist. As Ridgway grows and development patterns influence multi-modal traffic safety and flow throughout the downtown area, this plan should be evaluated and updated.

¹ Retrieved April 2011 from <http://walkable.org/>