

Canon City Revitalization Expansion Area

Conditions Survey

Draft as of February 2020



Prepared for:

City of Canon City Council
Canon City, Colorado

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Cañon City Reinvestment Expansion Area

City of Cañon City, Colorado

1.0 Introduction

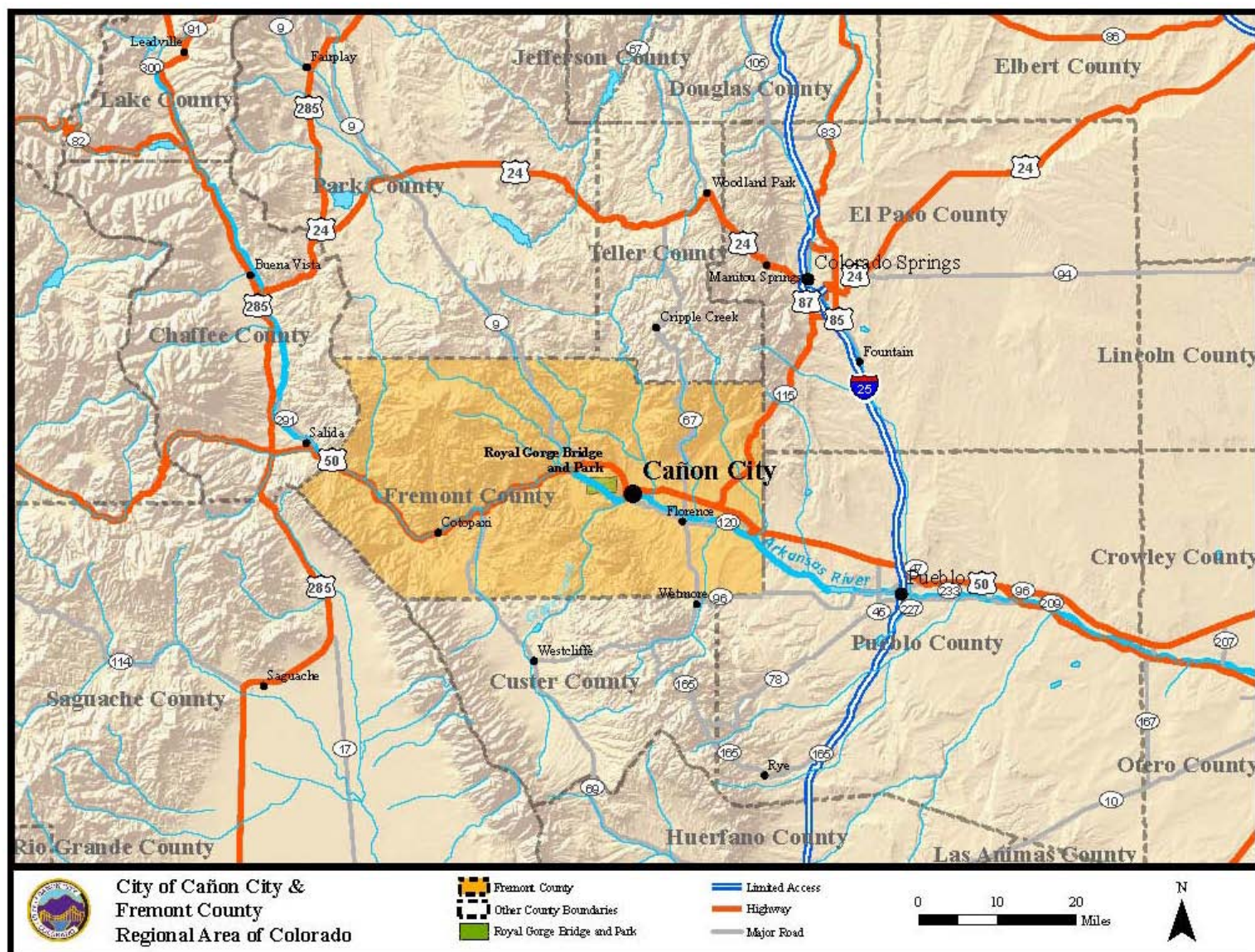
The following report, the Cañon City Reinvestment Expansion Area Survey (herein referred to as the "Survey"), was prepared for and submitted to the City of Cañon City (herein referred to as the "City") in February 2020. As illustrated in Figure 1, the subject of this work included properties located in the central portion of the Cañon City along US Highway 50 (herein referred to as "US Highway 50" and "Royal Gorge Boulevard" between 1st and 16th Streets) within Fremont County, CO. The purpose of this investigation was to determine whether conditions that collectively meet the definition of a "blighted area" defined in the Colorado Urban Renewal Law (herein referred to as the "Law", "Act" or "Statute") are present at levels sufficient for an urban renewal designation by the Cañon City Council (herein referred to as the "City Council").

Procedures for creating an urban renewal area, as defined in the Act, involve multiple steps, the first being the verification of blighting factors. Those factors and supporting findings are described in the Survey report, which is intended to provide an understanding of the type and nature of conditions in a defined area, so that the municipality's governing body may determine its eligibility. Subsequent steps include: preparing a plan of development, identifying resources to finance projects and improvements, and estimating possible impacts; as well as sharing this information with property and business interests, along with other partner taxing entities.

Creation of an urban renewal area is a decision made by municipalities when circumstances in a designated geography exist, making it infeasible for private investment. With this resource, and whereas many public improvements are eligible for funding assistance by an urban renewal authority, communities are able to offset extraordinary expenditures without raising taxes or issuing bonds.

Eliminating "blighting" conditions and encouraging investment and reinvestment in properties for the furtherance of intentions stated in the City's 2017 - 2020 Strategic Plan and City of Cañon City 2001 Comprehensive Plan Update, later amended (herein referred to as the "Comprehensive Plan"), is the primary objective for which the Survey was commissioned.

Figure 1: Regional Context Map



2.0 Study Area Description

Table 1 below provides a list of all taxing entities impacting properties that were the subject of this investigation. As reflected, there are ten (10) groups including the City and Fremont County. Table 2 provides detailed information regarding the characteristics of properties in the Survey Area which, as presented, is comprised of 751 parcels totaling approximately 1,300 acres, and adjacent rights-of-way. Notable aspects include the fact that 433 or over half of the parcels are less than half an acre in size. Additionally, 554 properties have an improvement, while almost 200 lack an improvement with quantifiable value. Ownership patterns reveal that the vast majority are located in Cañon City, while only 11% reside outside the state. Uses in the Area, as defined by the Fremont County Assessor's Office are either Agricultural, Commercial, Exempt, Residential, Industrial and Vacant, with the vast majority being Commercial. In fact, 87% of the properties with a classification were either zoned Commercial or Central Business.

Figure 2, which follows the tables, illustrates the boundaries of those parcels which include contiguous commercial, central business district, and industrial zoned properties along Highway 50 and its arterial streets including South 9th Street, South 8th Street, and Justice Center Road. Additional properties located along South 1st Street, including commercial and industrial zoned areas along Mariposa Road, Valley Road, and Forge Road, are also included as is the St. Scholastica site located north of the Downtown Area on 7th Street. Collectively, the subject properties and infrastructure are referred to herein as the "Study Area" or "Area".

Whereas the two principal objectives of any urban renewal initiative must be the elimination of "blighting" conditions, and advancement of stated community goals, presented below is an expression of City Council's intentions as reported in the 2017 - 2020 Strategic Plan:

"In order for Cañon City realize its vision as a vibrant, attractive and safe community that values quality of life, adventure and prosperity," they must advance these strategic priorities -- economic development, public safety, infrastructure, attractive built environment, community investment opportunities; public trust, transparency and accountability."

Table 1
Taxing Entities with a Presence in the Area
 January 2020

Taxing Entity	Mill Levy
Fremont County	0.012384
Fremont County School District RE-1	0.044353
City of Canon City	0.002891
Canon City Fire District	0.018471
Fremont Sanitation District	0.000000
Canon City Recreation District	0.003513
Southeastern Colorado Water Conservation District	0.000902
Upper Arkansas Water Conservation District	0.000435
Fremont Conservation District	0.000500
Four Mile Metro District #3	0.015000
Total All Entities	0.098449

Source: Fremont County Assessor's Office and Ricker | Cunningham.

2.1 Existing Zoning

Properties in the Study Area are generally zoned Residential , Commercial, Industrial and Open Space. A description of specific zoning classification present are provided below as defined in the City of Cañon City, Subdivision & Development Regulations, Appendix A to Title 16 and Excerpts from Chapter 17.04 of the Cañon City Municipal Code, Effective March 1, 2007, Updated March 17, 2014, Updated March 26, 2015, and Updated June 27, 2018 (herein referred to as the "Municipal Code").

Zoning Classifications

17.12.065 R-L, Rural Living

The R-L Zone District is comprised of limited agricultural uses, single-family residences and accessory uses, all appropriately separated from business and industrial uses.

17.12.070 R-1, Low Density

The R-1 Zone District is comprised of single-family residential developments, along with other necessary and compatible improvements.

17.12.075 R-1A, Low Density, Small-Lot Residential

The R-1A Zone District is comprised of single-family homes and accessory structures on small lots platted prior to adoption of the city's zoning code, and provides for development of residential subdivisions on small lots where homes

Table 2
Study Area Parcel Characteristics
 January 2020

No. of Parcels	751
Acres (approximate)	1,300
Parcel Size Range (acres)	0.122 - 60.0 ac
Parcel Size Range (square feet)	974 - 2,613,600 sf
No Acreage Figure	83
Parcels <0.5 Acres	433
Parcels 0.5 - 1.0 Acres	93
Parcels 1.0 - 2.0 Acres	49
Parcels 2.0 - 5.0 Acres	58
Parcels 5.0 - 10.0 Acres	15
Parcels over 10 Acres	16
Parcels with an Improvement (Structure)	554
Parcels without an Improvement (Vacant)	197
Parcel Ownership	
Canon City Address	542
Elsewhere in Colorado	122
Out-of-State	83
Percent of Out-of-State Owners	0
Parcel Values	
Improvements Value (Actual)	\$129.2m
Land Value (Actual)	\$70.0m
Improvements Value (Assessed)	\$32.2m
Land Value (Assessed)	\$18.5m
Land Value as a Percent of Improvement Value (Actual)	54.2%
Most Recent Sale Dates	
< 1980	2
1980 - 1989	13
1990 - 1999	97
2000 - 2009	200
2010 - 2019 (August)	278
Uses	
Agricultural	12
Commercial	351
Exempt	66
Residential	195
Industrial	9
Vacant	92
Zoning	
Planned Development (PD)	8
Low Density Residential (R-1)	1
Light Industrial (I)	90
Central Business (CB)	197
Commercial (C)	452

Note: Numbers and percentages may not total 100% based on the availability of information.

Source: Fremont County Assessor's Office and Ricker | Cunningham.

may or may not have one exterior wall on a side property line (zero lot line), and where residents may share common open space.

17.12.080 R-2, Medium Density

The R-2 Zone District is comprised of single-family and duplex residential units and other necessary and compatible improvements.

17.12.090 R-3, High Density

The R-3 Zone District is comprised of multi-family residential developments of three (3) or more dwelling units per structure; including, but not limited to, townhomes, condominiums, apartments and other types and forms of dwelling units permitted under the Colorado Common Interest Ownership Act, CRS Section 38-33.3-101 et seq..

17.12.110 MH-1 District, Mobile Home Parks

The MH-1 Zone District is comprised of mobile home parks, but allows for single-family dwellings located on individual lots.

17.12.120 MH-2 District, Mobile Home Subdivisions

The MH-2 Zone District is comprised of residential subdivisions wherein mobile, manufactured and | or modular homes are placed on individually-owned lots; thereby creating a low-density, quiet, single family environment.

17.12.130 C District, General Commercial

The C District is comprised of establishments engaged in retail sales and services, along with wholesale facilities, and allows for a variety of shoppers' goods. This district is intended to serve the needs of Cañon City and surrounding communities, along with the tourist trade.

17.12.140 CB District, Central Business District Commercial

The CB District is comprised of establishments engaged in retail sales and deemed appropriate for a designated central business district, including a variety of shoppers' goods and supportive services.

17.12.150 I District, Light Industrial

The I District is comprised of "non-offensive" types of industrial, processing, assemblage, limited fabrication and light manufacturing uses; along with attendant services, and complementary and supporting uses, all of which must comply with state, local and federal laws in terms of possible impacts and as explained in Section 17.20.105 of the Municipal Code.

17.12.160 OPR District, Open Space, Parks and Recreation

The OPR District is comprised of areas designated for public and semi-public uses established for the purpose of: conserving open space, preserving environmentally sensitive properties, and creating and regulating land for active and passive recreational uses and facilities, supported by limited commercial activities, where appropriate. The District may also host city-owned facilities, including, but not limited to: water treatment, distribution, and stormwater management facilities, including ditches, floodways, detention basins and similar features.

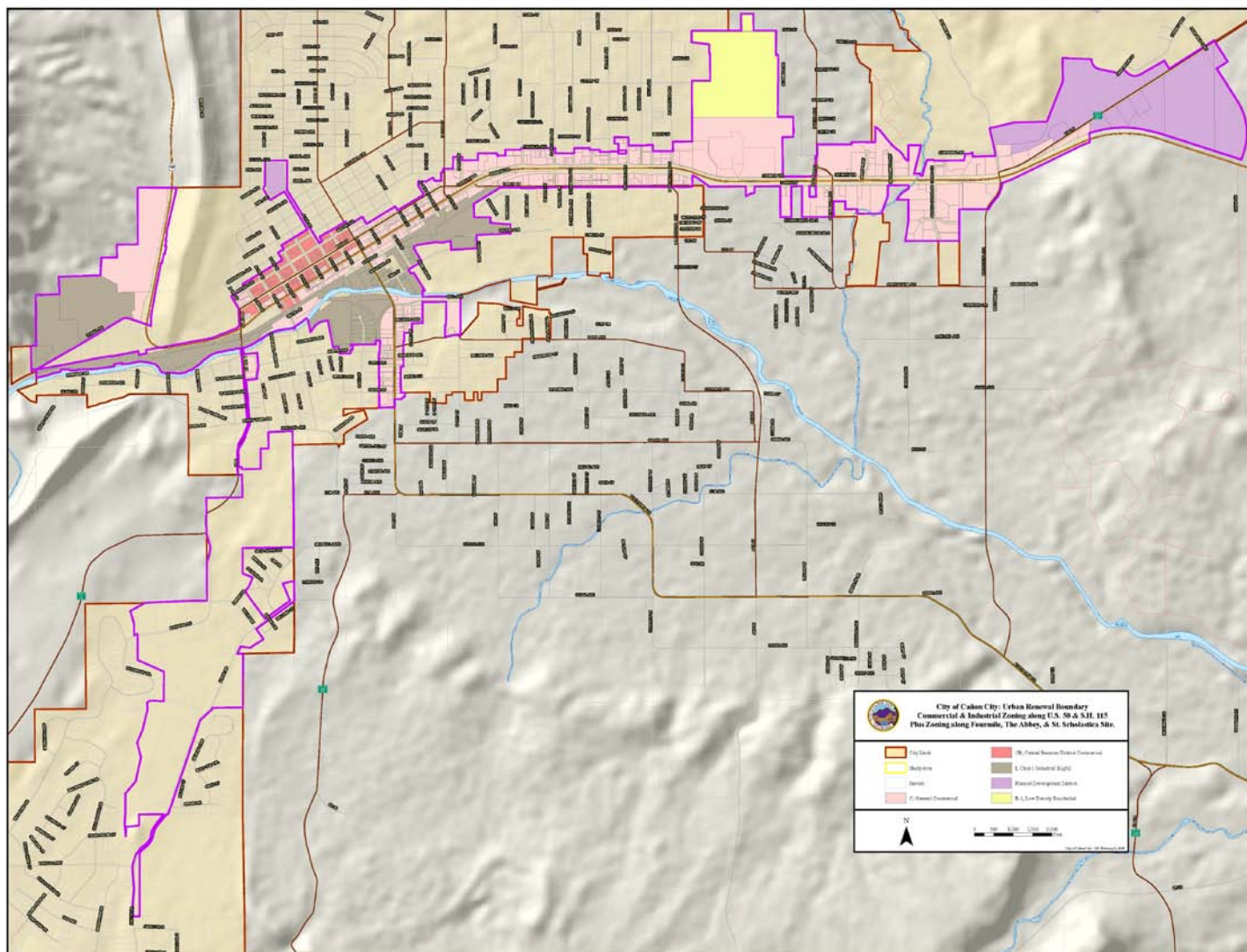
2.2 Policy Planning References

As per 31-25-103 (9) of the Act, "an 'urban renewal plan' means a plan, as it exists from time-to-time, for an urban renewal project, which plan conforms to a general or master plan for the physical development of the municipality as a whole and which is sufficiently complete to indicate such land acquisition, demolition and removal of structures, redevelopment, improvements, and rehabilitation as may be proposed to be carried out in the urban renewal area." The last major update to the City's Comprehensive Plan was completed in 2001, while several supplemental policy and visionary reports and plans (listed below) have been prepared since then, largely to serve as amendments to that original guiding document. The intent of any urban renewal plan for the subject properties would be to advance the objectives expressed in these documents.

Reference Documents:

- City of Cañon City Comprehensive Plan Update (2001)
- US 50 Corridor Plan (2015)
- History Center Long Range Plan (2015)
- Cañon City US Highway 50 Access Control Plan
- Downtown Cañon City Strategic Plan (2012)
- Eastern Fremont County Trails, Open Space & River Corridor River Improvements Detail Plan
- Cañon City Vision Plan (2014)
- City of Cañon City Arkansas River Corridor Master Plan (2017)
- 2017 - 2020 Strategic Plan (2017)
- US 50 West Access Control Plan (ongoing)

Figure 2: Study Area Boundary Map



2.3 Future Land Uses

The Future Land Use Framework Map for Cañon City illustrates the type and location of desired land uses and development patterns for areas within the municipal limits, as well as other locations outside these boundaries, but designated within its Urban Growth Boundary. As explained in the City of Cañon City Comprehensive Plan Update, adopted in 2001 (herein referred to as the "Comprehensive Plan"), Cañon City's Urban Growth Boundary includes the area where urban levels of growth may be accommodated during the 20 years following adoption of the plan. Specific uses described therein reflect historical patterns of development in and beyond the city limits where future urban growth and development is anticipated. Urban level development is typically characterized by density and required infrastructure such as water, sewer, roadway, and other similar services expected in a built environment. Use types identified in the Future Land Use Framework Map that affect properties in the Study Area are presented and defined as follows.

Commercial - this category is intended to provide for a variety of commercial uses, including retail, office and service establishments. Specifically, the **Comprehensive Plan** acknowledges reasonable expansion and/or redevelopment of existing commercial land use activities within the Downtown Area and established commercial corridors (i.e. US Highway 50 and State Highway 115).

Industrial - this category is intended to provide for expansion of the city's light industrial and tech-park districts, particularly at the northeast intersection of US Highway 50 and State Highway 67.

Mixed-Use - this category is intended to provide for use types desired within the designated Four-Mile Development Plan Area, including dwelling units on a variety of lot sizes, along with nonresidential land uses where appropriate.

Residential - this category is intended to provide for housing of varied types and densities, specifically in locations where existing residential units exist, as well as areas planned for future development.

Multi-Family - this category is intended to provide for existing and planned multi-family and higher-density residential uses.

Public | Semi-Public - this category is intended to provide for land that may be used for parks, open space, schools; or municipal, county, state and federal uses. Semi-public uses such as churches and non-profit organizations may also be allowed.

Undeveloped - this category is intended to provide for areas that are not constrained by significant natural or topographic features, and where ownership does not fall within a public or semi-public category. This category is also designated for future growth and development activities where public utilities and services may be available.

At the time the Future Land Use Map was prepared, it was assumed city water and sewer facilities would be sufficient to support anticipated growth through the year 2021. However, as explained herein, there are numerous segments of this infrastructure that either under-serve properties (as of January 2020), or which will require enhancements in order to support new development or redevelopment.

3.0 Definition of Blight

A determination of blight is a cumulative conclusion based on the presence of several conditions or factors (physical, market, and other), defined by state law, that collectively contribute to the deterioration of an area. Taken together, and when left unattended for extended periods of time, they can adversely impact the economic health of properties not only in their general vicinity, but those of the community at-large. With more than 50 years of history to reflect on, blighting conditions are known to diminish the positive attributes of investment and reinvestment in land and improvements, and stagnate property values. With what often results in a pattern of spending at disproportionate levels in deteriorating areas; municipalities find themselves with limited funds to maintain and enhance their communities. For the purpose of this Survey, and as set forth in the Law, the definition of a blighted area is as follows:

A “blighted area” means an area that in its present condition and use, and by reason of the presence of at least four of the following factors, substantially impairs or arrests the sound growth of the municipality, retards the provision of housing accommodations, or constitutes an economic or social liability; and is a menace to the public health, safety, morals, or welfare. Eligible conditions (factors) identified in the Act include:

- (a) *Slum, deteriorated, or deteriorating structures;*
- (b) *Predominance of defective or inadequate street layout;*

- (c) *Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness;*
- (d) *Unsanitary or unsafe conditions;*
- (e) *Deterioration of site or other improvements;*
- (f) *Unusual topography or inadequate public improvements or utilities;*
- (g) *Defective or unusual conditions of title rendering the title non-marketable;*
- (h) *Existence of conditions that endanger life or property by fire or other causes;*
- (i) *Buildings that are unsafe or unhealthy for persons to live or work in because of building code violations, dilapidation, deterioration, defective design, physical construction, or faulty or inadequate facilities;*
- (j) *Environmental contamination of buildings or property;*
- (k.5) *Existence of health, safety, or welfare factors requiring high levels of municipal services or substantial physical underutilization or vacancy of sites, buildings, or other improvements;*
- (l) *If there is no objection of such property owner or owners and the tenant or tenants of such owner or owners, if any, to the inclusion of such property in an urban renewal area, "blighted area" also means an area that, in its present condition and use and, by reason of the presence of any one of the factors specified in paragraphs (a) to (k.5) of this subsection (2), substantially impairs or arrests the sound growth of the municipality, retards the provision of housing accommodations, or constitutes an economic or social liability, and is a menace to the public health, safety, morals or welfare. For purposes of this paragraph (1), the fact that an owner of an interest in such property does not object to the inclusion of such property in the urban renewal area does not mean that the owner has waived any rights of such owner in connection with laws governing condemnation. Source: Colorado Revised Statute 31-25-103(2).*

The determination of whether an area is, or is not a "blighted area" is the sole responsibility of municipal legislative bodies (i.e., City Council or Town Board). The Survey identifies conditions within the Study Area that City Council may consider in deciding whether to organize the urban renewal authority and later, to approve an urban renewal plan for redevelopment of properties within its boundaries.

As stated in the Law, a finding of eligibility neither requires that all eleven (11) factors be present in the area of study, nor that every parcel in the area be adversely impacted by a qualifying factor. In this instance, the Cañon City Council will determine the Study Area's eligibility based on the presence of four (4) or more factors (or five (5) in cases where the use of eminent domain is anticipated). As explained in (I) above, these thresholds may be reduced to the presence of one (1) blighting factor in cases where owners of property and tenants of the owners do not object to inclusion in the area. Note: Although the Cañon City Council does not intend to include a provision for the use of eminent domain, it is recommended they require the higher threshold of five (5) factors when considering the Area's eligibility for an urban renewal designation.

4.0 Study Methodology

Ricker | Cunningham (RC), Urban Renewal Specialists, were authorized by City Council in December 2019 to investigate conditions in the Study Area, and prepare a report describing their findings. To this end, RC personnel reviewed information including Geographic Information Systems (GIS) records, past reports and studies, and other data and documents provided by City Staff and representatives of other public agencies; and conducted field investigations during the month of January, as well as in early February.

4.1 Description of Statutory Factors

What follows is a description of each of the statutory factors listed above. Actual conditions either observed or identified within the Study Area are described in *Section 5 Summary of Findings*, along with an opinion regarding whether collectively, they constitute a finding of "blight". In making a final determination, the Cañon City Council will have to conclude that that finding satisfies § 31-25-103(2) of the Statute.

(a) Slum, deteriorated, or deteriorating structures

This factor is said to be present when an area contains structures that are deteriorating or deteriorated according to municipal codes or the physical condition of structures in an area pose specific life-safety concerns due to the deterioration or absence of its: roof; walls, fascia board or soffit; foundation; gutters or downspouts; exterior finish; windows or doors; stairways or fire escapes; mechanical equipment; loading areas; fences, walls or gates; or non-primary structures.

(b) Predominance of defective or inadequate street layout

This factor is said to be present when the layout of existing streets or absence of streets adversely impact: the health, safety and welfare of individuals using vehicular and non-vehicular modes of transportation; or sound development of the area. Specific circumstances include: inadequate vehicular access, internal circulation, street widths or parking lot layout; presence of dead ends; deteriorating condition of existing streets; inadequate accommodations for safe pedestrian and bicycle movement; lack of driveway definition or curb cuts; and / or elevated history of traffic accidents.

(c) Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness

This factor is said to be present when a parcels size or configuration (long and narrow or irregularly sized) inhibits, or is likely to inhibit the development of improvements consistent with prevailing regulations (i.e., zoning); or vehicular access is either inadequate or unsafe. In this context, shared access, even among properties with the same owner, is considered a deficiency since it could limit the redevelopment potential of one or more properties were the owner to decide to sell them individually.

(d) Unsanitary or unsafe conditions

This factor is said to be present when there are poorly lit or unlit areas, sidewalks are cracked or uneven, drainage infrastructure is deficient, trash or mechanical equipment is unscreened, there is evidence of vandalism or vagrancy; incidents of crime are increasing or disproportionately high; there is a lack of fire protection; or hazardous contaminants, floodways and floodplains, and steep slopes threaten the health, safety and welfare of persons in an area.

(e) Deterioration of site or other improvements

This factor is said to be present when property, structures or public improvements have been damaged or neglected as reflected in deteriorating signs, parking surfaces, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, streets or landscaping; or trash, debris and weeds are visible and pervasive.

(f) Unusual topography or inadequate public improvements or utilities

This factor is said to be present when the topography of an area, including the presence of severe slopes and gullies, either: makes improvement of properties difficult, impractical, or infeasibly costly; limits a site's usefulness; adversely affects the size or configuration of built structures; or requires expensive infrastructure to support development as required by prevailing regulations. The presence of overhead utilities is another condition considered in the context of this factor.

(g) Defective or unusual conditions of title rendering the title non-marketable

This factor is said to be present when development is hampered or properties are deemed unmarketable due to conditions of title (including unclear ownership) such as covenants or other provisions governing its use that are discriminatory, obsolete or unduly restrictive. Also considered in the context of this factor is the presence of utility, ditch and access easements which can have a similar impact on a property's potential and capacity for development.

(h) Existence of conditions that endanger life or property by fire or other causes

This factor is said to be present when property or structures are subject to threats from fire, hazardous contaminants, flooding, or criminal activity.

(i) Buildings that are unsafe or unhealthy for persons to live or work in because of building code violations, dilapidations, deterioration, defective design, physical construction, or faulty or inadequate facilities

This factor is said to be present when conditions within properties or structures pose a threat to habitation or daily use resulting from contamination or a lack of safety infrastructure (i.e., fire sprinkler systems). Conditions that are present under (a), (d), (i) and (k.5) may also be included under this factor.

(j) Environmental contamination of buildings or property

This factor is said to be present when past or ongoing chemical or biological contamination of a site either poses a health hazard to users, or limits the type or magnitude of development that is either legally permitted or

financeable. Conditions listed under factors (d), (i), and (k.5) also qualify under this factor.

(k.5) Existence of health, safety, or welfare factors requiring high levels of municipal services or substantial physical underutilization or vacancy of sites, buildings, or other improvements

This factor is said to be present when properties or structures are vacant or underutilized (as anticipated by zoning); or a disproportionate level of public services are required to address a disproportionately high frequency of crimes, fires, accidents or building code violations. Conditions listed under factors (a), (d), (i), and (j) also qualify under this factor.

5.0 Summary of Findings

It is the conclusion of this Cañon City Reinvestment Expansion Area Survey that within the Area boundaries, ten (10) of the possible eleven (11) blight factors are present including those listed here: (a) deteriorated or deteriorating structures; (b) defective or inadequate street layout; (c) faulty lot layout; (d) unsanitary or unsafe conditions; (e) deterioration of site or other improvements; (f) unusual topography or inadequate public improvements or utilities; (h) conditions that endanger life or property by fire or other causes; (i) buildings that are unsafe or unhealthy for persons to live or work; (j); environmental contamination of buildings or property; and (k.5) substantial physical underutilization or vacancy of sites, buildings, or other improvements. What follows are descriptions and supporting data regarding conditions either observed or identified and associated with each one. Representative photographs of select conditions are presented in Appendix A.

(a) Slum, deteriorated, or deteriorating structures

An investigation of conditions associated with degrading buildings, primarily among non-single family detached structures in the Study Area, was conducted from the outside in locations both visible from and accessible to the general public. Elements of improvements that were observed and deemed to be deteriorating included: mechanical and operating equipment that was either unscreened, or partially screened by damaged and deteriorating fencing; broken and boarded windows; crumbling masonry around loading docks and receiving areas; and building facades where paint was peeling.

Secondary structures including sheds and other storage facilities were, in certain instances found to be, in worse condition than their associated primary structure. While not in violation of city codes (Chapter 17 of the Municipal Code), fencing materials used within all property types often included a combination of materials (chain link with barbed wire, wood panels, remnant concrete, and tarps); and all were in various stages of disrepair. In the vicinity of Dawson Ranch, fencing between residential and non-residential land uses also varied, and did not appear to ensure the minimum standard of providing protections for "public safety, health and welfare."

(b) Predominance of defective or inadequate street layout

Defective or inadequate street layouts are often a byproduct of one or more of the following street conditions: absence of accommodations for safe vehicular and non-vehicular mobility, limited capacity to support existing or potential traffic activity, and deteriorating infrastructure. All of these conditions were either observed or identified in the Study Area, with the most inauspicious being those that are inconsistent with established and adopted municipal codes.

Supporting roadway improvements, including sidewalks, appeared to be a combination of compliant and non-compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), varying widely by location. For instance, it was visibly obvious, and confirmed by information provided by City representatives, that several blocks in the Downtown Area, primarily along Main Street, have recently been improved, functionally and aesthetically. Conversely, several other sidewalk improvements located along and within some of the Study Area's other roadway corridors, were not only incomplete, but in some cases nonexistent. Among those that were present, few appeared appropriately sized or able to accommodate individuals with disabilities.

Roadways with adaptations for bicycles were also limited, and planned improvements, as explained in the City's Arkansas River Corridor Master Plan, completed in 2017, are primarily recommended with streets running perpendicular to US Highway 50 | Royal Gorge Boulevard, and primarily at 1st Street, for the express purpose of providing access to the Arkansas River corridor.

In terms of sidewalks within large undeveloped tracts, such as those in the vicinity of Dawson Ranch, they were largely absent, yet anticipated by the current Municipal Code and prevailing zoning.

Table 3
Non-Fire Related Incidents by Type
 2019

Incidents by Type	2019	% of Total
Medical Assist	252	7.2%
EMS Call, excluding vehicle accident w/ inju	2,020	57.9%
Motor vehicle accident with injuries	63	1.8%
Motor vehicle/pedestrian accident	9	0.3%
Motor vehicle accident no injuries	117	3.4%
Search for person	5	0.1%
Extrication or Rescue	8	0.2%
Gasoline, oil or flammable liquid spill	11	0.3%
Gas Leak	28	0.8%
Chemical spill	3	0.1%
Carbon monoxide incident	35	1.0%
Electrical wiring/equipment problem	20	0.6%
Overheated motor	4	0.1%
Power line down	24	0.7%
Person in distress	7	0.2%
Police assist, public service	58	1.7%
False alarm	123	3.5%
Unauthorized burning	42	1.2%
Authorized controlled burning	48	1.4%
Smoke scare	55	1.6%
HazMat release investigation	8	0.2%
Bomb scare	2	0.1%
System malfunction	3	0.1%
Sprinkler activation	5	0.1%
Smoke detector/alarm system	27	0.8%
Unintentional alarm/activation	148	4.2%
Severe weather/lightning strike	6	0.2%
Dispatched and cancelled	253	7.2%
No incident found	65	1.9%
Miscellaneous incidents	42	1.2%
Totals	3,491	100.0%

Source: Cañon City Fire Protection District and Ricker | Cunningham.

One measure of a street's adequacy is the frequency with which traffic-related incidents occur, either vehicular conflicts or conflicts between vehicles and either pedestrians or bicycles. According to the Cañon City Fire Protection District and as reflected in Table 3, traffic-related occurrences within the Study Area represented nearly 6% of all non-fire related incidents in 2019, proceeded in frequency by only Medical Assist and Emergency Medical Service (EMS) calls for service, and calls for which equipment was dispatched and then cancelled.

In terms of where these events occurred, supplemental information provided by Atkins, a member of the US 50 West Access Control Plan Project Team, revealed that vehicle-related incidents along the US Highway 50 Corridor during the period between July 2013 and June 2018, primarily occurred at 4th, 5th, 9th, 11th and 15th Streets, with the largest numbers reported at and along 9th and 15th Streets. These figures were based on data provided by the Colorado Department of Transportation.

As shown in Table 4, among all non-fire related incidents, the vast majority took place along Main Street and US Highway 50.

Table 4
Fire-Involved Incidents by Location
2019

Incidents by Location	2019	% of Total
Fremont Drive	54	9.6%
Main Street	194	34.5%
Royal Gorge Boulevard	102	18.1%
US Highway 50	212	37.7%
Totals	562	100.0%

Source: Cañon City Fire Protection District and Ricker | Cunningham.

Table 5 illustrates between grass and vegetation and building fires, in 2019, the former category represented roughly 42% of all fire-related incidents, while the latter represented nearly 15%. The balance occurred in various locations such as motor vehicles, dumpsters and outdoor storage areas.

Table 5
Fire-Related Incidents by Type
 2019

Incidents by Fire Type	2019	% of Total
Building	15	15%
Cooking	10	10%
Chimney or flu	3	3%
Trash or rubbish	5	5%
Motor home, camper, RV	3	3%
Passenger vehicle	3	3%
Road freight or transport vehicle	1	1%
Off-road vehicle or heavy equipment	2	2%
Natural vegetation, forest, or brush	32	32%
Grass	10	10%
Outside rubbish, trash or waste	6	6%
Dumpster or other outside receptacle	2	2%
Outside storage/equipment	4	4%
Explosion	1	1%
Excessive heat, scorch burns	3	3%
Totals	100	100%

Source: Cañon City Fire Protection District and Ricker | Cunningham.

(c) Faulty lot layout

Because faulty streets, as discussed above, often create faulty lots, properties in the Study Area that suffer from conditions associated with Factor (b) also suffer from conditions associated with Factor (c). Faulty lots are those that lack adequate and clearly defined points of ingress and egress, as well as those that due to their size or shape, have limited utility.

Within the Study Area, there are numerous observable examples of properties lacking direct access to surrounding roadways, and in each of these instances, visibility to and from these parcels is significantly obstructed. Another aspect of road conditions, not previously discussed, includes a lack of curb, gutter and lighting both within residential and commercial area, locations where they would

have been anticipated due to levels of vehicular activity. While sometimes less impactful in residential neighborhoods, these deficiencies in commercial and industrial areas, where clearly defined points of ingress and egress is essential for the safe movement of goods and services, can pose a significant competitive disadvantage and result in below market values.

Also as explained above, a lot's configuration can impact its function and developability. In other words, lots that are either too small or irregular in shape to accommodate market-supported improvements based on municipal regulations (i.e., parking ratios, setbacks, amount of impervious cover) are often considered faulty. To this end, they are often described as "remnants." In the Study Area, numerous parcels with these characteristics exist, particularly south of US Highway 50 between the road and railroad tracks, and between the railroad tracks and Arkansas River.

(d) **Unsanitary or unsafe conditions**

Conditions which diminish protections for individuals living, working and passing through an area can range from a lack of infrastructure to heightened levels of criminal activity; and may include the presence of environmentally contaminated properties or parcels impacted by floodways. While "unsafe" conditions may also be considered "unsanitary," the latter are more typically associated with circumstances that are visible such as graffiti, vandalism, and unkempt landscaping, all of which are more indicative of neglect, rather than threats to persons or property.

Substandard infrastructure already discussed has largely been associated with the condition and capacity of roadways and associated accommodations. However, not yet discussed, but also considered in the context of this Factor (d), is the presence of protections for buildings and their occupants from fire-related incidents. Fire prevention resources including water and suppression systems, and the capacity to provide adequate pressure and flow, is something monitored by the Cañon City Fire Protection District. Regarding actual buildings with suppression systems installed, this level of information was only available for properties in the Downtown Area.

Information provided by the City's Water Department revealed that among all of the more than 195 commercial structures located in the Downtown Area, only 77 have fire suppression lines, meaning that nearly half of the inventory is unprotected and thereby placing all properties in the area at risk. These findings are consistent

with comments received during the study process such as, " While water flow is generally adequate Downtown, because of the significant inventory of historic buildings, fire suppression infrastructure is limited." With respect to flow and pressure, information provided by both Cañon City 's Fire Protection District and Police and Public Safety Department.

Table 6
Criminal Incidents by Type
2017 to 2019

Incidents by Type	2017	2018	2019	Total
Aggravated Motor Vehicle Theft	11	8	9	28
Animal Cruelty		1		1
Assault	15	11	19	45
Burglary	12	12	32	56
Child Abuse	3			3
Computer Crime			1	1
Criminal Impersonation		1	1	2
Criminal Mischief	37	25	27	89
Criminal Tampering	2		4	6
Criminal Trespassing	18	17	32	67
Defacing Property	1	2	2	5
DeFrauding				0
Disorderly Conduct	7	10	8	25
Domestic Violence	1	5	5	11
Forgery	11	26	14	51
Fraud	5	12	4	21
Harassment	14	16	19	49
Identity Theft	4	5	4	13
Indecent Exposure	2	2	1	5
Issuance of Bad Check	1		1	2
Menacing	2	9	3	14
Murder	1			1
Possession - Drug Related	6	5	4	15
Robbery	2	3		5
Sexual Assault	2	4	3	9
Soliciting		1		1
Stalking	3			3
Theft	136	195	301	632
Toxic Vapors Abusing			3	3
Unauthorized Use	6	6	3	15
Unlawful Distribution		1	1	2
Unlawful Possession	11	15	16	42
Totals	313	392	517	1,222

Source: Cañon City Police and Public Safety and Ricker | Cunningham.

Criminal and Fire-Involved Activity

In the same manner that the frequency of traffic events can be an indicator of unsafe roadway conditions; heightened levels of criminal activity can be an indication of an unsafe environment. Data provided by the Cañon City Police and Public Safety Department is presented in Table 6, and illustrates the number and nature of criminal incidents in the Study Area between 2017 and 2019. As the figures therein show, crime has continued to increase at a rate of more than 25% between 2017 and 2018, and nearly 32% between 2018 and 2019. Among all of the incidents, Theft represented the largest category at approximately 52%, followed by Criminal Mischief and then Violent Crimes.

Table 7 reflects the frequency of criminal incidents by location within the Study Area between 2017 and 2019. As shown, almost 80% of all incidents occurred on either Fremont Drive, Main Street, Royal Gorge Boulevard or US Highway 50 during that timeframe. Activity trends within those roadways have varied, however, with them declining in Fremont Road, yet increasing in Main Street, Royal Gorge Boulevard and US Highway 50. Figure 3 illustrates concentrations of Group A criminal activity within commercial properties, as reported by the Cañon City Police and Public Safety Department in 2019.

Environmental Impacts

In terms of environmental contamination, a review of information available on the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) website revealed that more than 100 operators are actively being monitored as potential contributors to air or ground pollution, of which two are known to have released contaminants.

Floodway Impacts

Based on review of National Flood Insurance Program Maps, parcels near the eastern and western edges are located in one of two Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHA), both of which are subject to inundation by a 1% annual chance of flooding. Specific zones that are present include Zones A and AE. Maps that revealed this information include:

Map Numbers: 08043C0628F, 08043C0629G, 08043C0636F, 08043C0637F

Panel Numbers: 628, 629, 636 and 637 of 926

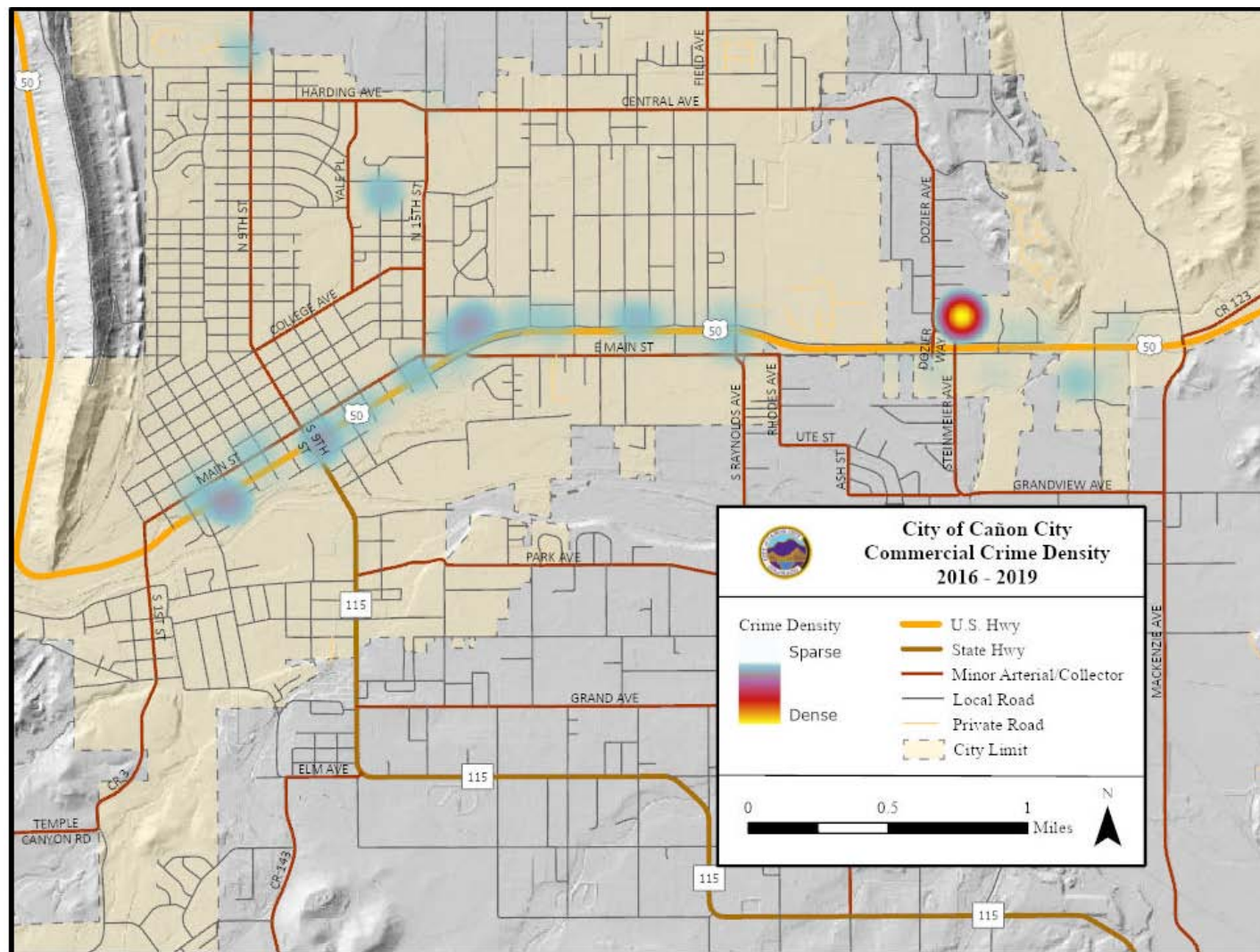
Dates: January 6 and July 3 of 2012

Table 7
Criminal Incidents by Location
 2017 to 2019

Incidents by Location	2017	2018	2019	Total
4th Street			5	5
5th Street			1	1
6th Street		1		1
7th Street		1		1
8th Street	1		1	2
9th Street	14	12	15	41
16th Street	8	6	4	18
19th Street	2	2	4	8
Berry Parkway		1	2	3
Central Avenue	3	2	1	6
Cottonwood Avenue		2	1	3
County Road 123				0
Del Rey Avenue			1	1
Field Street			1	1
Florence Street	1			1
Fremont Drive	62	73	54	189
Greenwood Avenue	3	4	2	9
Greydene Avenue	3	4		7
Independence	1	1		2
Justice Center Road	10	8	13	31
Latigo Lane	3	6	2	11
Macon Avenue	6	1	6	13
Main Street	50	66	67	183
McCormick Parkway	1	3	7	11
Myrtle Avenue		1		1
Phay Avenue	14	18	12	44
Rainbow Drive	2		3	5
Raintree Boulevard	3	3	3	9
Raynolds Avenue	3	7	8	18
Riverside Drive		1		1
Royal Gorge Boulevard	55	47	92	194
Sell Avenue			1	1
US Highway 50	67	122	211	400
Yale Place	1			1
Totals	313	392	517	1,222

Source: Cañon City Police and Public Safety and Ricker | Cunningham.

Figure 3: Crime Density Map



Floodway areas in Zone AE include the channel of a stream plus adjacent floodplains and areas that must be kept free of encroachment so that the 1% annual chance of flood can be carried without substantial increases in flood heights. Flood areas other than AE are those with a 0.2% annual chance flood; areas of 1% annual chance flood with average depths of less than one foot or with drainage areas less than one square mile; and areas protected by levees from 1% annual chance flood.

(e) Deterioration of site or other improvements

Evidence of deterioration within properties and in public rights-of-way, in and adjacent to the Study Area, and observable in some of the photographs presented in Appendix A, include: unscreened trash, debris and equipment; crumbling and broken asphalt surfaces; damaged fencing and signage; overgrown landscaping; along with buildings and other structures with visible deferred maintenance. While any of these conditions considered independent of the others may not suggest a significant threat to people or property, taken together with the presence of other “blighting” factors, suggests a pattern of deterioration and neglect.

(f) Unusual topography or inadequate public improvements or utilities

Conditions associated with aspects of Factor (f) which may seem distinctly different, are actually directly related. For instance, topography within the Study Area includes both flat lands and rolling hills, the latter of which poses costly challenges to site improvements in the form of expenses associated with the necessity for site grading and construction of retaining walls. However, within the flat lands, particularly in the vicinity of Dawson Ranch, there are numerous arroyos accompanied by steep slopes, similarly impacting the improvement potential of connected parcels. Among these, many are also located within restricted floodways, as described earlier in the context of Factor (d).

Inadequate Public Improvements

According to a representative of the Cañon City Water Department, within the Study Area there are numerous locations where existing infrastructure is either insufficient to extinguish a fire under existing conditions, or sufficient under existing conditions, but which would be inadequate and require additional infrastructure were properties to be significantly redeveloped. Planning areas with these deficiencies are identified as follows.

- Planning Area US Highway 50 West
- Planning Area West of 1st Street to Tunnel Drive Trailhead north of the Arkansas River
- Planning Area 1st Street to 9th Street north of US Highway 50
- Planning Area 9th Street to 15th Street south of US Highway 50
- Planning Area 16th Street to Raynolds Avenue north of US Highway 50
- Planning Area Raynolds Avenue to Dozier Avenue north of US Highway 50
- Planning Area Four Mile Lane to Four Mile Parkway north of US Highway 50
- Planning Area 1st Street to 9th Street south of Arkansas River
- Planning Area East of CR 3 Highlands Avenue to Valley Road
- Planning Area Mariposa Road Ptarmigan Trail to Valley Road, south to north boundary Wolf Park Subdivision
- Planning Area West of Forge Road north boundary Wolf Park Subdivision to Shiloh

Capital projects planned for improvement and listed on the City's website include those presented in Table 8. As shown, they fall into general categories of roads, bridges, buildings, parks and planning. While no information was provided with regard to levels of funding available for each project, nor their anticipated timing, the fact that they have been identified is considered to suggest they are deficient and in need of either improvement or enhancement.

In addition to those projects presented here, the Downtown Area is the subject of a significant street improvement program. As also described on the City's website, the focus of this street reconstruction project is Main Street from 5th through 7th Streets; and will include upgrades to sidewalks, curbs, gutters, and parking facilities. Associated infrastructure projects include construction of a new water main between 5th and 10th Streets, new service lines to meter pits located in the front of buildings, and undergrounding of power lines. Other enhancements will include tree plantings and a new irrigation system.

Not mentioned previously, but also considered in the context of this Factor (f), is the presence of overhead utility lines. While permissible according to prevailing regulations, overhead power lines are thought to be a visual "blight" that can contribute to a larger perception of neglect and decay. Their impact is often realized in below market values among properties located adjacent to utility

Table 8
Cañon City Capital Improvement Projects

2019

Capital Improvement Projects
Water
Main Street Water Main Replacement
North 12th Street Water Main Replacement/Installation
South 4th Street and Myrtle Lane Water Main Replacement
Streets
2A Forge Road
2A Main Street and S 12th Street
2A N 12th Street
Alley Reconstruction
Chip/Crack Seal
Miscellaneous Concrete
N Reynolds Avenue Paving
Quality of Life/Colorado Department of Transportation
CMAQ 2020
CO115 Pedestrian Improvements
SRTS CCMS Main Street
SRTS Lincoln, 4th Street and Myrtle Avenue
US50 Pedestrian Improvements
US50 West Access Control Plan
Railroad Crossings
Forge Road - RRRR
S 11th Street - RGRR
S 11th Street - UPRR
Parks
Centennial Park - Phase III
Wayfinding
Gateway Monument Signage
Park Identification Signage
Wayfinding Signage
Buildings
Bridge Maintenance
Pedestrian Bridge Repair
Planning/Survey
River Corridor
Forked Gulch
Stormwater
Abbey Basin Dam Maintenance
Stormwater Capital Improvement Plan - 9th Street
Stormwater Capital Improvement Plan - Abbey
Stormwater Capital Improvement Plan - Dawson Ranch

Source: City of Cañon City and Ricker |
Cunningham.

corridors, and their removal has been identified as an eligible expense for which urban renewal resources may be expended.

(h) Existence of conditions that endanger life or property by fire or other causes

Conditions posing a threat to people and property identified within the Study Area primarily include those associated with infrastructure deficiencies previously described and associated with mobility and protections from fire; as well as circumstances that foster criminal activity and all of which have already been described in detail.

(i) Buildings that are unsafe or unhealthy for persons to live or work in because of building code violations, dilapidations, deterioration, defective design, physical construction, or faulty or inadequate facilities

See discussions associated with Factors (a), (d) and (f) above, and Factor (j) below. Although information related to past incidents of environmental contamination and the ongoing monitoring of properties with the potential to adversely impact conditions in the Area; they are again referenced in the context of this Factor (i) primarily because of the extraordinary expense of constructing preventative barriers often required by local codes during redevelopment of properties in the vicinity of past occurrences.

(j) Environmental contamination of buildings or property

Based on a review of public information available on the EPA website, more than 47 parcels within the Study Area are actively being monitored for possibly emitting contaminants into the air. An additional 55 parcels are actively being monitored for possibly emitting contaminants into the ground. For privacy purposes, these lists have been provided to the Cañon City Council under separate cover. Among the monitored sites, two are known to have released air and ground toxins.

(k.5) Existence of health, safety, or welfare factors requiring high levels of municipal services or substantial physical underutilization or vacancy of sites, buildings, or other improvements

As is the case with other factors of blight, conditions associated with Factor (k.5) can be distinctly different, or directly related. Resources provided to properties and businesses by the City of Cañon City and its affiliate organizations generally include: sanitation (both sewer and refuse), water, streets and transportation, libraries, schools, and food inspections; along with fire, police, ambulance, and other health department related services. Previous discussions associated with conditions

contributing to the presence of Factors (b), (c), (d), (f) and (i), particularly related to suboptimal protections for people and property, have all contributed to disproportionate levels of services and resources being expended to properties in and around the Study Area. An additional service, not yet mentioned, but also being provided at disproportionately high levels is assistance with medical conditions. Among the more than 3,490 non-fire-related incidents responded to by the Cañon City Fire Protection District in 2019, approximately 65% were either Medical Assists or EMS related events.

Vacancy and Underutilization

The second aspect of this Factor (k.5) speaks to threats and challenges resulting from high rates of vacancy in buildings and under-utilization of properties. As reported in the Downtown Strategic Plan, the Downtown Area is currently "underutilized and can support higher uses." It goes on to explain that high levels of utilization are present not only in ground floor spaces, but on the second floor of many buildings. They attributed vacancies to the age of the district's inventory, and heightened levels of disrepair.

In other locations within the Study Area, there is also evidence of both unimproved parcels and vacant space within buildings. Whereas the Area includes numerous properties on the edge of the community, vacant properties would not necessarily be unexpected; however, there are several others in locations that could be described as "infill sites," or properties surrounded by "urban level development." Vacancies in these locations are considered disruptive to the community form, and a condition that makes the delivery of public services more expensive and highly inefficient.

6.0 Conclusion

In summary, ten (10) of the eleven (11) total possible factors were either identified or observed at varying degrees of intensity in the Study Area, and all at levels considered adverse and impactful to a degree that any resolution or mitigation would be time-intensive and costly.

Cañon City Reinvestment Expansion Area

Conditions Survey

City of Cañon City, Colorado

Appendix A:

Photographic Inventory











