

Silver City Virtual Site Visit and Project Summary Report



Newly painted trailhead kiosk with 2020 updated Boston Hill map

Photo provided by Bridgette Johns

The University of New Mexico Prevention Research Center, VIVA Connects

June 2, 2021



PARTNERS



The mission of the Department of Health is to protect the public's health through preventing avoidable disease, injury, disability, and premature death; assuring access to affordable, quality health care; promoting healthy lifestyles; and documenting and monitoring health events. www.nmhealth.org.



*The Prevention Research Center at The University of New Mexico addresses the health promotion and disease prevention needs of New Mexico communities through participatory, science-based, health promotion, and disease prevention research. It fulfills this mission through collaboration, training, dissemination, and evaluation activities
hsc.unm.edu/medicine/departments/pediatrics/divisions/ppls/initiatives/viva/*



The Town of Silver City Trails and Open Space Committee - Silver City is the hub of an inclusive community settled within a small town that through guided growth, honors and preserves its historical, cultural, and natural heritage while facilitating jobs, health, and educational resources such that the residents and visitors may enjoy and protect the recreational opportunities of the area and high quality of life.



The Continental Divide Trail Coalition (CDTC) is the 501(c)(3) national non-profit working in partnership with the US Forest Service, National Park Service, and Bureau of Land Management to complete, promote and protect the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail. Founded in 2012 by a passionate group of volunteers and recreationists, CDTC is a membership organization working to building a strong community of supporters who want to see the CDT protected not just for today's users, but for generations to come.



The Gila Trails and Open Space Coalition's mission is to foster collaboration among users to promote the equitable access, connectivity, development and maintenance of trails and open space for the enhancement of public health, well-being, and economic vitality.

ADDITIONAL PARTNERS

- *The Southwest New Mexico Arts, Culture, and Tourism board*
- *Opening Spaces LLC*
- *The LOR Foundation*
- *The New Mexico Department of Health SW Region Health Promotion Team*
- *The CDTC Gateway Coordinator*
- *SE Group*
- *AmeriCorps*
- *Youth Conservation Corps*
- *Aldo Leopold Charter School*
- *Western institute for Lifelong Learning*

PARTICIPANTS

Laurel Fimbel - *Professional Intern, the Prevention Research Center.*

Bridgette Johns - *Coordinator, Southwest New Mexico Arts, Culture & Tourism.*

Joseph O'Dell - *Comprehensive Cancer Center: Department of Health.*

Additional Team Members (Those unable to attend the virtual site visit meeting)

Sally Davis - *Director, the Prevention Research Center.*

Michele Giese - *Health Promotion Specialist, SW Region Health Promotion Team, New Mexico Department of Health.*

Lee Gruber - *Director, Southwest New Mexico Arts, Culture & Tourism.*

Desiré Liska - *Coordinator, Gila Trails and Open Space Coalition, Cartographer, Opening Spaces LLC.*

Bob Schiowitz - *Town of Silver City Trails and Open Space Committee, Gila Trails and Open Space Coalition Member, Volunteer Trail Development Manager.*



Beautiful cactus blooming at Boston Hill

Photo provided by Laurel Fimbel

This report was supported by Cooperative Agreement Number 5-U48-DP-005034 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The findings and conclusions of this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the CDC. This report was completed June 30, 2021. Design, editing, and photography by Laurel Fimbel, with some previous formatting and information from Jason Schaub, Copyright 2021. This report was approved by Bridgette Johns from Silver City on July 8, 2021.

SITE VISIT OVERVIEW

On June 2, 2021, Laurel Fimbel from the University of New Mexico Prevention Research Center's VIVA Connects program virtually met with Bridgette Johns from New Mexico Southwest ACT organization, along with Joseph O'Dell from the Department of Health.

Discussion occurred of the previous projects in Grant County, and how elements of the *Community Guide* were being met. Reflection of facilitators, barriers, and partnerships enhanced everyone's understanding and knowledge of the successful previous projects. Long term sustainability of these projects was also addressed during our visit.

Secondly, using screensharing, together we all completed a logic model for the newest EL PASEO project. Filling in the logic model allowed for all parties to brainstorm, discuss, and better comprehend the final goals of the projects and the necessary steps that need to be taken.

This meeting enabled all the individuals to develop a deep understanding of the underlying barriers and facilitator's at-play when successfully implementing long-term projects aimed at improving places for physical activity in rural settings.

As part of ongoing technical assistance, VIVA Connects has provided this report to assess not only the status of their current grant, but overall sustainability and successful previous projects in the community of Silver City. Importantly, all of the recommendations by VIVA Connects are rooted in the evidence-based science promoted by the *Community Guide*.



Mural in downtown Silver City directing people to the San Vicente Trail

Photo provided by Laurel Fimbel

THE COMMUNITY GUIDE

Established by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in 1996 and supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Community Guide offers the latest, evidence-based recommendations for implementing health-improvement initiatives in local governments, communities, schools, and other populations.

There are five intervention elements to increase physical activity as such:

- *Community-Wide Campaign*
- *Creating or Improving Places for Physical Activity*
- *Individually Adapted Programs*
- *Built Environment Approaches*
- *Social Support Interventions*

Utilizing the Guide as a framework for program development ensures that all health initiatives, campaigns, or other recommendations are embedded in evidence-based practice, enhancing the potential impact of a given intervention while ensuring that local funding sources are used efficiently.

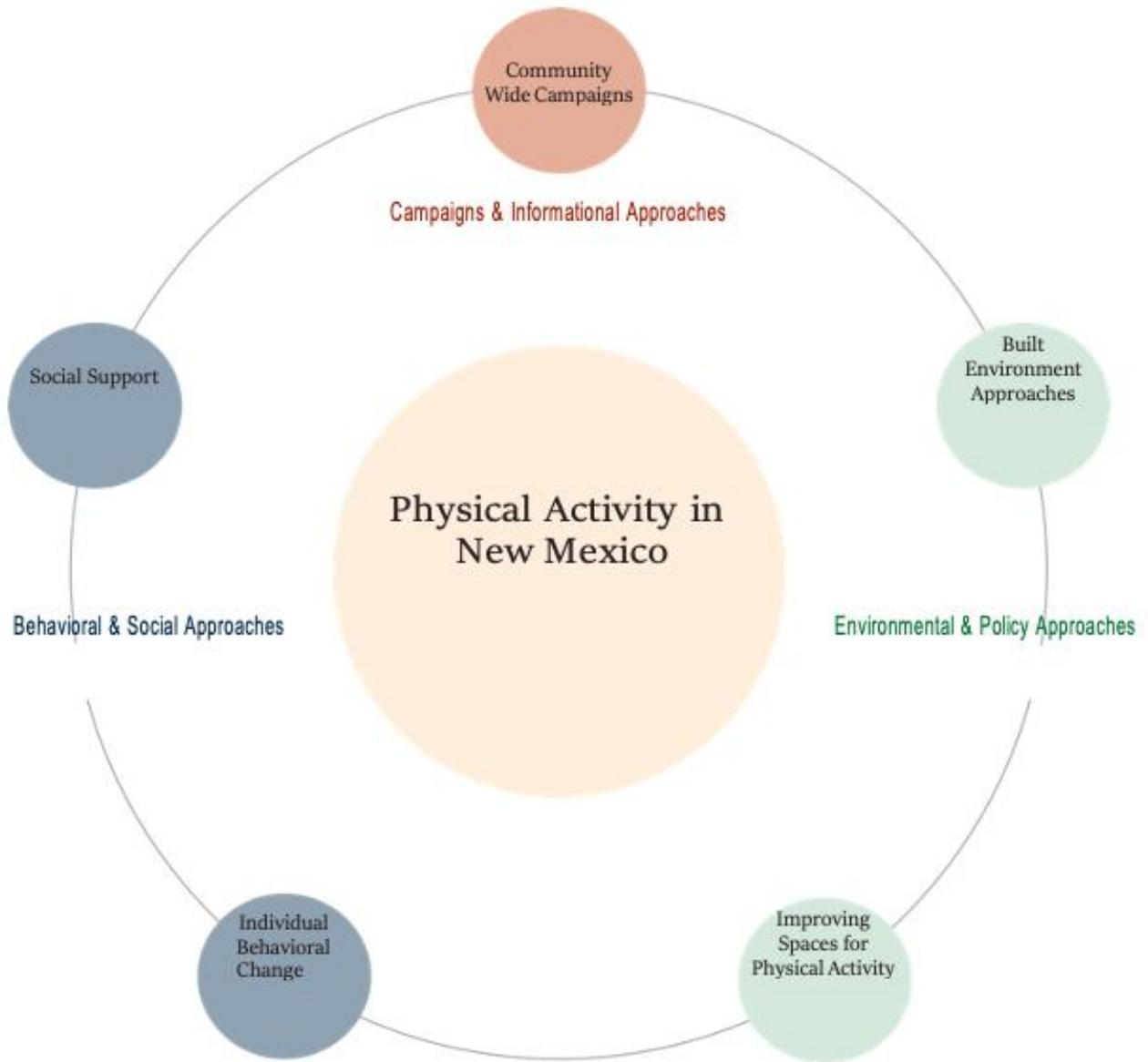
During our virtual meeting, Bridgette thought and discussed how her organization's work pertained to each intervention element. Using screenshare, I (Laurel), quickly typed in her responses. Below is each intervention element and the recorded notes.

For more information, visit: The Department of Health and Human Services. The Guide to Community Preventive Services (The Community Guide) website. <https://www.thecommunityguide.org/>. Accessed June 2021.

"I am grateful to be a part of this team."

-Michele Giese

COMMUNITY GUIDE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN RURAL COMMUNITIES



Model provided by Jason Schaub

COMMUNITY WIDE CAMPAIGNS

Community-wide campaigns to increase physical activity utilize highly visible, broad-based, multicomponent strategies such as social support, risk factor screening, and health education. These campaigns may also highlight target diseases, such as cancer, heart diseases, and other chronic conditions the local community may be more prone towards.

Silver City has strong community-wide campaigns to promote physical activity in their community. Many community events such as workdays, races, etc. are held around town each year. Along with much publicity press from the Silver City Daily Press, the team in Silver City works hard to involve the community and have their efforts shown around town.

Bridgette did recognize the need to increase more community events for San Vicente, EL PASEO, and any other future projects in order to continue community enthusiasm for outdoor recreation areas.

Recorded Meeting Notes:

Recommendation	Comments
<p><u>Community-Wide Campaigns</u> Work together across sectors to implement campaigns to increase physical activity using highly visible, broad-based, multi-component strategies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Boston Hill Birthday – 2019 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increase signage and awareness ○ Announce land that the county had donated for Boston Hill ○ Participation of the trail crew (charter school). Students led the hike ○ Coordinated by the town of silver city ● Always working to increase community collaboration, especially with youth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Youth drive the community pride, encourage more people, inclusion ● 2020 community run virtual <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 5-mile and 10-mile run ○ Designated route ○ Fun, still fostering community during COVID ○ Runners would see the team on Boston Hill working on signage/kiosks ○ Coordinated by local ● Coverage of events from the Silver City Daily Press. Bob has a connection with a reporter to continue to update community. Community reads the paper often which helps inform individuals of the projects occurring ● Improvement: Could increase more community events (for San Vicente and other new trails) and outreach. The Passport and EL PASEO project can allow for further collaboration. Launching events, partnering with other organizations, etc.

"I was out enjoying a lovely hike and applying stickers to the Carsonite signage."

– Michele Giese talking about the joys of implementing signage on Boston Hill

CREATING OR IMPROVING PLACES FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Access to places for physical activity is critically important. Creating and improving the safe, accessible use of dedicated areas to be physically active has shown to be an effective means of increasing the overall physical activity levels of a community.

With support from the Town of Silver City Trails and Open Space Committee, much land and area has been donated for trails and outdoor recreation areas. Boston Hill, San Vicente, the Water Works building, and land for the EL PASEO project have all benefited from donated land.

Silver city is transforming from an extractive (mining) economy towards an outdoor economic industry, thus focusing on and promoting more outdoor areas for physical activity and sport.

Recorded Meeting Notes:

Recommendation	Comments
<p><u>Creating or Improving Places for Physical Activity</u> Worksites, coalitions, agencies, and communities work together to change local environments to create opportunities for physical activity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● County was awarded \$250,000 for comprehensive trails and open space master plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SE group (big funding and partner) ○ They have great experience with mining communities. They can help improve outdoor physical activity, and residential health ○ The SE group has put out trail counters (n=25) to evaluate the usage of trails ○ Working to regulate horse riding/biking/ATV use on trails- need community input in order to finalize designation decisions ○ SE will provide funding for trails that need additional support ● Forest Service and Gila Trails Coalition are both big partners as well ● Silver city is moving towards an outdoor industry vs. extractive economy and focus



Extensive bike trails on Boston Hill provide outdoor recreation areas

Photo provided by Laurel Fimbel

INDIVIDUALLY ADAPTED PROGRAMS

Programs focused on behavior change of community members is critical to improving health of a population. Many of the VIVA Connects funded projects focus on promotion of education and health-oriented programs in order to encourage healthy habits of community members.

Many programs exist in Silver City to help promote healthy lifestyle choices. Youth/school organized groups educate and teach children about the importance of physical activity, the outdoor ecosystem, and nutrition. Adult education through AmeriCorps and Western Institute for Lifelong Learning reach adults of any age to encourage work and play in the outdoors. Additionally, two cycling groups in the area offer annual events as well as promotion of biking and exercise.

Additionally, Bridgette has noticed that gentrification/cultural segregation causes people to not feel comfortable using some walking areas. This is a community-wide issue, and one that Bridgette and her team are hoping to help by creating the passport program and encouraging youth and families to visit different hiking areas around Silver City, and surrounding communities in the future.

Recorded Meeting Notes:

Recommendation	Comments
<p><u>Individually Adapted Programs</u> Create programs that teach people behavioral skills to help them incorporate physical activity into their daily routines.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Passport Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Focus for youth and families to increase use of trails ● AmeriCorps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Multiple teams have helped with the trail building and maintenance work ● Youth Conservation Corpse <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Educational projects/education ○ State funded program ● Charter School youth workers ● Village of Santa Clara ● Cycling groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Two different annual events/races ○ Schools offer cycling electives for youth ● Western institute for Lifelong Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Interactive classes for retired individuals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hiking, biking, ▪ Bob helps teach classes and increase outdoor physical activity in older adults ● Waterworks project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Programs for land restoration, water conservations, pollinator gardens, etc. ○ Volunteer groups and consultation groups work together ● Town of Silver City Greenways vision: wants to connect all the open spaces from downtown. This will increase ease of access, and promote physical activity

BUILT ENVIRONMENT APPROACH

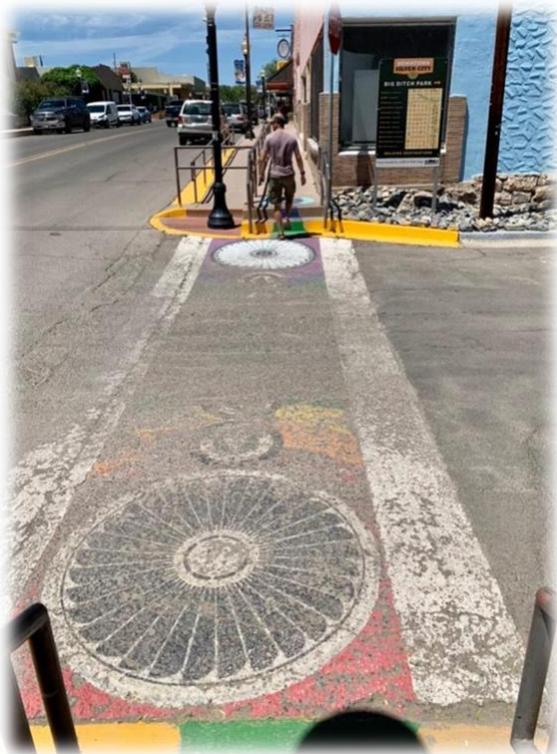
In order to ensure that everyone has access to places for physical activity, modifying the environment can greatly enhance one's ability to exercise.

The Town of Silver City promotes different community projects to increase safe biking routes around town. This will allow commuters to incorporate more physical activity in their route by safely biking to work or around town instead of driving.

Other projects such as Boston Hill and San Vicente have benefited greatly from signage efforts and trail building/maintenance to increase satisfaction and confidence on the trails. Signage and trail building/maintenance continues to be an important project to continuously work on.

Recorded Meeting Notes:

Recommendation	Comments
<p><u>Built Environment Approaches</u> Create or modify environmental characteristics in a community to make physical activity easier or more accessible by combining transportation systems with land use and environmental design features.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Waterworks project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Programs for land restoration, water conservations, pollinator gardens, etc. ○ Volunteer groups and consultation groups work together ● San Vicente <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Formalizing one official trail with signage (information and directional) ○ Feedback from community members expressing the need for signage ● Signage in town directing people to the trails increases trail access/awareness and ease of transportation ● Connecting trails from downtown safety, and having signage at waterworks (for CDT hikers coming into town) and other areas increases accessibility



Left: Painted sidewalks allow pedestrians to cross streets more safely at visible crosswalks (Bridgette has expressed interest in future work to re-do and add more painted crosswalks)



Right: Signage in downtown Silver City allows citizens to find trails and navigate around town confidently

Photos provided by Laurel Fimbel

SOCIAL SUPPORT INTERVENTIONS

Lastly, social support for physical activity is a potent method for engaging community members to become more active. This includes developing social networks that support health-promoting behavioral change, such as the creation of walking groups and other, physically active social endeavors.

With so many active community organizations working together, Silver City has been able to achieve various project and run community programs. Both small and large organizations have all been able to correspond with one another to promote health in the community. This is one of Silver City’s biggest facilitators to sustainability of projects.

However, with so many groups working together, Bridgette did note that to maximize effectiveness, having one organization as the “leader” works best. South West New Mexico ACT has recently stepped up to play that role as “leader” in order to coordinate meetings, volunteers, workdays on trails, and other community events.

Recorded Meeting Notes:

Recommendation	Comments
<p><u>Social Support Interventions</u> Focus on building, strengthening, and maintaining social networks that provide supportive relationships for behavior change.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Having one or multiple hub groups to manage/collaborate the organizations increases effectiveness ● Meetings with county officials and organizations, and focusing on listening, sharing, collaborating <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The mining community requesting assistance from Southwest New Mexico ACT ○ Bigger organizations working with smaller ones to increase efforts ○ Top down approach to increase change from within a community, increasing effectiveness
<p>Other Notes:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Helpful: Bridgette stressed the importance to have one coordinator (group) to oversee all collaborating organizations in order to make projects run more smoothly <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Facilitator to successful project completion with multiple organizations involved

"This AmeriCorps crew was a huge benefit to our Grant County communities, in many ways. The amount of work completed across the county (6 different project sites) was astounding and inspiring, and the crew members brought such joy and enthusiasm to the projects. Additionally, the six project sites were scattered across the county, so we had the wonderful opportunity to collaborate and coordinate with community partners in a unique and inspiring way. Win-win, all around."

- Bridgette Johns

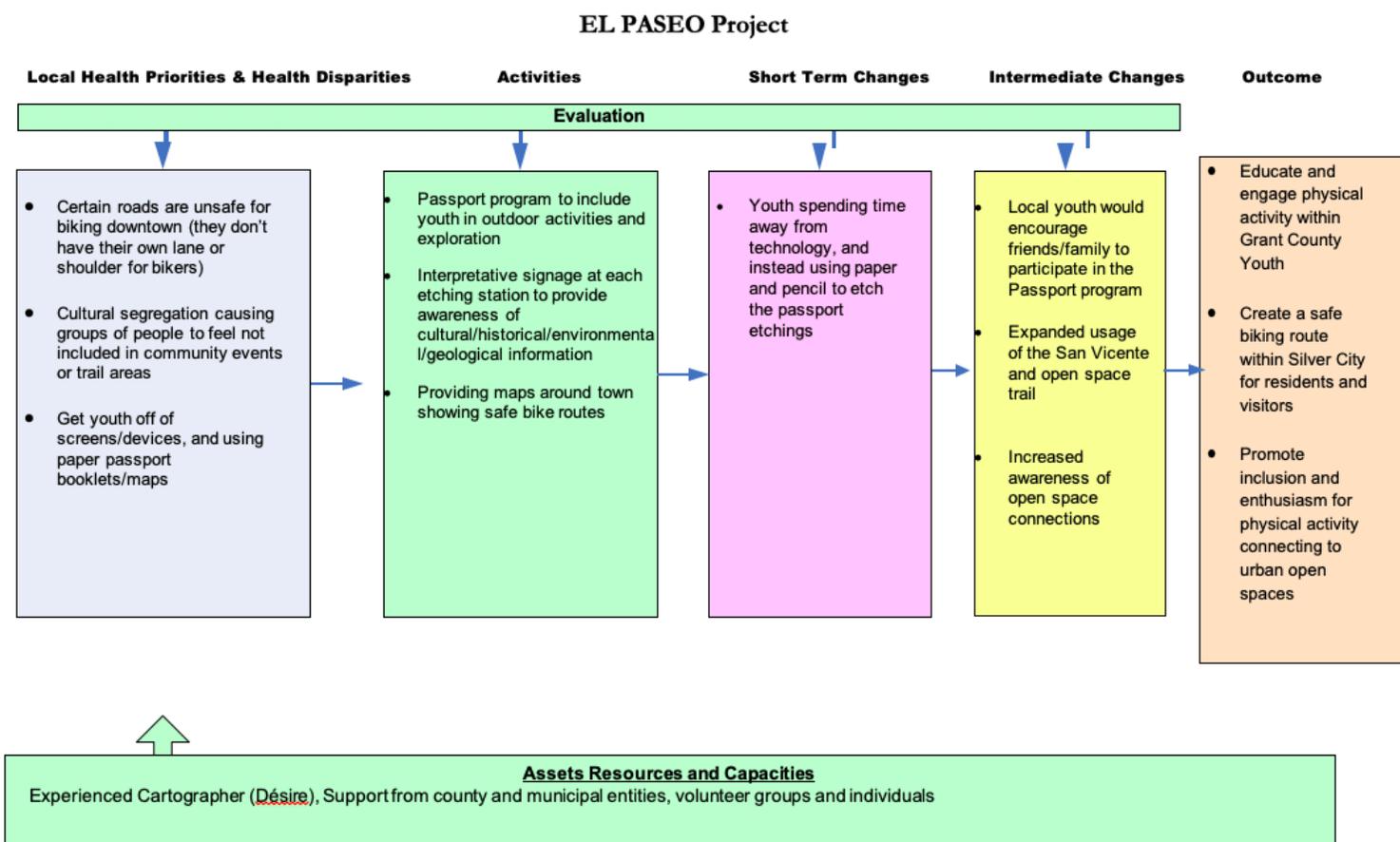


AmeriCorps crew on Boston Hill

Photo provided by Bridgette Johns

EL PASEO LOGIC MODEL

During the virtual meeting, using screenshare, we completed the EL PASEO project logic model. Logic models are useful visual tools to help outline steps and goals of a project. The Silver City team can greatly benefit from this exercise and reference the completed logic model when navigating their project.



Other Partners

Federal Agencies: – None

State Agencies: – Outdoor Recreation Division

Local: - Grant County, Town of Silver City, Silver City Museum (may support passport program), Town of Silver City Trails and Open Space Advisory Committee, Healthy Kids Healthy Communities, The Commons Center for Food Sustainability (etching station- increase awareness)

Facilitators

- Having multiple skilled organizations and individuals working together, as well as community enthusiasm.

Barriers

- Technology: removing kids from using so much screen time. Big task, and difficult to actually achieve.
- Potential issues with awareness of the passport program. Difficult to get information into the schools for the youth.
- Pushback from some community members not wanting large groups on Boston Hill/other trails – mostly issues with mountain biking. Ensuring equitable access for everyone on trails, and how to manage different activity groups on trails. Signage designating trails for specific activities.
- Ensuring compliance with signage requests. (San Vicente and private property surrounding the trail). Not having an entity that monitors compliance.



Newly painted trailhead kiosk with new San Vicente trail map

Photo provided by Bridgette Johns

EL PASEO PROJECT UPDATE & FUTURE GOALS

Officially as of June 22, 2021 the EL PASEO project has been modified. Desiré was the main leader of this program, however, has stepped away from this project and will no longer be part of the team. Desiré has had two computer crashes in the past year, and each time has lost all of her mapping work. After her most recent crash in early June, 2021, she has lost all her work and will no longer lead the EL PASEO project.

Bridgette Johns has requested that the project be modified to focus instead on increasing bike activity on trails, as well as signage posted with maps and information to connect walking paths through town. Sally Davis has approved of this project revision, and work on this new project has already begun. Completion date is still to be estimated, however, the PRC VIVA team is confident in Silver City's team to continue to stay in close contact and complete the below deliverables.

Deliverables:

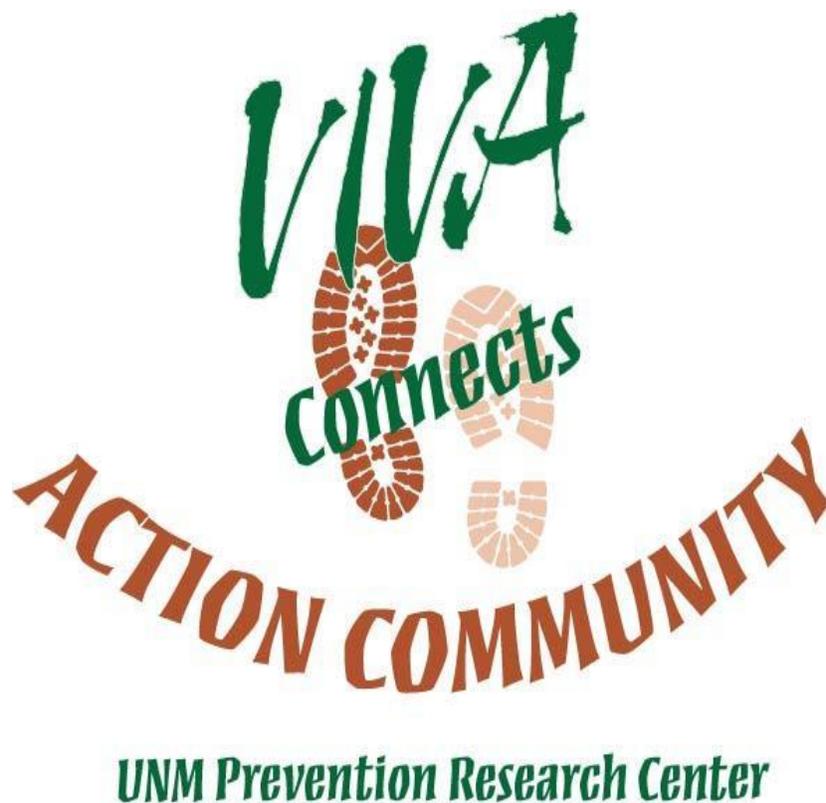
1. One Bicycle Repair Station for Boston Hill (already purchased and awaiting installation by Town of Silver City).
2. One Bicycle Repair Station for Dragonfly Trailhead (a route which is heavily used by cyclists and is far away from any repair shops).
3. Design of three Interpretive Signs (denoting culture, history, and environmental aspects) to be printed and installed at Boston Hill, San Vicente Creek, and Waterworks Site trailhead kiosks.
4. Design, print, and installation of an Urban Trail Connection map – denoting connection of all of the Town of Silver City Open Spaces/Trails (Boston Hill, San Vicente, Waterworks Site, Big Ditch Park).

We are excited to begin this new modified project and know that these deliverables will be very valuable to increase physical activity and cancer prevention, as well as economic and community enhancement of Silver City.

"Please know that we are making great progress"

-Bridgette Johns

Special thanks to everyone involved for promoting health and physical activity in communities around New Mexico.



PREVENTION RESEARCH CENTER
Prevention & Population Sciences

2703 Frontier, NE | RIB Suite 120, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87131
Ph: 505-272-4462 | Website: hsc.unm.edu