

# 5-YEAR TRAILS AND OPEN SPACE PLAN

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2024

Basin Recreation



**BASIN**  
RECREATION



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# 1: INTRODUCTION

## SENSE OF PLACE - NATURE, PEOPLE, AND RECREATION

Nestled within the Wasatch Back region of the Rocky Mountains, the Snyderville Basin District is an expansive territory covering around 50 square miles within Summit County, Utah. It is renowned for its diverse and awe-inspiring natural landscapes, which makes it a magnet for residents and visitors alike.

What truly sets the Snyderville Basin apart is its remarkable topography. Here, elevations span from 6,000 to 9,000 feet above sea level. Within this spectrum, recreationists encounter a breathtaking variety of terrain – from mountain peaks to alpine meadows, all embraced by lush forests and clear lakes. Meandering streams gracefully traverse this landscape, adding to its charm. It is a terrain that beckons to outdoor enthusiasts and nature lovers of every stripe. The Snyderville Basin community mirrors its diverse landscape. Full-time and seasonal residents, families, retirees, and adventure seekers come together to create a vibrant and engaged populace.



This community resides in neighborhoods nestled in valleys and foothills, and commercial hubs strategically positioned along major transportation routes. Throughout this development there is a steadfast commitment to preserving open spaces and safeguarding the environment, evident in the district's rigorous land-use regulations.

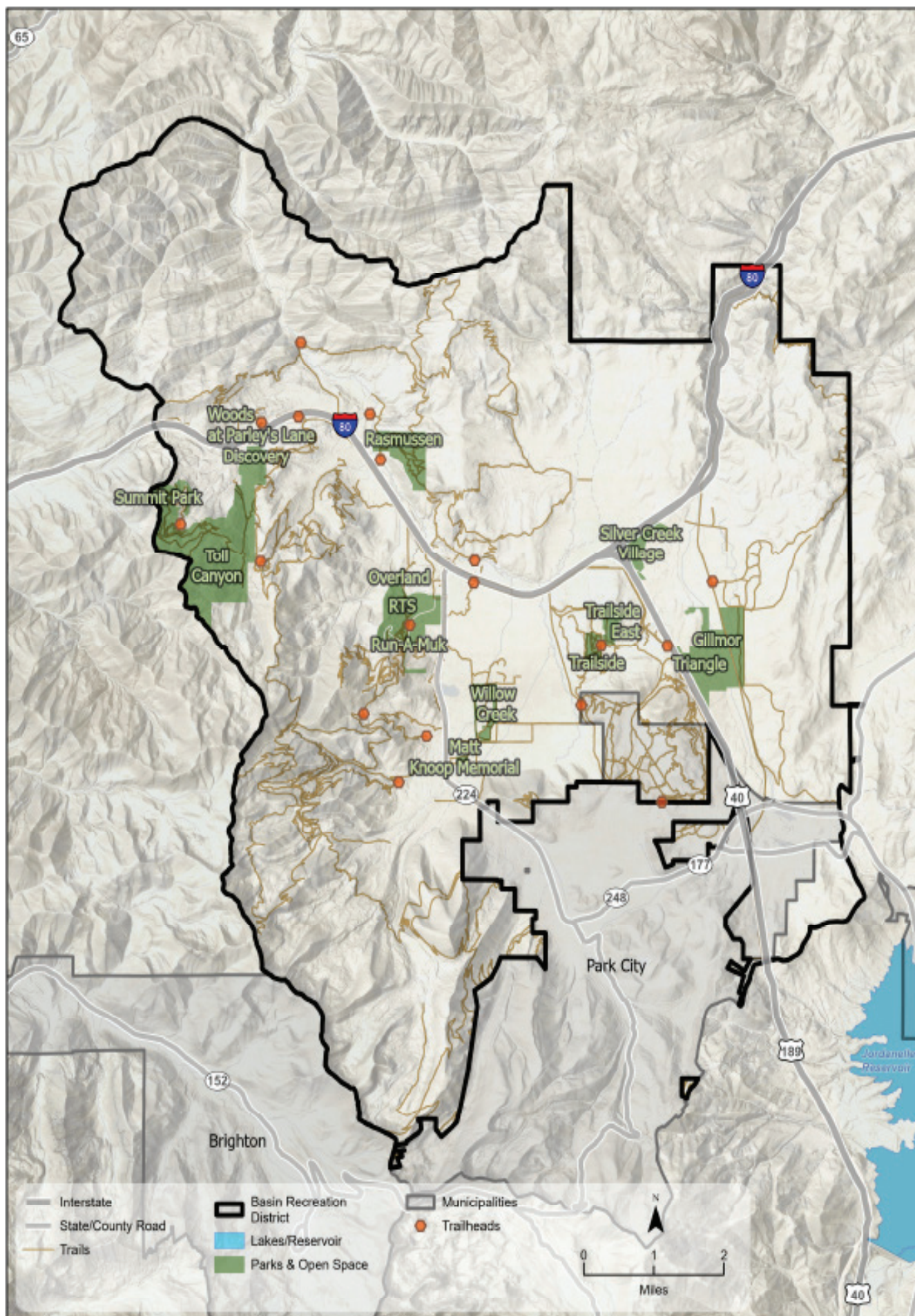
The Snyderville Basin is not just a place to live; it is a haven for outdoor enthusiasts from around the globe. As seasons change, so do the recreational opportunities. Warm summer months usher in hikers, mountain bikers, while winter's embrace welcomes skiers to numerous world-class resorts and invites snowshoe users, cross-country skiers, and fat-tired snow cyclists to explore the extensive trail systems. Trails are the arteries of this recreational haven, weaving a complex network across the landscape. From leisurely strolls to challenging mountain biking trails, these pathways guide residents and visitors alike through meadows, along streams, and to breathtaking viewpoints. This Trails and Open Space Plan sets out to meet an expectation of community stewardship and responsibility to protect the natural resources that make recreating here an unparalleled experience.

This plan serves as an assessment of the District's progress towards the 2019 Trails Master Plan Objectives. Because of this, the strategies identified focus on recreational values of the District's Trails and Open Space Department. Open Space is included in the title to reflect the unified management structure of the department and the dual consideration of both recreation and conservation in the implementation of this plan. This plan has also been developed alongside a 10 year strategic plan for the district as a whole and will guide the district towards continued success as a world-class recreation destination.

Over  
**2,500**  
**acres**  
of  
**open space**

Over  
**180**  
**miles**  
of  
**trails**

Established  
in **1986**



## BACKGROUND

The Snyderville Basin Special Recreation District (“Basin Recreation” or “the District”) is a prominent governmental organization located in Summit County, Utah. Established in 1986, the district was formed to address the growing recreational and open space needs of the Snyderville Basin area, which borders Park City, Kimball Junction, and the surrounding neighborhoods.

The formation of the Basin Recreation was driven by the increasing demand for recreational facilities and services in response to the area’s population growth and the rise of tourism. Residents and local leaders recognized the importance of preserving the region’s natural beauty while providing recreational amenities to enhance the quality of life for both residents and visitors. As a result, the district was created to manage and develop these amenities.

The District serves a diverse and dynamic community, catering to the needs of residents and tourists alike. Its commitment to providing exceptional recreational opportunities is evident through its extensive network of trails. The district boasts over 180 miles of trails that meander through the breathtaking landscapes of the Wasatch Mountains. These trails cater to a wide range of outdoor activities, including hiking, mountain biking, trail running, and cross-country skiing during the winter months. The trail system offers options for all skill levels, from beginner-friendly paths to challenging backcountry routes, making it a vital resource for outdoor enthusiasts of all ages and abilities.

In addition to its trail systems, Basin Recreation manages and maintains various other recreational amenities. This includes parks, sports fields, swimming facilities, and community programs and events. The district plays a pivotal role in promoting community engagement, health, and wellness through its diverse offerings. Whether it’s enjoying the natural beauty of the trails, participating in organized sports, or attending community events, the District has become an integral part of the region’s identity, enhancing the overall quality of life for its residents and enriching the experiences of visitors.



## HISTORY

### 1986-1997: FOUNDATION AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT

The establishment of the District in 1986 marked the first step towards creating a haven for outdoor enthusiasts in the Snyderville Basin. The District was born out of the vision and dedication of the Summit County Board of County Commissioners, who recognized the need for accessible and well-maintained recreational facilities within the district's boundaries.

The late 1990s brought a significant turning point as District residents, clearly passionate about their community's recreational future, gave their resounding approval for a \$7.5 million General Obligation Bond in September 1995. This financial milestone paved the way for the development of community parks and recreation facilities that would become the cornerstone of outdoor life in the Basin.

In the following years, the commitment to trails and outdoor experiences was further solidified. In 1996, policies supporting the growth of community parks and trails became integral to the Snyderville Basin General Plan. These policies took shape and gained precision in the District's Recreation and Trails Master Plan, a comprehensive blueprint that the County Commission endorsed with enthusiasm in December 1997. The plan not only outlined the strategic vision but also allocated an initial sum of \$2 million to kick-start the implementation of a community-wide trail system, setting the wheels of progress in motion.




## 2000s: TRAIL EXPANSION AND OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION

In November 2001, voters in the District demonstrated their unwavering commitment to expanding recreational opportunities when they authorized an additional \$11 million General Obligation Bond. A significant portion of this funding—\$2 million—was specifically designated for the advancement of trails, highlighting their importance as a cherished community asset.

Furthermore, the District played a pivotal role in preserving the natural beauty of the Snyderville Basin. In November 2004, voters rallied behind a \$10 million General Obligation Bond dedicated to acquiring passive recreational open spaces, including trails and trailheads. This initiative was a response to the call of the Basin Open Space Advisory Committee (BOSAC), whose mission was to advise the County Council on open space matters. This commitment to preserving open spaces was formally enshrined in Summit County Ordinance No. 520, which declared the preservation of open space as the “central premise” of the General Plan.





## 2010s: A VISION FOR HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

The early 2010s marked a pivotal phase in the evolution of the Snyderville Basin's recreation landscape. In 2009, the Snyderville Basin Planning Commission initiated a thorough review and update of the General Plan. The objectives were clear: to promote open space preservation, protect scenic vistas, enhance connectivity, and promote a culture of healthy living rooted in year-round recreational opportunities compatible with the resort-residential character of the community.

The significance of recreational opportunities and trail connections was further underscored in the updated General Plan. Chapter 4 was entirely dedicated to Recreation and Trails, with an overarching goal of fostering a "healthy lifestyle for residents and visitors through existing and new recreational opportunities and trail connections to meet the broad range of recreation needs of the Districts residents and visitors."

This vision found concrete expression across the District in the years that followed. In November 2010, voters enthusiastically approved the issuance of \$20 million General Obligation Bonds, allocating \$8 million explicitly for trail construction and trail-related enhancements. A similar groundswell of support was witnessed on November 4, 2014, when voters once again demonstrated their commitment by approving a \$25 million General Obligation Bonds, providing further resources for trails, recreation facilities, and open space preservation.



## 2: BASIN RECREATION SUBDISTRICTS

### SUBDISTRICT NEED AND OVERVIEW

When the 2019 Trails Master Plan was developed, the Basin Recreation district was largely thought of as a uniform district across a nuanced landscape. This approach requires district wide cost estimation for new trail development or management which may not reflect the unique circumstances between trails in more highly developed or isolated parts of the district.

Subdistricts are a vital tool for managing The District's vast expanse of 2,500 acres, 180 miles of trails, and various facilities. These subdistricts enable tailored management decisions based on geography, environment, and land use, serving as an effective communication tool between The District, the community, elected officials, and user groups. Developed alongside a 5-year trails and open space plan, the 10-year Strategic Planning Process recognized the need to divide Basin Recreation's large service area into five subdistricts. This subdivision enhances planning and financial decision-making by taking into account the unique characteristics of each geographical area.

These subdistricts are detailed on the following pages. They include:

Central Corridor & Neighborhood Subdistrict,

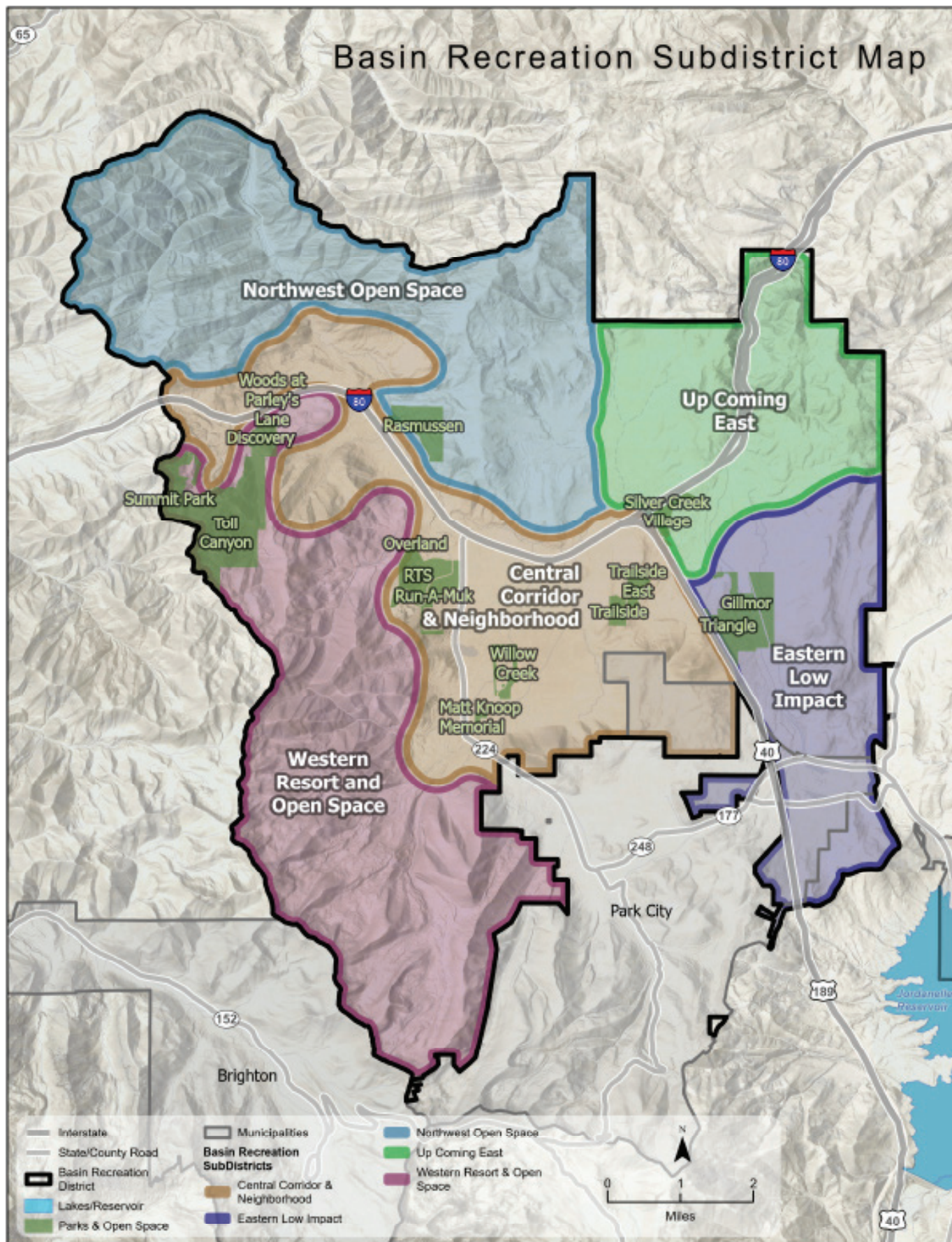
Western Resort and Open Space Subdistrict,

Northwest Open Space Subdistrict,

Upcoming East Subdistrict,

and the Eastern Low-Impact Subdistrict.







## CENTRAL CORRIDOR & NEIGHBORHOOD SUBDISTRICT

The Central Corridor & Neighborhood subdistrict contains relatively developed neighborhood, commercial and transportation corridor areas. This subdistrict has some valued open spaces and hosts a variety of recreational offerings. It contains much of the residential development within The District and key regional transportation corridors. In addition to several District-owned natural space assets, this subdistrict encompasses Swaner Nature preserve and EcoCenter, a 1,200-acre preserve at the heart of Snyderville Basin. Hi Ute Ranch also sits within the boundary of this sub-district as a valued cultural and open space landmark.

**STRENGTHS:** A diversity of vibrant neighborhood and commercial atmosphere; Existing bicycle and pedestrian connection routes between districts; A high-concentration of diverse recreational assets and opportunities; High visitation to existing facilities.

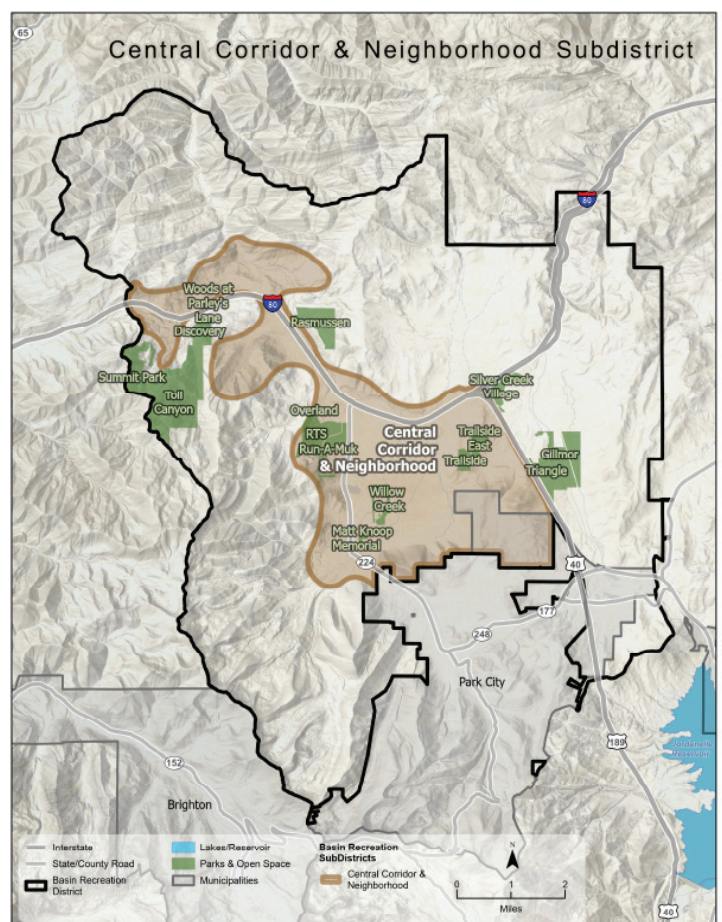
**CHALLENGES:** The I-80 corridors inhibits trail connectivity from north to south; connectivity is limited between the Kimball Junction area and the Silver Creek and Highland estates neighborhoods; Additional development is a concern in undeveloped and open space areas.

**OPPORTUNITIES:** Future plans should include an increased focus on safe bicycle and pedestrian connections; Given the additional proposed large residential / mixed use development and increased traffic volumes at Kimball Junction -near Outlets / Threemile Canyon- maintaining protected public access and/or designated or separated bike/ped corridors providing connection between open areas/trailheads is key.

### TRAIL NETWORKS SERVICED:

#### 100 Miles of Trail network

Millennium Trail, PRI, RTS, and the East 224 Trail, Gorgoza, Amenti, Trailside, Spring Creek.



## WESTERN RESORT AND OPEN SPACE SUBDISTRICT

The Western Resort and Open Space subdistrict is comprised of large open space areas with several large landowners including Vail Resorts and the Utah Olympic Legacy Foundation. The subdistrict stretches from Iron Mountain to Summit Park and hosts several popular trails which move through privately owned lands and neighborhood areas.

**STRENGTHS:** Popular trail and open space assets which provide access points into several different neighborhoods

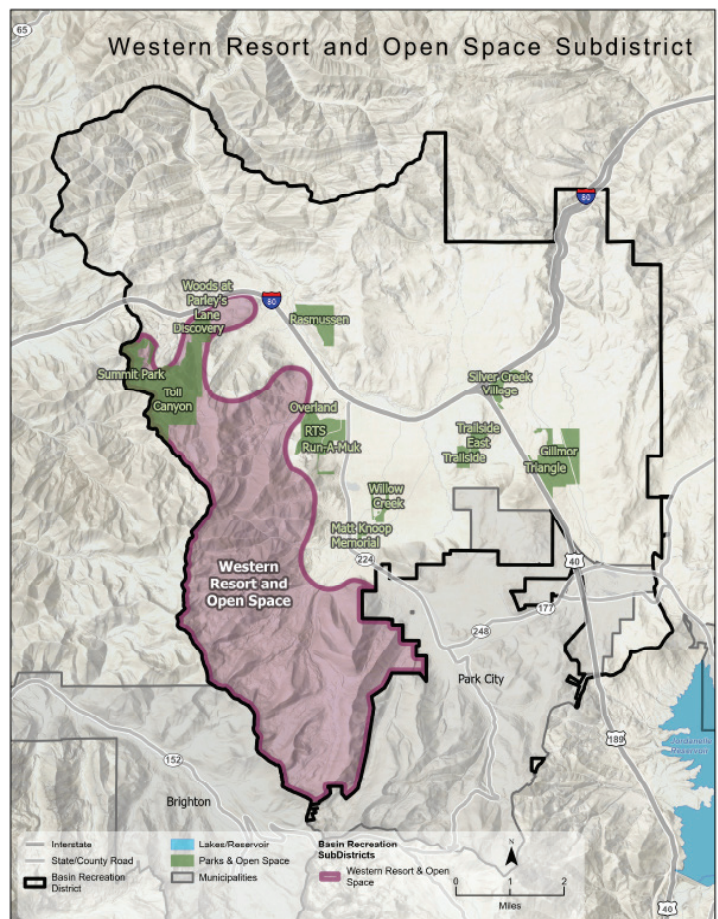
**CHALLENGES:** Large open space areas require extensive open space management; reliance on resort stakeholders for access; parking at popular trailheads is limited, agreements with landowners require intensive management to preserve access.

**OPPORTUNITIES:** Explore partnership opportunities to share resources with resort stakeholders; establish a standard open space management program to increase capacity within this area, define open space management agreements with landowners

### EXISTING TRAIL NETWORKS:

#### 78 Miles of Trail Network

Ambush Trail, Colin's Trail, Mid Mountain trail, Pinecone Ridge, Rob's Trail, UOP, Road to WOS/Short Stack, Over Easy





## NORTHWEST OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

This subdistrict is characterized by open space bordering existing neighborhoods. This area has several popular trail systems including the Flying Dog, 24-7, and Glenwild trails and the Rasmussen Open Space. The East Canyon Creek Watershed also runs through this area, providing valuable open space assets, habitat and ecological services.

**STRENGTHS:** Valued visual and ecological open space; extensive trail system which connects east-west along the north-end of the district, much of which is south facing and provides early season outdoor recreation opportunities

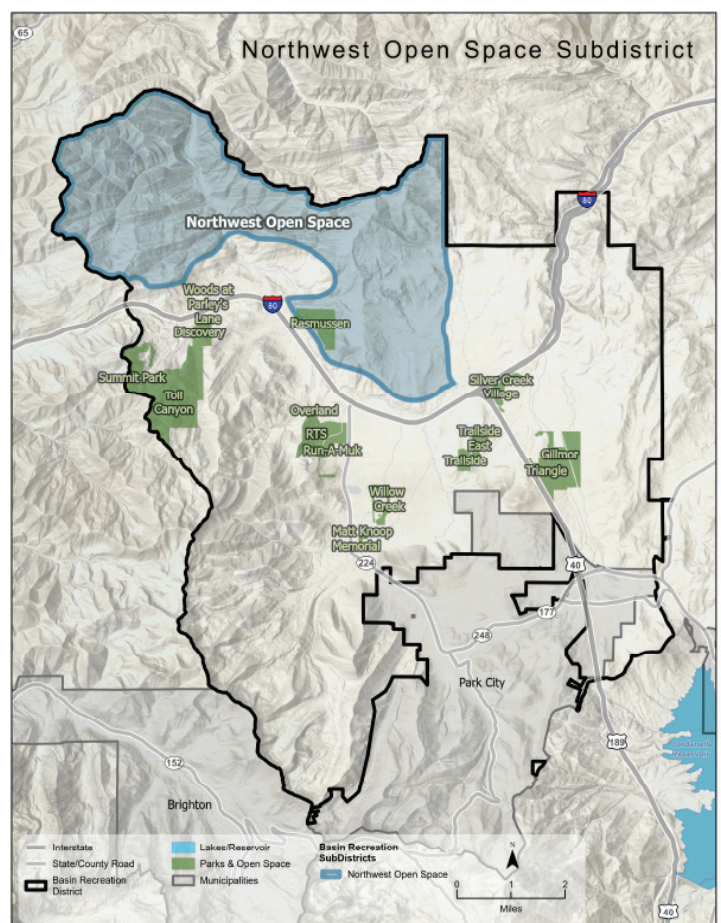
**CHALLENGES:** Limited formal connections into the Emerging East subdistrict; large open space areas require extensive management resources

**OPPORTUNITIES:** Formalize connections between the East Canyon subdistrict and the Emerging East; establish a standard open space management program to increase capacity within this area

### TRAIL NETWORKS SERVICED:

39 Miles of Trail

Flying Dog Trail Network, Glenwild,  
Bob's Basin, 24-7



## UPCOMING EAST DISTRICT

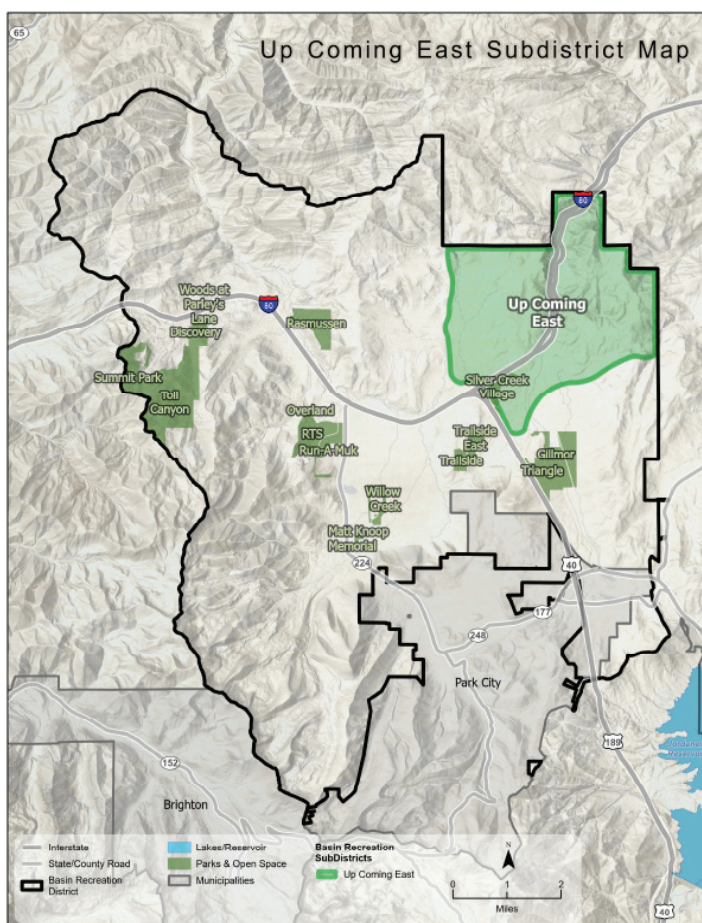
This is a rapidly growing subdistrict. This subdistrict has historically assumed a rural character and remains one of the few areas within the district with a vibrant equestrian community. This subarea has few established connections. With the exception of the recently acquired Silver Creek Village parcel this area has no existing District facilities. Rapidly increasing residential growth in the Silver Creek area has emphasized the need for additional recreational opportunities to keep pace with district-wide growth.

**STRENGTHS:** Contains most of the remaining undeveloped land in the District creating opportunity for new facilities and open space preservation. Recreation development would be easily accessible for users across the District by vehicle and public transit

**CHALLENGES:** Very limited connectivity to other neighborhoods and subdistricts; no existing recreation facilities; The persistent residential and commercial development in the area suggests a dynamic environment that requires prompt and decisive action to meet the needs of residents.

**OPPORTUNITIES:** Additional indoor and outdoor facilities to deliver essential community facility need in subdistrict and enhance overall district facility equity, enhanced connectivity between neighborhoods; open space preservation of areas with a historical public use pattern and central neighborhood hubs

**TRAIL NETWORKS SERVICED:**  
Current trail networks limited, Silver Creek Site Recently Acquired.





## EASTERN LOW IMPACT

This area has experienced limited growth due to several complex factors including several sensitive areas, a wide distribution of contaminated soils, and steep hillside slopes. However, this area will likely grow in the next ten years with uses compatible with its unique characteristics. Within this area, the District owns several undeveloped parcels adjacent to US-40.

**STRENGTHS:** Limited existing development; several undeveloped District-owned parcels

**CHALLENGES:** Contaminated soils, wetland areas and steep hillside slopes present developmental barriers in this area; Future EPA remediation work will be required limiting the number of long-term facilities in the near term

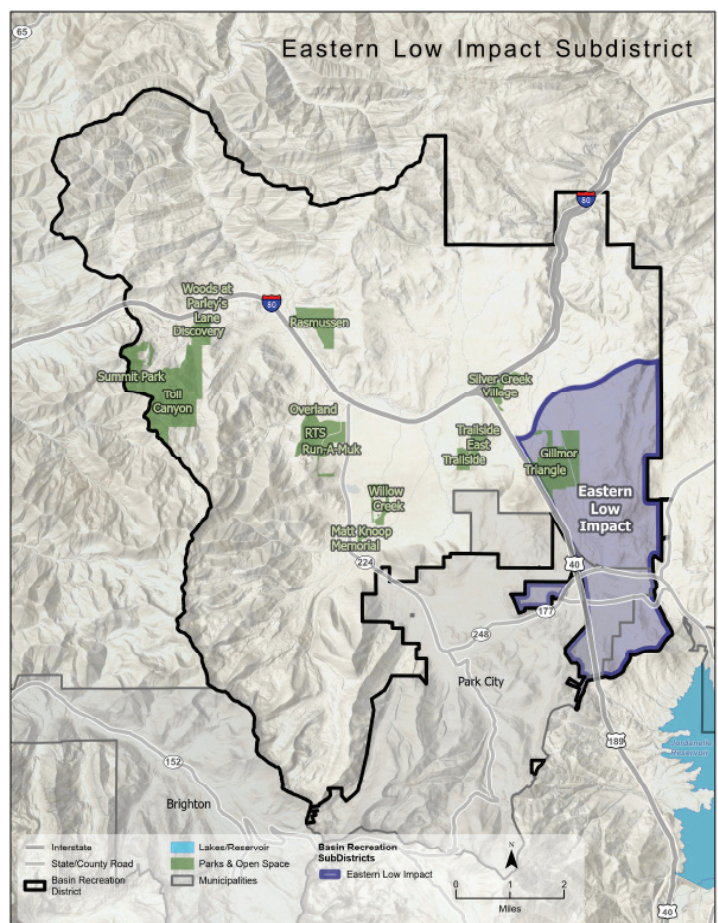
**OPPORTUNITIES:** “Temporary” installations (boardwalk trails, interpretative information); Additional fields or courts to meet critical outdoor facility need; Limited existing residential development may provide opportunity for lighted facilities

### EXISTING BASIN RECREATION

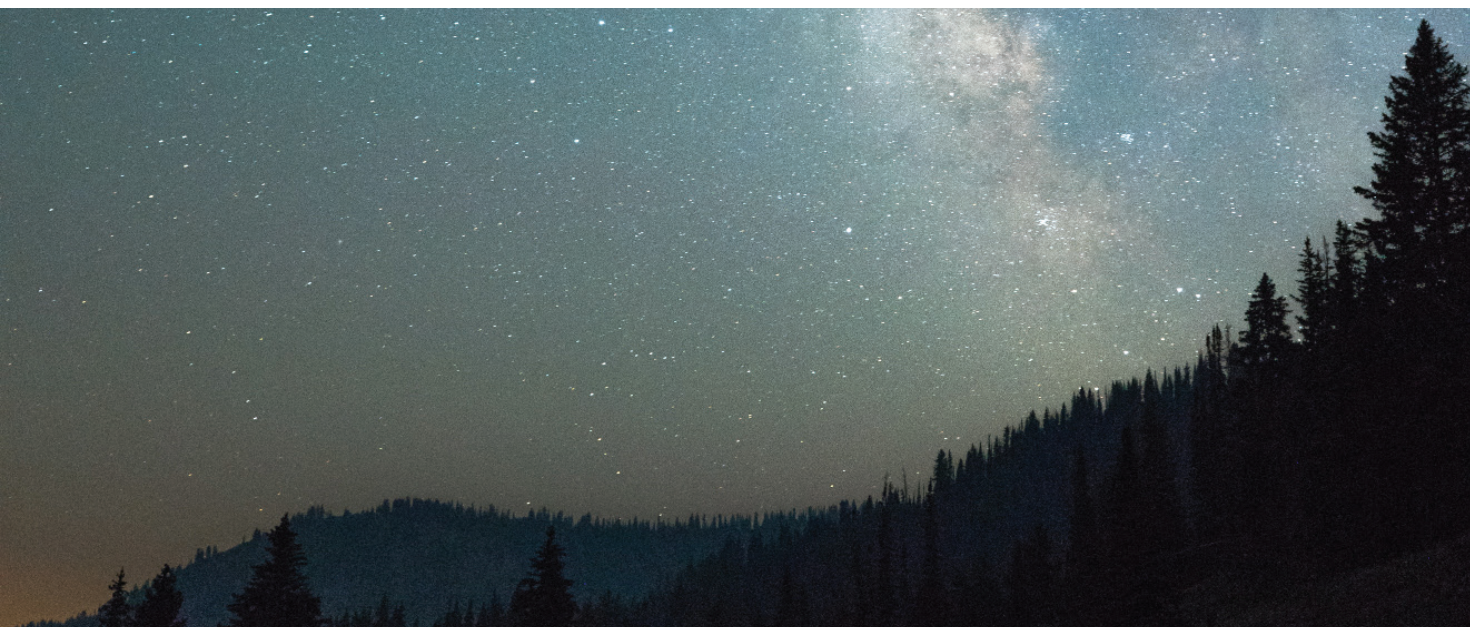
**FACILITIES:** Williams, Triangle, Gillmore

### TRAIL NETWORKS SERVICED:

17 Miles of Trail







## 3: TRAILS AND OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

The [2019 Snyderville Basin Special Recreation District Trails Master Plan](#) has been in place for nearly five years. This assessment provides a third-party review of progress towards the original trails plan objectives.

This assessment provides critical insights into the current status of the trails and open space system, identifying areas of significant success as well as specific challenges. This assessment's recommendations should guide the District's continued efforts toward achieving the goals and objectives set forth in the original 2019 Trails Plan, for the benefit of the community and all Snyderville Basin trail users.

### METHODOLOGY

During the Fall of 2022, Kay-Linn Enterprises staff spent a week on the ground assessing the condition of the trails and open space system managed by The District. Trails and Open Space were toured on foot and bicycle with District staff. These tours and numerous meetings with District staff provided context and an opportunity to discuss seasonal work flow, challenges, and ideas on future trail network and facility improvements.

The assessment is qualitative in nature, reflecting on goals and objectives developed for the existing Trails Master Plan.

## OBJECTIVES ASSESSMENT

This chapter of the document is organized based on the original objectives and sub-objectives provided in the 2019 Trails Master Plan. Each objective and sub-objective is rated using a three tier rating system. This page provides an overview of the objectives and their ratings. Objectives and sub-objective titles have been edited from original trails plan language for brevity and clarity. The colored bar next to each objective reflects its assessment - red does not meet objective, orange meets objective, and green exceeds objective.



### 1. PROVIDE HIGH-QUALITY TRAIL EXPERIENCES

- ☐ ☐ ☒ A. Develop trails in accordance with industry best practices
- ☐ ☒ ☐ B. Employ trail construction and management strategies to optimize the trail experience
- ☐ ☒ ☐ C. Develop a comprehensive system of supporting infrastructure
- ☐ ☐ ☒ D. Seek opportunities to sustainably develop trails to provide a varied, unique, and quality trail experience



### 2. DEVELOP A CONNECTED NETWORK OF TRAILS

- ☐ ☒ ☐ A. Develop a connected network of transportation trails
- ☐ ☒ ☐ B. Develop partnerships to promote regional connectivity
- ☐ ☒ ☐ C. Pursue strategic connections across major barriers
- ☐ ☒ ☐ D. Provide trail options to support a full range of trip lengths
- ☐ ☒ ☐ E. Develop a comprehensive access strategy
- ☐ ☐ ☒ F. Place trail access points close to neighborhood hubs



### 3. PROVIDE AND SUPPORT A DIVERSITY OF TRAIL EXPERIENCES

- ☐ ☒ ☐ A. Provide for a diverse set of non-motorized trail use types
- ☐ ☒ ☐ B. Provide trail experiences accessible and enjoyable to all ages and abilities
- ☐ ☒ ☐ C. Consider a variety of user objectives in the planning, design and construction of new trails
- ☐ ☐ ☒ D. Emphasize the design of stacked loop systems where possible
- ☐ ☒ ☐ E. Provide accessible trails for those with adaptive needs



## OBJECTIVE ASSESSMENTS EXPLAINED

Does Not Meet Objective



Trails and open space areas exhibit deficiencies such as inadequate maintenance, safety concerns, or failure to align with industry best practices.

Meets Objective



In alignment with the goals and objectives established in the Trail Master Plan. Facilities are well-maintained, safe, and meet industry best practices.

Exceeds Objective



Facilities surpass defined objectives. These areas are exemplary, demonstrating outstanding quality, maintenance, and exceed industry standards.

**TRAILS INITIATIVE MARKER: GREEN HIGHLIGHT INDICATES OBJECTIVES RELATED TO PROPOSED "TRAILS INITIATIVE" FOR THE DISTRICT IN THE NEXT 5 YEARS.**



### 4. DEVELOP A SUSTAINABLE AND ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE TRAIL SYSTEM



A. Secure sufficient and dependable annual maintenance funding



B. Plan, design, construct and manage trails in accordance with industry best practices



C. Monitor and evaluate future needs of the trail system



### 5. DEVELOP AN ALL SEASON TRAIL NETWORK



A. Provide year-round access to trail network by grooming and plowing during winter months



B. Provide trails to accommodate nordic, cross country, fat biking, and snowshoeing uses



C. Consider four season use when evaluating trail proposals



### 6. PROVIDE PROGRAMS TO BUILD A COMMUNITY CULTURE OF TRAIL USE



A. Develop partnerships to foster culture that values trail user experience and safety



B. Promote trail user etiquette



## 1. PROVIDE HIGH-QUALITY TRAIL EXPERIENCES

OBJECTIVE 1 A: DEVELOP TRAILS IN ACCORDANCE WITH INDUSTRY BEST PRACTICES AND AS DEFINED IN THE DISTRICT TRAIL DESIGN STANDARDS.



EXCEEDING OBJECTIVE

Trails that have been developed since the adoption of the Trails Master Plan meet both industry best practices and the District Trail Design Standards. The District is a national leader in this regard, both in the quality of trails developed and in its long history of working with private entities to assure quality trail development for public use and Basin Recreation management.



### 5-YEAR FOCUS

Increase focus on the maintenance of existing trails and begin planning for the incremental reconstruction of hard surface trails. Natural surface / general trail tread maintenance of 20% of the system mileage each year could be an added benchmark under this objective to place the system on a 5-year maintenance cycle. Hard surface trails generally have a 15-year (asphalt) to 20-year (concrete) lifespan and planning for reconstruction of these trails in stages, with some segments reconstructed before it is 100% necessary can reduce maintenance costs and distribute capital costs over time.



### KEY ACTIONS

**Establish budget for annual trail resurfacing / repaving.** This could be separate line items for paved / unpaved.

**Monitor Asphalt and Concrete surfaced trails for wear indicators.** Minor repairs to asphalt pathways are far more cost efficient than complete reconstruction, and identifying and addressing issues before they are severe will be a significant cost savings to the district.



## 1. PROVIDE HIGH-QUALITY TRAIL EXPERIENCES

### OBJECTIVE 1B: CONSIDER AND EMPLOY VARIOUS TRAIL CONSTRUCTION AND MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES TO OPTIMIZE THE TRAIL EXPERIENCE.

In situations where specific trail users affect the enjoyment or safety of other trail users, consider employing management strategies to mitigate conflicts.

- Consider shared-use and single-use trails, directional trails, accessible trails.
- Refer to the District Trail Design Standards for considerations related to shared-use trails and single-use trails.
- Keep up with emerging trail development trends.



#### MEETING OBJECTIVE

Basin Recreation has successfully managed issues such as use conflicts, crowding, and perceptions of safety on some trails through use-management strategies and directional trails. These management actions have increased the quality of the mountain biking experience throughout the trail system. The actions have not appreciably improved the pedestrian experience, except for reducing the number of interactions with mountain bikers on some trails.

Conflict mitigating signage installed has met with lesser success, as the signs are generally small, stand-alone in nature (not part of kiosk signage), and are not readily identifiable as part of a larger etiquette program. The District has the opportunity to be a national leader in providing accessible mountain bike (a-mtb) trails as well as improving experiences for other mobility challenged users throughout the trail system.



#### 5-YEAR FOCUS

5-Year Focus: During the renewed trail maintenance process and beginning at trailheads, Basin Recreation can consider the appropriateness of trail tread alterations that will make the trail a-mtb accessible or provide a more stable surface and/or reduced grade to increase access. Opportunities can also be assessed near trailheads for shorter, steeper hiking-only trail development that would provide quicker access to higher elevations than are typical in the Basin Recreation system. Similarly, where high quality vistas, wildlife viewing opportunities, or passive recreation areas exist, the District could consider short hiking-only spur trails that would reduce trail congestion and provide an improved pedestrian experience.



## 1. PROVIDE HIGH-QUALITY TRAIL EXPERIENCES

### OBJECTIVE 1C: DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF SUPPORTING INFRASTRUCTURE THAT COMPLIMENTS THE TRAILS THEMSELVES.

- Develop trailhead facilities which may include restrooms, water fountains, bicycle racks, bicycle repair stands, parking areas.
- Develop an attractive and comprehensive trail wayfinding system that lets users confidently navigate the trail system.
- Develop special use areas that are complimentary to the trail system such as bicycle pump tracks, mountain bike parks, and freeride mountain bike trails.



#### MEETING OBJECTIVE

District trailheads are high quality, but parking availability is a challenge. Quality wayfinding and navigation signage is present throughout the system. Since initial kiosk placement, a number of additional signs have been added at most locations that now trend toward over-signage. This increases the potential for visitors to miss important information or ignore it altogether. High quality mountain bike-specific facilities have been developed, but older facilities such as Trailside Bike Park and the pump track at Matt Knoop Park require more maintenance than they currently receive.



#### 5-YEAR FOCUS

The District should consider the potential for trailhead parking expansion where possible, as recently proposed at the Run-A-Muk trailhead. While this is not possible in many locations, there may be opportunities to create “satellite” parking areas near trailheads (i.e. existing commercial lots, park and rides, etc.) to handle overflow during high trail use periods when use at adjacent facilities may be lower. Weekend versus weekday use timing should be assessed, and satellite parking areas should be located relative to proximity of other trailheads and by time of use.

A signage overhaul should be considered in the near future, as changes are made regarding use management, accessibility, and trail networks. This provides an opportunity to augment wayfinding and navigation with messaging regarding etiquette, interpretation, and stewardship.

Pump tracks within the District system do not meet modern standards. Asphalt surfacing on these amenities would reduce maintenance costs while increasing community accessibility by opening them up to scooters, skateboards and others.



## 1. PROVIDE HIGH-QUALITY TRAIL EXPERIENCES

OBJECTIVE 1D: SEEK OPPORTUNITIES TO SUSTAINABLY AND RESPONSIBLY DEVELOP TRAILS IN AREAS THAT PROVIDE A VARIED, UNIQUE, AND QUALITY TRAIL EXPERIENCE.

Consider such factors as grades, steep slopes, viewsheds, vegetation, wetlands, and riparian corridors.



EXCEEDING OBJECTIVE

As articulated in objective 1a above, trails developed post-adoption of the trail master plan adhere to industry best practices and District trail design standards, positioning The District as a national front runner in providing high-quality and sustainably built trails for public use.



### 5-YEAR FOCUS

Interpretation of the quality, unique character, and management needs/regimes throughout Basin Recreation trail system could be improved. Larger signs at trailheads or at pull-outs along paved trails and with smaller QR codes/downloadable material along natural surface trail routes could be developed in coming years to increase public and visitor awareness of trail etiquette and environmental stewardship.



## 2. DEVELOP A CONNECTED NETWORK OF TRAILS

OBJECTIVE 2A: DEVELOP A CONNECTED NETWORK OF TRANSPORTATION TRAILS THAT LINK RESIDENTS AND VISITORS TO POPULAR COMMUNITY DESTINATIONS SUCH AS SCHOOLS, PARKS, COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS, CIVIC USES, AND NEIGHBORHOODS.



### MEETING OBJECTIVE

Given the challenges presented in moving from east to west through the I-80 corridor, solutions to which are not likely feasible over the next five years, the transportation trail network throughout Basin Recreation is quite robust and well-connected.



### 5-YEAR FOCUS

Any additions to the transportation trail system, especially in growing east side of the District and the nearby communities are a considerable challenge in terms of connectivity and ongoing management. Basin Recreation needs to reexamine its agreements relative to public transportation, as facilities that were developed initially for recreation and previously could be managed with a lower level of service are now depended upon for 365-day/year usage.

Where new development is being planned, Basin Recreation needs to be part of the process that assures broader non-vehicle transportation is well integrated, especially where connectivity can be provided to natural surface trail systems, parks, and recreation facilities.



## 2. DEVELOP A CONNECTED NETWORK OF TRAILS

OBJECTIVE 2B: PARTNER WITH LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS, AGENCIES, AND JURISDICTIONS TO PROMOTE REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY VIA THE COMMUNITY-WIDE TRAIL SYSTEM TO DESTINATIONS BEYOND THE DISTRICT.



### MEETING OBJECTIVE

This is more a long-term planning process, and the District regularly communicates with transportation and planning entities throughout the region.



### 5-YEAR FOCUS

Continue to play the current role of supporting regional connectivity in trail and transportation planning.

OBJECTIVE 2C: PURSUE STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS ACROSS MAJOR BARRIERS SUCH AS HIGHWAYS THAT IMPROVE ACCESS TO THE COMMUNITY-WIDE TRAIL SYSTEM, PROVIDE MORE DIRECT CONNECTIONS, OR IMPROVE TRAIL USER SAFETY.



### MEETING OBJECTIVE

Similar to 2B, this is a long-term planning process. While the current connections across Interstate 80 at the Field House are not ideal, improvements are being considered. Improvements made on the Jeremy Ranch Elementary School Underpass, and planned access at Silver Summit to the future transportation center offer long-term benefits.



### 5-YEAR FOCUS

Coordinate with UDOT, Summit County, and others to implement grade separated crossings across major highway corridors as identified in the 2019 Summit County Active Transportation Plan.





## 2. DEVELOP A CONNECTED NETWORK OF TRAILS

OBJECTIVE 2D: SEEK TO PROVIDE A CONNECTED SYSTEM OF RECREATIONAL TRAILS AND LOOP OPTIONS THAT SUPPORT A VARIETY OF DURATIONS FROM THE “30-MINUTE” AFTER WORK EXPERIENCES TO ALL-DAY EPICS.



MEETING OBJECTIVE

With such a robust trail system, there is no doubt that a variety of different options exist for recreation experiences of differing durations. That being said, the District’s trail offerings tend toward the medium and long distance mountain bike and trail running options when compared to other major trail systems.



5-YEAR FOCUS

During maintenance and accessibility assessments at the major trailheads, Basin Recreation should also consider the development of shorter, steeper, hiking-only trails, as well as more accessible, shorter loops to accommodate a wider range of trail user abilities and those seeking recreation in a limited time frame.







## 2. DEVELOP A CONNECTED NETWORK OF TRAILS

OBJECTIVE 2E: DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE ACCESS STRATEGY FOR THE COMMUNITY-WIDE TRAIL SYSTEM THAT SUPPORTS A VARIETY OF MODES OF TRANSPORTATION.



MEETING OBJECTIVE

This objective has been met in the more highly developed areas within the Basin Recreation system.



### 5-YEAR FOCUS

Integrating the Silver Creek parcel, transit center, rail trail, Promontory Trailhead, and new development east of US 40 into the broader community-wide trail system with hard and soft surface trails is the highest priority area needing a comprehensive access strategy.

OBJECTIVE 2F: WHERE POSSIBLE, PLACE TRAIL ACCESS POINTS CLOSE TO NEIGHBORHOOD HUBS TO AVOID THE NEED TO DRIVE TO ACCESS TRAIL NETWORKS SUPPORTING THE “GARAGE TO TRAIL” CONCEPT.



EXCEEDING OBJECTIVE

There are very few communities that have even comparable “Garage to Trail” access to the District-served area. While some routes to schools are more narrow than ideal, the limited road crossings and off-street locations are much safer than if the routes were widened road shoulders.



### 5-YEAR FOCUS

Just as with Objective 2E, the same level of service and access east of US 40 will be vital in providing equitable access throughout the Basin Recreation-managed system.









### 3. PROVIDE AND SUPPORT A DIVERSITY OF TRAIL EXPERIENCES

#### OBJECTIVE 3A: RECOGNIZE AND PROVIDE FOR DIVERSE USES...

...including but not limited to running, cycling, hiking, backpacking, mountain biking, horseback riding, skateboarding, skating, cross-country or Nordic skiing, winter bicycling, adaptive bicycling, snowshoeing, and other non-motorized recreation and transportation.



MEETING OBJECTIVE

The diversity and amount of trails within the District provides a variety of recreation options to nearly all users. However, the ongoing management of those offerings, especially related to maintenance of natural surface trails and winter grooming, is starting to suffer. Drainage maintenance needs are present on many natural surface trails. Winter grooming schedules are challenging to maintain on paved transportation trails. Equestrian options in the system are generally hard to provide, given horse trailer space requirements and development trends that are reducing the number and acreage of former agricultural/ranch lands.



#### 5-YEAR FOCUS

Starting at trailheads, assess the potential for greater accessibility, and continue that assessment further into the system. This can result in large accessibility gains for visitors of all abilities.

Achieving a balance between access and equity is a challenge. Decisions about where e-bikes are allowed or restricted can impact recreational opportunities for different user groups. Striving for inclusion while preserving the environment and ensuring user safety requires thoughtful consideration.

Skateboarding, skating, blading, and scooter options would be improved through the asphalt surfacing of pump tracks and potentially integrating additional, above-ground plaza-style amenities.



### 3. PROVIDE AND SUPPORT A DIVERSITY OF TRAIL EXPERIENCES

OBJECTIVE 3B: PROVIDE TRAIL EXPERIENCES THAT ARE ACCESSIBLE AND ENJOYABLE BY INDIVIDUALS OF ALL AGES AND ABILITIES.

Specific trails may only accommodate a specific user or experience; however, the overall trail system should provide opportunities for a variety of users and abilities.



#### MEETING OBJECTIVE

The additions of mountain bike-optimized trails in Bob's Basin, Discovery, and RTS have diversified the user experience for varied levels of mountain biker ability while reducing the potential use conflicts of startling and congestion in other areas.



#### 5-YEAR FOCUS

The mountain bike-optimized trails as well as at Trailside Bike Park need a specific risk management plan that includes regular assessment of features/signs/sight lines/tread condition, incident response plan, and documentation. This is best initiated at the end of a use season to prepare for the following use season's initial maintenance.

Basin Recreation recognizes the popularity and potential benefits of e-bikes, both for increasing accessibility, and encouraging active transportation. Over the next five years, the District should study the impact of allowing ebikes on system trails, and/or consider pilot programs on a small scale to evaluate actual impacts.



### 3. PROVIDE AND SUPPORT A DIVERSITY OF TRAIL EXPERIENCES

OBJECTIVE 3C: BEYOND THE TYPES OF TRAIL USES ACCOMMODATED, CONSIDER A VARIETY OF USER OBJECTIVES IN THE PLANNING, DESIGN, AND CONSTRUCTION OF NEW TRAILS.



MEETING OBJECTIVE

While some of the mountain bike user desires have been met through the creation of use-specific trails, the objectives of some pedestrian users have not yet received the same attention. Specifically, there is a need to provide more direct access to vistas and other high value destinations.



5-YEAR FOCUS

During maintenance and accessibility assessments on individual sub-systems, consider the potential for pedestrian-only routes that allow users to short cut some of the long, gradual climbs. While these trails would be steeper and more oriented to the fall line than is portrayed in the Trail Design Standards, the level of skill within the District and/or contracted trailbuilders is sufficient to develop these trails to shed water.







### 3. PROVIDE AND SUPPORT A DIVERSITY OF TRAIL EXPERIENCES

OBJECTIVE 3D: FOR NATURAL SURFACE TRAILS, STACKED LOOP TRAIL SYSTEMS ARE PREFERRED TO PROVIDE A VARIETY OF LOOP OPTIONS AND INCREASING LEVELS OF DIFFICULTY FARTHER AWAY FROM ACCESS POINTS.



EXCEEDING OBJECTIVE

Basin Recreation is exemplary in planning trail systems with a variety of options.



#### 5-YEAR FOCUS

Through a renewed focus on maintenance, the differentiation in difficulty levels can be augmented by adding a “maintained to” specification in project planning. Maintenance activities that aim to provide wide, smooth trails with long sight lines near access points can be differentiated from more challenging trails that may be maintained to a rougher standard.





### 3. PROVIDE AND SUPPORT A DIVERSITY OF TRAIL EXPERIENCES

OBJECTIVE 3E: RECOGNIZE AND PROVIDE FOR A VARIETY OF TRAILS ACCESSIBLE TO THOSE WITH ADAPTIVE MEANS OF ACCESS AND NEEDS.



#### MEETING OBJECTIVE

The abundance of aggregate surfaced trail opportunities throughout Basin Recreation the system allows trail users with mobility challenges to get outside and have a very positive trail experience. However, many of these opportunities are in topographically flat areas that may provide access to grasslands or lowlands but don't provide these trail users with higher elevation vistas of the area.

Recent advances in accessible mountain (a-mtb) technology such as decreased width and electric assist propulsion has potentially opened up opportunities for outings of greater distance, elevation gain, and challenge. Many trails in the District system have the potential to provide improved a-mtb access, but have impediments of width, turning radii, or outslope. When designing trails for universal access, special consideration should also extend to trailheads. This includes considering accessible parking, kiosk signage legibility, water/restroom facility access, extra spatial requirements to accommodate 'landings' for transition in/on/out/off of vehicles or adaptive gear, and accessible site furnishings at vistas.



#### 5-YEAR FOCUS

Working with regional partners, and concurrent with the ongoing maintenance focus, determine where the greatest mobility challenges and a-mtb access gains could be made with minimal trail alterations.



#### 4. DEVELOP A SUSTAINABLE TRAIL SYSTEM IN AN ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE WAY

OBJECTIVE 4A: SECURE AND BUDGET SUFFICIENT AND DEPENDABLE ANNUAL MAINTENANCE FUNDING FOR THE COMMUNITY-WIDE TRAIL SYSTEM, SEEKING OUT PARTNERSHIPS WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS TO SHARE AND LEVERAGE TRAIL MAINTENANCE RESOURCES.



NOT MEETING OBJECTIVE

As the District-managed facilities have increased over time, especially related to hard surface trails, invasive plants, snow, and dog waste management, staff have been encumbered by these relatively low-skill activities. As a result, ongoing annual natural surface trail maintenance and winter grooming cannot be prioritized. These high-skill management activities are crucial to the quality of trail experiences provided by the District and current staff have the requisite skills to provide a high quality product. Staff expansion, filling in the base maintenance level, is a potential option to allow the current technical level staff to prioritize more demanding maintenance, but hiring, housing, and retention issues are likely to propose long-term challenges in Summit County. Without changing the maintenance management equation, staff retention may become an issue as those technically skilled workers have geographic and market flexibility to take skills honed at the District to different employers.

Basin Recreation does not have robust partnerships in trail maintenance with respect to some other major municipal trail providers. This is likely a result of historically having the in-house staff resources needed along with an institutional focus on recreation facility and programming that doesn't rely on volunteer assistance. As trail miles and geographic scope have increased, in-house staff resources now do not have the capacity to meet maintenance needs. Further, developing partnerships requires significant time and effort in outreach, organization, training, and follow-up. These skill sets are different from those typically required for trails staff, and without the available time to complete necessary maintenance, staff would be hard-pressed to develop a meaningful volunteer stewardship program.

One strong counterpoint to this situation is the volunteer dog waste removal events at Run-A-Muck. With hundreds of individuals participating each year, this is a very positive sign that area residents are willing and able to help manage the District's trails and conservation resources. While this activity does not require volunteer training or much oversight, this event's established avenues for outreach, coordination, and implementation should be modeled in the development of new partnership programs.



Outside of volunteer partnerships, Basin Recreation is working with external contractors for specialized services, including invasive weed management, wildfire mitigation, and hard surface trail construction. These specialized services are relatively unique in terms of equipment and training and, as such, do not make financial or operational sense to be attempted in-house.



## 5-YEAR FOCUS

The shortage of staff capacity for trail maintenance, especially for trail corridor vegetation/weed management, dog waste management, and snow removal, are the biggest impediments to a sustainable trail management plan. Mitigating these challenges through a combination of stewardship partnership programs, external contractors, and internal project management training should be the District's focus over the next five years.

A stewardship partnership program is, at its core, a communications and marketing endeavor. Building the "database" of volunteers on multiple fronts, for varied projects, and at multiple times is the key that unlocks the doors to assistance. This is a specific skill set that is not likely an everyday part of the trails and open space staff, but a District-wide position. This position should understand schedules of all District activities, have time available for outreach and organization, and the ability to "tell the story" regarding the public role in caring for trails and open space.

External contractors, while often directly more expensive than in-house staff, are motivated by efficiency and volume. Especially for higher level operations such as wildfire mitigation, or lower skill level operations such as trash removal or trail corridor brushing/mowing, servicing these needs through external sources would allow trails and open space staff to focus more on the management of resources.

Finally, these volunteer and contractual relationships need to be effectively managed. Basin Recreation staff are adept at "doing" their jobs, but do not necessarily have the abilities to train volunteers and oversee contractors, or manage contracts. Reducing some of the low level maintenance burden on staff, combined with contractor management training would increase the professional staff capacity, improve job satisfaction, lengthen retention, and improve overall trails and open space quality in the District.



#### 4. DEVELOP A SUSTAINABLE TRAIL SYSTEM IN AN ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE WAY

OBJECTIVE 4B: PLAN, DESIGN, CONSTRUCT AND MANAGE TRAILS IN ACCORDANCE WITH INDUSTRY BEST PRACTICES.



MEETING OBJECTIVE

District Trail Design Standards for the planning, design, and construction of trails are being met and adhere with industry best practices. While these protocols have led to high quality trails, the annual maintenance needs have not been met for some years resulting in a maintenance backlog of work. Basic drainage maintenance is the largest need throughout the trail system on natural surface trails, aggregate addition is needed on some trails. Higher maintenance is generally afforded to highly visible transportation trail surfaces (replacement, patching, and crack filling), and immediate edge treatments.



#### 5-YEAR FOCUS

Adding team member capacity (time and skills), along with a concerted refocus on maintenance, will bring the quality standard up throughout the system.



#### 4. DEVELOP A SUSTAINABLE TRAIL SYSTEM IN AN ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE WAY

##### OBJECTIVE 4C: MONITOR AND EVALUATE FUTURE NEEDS OF THE TRAIL SYSTEM.



##### MEETING OBJECTIVE

Trailhead and trail counter data has been collected throughout the system to help better understand relative use pressures and balance that against trailhead capacity and trail congestion. However, without staff time and capacity for analysis, the collected data is used primarily to confirm qualitative assumptions such as the need for more parking at the Run-A-Muck Trailhead, rather than analysis. An example of a potential analysis is whether the new Discovery Trailhead and mountain bike-optimized downhill-only trails are reducing congestion at Bob's Basin/Flying Dog.



##### 5-YEAR FOCUS

In the Upcoming Eastern subdistrict the District is positioned to utilize existing knowledge and data from established operations to proactively plan for the future. Access across existing transportation routes are limited. As such, the geographic area needs to be examined as if there is no access to already-developed recreation resources in the west to assure that future open space and recreation access, functions and values are built to the existing standards of Basin Recreation.

The Upcoming Eastern district has significant planned developments. These include residential and commercial development, the Silver Creek site, new Open Space properties, the transit center, and the longer distance linear rail trail. Among all of these considerations, the District has a responsibility to plan, develop, and maintain a similar level of access, service, quality, and management as enjoyed elsewhere in the District.

The needed level of outreach, coordination, project planning, and implementation for all of these projects is not possible with the current District trails and open space staff structure. Staff expansion in planning and operations is needed for anticipated planning, funding, and permitting operations over the next 5 years. Concurrently, building the professional skill sets of staff below the planning and operations level will prepare the department for project implementation, from new trail and trailhead development to noxious weed mitigation. Many projects should be completed prior to the area reaching build-out so that new residents are met with opportunities for four-season "garage to trail" recreation.



## 5. DEVELOP AN ALL SEASON TRAIL NETWORK

OBJECTIVE 5A: PROVIDE YEAR-ROUND ACCESS TO A LOGICAL NETWORK OF BOTH RECREATION AND “RECREATION AND TRANSPORTATION” TRAILS BY GROOMING AND PLOWING DURING WINTER MONTHS.



### MEETING OBJECTIVE

Navigating the challenges of seasonal transitions and unpredictable winter snow in the area, the District is actively addressing plowing and grooming requirements. However, the timing and quality of these activities during winter months can be influenced by factors such as contractor agreements and proximity, leading to potential delays and sub-optimal grooming outcomes.



### 5-YEAR FOCUS

Solving the bottle neck of time dedicated to plowing/grooming- via agreements, private service contracts, or additional staff capacity (i.e. numbers of staff, remote location storage of plowing equipment, etc.)- is necessary if grooming quality is to be improved over the next five years.







## 5. DEVELOP AN ALL SEASON TRAIL NETWORK

**OBJECTIVE 5B: PROVIDE GROOMED WINTER TRAILS TO ACCOMMODATE WINTER USES, THAT MAY INCLUDE NORDIC/CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING, FAT BIKING, AND SNOWSHOEING.**

☐ ☒ ☐ MEETING OBJECTIVE

There is sufficient mileage, variety, and locations in the District’s service area. Additional opportunities, especially in the east, will be necessary in the future. Partnerships may be able to extend the reach and capacity of grooming in some areas. Without additional staff capacity, the overall opportunity gains can only be minimal.

☒ 5-YEAR FOCUS

Per section 5a, resolving the grooming bottleneck—through agreements, private contracts, or increased staff and equipment storage solutions—is essential for enhancing grooming quality.

**OBJECTIVE 5C: CONSIDER THE SEASONAL VALUE AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR FOUR-SEASON USE WHEN EVALUATING TRAIL PROPOSALS.**

☐ ☒ ☐ MEETING OBJECTIVE

This objective is difficult to assess, but staff discussions regarding equipment storage at remote locations for increased efficiency indicates that the District is approaching seasonal maintenance strategically. As the population increases in the east with full-time residents, the district should continue to strategically place maintenance equipment in each of the subdistricts.

☒ 5-YEAR FOCUS

Consider the resident winter recreation needs in the developing east.



## 6. PROVIDE PROGRAMS TO BUILD A COMMUNITY CULTURE OF TRAIL USE

OBJECTIVE 6A: COLLABORATE WITH GROUPS AND AGENCIES TO FOSTER A TRAIL CULTURE FOCUSED ON USER EXPERIENCE AND SAFETY. WORK WITH COMMUNITY PARTNERS TO ESTABLISH STEWARDSHIP AND AMBASSADOR PROGRAMS, TRAIN VOLUNTEERS IN TRAIL ETIQUETTE, AND PROMOTE AWARENESS OF TRAIL ISSUES. PARTNER WITH LOCAL YOUTH PROGRAMS TO ENGAGE YOUNG PEOPLE IN OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES, ENCOURAGE HEALTHY LIFESTYLES, AND ENSURE TRAIL ACCESS FOR ALL.



### NOT MEETING OBJECTIVE

As discussed in 4a above, as the District has expanded its facilities, staff's time has become taxed by routine tasks like snow removal and dog waste management. This is diverting attention from higher-skilled maintenance and winter grooming that are essential for quality trail experiences. Despite staff expertise, their ability to focus on complex maintenance is hindered without staff expansion to handle the basic tasks. yet hiring and staff retention is challenging due to high costs of living. Unlike other municipal trail providers, Basin Recreation lacks strong volunteer maintenance partnerships, partly due to historical reliance on in-house resources and an institutional focus that hasn't leveraged volunteer help. Although the success of volunteer events indicates community willingness to assist, establishing partnerships requires skill sets and time the current staff cannot spare. Meanwhile, for specialized tasks such as invasive weed control and wildfire mitigation, the Districts efficiently utilizes external contractors, acknowledging the impracticality of managing these services internally or with volunteers.



### 5-YEAR FOCUS

The District should partner with community organizations to establish stewardship and trail ambassador programs. These should train volunteers in trail etiquette, rules, and regulations. This initiative should enhance public awareness of trail issues and user needs. Additionally, the District should strive to work with local youth recreation programs to increase young people's participation in outdoor activities, promote stewardship, encourage healthy lifestyles, and ensure that the District's trail system is accessible to all ages and socioeconomic backgrounds. Through these partnerships, the District can secure a sustainable future for trail use and foster a community-wide commitment to environmental conservation and outdoor engagement.



## 6. PROVIDE PROGRAMS TO BUILD A COMMUNITY CULTURE OF TRAIL USE

OBJECTIVE 6B: PROMOTE TRAIL USER ETIQUETTE THROUGH TRAIL SIGNAGE AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS.



### MEETING OBJECTIVE

Quality wayfinding and navigation signage is present throughout the system, but since initial kiosk placement a number of additional signs have been added at most locations that now trend toward over signage and a higher potential for visitors to miss important information or ignore it altogether.



### 5-YEAR FOCUS

To align with the recommendations in objectives 1c and 6a, it's critical that the district ensures clear communication regarding trail etiquette and care. Collaborating with partners and user groups the District should craft and execute a comprehensive communication strategy, including the integration of these messages into trail signage. This approach will foster community engagement and education, leading to a collective sense of responsibility for the upkeep and stewardship of the trail system.







## 4: TRAILS INITIATIVES

### BIG MOVES & THE 5-YEAR TRAILS AND OPEN SPACE STRATEGY

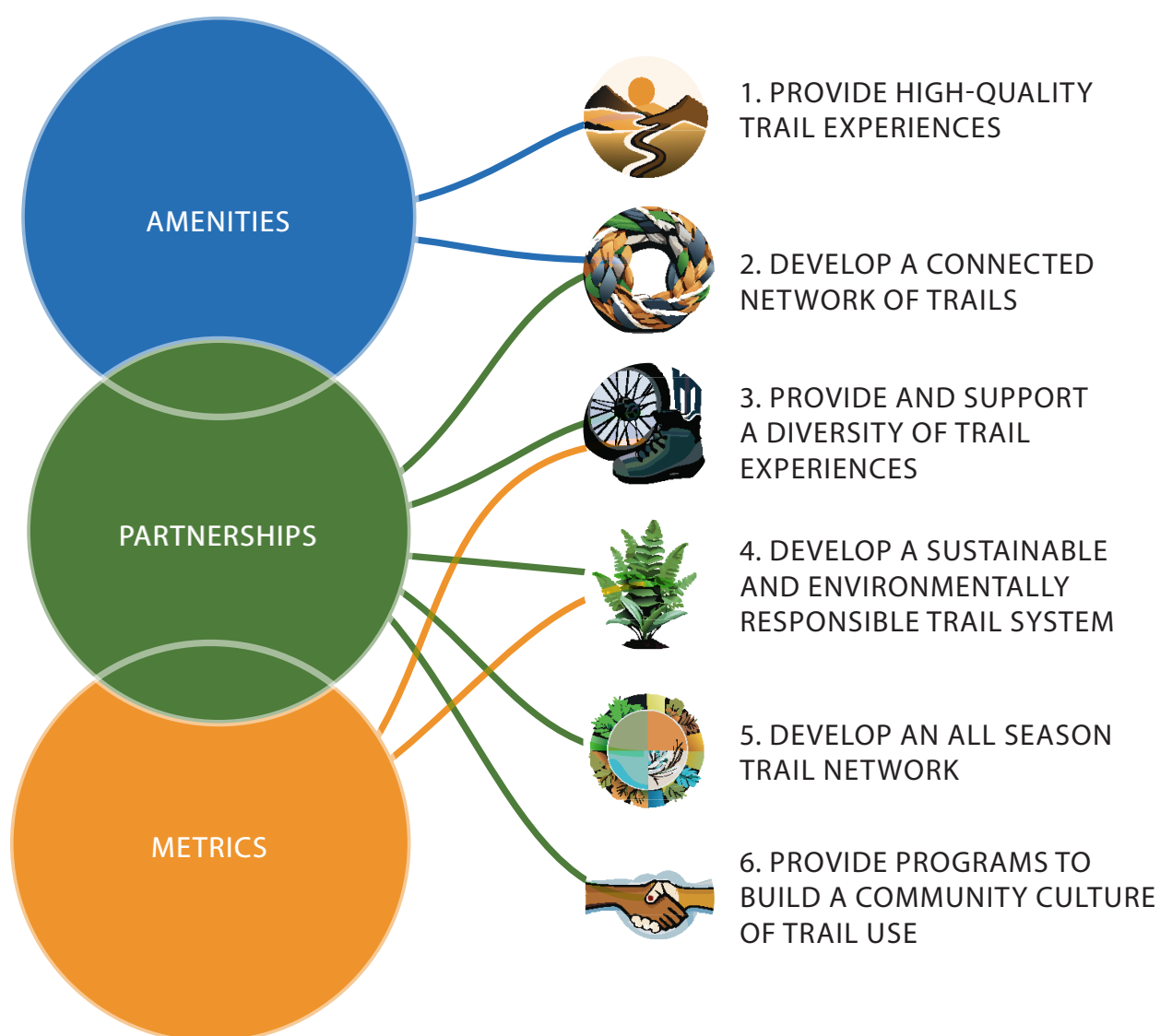
As outlined in the 10-year Strategic Action Plan, moving Basin Recreation forward as a more effective, stable entity requires a number of relatively significant pivots from the current operations.

#### 10 YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN BIG MOVES:

- 1. Subdistrict Planning**
- 2. Enhancing Equity**
- 3. Strengthening Community Partnerships**
- 4. Restructuring Agreements**
- 5. Supporting Staff and Career Development**
- 6. Delivering Essential Community Needs**
- 7. Becoming a Fully Transparent Organization**

To align this 5 year strategic trails and open space assessment with the broader vision of the District's 10 year plan, three specific "Trails Initiatives" are highlighted in this document. Each trails initiative is related to a specific Trails Plan Objective, as well as one or more Strategic Action Plan "Big Moves".

## BIG MOVES & THE 5-YEAR TRAILS AND OPEN SPACE STRATEGY



Each of the trail initiatives outlined in this chapter have been identified to directly support one or more of the Trails Plan Objectives, which in turn will directly support the 10 Year Strategic Plan.

## TRAILS INITIATIVE #1: AMENITIES

It's no secret that the trails are amazing across the Snyderville Basin. So it is not trail expansion that is the focus of this Big Move, but increasing the number and quality of amenities. By focusing on three core amenities - re-evaluating wayfinding, hardening pump tracks and jumps, and expanding trailhead parking the District can continue to develop on all fronts and remain a world-class trail network.

### RE-EVALUATE SIGNAGE

The wayfinding systems through the District's trail networks are excellent. However, ongoing additions and changes to the system have resulted in project-by-project additions without a holistic wayfinding approach. In some cases, this is manifested as overly-detailed signage that loses key messaging, or in others redundant or incorrect signage. Many signs around the system were developed before use management and one way trails were installed, or before e-bikes were widely adopted. A holistic approach to developing a comprehensive wayfinding strategy for the District would improve the overall clarity of messaging and improve the end user experience.

### HARDEN PUMP TRACKS AND JUMPS

Trailside Bike Park and the pump track at Matt Knoop Park are beloved facilities whose age is beginning to show. Throughout these natural surface facilities, the lips of jumps and tops of rollers are some of the most degraded but critical components of the features. Maintenance requirements for these facilities are becoming ever more time-intensive. To reduce this maintenance burden and maintain these facilities' value well into the future, these and other bike parks in the system should look at hardening pumptracks and major jumps. Construction of wooden or synthetic wood jumps and asphalt hardening of pump tracks has proven to be an effective way to not only reduce maintenance, but in the case of asphalt pump tracks - also broaden the user base to skateboards, scooters, and skates.

## OPTIMIZE TRAILHEAD PARKING

With the rising influx of visitors, the District should conduct a comprehensive evaluation of existing trailhead capacity and condition. This evaluation should take into account various factors, such as trail design, safety, carrying capacity, parking availability, property management plans, trail easements, and financial impacts.

The evaluation should provide an understanding of each trailhead's unique characteristics and challenges. The evaluation should identify peak trailhead use by day of the week and hour of the day. Such an effort can help the District pinpoint which access points are under- and over-utilized, and make investments in expansion and management accordingly. The evaluation phase can also help identify where new trailheads are needed, and how additions could benefit the system's overall function.

Data gathered should inform a trailhead capacity management plan. Such a plan should employ a carrying capacity framework to ensure that the proposed management strategies align well with the specific attributes and demands of each trailhead. A trailhead capacity management plan can develop tailored solutions that address the unique needs and pressures of each District trailhead, fostering a more sustainable and enjoyable experience for all visitors.



## TRAIL INITIATIVE #2 - PARTNERSHIPS

As discussed in the assessment of Trails Plan Objective 4a, current District staffing structure can not fully meet the current and planned maintenance needs in the expansive network. The solution to this issue will be to expand staffing and resources to better leverage non-profit and community partnerships. These partnerships can be divided into five basic categories:

- Volunteer Partnerships,
- Academic Partnerships,
- Philanthropic Partnerships,
- Contractor Partnerships, and
- Ranger/Ambassador Programs

Collaborating with community groups and partners fosters community bonds and also offers financial benefits. Basin Recreation can leverage resources, expertise, and volunteer networks, reducing staffing and maintenance costs. Partners may share in these expenses and provide access to additional funding sources, enhancing financial sustainability.

Future collaboration with community partners can help the District align its mission with community needs, strengthen inter-agency bonds, expand its network of local advocates, and bring financial advantages.

There is little that such partnerships won't effect positively - these partnerships can contribute to enhancing recreational programs, events, and facilities while building a more robust and engaged community.

Expansion of existing partnerships and their ongoing success could hinge on a dedicated District staff resource that would have the skills, passion, and capacity to manage the communications, contracting, and coordination needed to see this effort through.

## VOLUNTEER PARTNERSHIPS

Every USFS District and BLM staff office has one or more roles dedicated to being a 'volunteer coordinator'. A similar effort should be undertaken by the District to dedicate staff to work with local non-profit and community groups to better leverage the human resources already circulating through the District's trail systems. Some key steps towards building long-lasting partnerships within the community includes:

- Identify core tasks that could be handled by volunteers - key is to understand which could be done without oversight, and which may require staff resources to guide productive efforts. Initial efforts could focus on:
  - » Minor Vegetation & Weed Management
  - » Dog Waste Removal & Litter Cleanup
  - » Winter Trail Grooming
  - » Natural Surface Trail Maintenance
- Establish a dedicated position as a district-wide volunteer coordinator to build a volunteer partnership base and lead communication efforts / volunteer days in conjunction with current staff.
- Study successful models of volunteer engagement such as Run-A-Muck and utilize existing volunteer contacts from these events.
- Build and maintain a database of volunteers that can be called on for guided and unguided volunteer work within the District.
- In close collaboration with trails staff, schedule and promote guided volunteer trainings, work parties, and other efforts to significantly boost current staff capacity.

## ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIPS

Partnering with institutions like Utah State University can provide valuable planning, design and analytic resources. The expertise and research capacity provided by the university's staff and students can enhance the quality of data analysis, allowing for a more nuanced understanding of land management, trail use, and more.

Access to the university's resources, such as advanced laboratory equipment and field research capabilities, can streamline the assessments necessary for decision-making. This could apply to having university support in data gathering for the accessibility study, trailhead study, or wayfinding studies recommended in this plan, or partnering with researchers to build a more detailed and holistic understanding of Basin Recreation's subdistricts.

## PHILANTHROPIC PARTNERSHIPS

The broad network of philanthropies and non profits already in place throughout the Snyderville Basin should be reviewed for the next crucial partner to support future fundraising. From the Silver Creek corridor to the next new after-school sport, focused non-profits can extend the District's fundraising capacity significantly. A non-exhaustive list of these potential partners can be viewed at [parkcityofkindness.org/nonprofits](https://parkcityofkindness.org/nonprofits).

A dedicated partnership coordinator role would be crucial to maximizing these types of partnerships. Such a role could focus on building and establishing these partnerships in order to leverage their membership base to support future fundraising needs, keeping more revenue for the day to day operations of Basin Recreation.

Based on conversations around the Summit County non-profit world, it may make sense for a new non-profit to be developed in order to facilitate these relationships. A future "Friends of Basin Rec" non-profit organization could be developed and utilized to fundraise specifically for future Basin Recreation needs. Having a dedicated partnership coordinator would further extend the effectiveness of a "Friends of" group.

## CONTRACTOR PARTNERSHIPS

Development of a relationship with contractors to take on specific low-technical-skill projects will allow District staff to go further in their core duties, as opposed to allowing ballooning maintenance tasks to take time away from more broad reaching and technical work.

Key efforts that should be considered for future contracting include:

- invasive species management
- wildfire mitigation
- trail and open space brushing & mowing
- trash removal / graffiti abatement
- winter snow grooming

A dedicated district staff resource should oversee the establishment of multi-year contracts for these and other open space management efforts. Key steps in this process include:

- Work with internal staff to identify and detail tasks ideal for outside contractors to own.
- Draft and issue an RFP for multiple open space / trail management contracting services. This RFP should be drafted to allow a potential contractor to select one or more services, rather than require completion of all. This approach recognizes that it may take more than one contractor to fulfill all of the District's needs.
- Consider application of the sub-district approach to contract provision and management - it may make sense for certain contracted tasks to be broken up based on sub-districts (trash cleanup / invasive species management) which could better divide a service into a multi-year agreement for more efficient procurement.
- District Staff will need to work closely with a selected provider to ensure that they learn the means and methods of efficient operations and maintenance throughout the District are learned and applied by a selected contractor - hence the value of a multi-year contract.



## RANGER/TRAIL AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

In response to the evolving landscape of outdoor recreation and the unique needs of the District, a Basin Recreation Ranger and Trail Ambassadors Program should be developed. This initiative addresses visitor safety, resource protection, education, interpretation, and community engagement, supporting a positive and sustainable trail experience for all users.

### Purpose and Goals:

The primary purpose of the joint Ranger and Trail Ambassadors Program is to create a comprehensive and positive trail experience for all visitors. Rangers will focus on patrolling parks, open spaces, and trails, ensuring compliance with rules and regulations. While Ambassadors will concurrently serve as friendly faces on the trails, providing assistance, disseminating information, and promoting responsible trail use. Together, they can contribute to improved visitor satisfaction, mitigated potential conflicts, and a heightened sense of community stewardship.

The trail ambassador positions could be paid or well managed volunteer programs, while the ranger positions would likely be paid due to their patrol and monitoring roles.

### Critical Responsibilities:

- **Visitor Engagement and Education:** Rangers and Ambassadors can actively engage with trail users, providing information on trail etiquette, environmental conservation, and safety measures.
- **Patrolling and Monitoring:** Rangers can patrol parks and open spaces, ensuring compliance and resource protection, while Ambassadors can monitor trail usage patterns, report maintenance needs, and communicate safety concerns.
- **Information Dissemination:** Ambassadors can distribute trail maps, share updates on trail conditions, and communicate important announcements to enhance the visitor experience.
- **Trail Ambassadors** are responsible for overseeing trail stewardship, maintenance, and providing leadership during trail building events, ensuring the implementation of proper conservation practices, coordinating volunteers, and fostering a sense of environmental stewardship among participants

The establishment of a comprehensive Basin Recreation Ranger and Trail Ambassador Program supports visitor management and reflects a community that values and preserves the natural beauty of the District. This joint initiative will create a positive ripple effect, leaving a lasting impact on visitor satisfaction, community relationships, and the sustainable use of the District's outdoor spaces.

## TRAILS INITIATIVE #3: TRAIL METRICS

The District should be commended on developing a process to collect and warehouse trail counts. However, there does not yet exist a process or methodology to broadly utilize that data and develop an assessment of trail use relative to a baseline, or using the data to qualitatively document the impact that new trail / bike park / resource construction brings to the trail network. The District should establish a methodology and set aside staff time to build annual “state of the trails” reports that rely on quantifiable data, viewed through a sub-district lens to better assess the ever-evolving geography, needs and function of the District’s trail network.

Using the sub-district model, a consultant or staff could incorporate one or more of the following steps into an annual process or report:

- **Develop a Trail Capacity Assessment:** Do a broad network analysis and/or correlate trail count data to major repair projects on Mid Mountain Trail and other known high-use trails to build a baseline understanding of what numbers are considered high, medium and low trail usage rates.
- **Identify critical locations to place permanent counters.** Place counters on major trails used as transportation corridors to build an understanding of how trail use is changing over time.
- **Deploy mobile trail counters** to additional locations (trailheads, new trails, remote locations in network) to gather additional data.
- **Utilize Big Data** sets to expand understanding: Strava Metro is an example of crowd-sourced GPS data that is only representative of Strava users. This dataset is free to municipalities and represents only a small portion of trail users in the system - but represents them everywhere. By connecting Strava Metro counts with known trail counter data, the District can then make grounded assumptions about areas in the trail network that do not yet have formal counts.
- **Continue to track trail conditions,** repair work, costs, and repair locations on an ongoing basis to build a ‘heatmap’ of District trailwork needs. Review data to support planning future seasonal workloads and ensuring equity across subdistricts
- **Deploy regular trailhead intercept surveys:** These labor-intensive surveys should be deployed regularly to provide a more nuanced understanding regarding the trail users’ experiences, demography, and modeshare.

## RECREATION DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS

The District maintains an steadfast commitment to delivering a comprehensive network of trails and recreational facilities that cater to the diverse needs of residents and visitors alike. This commitment is maintained while simultaneously working to preserve the region's unique ecological landscape.

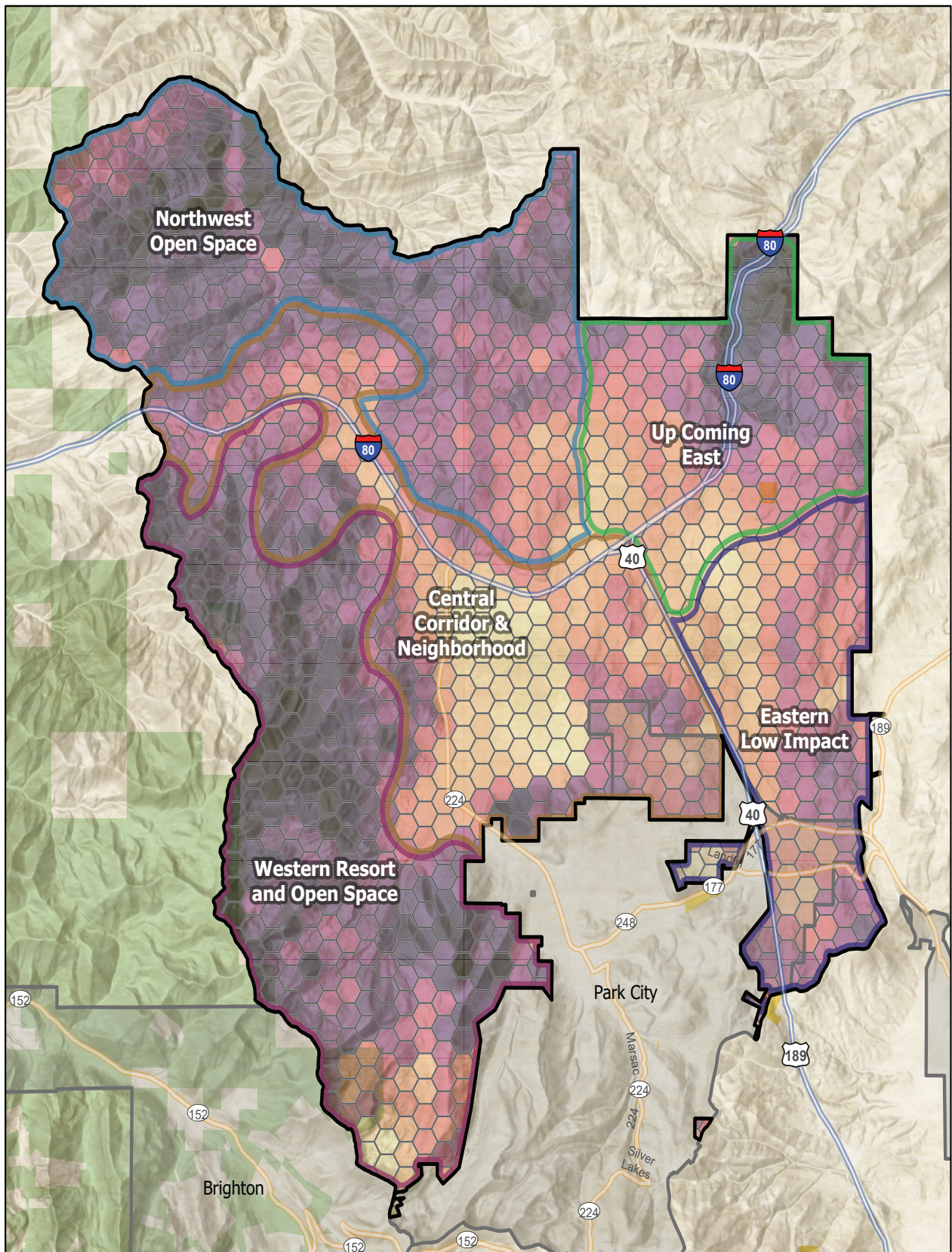
### RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATION ANALYSIS

The Recreational Development Consideration Analysis is a tool designed to provide high level suitability analysis for projects across the District. By integrating numerous GIS datasets into a single overlay analysis, it offers a way to identify potential impacts related to recreational development. This tool offers a way of understanding the potential environmental impacts, permitting, cost, and complexity implications of any given project within the District.

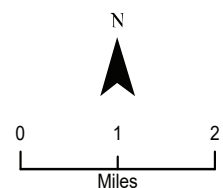
This tool provides an analytical framework evaluating key factors such as slope, site accessibility from roadways, proximity to existing trails, known wetlands and critical habitat, and invasive weed data. Each dataset is weighted to prioritize more critical datasets (such as slope for trails development) over less critical data (proximity to existing roadways). These weighted datasets are layered together to generate a comprehensive suitability analysis reflecting the cumulative influence of these factors across the district. The suitability analysis displays areas with less consideration/complexity for intensive recreational development as lighter tones, and those of higher consideration/complexity are darker.

It should be mentioned that while cost and complexity increases rapidly with distance from infrastructure, those qualities of remoteness are unique and valuable experiences for trail users. This broad landscape analysis is not a comprehensive decision-making tool, but serves as a valuable first step towards developing identifying the optimal locations for recreational development based on known environmental and infrastructure constraints and opportunities.





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|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interstate</li> <li>State/County Road</li> <li>SBSRD Boundary</li> <li>50 Acre Grid</li> <li>Municipalities</li> <li>Bureau of Land Management</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forest Service</li> <li><b>Recreation Development Consideration</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low Consideration</li> <li>High Consideration</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>SBSRD SubDistricts</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Central Corridor &amp; Neighborhood</li> <li>Eastern Low Impact</li> <li>Northwest Open Space</li> <li>Up Coming East</li> </ul> </li> <li>Western Resort &amp; Open Space</li> </ul> |
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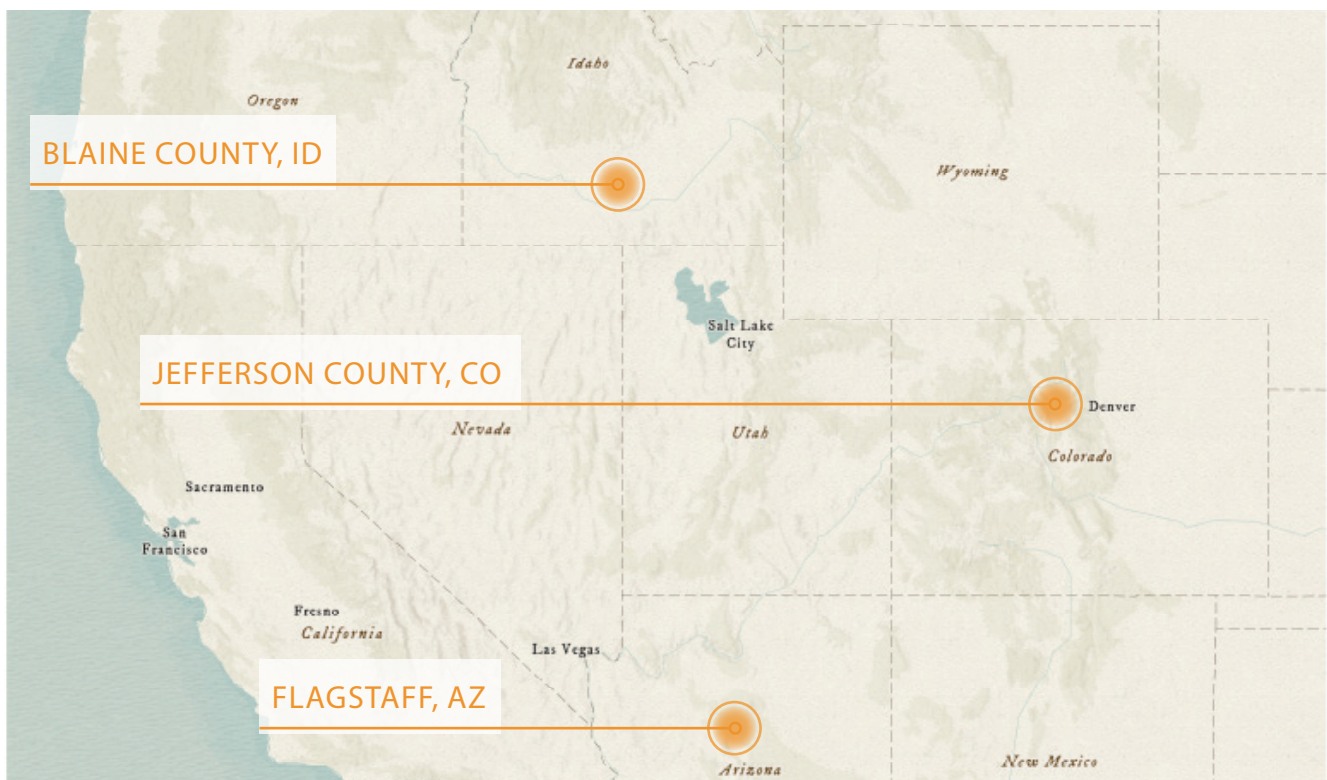
## 5: CASE STUDIES

Case studies offer insights to support informed decision-making and should enhance the overall efficacy of this plan. Three peer agencies have been selected to represent comparable communities across the western United States. These comparisons were selected specifically for comparable approaches to trail development, community engagement, and sustainable land management.

The case studies are located in:

- Jefferson County, Colorado
- Blaine County, Idaho
- Flagstaff, Arizona

These case studies were deliberately selected for their relevance to the District in terms of seasonality, terrain, facilities, and community demographics. This intentional selection ensures that the insights derived are applicable to the District's context.





## JEFFERSON COUNTY, COLORADO - PARKS & OPEN SPACE

Nestled just west of Denver, Colorado, Jefferson County Open Space (JCOS) manages 56,000 acres of open space and 265 miles of trails, supported by a robust volunteer program of over 300 active participants and a “Friends Of” group. Beyond its local population of 580,000 residents, JCOS serves as a crucial outdoor escape for over a million Denver metro area residents. The 27 Open Space Parks offer a diverse range of outdoor activities and play a vital role in education and conservation efforts. The county employs a Conservation Planning process to acquire new properties, ensuring a balance between human-centric amenities and resource conservation. The success of JCOS is deeply rooted in its Trails Partnership Program, grant initiatives, and the commitment of volunteers, showcasing a model of responsible land management, ecological conservation, and community engagement over its five-decade history.

JCOS presents an exemplary case study for Basin Recreation to draw insights and inspiration. By studying JeffCo’s success in managing a vast open space, engaging a strong volunteer network, and implementing a comprehensive Conservation Planning process, Basin Recreation can glean valuable strategies for optimizing its own land management initiatives.

### KEY LESSONS AND INSIGHTS

#### **Effective Volunteer Engagement:**

Lesson: Jefferson County’s robust volunteer program, with over 300 active volunteers, is a key contributor to the success of their trails and open spaces.

Application for Basin Recreation: Consider developing and expanding a volunteer program to involve the local community in trail maintenance, conservation, and other stewardship activities. This not only enhances resource management but also fosters a sense of community ownership.

#### **Community Support:**

Lesson: Jefferson County enjoys support from the “Friends Of” group, indicating strong community backing.

Application for Basin Recreation: Build and nurture relationships with local community groups and organizations that share an interest in outdoor recreation and conservation. This support can be instrumental in fundraising, advocacy, and overall success.



### **Conservation Planning for Acquisitions:**

Lesson: Jefferson County employs a Conservation Planning process when acquiring new properties, focusing on natural and cultural resources.

Application for Basin Recreation: When acquiring new land or developing new facilities, consider implementing a similar conservation planning process. Evaluate the ecological and cultural significance of the area to guide responsible and defensible land management and development.

### **Trail Partnership Program and Grant Funding:**

Lesson: The Trails Partnership Program and grant funding are crucial for project collaboration and priority initiatives.

Application for Basin Recreation: Explore partnerships with organized groups and municipalities. Establish a grant program to secure additional funding for priority trail projects, maintenance, and conservation efforts.

### **Long-Term Success through Adaptation:**

Lesson: Jefferson County has adapted to rapid municipal growth through programs like the Trails Partnership Program.

Application for Basin Recreation: Anticipate and adapt to changes in the local community, demographics, and recreational trends. Flexibility and adaptation are crucial for long-term success.



## BLAINE COUNTY RECREATION DISTRICT, IDAHO

Founded in 1976, the Blaine County Recreation District (BCRD) is a non profit organization that manages indoor and outdoor recreation facilities for Blaine County Idaho, including the communities of Sun Valley and Ketchum. BCRD manages over 69 miles of multi-use trail network, including coordinated nordic trail grooming, as well as the historic Galena Lodge, the FitWorks fitness center, and the BCRD Aquatic Center. They operate many youth and adult sports leagues, and after school and summer day camp programs. BCRD is supported by numerous seasonal staff, 20 full time staff, and a three member Board of Directors.

BCRD provides valuable lessons for Basin Recreation in terms of revenue generation, facility diversification, program offerings, and federal land partnerships. Basin Recreation can draw inspiration from these aspects to enhance its own trail planning initiatives and enhance their vibrant, sustainable community.

### KEY LESSONS AND INSIGHTS

#### **Effective Revenue Generation:**

Lesson: The Blaine County Recreation District (BCRD) successfully generates revenue through regular tax revenue and a robust system of day and season passes, contributing to an annual income of \$3.95M.

Application for Basin Recreation: Explore and enhance revenue-generation strategies by implementing a combination of regular tax revenue and well-structured pass systems. This approach can offer greater financial stability and supports the sustained growth of recreational initiatives within the community.

#### **Diversification of Recreational Facilities:**

Lesson: BCRD effectively manages a diverse range of recreational facilities, including a multi-use trail network, Nordic trail grooming, Galena Lodge, FitWorks fitness center, and the BCRD Aquatic Center.

Application for Basin Recreation: Basin Recreation can learn from BCRD's success by diversifying its recreational facilities. Consider managing and developing a comprehensive range of amenities, catering to various interests within the community. This approach enhances the overall recreational experience and meets the diverse needs of residents.

### **Youth and Adult Program Offerings:**

Lesson: BCRD operates numerous youth and adult sports leagues, as well as after-school and summer day camp programs, contributing to a vibrant and active community.

Application for Basin Recreation: Basin Recreation can foster community engagement by expanding its offerings to include a variety of youth and adult sports leagues, along with after-school and summer day camp programs. This not only promotes physical activity but also strengthens the sense of community and well-being among residents.

### **Federal Land Partnership:**

Lesson: BCRD successfully operates on federally managed land, exemplified by the partnership with Galena Lodge, relying on donations and trail fees to cover expenses.

Application for Basin Recreation: Explore partnerships with federal land management agencies to support operations on and connections to federally managed land. Establishing partnerships similar to BCRD's collaboration with Galena Lodge allows for the effective use of resources and the creation of sustainable recreational facilities.



## FLAGSTAFF, ARIZONA

Flagstaff, Arizona, stands as a commendable example of effective community and recreation planning. Flagstaff's Open Space Program manages over 3,000 acres of open space properties. The active involvement of volunteer Open Space Stewards fosters a sense of ownership and environmental stewardship, at minimal cost to the program.

Flagstaff's unique funding mechanisms, including public-private partnerships, the Flagstaff Urban Trails System, and the Adopt-a-FUTS program, underscore a commitment to community-driven recreation and open space. By emphasizing collaboration with volunteer groups and non-profit partnerships, Flagstaff demonstrates how cities can leverage community interest and efforts in building great open space and trail networks.

### KEY LESSONS AND INSIGHTS

#### **Preservation of Natural Beauty:**

Lesson: Flagstaff's Open Space Program, managing over 3,000 acres of open space properties, plays a crucial role in preserving the city's natural beauty and enhancing residents' well-being.

Application for Basin Recreation: Embrace the importance of preserving natural assets within Basin Recreation's jurisdiction. Continue to enhance and develop the Open Space Program to actively manage and protect key areas, contributing to the overall aesthetic appeal and well-being of the community.

#### **Community Engagement and Volunteerism:**

Lesson: Flagstaff's volunteer Open Space Stewards actively participate in the protection and management of open spaces, fostering a sense of ownership and environmental stewardship.

Application for Basin Recreation: Look to Flagstaff's program as a potential model for how to organize, manage, and maintain a future volunteer corps. Actively involve local residents in the protection and management of open spaces, cultivating a sense of community ownership and environmental stewardship.



**Blend of Funding Mechanisms:**

Lesson: Flagstaff's unique blend of public and private funding mechanisms ensures financial resilience for community-driven recreation and open spaces.

Application for Basin Recreation: Diversify funding sources to support the development and maintenance of recreational amenities. Explore a combination of public and private funding mechanisms to enhance financial resilience and sustain the growth of Basin Recreations initiatives.

**Community-Driven Maintenance Initiatives:**

Lesson: Flagstaff's Adopt-a-FUTS (Flagstaff Urban Trails System) program encourages citizens and businesses to actively contribute financially to the maintenance and enhancement of urban trails.

Application for Basin Recreation: Consider a similar program to encourage local businesses and residents to directly contribute to the maintenance and improvement of Basin Recreations trail systems, in exchange for clear recognition. This collaborative effort offers a creative way to diversify funding resources while publicly celebrating community partners.

