

Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services

PR&CS Administration, 1401 Recreation Way, Colorado Springs, CO 80905



Agenda TOPS Working Committee

Wednesday, October 4, 2023

7:30 a.m.

1401 Recreation Way

How to call in to the meeting for citizens:

Please dial +1 (720) 617-3426 Conference ID: 494 055 957#

How to comment:

- *For Citizen Discussion concerning items that are not on the agenda please email your comments to TOPSWorkingCommittee@coloradosprings.gov in advance of the meeting.*
- *For Agenda Items - Before the meeting, those who wish to comment should submit their name, telephone number, and the topic or agenda item for comment to TOPSWorkingCommittee@coloradosprings.gov. If you are a participant in Microsoft TEAMS please use the chat function to indicate you would like to comment. If you have joined the meeting via conference call, please listen for your opportunity to comment. You will be called upon to comment using the last four digits of your telephone number. Please limit your comment to three minutes.*

Agenda Preview

Committee Chair

Announcements

Staff and Committee

Approval of Minutes

Committee

Citizen Discussion

Citizens

Action Items

Presentation Items

Blodgett Master Plan
Trail Projects Update

David Deitemeyer
Emily Duncan

Citizen Discussion

Citizens

Adjournment

TOPS Working Committee Update

04 October 2023



Blodgett Open Space Master and Management Plan

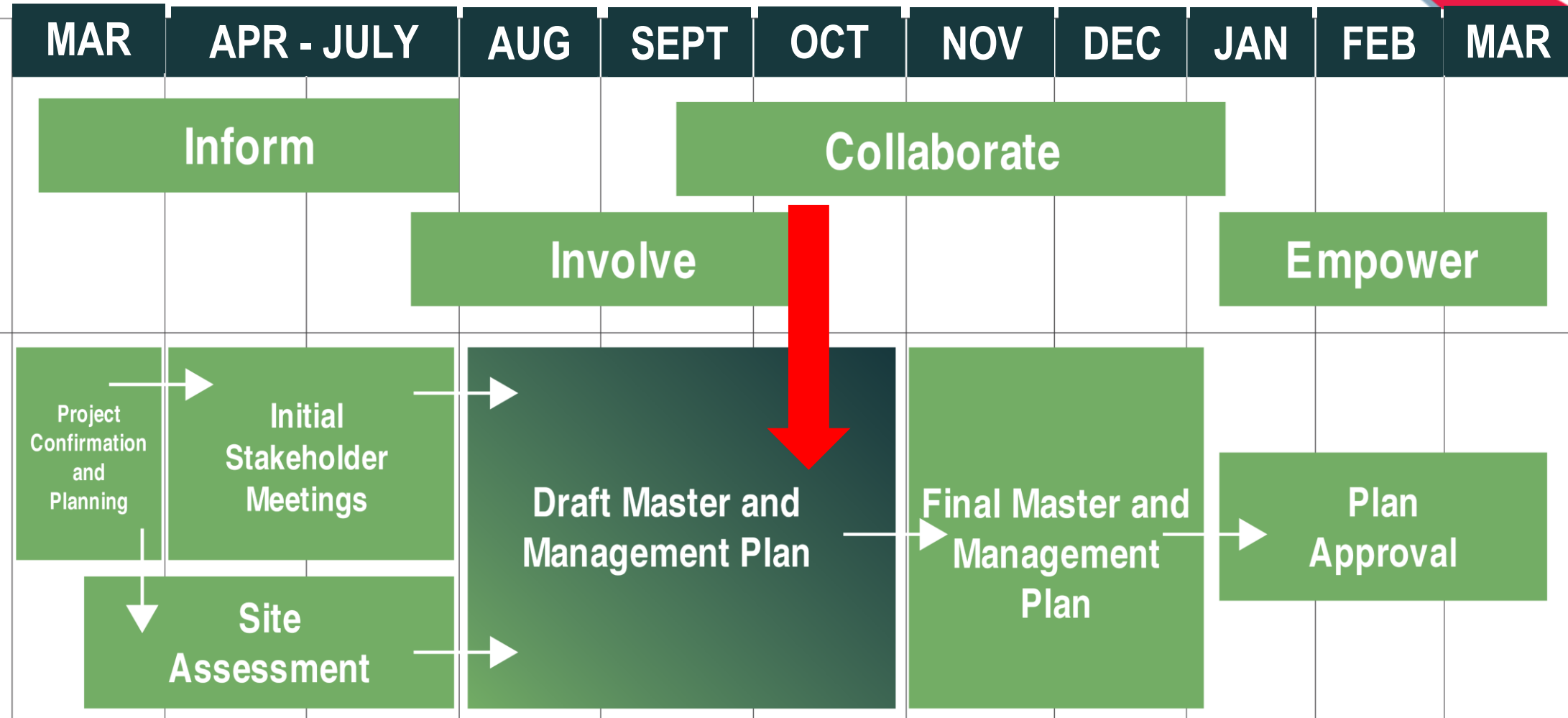
Presentation Goals...

Establish a base of common knowledge about the site and public engagement to date.

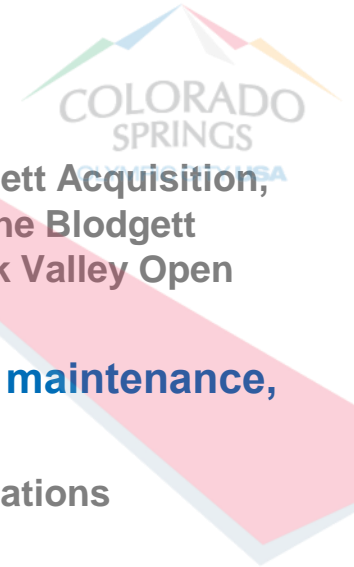
- **Site Assessment**
- **Public Engagement**

Share Next Steps and the Schedule for TOPS WC and PA Board.

Where we are in the Process



Blodgett Open Space MMP Givens

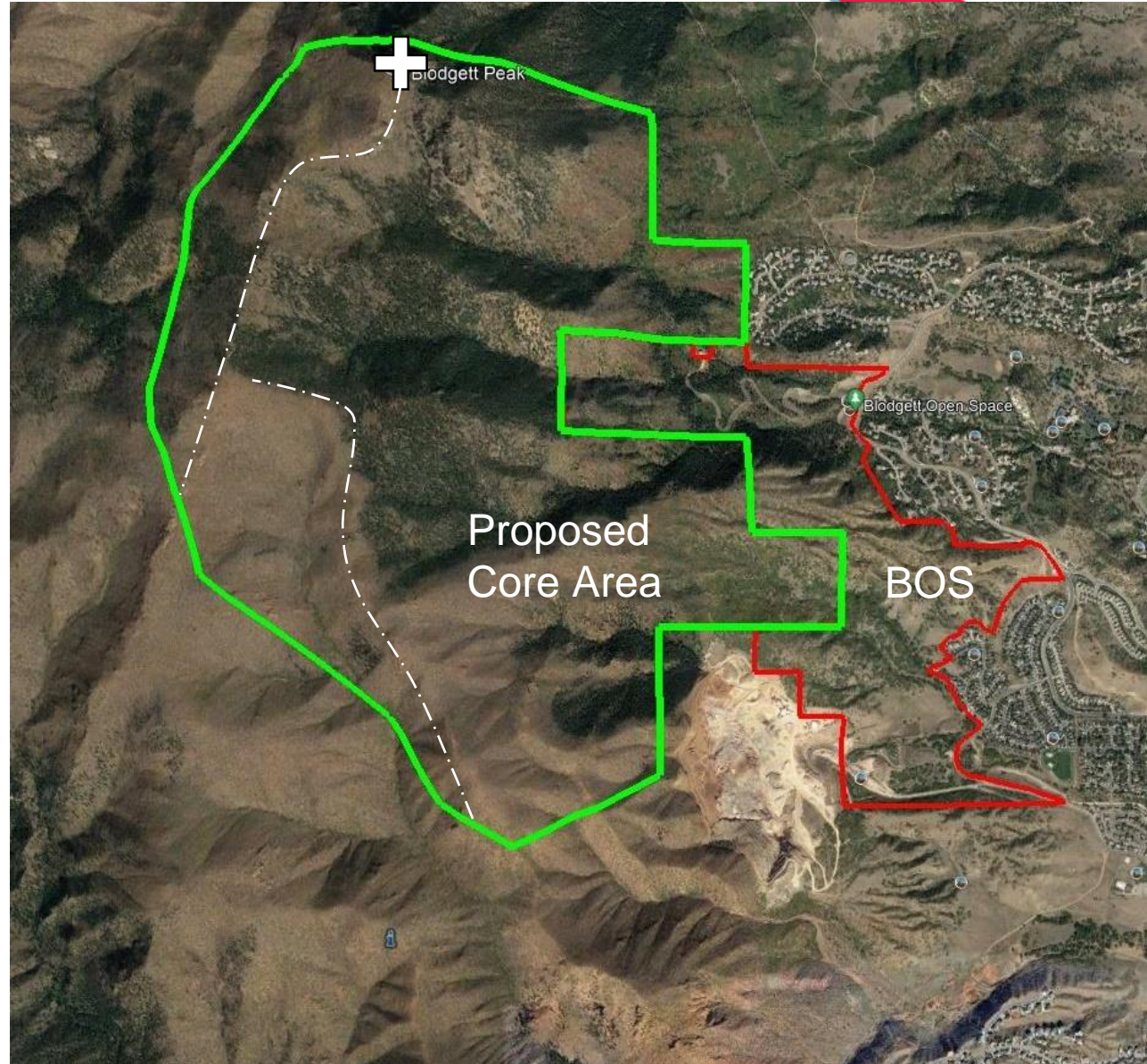


- **The properties will be collectively named and managed as Blodgett Open Space.** The South Blodgett Acquisition, Pikeview Frontage, and westernmost segment of the Peregrine Open Space properties are collectively within the Blodgett Open Space. The other uniquely acquired properties will remain named and signed Peregrine Open Space, Oak Valley Open Space, and Woodmen Valley Open Space for the purposes of this master plan.
- **The City's Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department is legally responsible for design, maintenance, operations, and management of all resources for Blodgett Open Space.**
 - The Master and Management Plan must conform to provisions in the Trails, Open Space and Parks Regulations Ordinances.
 - The Plan must honor conservation easements and utility easements currently in place.
 - The City Parks Department's stewardship and recreation decisions will be based on collected data, changing conditions, and industry best management practices.
- **All decisions regarding USFS lands are under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Forest Service.** The USFS lands - interlocking property boundary and parts of their property including Blodgett Peak – will be considered during this planning process.
- **Decisions regarding sensitive and federally protected wildlife management, habitat and protection will be made with guidance from Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW).**
- **Many groups and individuals are interested in and encouraged to help develop the best possible Master and Management Plans; all voices will be equal in the decision-making process.**
- **Implementation of the Blodgett Open Space Master and Management Plan will occur as funding allows.**
- **The recommended Master and Management Plan will be submitted to the TOPS Working Committee for recommendation and to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board for approval.**

Blodgett Peak Access Gives Highlights



- The USFS is participating in the Blodgett Open Space MMP to receive public input on a potential sustainable route to the summit of Blodgett Peak.
- The USFS has not agreed to implement such a route. NEPA analysis and further planning would be required to consider a potential route.
- The FS cannot commit to decisions within the City's Blodgett Open Space Master and Management timeframe.
- The Blodgett Peak FS Trail project is a low priority compared to the Wildfire Crisis Strategy and other higher priority work for at least the next 5 years, from 2023 through 2028.



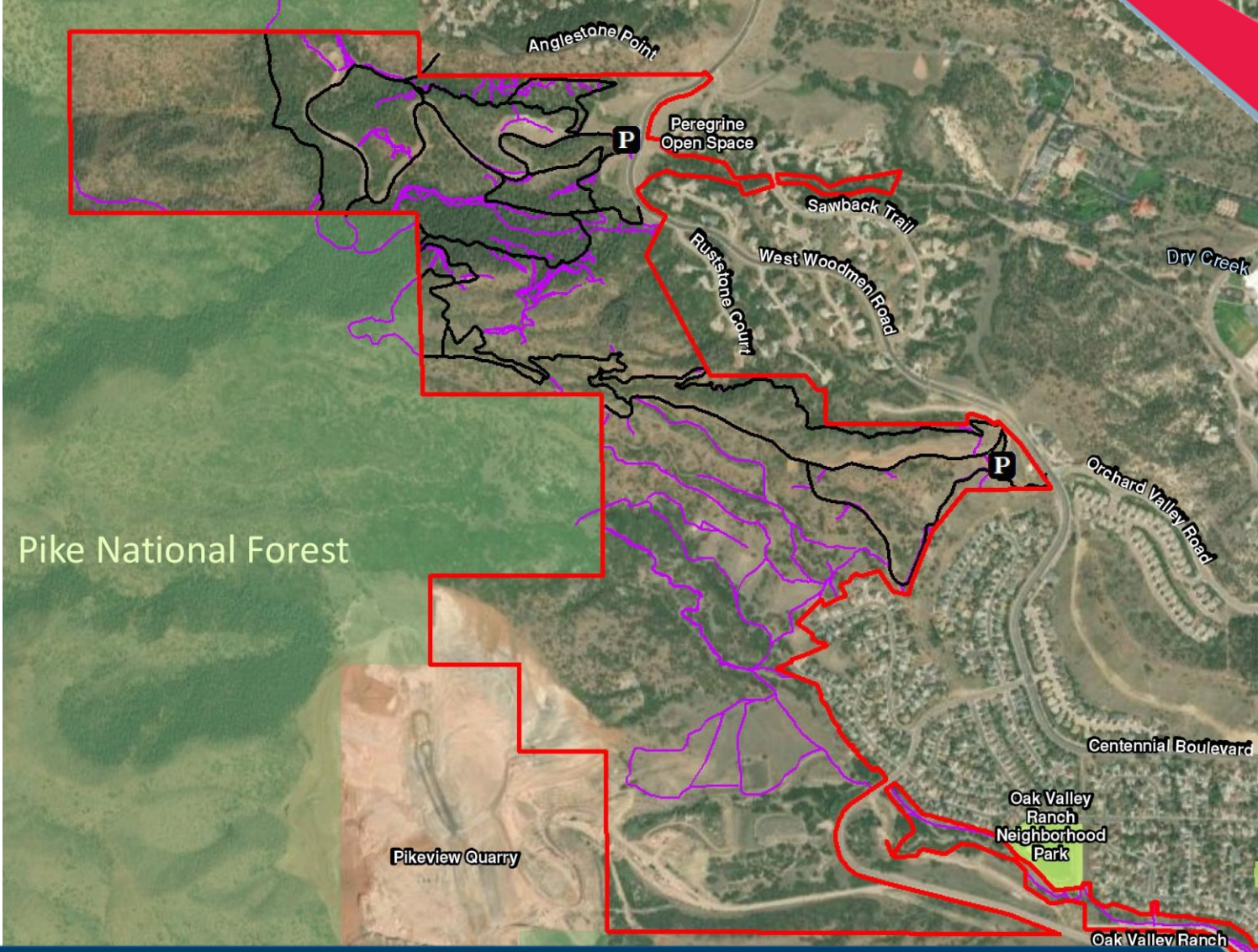
Site Inventory and Assessment



Existing Conditions



- Legend
- P** Parking/Trailhead
 - Red outline** Blodgett Open Space
 - Black line** Designated Trail
 - Purple line** Undesignated Trail
 - Light green** Neighborhood Park
 - Dark green** Pike National Forest
 - Brown** U.S. Air Force Academy



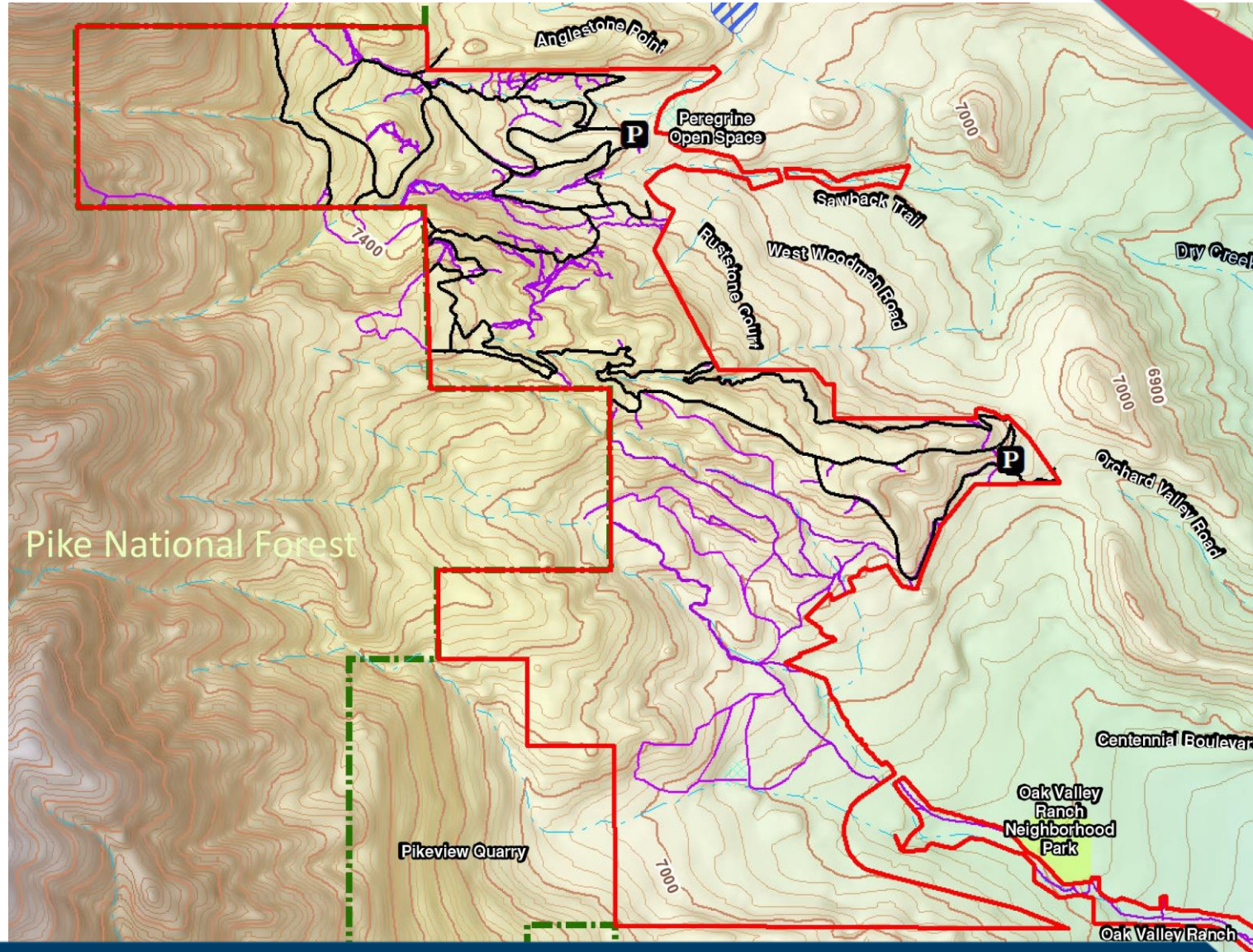
Elevation

Legend

-  Parking/Trailhead
-  Blodgett Open Space
-  Designated Trail
-  Undesignated Trail
-  Neighborhood Park
-  Intermittent Stream
-  Intermittent Poond
-  Pond
-  Pike National Forest
-  U.S. Air Force Academy
-  20-foot Contour

Elevation Value

-  9500 feet
-  6500 feet



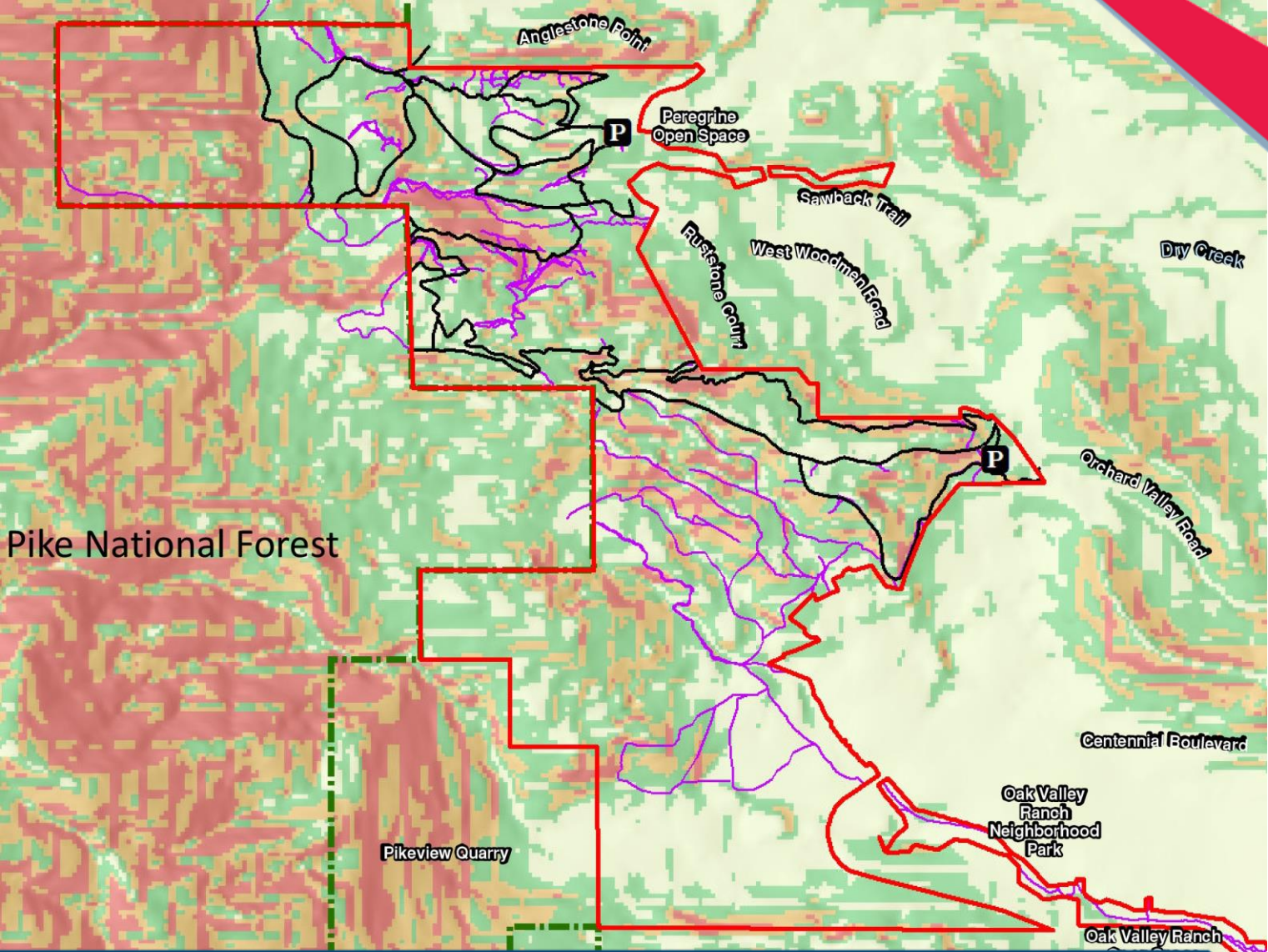
Slope

Legend

- P Parking/Trailhead
- Blodgett Open Space
- Designated Trail
- Undesignated Trail
- Pike National Forest
- U.S. Air Force Academy















Percent Rise

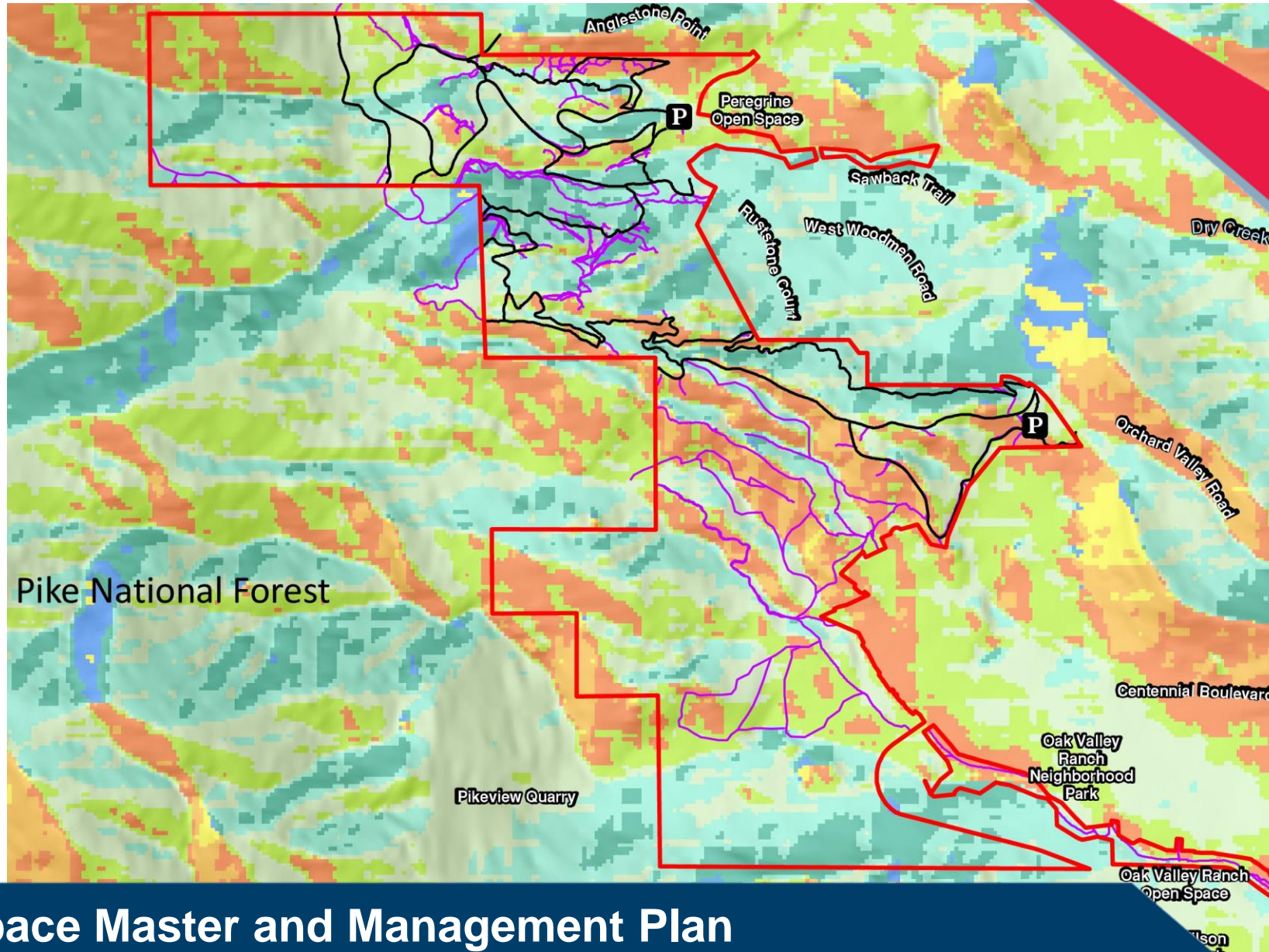
- 0 - 30%
- 31 - 50%
- 51 - 60%
- 61 - 85%



Aspect




Legend

-  Parking/Trailhead
-  Blodgett Open Space
-  Designated Trail
-  Undesignated Trail
-  Flat (-1)
-  North (0-22.5)
-  Northeast (22.5-67.5)
-  East (67.5-112.5)
-  Southeast (112.5-157.5)
-  South (157.5-202.5)
-  Southwest (202.5-247.5)
-  West (247.5-292.5)
-  Northwest (292.5-337.5)
-  North (337.5-360)












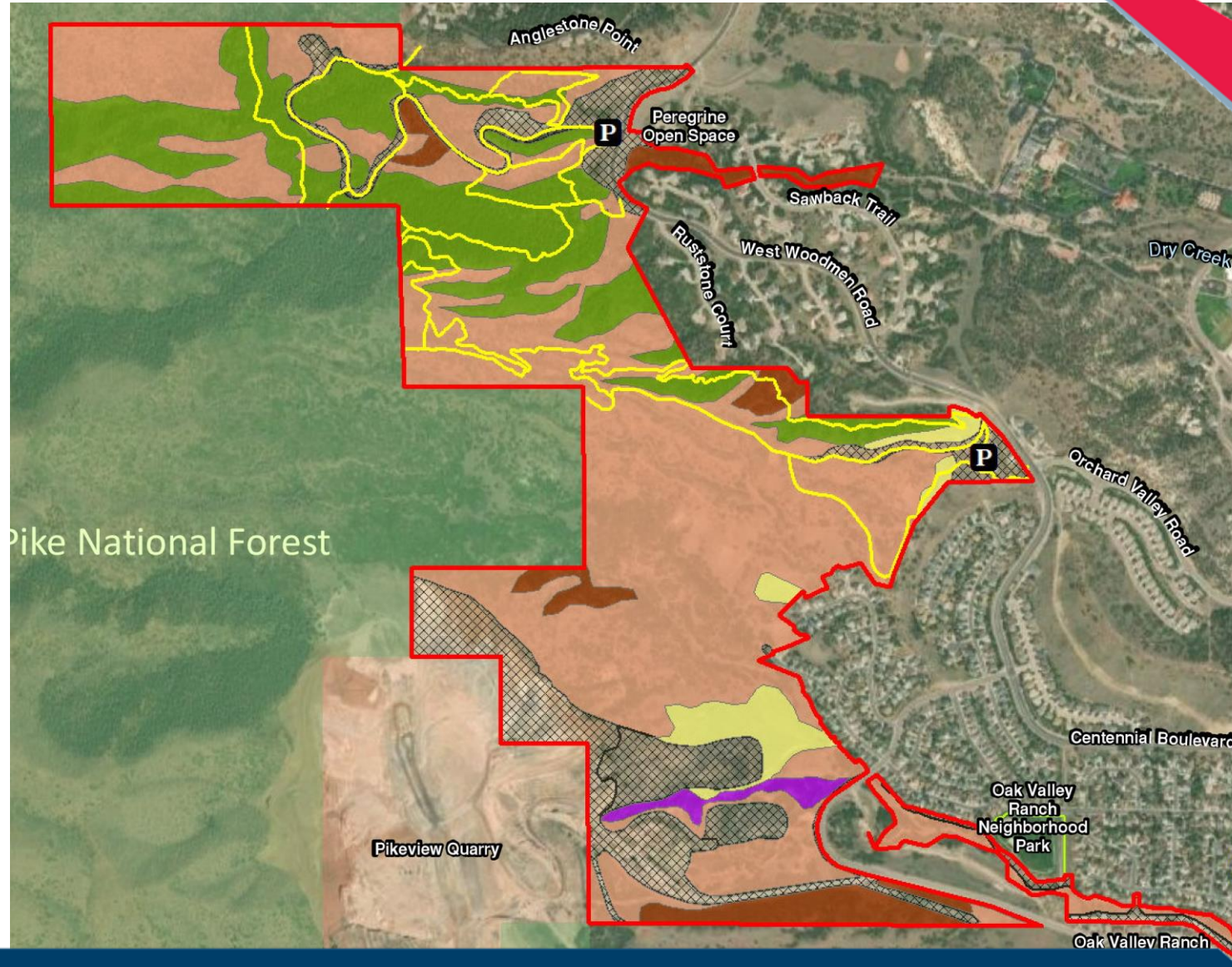
Vegetation

Legend

-  Parking/Trailhead
-  Blodgett Open Space
-  Designated Trail

Vegetation Communities

-  Disturbed/Developed
-  Mixed Conifer
-  Mixed Conifer Scrub/Shrub
-  Mixed grassland
-  Riparian
-  Scrub/Shrub
-  Neighborhood Park
-  Pike National Forest
-  U.S. Air Force Academy

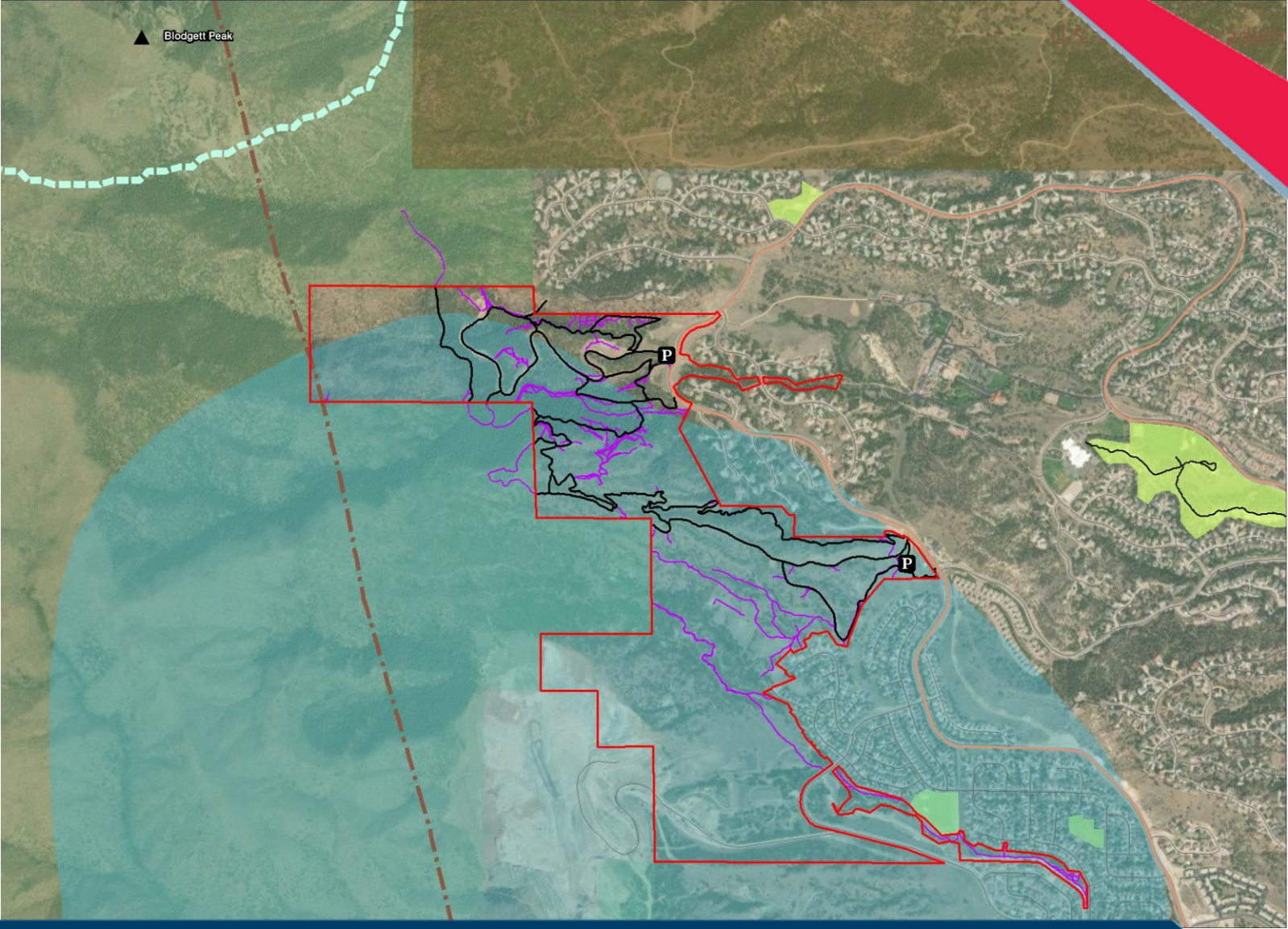


Bighorn Sheep Habitat



Legend

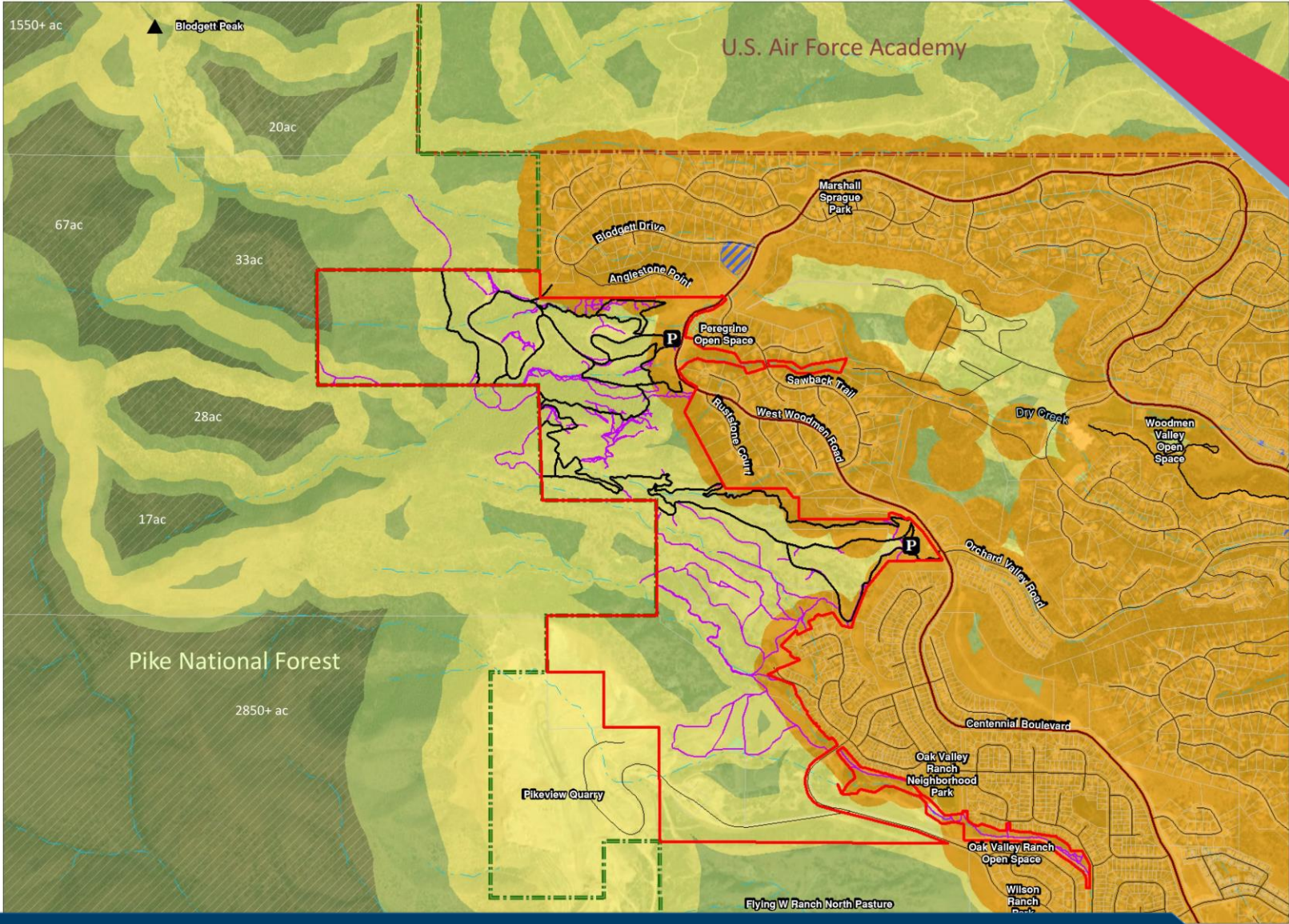
- P** Parking/Trailhead
- Blodgett Open Space
- Designated Trail
- Undesignated Trail
- Bighorn Migration Patterns
- Bighorn Production Area
- Bighorn Winter Range
- Neighborhood Park
- Pike National Forest
- U.S. Air Force Academy



Habitat Fragmentation



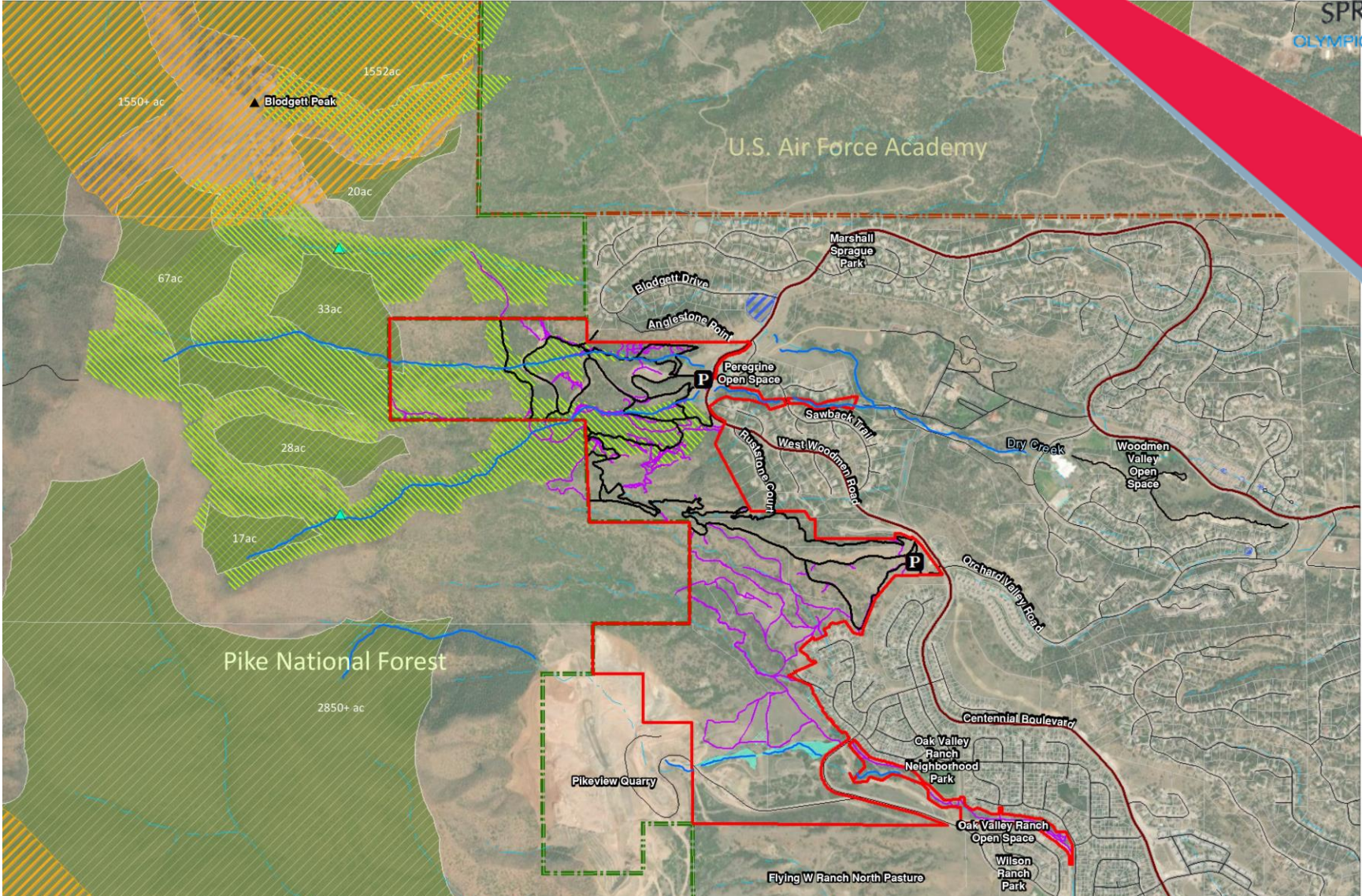
- Legend
- P Parking/Trailhead
 - Blodgett Open Space
 - Designated Trail
 - Undesignated Trail
 - Parcel Boundary
 - Intermittent Stream
 - Intermittent Poond
 - Pond
 - Pike National Forest
 - U.S. Air Force Academy
 - High Disturbance
 - Medium Disturbance
 - Secondary Habitat
 - Core Habitat



Site Assessment – Key Habitat Areas



- Legend
- P** Parking/Trailhead
 - Blodgett Open Space
 - Designated Trail
 - Undesignated Trail
 - Parcel Boundary
 - ▲ Water Crossing
 - Perennial Stream
 - Intermittent Stream
 - Intermittent Poond
 - Pond
 - Pike National Forest
 - U.S. Air Force Academy
 - Riparian
 - Bighorn Production Area
 - Core Habitat
 - Conifer Forest



Initial Public Engagement Findings



Blodgett Open Space Master and Management Plan

What We Have Hosted So Far...

State of the
Outdoors
(Industry Event)
May 15th



Onsite
Community
Activity at South
Trailhead
May 20th

Get Outdoors
Event at
Memorial Park
June 3rd



Ute Valley Park &
North Blodgett
Trailhead
Mornings
June 9 & 10th

Public Engagement - to date



761 Directly Engaged Citizens.

Total number of community members reached included 150 people in-person and 611 individual responses from the online input opportunities.

In person counts are based on the number of total dots on the board divided by the number of votes each person got (three yesses and two noes for a total of five votes per person).

Five In-Person Public Events.

Three Online Project Surveys (General, Visual Preferences, Geo-based).

Visual Preferences Boards both Online and In-Person Input.

Visual Preference Board Results



Blodgett Open Space Master and Management Plan

1 Accessible Trails for Other Power-Driven Mobility Devices

2 Bird and Wildlife Watching

3 Advanced Single-Use Mountain Biking Trails

4 Off-Leash Dog Area and On-Leash Trails

5 Volunteering

6 Multiuse Trails

7 Advanced Single-Use Hiking Trails

8 Chairlift on Adjacent Property to Upper Elevations

Tell us what you want to see!

- Place a green sticker on the features you want to see in the open space.
- Place a red sticker on the features you are not interested in seeing in the open space.

Features Preferences Board

Stay Informed! 719-799-6662 BlodgettMasterPlan@gmail.com coloradosprings.gov/BlodgettMasterPlan

Blodgett Open Space Master and Management Plan

9 Picnic Areas and Shelters

10 Nature-based Playground

11 Restrooms

12 Habitat Protection

13 Winter Sports Trails

14 Paragliding and Hang-gliding Launch and Landing Sites

15 Visitor / Regional Trailhead / Interpretive Center

16 Adaptive Management

Tell us what you want to see!

- Place a green sticker on the features you want to see in the open space.
- Place a red sticker on the features you are not interested in seeing in the open space.

Features Preferences Board

Stay Informed! 719-799-6662 BlodgettMasterPlan@gmail.com coloradosprings.gov/BlodgettMasterPlan

Visual Preference Board Results



Image No.	Image Title	Yes Totals (All In Person Events)	No Totals All (In Person Events)	Yes Totals (Online Survey)	No Totals (Online Survey)	All Yes Totals	All No Totals
1	Accessible Trails for Other Power-Driven Mobility Devices	37	34	42	101	79	135
2	Bird and Wildlife Watching	15	2	51	14	66	16
3	Advanced Single-Use Mountain Biking Trails	57	4	132	23	189	27
4	Off-Leash Dog Area and On-Leash Trails	36	9	61	68	97	77
5	Volunteering	20	1	48	6	68	7
6	Multiuse Trails	54	1	133	4	187	5
7	Advanced Single-Use Hiking Trails	66	0	95	17	161	17
8	Chairlift on Adjacent Property to Upper Elevations	25	46	84	55	109	101
9	Picnic Areas and Shelters	17	10	34	31	51	41
10	Nature-based Playground	33	2	28	30	61	32
11	Restrooms	37	13	16	11	53	24
12	Habitat Protection	64	3	82	13	146	16
13	Winter Sports Trails	43	1	80	9	123	10
14	Paragliding and Hang-gliding Launch and Landing Sites	32	36	130	30	162	66
15	Visitor / Regional Trailhead / Interpretive Center	17	9	20	32	37	41
16	Adaptive Management	22	4	19	14	41	18
Totals		575	175	1,055	458	1,630	633

Highest YES dot images

- Advanced Single-Use Mountain Biking Trails
- Advanced Single-Use Hiking Trails
- Multi-Use Trails
- Paragliding Launch and Landing Sites
- Habitat Protection

Highest NO dot images

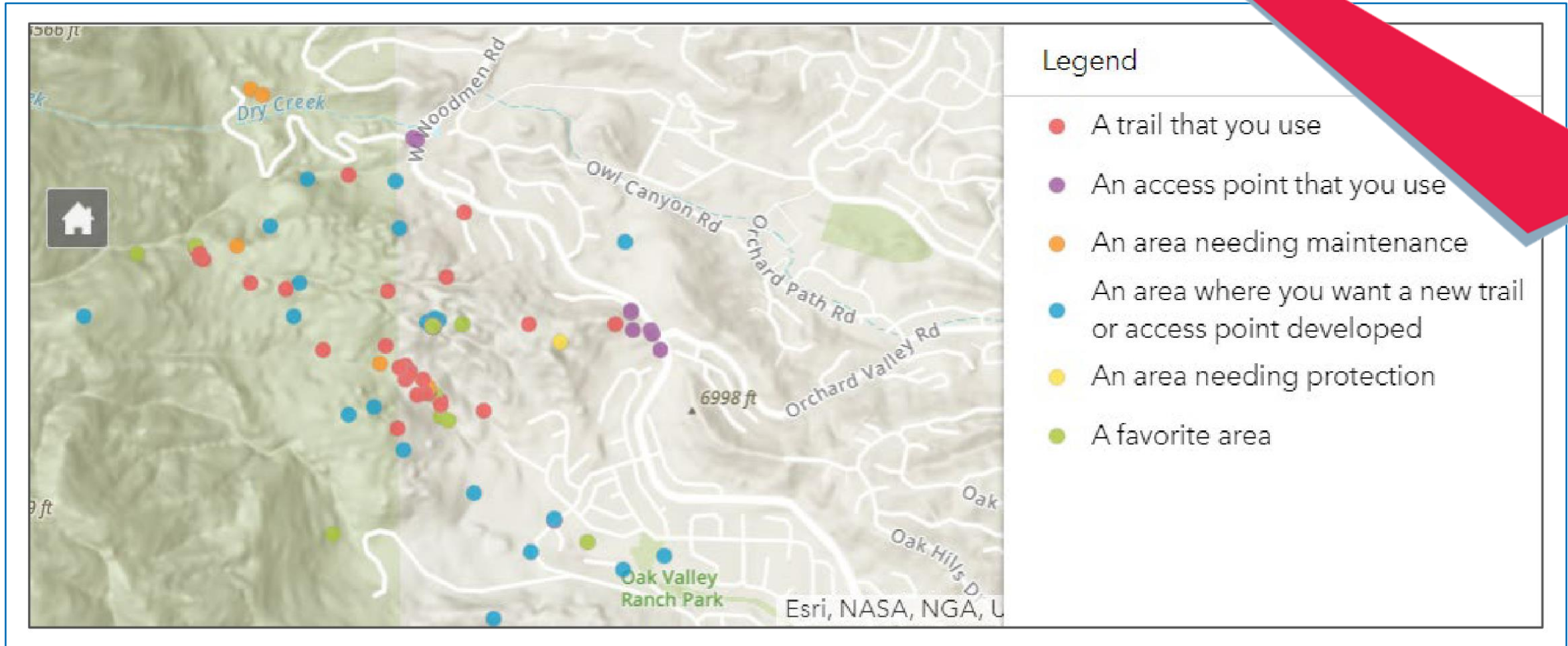
- Accessible Trails for OPDMD

No Clear Preference equal YES / NO dots

- Chairlift Access to Upper Elevations
- Off-Leash Dog Area
- Visitor / Regional Trailhead / Interpretive Center

Participants (407) were in favor of all other images.

ArcGIS Survey123 Results



Nearly 90% of the 107 participants skipped more than 3 questions.

General Survey Results



Preferred Experiences

- Views
- Trail Variety/ Challenging Terrain for all users
- Peaceful/Less Crowded
- Proximity to Home
- Access to USFS
- Wildlife Encounters
- Undeveloped/ Natural Landscape
- Hiking/Biking/ Trail Running

Anticipated Opportunities

- Preserving Natural Character, Pine Forest, drainages and wildlife habitat
- Paragliding Sites
- Additional Trails
- Connectivity: Sustainable Trails to Blodgett Peak, its ridgeline, Ormes Peak and to the surrounding neighborhoods

Respondents' Concerns

- User Conflict/ Overcrowding
- Trail and General Maintenance
- Loss of Challenging Trails
- Erosion
- Lack of Enforcement (dogs, night activity, vandalism, litter, e-bikes, rogue trails, dirt bikes & ATVs)
- Dogs
- Uncertainty about Plan recommendations

Nearly all participants (229) completed all the questions.

General Survey Demographics

Respondents' visits range from daily to never with most visited twice a week to 3 times per month

More than ½ of the respondent's hike to top of Blodgett Peak. Accents range from 2/week to 3-8 /year

Respondent age evenly spread 19-65 years with 10% over 66 or under 18

Respondents predominately live in 80919 with representation from all regional zip codes

22 August 2023 Community Work Session



Alternative Approaches



**Trails are primarily for the land,
not the people.**

BOS Stats for Consideration



Existing Trails to stay

About 4.5 miles some sustainable trail, some need work

Closing social and system routes

About 12 miles

New Sustainable Trails

Ranging from about 16-17 miles

Trailheads

Three with parking & comfort amenities



Public Preferences



Management

1. Enforcement (dogs, night activity, vandalism, litter, e-bikes, rogue trails, dirt bikes & ATVs)
2. Policy (e-bikes, adaptive management (muddy trail closures))
3. Maintain facilities, resources and trails
4. Concern with overcrowding

Recreation/Access

1. Single-use/directional trails for bikers and hikers
2. More technical mountain biking and hiking trails
3. Paragliding launch and landing sites
4. Add TH's & more Parking
5. Protect existing drainages, wildlife and wildlife habitat
6. Chairlift, off-leash area, Regional TH Center

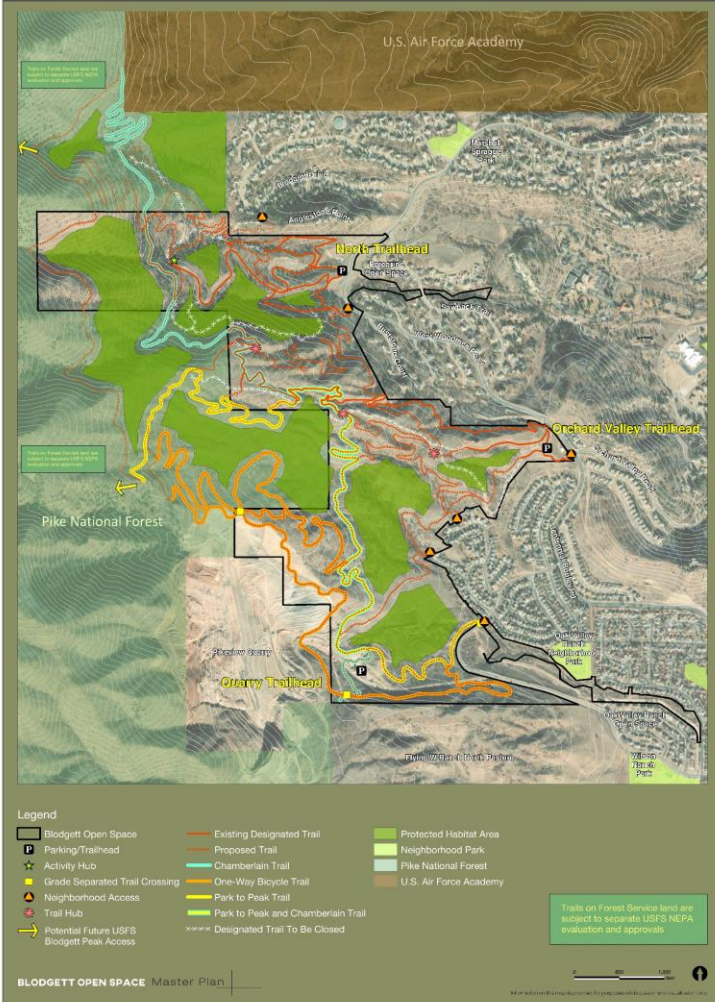
USFS/CPW

1. Sustainable and direct hiking trail to top of Blodgett with connections to Ormes Peak and the ridgeline
2. Sustainable multiuse trail to top of Blodgett with connections to Ormes Peak and the ridgeline

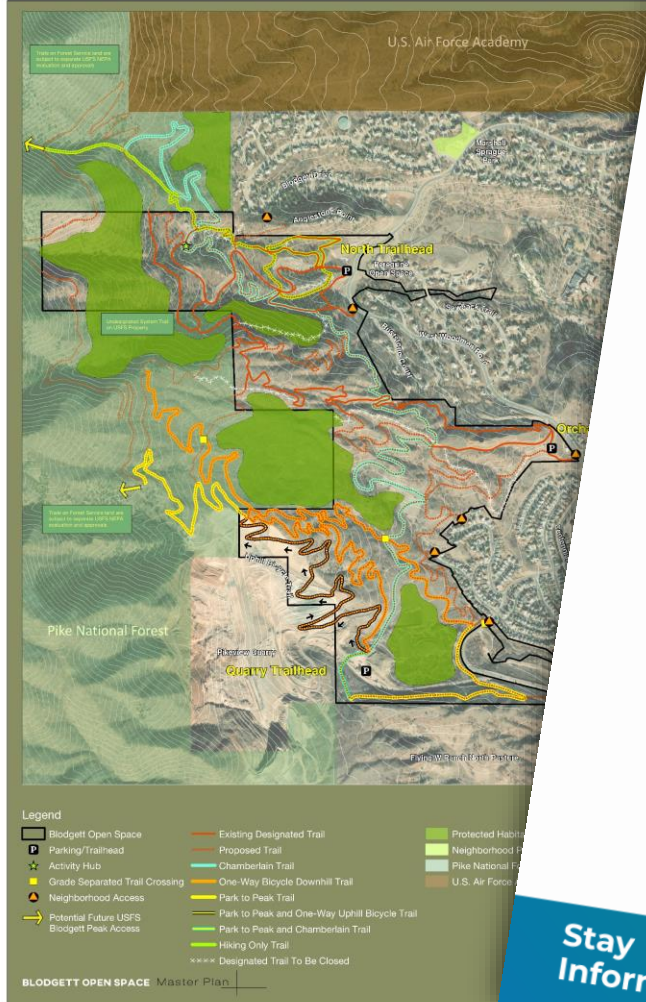
This is what we heard...

Alternative Concepts I & II

Alternative Concept I



Alternative Concept II

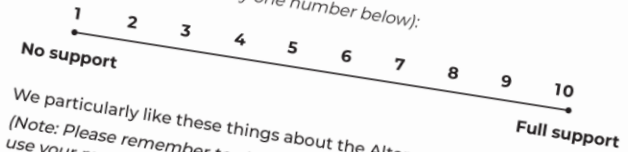


Blodgett Open Space Master and Management Plan

SMALL GROUP RESPONSE FORM ALTERNATIVE CONCEPTS I AND II

ALTERNATIVE CONCEPT I

Our group's level of support (circle only one number below):



We particularly like these things about the Alternative Concept I:
(Note: Please remember to also include the reason for why you like this feature. Also use your marker to place a number on the map which corresponds with any site-specific preference.)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

We have the following concerns about the Alternative Concept I:
(Note: Please remember to also include the reason for each concern. Also use your marker to place a number on the map which corresponds with any site-specific concern.)

6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

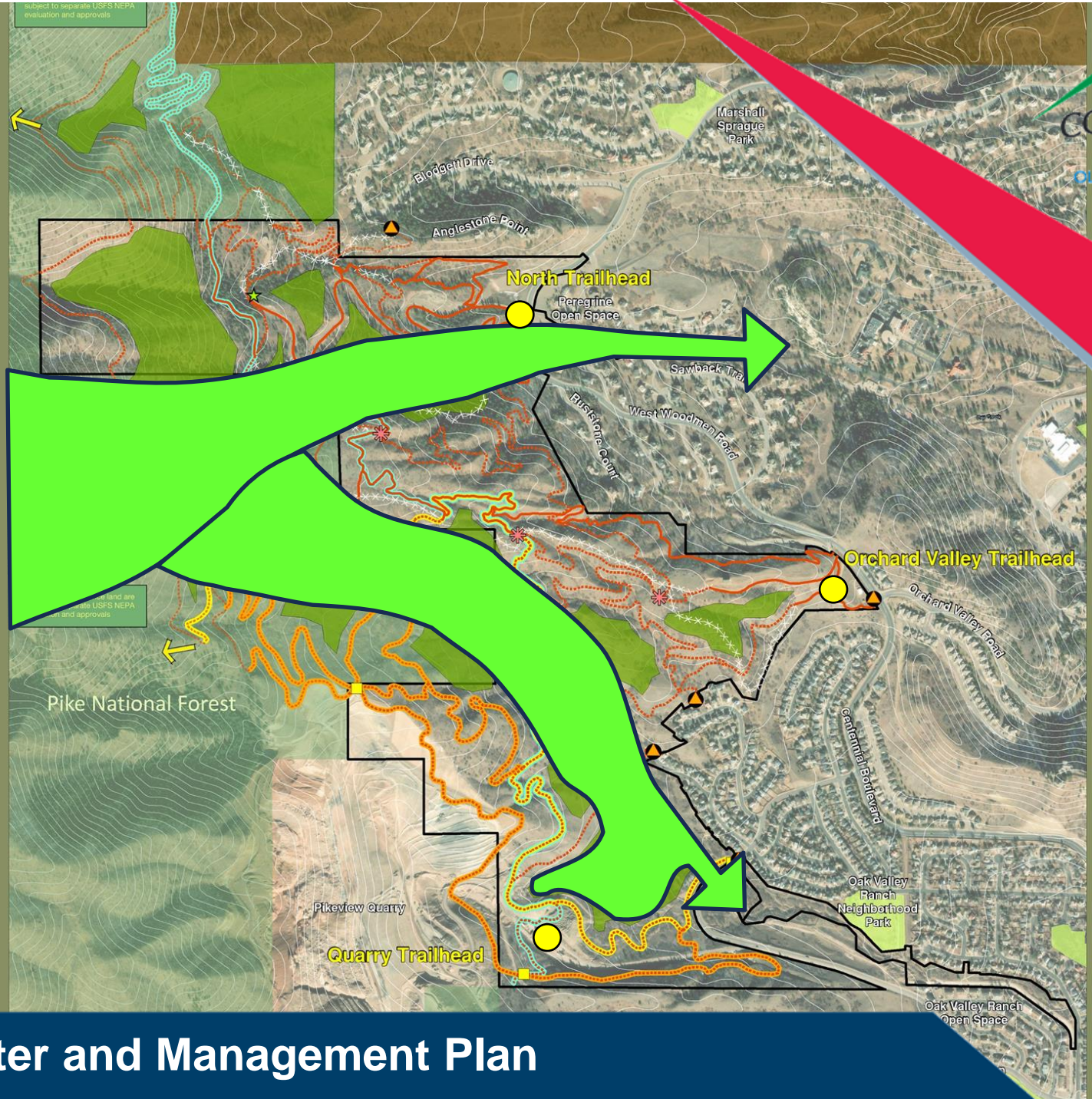
Stay Informed!

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coloradosprings.gov/BlodgettMasterPlan



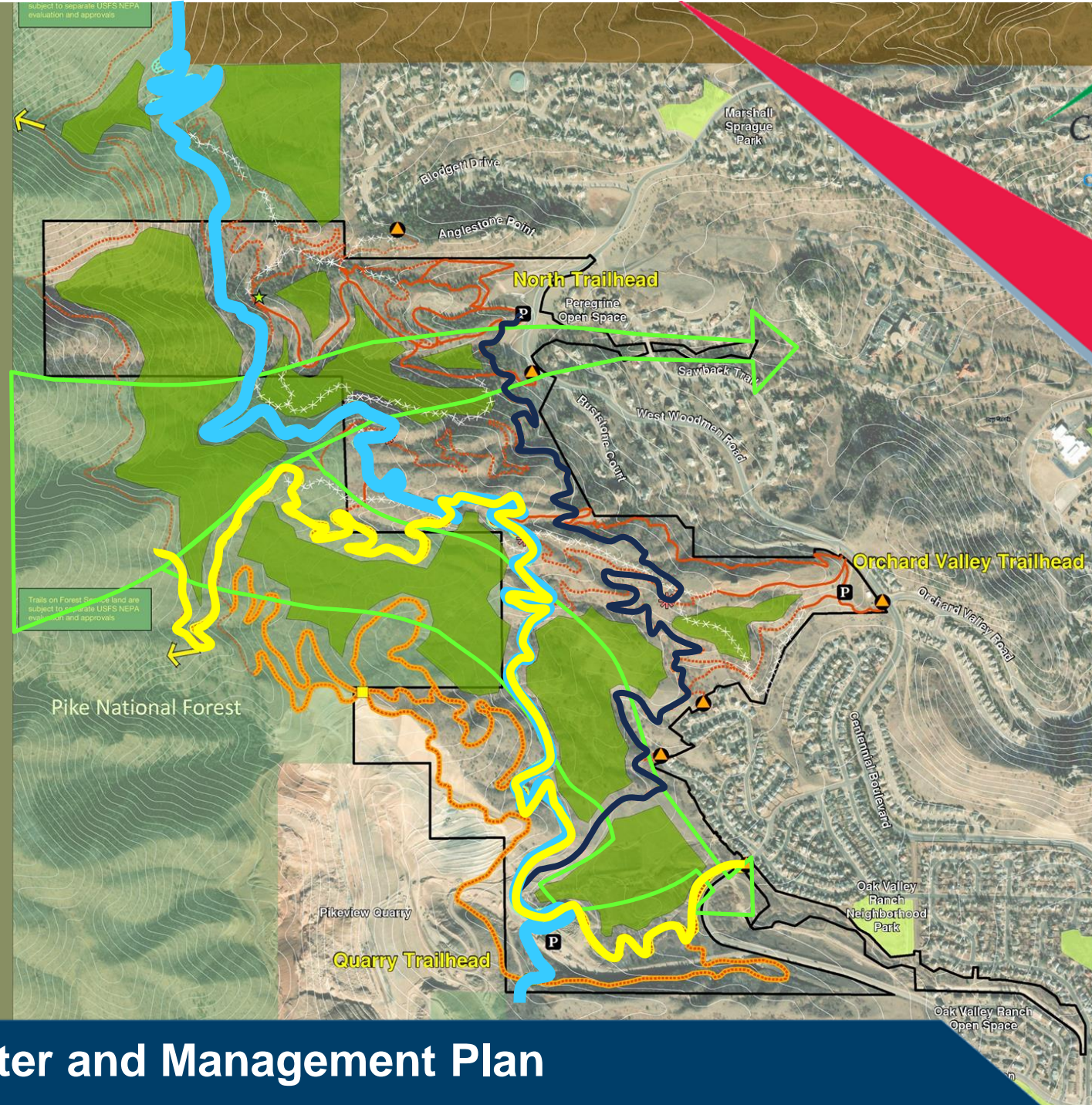
Alternative Concept I

- Blodgett Open Space
- Parking/Trailhead
- Activity Hub
- Grade Separated Trail Crossing
- Neighborhood Access
- Trail Hub
- Potential Future USFS Blodgett Peak Access
- Existing Designated Trail
- Proposed Trail
- Chamberlain Trail
- One-Way Bicycle Trail
- Park to Peak Trail
- Park to Peak and Chamberlain Trail
- Designated Trail To Be Closed
- Protected Habitat Area
- Neighborhood Park
- Pike National Forest
- U.S. Air Force Academy



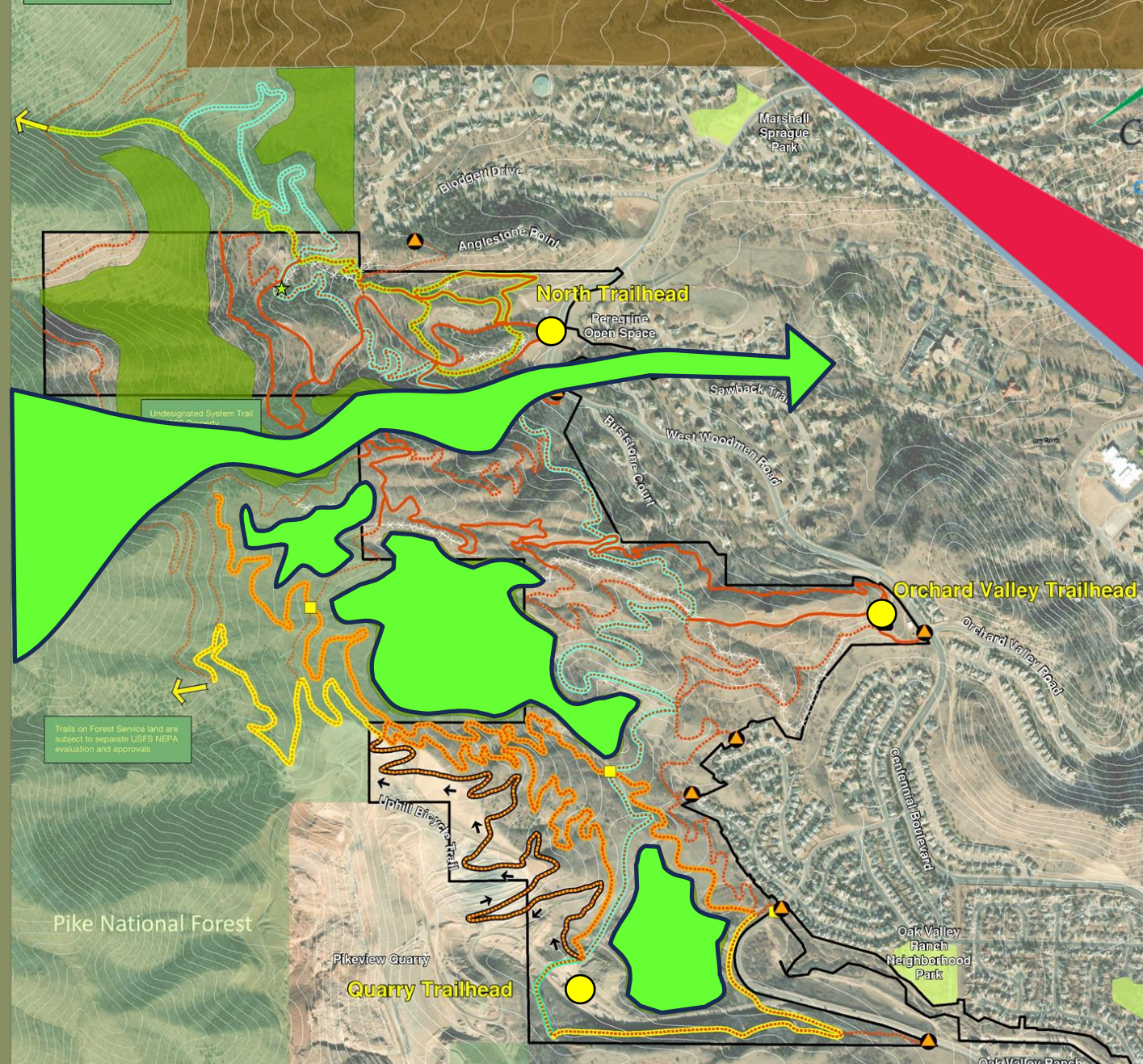
Alternative Concept I

- Blodgett Open Space
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- Chamberlain Trail
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- Park to Peak and Chamberlain Trail
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- Protected Habitat Area
- Neighborhood Park
- Pike National Forest
- U.S. Air Force Academy



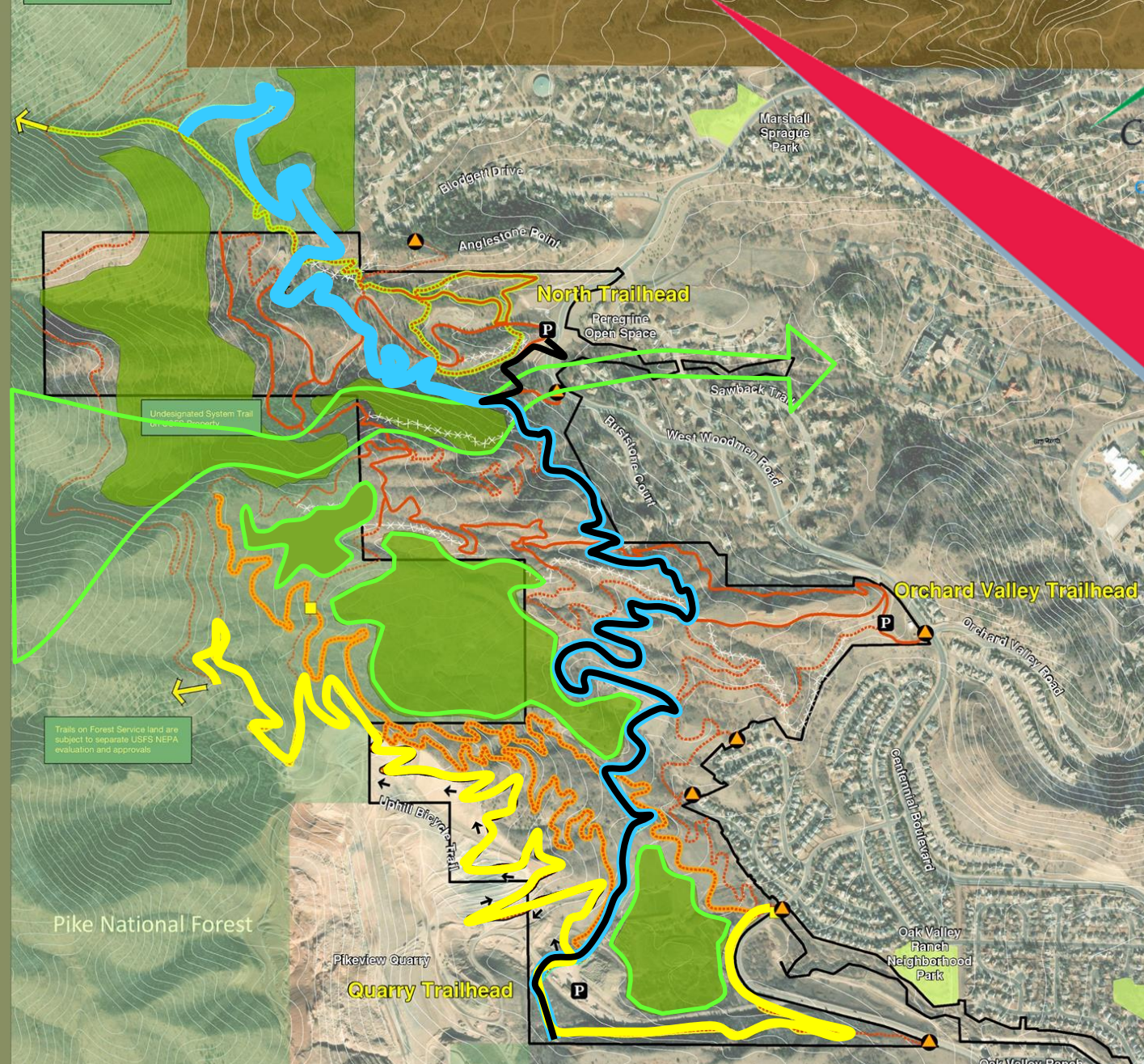
Alternative Concept II

-  Blodgett Open Space
-  Parking/Trailhead
-  Activity Hub
-  Grade Separated Trail Crossir
-  Neighborhood Access
-  Potential Future USFS Blodgett Peak Access
-  Existing Designated Trail
-  Proposed Trail
-  Chamberlain Trail
-  One-Way Bicycle Downhill Trail
-  Park to Peak Trail
-  Park to Peak and One-Way Uphill Bicycle Trail
-  Park to Peak and Chamberlain Trail
-  Hiking Only Trail
-  Designated Trail To Be Closed
-  Protected Habitat Area
-  Neighborhood Park
-  Pike National Forest
-  U.S. Air Force Academy

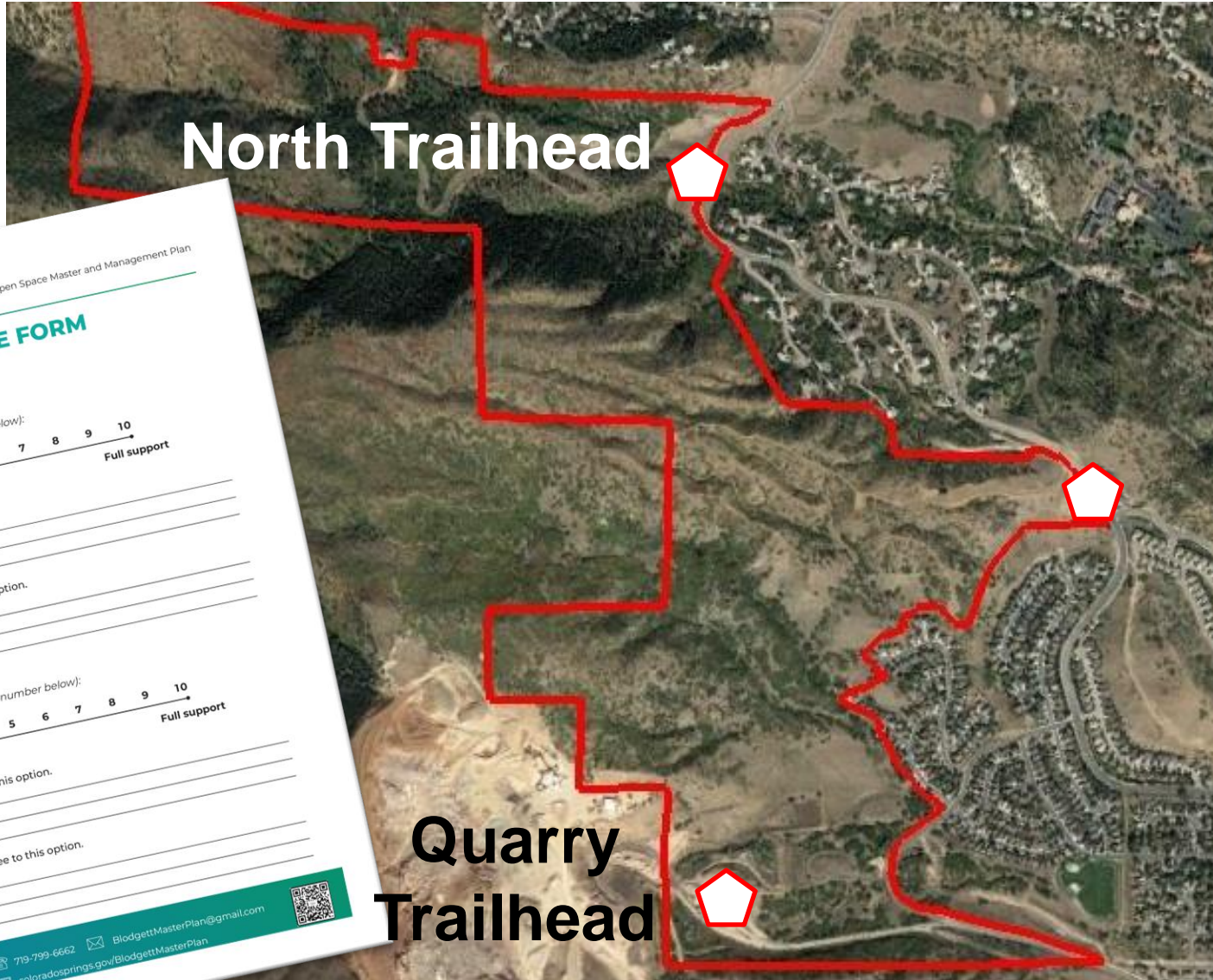


Alternative Concept II

-  Blodgett Open Space
-  Parking/Trailhead
-  Activity Hub
-  Grade Separated Trail Crossir
-  Neighborhood Access
-  Potential Future USFS Blodgett Peak Access
-  Existing Designated Trail
-  Proposed Trail
-  Chamberlain Trail
-  One-Way Bicycle Downhill Trail
-  Park to Peak Trail
-  Park to Peak and One-Way Uphill Bicycle Trail
-  Park to Peak and Chamberlain Trail
-  Hiking Only Trail
-  ***** Designated Trail To Be Closed
-  Protected Habitat Area
-  Neighborhood Park
-  Pike National Forest
-  U.S. Air Force Academy



Trailhead Options



North Trailhead

Orchard Valley Trailhead

Quarry Trailhead

Blodgett Open Space Master and Management Plan

SMALL GROUP RESPONSE FORM
TRAILHEADS

Expanded North Trailhead - a
Our group's level of support (circle only one number below):

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
No support Full support

The advantages we see to this option.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

The disadvantages we see to this option.

4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

Relocated North Trailhead - b
Our group's level of support (circle only one number below):

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
No support Full support

The advantages we see to this option.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

The disadvantages we see to this option.

4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

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USDA USFS Pike Peak Ranger District Blodgett Peak Access



Blodgett Open Space Master and Management Plan

SMALL GROUP RESPONSE FORM
USFS CONNECTION PREFERENCES

The current non-system routes to the top of Blodgett Peak are frequently used and result in degradation of the natural resources (such as erosion, loss of vegetation, traversing springs/seeps, wildlife disruption, tree root undermining).

Would your group support the concept of two sustainable system trails (one multiuse and one hiking only) to the ridgeline and top of Blodgett Peak?

Yes, because _____

No, because _____

Would your group support stabilizing the current direct route in the drainage just south of Blodgett Peak?

Yes, with stone stairs so the route remains steep and direct

Yes, with some reroutes to minimize the steepness

No, because _____

If only one sustainable system trail is possible to the top of Blodgett Peak, our group wants it to be...

Hiking only

Multiuse

Does your group support limiting system routes accessing Blodgett Peak and the ridgeline to consolidate wildlife habitat to reduce impact on these and all species?

Yes, because _____

No, because _____

Given your knowledge of the Bighorn Sheep Habitat, does your group support limiting access (number of people or seasonal closures) accessing Blodgett Peak and the ridgeline?

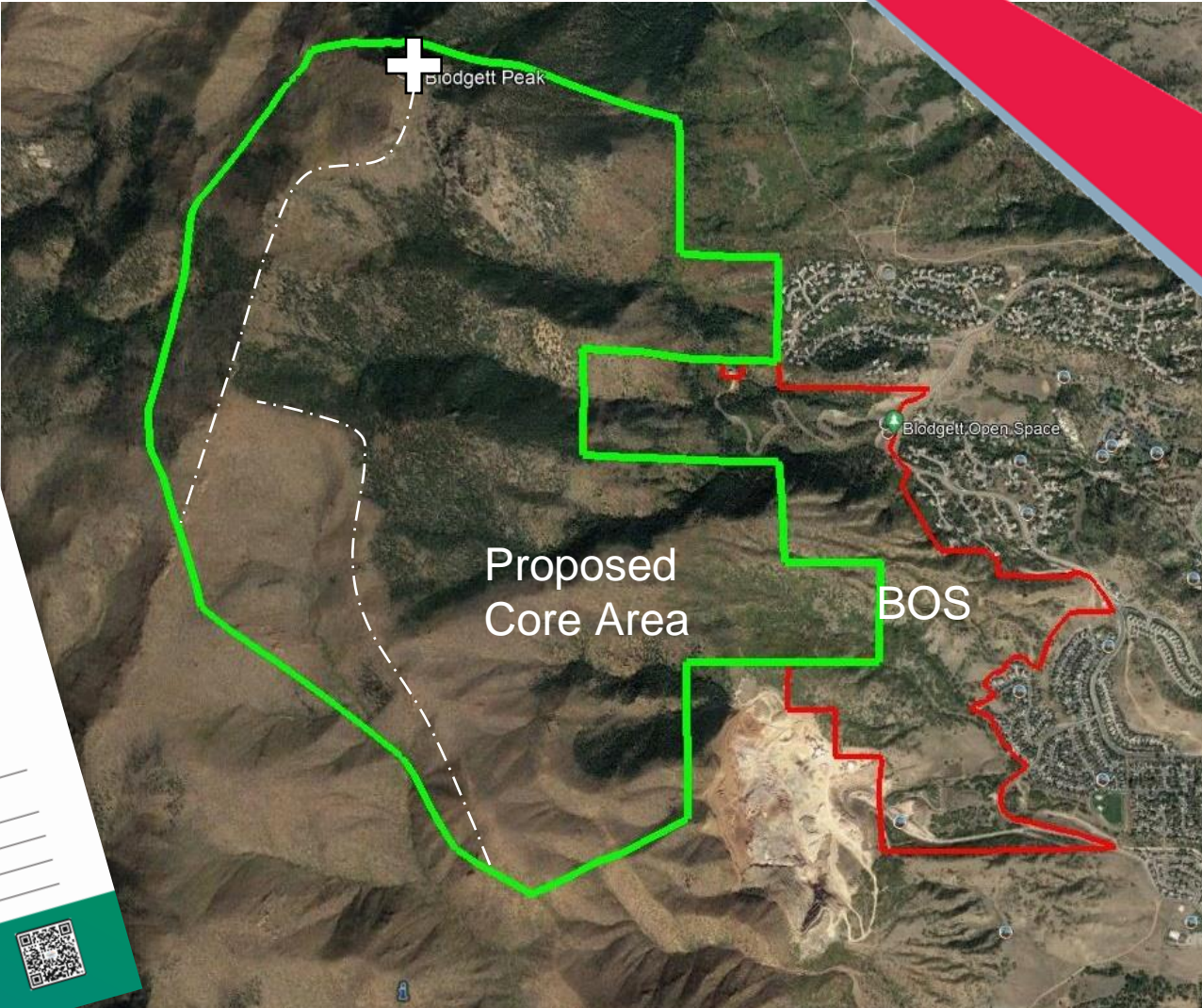
Yes, at all times

Yes during lambing season only

No, because _____

Are there any other thoughts you would like to share? _____

MasterPlan@gmail.com

22 August 2023 Community Work Session Summary of Community Input



Nearly all participants (112) completed all the small group activities and report out.

22 August 2023 Community Work Session

Summary of Community Input



Highly Preferred Elements and Experiences

- **Integrated and contiguous habitat protection areas**
- **Buffering neighborhoods from open space uses – trails and trailheads**
- **Wayfinding Signage**
- **Use Areas**
 - Trail Hubs
 - Paragliding Sites
 - Dog run area
- **Trails**
 - **Use Designated Trails**
 - Uphill bike only
 - Downhill bike only
 - Hiking only
 - **Trail Variety/ Challenging Terrain**
 - **Trail Connectivity**
 - North/South trail options
 - Chamberlain Trail higher in BOS
 - Surrounding neighborhoods
 - BOS Trail system optimization thru USFS lands
 - Sustainable Multi-Use Trail to Blodgett Peak, its ridgeline, Ormes Peak - Access to USFS lands
 - **Trailheads**
 - Expand North and Orchard Valley
 - Add Quarry Trailhead

Concerns

- **User Conflict/ Overcrowding**
- **Trail and General Maintenance**
- **Lack of Enforcement**
 - Dogs off leash
 - Nighttime nefarious activities
 - Existing traffic and high speeds on Centennial and Allegheny
- **Uncertainty about future USFS access and trail continuity**

Public Engagement Overview

Key Highlights from August 22nd Event and Online Input as of 9.26.23



Event Feedback Results

- 112 People in Attendance with an estimated 14 Small Group Teams of 4-5 people provided feedback on the concepts presented. Some attendees left without participating in the small group sessions or left without handing in their forms. This is an estimate based on the input collected at the end of the evening.
- 14 Small Group Teams of 4-5 people provided feedback on the two concepts presented.
 - ✓ Out of 10 points, Concept 1's average level of support was 6.
 - ✓ Out of 10 points, Concept 2's average level of support was 7.

Online Survey Feedback Results as of 9.26.23 (Survey closes on October 8th)

- 35 Responses to date.
- ✓ Out of 35 respondents, only 3 fully support Concept 1.
- ✓ Out of 35 respondents, only 1 fully does not support Concept 2.
- ✓ Concept 1 currently has low levels of support; out of 10 points, the average is 3
- ✓ Concept 2 currently has high levels of support; out of 10 points, the average is 9

**More from the online results will be shared when the survey closes.*

Public Engagement Overview



Trailhead Option Results

Trailhead Options Results from Event (out of 10 points total for support)

- ✓ Average level of support for Expanded North Trailhead A was 6
- ✓ Average level of support for Expanded North Trailhead B was 4
- ✓ Average level of support for Orchard Valley Trailhead was 8
- ✓ Average level of support for New Quarry Trailhead was 9

Trailhead Options Results from Online Survey (out of 10 points total for support)

- ✓ Average level of support for Expanded North Trailhead A was 7
- ✓ Average level of support for Expanded North Trailhead B was 5
- ✓ Average level of support for Orchard Valley Trailhead was 8
- ✓ Average level of support for New Quarry Trailhead was 9

North Trailhead A

North Trailhead B

Orchard Valley

New Quarry (South)



Public Engagement Overview

Key Highlights from August 22nd Event and Online Input as of 9.26.23



Online Survey Feedback Results as of 9.26.23 (Survey closes on October 8th) cont'd

USFS Preferences for sustainable systems to the top of Blodgett Peak:

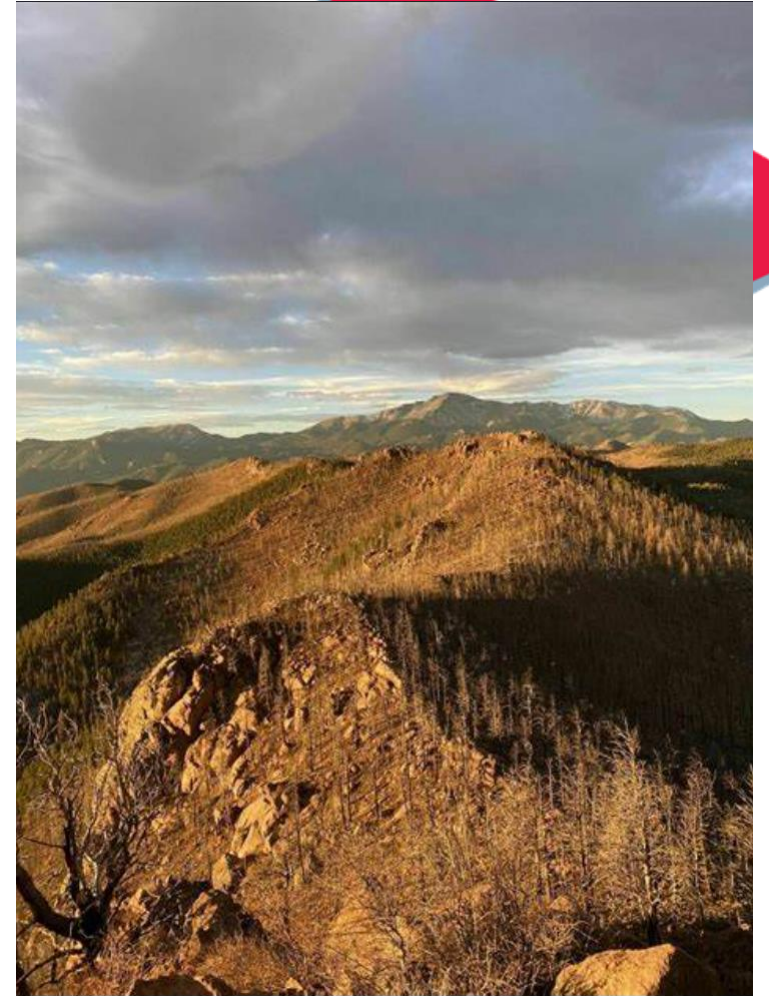
- ✓ 4 preferred hiking only
- ✓ 31 Preferred multiuse
- ✓ 30 support the concept of two sustainable system trails to the ridgeline and the peak while 6 do not support that.

USFS Preferences for stabilizing the current direct route in the drainage just south of Blodgett Peak:

- ✓ 19 said yes with stone stairs
- ✓ 10 said yes with some reroutes
- ✓ 7 said no

USFS Preferences for support for limiting system routes accessing Blodgett Peak and the ridgeline to consolidate wildlife habitat to reduce impact on these and all species:

- ✓ 17 said yes
- ✓ 18 said no



Public Engagement Overview

Key Highlights from August 22nd Event and Online Input as of 9.26.23



Online Survey Feedback Results as of 9.26.23 (Survey closes on October 8th) cont'd

USFS Preferences for support for limiting system routes accessing Blodgett Peak and the ridgeline to consolidate wildlife habitat to reduce impact on these and all species:

- ✓ 17 said yes
- ✓ 18 said no

USFS Preferences for supporting limited access to Blodgett Peak and the Ridgeline for Bighorn Sheep:

- ✓ 21 said yes at all times
- ✓ 22 said yes during lambing season only
- ✓ 12 said no



Next Steps



Next Steps



4 October	7:30 am	TOPS Working Committee Update
10 October	1:30 pm	SAC and Staff #5
12 October	7:30 am	Parks Advisory Board (PAB) Update
17 October	5:30 pm	Community Activity at Flying W Ranch – presentation of Recommended MMP and small group input activities
Mid-Dec thru Mid-Jan	online	Community Activity – review and comment on Draft Blodgett Open Space Master and Management Plan
7 Feb 2024	7:30 am	TOPS Working Committee presentation of Recommended BOS MMP
8 Feb 2024	7:30 am	PAB Presentation of Recommended BOS MMP
6 March 2024	7:30 am	TOPS Working Committee recommendation to PAB on BOS MMP
14 March 2024	7:30 am	PAB Action for approval on BOS MMP

COLORADO SPRINGS PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

TOPS WORKING COMMITTEE

Date: October 4, 2023

Item Number: Presentation Item # 1

Item Name: **Presentation of the Blodgett Open Space Master and Management Plan public process**

SUMMARY:

Through an extensive public process, Staff and the consultant team (Tapis Associates) are engaged in the Blodgett Peak Open Space Master and Management Plan. The public process is approximately halfway completed with refinement of the plan alternative to be presented to the community in October.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION:

N/A

BACKGROUND:

Blodgett Open Space, located on the northwest side of Colorado Springs, consists of multiple parcels of Trails, Open Space and Parks (TOPS) program acquired land over the past 20 years. The original Blodgett Open Space was first acquired in 2001. In recent years, the City of Colorado Springs Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department (PR&CS) purchased additional land in 3 phases for the expansion of the open space. The most recent purchase on 153 acres occurred in the spring of 2021. The entirety of Blodgett Open Space comprises of 384 acres.

To establish a holistic new plan for the long-range development and management of Blodgett Open Space, the PR&CS selected Tapis Associates to lead and facilitate an Open Space Master Plan and a Maintenance Management Plan (Management Plan). The combination of these plans will guide efforts to develop improvements and appropriately manage the open space over the next 10 to 15 years to meet today's and tomorrow's demands for the Colorado Springs Community and Pikes Peak Region.

The Blodgett Open Space has been used for passive recreation, including hiking, mountain biking and wildlife viewing. The open space also serves as a gateway to the Pike National Forest and several undesignated trails, including access to Blodgett Peak. With the increase in visitation, newly acquired properties, extensive development of rogue trails and an outdated master plan for the open space, the necessity for the comprehensive planning and resource oversight is critical.

The master and management plan for Blodgett Open Space seeks to create a balance between the need to protect and maintain the open space's historic and natural resource integrity with the need to serve the ever expanding base of current and future users. At the start of this planning process, the City determined that natural/cultural resource management and public access could be most effectively balanced by managing the open space properties together. The properties are being collectively named and managed as Blodgett Open Space.

The master plan process began in April 2023 with the City working with a variety of technical experts to conduct baseline surveys of the property. Data was collected to inform the plan through a variety of methods including numerous site visits, an active stakeholder action committee, online surveys, in person meetings, and review of existing resource studies.

To help guide the planning process project givens were presented and adopted by participants of the community meetings. The givens identify those elements of the master and management plan that are not negotiable. They represent the responsibilities of the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department and provide the parameters for the decisions that were made through the Blodgett Open Space master planning process.

From within this framework, master plan participants and the project team identified the key issues to be addressed throughout the process and established the project goals and guiding principles that served as the guidepost in the decision making process for the master and management plan. Guiding principles will be developed on the management and stewardship of the open space through preservation of the natural and cultural resources, balancing wildlife with management practices, implementing a sustainable trail system, improving forest health, and developing partnerships.

As of October 1, the process has included six in person engagement opportunities and three project surveys. The engagement was used to introduce the project, understand and discuss the issues, challenges, opportunities, and possibilities within Blodgett Open Space as well as possible access to Blodgett Peak on forest service lands. The public had an opportunity to hear the cohesive summary of the feedback and initial trail system and trailhead concepts at the community work session on August 22, 2023. Attendees were asked to work in small groups, discuss the concepts and provide feedback. This information collected is shaping the final draft recommendations that will be presented at the October 17th public meeting.

The Blodgett Open Space Master and Management Plan will represent a significant collaboration between the planning team, staff, United States Forest Service, United States Air Force Academy, neighborhood HOA's, numerous partnership organizations and the general public. This master plan will guide the future of this important park resource for the next 10-15 years.

A comprehensive overview and presentation of the final draft Blodgett Open Space Master and Management Plan will be presented to the TOPS Working Committee in February 2024 and final consideration for March of 2024.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

N/A

BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION:

N/A

ALTERNATIVE:

N/A

RECOMMENDATION:

Presentation item only, no action necessary at this time.

PROPOSED MOTION:

Presentation item only, no action required at this time.

Attachments:

Blodgett Open Space Master and Management Plan presentation.

All public meeting material to date for the Blodgett Open Space Master and Management Plan, along with compiled comments received throughout the public process, can be reviewed at :
www.coloradosprings.gov/BlodgettMasterPlan

PARTIES NOTIFIED OF THIS MEETING:

Participants of the Blodgett Open Space Master and Management Plan Process
Blodgett Open Space Stakeholder Action Committee
Project Partners
Trails and Open Space Coalition

COLORADO SPRINGS URBAN TRAIL PROJECT UPDATE



TOPS Working Committee
City of Colorado Springs
Parks, Recreation and Cultural
Services

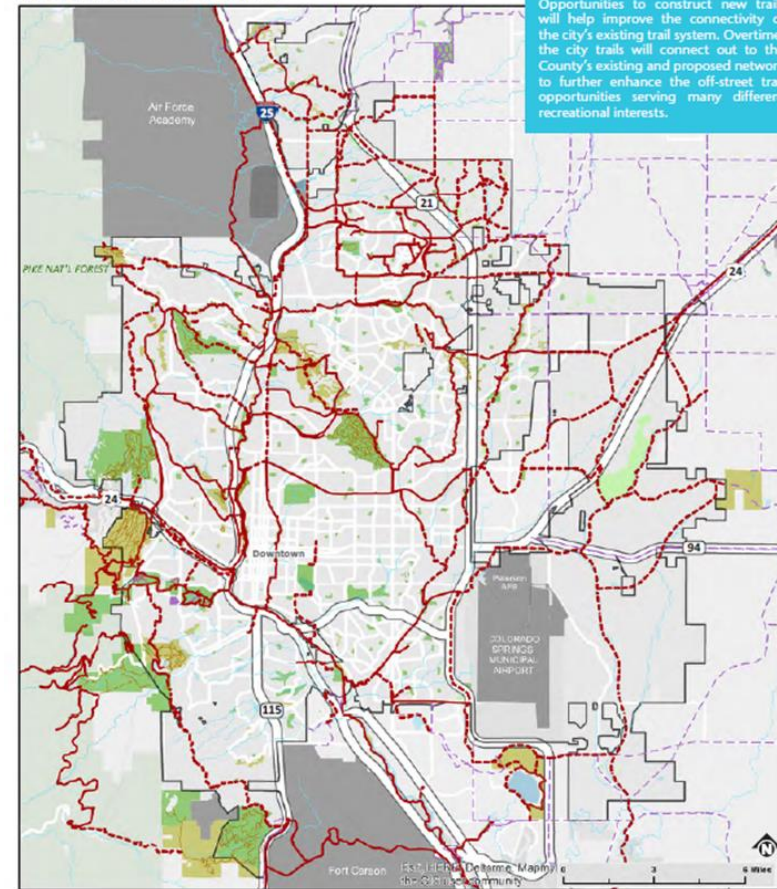
Emily Duncan- Trails Development Coordinator

October 4th, 2023 Design and Development

PARK SYSTEM MASTER PLAN

- A framework to guide the urban trail system network and connections, including local and regional connectivity

Map 23: Existing and Proposed Trail Network

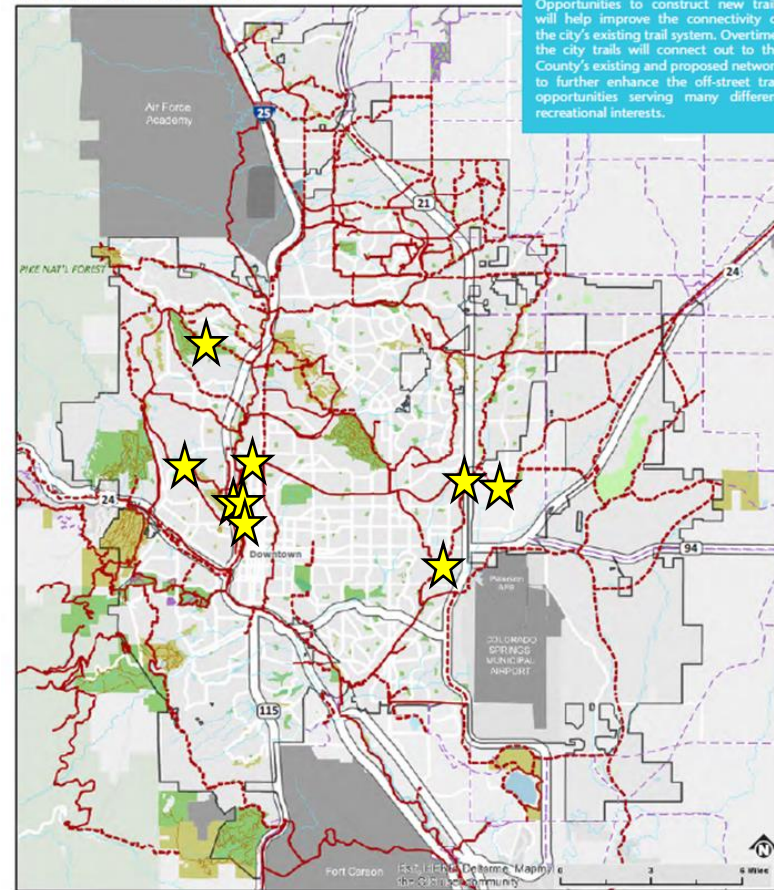


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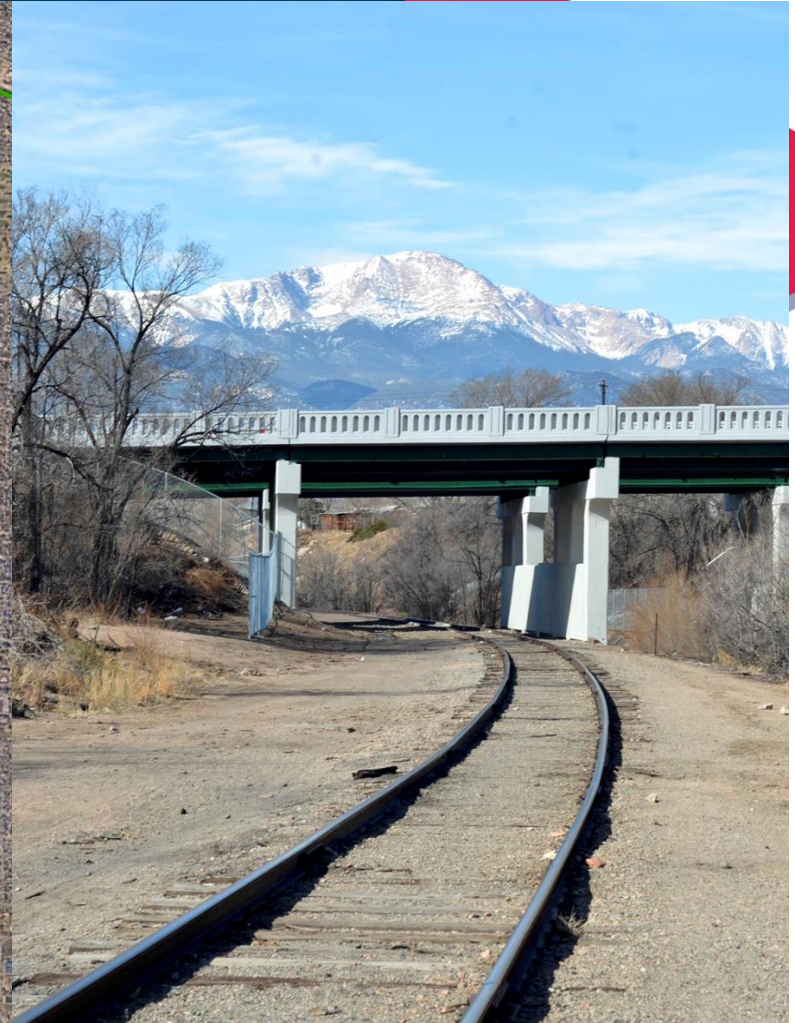
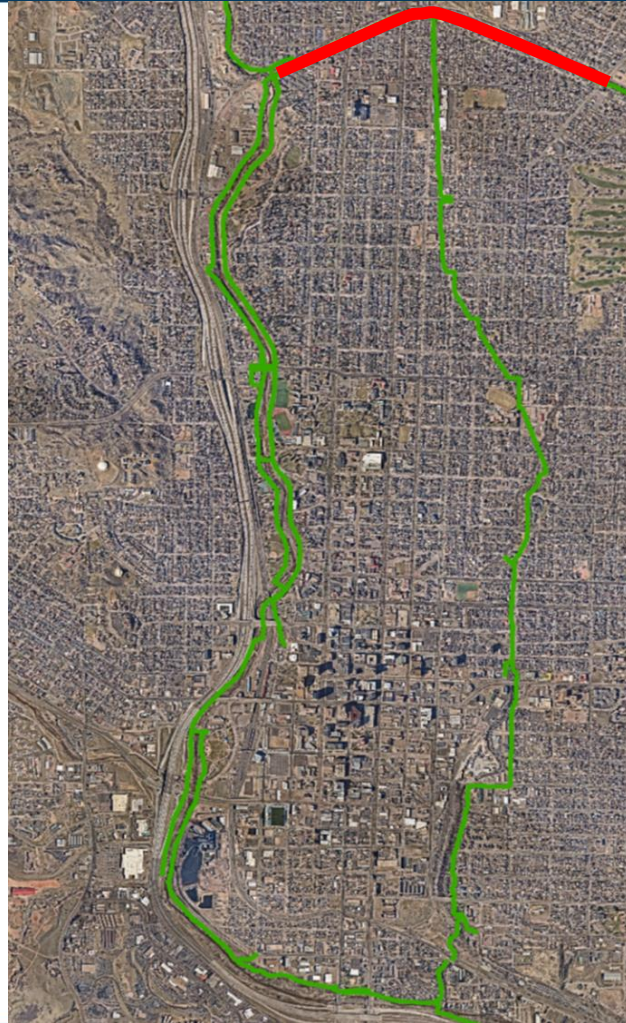
★ Projects Underway
(Construction, Design, Budgeting)

Map 23: Existing and Proposed Trail Network



LEGACY LOOP: ROCK ISLAND TRAIL

- Construction of Rock Island Trail from Van Buren Street to Templeton Gap
- Underpasses at Nevada and Cascade Avenue
- Funded by: TOPS Trails, LWCF Grant and Colorado the Beautiful Grant
- Tentative early 2024 completion



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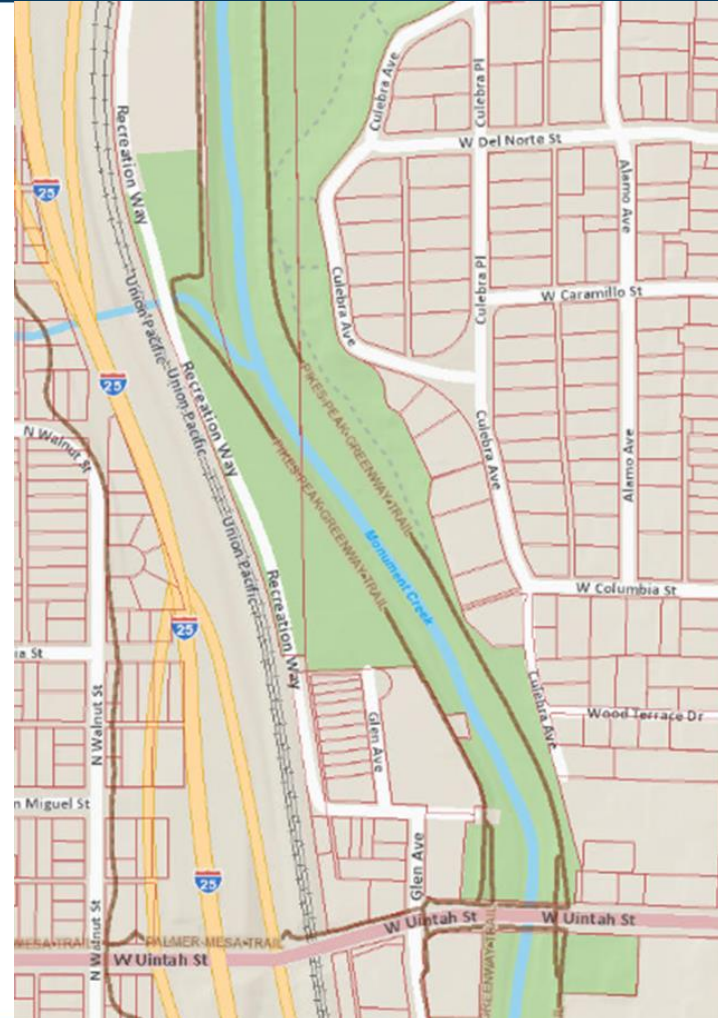


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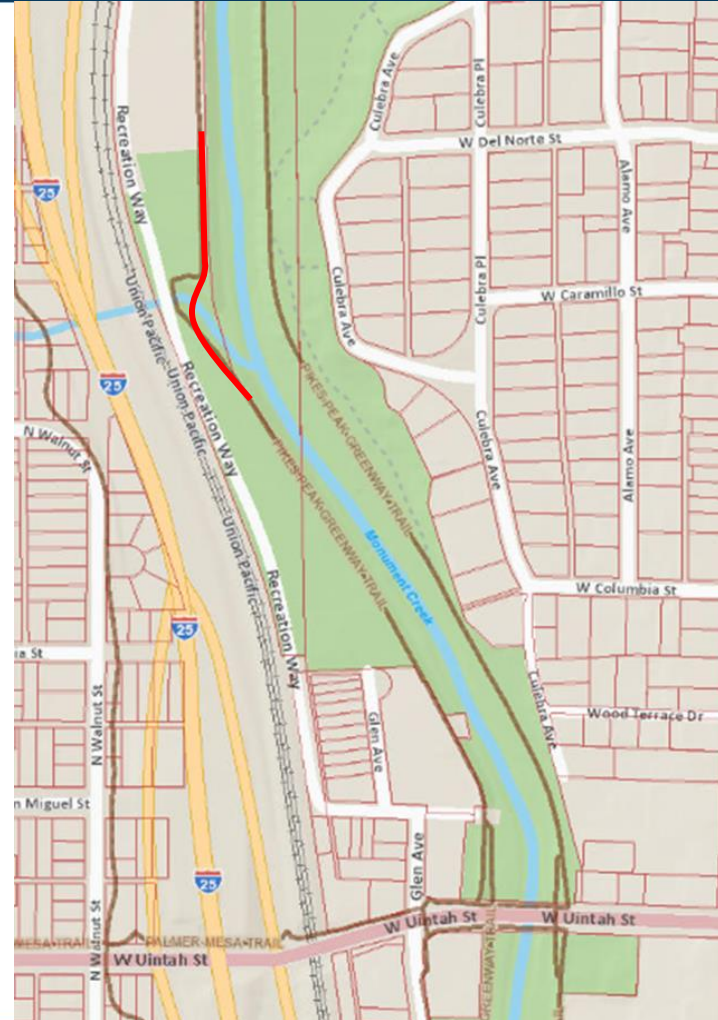
LEGACY LOOP: PIKES PEAK GREENWAY

- Construction of Pikes Peak Greenway (West) from Legacy Loop Trailhead south to Uintah
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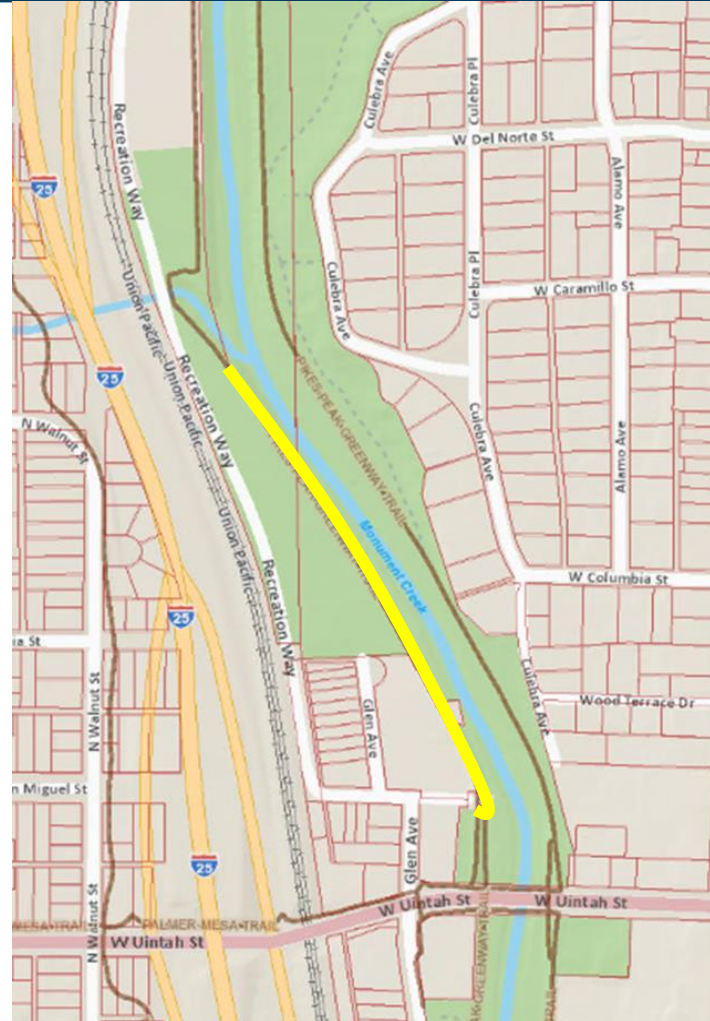


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LEGACY LOOP: PIKES PEAK GREENWAY

- Undergrounding of overhead utilities from Mesa Creek Confluence to Uintah
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- Tentative late Fall 2023 completion
- Trail development to follow



LEGACY LOOP: PIKES PEAK GREENWAY

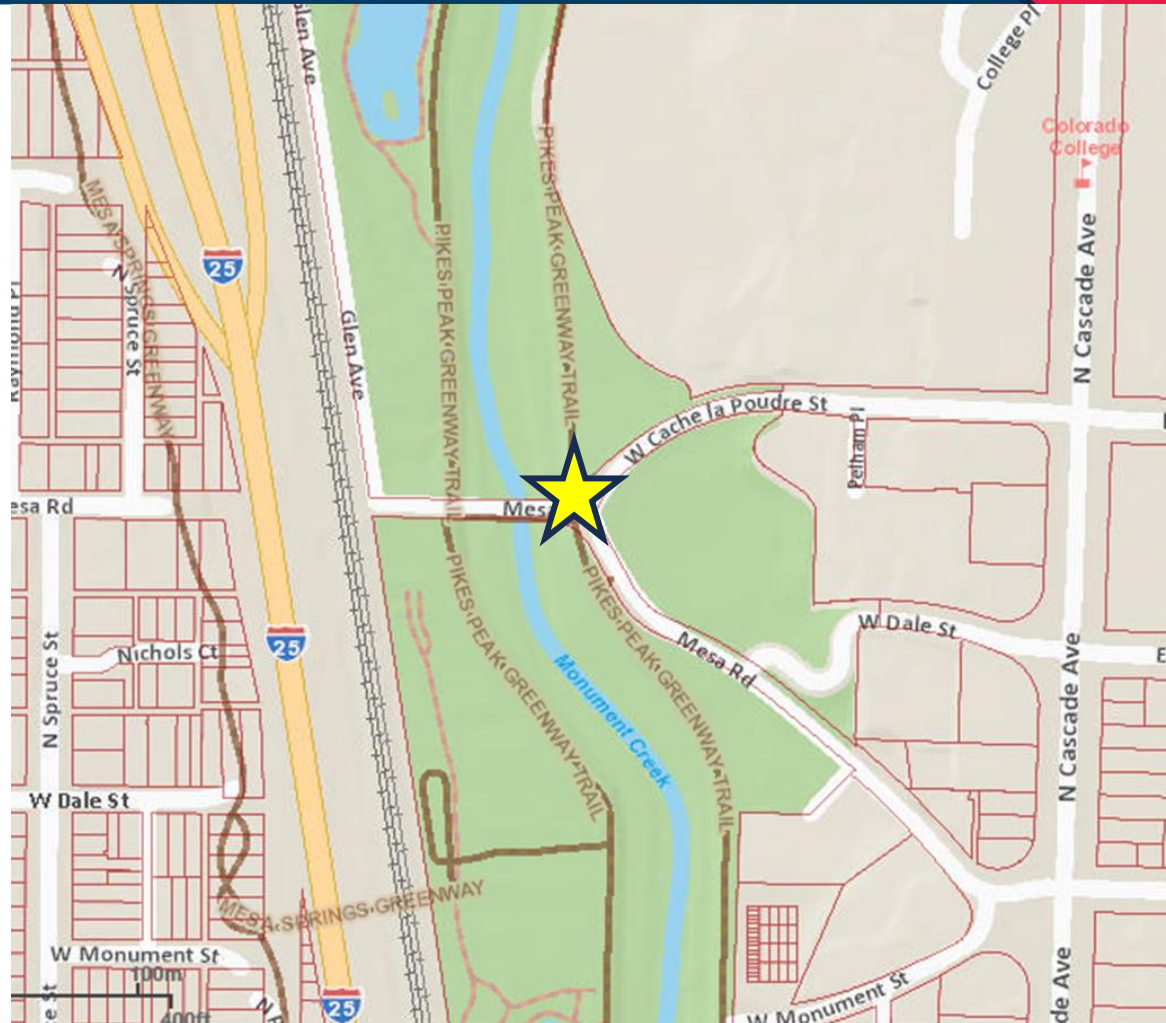


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LEGACY LOOP: PIKES PEAK GREENWAY

- Partnership with Colorado Springs Utilities for expanded trail access and utility maintenance
- Underpass access at Mesa Road for Pikes Peak Greenway
- Starting Construction 10/9
- Anticipated reopening early Summer 2024



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SAND CREEK TRAIL ROCK ISLAND TRAIL

- Sand Creek Trail: Palmer Park Blvd. to Constitution
- Rock Island Trail: Sand Creek at Powers to Constitution
- Funding: CDOT grant and TOPS Trails
- 2024 Bid and Construction



SAND CREEK TRAIL ROCK ISLAND TRAIL

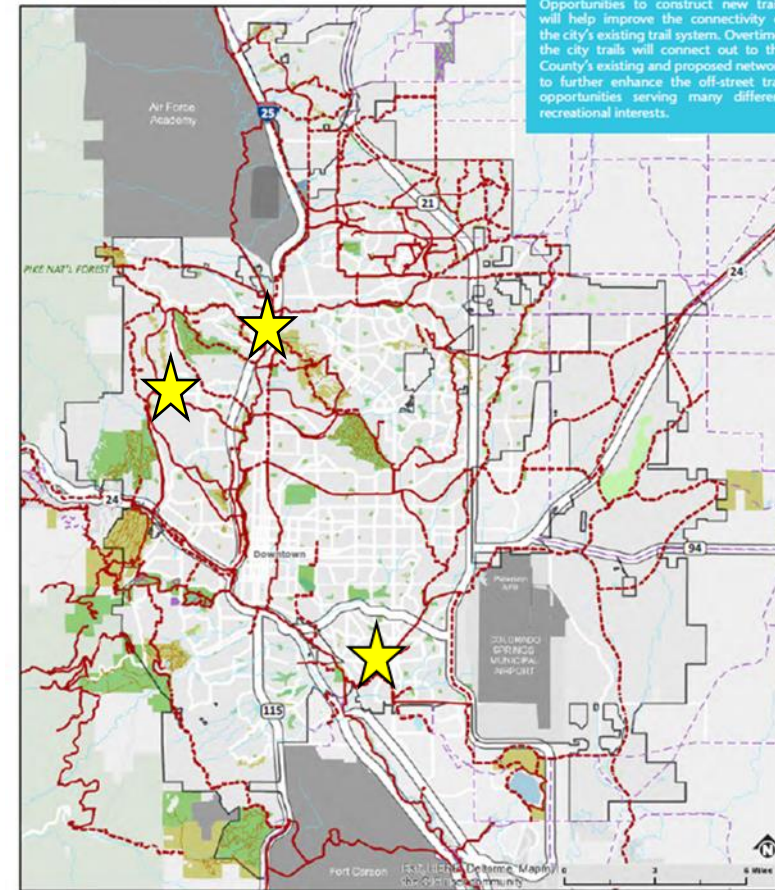
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RECENTLY COMPLETED PROJECTS

- **Pikes Peak Greenway**
 - Rockrimmon Blvd. to Cottonwood Creek Trail
- **Sinton Trail**
 - At Garden of the Gods Road
- **Sand Creek Trail**
 - At Hancock Expressway

Map 23: Existing and Proposed Trail Network



Proposed Urban Trail
Existing Urban Trail
Existing County Trail
Proposed County Trail
Existing Park Trail
Pike National Forest
Park Lands (City and Special District)
Open Space/Special Resource Area/Greenway
Undeveloped Park Land (City and Special District)
City Limits

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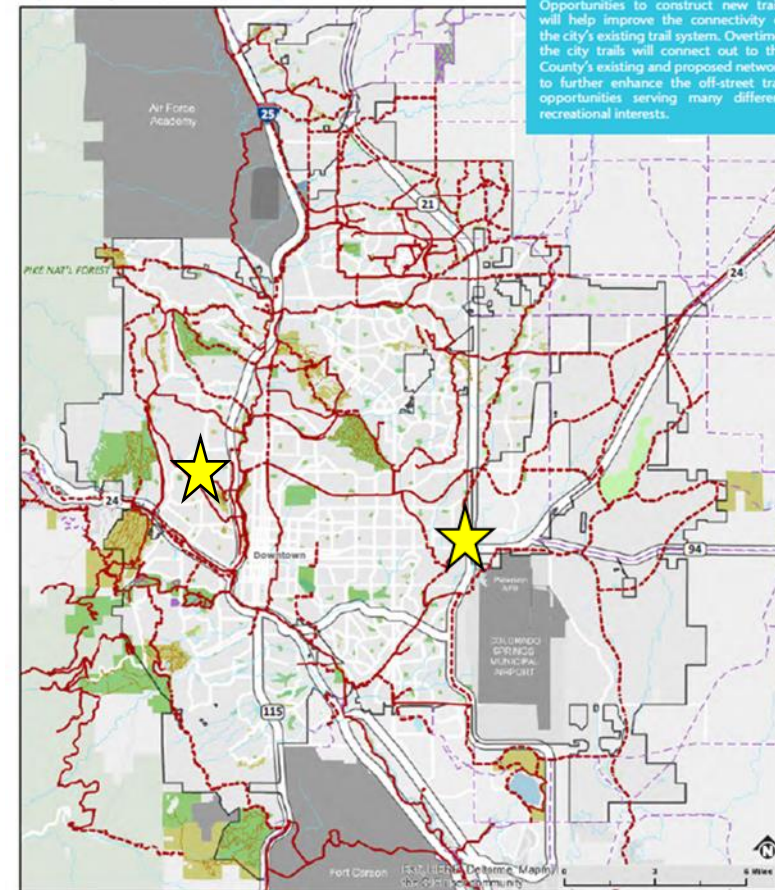
2024 URBAN TRAIL PROJECTS

Urban Trail Design

Sand Creek Trail

- Airport Road to Palmer Park
- Palmer Mesa Trail
- Mesa Road

Map 23: Existing and Proposed Trail Network



--- Proposed Urban Trail
--- Existing Urban Trail
--- Existing County Trail
--- Proposed County Trail
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Pike National Forest
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QUESTIONS? THANK YOU!

