

August 28, 2023



Municipality of Anchorage  
Girdwood Valley Service Area  
P.O. Box 390  
Girdwood, AK 99587

RE: Agency Authorization - Application for Comprehensive Plan Amendment – Girdwood Trails Plan

I hereby authorize Holly Spoth-Torres and Huddle AK to act as the Girdwood Service Area's representative regarding the Comprehensive Plan Amendment required for the Girdwood Trails Plan. If you have any questions, please contact me at 907-343-8374 or [kyle.kelley@anchorageak.gov](mailto:kyle.kelley@anchorageak.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kyle Kelley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kyle Kelley  
Girdwood Service Area Manager  
Municipality of Anchorage

# Comprehensive Plan Amendment

Municipality of Anchorage  
Planning Department  
PO Box 196650  
Anchorage, AK 99519-6650

PETITIONER*		PETITIONER REPRESENTATIVE (if any)	
Name (last name first): Kyle Kelley, Girdwood Service Area Manager		Name (last name first): Holly Spoth-Torres, Huddle AK	
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 390		Mailing Address: 605 W 2nd Ave	
Girdwood AK 99587		Anchorage AK 99501	
Contact Phone – Day: 907-343-8374 Evening:		Contact Phone – Day: 907-223-0136 Evening:	
E-mail: kyle.kelley@anchorage.gov		E-mail: holly@huddleak.com	

\*Report additional petitioners or disclose other co-owners on supplemental form. Failure to divulge other beneficial interest owners may delay processing of this application.

PROPERTY INFORMATION		
Property Tax # (000-000-00-000): Various parcels in Girdwood.		
Site Street Address: n/a		
Current legal description: (use additional sheet if necessary) n/a		
Existing Designation:	Acreage:	Grid #:
Proposed Designation:		
Existing use:	Proposed use (if any):	

I hereby certify that (I am) (I have been authorized to act for) the owner of the property described above and that I petition to amend the Comprehensive Plan in conformance with Title 21 of the Anchorage Municipal Code of Ordinances. I understand that payment of the application fee is nonrefundable and is to cover the costs associated with processing this application, and that it does not assure approval of the Comprehensive Plan Amendment. I also understand that assigned hearing dates are tentative and may have to be postponed by Planning Department staff, the Planning and Zoning Commission, or the Assembly for administrative reasons.

*Holly Spoth-Torres*  
Signature ☐ Owner ☒ Representative

(Representatives must provide written proof of authorization)

8/28/23  
Date

Holly Spoth-Torres, Huddle AK, Project Representative

Print Name

Accepted by: <i>FM</i>	Poster & Affidavit: <i>N/A</i>	Fee: <i>\$13,965.00</i>	Case Number: <i>2023-0119</i>	Meeting Date: <i>P2C: 11/06/23</i>
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# Application Comprehensive Plan Amendment Girdwood Trails Plan

August 28, 2023

## Introduction

The Girdwood Trails Plan (GTP) is a concerted effort that brought Girdwood together for a holistic conversation about the future of the trail system. The GTP is a 10–15-year guiding document for the community, local trails organizations, agencies, and elected officials that defines the Girdwood trails network and identifies trail projects that are supported by the community. The GTP is a framework with community-developed values, vision, and goals that local officials and partner organizations can use to make investment and project decisions. The Girdwood Trails Plan is divided into two parts:

### Part 1: Introduction and Existing Conditions

Part 1 of the GTP provides an overview of the existing trail system and summarizes community input, key themes, and needs. (GTP Plan pages 10 – 32)

### Part 2: Recommendations & Implementation

Part 2 of the GTP identifies both broad aspirations and specific implementation actions to guide trail projects over the next 10–15 years to achieve the trail system that Girdwood envisions. (GTP Plan pages 33 – 45)

Over the course of the existing condition analysis and stakeholder engagement, the following themes emerged:

- Girdwood Residents Value Access to Trails
- The Girdwood Trails System Should be Equitable and Balanced
- The Community Wants to Improve Connectivity and Access to Trails
- Sustainable Trail Management and Maintenance is Important
- Project Approval Processes Need to be Streamlined

The GTP works to address the major themes through the proposed trail network, proposed projects, and implementation plan.

Following is a short narrative of the items required by the Comprehensive Plan Amendment Application that may not be included in the GTP document. The GTP document as a stand-alone document provides all the details necessary for review.

## Purpose and Need for the Girdwood Trails Plan

The Girdwood Area Comprehensive Plan (GAP) was adopted in 1995, almost 30 years ago, and is currently being updated. The 1995 GAP gives overall policy direction for trails in the Girdwood Valley by outlining policies/guidelines that are currently used to guide trail management and projects in Girdwood. However, as population and trail use have increased, there is a demand for an expanded interconnected trail network that serves community and visitor needs. A plan that is more specifically focused on the

development and improvement of the trail network is needed to ensure that trail projects have been considered holistically and are supported by the community. It is Girdwood's intention that the GTP become a stand-alone, adopted element of the Comprehensive Plan. The Turnagain Arm area of Table 21.01-1 in 21.01.080 B1 should be amended to add the Girdwood Trails Plan as a Comprehensive Plan Element for Turnagain Arm.

In many communities, it is common for trail systems to be part of a larger open space system. Trails are often found within the boundaries of parks and open spaces, but also provide critical links connecting important open spaces with one another and other community facilities. The GTP is focused on trails, trail locations, and the types of trails to be developed. The GAP, as a comprehensive land-use plan, will provide policies and recommendations for open space in the Girdwood Valley.

The update to the GAP is ongoing and the process has developed a Draft Vision, Goals, & Policies document. This GTP is consistent with the GAP's Draft Vision, Goals, & Policies related to active transportation and trails and can be found as an attachment to this application.

The GTP meets the approval criteria for a Comprehensive Plan Amendment outlined in AMC 21.03.070C as follows:

1. The GTP identifies new issues, needs, and opportunities that are not adequately addressed in the GAP. Although the 1995 GAP outlines seven policies and guidelines related to trails, they were intended to be interim measures until a more specific trail plan was adopted. Although the 1995 GAP presumes that the revised Anchorage Trails Plan would provide more specific guidance for trails, the continued development and increased use of trails in Girdwood warrants its own guiding document. The GTP should supersede the seven recommendations outlined in the 1995 plan on pages 73-74. Some of the new issues, needs, and opportunities the GTP addresses that are not contained in the 1995 GAP include:
  - a. The GTP, including its values, vision, goals, and project list provides a holistic framework for agencies and community members to manage and improve Girdwood Trails. An official, coordinated, and community-supported guiding document that meets the criteria of municipal planning processes did not exist before this making it difficult to gain project approvals for trail projects.
  - b. A list of community-supported projects that drive investment and funding decisions for local officials and partner organizations. This list is helpful for the community when seeking funding.
  - c. When new residential and commercial development is proposed in Girdwood, the GTP will serve as a guide to preserve existing trails, build new trail connections, and ensure that community trail connectivity and trail user experience is enhanced.
  - d. Many of Girdwood's neighborhood streets are not ideal for active transportation and/or recreation. The GTP works to enhance community connectivity through the trail system so that Girdwood can remain a community focused on pedestrian and bicycle transportation.
  - e. With the increase in winter and summer bicycle use, this plan works to mitigate user conflicts by identifying new trails for all users to disperse trail congestion and separate users. The GTP trail map identifies a balanced network of trail types for many users.
  - f. This plan identifies additional safe trail crossings of Glacier Creek to improve connectivity of the trail system throughout the valley.

- g. This plan identifies trailhead and parking improvements to better serve visitors who want to use trails in the Girdwood Valley and reduce the impact on residents.
2. The GTP maintains the internal consistency of the GAP and is consistent with other elements of the comprehensive plan without the need to change other components of the plan. The content and projects identified the GTP do not require amendments to other plans, however the GTP will supersede certain elements of the Girdwood Comprehensive Plan as follows:
  - a. *Anchorage Park, Greenbelt and Recreation Facility Plan: Volume 3: Turnagain Arm, 1987:* The Turnagain Arm Park and Open Space plan is a planning document that was a tool used to assist communities in shaping their neighborhoods. The document was used to identify specific areas for trails and neighborhood and community-use parks and open spaces. This plan is outdated; however, it is still referenced in current Title 21 regarding use specific standards in Turnagain Arm for Parks and Open Areas (21.05.040 G2c). The GTP will replace the 1987 plan for trail projects in the use-specific standards identified in 21.05.040 G2c.
  - b. *Girdwood Commercial Areas and Transportation Master Plan, 2001:* This plan addresses two vitally important areas of concern for Girdwood - a long-range, multimodal transportation plan and a long-range strategy for improving the commercial areas in the Girdwood Valley. Relevant to the GTP the Girdwood Commercial Areas and Transportation Master Plan recommends the following:
    - i. Sidewalk connectivity to the nearby trail system.
    - ii. The trail system should provide for recreation, recreation-based tourism, and at the same time trails should support a growing volume of utilitarian travel, commuting to and from school/work or shopping by bike, skiing, or walking.
    - iii. Trail connections between development, between different trails, and between areas of the valley must be implemented.

The trail projects and recommendations in the GTP work to implement recommendations in the Girdwood Commercial Areas and Transportation Master Plan. The GTP Proposed Trail Network Map will supersede the Map 9 - Primary Trails.
  - c. *Crow Creek Neighborhood Land Use Plan, 2006:* This plan guides decisions by HLB on land to be sold and developed for housing and land to be retained for public open space and recreation use. To ensure that recreational trails are considered and reserved as housing is developed on HLB land, the GTP carries forward the proposed trails on page 27 of the Crow Creek Neighborhood Land Use Plan. These trails have been incorporated into the GTP Proposed Trail Network Map.
3. The GTP is not detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, convenience, or welfare of the community. One of the GTPs primary values is Health & Well-Being. Every project listed will improve community health and safety, whether providing safe creek crossings, minimizing user conflicts, reducing impacts on residents, or providing additional opportunities for everyone to get outdoors for physical activity.
4. The GTP is not an amendment to the comprehensive plan map so the approval criteria to ensure that "land use designations are to be equally or more supportive of the comprehensive plan goals, objective, policies, and guidelines," does not apply.
5. The GTP is not an amendment to the comprehensive plan map so the approval criteria to ensure that the "subject site is consistent with the adopted description and locational criteria for the

requested land use designation, and is physically suitable to accommodate the proposed designation, including but not limited to access, physical constraints, provision of utilities, and compatibility with surrounding designations and development patterns,” does not apply.

## Community and Stakeholder Engagement

There was extensive outreach and engagement during the development of the Girdwood Trails Plan. The GTP was collaboratively developed with Girdwood residents, stakeholders, municipal staff, and agency partners providing valuable input throughout the process. Community participation occurred over the duration of multiple years. Participants engaged in challenging conversations to find consensus around planning for a trail system that is balanced, accessible, inclusive, and representative of Girdwood’s community identity. Various engagement strategies were employed including:

- Trail Plan Subcommittee – appointed by the Girdwood Trails Committee (11 meetings, four workshops, one special meeting)
- 10 stakeholder interviews
- Two public meetings
- Online interactive map that allowed for site-specific comments
- Public review Draft Trails Plan available for comment via an online comment portal
- 16 Girdwood Trails Committee regular and special meetings (November 2021 - October 2022) reviewing and discussing plan amendments, involving over 200 interested members of the public.

All public meetings, workshops, and Girdwood Trails Committee meetings were noticed per Table 21.03-1 in AMC 21.03.020. Details about the engagement process can be found on pages 29-30 of the plan and attached to this application.



## Overarching Plan Goals

Through a community survey, public meetings, and years of Imagine! Girdwood committee meetings, the following four goals emerged as overarching themes that should guide the development of the Girdwood Area Plan. These four themes are remarkably similar to the broad goals identified in the 1995 GAP.

- Girdwood values its small-town atmosphere.
- A community with equitable and affordable access to services, facilities, and housing that maintain and enhance the quality of community life.
- Girdwood is a community that is active outdoors.
- Girdwood's natural environment is the basis/foundation of our identity and economy.

Girdwood residents want to make decisions about land-use and growth that protect quality of life, the natural environment, and make Girdwood an attractive place for business and economically strong. To do so the goals and policies outlined in this plan will work to establish a mix of land uses, create a range of housing choices, promote walkable neighborhoods and public spaces, preserve open/natural/wild spaces, foster attractive development consistent with Girdwood's sense of place, encourage a variety of transportation choices, make development decisions predictable, and encourage transparent participation and collaboration in community processes.

Clearly over the past three decades there is continuity that Girdwood residents want a healthy, sustainable, and vibrant small town with access to the outdoor environment. The community vision has not changed. However, 25 years later, there are a different set of community conditions and concerns requiring a new set of strategies, policies, and actions in order to address and guide change now and into the future. The Girdwood Area plan goals and policies are organized into four different topic areas:

1. Economic Development
2. Housing
3. Recreation & Natural Space
4. Transportation

## **TOPIC: Economic Development**

**VISION:** Increase economic opportunities for people to live, work, and play in Girdwood. Girdwood's environment drives its economy – development must be sustainable and sensitive to the current and changing environment. Girdwood aspires to be a low environmental impact community.

**GOAL:** Economic Diversification and Sustainability

**POLICY:** Increase commercial space (office and retail).

**POLICY:** Provide space for light industrial.

**POLICY:** Girdwood is business-friendly – Girdwood has opportunities for entrepreneurs and innovators.

**POLICY:** Girdwood increases opportunities for cottage craft.

**GOAL:** Economic development in Girdwood is compatible with the natural environment.

**POLICY:** Economic development initiatives will minimize the impact on Girdwood's natural environment.

**POLICY:** Conservation as a form of development. For example, the protection of valuable wild/natural/open space can be a contributor to the local economy.

**POLICY:** New and existing development is connected to the trail and active transportation system.

**GOAL:** Development that is sensitive to and enhances the natural environment.

**POLICY:** All roads and parking lots don't have to be paved.

**POLICY:** Green Infrastructure.

**POLICY:** Commercial development design guidelines reflect the characteristics of the community.

**GOAL:** Girdwood is a climate resilient community.

**POLICY:** Girdwood develops a Climate Action Plan.

**POLICY:** Encourage industry/commerce that reflects the changing climate.

**POLICY:** Enhance existing and build new infrastructure to support future climate norms.

**GOAL:** Girdwood has a broad range of support services within the community.

**POLICY:** Encourage the expansion of childcare facilities to promote the family atmosphere of people living and working in Girdwood.

**POLICY:** A variety of ancillary health care services are provided locally.

GOAL: Girdwood decreases its carbon footprint.

POLICY: Girdwood develops programs and incentives to increase efficiency, decrease energy use, and promotes renewable energy sources.

POLICY: Girdwood works with utilities to develop sustainability programs and incentives, including a recycling program.

GOAL: Girdwood maintains and enhances our community character and sense of place.

POLICY: Encourage development and design guidelines that maintain and enhance the natural character and small town feel of Girdwood.

POLICY: Encourage the preservation of Girdwood's historical and cultural resources by utilizing Federal and State Historic Preservation Tax Incentive Programs, creating new incentive programs where appropriate, and participating in the local landmark program.

POLICY: Support knowledge and preservation of Girdwood's unique historical and cultural resources through community-driven and led interpretation projects.

POLICY: Encourage and streamline events and festivals.

POLICY: Girdwood has a variety of indoor and outdoor community gathering spaces.

#### **TOPIC: Housing**

VISION: The range of housing options in Girdwood allows residents the opportunity to live and work in Girdwood. The cost of housing in Girdwood balances employment and income distribution.

GOAL 1: Maximize the use of existing housing inventory to meet housing needs in Girdwood.

POLICY: Develop strategies and best practices to maximize the use of existing Girdwood housing inventory to address housing need in Girdwood.

POLICY: Support the short-term rental housing market in Girdwood while minimizing its impacts to the community through appropriate regulations.

POLICY: Encourage long-term rentals by providing incentives such as using tax incentives or exemptions for property-owners.

POLICY: Encourage property renovations that increase density through regulatory changes, tax, or financial incentives where appropriate zoning allows.

GOAL 2: Encourage a broad range of new housing development that is consistent with Girdwood's community character, natural character, and Girdwood's housing vision, needs, and cost challenges.

POLICY: Girdwood encourages mixed-use residential and multi-family housing developments where appropriate.

POLICY: All residential zoning in Girdwood allows for duplex developments with multi-family housing (more than triplex) allowed in targeted areas.

POLICY: Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) are encouraged where appropriate.

POLICY: Explore and encourage non-conventional residential alternatives for meeting the diversity of housing demands (tiny homes, alternative construction).

POLICY: Encourage and explore alternatives for more affordable housing such as but not limited to single-family housing and detached development: for example, small lot, community land trusts, or unit lot subdivisions.

POLICY: Pursue opportunities to fund infrastructure improvements to reduce overall housing development costs such as water, sewer, or public roads.

POLICY: Pursue the development of community-supported senior housing where residents can age in place. (For example, Public-Private Partnership) (look at example in Cooper Landing). Example Carol Creek.

**GOAL 3: Develop additional organizational capacity for housing development in Girdwood.**

POLICY: Support efforts to create additional funding for housing and/or bridge financing gaps; collaborate with other communities and organizations to provide these opportunities. Examples are a housing trust, community land trust, mezzanine fund, tax increment financing, and non-conventional loan programs.

POLICY: Girdwood creates a housing coalition comprised of public, non-profit, and the private sector to advocate solutions for housing development.

POLICY: Market Girdwood to community-oriented housing developers that can bring creative financing options to address housing affordability and build housing that reflects Girdwood's community character.

POLICY: Partner with HLB to meet Girdwood's housing and community needs.

**GOAL 4: Girdwood collects and analyzes housing data to better support community planning and development (this is action-informing, not a requirement for new housing development).**

POLICY: Girdwood develops a process to collect and publish regular market data.

POLICY: Develop a housing strategy and needs assessment.

POLICY: Develop performance measures for housing to track progress and market adjustments.

POLICY: Develop an appropriate property tax incentive program to implement in Girdwood.

**TOPIC: Recreation and Natural Space**

VISION: Recreation and natural spaces are a cornerstone of life in Girdwood. Local parkland, natural spaces, trails, commercially developed recreation, indoor facilities, are all critical elements of a robust

community recreation system. Our driveways are our trailheads and our backyards are gateways to natural spaces.

GOAL: The Girdwood recreation system is balanced – there are a range of year-round experiences for community-supported activities.

POLICY: Ensure that parks, trails, natural spaces, and outdoor recreation facilities meet community needs. The quantity of outdoor recreation assets meets both Girdwood's community goals and level of service guidelines for a community the size of Girdwood.

POLICY: Maintain existing outdoor park facilities for safety and long-term durability.

POLICY: There are very limited motorized uses allowed within the recreation and natural space system.

POLICY: The Girdwood recreation and natural space system is easy and convenient for everyone to experience during everyday life.

GOAL: Girdwood has indoor and covered recreation facilities.

POLICY: Identify locations.

POLICY: Public-Private Partnerships are recommended to leverage funding and other resources.

GOAL: Girdwood has a formal, established, maintained, and protected system of trails and natural spaces.

POLICY: Identify areas that are primarily recreation and natural space areas and manage them as such. Transfer management authority of Heritage Land Bank parcels that would be better managed by Girdwood Parks & Recreation.

POLICY: Identify and protect trails and trail access via easements.

POLICY: Support implementation of Girdwood trails and natural spaces plans.

GOAL: Girdwood's trails and natural spaces are integrated into the community.

POLICY: Girdwood explores public-private partnerships to market and support our trails and natural spaces system. (For example, consider Trail Town designation.)

POLICY: New development (e.g. housing, transportation) is consistent with ensuring access and protection of trails and natural spaces.

POLICY: Support use of trails for active transportation within the community.

## **TOPIC: Transportation**

VISION: All modes of transportation, including human-powered, are considered equally and Girdwood is a walkable community.

GOAL: Girdwood has a connected system of trails and walkways. A car is not required to live here.

POLICY: Every new and existing subdivision is connected to the active transportation network.

POLICY: Improve multi-modal access within the Alyeska Basin Subdivision.

GOAL: Support a year-round, regular, and reliable transit between Girdwood and Anchorage.

POLICY: Explore public-private partnerships to provide transit service.

GOAL: Parking in Girdwood complements our community and does not encourage unnecessary driving.

POLICY: There is a viable park and ride lot.

POLICY: Parking is right sized for our community.

GOAL: Ensure that Girdwood's transportation infrastructure is resilient if emergency evacuation is necessary.

POLICY: Create a transportation plan for Girdwood that identifies and addresses weak points in current infrastructure.

GOAL: Maintain the Girdwood Airport as a valuable community asset.

POLICY: Support development at the Girdwood Airport that recognizes the community, sense of place, and natural environment.

GOAL: Encourage the integration of the Alaska Railroad Girdwood Depot into the local transportation network.

POLICY: Advocate for Girdwood as a continued stop.

POLICY: Explore opportunities for the train to become a more affordable and feasible public transportation option for locals.

POLICY: Pursue the train depot as a location for a transportation hub.



# Girdwood Nordic Ski Club

May 24, 2023

To Whom It May Concern,

I wholeheartedly support the updated 2023 Draft of the Girdwood Trails Plan. This plan will serve as a much needed guiding document for Girdwood's trail system in the upcoming years. As Girdwood's trail-use and tourism continues to grow...the community, local non-profits, and Girdwood Trails Committee are all well represented in this plan giving developers the necessary local perspective for a sustainable, protected, and diverse trail system.

Girdwood trails are a major part of Girdwood's identity. The consensus found in this challenging and thorough process of creating a collaborative plan started with listening to the community and identifying our values. I really appreciate that first step, defining values, as it resonates with the Girdwood maxim that "our driveway is our trailhead". From there, the mission statement reads: Girdwood aspires to be a world-class outdoor recreation destination offering residents and visitors trails that are interconnected, diverse, and sustainable. Girdwood's trails are vital to our community well-being, identity, and economy. This statement dovetails with the mission of the Girdwood Nordic Ski Club which is: A vision of creating a world-class Nordic/Multi-Use trail system within the Girdwood Valley for year-round enjoyment.

My hope is that as new developments and trail proposals come forward, including multi-use winter trails, this plan will be referenced, discussed, have dog-eared pages, coffee cups stains, and new scribbled ideas to help guide our trail system forward...and leave more cars in the garage.

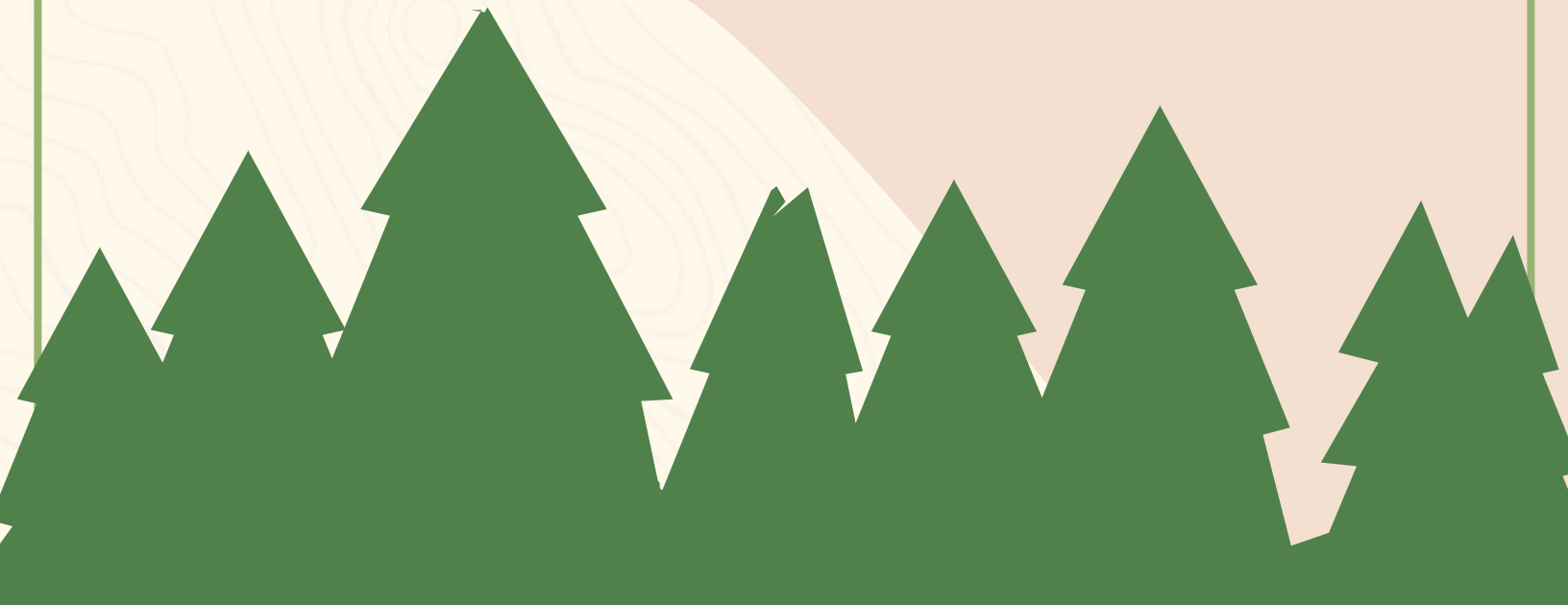
Sincerely,

Deb Essex  
President, Girdwood Nordic Ski Club  
[deb@skigirdwood.org](mailto:deb@skigirdwood.org)

# GIRDWOOD TRAILS PLAN



**GIRDWOOD TRAILS**  
**A L A S K A**



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### **Girdwood Board of Supervisors**

Amanda Sassi  
Briana Sullivan  
Jennifer Wingard  
Mike Edgington

### **Girdwood Trails Committee**

Adam Hoke  
Alex Davis  
Amanda Piatt  
Amanda Sassi  
Amanda Tuttle  
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Anna Moran  
Barb Crews  
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Jim Braham  
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Julie Jonas  
Justin Thomas  
Kalie Harrison  
Kate Sandberg  
Kathy Trautner  
Kellie Okonek  
Kevin McDermott  
Krystal Hoke  
Kyle Kelley  
Lin Hinderman  
Lisa Mauer  
Lori Harris  
Lou Theis  
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Marc Esslinger  
Margaret Tyler  
Marguerite Leeds  
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Mark Jonas  
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Mike Edgington  
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Nick D'Alessio  
Nick Georgelos  
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Paul Forward  
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Sharon Samuels  
Shelley Rowton  
Sherry Dugan  
Sophie Ostroski  
Sparky Anderson  
Steve Halverson  
Stu Greene  
Summer Stone  
Tim Lydon  
Zach Behney

### **Girdwood Trails Plan Subcommittee**

Brenden Raymond-Yakoubian  
Brian Burnett  
Carolyn Brodin  
Craig Schubert  
Deb Essex  
Eileen Halverson  
Jonathon Lee  
Nick Georgelos  
Paul Crews  
Ron Tenny

### **Municipality of Anchorage Assembly**

Christopher Constant  
Crystal Kennedy  
Felix Rivera  
Forrest Dunbar  
Jamie Allard  
John Weddleton  
Kameron Perez-Verdia  
Meg Zaletel  
Pete Petersen  
Suzanne LaFrance

### **Girdwood Valley Service Area Staff**

Kyle Kelley  
Margaret Tyler

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>PART 1 – INTRODUCTION + EXISTING CONDITIONS .....</b>	<b>10</b>
Introduction .....	10
Existing Conditions .....	13
Community & Stakeholder Engagement .....	29
<b>PART 2 - RECOMMENDATIONS + IMPLEMENTATION .....</b>	<b>33</b>
Purpose .....	33
Vision, Values, Goals .....	33
Proposed Trail Network .....	35
Implementation Strategy .....	45
Plan Revision & Amendment Process .....	45
<b>REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>APPENDIX .....</b>	<b>47</b>

### Land Acknowledgement

It is with gratefulness and respect that Girdwood wishes to acknowledge the traditional homeland of the Dena'ina Athabaskan People.

**DENA'INA QUT'ANA CHIQUINIK, CHIN'AN GHELI GU YEH DENA'INA EŁNEN'AQ' ŁUH  
CH'NIDATL' GHU**

**"THANK YOU DENA'INA PEOPLE FOR LETTING US WALK ON YOUR LAND"**

## LIST OF FIGURES & MAPS

### FIGURES

1. Plans Considered During Development of Girdwood Trails Plan
2. Historical Population of Girdwood 1950-2015
3. Proposal Process for New Trails in Girdwood
4. USFS Trails Class System
5. Trails Classification of Existing Trails
6. Existing Parking and Trailheads
7. Public Meeting #1: Interactive Online Map
8. Girdwood Trails Plan: Goals
9. New Trails: Proposed Trails Classifications, Design Parameters, Designed Uses, and Managed Uses

### MAPS

1. Girdwood Trails Plan: Wetlands Map
2. Girdwood Trails Plan: Avalanche Path Map
3. Girdwood Trails Plan: Existing Trails
4. Girdwood Management Purposes Areas
5. Girdwood Trails Plan: Land Ownership Map
6. Girdwood Trails Proposed Trail Network

## ACRONYMS | COMMON TERMS

ABS - Alyeska Basin & South Valley Trails

AHC - Alyeska Highway Corridor

ARRC - Alaska Railroad Corporation

BC - Backcountry

Bird - to - Gird - Indian to Girdwood Trail

DOT&PF - Department of Transportation & Public Facilities

DNR - Department of Natural Resources

DNR DMLW - Department of Natural Resources, Division of Mining, Land & Water

GAP - Girdwood Area Plan

GBOS - Girdwood Board of Supervisors

GCR1 - Girdwood Commercial Recreation

GOS - Girdwood Open Space

gR-3 - Residential Districts - Single-Family/Two-Family Residential

gR-5 - Residential Districts - Multiple-Family Residential

GTC - Girdwood Trails Committee

GTP - Girdwood Trails Plan

GVTMP - Girdwood Valley Trails Management Plan

GVSA - Girdwood Valley Service Area

HLB - Heritage Land Bank

INHT - Iditarod National Historic Trail

MOA - Municipality of Anchorage

ROW - Right of Way

SOA - State of Alaska

UDC - Urban Design Commission

USDA - United States Department of Agriculture

USFS - United States Forest Service

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### PLAN PURPOSE

The Girdwood Trails Plan (GTP) is a concerted effort that brought the community together for a holistic conversation about the future of the trail system. The GTP is a 10-15 year guiding document for the community, local trails organizations, agencies, and elected officials that defines the Girdwood trails network and identifies trail projects that are supported by the community. The GTP is a framework with community-developed values, vision, and goals that local officials and partner organizations can use to make investment and project decisions.

### GUIDE TO THE PLAN

The Girdwood Trails Plan is divided into two parts:

#### **Part 1: Introduction and Existing Conditions**

Part 1 of the Girdwood Trails Plan provides an overview of the existing trail system and summarizes community input, key themes, and needs.

#### **Part 2: Recommendations & Implementation**

Part 2 of the Girdwood Trails Plan identifies both broad aspirations and specific implementation actions to guide trail projects over the next 10–15 years to achieve the trail system that Girdwood envisions.

### PUBLIC INPUT & PLAN DEVELOPMENT

The Girdwood Trails Plan was collaboratively developed with Girdwood residents, stakeholders, municipal staff, and agency partners providing valuable input throughout the process. Community participation occurred over the duration of one year. Participants engaged in challenging conversations to find consensus around planning for a trail system that is balanced, accessible, inclusive, and representative of Girdwood's community identity. Various public input strategies were employed including:

- Trail Plan Subcommittee – appointed by the Girdwood Trails Committee (11 meetings, four workshops, one special meeting)
- 10 stakeholder interviews
- Two public meetings
- Online interactive map that allowed for site-specific comments
- Public review Draft Trails Plan available for comment via an online comment portal
- 16 Girdwood Trails Committee regular and special meetings (November 2021 - October 2022) reviewing and discussing plan amendments, involving over 200 interested members of the public.

### KEY PLAN THEMES

Over the course of the existing condition analysis and stakeholder engagement, the following themes emerged:

- Girdwood Residents Value Access to Trails
- The Girdwood Trails System Should be Equitable and Balanced
- The Community Wants to Improve Connectivity and Access to Trails
- Sustainable Trail Management and Maintenance is Important
- Project Approval Processes Need to be Streamlined

This plan works to address them through the proposed trail network, proposed projects, and implementation plan.

### VALUES, VISION, GOALS

Girdwood residents developed values, a vision statement, and plan goals that guided the development of the trail plan and will serve as the basis for future action and decision-making for Girdwood's trails.



GIRDWOOD TRAILS  
ALASKA

# GIRDWOOD TRAIL PLAN

## VALUES • VISION • GOALS

Girdwood residents developed values, a vision statement, and plan goals that guided the development of the trail plan and will serve as the basis for future action and decision-making for Girdwood's trails.

**VALUES:** VALUES ARE CORE PRINCIPLES THAT GUIDE AND DIRECT WORK. VALUES GUIDE DECISION-MAKING AND ESTABLISH A STANDARD AGAINST WHICH ACTIONS CAN BE ASSESSED.



**Access:** Trails are easily accessible, provide safe access to outdoor recreation, everyday community destinations, and the alpine.



**Natural World:** Trails provide access to the natural world to experience wildlife, wilderness, natural spaces, and functioning ecosystems.



**Health & Well-Being:** Trails contribute to improved physical and emotional health by promoting outdoor activity and social connection.



**Stewardship:** Trails are sustainable, well-planned, designed, constructed, and maintained now and for future generations.



**Experience:** Girdwood Trails provide a variety of outdoor experiences.



**Diversity & Inclusivity:** Trails provide a variety of diverse trail experiences for everyone.



**Community Identity:** Trails are an essential part of Girdwood's community identity and cultural history.



**Recreation:** Trails and natural spaces provide safe, low-cost opportunities to get outdoors and recreate.



**Explore & Learn:** Trails provide places for exploration, discovery, and education.

**VISION:** GIRDWOOD ASPIRES TO BE A WORLD-CLASS OUTDOOR RECREATION DESTINATION OFFERING RESIDENTS AND VISITORS TRAILS THAT ARE INTERCONNECTED, DIVERSE, AND SUSTAINABLE. GIRDWOOD'S TRAILS ARE VITAL TO OUR COMMUNITY WELL-BEING, IDENTITY, AND ECONOMY.

### GOALS:

#### Goal 1: PLAN



Provide a balance and diversity of trail experiences that minimize user conflicts and are consistent with the Girdwood Area Plan and the Girdwood Valley Trail Management Plan.

#### Goal 2: CONSERVE



Identify, designate uses, and protect trails through proper processes.

#### Goal 3: DEVELOP



Build trails using sustainable design principles with a clear project approval process among landowners.

#### Goal 4: MAINTAIN



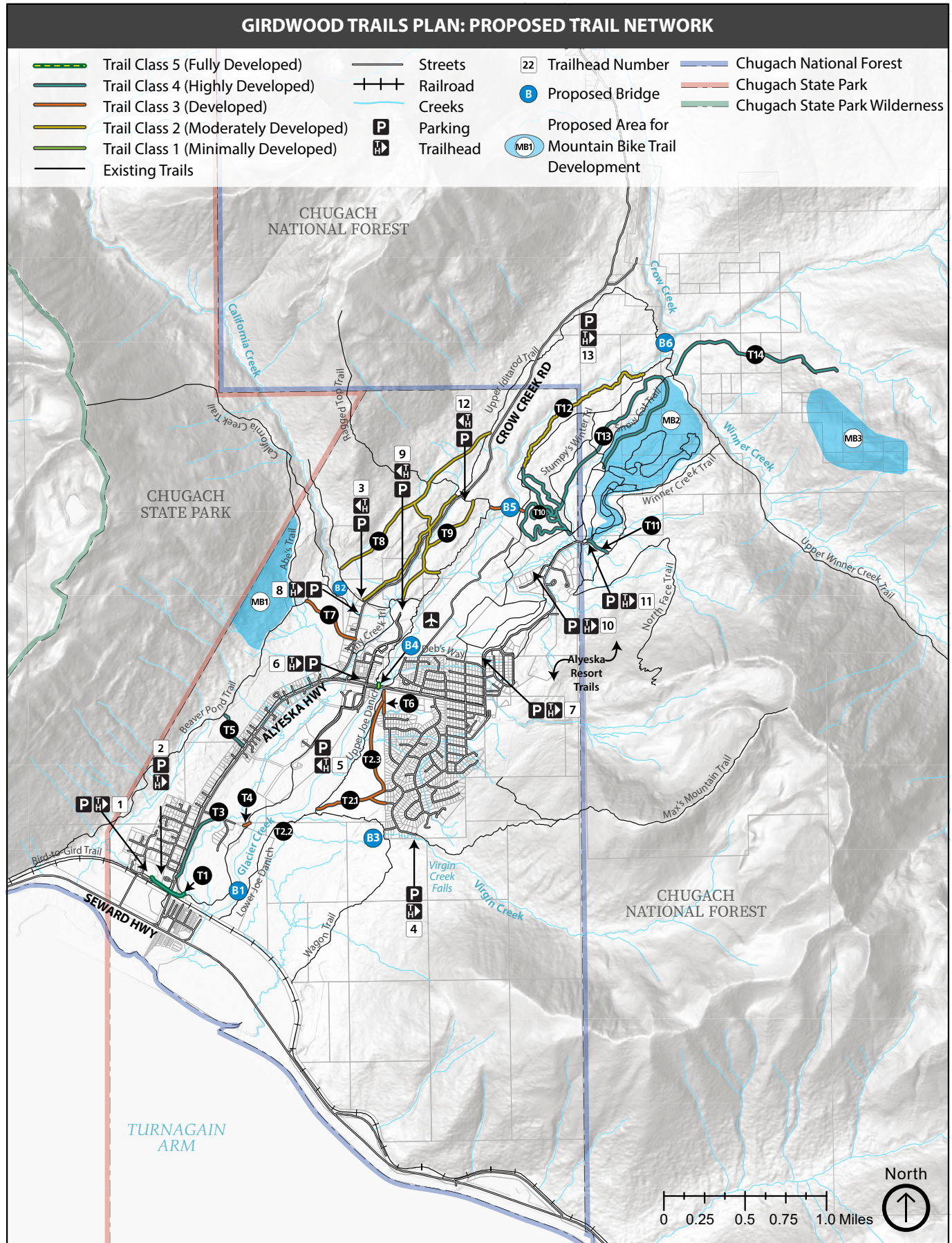
Manage trails as needed for safety, the desired user experience, and to conserve natural resources.

#### Goal 5: SUSTAIN



Provide adequate funding, planning, support, and stewardship for trails.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### GIRDWOOD TRAILS PLAN: PROPOSED TRAIL NETWORK

#### NEW TRAILS

- T1** Separated Grade Crossing: Railroad Bridge at Alyeska Hwy (4)
- T2.1** Timberline - Danich Connection (3)
- T2.2** Lower Danich Trail Upgrade
- T2.3** Timberline - Barren Ave Connection (3)
- T3** Lower Valley Trail Loop Connection (3)
- T4** Ruane Road Trail Connection to Lower Iditarod (3)
- T5** Beaver Pond to Alyeska Highway (3)
- T6** Barren Avenue to Alyeska Highway (3)
- T7** Crow Creek Road to Beaver Pond Trail (3)
- T8** Toe Slope Trail-California Creek to Iditarod (2)
- T9** Crow Creek Neighborhood Trails (2-3)
- T10** Forest Loop Trail (4)
- T11** Arlberg Connection to Winner Creek Trail (4)
- T12** Glacier Canyon Rim Trail (2)
- T13** Upper Valley Multi-Use Connector (4)
- T14** Snowcat Trail Improvements (4)

#### BRIDGE PROJECTS

- B1** Glacier Creek Trail Bridge - Lower Valley
- B2** California Creek Bridge
- B3** Virgin Creek Bridge
- B4** Better Connectivity at Glacier Creek Bridge at Alyeska Hwy
- B5** Glacier Creek Trail Bridge – Middle Valley – (north of airstrip)
- B6** Glacier Creek Trail Bridge - Upper Valley

#### SPECIAL PROJECTS

- SP1: Areawide Wayfinding (Not on Map)
- SP2: Girdwood Valley Circum-Valley Loop (Not on Map)

#### TRAILHEADS

- H1** Girdwood Depot Trailhead Upgrades – with restroom
- H2** Glacier Ranger District Trailhead
- H3** Girdwood Cemetery Trailhead
- H4** Virgin Creek Falls Trailhead
- H5** Karolius Trailhead
- H6** Girdwood Town Center Trailhead Improvements – with restroom
- H7** Moose Meadows Trailhead Improvements
- H8** Beaver Pond Trailhead
- H9** Girdwood PreK-8 School – Parking Agreement
- H10** Alyeska Resort Parking Agreement
- H11** Arlberg Trailhead Expansion – with restroom
- H12** Middle Iditarod Trailhead
- H13** Winner Creek Gorge Trailhead Expansion

#### PROPOSED AREAS FOR MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAIL DEVELOPMENT (MB)

- MB1** Beaver Pond
- MB2** Near the Nordic 5K
- MB3** End of the Snowcat Trail

## PART 1 – INTRODUCTION + EXISTING CONDITIONS

### INTRODUCTION

The community of Girdwood is nestled within the Glacier Valley on the Turnagain Arm of Southcentral Alaska. Girdwood is located at the tip of North America's northern-most temperate rainforest and is surrounded by the rugged Chugach Mountains, capped with hanging glaciers that feed creeks and flow into Turnagain Arm. The town is bordered by Chugach State Park and Chugach National Forest land, which provide ample opportunity for outdoor activities year-round, including backcountry and resort skiing and snowboarding, biking, hiking, and pack rafting. The location, natural beauty and resort development draw residents and visitors alike.

Girdwood's location, scenic landscapes, snowfall, steep peaks, and recreation opportunities drive the use and desired development of the trail system. The Girdwood trail system offers recreation, transportation, connectivity, and is a key resource for the town's sense of place, economy, and culture.

#### Study Area

Although the public and stakeholder engagement process and trail planning analysis included trails on a variety of lands, the GTP only has the authority to make recommendations for trails and related trail development on municipal land. Other landowners and facility managers can use this document for reference when making trail decisions on their respective property.

#### Planning Context

To better understand the context of trails in Girdwood, previous and concurrent plans were reviewed for relevant information related to this planning process. Below is a table outlining relevant plans that were considered during the development of this plan.

**Figure 1**

PLAN/STUDY	PLAN DESCRIPTION	CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE GIRDWOOD TRAILS PLAN
Girdwood Area Plan (GAP), 1995	The GAP was adopted in 1995 and is currently being updated. The GAP gives overall policy direction for trails in the Girdwood Valley. The 1995 GAP outlines seven policies/guidelines to serve as interim measures until a revised Anchorage Trails Plan is adopted. The policies/guidelines cover trail buffers, easements, pedestrian facilities along connector streets, multi-use trails, primitive trails, and a management plan for the Recreation Reserve.	The GTP and the GAP are being developed concurrently. It is extremely important that the updated Vision, Goals, & Policies for the GAP continue to be the overarching guidance for the GTP. The GTP shall be consistent with the GAP and continued coordination is required.
Anchorage Park, Greenbelt and Recreation Facility Plan: Volume 3: Turnagain Arm, 1987	The Turnagain Arm Park and Open Space plan is a planning document that was a tool used to assist communities in shaping their neighborhoods. The document was used to identify specific areas for trails and neighborhood and community-use parks and open spaces.	This plan is outdated; however, it is still referenced in current Title 21 regarding use-specific standards in Turnagain Arm for Parks and Open Areas (21.05.040 G2c). The GTP will replace the 1987 plan for trail projects in the use-specific standards identified in 21.05.040 G2c.

PLAN/STUDY	PLAN DESCRIPTION	CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE GIRDWOOD TRAILS PLAN
Girdwood Valley Trails Management Plan, 2020	The Girdwood Valley Trails Management Plan (GVTMP) provides guidance for trail development, management, and maintenance. The plan offers a thorough inventory of existing trails and guidance for sustainable trail maintenance and construction. While the GVTMP touches on everything from physical features to signage and accessibility, the primary focus is trail management including design guidelines and parameters.	Although there will be some overlap between the GVTMP and the GTP, the GTP should remain consistent with the GVTMP regarding trail classifications. The GTP will define the future trail network including access, connections, and new trail development.
Chugach State Park Management Plan, 2016	The Chugach State Park Management Plan is the basis for the management and development of the state-owned land and water within the legislatively designated boundary of the park as well as for areas managed by the park under special agreement.	There are several existing Management Agreements cataloged within the Chugach State Park Management Plan that have some bearing on Girdwood trails with shared management. A table of Facility Improvements proposes a trailhead and small parking lot at the south end of the Bird-to-Gird Trail. California Creek Trailhead is listed as a proposed project.
Chugach State Park Access Plan, 2010	This plan is a coordinated effort between the State of AK and the MOA aimed at securing and improving public access to Chugach State Park. This plan guides both agencies as they work to maintain and provide for future access to the park. The access plan was adopted by the MOA as an element of the Comprehensive Plan.	A table of access-specific recommendations suggests the following actions on the Bird-to-Gird Milepost 0 Trailhead, California Creek Trailhead and California Creek Trail: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Bird-to-Gird Milepost 0: Work with ADOT&amp;PF, DNR DMLW, ARRC, and the GTC and GBOS to establish and manage a small vehicular lot in this area for trail access.</li> <li>2. California Creek Trailhead: Continue to maintain management right between the DNR DMLW and DPOR. Work with the GBOS and GTC to construct and manage a small vehicular lot, trailhead and trail in this area. Work with HLB to establish a trail easement to ensure access across their lands is preserved.</li> <li>3. California Creek Trail: Work with HLB to establish a trail easement to ensure secure access across its lands is preserved. Work with the GBOS and GTC to maintain and manage the trail.</li> </ol>
Chugach National Forest: Land Management Plan, 2020	The Chugach National Forest Land Management Plan sets desired conditions, objectives, standards, and guidelines for the management, protection, and use of the forest.	This plan describes the desired trail conditions for the Iditarod National Historic Trail (INHT) and the Winner Creek Trail. The INHT is listed as Trail Maintenance Priority Area #15 (in the US).

PLAN/STUDY	PLAN DESCRIPTION	CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE GIRDWOOD TRAILS PLAN
Girdwood South Townsite Master Plan, 2014	This area master plan establishes the general arrangement of land uses and circulation and infrastructure systems for the Girdwood South Townsite, including proposed vehicular and pedestrian circulation and the types of acceptable proposed development.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Encourage transportation modes other than automobiles.</li> <li>2. Locate trails and activity areas with particular care for solar access, views, protection from weather, and continuity of connections.</li> <li>3. Need recreational facilities, including expanded ski terrain and more hiking and Nordic trails.</li> <li>4. Partnerships for development: The details of the process to implement projects created by a public-private partnership (such as the partnership between HLB and potential developers) will be worked out on a case-by-case basis. For example, in a case where the Heritage Land Bank was to sell a large parcel, without subdividing, a new developer would be required to develop roads, trails, stormwater management, and other infrastructure, as well as do the necessary surveying and project permitting.</li> </ol>
Girdwood Commercial Areas & Transportation Master Plan, 2001	The Girdwood Commercial Areas and Transportation Master Plan addresses two vitally important areas of concern for Girdwood - a long-range, multi-modal transportation plan and a long-range strategy for improving the commercial areas in the Girdwood Valley.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sidewalk connectivity to nearby trail system.</li> <li>2. The trail system should provide for recreation, recreation-based tourism, and at the same time trails should support a growing volume of utilitarian travel, commuting to and from school/work or shopping by bike, skiing or walking.</li> <li>3. Trail connections between pods of development, between different trails, and between areas of the valley must be implemented.</li> </ol>
Heritage Land Bank Annual Work Program & 5-year Management Plan, 2021	The HLB Work Program is an annually approved guide for allocating and managing HLB land and resources. The program functions and activities must be consistent with Municipal Code, HLB policies, and pertinent comprehensive or area plans.	As HLB is the largest landowner in the Girdwood Valley, continual coordination between the community and HLB to implement both HLB's and the community's goals is required.
Crow Creek Neighborhood Land Use Plan, 2006	The Crow Creek Neighborhood Land Use Plan guides decisions by HLB on land to be sold and developed for housing and land to be retained for public open space and recreation use.	The land use plan makes recommendations for the study area, including open space, establishing a neighborhood trail system, and preserving existing trails.
Winner Creek Trails Feasibility Study, 2007	This study determines the feasibility of building Nordic ski trails in the Winner Creek/Glacier Creek valleys that balance community sensitivities to increased public use, the environment, and other related developments.	Proposed projects in the GTP that overlap this study area will use the extensive analysis in suggesting the appropriate route.

## EXISTING CONDITIONS

### Existing Community Conditions

#### Characteristics of the Study Area

Girdwood consists of a diverse population of outdoor enthusiasts, local business owners, teleworkers, and commuters with jobs in Anchorage. Other outdoor enthusiasts throughout Alaska come to use Girdwood's trails for backcountry and Nordic skiing, snowshoeing, hiking, biking, etc. The town's historic roots as a mining community and as an access route for the original Iditarod Trail provide many unique routes and trails. Alyeska Resort's offerings continue to evolve and expand (downhill biking and Nordic Spa), offering year-round activities. Visitor numbers increase every year. This plan will analyze the Girdwood Valley systematically to fully realize the community's year-round trails.

#### Population

The original people of the Girdwood Valley were the Dena'ina Athabascan who may have visited the valley to trap, hunt, and fish. The town of Girdwood was established by goldminers in the 1896, and by 1906 had grown to 1500 goldminers and railroad workers. In the 1950's the population of the Girdwood Valley was low and mostly supportive of highway construction efforts after gold mining ended during World War II. As Alaska began to develop its resources throughout the state, the population began to increase. After the Alyeska Hotel was completed in the mid-1990's, population growth slowed as development became constricted by lack of land and available local jobs. During peak times, population in the town can reach 4000 people – double the resident population. Visitation to Girdwood increases due to the great demand for trails and year-round outdoor recreation experiences and the natural beauty that the town provides.



Figure 2

YEAR	POPULATION	CHANGE (%)
2020	2,025	-23.8
2015	2,658	3.4
2010	2,570	22.9
2000	2,091	71.3
1990	1,221	111.6
1980	577	300.7
1970	144	128.6
1960	63	-20.3
1950	79	

Source: American Fact Finder, 2017, US Census and 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimate

## ***Economy***

Girdwood's economy relies largely on the visitor industry and the related natural assets and outdoor recreation infrastructure that visitors seek. As such, Alyeska Resort and Girdwood's surrounding trails are a large part of the town's economic sustainability.

The largest industry sector providing just under half of the jobs in Girdwood is arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodations, and food service, which reflects Girdwood's primary employer, Alyeska Resort.

## ***Governance***

As part of the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA), the Girdwood Valley Service Area (GVSA) provides public services within its boundaries. The Girdwood Board of Supervisors is an elected body made up of residents to advise the Municipality on services for which Girdwood taxes itself: road maintenance, fire, police, cemetery, and parks & recreation.

The Girdwood Trails Committee, as a committee of the Girdwood Board of Supervisors, makes recommendations for all trails in the valley, regardless of land ownership. However, the authority to improve or authorize trails resides with the underlying landowner. Public landowners, whose lands provide authorized trails, include Girdwood Parks and Recreation, MOA Heritage Land Bank, Chugach National Forest, Chugach State Park, and Anchorage School District. Alyeska Resort, a private landowner and lessee of State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources, hosts popular summer trails that are accessible to the public during the summer months.

Although the planning analysis of trails in the valley includes trails on all lands, the GTP only has the authority to make recommendations for trails and related trail development on Municipal land.

## ***Girdwood Trails Managers: Recreation-Based Organizations & Volunteers***

In Girdwood, trail managers are defined as non-profit organizations or businesses that have obtained an easement from the MOA Heritage Land Bank to build and manage trails for public use in the Girdwood Valley. Current trail managers include the Girdwood Nordic Ski Club, Chugach Powder Guides, Bikewood, and the Girdwood Trails Committee.

## ***Existing Trail Planning, Design & Construction Approval Process***

Planning, design, and construction of a new trail in the Girdwood Valley requires a process with multiple steps and a variety of public input. The following graphic describes the current process required to get approval to build trails on Municipal land. This includes obtaining HLB and other Municipal authorizations.

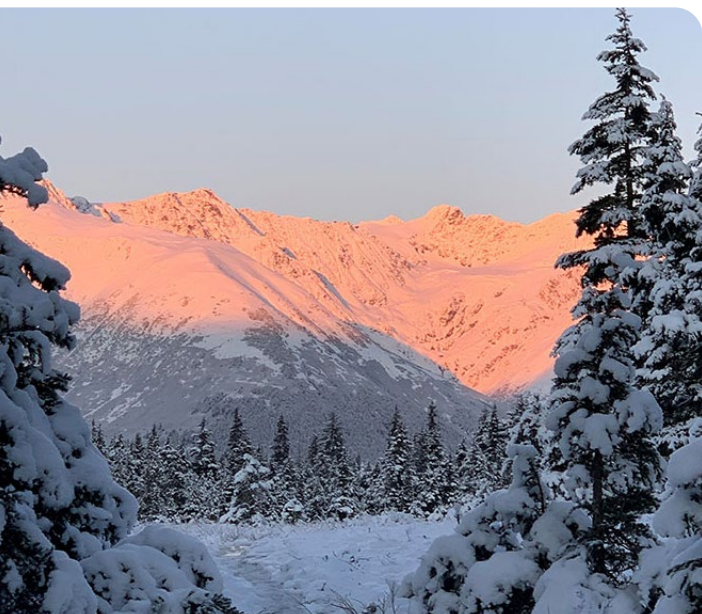
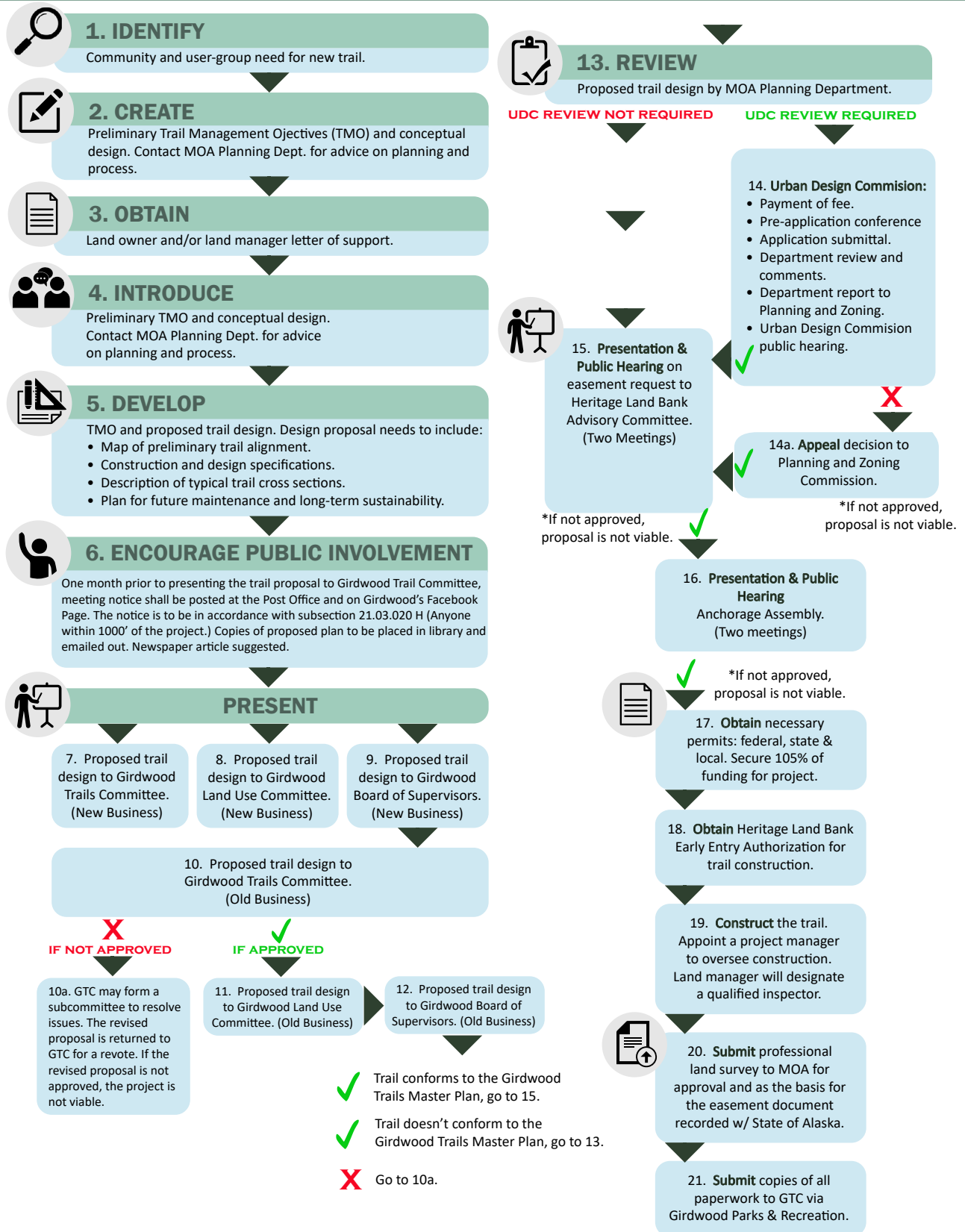


Figure 3

## PROPOSAL PROCESS FOR NEW TRAILS IN GIRDWOOD



## **Demand for Expanded Trail Network**

The 2019 Girdwood Area Plan Survey results indicate that access to trails and outdoor recreation experiences are one of the primary aspects of Girdwood that residents love. Additionally, when asked what changes residents want to see in the next 10-20 years, recreation was a top choice. The survey results indicate that Girdwood residents want more of what they love. To dig a little deeper into this topic, the Imagine! Girdwood public meeting in April 2019 asked meeting participants what outdoor recreation opportunities they would prioritize for Girdwood's future. More than 61% of respondents indicated that new 4' wide trails for hiking/running, mountain biking, and classic Nordic skiing should be prioritized. This data suggests a desire for more trails within the Girdwood Valley.



**Multi-Use Trails** – There is increasing demand to expand the class 3 and 4 range, year-round, multi-use trails that create more connecting and looping opportunities that are easy-moderate in difficulty. This type of trail would provide more outdoor recreation experiences for visitors and more accessible opportunities for new trail users and families.



**Single-Use, Purpose-Built Mountain Biking** - Use of mountain bikes and demand for mountain bike-specific trails has been on the rise in Girdwood. Bikewood has developed a Master Plan for creating bike-only trails. There is currently user conflict between the growing mountain bike community and other trail users.

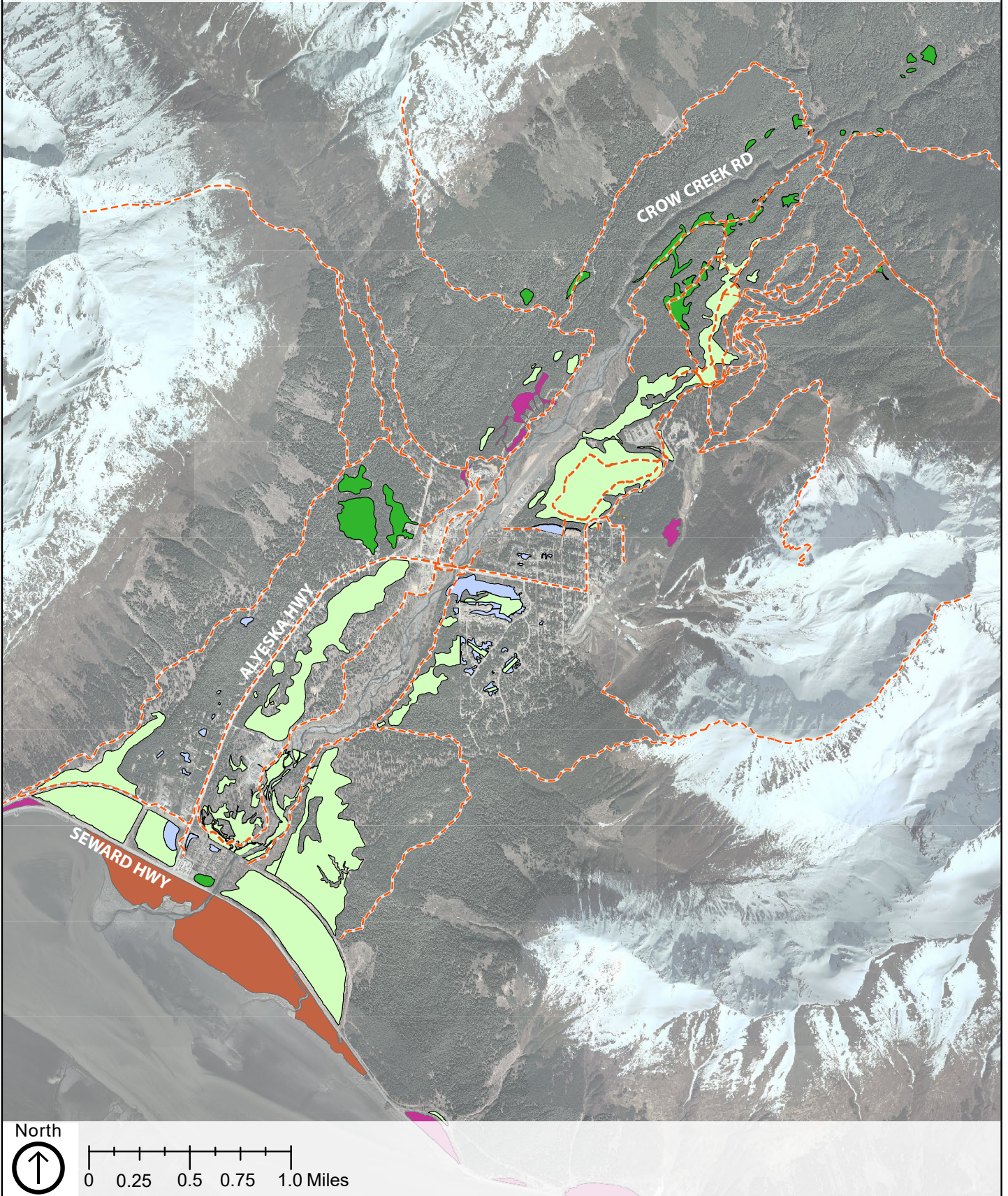
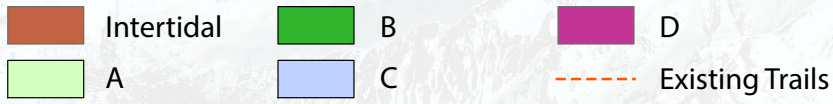
## **Existing Physical Conditions**

The Girdwood Valley is surrounded by public land on three sides and Turnagain Arm of Cook Inlet on the fourth. The narrow valley is bisected by Glacier Creek, Virgin Creek, California Creek, and their tributaries. The base of the valley is splattered with various wetlands that have traditionally been too wet to develop or use; however, climate change is altering precipitation and vegetation patterns quickly, and the long-term implications are unknown. Finally, human-built infrastructure, including the Alyeska Highway, Alaska Railroad and the Airport, impact trail routes. In brief summary, the existing trail system in the Girdwood Valley has developed as a result of its natural and constructed characteristics. Girdwood has a variety of out-and-back trails that essentially “dead-end” instead of creating loops or traverses.

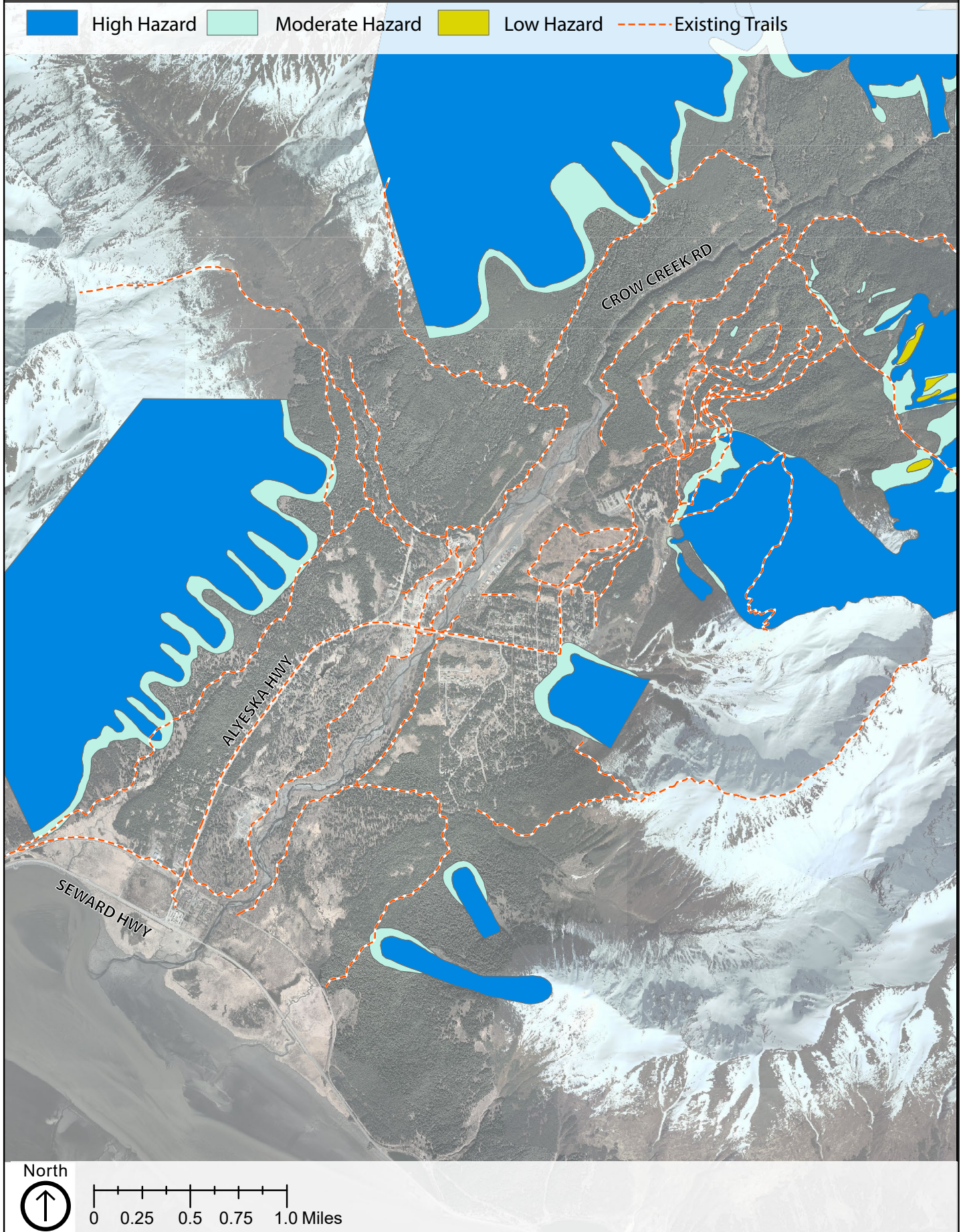
## **Environmental Conditions**

While natural beauty and opportunity for recreation are abundant in Girdwood, there are some physical constraints to consider for trails. The organic soils, wetlands, avalanche zones, and topography create challenging conditions for sustainable and maintainable trail development in the Valley. Trail alignment, development and management must consider these environmental factors when planning for new and existing trails. A detailed narrative on the geology, topography, hydrology, soils, vegetation, fish, wildlife, and climate of the Girdwood Valley can be found in the GVTMP (2020).

# GIRDWOOD TRAILS PLAN: WETLANDS MAP



GIRDWOOD TRAILS PLAN: AVALANCHE PATH MAP



## Existing Trails

The GVTMP identifies more than 30 individual trails within the Girdwood Valley. The more than 75 miles of trail wind through the Girdwood Valley and reach up surrounding ridges (See existing trails map on page 21). Existing trails offer recreation opportunities for a variety of different uses. The existing trail system predominantly offers recreation and access to scenic and natural destinations.

The GVTMP classifies and manages trails using the USDA Trail Classification System described below. For a complete description of Girdwood's trail classification system, see the GVTMP.

Figure 4



For planning purposes, it is important to understand the current distribution of trail classifications so that the community can plan for future trail projects that achieve the demand not currently being met by the current trail system.



**Figure 5: Existing Trails**

KEY	TRAIL	TRAIL LENGTH (MI)	TRAIL CLASSIFICATION
1	Bird-toGird Trail	10	5
2	Beaver Pond	3.25	3
3	Alyeska Highway Trail	3	5
4	Abe's Trail	1.5	2
5	California Creek Trail	1	1
6	Ragged Top Trail	2	1
7	Iditarod - Upper Trail	6	3
7	Iditarod - Lower Trail	3	4
8	Joe Danich Trail	2.5	1
9	Wagon Trail	1.5	1
10	Virgin Creek Falls Lower Trail	0.6	1
10	Virgin Creek Falls Upper Trail	0.25	3
11	Max's Mountain Trail	2	1
12	Shortcut from Bike Path to Davos	0.125	3
13	Hightower Multi-Use Trail	0.3	5
14	Tiny Creek Trail	1	3
15	Athabaskan Environmental Physics Trail	0.25	3
16	Deb's Way	0.5	3
17	Moose Meadow Trails	1	4
18	Verbier Way Bike Path	0.3	5
19	Egloff Multi-Use Trail	0.2	5
20	Winner Creek Trail Extension	0.4	3
21	Winner Creek Trail Upper	9.12	2
21	Winner Creek Trail	3.5	4 & 3
22	North Face Trail	2.25	2
23	Nordic 5K Loop	3.1	4
24	Mt Alyeska: Center Ridge to Max's	1.3	1
25	Snow Cat Summer Trail	4	1
25	Snow Cat Winter Trail	4	4
26	Stumpy's Summer Trail	2	1
27	Stumpy's Winter Trail	2.5	2
28	Arlberg Bike Path	1.5	5
29	Two Cents	0.3	3
29	Small House	0.5	3
29	Earnagain	0.3	3
n/a	Eagle Glacier Access	3.85	1
n/a	Crow Pass Trail	3.73	2
Total		78.625	

**SUMMARY: TRAIL CLASSIFICATION TOTALS (MI)**

Class 1	20.75	26.3%
Class 2	19.13	24.3%
Class 3	15.38	19.6%
Class 4	8.10	10.3%
Class 5	15.30	19.5%
	78.63 miles	100%

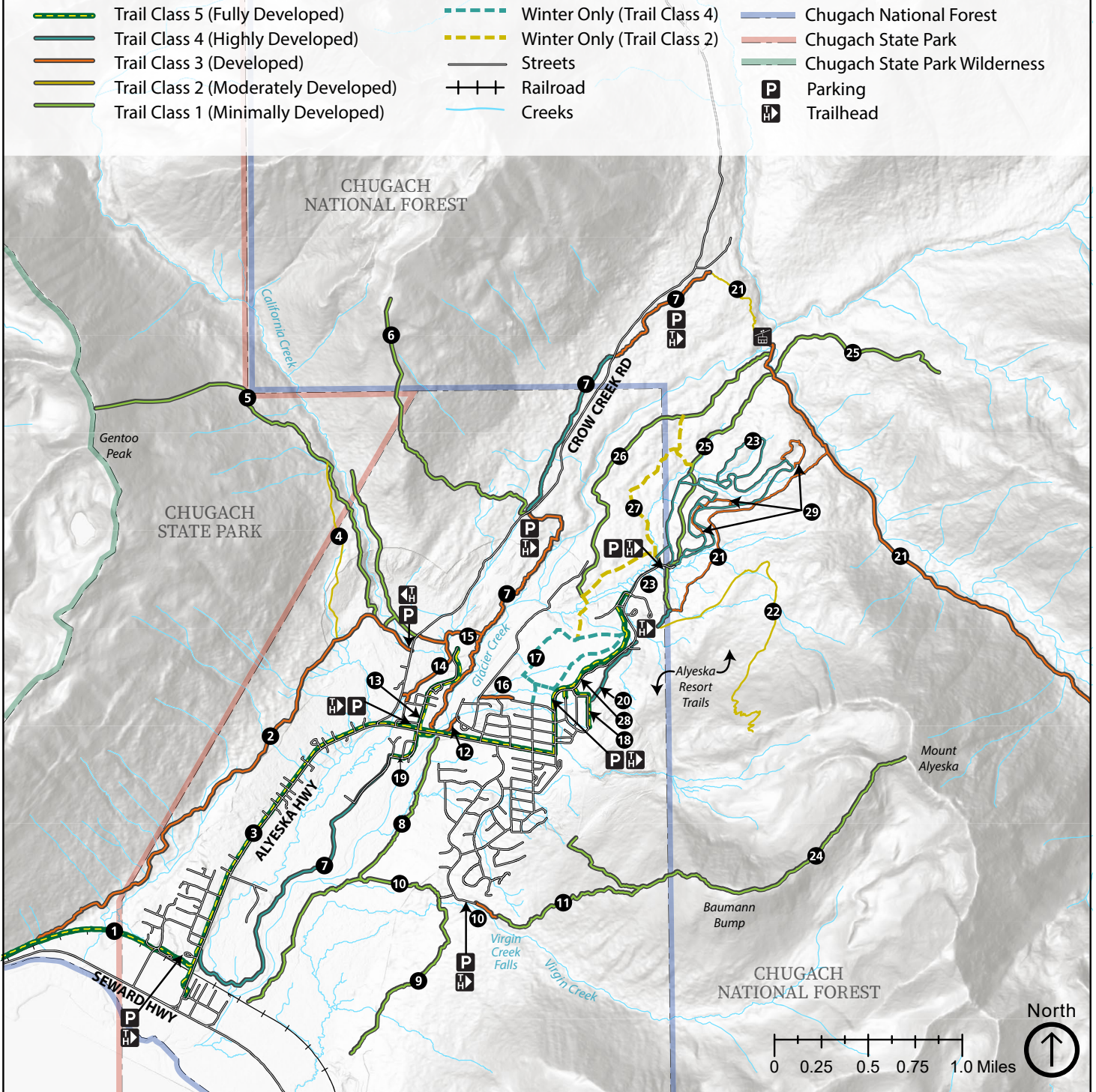
**Seasonal Trails**

The Girdwood trail system offers four seasons of opportunities. Given the unique climate and abundant snowfall in Girdwood, winter recreation and trail opportunities allow residents and visitors alike to enjoy Girdwood year-round. Alyeska Resort offers 1,400 acres of skiable area and the Nordic ski trails managed by the Girdwood Nordic Ski Club nearby. However, due to soils and climate, there are remarkable winter-only trails through wetlands and meadows, providing trail experiences on frozen surfaces. These routes are not sustainable or accessible during the summer months. In addition, other routes that utilize elevation and topography to access more remote areas of the Valley are not accessible in the winter due to avalanche hazards. Finally, there are trails that are managed for a single use during the winter (ski only, for example) that are utilized as multi-use during the summer months. In short, the Girdwood trail system varies greatly in seasonal routes and uses. Trail design and management practices should consider seasonal and environmental conditions for the safety of trail users and to protect the environment the trail traverses.

Trail planning and development should achieve sustainable, four-season management of trails through collaborative planning and partnership, intended use, classification, construction, and shared use agreements.

See the existing trail map on page 21 to identify seasonal trails.

# GIRDWOOD TRAILS PLAN: EXISTING TRAILS



## TRAIL NAMES (TRAIL CLASSIFICATION #)

- |                               |   |                                     |  |
|-------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1 Bird - to - Gird Trail (5)  | 9 Wagon Trail (1)                                   | 16 Deb's Way (3)                    | 23 Nordic 5K Loop (4)                    |
| 2 Beaver Pond Trail (3)       | 10 Virgin Creek Falls Lower Trail (1)               | 17 Moose Meadow Trails (4)          | 24 Mt Alyeska: Center Ridge to Max's (1) |
| 3 Alyeska Highway Trail (5)   | 10 Virgin Creek Upper Trail (3)                     | 18 Verbier Way Path (5)             | 25 Snow Cat Trail (4)                    |
| 4 Abe's Trail (2)             | 11 Max's Mountain Trail (1)                         | 19 Egloff Multi-Use Trail (5)       | 26 Stumpy's Summer Trail (1)             |
| 5 California Creek Trail (1)  | 12 Shortcut from Alyeska Highway Trail to Davos (3) | 20 Winner Creek Trail Extension (3) | 27 Stumpy's Winter Trail (2)             |
| 6 Ragged Top Trail (1)        | 13 Hightower Multi-Use Trail (5)                    | 21 Winner Creek Trail Upper (2)     | 28 Arlberg Path (5)                      |
| 7 Iditarod - Lower Trail (4)  | 14 Tiny Creek Trail (3)                             | 21 Winner Creek Trail (4 & 3)       | 29 Two Cents (3)                         |
| 7 Iditarod - Middle Trail (3) | 15 Athabaskan Environmental Physics Trail (3)       | 22 North Face Trail (2)             | 29 Small House (3)                       |
| 7 Iditarod - Upper Trail (3)  |   |                                     | 29 Earnagain (3)                         |
| 8 Joe Danich Trail (1)        |   |                                     |  |

## **Trail Management Areas**

For management purposes, the Girdwood Valley is divided into five areas (see map on page 23).

### ***Upper Valley Trails***

The Upper Valley trails have the most concentrated use of any trails in the valley with the highest diversity of user groups. Residents and visitors hike, mountain bike, Nordic ski, and showshoe on these trails. Some of the winter trails are on wet ground unsuitable for summer use. Trails range from class 1 to class 5. All the groomed Nordic trails are in this management area, as are many ungroomed multi-use and classic skiing only trails.



### ***Resort-Managed Trails***

Alyeska Resort manages and maintains trails that are on the Resort's private property. Summer trails include the North Face Trail and Winner Creek Extension Trail. Alyeska Resort also manages and maintains downhill mountain bike trails, which are accessed via chairlifts. A trailhead for the Winner Creek Trail is located adjacent to Hotel Alyeska. These trails are open to the public; fees apply for lift access.

### ***Alyeska Basin & South Valley Trails (ABS)***

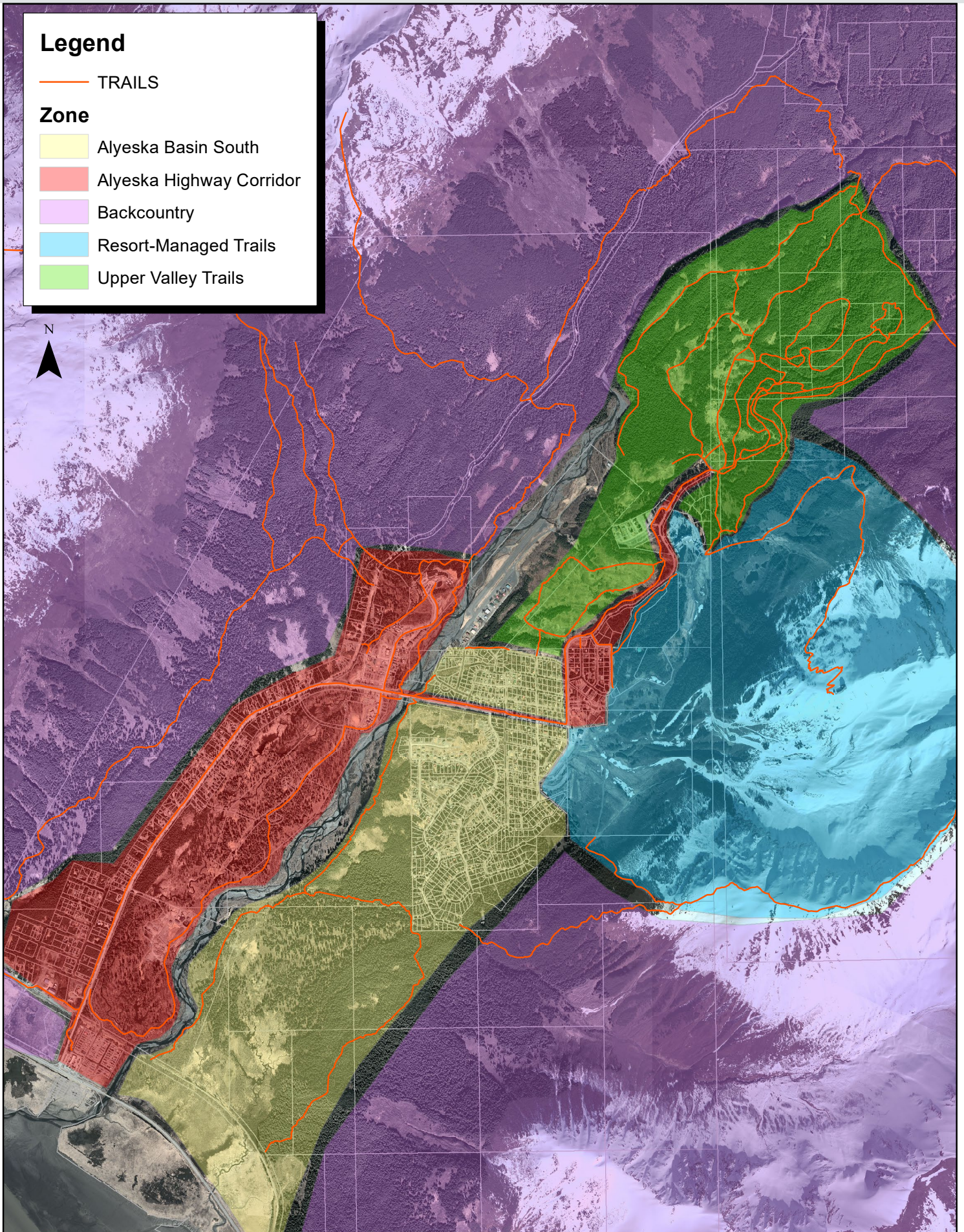
The ABS trails are routes that have evolved through community use into class 1 and 2 trails. This management area includes social trails that are important community links. The ABS trails are high value trails to the community and have significant maintenance requirements. Their alignments are generally across flat ground with numerous streams, wetlands, and flood plains.

### ***Alyeska Highway Corridor (AHC)***

The AHC contains all the paved, multi-use trails in the valley, from the Hotel Alyeska to the intersection of the Alyeska Highway and the Seward Highway, as well as the trails found in Girdwood's Town Center and Forest Fair Park. The core trail is the Alyeska Highway Path. There are four other paved paths that radiate from it: the Hightower Multiuse Trail to the school, the Arlberg Path to Hotel Alyeska, the Egloff Path to the Library and the Bird-to-Gird Trail. The Lower Iditarod Trail, Athabaskan Environmental Physics (AEP) Trail, and Tiny Creek Trail are also located in this corridor.

### ***Backcountry (BC)***

The BC management area surrounds all the other trail management areas and contains the more remote, primitive trails. This area stretches from Turnagain Arm to the top of the ridges surrounding the valley. The BC area encompasses all lands west of the Alyeska Highway Corridor and extends east to Berry Pass with trails mostly along historic transportation routes. Trails in this corridor face significant pressure from potential development of the new south town site and the proposed Crow Creek neighborhood developments, including the proposed new subdivision referred to as Holtan Hills. Most INHT segments are within this area (Girdwood Iditarod, Crow Pass, and both upper & most of lower Winner Creek Trails). The Beaver Pond Trail, California Creek Trail, Abe's Trail, and the Ragged Top route are all located in this area. The area contains several trailheads along Crow Creek Road.



## Existing Trail Use



**Hiking/Pedestrian** – The Girdwood trail system currently sees a broad spectrum of hikers and pedestrians, from young children and first-time hikers on guided tours, to seasoned backpackers heading out for multi-day overnight journeys. A balance of trail classes should be maintained to provide a range of experiences for all hiking/pedestrian trail users. Many residents desire trail surfaces that are accessible and that are adequate and safe for running or walking with strollers. Similarly, primitive trails are desired by residents for neighborhood connections and solitude within the valley. Primitive trails are primarily unmapped social trails. Most do not have trailheads, wayfinding, or other developed infrastructure.



**Skiing** – Within the Girdwood trail system, there are opportunities for groomed and ungroomed classic and skate Nordic skiing as well as resort and backcountry downhill skiing. The existing opportunities cater to a more advanced skier, and there is a desire for more beginner runs and routes in both Nordic and downhill areas. A range of difficulty will better serve a broad spectrum of trail users (new and experienced) and families with younger children.



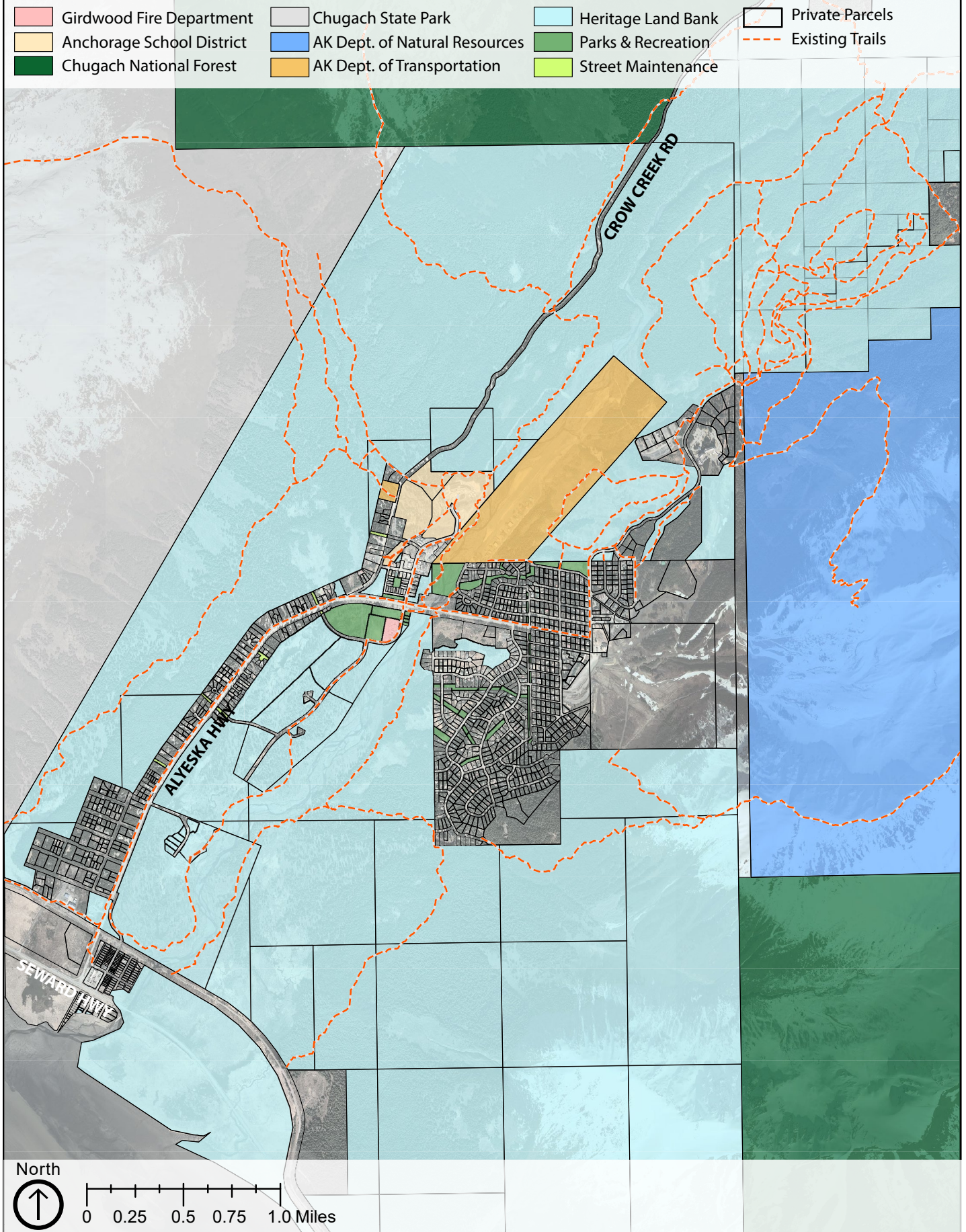
**Biking** – The Bird-to-Gird Trail brings bicyclists into Girdwood along the Turnagain Arm and offers 13.2 miles of paved trail. There are additional paved, multi-use trails that connect cyclists through Girdwood along the Alyeska Highway Corridor. There are limited amenities, such as bike racks and repair stations, for bicyclists which can discourage multi-modal transportation for those who live in or visit Girdwood.

## Land Ownership

Land ownership presents unique opportunities and challenges for the Girdwood trail system. Girdwood trail system lands are predominantly owned and managed by public agencies like the Municipality of Anchorage – Heritage Land Bank, State of Alaska - Chugach State Park, the Department of Natural Resources, and United States Forest Service - Chugach National Forest. Agency decision-making and project authorization processes vary by agency. It is not uncommon for trails within the Girdwood trail system to traverse multiple landowners from trailhead to terminus. The complexity of land ownership requires a higher level of public collaboration during trail planning and management.



# GIRDWOOD TRAILS PLAN: LAND OWNERSHIP MAP



### **Trail Easements & Legal Access**

All publicly managed trails should be legally accessible so that the trails are protected from encroachments and the public's access is protected. In turn, the property rights of private landowners are respected by trail users. All managed trails in the Girdwood Valley should have one of the following authorizations:

1. Easement managed by the underlying land management authority
2. Intra-governmental agreement or permit
3. A dedicated Municipal park

There are unauthorized trails on State of Alaska DOT&PF (aviation & highway) lands, utility easements and the Alaska Railroad right-of-way.

### **Connectivity**

Glacier Creek bisects the Girdwood Valley, and historically the Hand Tram provided one of the only crossings within the trail system itself. The pedestrian bridge adjacent to the vehicular bridge on the Alyeska Highway provides another crossing. No other formal cross-valley connections exist, including at the mouth of the valley where several trails terminate at the railroad but do not interconnect. Reliable, multi-use connections are needed at the lower and upper valley to provide interconnectivity of trails.

The Hand Tram was initially completed in 2000 and created a connection across Glacier Creek on the Winner Creek Trail during summer months only. Due to a variety of concerns, the Hand Tram was decommissioned in 2020. A bridge providing year-round multi-use connectivity is anticipated to be constructed in the coming 2-4 years (See project B6 described on page 42).

### **Access: Trailheads and Parking**

The GVTMP states that identifiable trailheads with sufficient, adjacent parking should be provided for each trail. Parking and trailhead access within Girdwood have become more difficult with an increase in visitors who arrive by car. Winter snow storage further complicates providing adequate trailhead parking and amenities that are accessible year-round.

Parking for trail access is available at the USFS Glacier Ranger District Office, Beaver Pond Trail and Moose Meadows Ski Trails. The following parking options are only accessible during summer: Crow Pass, Upper Iditarod Trail, Upper Virgin Creek Trail.

Virgin Creek Falls is a popular scenic stop and photo opportunity for visitors that lacks adequate parking for current demand. The site has some constraints to expanding parking and lacks amenities to accommodate higher levels of use. The 5k Nordic Ski Loop parking was constructed in 2016 and has outgrown its capacity on popular days. Alyeska Resort allows trail users to utilize hotel parking near the chapel of Our Lady of the Snows. While having this overflow lot is helpful, it may not always be allowed, and longer-term sustainable options may be needed.

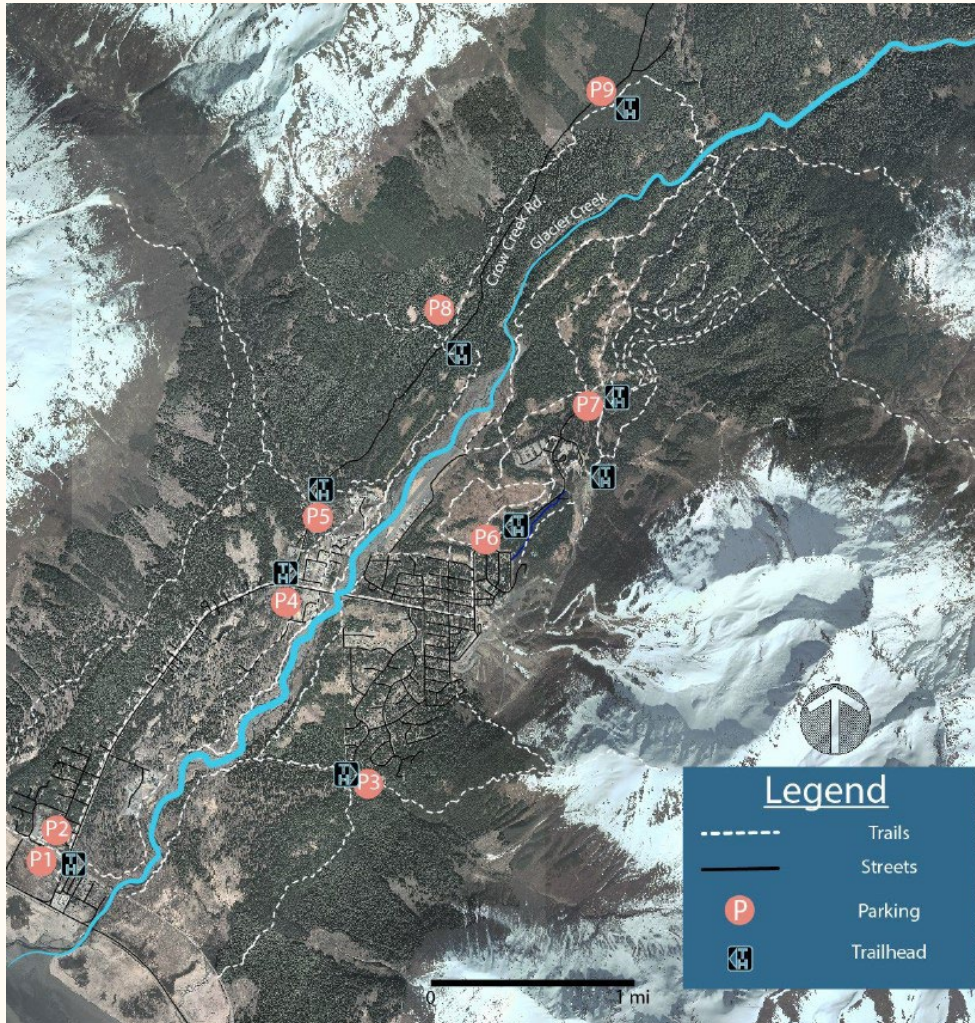
There are several trails within the Girdwood trail system that do not have trailheads. Wagon Trail is a commonly cited example that is not accessible by a public trailhead. The trail has historic value but cannot easily be shared with visitors. Access to the trail system via the Airport is a conflict commonly mentioned by Girdwood residents. The airport road was a popular access point for upper valley exploration as it provides connection to upper valley trails and locations, such as the Hotel Alyeska. DOT has recently been enforcing trespassing on its land as pedestrian traffic conflicts with airport operations. A mutually agreeable compromise to this would be beneficial, as connectivity to the trails is needed.

Most of Girdwood's trails provide parking along wide road shoulders, and trail access is via informal trailheads. Even at trailheads where parking has been recently updated, current use has already outgrown the existing capacity.

Chugach State Park has developed a management policy for trail access and trailheads. Solution-driven conversations around trails that begin in Girdwood and enter Chugach State Park land are needed.

Figure 6

## EXISTING PARKING AND TRAILHEADS



P1: AK Railroad Depot  
20-30 spaces

P2: Chugach National Forest  
Glacier Ranger District  
16 spaces + 2 accessible

P3: Virgin Creek Falls  
9-12 spaces in roadway

P4: Girdwood Town Center  
30-40 spaces + 2 accessible

P5: Beaver Pond  
16 unmarked spaces in  
roadway

P6: Moose Meadows  
10-12 spaces

P7: Arlberg Road Trailhead  
20 spaces + 1 accessible

P8: Middle Iditarod  
4-6 spaces

P9: Winner Creek Gorge  
20 spaces + 1 accessible



Middle Iditarod Trailhead



Arlberg Road Trailhead



Virgin Creek Falls Trailhead



Beaver Pond Trailhead

## **Amenities, Signage, & Wayfinding**

**Signage & Wayfinding** – A lack of clear signage and wayfinding in tandem with informal parking and unmarked trail heads, makes navigation of the Girdwood trail system difficult. Most junctions are unmarked, which makes navigation challenging, especially where social trails intersect the established trail system.

Land ownership is complex throughout the Girdwood trail system, and there are inherent risks and hazards in outdoor recreation. A lack of wayfinding and emergency information on the trails presents challenges for emergency and rescue situations and on reporting trail issues.

With multiple landowners and management styles at trailheads throughout the system, the wayfinding is not consistent in appearance or information provided. This creates confusion for trail users and first responders.

As the Girdwood trail system expands, clear signage and wayfinding will be crucial to indicate level of difficulty, allowed uses, ownership, safety, interpretation, rules & regulations, and wayfinding. Snow storage and berms should be considered to ensure wayfinding and trailhead markers are visible year-round. A cohesive and uniform wayfinding system should be developed and implemented.

**Toilets** – There are no restrooms provided at trailheads throughout the Girdwood trail system. Due to the high level of visiting trail users and the economic activity that is trail-based, providing permanent or portable toilets during peak season would reduce environmental impact, litter, and improve the user experience.

**Dog Waste Stations & Signage** – Conflict between humans and dogs on the trail is not exclusive to Girdwood. Clear signage to indicate where dogs are allowed and if they must be leashed reduces conflict as well. Dog waste has become an issue on trails within Girdwood. Highly trafficked trailheads lack dog waste stations, trash receptacles, and educational signage. As many visiting trail users are not familiar with 'Leave No Trace' principles, this issue may be expected to grow.

**Trash Receptacles** – There are few trash cans located throughout the trail system in Girdwood. Many trailheads have trash receptacles, but there are long stretches of trail without them. While most weekend backpackers and residents are willing and prepared to 'pack it out' or wait until they find a trash can, providing bear proof trash cans at highly trafficked visitor-favorite trailheads like Upper Virgin Creek Falls and Beaver Pond will help keep the trail system clean.

**Bike Racks** – The Bird-to-Gird Trail brings cyclists into Girdwood from Anchorage along the Turnagain Arm. A growing mountain bike community and trail opportunities draw additional cyclists into town for recreation. Bike racks are present at few trailheads, including Alyeska Resort. Installation of bike racks throughout town would encourage trail users to move around town to local businesses and other recreation spots while visiting.

## **Trail Maintenance**

The GVTMP describes the current level of maintenance for each of the trails within the system. The Girdwood trail system requires brushing, grooming, and general trail maintenance throughout different areas based on the trail class, designation, and allowed use.

Multiple landowners along trails results in various levels of capacity for maintenance and management throughout the trail system and along specific trails. Different types of trail users would like to see varying levels of maintenance based on their preferences and activity.

Trail maintenance relies heavily on a small, seasonal Municipality of Anchorage Parks and Recreation Staff, partner organizations, and community volunteers. As trail use increases and more trails are constructed, it will be crucial to provide adequate funding and resources to support trail maintenance and management.



## COMMUNITY & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The Girdwood Trails Plan project launched in late February 2020, just as the world was entering lockdown due to COVID-19. Community and stakeholder participation occurred entirely in a virtual setting. The process was not ideal; community members would have much preferred to be in rooms together gathered around maps with markers and sticky notes or out on the trails in groups investigating site conditions, but everyone adapted and the project moved forward.

### **Girdwood Trails Plan Subcommittee**

The Girdwood Trails Committee selected eleven (11) individuals to sit on the Girdwood Trails Plan Subcommittee.

The subcommittee met on a monthly basis via Zoom to participate in and make recommendations to the trail planning process. During the process, the subcommittee held eleven (11) regular meetings, four (4) workshops and one (1) special meeting. A complete record of meeting agendas, summaries, and meeting materials can be found by visiting the following website: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1gPuYrLKRM9ovsAf4x7ThDh2CziVkJ4sl?usp=sharing>

### **Stakeholder Interviews**

A series of ten (10) stakeholder interviews were conducted to establish a baseline of qualitative project information and to better understand the current conditions of the trail system, as well as the diversity of community goals and visions for the future of Girdwood trails.

The following groups and individuals were interviewed:

- GirdWild
- Girdwood Mountain Bike Alliance (now Bikewood)
- Alyeska Resort
- Girdwood Nordic Ski Club
- Ascending Path
- Landowners (Two meetings): Chugach State Park, Heritage Land Bank, Chugach National Forest
- General Trail Users: Three individuals not associated with a group or organization.

A complete Stakeholder Interview Executive Summary and each individual meeting summary can be found in the appendix.

### **Public Meetings**

Two virtual public meetings were held during the development of the Girdwood Trails Plan. The first public meeting introduced the project to the broader community; shared draft values, vision, and goals; and launched an interactive online mapping application (described below) to gather community input. There was a lot of community interest in this meeting - over 100 people were in attendance. A summary of the comments received and presentation polling results can be found in the appendix. A second virtual public meeting was held in June of 2021 to share the Draft Girdwood Trails Master Plan with the public for review and comment.

### **Girdwood Trails Committee**

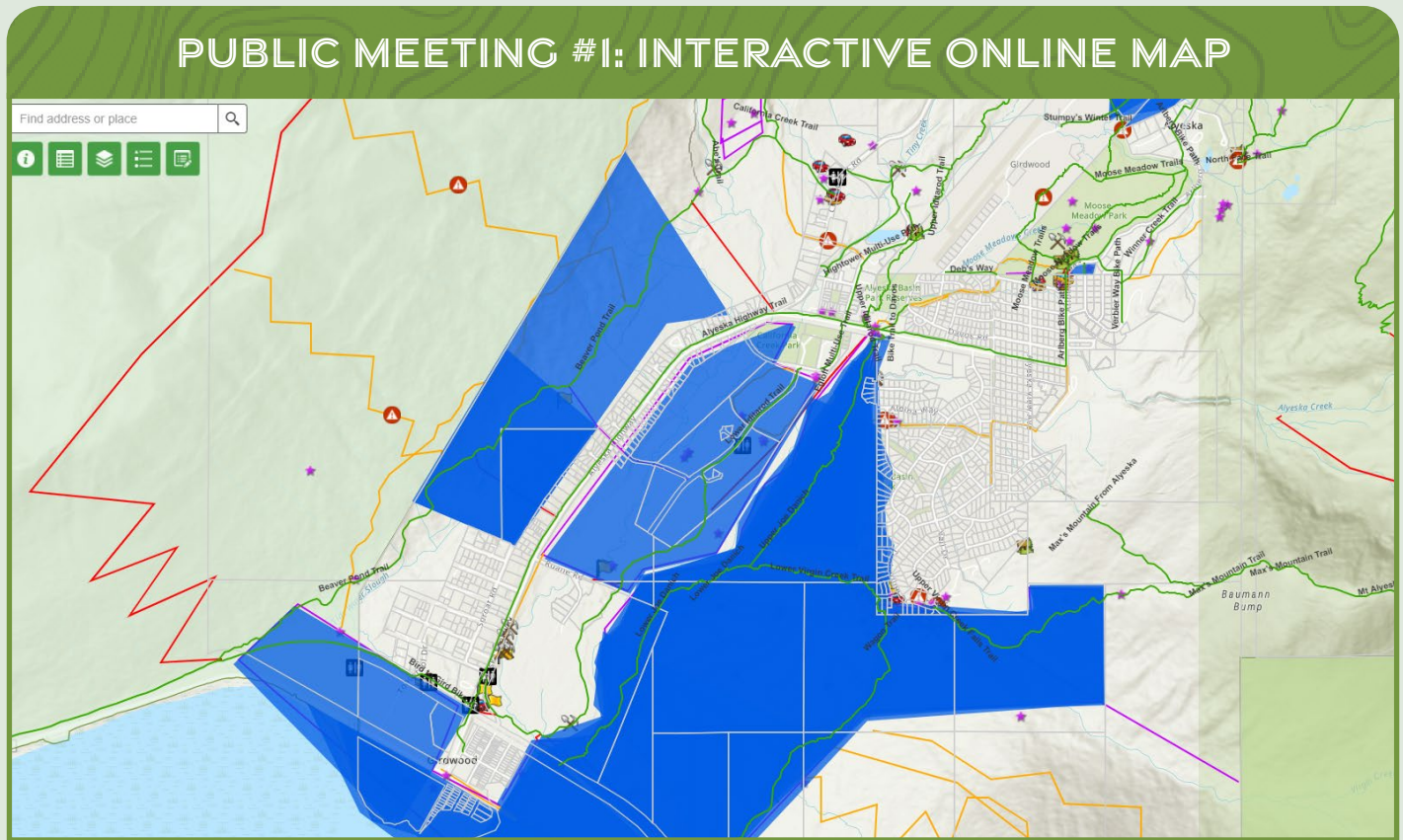
The Girdwood Trails Committee held sixteen regular and special meetings between November, 2021 and October, 2022. Over 200 interested members of the public participated during this timeframe to review the plan, and discuss amendments.



## Interactive Online Map

An interactive, online mapping application was developed in 2020 to gather comments and feedback from the public. It was not possible to implement in-person community mapping workshop activities due to COVID-19. The goal of the application was to collect information about existing conditions, but to also gather input and ideas about the future of the trail system. The application was launched and advertised to the community on Thursday, November 19th, and was open for participation through Monday, December 21st. Almost 500 individual comments and ideas were received via this online tool. A summary and complete list of comments can be found in the appendix. The application is closed for participation but can still be viewed. Girdwood Trails Interactive Web Application: <https://arcg.is/1PyHKf>

Figure 7



## Girdwood Trails Plan Themes

The results of the existing condition analysis and community and stakeholder engagement revealed the following key findings and themes:

### *Girdwood Residents Value Access to Trails*

Many Girdwood residents were drawn to the town due to the nature of the small community and its multi-modal access to trail-based recreation. Given Girdwood's proximity to Anchorage, residents value having multi-modal access to trails directly from their front door. Continuing to provide direct and easy access to trails for everyone is a shared goal.

Girdwood residents and trail system users value the variety of activities that are possible within the trail system (i.e. hiking, biking, skijoring, downhill skiing, cross country skiing, wildlife viewing, etc.). The accessibility of the trail system, whether it be from residents' front door, or visitors having easy access from their accommodations, is something the community of Girdwood highly values.

## *The Girdwood Trails System Should be Equitable and Balanced*



### ***Level of Difficulty***

Bearing in mind that outdoor recreation in Alaska is somewhat more "extreme" than one might find in other places, the opportunities in Girdwood still seem to skew toward a more experienced outdoor recreator. There is a desire for trails that are accessible and safe for hikers, bikers, and skiers of all levels. Creating opportunities at all levels of difficulty is especially important as the number of youth and visitors engaging in recreation is on the rise.



### ***Management of Allowed Uses***

Due to the growing popularity of trail- and nature-based activities, such as biking, a balance of user groups and notice of allowed uses is needed. There is some user conflict between hikers and bikers and their desired trail experiences. However, bikers and non-bikers alike agree that more purpose-built, single-use, bike-specific trails are needed to reduce this conflict system-wide. Trails that are not designed and built for bikers result in increased user conflict, maintenance requirements, and costs.



### ***Range of Opportunities for All People***

Offering opportunities for every type of resident or visitor is something that the community of Girdwood values and feels is important. With proper planning, the Girdwood trail system can provide a range of experiences for users of all ages and abilities. There are opportunities for viewing scenery whether one is walking a short distance, biking on paved trails, pushing a stroller on a trail through the forest, mountain biking, or hiking in the backcountry. Each trail cannot cater to everyone, but the planning process will help determine which opportunities are already provided and what updates or additions can be made to create a diverse trail system that offers something for everyone.



### ***Balance of Trail Classifications Throughout the System***

There is significant diversity in the experience that each trail user wishes to have when using the Girdwood trail system. To best meet this diversity, the trail system should be comprised of a balance of trails of various classifications. Girdwood residents value the diversity among types of trails and experiences as much as they value the ability to engage in many forms of trail and nature-based recreation. Trail users appreciate and see the need for access to class 1 (minimally developed) trails as well as class 4 (fully developed) trails. The Bird-to-Gird and Nordic 5k Trails are formalized, well-maintained trails that are valued by many community members to the same degree that undeveloped, primitive trail experiences are valued. A trail system with a balance of trail classifications will lend itself well to providing opportunities for the novice as well as advanced trail user and creating a broad range of outdoor and recreation experiences.



### ***Areas for Primitive Trail Development***

While it is vital to provide a variety of trails when it comes to difficulty, use, and trail classification, it is also necessary to identify areas that prioritize limited or primitive trails (Class 1 and 2). Many residents and user groups value having access to wild lands areas that are minimally developed. The areas should be accessible within short walking distance of the community and provide primitive, non-mechanized trail experiences. The areas with primitive trails should prioritize habitat protection, spaces for quiet and solitude, orienteering, wildlife viewing, and ungroomed skiing.

### ***The Community Wants to Improve Connectivity and Multi-Modal Access to Trails***

There are many wonderful trails within the Girdwood trail system that are missing formal or improved access for users of all modes, wayfinding, or amenities. The thought of the Girdwood trail system inundated by out-of-town guests is difficult for many long-time residents; however, with proper planning and thoughtful access planning, use can be managed.

Girdwood may consider upgrading certain trails to support higher levels of traffic and promoting them accordingly. Trails that are not yet to a standard that can sustainably accommodate higher levels of use or do not have easy access should be managed as such. Trails that are managed for use by Girdwood visitors should be clearly marked with wayfinding, promotional materials, and maps. This communication around access, use, and level of trail development will create a clear expectation as to the type of trail experience one can expect.

Commonly cited examples such as Wagon Trail, a historic experience that many residents value, cannot be shared or promoted with visitors arriving by car due to having no trailhead parking. Upper Virgin Creek Falls is a very popular destination that is promoted well and receives high traffic but does not have managed parking to accommodate visitors arriving by car or restrooms. Providing improved access for people arriving by all modes of transportation, formal trailheads, as well as appropriate amenities and parking for the level of use anticipated on a given trail will help to alleviate many of the current issues.

There is generally consensus that the trail system would benefit from increased connectivity between existing trails. Creating connectivity among existing trails may consist of new trail development to close "missing connections" as well as formalization of social trails that have evolved over time.

There is a desire for connectivity through town and around the valley, which is bifurcated by Glacier Creek and Alyeska Highway. Creek crossings will need to be eventually addressed to create the desired valley-wide connectivity. There is interest to fill in gaps in the system and to create more trail loops.

Creating connectivity within the trail system will create a more cohesive experience and additional opportunities to travel through Girdwood. Girdwood residents value the ability to travel without a car, and a connected trail system utilizing the town's infrastructure is a key part of that.

### ***Sustainable Trail Management and Maintenance is Important***

While all stakeholders understand that both the coordination and cost of maintenance have been challenging, the desired level of maintenance moving forward varies among trail users due to preference and desired trail experience.

Brushing out trails, grooming, and general trail maintenance (removing fallen trees, tread, bridges, etc.) should all be considered. Trails that become overgrown (such as Beaver Pond and Upper Iditarod) should be brushed out with some regularity. Although some users seem to be content with the level of grooming, others think that additional grooming would make the winter multi-use trail system more accessible to more trail users. The level of trail maintenance required, anticipated funding, and volunteer commitment should be discussed in the initial planning stages of all new trail development.

### ***Project Approval Processes Need to be Streamlined***

The project approval process should be transparent and understood by all. There should be adequate public involvement opportunities and communication between all parties. There is community frustration about the current process and a consensus that a streamlined approval process would benefit everyone. The trail plan will provide clarity around that process, establish a shared vision, and result in a community-supported and adopted document that may be referenced during future trail development.

## PART 2 – RECOMMENDATIONS + IMPLEMENTATION

### PURPOSE

The purpose of Part 2 of this plan is to identify both broad aspirations and specific implementation actions to guide trail projects over the next 10-15 years that will achieve the trail system that Girdwood envisions. This section of the GTP contains:

- A simple, long-range vision statement that describes Girdwood’s aspirations for the trail system.
- A list of community-developed values that support the vision and articulate core principles that guide and direct work. Values guide decision-making and establish a standard against which actions can be assessed.
- Five goals Girdwood can aim to achieve over the next 10-15 years.
- Implementation actions that identify specific projects that Girdwood should invest in and accomplish.

### VISION, VALUES, & GOALS

Girdwood residents developed values, a vision statement, and plan goals that guided the development of the trail plan and will serve as the basis for future action and decision-making for Girdwood’s trails.

The vision, values, and goals provide organizing principles for the plan and serve as a “compass” for future decisions – providing statements of intent that can guide Girdwood, its citizens and partners when responding to change, growth and new opportunities. The vision, values, and goals ensure that future decisions are consistent with the original intent of the plan. The vision, values, and goals were derived from public input provided through the GTP Subcommittee, public meeting #1 and general public comments.

#### Girdwood Trails Plan: Vision

Girdwood aspires to be a world-class outdoor recreation destination offering residents and visitors trails that are interconnected, diverse, and sustainable. Girdwood’s trails are vital to our community well-being, identity, and economy.

#### Girdwood Trails Plan: Values

Values are core principles that guide and direct work. Values guide decision-making and establish a standard against which actions can be assessed.



**Access:** Trails are easily accessible, provide safe access to outdoor recreation, everyday community destinations, and the alpine.



**Health & Well-Being:** Trails contribute to improved physical and emotional health by promoting outdoor activity and social connection.



**Experience:** Girdwood Trails provide a variety of outdoor experiences.



**Community Identity:** Trails are an essential part of Girdwood’s community identity and cultural history.



**Explore & Learn:** Trails provide places for exploration, discovery, and education.



**Natural World:** Trails provide access to the natural world to experience wildlife, wilderness, natural spaces, and functioning ecosystems.



**Stewardship:** Trails are sustainable, well-planned, designed, constructed, and maintained now and for future generations.



**Diversity & Inclusivity:** Trails provide a variety of diverse trail experiences for everyone.



**Recreation:** Trails provide safe, low-cost opportunities to get outdoors and recreate.

Figure 8

## GIRDWOOD TRAILS PLAN: GOALS



### GOAL 1: PLAN

Provide a balance and diversity of trail experiences that minimize user conflicts and are consistent with the Girdwood Area Plan and the Girdwood Valley Trail Management Plan.



### GOAL 2: CONSERVE

Identify, designate uses, and protect trails through proper processes.



### GOAL 3: DEVELOP

Build trails using sustainable design principles with a clear project approval process among land-owners.



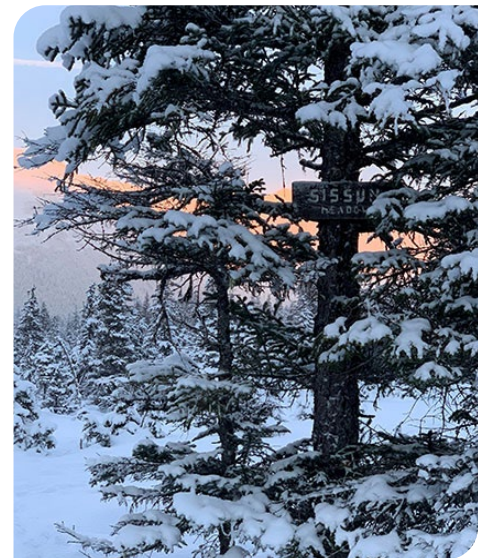
### GOAL 4: MAINTAIN

Manage trails as needed for safety, the desired user experience, and to conserve natural resources.



### GOAL 5: SUSTAIN

Provide adequate funding, planning, support, and stewardship for trails.



## PROPOSED TRAIL NETWORK

The Proposed Trail Network map, along with the list of proposed projects, work to achieve the vision and goals of the GTP and specifically address major themes identified through stakeholder engagement and the existing condition assessment. These themes are:

- Improve Connectivity and Access
- Improve Balance & Diversity of the Trail System

Proposed projects are grouped into the following categories; New Trails (T), Bridge Projects (B), Trailhead Projects (TH), Proposed Areas for Primitive Trails (PT), Proposed Areas for Mountain Bike Trail Development (MB), and Special Projects (SP).

### This Plan Improves the Balance and Diversity of the Trail System

#### **Proper Management and Funding of Existing Trails**

Girdwood trails should be actively managed, maintained, and funded to ensure trails are consistent with their assigned classification standards and experience as identified in the Girdwood Trails Management Plan. Trails should be maintained, so they are routed on sustainable alignments and hardened when necessary to assure trail sustainability and protection to the surrounding natural areas.

#### **Areas for Mountain Bike Trail Development**

Another way this plan improves the diversity of trail experiences in Girdwood is by identifying areas that are suitable for purpose-built, single-track mountain biking flow trails. There is an increased demand for this type of recreation experience in the valley. Providing a specific area for mountain bikes will provide users with an exceptional trail experience tailored to mountain biking while reducing user-conflicts on multi-use trails elsewhere that are primarily built for hiking or skiing. The areas identified for mountain biking trail development don't limit the development of other recreational activities in the area.

#### **New Trails**

The GTP proposes a variety of new trails that will improve the balance of trail classifications within the Girdwood trail system. Trail users will have a greater range of experiences and options for outdoor recreation and more trails from which to choose.

### How This Plan Improves Connectivity and Access

#### **Bridges**

Glacier Creek is a barrier to trail connectivity in the Girdwood Valley. This plan proposes three (3) multi-use trail bridges equitably dispersed throughout the valley to better connect residents and visitors to trails without having to drive to access trailheads.

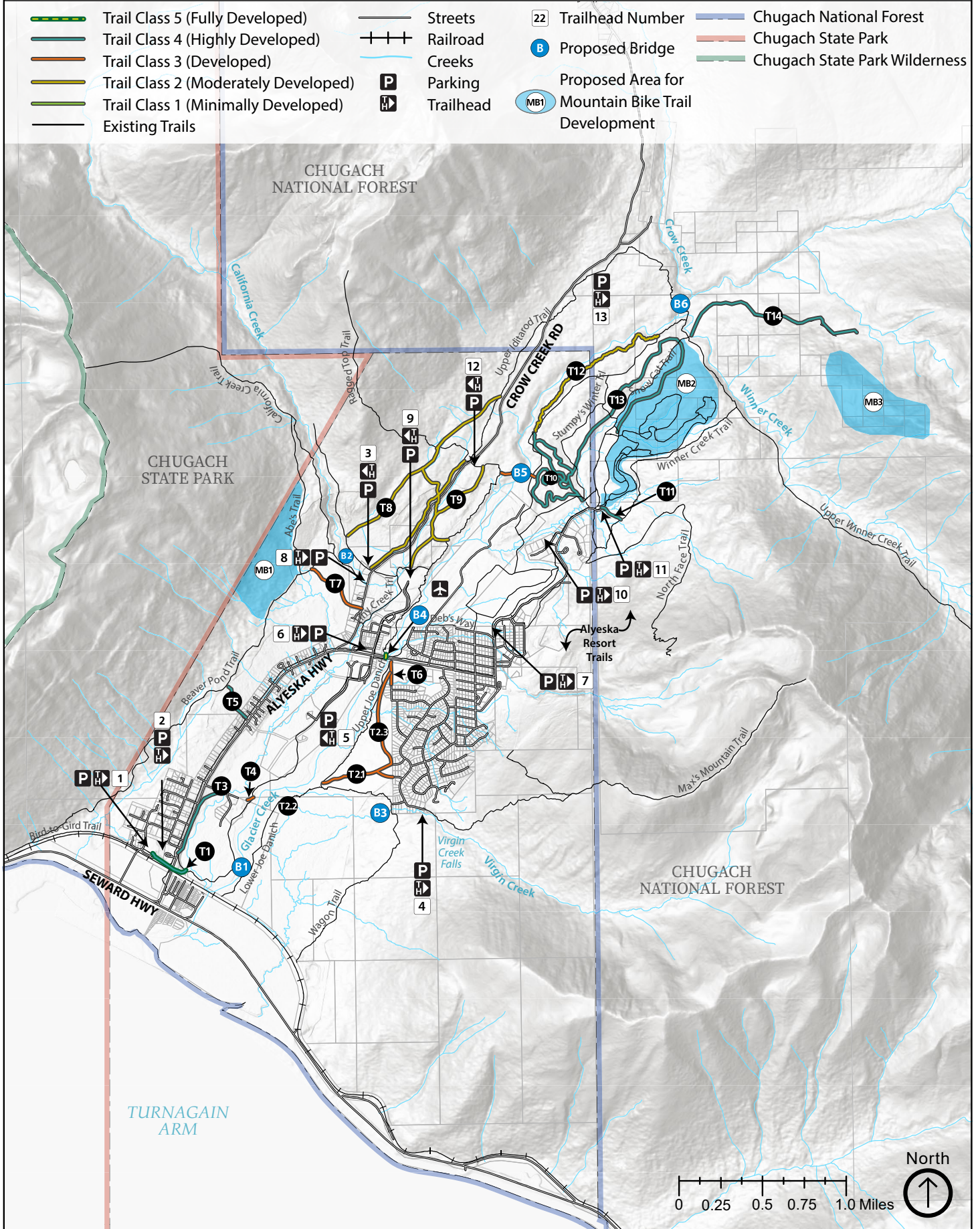
#### **Trailheads**

There are a multitude of existing trailheads in Girdwood with a range of amenities; however, to improve access to trails, this plan proposes a range of trailhead upgrades, expansions, cooperative agreements, and new trailheads to meet increasing access demands and to ensure existing parking areas are being efficiently utilized. Before considering new parking, consider strategies to better manage existing parking capacity.

#### **New Trails**

In addition to the proposed new trails that will improve the balance and diversity of the trail system, other new trails are proposed to improve access to the trail system and connectivity within the system. Proposed new trails improve the functionality of the system by completing smaller and larger loops, connecting to neighborhoods and community facilities, and providing safe and authorized routes to avoid trespassing.

## GIRDWOOD TRAILS PLAN: PROPOSED TRAIL NETWORK



## GIRDWOOD TRAILS PLAN: PROPOSED TRAIL NETWORK

## NEW TRAILS

- T1** Separated Grade Crossing: Railroad Bridge at Alyeska Hwy (4)
- T21** Timberline - Danich Connection (3)
- T22** Lower Danich Trail Upgrade
- T23** Timberline - Barren Ave Connection (3)
- T3** Lower Valley Trail Loop Connection (3)
- T4** Ruane Road Trail Connection to Lower Iditarod (3)
- T5** Beaver Pond to Alyeska Highway (3)
- T6** Barren Avenue to Alyeska Highway (3)
- T7** Crow Creek Road to Beaver Pond Trail (3)
- T8** Toe Slope Trail-California Creek to Iditarod (2)
- T9** Crow Creek Neighborhood Trails (2-3)
- T10** Forest Loop Trail (4)
- T11** Arlberg Connection to Winner Creek Trail (4)
- T12** Glacier Canyon Rim Trail (2)
- T13** Upper Valley Multi-Use Connector (4)
- T14** Snowcat Trail Improvements (4)

## BRIDGE PROJECTS

- B1** Glacier Creek Trail Bridge - Lower Valley
- B2** California Creek Bridge
- B3** Virgin Creek Bridge
- B4** Better Connectivity at Glacier Creek Bridge at Alyeska Hwy
- B5** Glacier Creek Trail Bridge – Middle Valley – (north of airstrip)
- B6** Glacier Creek Trail Bridge - Upper Valley

## SPECIAL PROJECTS

- SP1: Areawide Wayfinding (Not on Map)
- SP2: Girdwood Valley Circum-Valley Loop  
(Not on Map)

## TRAILHEADS

- H1** Girdwood Depot Trailhead Upgrades – with restroom
- H2** Glacier Ranger District Trailhead
- H3** Girdwood Cemetery Trailhead
- H4** Virgin Creek Falls Trailhead
- H5** Karolius Trailhead
- H6** Girdwood Town Center Trailhead Improvements – with restroom
- H7** Moose Meadows Trailhead Improvements
- H8** Beaver Pond Trailhead
- H9** Girdwood PreK-8 School – Parking Agreement
- H10** Alyeska Resort Parking Agreement
- H11** Arlberg Trailhead Expansion – with restroom
- H12** Middle Iditarod Trailhead
- H13** Winner Creek Gorge Trailhead Expansion

## PROPOSED AREAS FOR MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAIL DEVELOPMENT (MB)

- MB1** Beaver Pond
- MB2** Near the Nordic 5K
- MB3** End of the Snowcat Trail

## PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS: PROPOSED TRAIL NETWORK

### New Trails (T)

- T1 Separated Grade Crossing: RR Bridge @ Alyeska Highway**  
Develop a trail connection built to Class 4 Biking Design Parameters that would complete a missing link between the Lower Iditarod on the east side of Alyeska Highway and the Bird-to-Gird Trail. This trail may also provide an important link if the Bird-to-Gird Trail gets extended south.
- T2.1 Timberline - Danich Trail Connection**  
Construct a connector trail to Class 3 Bicycle Design Parameters in uplands between Turin Dr and/or Carlina Drive cul-de-sacs to connect to the Danich Trail.
- T2.2 Lower Danich Trail Upgrade**  
The Lower Danich Trail shall be upgraded to a Class 3 Trail (Bicycle Design Parameters) if, and only if, B1 (Lower Valley Glacier Creek Trail Bridge) and T2.1 are constructed (Timberline Neighborhood to Danich Trail Connection).
- T2.3 Timberline - Barren Ave Connection**  
Construct a neighborhood connector trail to Class 3 Bicycle Design Parameters in uplands from Turin Dr and/or Carlina Drive cul-de-sacs to connect to T6 (Barren Avenue to Alyeska Highway).
- T3 Lower Valley Trail Loop Connection**  
Build a trail connection in the uplands, where possible, between the beginning of the Lower Iditarod Trail and Ruane Road connecting Ruane Rd., south to the Lower Iditarod. This new, lower valley trail would provide a loop in the lower valley east of the Alyeska Highway, improving connectivity and providing an alternate, unpaved, looped route for lower valley residents. The trail should be constructed to Class 3 Bicycle Design Parameters. The trail should be located on HLB lands zoned GOS. Girdwood should collaborate with ADOT&PF to include this improvement as part of the Alyeska Highway/Seward Highway intersection project.
- T4 Ruane Road Trail Connection to Lower Iditarod**  
Build a trail connection from Ruane Road to the Lower Iditarod Trail to provide more connecting loops in the lower valley. The trail should be constructed to Class 3 Bicycle Design Parameters.
- T5 Beaver Pond to Alyeska Highway**  
Construct an east/west trail connection in the lower valley, between the Beaver Pond Trail and the Alyeska Highway Bike Path. This trail would allow users to access and exit the Beaver Pond trail about midway, creating a shorter option for those who do not wish to go the entire length of Beaver Pond Trail. It would provide trail connectivity for residents of a possible future development of HLB Tract 18A. The trail would be constructed to Class 3 Bicycle Design Parameters. Boardwalk structures can be used to cross wetlands where necessary. The trail alignment should use the existing Juniper Drive easement. The proposed trail crosses HLB land zoned gR-3.
- T6 Barren Avenue to Alyeska Highway**  
This proposed trail connection would provide a more direct trail to town center from the Alyeska Basin Subdivision by shortening the amount of time pedestrians and trail users would have to travel on roads. Avoid wetlands when possible. Boardwalk structures can be used where staying out of wetlands is not feasible. This trail should be routed using HLB land zoned GOS and/or GCR-1. Designed to Class 3 Bicycle Design Parameters. Trail would tie into the Alyeska Highway Bike Path after crossing under the Alyeska Highway Glacier Creek bridge.

**T7 Crow Creek Road to Beaver Pond Trail**

This proposed trail is a Class 3 trail using Bicycle Design Parameters. The purpose of this trail is to provide a separated “down-route” for bikers using MB1. Beaver Pond Trail would be the up route. The intention is not to promote this trail with a trailhead at Crow Creek Road, but rather to direct bike traffic leaving MB1, separating user groups and mitigating user conflict by removing downhill bike traffic moving at a higher speed from other trail users on Beaver Pond Trail. There is an existing ROW easement in the neighborhood that should be utilized in the construction of the southernmost portion of this trail. The trail may cross the very southern tip of the Girdwood Cemetery parcel. If the trail is constructed before parcel 6-010, zoned gR-3, is developed, the trail and associated easement may need to relocate when/if the HLB parcel is subdivided and developed. This trail is identified as the Village Intertie in the Crow Creek Neighborhood Land Use Study.

**T8 Toe Slope Trail - California Creek to Iditarod**

This trail forms a natural connection between the Beaver Pond Trail on the south, and the Iditarod on the north crossing Ragged Top Trail on the way. The route traverses an area of old growth rainforest, open marshes, small stream courses and waterfalls. The trail would require a bridge to cross over California Creek to join up with Beaver Pond Trail. This bridge could be built in coordination with the Girdwood Cemetery, whose Master Plan also shows a bridge in this area. T8 would provide an important link in the Circum-Valley Loop. Trail would be constructed to Class 2 Hiking Design Parameters. The proposed route traverses HLB lands zoned both GOS and gR-3. If the trail is constructed before parcel 6-010, zoned gR-3, is developed, the trail and associated easement may need to relocate when/if the HLB parcel is subdivided and developed. This trail is identified in the Crow Creek Neighborhood Land Use Study. A bridge should be constructed over California Creek in combination with this project. See Project B2.

**T9 Crow Creek Neighborhood Trails**

This area on either side of Crow Creek Road between Beaver Pond Trailhead and Middle Iditarod Trailhead contains several trails that are referenced in the Crow Creek Neighborhood Land Use Plan: [https://www.muni.org/Departments/hlb/Documents/CC\\_Land\\_Use\\_Plan\\_May\\_06\\_WEB.pdf](https://www.muni.org/Departments/hlb/Documents/CC_Land_Use_Plan_May_06_WEB.pdf)

The trails referenced in the plan and adopted in this planning document are as follows:

- Crow Creek Byway – parallels the Crow Creek Road and provides pedestrian access along this corridor that will be diminished if the road becomes a higher speed, higher volume route. Ideally this route would be separated from the roadway and built as part of the Crow Creek upgrade.
- Inter-Meadow Trail – this route, also shown on several planning maps, connects through the Matrix unit to the Iditarod Trail to the north and the school to the south. This is a very picturesque area of timbered ridge tops, bedrock outcrops and open marshes, all with spectacular views of the upper Glacier Creek Valley. These same features create challenges for development in this area, so the trail may be limited to short trail connectors between residential streets.
- Tiny Creek and Hemlock Interties – these two interties would provide connections between the existing and proposed up-down valley routes. The Tiny Creek intertie takes advantage of a small stream corridor through big timber; the Hemlock intertie follows a low inter-marsh ridge with view sheds both up and down valley.
- The proposed trails are located on lands zoned GOS, gR-3, and gR-5. If the trails are constructed before HLB parcels 6-011, 6-016, and 6-017 are developed, the trails and associated easements may need to relocate when/if the HLB parcels are subdivided and developed.

- T10 Forest Loop Trail (4)** Construct a Class 4 multi-use loop trail in the forested uplands built to two-way Skate Ski Design Parameters. A connection from the Forest Loop should be made west to B5 (Middle Valley Glacier Creek Trail Bridge), east to T13 (Upper Valley Multi-Use Connector) and north to T12 (Glacier Canyon Rim Trail).
- T11 Arlberg Connection to Winner Creek Trail** As the Arlberg Trailhead becomes a more central access point to the trail system, it is necessary to build an official Class 4 connection between this trailhead and the Winner Creek Trail. There is a trailhead to Winner Creek on Alyeska Resort property, but access to Winner Creek should be provided from public land.
- T12 Glacier Canyon Rim Trail** This proposed trail creates an upland route between the southern and northern portions of Stumpy's Summer Trail. It would replace the sections of Stumpy's Summer trail that traverse wetlands. The trail would create a loop option for hikers on the Winner Creek and Snowcat trails. The proposed trail should be constructed to the Class 2 Hiking Design Parameters. Bikes and other mechanized uses would not be allowed on the trail. The trail should be hardened as necessary to avoid braiding of trails, resource damage, and to achieve trail sustainability.
- T13 Upper Valley Multi-Use Connector** This trail would provide an upland, year-round, multi-use looping trail system for the Upper Valley connecting skiing, biking, and hiking routes with the Arlberg parking lot. This trail shall be designed to a Class 4 Skate Skiing Design Parameter for two-way travel.
- T14 Snowcat Trail Improvements** The Snowcat Trail was originally located and constructed not for sustainable trail use, but as a cut in vegetation for the snowcat to reach higher elevations in winter. Over time, the route has been used by trail users, not because the route is great, but because it is there. This project proposes identifying a sustainable route (both the tread surface and the grades) either within the snowcat cut or adjacent to it and hardening the tread. Improvements should be considered on both sides of Winner Creek Trail and built to Class 4 Bicycle Design Parameters. On the north side of Winner Creek a separate, down route for bikes should be constructed separate from the multi-use T14 and connecting MB3 to the bottom of the hill. This connection will separate faster and slower traffic minimizing user conflict. This project should reconstruct/relocate the Snowcat Trail out of wetlands wherever possible.

**Trail Class:** There are five Trail Classes, ranging from the least developed (Trail Class 1) to the most developed (Trail Class 5).

**Design Parameters:** Technical guidelines for the survey, design, construction, maintenance, and assessment of a trail based on its Designed Use and Trail Class. These parameters help trail developers by setting the design criteria to meet the trail's intended use.

**Managed Use:** Modes of travel that are actively managed and appropriate on a trail, based on its design and management. Additional uses may also be allowed, but the trail would not be specifically designed to accommodate that use.

**Designed Use:** Only one Designed Use is identified as the design driver for a trail— that use which has the most limiting design requirements. The seven designed uses found on Girdwood trails are:

- |                     |                              |
|---------------------|------------------------------|
| a. Hiker/Pedestrian | e. XC Ski (Classic/Diagonal) |
| b. Mountain Bike    | f. Skijoring                 |
| c. Bicycle          | g. Dog Sledding              |
| d. XC Ski (Skate)   |                              |

**Figure 9**

The Girdwood Valley Trails Management Plan (GVTMP) provides management guidance for the classification, designed uses, and managed uses of existing trails in Girdwood. This plan (GTP) defines the class and uses for the proposed trails recommended in this plan.

NEW TRAILS: PROPOSED TRAIL CLASSIFICATIONS, DESIGN PARAMETERS, DESIGNED USES, & MANAGED USES						
PROJECT	TRAIL	TRAIL CLASS	TRAIL LENGTH (MI)	DESIGNATED USE	MANAGED USE	PROHIBITED USE
T1	Separated Grade Crossing: Railroad Bridge at Alyeska Hwy	4	0.25	Bicycle	Multi-use: Hiking, Biking, Cross Country Skiing	Dogsled, Pack & Saddle, Motorized
T2.1	Timberline - Danich Trail Connection	3	0.46	Bicycle	Multi-use: Hiking, Biking, Cross Country Skiing	Dogsled, Pack & Saddle, Motorized
T2.2	Danich Trail Upgrade	3	2.5	Bicycle	Multi-use: Hiking, Biking, Cross Country Skiing	Dogsled, Pack & Saddle, Motorized
T2.3	Timberline - Barren Ave Connection	3	0.54	Bicycle	Multi-use: Hiking, Biking, Cross Country Skiing	Dogsled, Pack & Saddle, Motorized
T3	Lower Valley Trail Loop Connection	3	0.5	Bicycle	Multi-use: Hiking, Biking, Cross Country Skiing	Dogsled, Pack & Saddle, Motorized
T4	Ruane Road Trail to Lower Iditarod	3	0.04	Bicycle	Multi-use: Hiking, Biking, Cross Country Skiing	Dogsled, Pack & Saddle, Motorized
T5	Beaver Pond to Alyeska Highway	3	0.6	Bicycle	Multi-use: Hiking, Biking, Cross Country Skiing	Dogsled, Pack & Saddle, Motorized
T6	Barren Avenue to Alyeska Hwy	3	0.14	Bicycle	Multi-use: Hiking, Biking, Cross Country Skiing	Dogsled, Pack & Saddle, Motorized
T7	Crow Creek Road to Beaver Pond Trail	3	0.42	Mountain Biking	Mountain Biking (down-route)	Dogsled, Pack & Saddle, Skijor, Motorized
T8	Toe Slope Trail - California Creek to Iditarod	2	1.3	Hiking	Hiking	Dogsled, Pack & Saddle, Motorized
T9	Crow Creek Neighborhood Trails	2-3	2.15	Bicycle	Multi-use: Hiking, Biking, Cross Country Skiing	Dogsled, Pack & Saddle, Motorized
T10	Forest Loop Trail	4	1.9	Skate Ski	Multi-use: Hiking, Biking, Cross Country Skiing	Dogsled, Pack & Saddle, Motorized
T11	Arlberg Connection to Winner Creek Trail	4	0.15	Hiking	Biking, Hiking	Dogsled, Pack & Saddle, Motorized
T12	Glacier Canyon Rim Trail	2	1.2	Hiking	Hiking, Skiing	Dogsled, Biking, Pack & Saddle, Motorized
T13	Upper Valley Multi-Use Connector	4	1.74	Skate Ski	Multi-use: Hiking, Biking, Cross Country Skiing	Dogsled, Pack & Saddle, Motorized
T14	Snowcat Trail Improvements	4	1.22	Bicycle	Multi-use: Hiking, Biking, Cross Country Skiing	Dogsled, Pack & Saddle, Motorized
MB1, MB2, MB3	Single-Use, Purpose-Built Mountain Biking Trails	3	TBD	Mountain Biking	Mountain Biking	Dogsled, Pack & Saddle, Skijor, Motorized

SUMMARY: TRAIL CLASSIFICATION & LENGTH TOTALS (MI) OF EXISTING & PROPOSED TRAILS		
Class 1	20.75	22.98%
Class 2	22.70	25.13%
Class 3	18.18	20.14%
Class 4	13.36	14.80%
Class 5	15.3	16.95%
	90.29 miles	100%

This summary represents the total length of existing and proposed trails.

## **Bridge Projects (B)**

- B1** **Glacier Creek Trail Bridge - Lower Valley**  
There is no safe and authorized crossing of Glacier Creek in the lower valley. A trail bridge at this location would create the opportunity for more loops in the lower valley. The bridge would also provide options for those who use the Depot Trailhead or Glacier Ranger District Parking Lot to connect to trails on the east side of Glacier Creek. The bridge should be wide enough to accommodate adjacent trails. If the Alaska Railroad pursues a bridge repair or replacement project where the railroad crosses Glacier and California Creeks at the northeast corner of Old Girdwood, consider a coordinated effort in partnership with the Railroad to include a pedestrian element. A future pedestrian bridge in the lower valley could also be an element of the proposed souther extension of the Seward Highway Trail. If coordination with the AK RR or ADOT&PF is not successful, the most feasible location to cross Glacier Creek in the lower valley should be identified. If this bridge is constructed, projects T2.1 and T2.2 must be implemented. **\*Additional UDC review required.**
- B2** **California Creek Bridge**  
Construct a pedestrian trail bridge across California Creek as part of the T8 trail project. The trail bridge will need to accommodate Class 2 Hiking Design Parameters. This bridge should be constructed in cooperation with plans for the development of the Girdwood Cemetery.
- B3** **Virgin Creek Bridge**  
Identify a location for a trail bridge to cross Virgin Creek. A bridge would provide a safe, legal, and sustainable connection between lower Virgin Creek and the Wagon Trail. This project must be pursued in concert with the Virgin Creek Falls Trailhead project (TH4).
- B4** **Improve Connectivity at Glacier Creek Bridge at Alyeska Highway**  
This project will likely not result in the construction of a bridge. A pedestrian circulation analysis should be completed to make recommendations on how to improve accessibility, connectivity, safety, and circulation across and underneath the Alyeska Highway connecting neighborhoods with the Town Center, school, and other community facilities and the Upper and Lower Iditarod. **\*Additional UDC review required.**
- B5** **Glacier Creek Trail Bridge – Middle Valley – (north of airstrip)**  
A pedestrian bridge at this location to cross Glacier Creek would improve connectivity of the entire trail system, creating opportunities for more looping trail experiences. A bridge here would connect future neighborhoods to Upper Valley Trails. In coordination with this project, trails should be constructed on either side of the proposed bridge connecting the Iditarod Trail to T10, Forest Loop Trail. These trails should be built to the trail classification of the connecting trails. Finally, a bridge in this location provides legal access to trails by avoiding AK DOT&PF Airport property. **\*Additional UDC review required.**
- B6** **Glacier Creek Trail Bridge – Upper Valley Hand Tram**  
A pedestrian bridge in the location of the former Hand Tram will provide year-round, multi-use connectivity to a design standard and capacity matching the Winner Creek Trail. B6 is currently in design and engineering phase; the majority of construction funding has been secured. **\*Additional UDC review required.**

## **Trailheads (TH)**

NOTE: Trailhead projects that propose new parking should, as practicable, consider strategies to manage existing parking capacity before adding more parking.

- TH 1** **Girdwood Depot Trailhead Upgrades**  
Pursue an official parking agreement with the Alaska Railroad to provide authorized trail parking in this location. Install trailhead, wayfinding, and informational signage as authorized. Provide a restroom and other visitor amenities like a picnic area. This trailhead can successfully accommodate Girdwood visitors who want access to lower valley trails and can be a great future trailhead for lower valley trails east of Glacier Creek when an authorized crossing of Glacier Creek is constructed (B1).
- TH 2** **Glacier Ranger District Trailhead**  
Pursue an official parking agreement with the USFS to provide authorized trail parking in this location. Install trailhead, wayfinding, and informational signage as authorized. This is a great opportunity to highlight coordination and collaboration for a community-based trail system.

- TH 3 Lower Valley Trailhead**  
Add a public trail head at the Girdwood Cemetery. This trailhead will be developed with the development of the future Girdwood cemetery. It will provide parking for access to Beaver Pond and Tiny Creek Trail to the school.
- TH 4 Virgin Creek Falls Trailhead**  
A combination of trailhead and circulation improvements are needed in this location to achieve the following:
- Reduce traffic impacts to the neighborhood streets.
  - Improve connectivity between Lower Virgin Creek and Upper Virgin Creek Trails
  - A separate Virgin Creek Trailhead and trail circulation study is needed to recommend a range of alternatives for resolving trail, traffic, parking, and trailhead conflicts in the neighborhood. **\*Additional UDC review required.**
  - Upon completion of the study and review of the suggested alternatives by GTC there will be implementation of the preferred option.
- TH 5 Karolius Trailhead**  
Build a new trailhead on HLB land zoned GCR-1 to service the east side of Glacier Creek. The trailhead should have capacity for 24 vehicles and include a kiosk, sanitation, and other trailhead amenities. This parking area will provide access to the trail system via the Lower Iditarod Trail and will also be under consideration for other uses in the future that are likely to require parking.
- TH 6 Girdwood Town Center Trailhead Improvements – with restroom**  
This trailhead exists but is underutilized. Provide signage, wayfinding, trailhead amenities, and a restroom to improve the use and functionality of this trailhead adding useful capacity and relieving pressure from other trailheads.
- TH 7 Moose Meadows Trailhead Improvements**  
Expand the Moose Meadows Trailhead to accommodate forty (40) vehicles. Reorganize and define parking to efficiently use the space. Add other trailhead amenities including informational and wayfinding signage.
- TH 8 Beaver Pond Trailhead**  
Implementing improvements at other trailheads (Town Square, Girdwood PreK-8 School, Girdwood Cemetery, and improved signage and wayfinding), may reduce the demand for on-street parking in this location. As required, coordinate with AK DOT&PF to investigate the feasibility of an official trailhead in this location.
- TH 9 Girdwood PreK-8 School Parking – Parking Agreement**  
Pursue an official parking agreement with Anchorage School District to provide authorized trail parking in the dirt lot adjacent to the AWWU road. Install trailhead, wayfinding, and informational signage as authorized. A trail should be constructed that connects this parking lot to the Middle Iditarod trail. This new connector trail should be located off of the AWWU road and can be constructed as part of future planned housing in the area. (Reference T9: Inter-Meadow Trail as part of this plan and the Crow Creek Neighborhood Land-Use Plan)
- TH 10 Alyeska Resort Parking Agreement**  
Pursue an official parking agreement with Alyeska to provide authorized trail parking in this location. Install trailhead, wayfinding, and informational signage as authorized.
- TH 11 Arlberg Trailhead Expansion**  
Coordinate with neighboring landowners to expand the Arlberg Trailhead parking area to the east. Include a vaulted restroom. Any resulting trailhead construction will likely need additional UDC approval separate from this plan approval. **\*Additional UDC review required.**
- TH 12 Middle Iditarod**  
Develop official trailhead parking in this location to accommodate 10-15 vehicles including signage, wayfinding, and other trailhead amenities. **\*Additional UDC review may be required.**
- TH 13 Winner Creek Gorge Trailhead**  
Expand the existing Winner Creek Gorge Trailhead to accommodate another 20+ vehicles. After a trail bridge (B5) is constructed across Glacier Creek, there will be an alternate access route for trail users to access the Upper Valley east of Glacier Creek more easily. Expansion of the Winner Creek Gorge Trailhead will disperse trailhead access to the Upper Valley and relieve some pressure from the Arlberg Trailhead.

## **Areas for Mountain Bike Trail Development (MB)**



### **Beaver Pond**

Provide purpose-built mountain biking flow trails (Class 2-3 Bicycle Design Parameters) to the west of Abe's trail and Beaver Pond trail. This area for mountain bike trail development would alleviate user conflicts around the Abe's Trail/Beaver Pond/California Creek area. Beaver Pond Trail (out of trailhead 20) would be the up route for bicycle traffic and the proposed T7 would be the down route. Design intent is to mitigate user conflict in this area to the greatest extent possible by providing purpose-built mountain biking trails and removing faster-speed bicycle traffic from multi-use trails built for hiking. Trailhead access for this area would be located at Town Center, the Beaver Pond Trailhead, Cemetery Trailhead, or Girdwood PreK-8 School.



### **Near the Nordic 5K**

Provide purpose-built mountain biking flow trails (Class 2-3 Bicycle Design Parameters) within and around the 5K Nordic Ski Loop. All trails in MB2 should minimize impacts to the Winner Creek Trail viewshed. Trailhead access to the area is from the Arlberg Trailhead, Alyeska Resort for resort guests, Alyeska Resort for the general public if a parking agreement is in place, and the Winner Creek Gorge Trailhead once the bridge over Glacier Creek at the former Hand Tram is in place.



### **End of the Snowcat Trail**

Provide purpose-built mountain biking flow trails (Class 2-3 Bicycle Design Parameters). This area will likely need to be coordinated and authorized by multiple landowners (HLB and DNR). As mentioned in Project T14, designate a down route for biking to parallel the Snowcat Trail and separate walkers and hikers from faster downhill biking traffic. Trailhead access to the area is from the Arlberg Trailhead, Alyeska Resort for resort guests, Alyeska Resort for the general public if a parking agreement is in place, and the Winner Creek Gorge Trailhead once the bridge over Glacier Creek at the Hand Tram is in place.

## **Special Projects (SP)**

### **SP1: Areawide Wayfinding**

Develop a comprehensive and standardized wayfinding and informational system that improves the understanding of and access to trails in Girdwood. The system should be simple, flexible, sustainable, fundable, represent community identity, and be implementable across multiple land ownerships.

### **SP 2: Girdwood Valley Circum-Valley Loop**

The existing and proposed trails that make up the route of the Girdwood Valley Circum-Valley Loop are described elsewhere; however, it is important to highlight the larger context of this idea. This loop trail is a key connector to the entire Valley - - connecting parks, roads, neighborhoods, and other community facilities. Everyone has access and everyone can navigate around the Valley by trail. Trail users can complete one segment, or they can go big and complete the whole thing. This concept presents an exciting opportunity as a destination trail experience.

## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

The Girdwood Trails Plan presents a proposed trail network along with a list of projects that are endorsed by the Girdwood Community. The plan will be implemented over the next 15-20 years by a variety of landowners and trail managers including, but not limited to, the Municipality of Anchorage, Chugach State Park, US Forest Service, Girdwood Trails Committee, Girdwood Nordic Ski Club, Bikewood, Chugach Powder Guides, and Alyeska Resort.

The size and complexity of every project in this plan is different, however, all projects are required to complete the following steps:



For a detailed list of the project approval process, see page 15 of this plan or the GVTMP.

However, many of the projects identified in this plan will not require additional review and approval by the Urban Design Commission or the Planning and Zoning Commission. The review and approval process for trails in Title 21 (Sec. 21.03.190 C 2.b.), combined with the community process of developing and adopting a trail master plan, provide the necessary review for many projects. Please reference the Proposed Trail Network project descriptions on pages 38 – 44 to identify the projects requiring additional Urban Design Commission or Planning and Zoning Commission approvals.

## PLAN REVISION & AMENDMENT PROCESS

The Girdwood Trail Plan provides direction to the Girdwood community for trail projects and trail funding priorities over the next 10-15 years. This plan is based on community priorities at the time of plan adoption, some of which are expected to change over time. A process for revising or amending this plan is needed to ensure its effectiveness as a guide for Girdwood's trails.

A complete revision of this plan may be undertaken every 15-20 years. A re-evaluation of the plan's recommendations and/or projects should be completed more frequently, about every 5-10 years. Plan re-evaluation should consider:

- Updated trends in trails, trail use, and outdoor recreation.
- Changes in assumptions that form the bases for the recommendations and projects in this plan.
- Changes in community aspirations that affect the plan's vision, values, goals, and projects.
- Community progress in implementing the plan.

If plan re-evaluation finds that there are no significant changes, a plan revision is not necessary. Plan amendments may be addressed as needed. The plan may also be amended based on the adoption of future studies and plans.

Any proposed revisions or amendments to this plan must be consistent with the Girdwood Area Comprehensive Plan.

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**APPENDIX**

# Executive Summary – Girdwood Trails Plan Stakeholder Interviews

## OBJECTIVES

Huddle AK worked in partnership with the Girdwood Trails Plan Subcommittee to develop a list of stakeholders and trail users to participate in interviews. The stakeholder group was selected to represent the variety of uses occurring on the trail system and their different perspectives of many trail users. The objective of the stakeholder conversations was to establish a baseline and better understand the current conditions of the trail system as well as varying goals and visions for the future to ensure a trails plan provides something for everyone in the Girdwood community.

## METHODOLOGY

Stakeholder interviews were conducted over 60-minutes via online meeting platforms. The following set of questions was used to begin and guide each conversation:

- What is your general perception of the Girdwood trail system?
- What do you value most about the Girdwood trail system?
- What do you feel the Girdwood trail system does well? What is working? What are the strengths of the system?
- Where do you feel the Girdwood trail system could be improved? What is not working? What are the challenges within the system?
- As you look ahead to the next 15-20 years, what are the most significant challenges and opportunities for the Girdwood trail system?
- How balanced do you feel the trail system is in terms of types of trails, parks, and permitted uses on public lands?
- What are the key issues facing the trail system?
- Are there any 'missing connections' that you know of?
- What other thoughts would you like to share about the Girdwood trail system's future?
- Are there trail projects that you think need to be completed?
- What do you think about existing trail conditions and maintenance?
- What do you think about trail amenities (signs, parking, trailheads, etc.)

Huddle AK captured each conversation and provided the stakeholders a summary to review for accuracy. The interview summaries were compiled for review by the Girdwood Trails Plan Subcommittee and inclusion in the public record.

Based upon the key findings of the stakeholder interviews, an existing condition report, and a Girdwood Trail Plan Working Group work session, a vision statement for the Trails Plan process will be developed. This statement will help to focus and guide the process by creating a shared vision for the trail system informed by viewpoints and information shared by all user groups.

## PARTICIPANTS

Girdwild  
Alyeska Resort  
Girdwood Nordic Ski Club  
MTB Alliance

Ascending Path  
Landowners and Managers  
General Trail Users: Jonathan Lee, Carolyn Brodin, Paul Crews

## KEY THEMES

### **Girdwood is a Trail Town and Residents Value Access to Trail-Based Recreation**

Many Girdwood residents were drawn to the town due to the nature of the small community and its access to trail-based recreation. Given Girdwood's proximity to Anchorage, residents value having trail access from their front door on-foot and providing recreation opportunities within the community is important to all.

Girdwood residents and trail system users value the variety of activities that are possible within the trail system (i.e. hiking, biking, skijoring, downhill skiing, cross country skiing, etc.). The accessibility of the trail system, whether it be from residents' front door, or visitors having easy access from Alyeska Resort, is something the community of Girdwood appreciates and cited often.

The presence of Alyeska Resort, recreational opportunities, and natural beauty draws tourists year-round. There is a perception that the Girdwood trail system has the foundation, location, and potential to be a world-class trail system. With adequate public involvement in the trails planning process and a shared vision, investments in trail maintenance, improved connectivity, access, and amenities would be beneficial for residents and visitors alike.

### **The Girdwood Trail System Should be Equitable and Balanced**

#### *Level of Difficulty*

Bearing in mind that outdoor recreation in Alaska is somewhat more 'extreme' than one might find in other places, the opportunities within the Girdwood trail system still seem to skew towards a more experienced outdoor recreator. There is a desire for trails that are accessible and safe for hikers, bikers, and skiers of all levels. Creating opportunities at all levels of difficulty is especially important as the number of youth and tourists engaging in recreation is on the rise. As with all recreation, there is a certain level of risk to be expected. However, clearly indicating trail difficulty and conditions on maps and trailhead kiosks will offer clear expectations and yield more prepared trail users who experience less injury or accidents. As the balance of trail classifications is diversified this will become increasingly important. Tourists or out of town guests may assume that a Class 4 trail poses little risk due to being well maintained and formalized and may be ill prepared for the risks of trail-based recreation.

#### *Allowed Uses*

Due to the growing popularity of various trail-based activities such as biking and skiing, the balance as well as clear indication of allowed uses on a trail is needed. There is some user conflict between hikers and bikers and their desired trail experiences. However, bikers and non-bikers alike agree that more bike specific trails and areas are needed. Trails which are not designed and built for bikers sustain damage and result in increased maintenance requirements and costs.

The construction of the Nordic 5k Loop through the efforts of the Girdwood Nordic Ski Club has created a designated area of allowed use for Nordic skiers that is generally removed from other trail users

experience that is well-marked, and well-maintained. The Girdwood Mountain Bike Alliance is pursuing similar efforts to create trail opportunities for bikers through the proper planning and channels. The possibility of zoning within the trail system will be explored as it may alleviate tension between user groups and maintain areas for specific uses and desired trail experiences.

As the designation and creation of areas for allowed uses progresses, the wayfinding, signage, and mapping should be clear and well planned to create easy to follow routes and loops. It is difficult for residents and visitors alike to understand where allowed uses change. Due to the nature of the development in the Girdwood trail system so far without a master plan, the system is incohesive. Allowed uses change frequently with little marking creating a fractured, confusing experience when a trail user must change or question whether their mode of travel is allowed on a trail. One example of this is the North Face Trail at the top of Mt. Alyeska, when the trail is open to bikers, hikers get cut off and must turn around.

### *Range of Opportunities for All People*

Offering opportunities for every type of resident or visitor is something that the community of Girdwood values and feels is important. Whether that is the tourist seeking a photo opportunity with very little hiking, the individual pushing a stroller or using a wheelchair, those who seek a more primitive experience in a natural space, or any other variety of trail user, the Girdwood trail system can provide options for all through proper planning. Each trail cannot cater to all, but the planning process will help determine which opportunities are already provided and what updates or additions may be made to trails to create a diverse trail system that offers something for everyone.

### *Balance of Trail Classifications throughout the System*

There is significant diversity in the experience that trail users wish to have when using the Girdwood trail system. In order to best meet this diversity in demand, the trail system should be comprised of trails of various classifications. Girdwood residents' value the diversity among types of trails and experiences as much as they value the ability to engage in many forms of trail-based recreation. They appreciate and see the need for access to class 1 (minimally developed) trails as well as class 4 (fully developed) trails. The Bird to Gird and Nordic 5k Trails are formalized, well-maintained trails that are valued by many community members to the same degree that undeveloped, primitive trail experiences are. There was interest expressed in formalization and clearer marking of some social trail networks. Formalizing select social trails will preserve the natural environment by making it clear where trail users should travel and funneling traffic onto fewer trails. Clearer marking of the formalized trail system will prevent visitors from wandering down social trails and accidentally arriving in residents' backyards rather than their intended destination. A trail system with a balance of trail classifications will lend itself well to providing opportunities for the novice as well as advanced hiker and creating a broad range of outdoor and recreation experiences.

### *Areas for No Trail Development*

While it will be vital to provide a variety of trails when it comes to difficulty, use, and trail classification, it will also be necessary to designate areas where no trail development will occur. Recent trail development and increased use within the Girdwood trail system have altered treasured primitive trail experiences. Many residents and user groups value having access to pristine wilderness areas that are

minimally developed. The Girdwood valley is vast and with proper planning and public involvement, spaces and experiences for all user groups are possible. Areas for no trail development must still follow the proper process and channels that new trail development is subject to. It should be clear why the area has been selected, how it will be accessed, and what (if any) level of enforcement, maintenance, or involvement will be needed.

### **Trail Access**

There are many wonderful trails within the Girdwood trail system that are missing formal access, wayfinding, or amenities. The thought of the Girdwood trail system inundated by out of town guests is difficult for many long-time residents. The process by which trail access is created will require community input and the benefit of improved trail access for safety and rescue should be kept in mind.

While the Girdwood trail system is a valued asset of the community, the trails do not benefit from being kept a secret. Striking a balance between overuse and having enough eyes on the trail for safety and maintenance is crucial. Through conversation and planning, Girdwood may consider upgrading certain trails to support higher levels of traffic and promoting them accordingly (i.e. Winner Creek Trail). Certain trails that are not yet to that standard or do not have easy access may not be as heavily promoted. The trails that are selected for tourism and promotion should be chosen by the community and clearly marked on promotional materials and maps. This communication around access, use, and level of trail development will create a clear expectation as to the type of trail experience one can expect.

Commonly cited examples such as Wagon Trail, a historic experience that many residents value, cannot be shared or promoted with visitors due to having no trailhead at either end. Upper Virgin Creek Falls is a very popular destination that is promoted well and receives high traffic but does not have parking or restrooms to accommodate visitors. Providing easy access, formal trailheads, as well as appropriate amenities and parking for the level of use anticipated on a given trail will help to alleviate many of the current issues.

### **Priority Projects**

- Hand Tram
- Virgin Creek Trailhead
- Max's Mountain
- Iditarod Trail
- Winner Creek Improvements
- Girdwood Mountain Bike Alliance Development
- Dedicated Areas for No New Trail Development
- Increased Connectivity between existing trails (Abe's Trail and California Creek)
- Wagon Trail Access and Tread
- Beaver Pond Maintenance and Improvements
- 

### **Trail Maintenance**

While all stakeholders understand that both the coordination and cost of maintenance have been challenging, the desired level of maintenance moving forward varies among trail users due to

preference and desired trail experience. Trail classification and allowed use designation will be helpful in determining the level of maintenance on given trails.

Brushing out trails, grooming, and general trail maintenance (removing fallen trees, tread, bridges, etc.) should all be considered. Trails designated for hiking or biking with a tendency to become overgrown (such as Beaver Pond) should be brushed out with some regularity. Most seem to be content with the level of grooming happening and would like to hold community conversations to reach maintenance agreements for additional grooming. General trail maintenance could be conducted more regularly, but due to financial burden the Girdwood trail system relies heavily on volunteers to conduct these activities. Areas that are designated for no trail development should be relatively unmaintained to provide a more primitive trail experience and preserve natural spaces for those who seek that.

The level of trail maintenance required, anticipated funding, and volunteer commitment should be discussed in the initial planning stages of all new trail development. Many interviewees felt that new trail projects should not be pursued until existing trails are up to date on maintenance.

### **Connectivity**

While many are excited about the prospect of new trails and expansion of allowed uses, there is consensus among those interviewed that the trail system would benefit from increased connectivity between existing trails. Creating connectivity among existing trails may consist of new trail development to close 'missing connections' as well as formalization of social trails where hikers have taken it upon themselves to establish connections.

A framework for creating access to the trail system and connectivity among current trails should exist before additional trails and new development is pursued to avoid trail relocation in the future. There is a desire for connectivity through town and around the valley, which is bifurcated by Glacier Creek and Alyeska Highway. Creek crossings will need to be addressed eventually to create the desired valley-wide connectivity. There is interest in filling in gaps to create out and back loops. One such connection is between Abe's Trail and California Creek, creating a loop would only require a small portion of trail to be formalized.

Creating connectivity among the trail system would create a more cohesive experience and additional opportunities to travel through Girdwood. With so many residents valuing the ability to travel without a car, a connected trail system utilizing the city's infrastructure is a key part of that.

### **Project Approval Processes**

The project approval process should be transparent and understood by all. There should be adequate public involvement opportunities and communication between all parties. There is frustration among the community around an arduous trails approval process while landowners and managers are sympathetic of this and working to simplify the process. This trails plan will provide some clarity around that process, establish a shared vision, and result in a community supported and adopted document that may be referenced during future trail development.

Topics that may be discussed and considered with all new trails and natural space projects include:

- Viewshed
- Land Ownership

Girdwood Trails Plan  
Stakeholder Interview: Alyeska  
March 16, 2020  
Summary Report

Attendees: Holly Spoth-Torres, Brian Burnett, Taylor Smith  
Conducted via phone

### QUESTIONS

- What is your general perception of the Girdwood trail system?
- What do you value most about the Girdwood trail system?
- What do you feel the Girdwood trail system does well? What is working? What are the strengths of the system?
- Where do you feel the Girdwood trail system could be improved? What is not working? What are the challenges within the system?
- As you look ahead to the next 15-20 years, what are the most significant challenges and opportunities for the Girdwood trail system?
- How balanced do you feel the trail system is in terms of types of trails? What are the key issues facing the trail system?
- Are there any 'missing connections' that you know of?
- What other thoughts would you like to share about the Girdwood trail system's future?
- Are there trail projects that you think need to be completed?
- What do you think about existing trail conditions and maintenance?
- What do you think about trail amenities (signs, parking, trailheads, etc.)

### SUMMARY

Alyeska feels that the trail system in Girdwood is a great start but for a developing resort town there are a lot of improvements possible. Alyeska values the proximity of the trail system to the resort. Additionally, the operational aspect is amazing – volunteers and land managers make the trail system work. The 5k Nordic Loop is a well-signed and easy to access asset for the resort. Moose Meadows is also a nice asset during high snow years, but the meadows are challenging to access in the lower snow years.

There are aspects of the trail system that are well-maintained, well-constructed, and well-signed – the Winner Creek Trail and the Hand Tram for example. This is attributed to the Forest Service, MUNI, and volunteers. Alyeska and Girdwood Nordic Ski Club share grooming of the Nordic 5k loop.

Alyeska shared about the trail extension from Fairview to the Hotel in 2011 as an example of wanting to develop a trail in one place and realigning that trail or replacing it with a higher quality trail somewhere else – an example of what the community can do working together. A trail that meets everybody's needs but built to a better standard.

Challenges around the trail system are getting approvals to build new trails, funding new construction, and maintaining the trails that already exist. Maintenance and drainage are two key issues due to Girdwood's climate – there is only so much ground that is appropriate on which to build (i.e. wetlands

and bogs are not appropriate). Sustainable terrain is not available for multiple reasons (planning, ownership, etc.).

Trail conflicts exist on Winner Creek – you used to be able to bike on the trail and it can no longer support that use due to traffic during peak times. Alyeska would support grooming Winner Creek in the winter to allow snow biking, however there is some resistance to that idea.

Over the next 15 years, the most significant challenge the trail system will face is meeting demand, especially in the vicinity of the resort. Winner Creek – Hand Tram – Crow Creek is consistently rated one of the best trails in Alaska and it's very busy.

Most trails in Alaska developed as game trails or transportation routes to resources, resulting in routes that are not the most sustainable – the trails are straight and follow the valley floor without much elevation gain or loss. More single-track bike trails would be good in Girdwood, there are a lot of hiking and running trails so a focus on bikeable or multi-use trails would be good. In the next 15-20 years it is important to have a diverse mix of sustainable trails for a diversity of uses.

The multi-use path is such a huge benefit. The trail creates access from the Resort to a lot of trails. Trails that provide connectivity to and from and within neighborhoods are important.

Projects that should be completed:

- Within the perimeter from the hotel, Winner Creek, back down the valley, across the hand tram, down on Iditarod/Beaver Pond, the bike trail coming back to Forest Service, down on the lower Iditarod to Alyeska highway -- Everything inside this loop should be allowed to be developed for more trail use.
- Starting on Beaver Pond heading down the Valley - between California Creek and Abe's trail – there's a branch off and there is a plateau between 2 trails. A few kilometers of single-track bike trails through the forest with 3-4K of trails that would be accessible to more residents and those who don't live in the Alyeska subdivision. It's very flat and it would support a Kincaid-style single-track alignment.
- Alyeska resort is going to continue to develop trails on its 400 acres that are available to both the community and guests. Alyeska is committed to creating trails that are accessible for all levels. Alyeska is beginning a master planning phase – creating a 10-year plan for the mountain. This master plan will likely propose new trails - hiking, biking, multi-use, with varying degrees of difficulty and user experiences.

Interactions between the public and Alyeska guests on Alyeska's trails has been good. Through signage and active management, the community has respected the downhill bike paths without impacting guests or hiking crowd.

Winter trail grooming has been taken on by the Girdwood Nordic Ski Club – this is a vital community service. There are improvements to be made with summer maintenance. The advent of singletrack trails has shown that the Girdwood Mountain Biking Alliance has the capacity to maintain trails, especially in the summer.

The current management plan does not allow spending public dollars on trails that don't have easements or trailheads – the Virgin Creek project conflicts with this policy but is a community issue that must be solved.

Currently, there are agreements in place in order to minimize parking issues. For example, Alyeska's parking lots are used for access to the 5K Nordic Loop, single track, etc. However, these agreements won't be in place forever – alternative, safe parking solutions that meet trail demands (more than 8-10 vehicles) need to be explored.

Alyeska is hopeful for this collaborative process that requires everyone to work together. As a prominent ski resort, Alyeska hopes to see plans for a trail system that resembles other resort/trail towns (Bend, Park City, Sun Valley) to elevate Girdwood to a level that is economically competitive with other resort towns. It's unlikely that anyone will look back and think "what were we thinking building all these trails"?

Girdwood Trails Plan  
Stakeholder Interview  
Ascending Path  
March 26th, 2020 at 3:30pm  
Attendees: Nicole Geils, GM of AP  
Huddle AK: Holly Spoth-Torres, Taylor Smith

### QUESTIONS

- What is your general perception of the Girdwood trail system?
- What do you value most about the Girdwood trail system?
- What do you feel the Girdwood trail system does well? What is working? What are the strengths of the system?
- Where do you feel the Girdwood trail system could be improved? What is not working? What are the challenges within the system?
- As you look ahead to the next 15-20 years, what are the most significant challenges and opportunities for the Girdwood trail system?
- How balanced do you feel the trail system is in terms of types of trails? What are the key issues facing the trail system?
- Are there any 'missing connections' that you know of?
- What other thoughts would you like to share about the Girdwood trail system's future?
- Are there trail projects that you think need to be completed?
- What do you think about existing trail conditions and maintenance?
- What do you think about trail amenities (signs, parking, trailheads, etc.)

### SUMMARY

Ascending Path (AP) loves the trails of Girdwood. AP has a positive working relationship with all parties involved in the use of the trails. The trails are in good condition. When AP is out on the trail and encounters issues, they send an email to the appropriate entity and the problem is addressed quickly – whether it's trees down, overflow issues, or something else.

AP operates in both the summer and winter. Winter snowshoe trips are guided if the conditions allow. AP is a boutique tour operator that guides small groups. The group ratio for their snowshoe and nature hikes is 10 or less clients to 1 guide.

AP most values the accessibility of Girdwood's trail system. Winner Creek is a trail that they use year-round. It is convenient to have trailhead access at Alyeska Resort. AP appreciates the various volunteers that maintain and provide services on Girdwood's trail system. AP values the care that the Girdwood community has for the trails. One can often see trail users picking up trash, curating the trails, and keeping them well maintained for everybody to enjoy.

AP feels that the response to various hazards on the trail is handled well, especially on heavily used trails. Some of the trails in Girdwood's system are very accessible while others could have better accessibility, parking, trash cans, and other amenities.

Virgin Creek is a problem trail due to parking, trash, and hikers not staying on the trail to avoid wet areas. Residents in nearby houses often get blocked in their driveways due to overflow parking. Virgin Creek is a very popular and easy trail which results in heavy traffic. Improvements and maintenance are

needed to accommodate the level of use. It seems that most people who visit just want a social media photo opportunity with the beautiful falls. They want to park, hike for 5 minutes, get a photo and leave. People often drive from Anchorage and after a 45-minute drive they need to use the restroom. When facilities are not provided at the trailhead, it creates an issue with TP and litter.

Crow Pass and Winner Creek provide parking, bathrooms, and trash cans.

The Lower Iditarod trail improvements look great! The Iditarod Trail is currently in the process of being updated, and maybe future update projects could include amenities such as parking, bathrooms, trash cans, and other services.

There is a loop that begins on Beaver Pond with signage on how to enter just off the Bird to Gird trail. It's a beautiful trail that many people like to use it. There are many side trails along the loop that experienced users take to access various places. The average hiker from out of town may accidentally take one of these trails and end up in resident's driveways.

Girdwood has some amazing and beautiful trails but parking and facilities around a few more key trailheads would be beneficial.

The challenges the trail system faces varies. One might see hikers on Winner Creek wearing flip flops during the summer. Winner Creek is well marketed and trafficked in the summer, so the hand tram has become an attraction... and some visitors do not respect the hand tram. During peak season in July and August, the wait for the hand tram can be upwards of 2 hours.

There is not a lot of conflicts among user groups that AP has seen. Trail users are generally very respectful on multi-use trails, but dog poo can sometimes be an issue. It's common to see dog waste bagged and left along the trail. Perhaps doggy "dump" stations would help trail users dispose of waste.

Alaskan tourism was growing, everything looked promising for summer 2020. We'll assume that trend will continue after COVID-19. Over the next 15-20 years, tourism will grow, so improvements of the trailheads and maps are beneficial. A more comprehensive and user-friendly trail map would be helpful to visitors. With a good map, the trails we want people to use could be highlighted as well as the facilities and amenities available to provide a more curated experience for visitors. More primitive trails that the locals prefer to use could be omitted or not as strongly promoted. A good trail map would expand user groups and help to keep the state tourism economy going.

Hopefully, there is an understanding among locals that Girdwood wants visitors/tourists on the trails. A few of the more-developed trails with amenities could be selected to funnel visitors to.

It's clear when you're getting on a multi-use trail which user groups you're going to run into while out.

The 5k Nordic Loop is done well. In the wintertime it's single use for cross country skiers, no dogs or hikers allowed. The community respects that because the rules have been clearly communicated, thus empowering users to share the message and inform people who were "breaking the rules" in a kind and gentle way.

AP is sympathetic to the fact that Girdwood P&R Staff are constantly "on call" in case there's an emergency at the hand tram. Another arrangement should be pursued to ease this burden. I believe there are committees already working on the hand tram emergency response situation.

Keeping the Alaska caveat in mind -- everything here is a little more extreme -- there's a good selection of trails. The paved path to Alyeska resort is nice. People complain about the elevation gain and not having a lot of trails that are flat. When the Lower Iditarod updates are complete that trail will be a nice and flat option for folks. That improvement will provide a wider variety of trails for visitors to Girdwood who aren't as sure footed as the locals. The 5k Nordic loop in summer is a nice hike that can be accessed right from Alyeska Resort. It provides another option that alleviates pressure from Winner Creek.

In a perfect world (with a BIG budget) there would be a bridge in conjunction with the hand tram. People who would like to have the experience of the hand tram can wait in line while others can take the bridge and continue their day without the congestion of the hand tram.

Project to complete:

- An interesting project would be to install a webcam at/near the hand tram so users and emergency response individuals could check the status of the tram. A few cameras in key locations could give people an idea of what's going on, assist in emergency situations, and allow for checking wait times and traffic on the hand tram.

GTP Stakeholder Interview  
1:1 General Trail User  
March 30, 2020 @ 11:00am  
Interviewee: Carolyn Brodin  
Huddle AK: Holly Spoth-Torres, Taylor Smith

## QUESTIONS

- What is your general perception of the Girdwood trail system?
- What do you value most about the Girdwood trail system?
- What do you feel the Girdwood trail system does well? What is working? What are the strengths of the system?
- Where do you feel the Girdwood trail system could be improved? What is not working? What are the challenges within the system?
- As you look ahead to the next 15-20 years, what are the most significant challenges and opportunities for the Girdwood trail system?
- How balanced do you feel the trail system is in terms of types of trails? What are the key issues facing the trail system?
- Are there any 'missing connections' that you know of?
- What other thoughts would you like to share about the Girdwood trail system's future?
- Are there trail projects that you think need to be completed?
- What do you think about existing trail conditions and maintenance?
- What do you think about trail amenities (signs, parking, trailheads, etc.)

## SUMMARY

In general, we have a good trail system. Carolyn likes the mix of developed and primitive options on the trail system both in winter and summer. Creating/improving connections between some of the trails is needed.

Carolyn values that there are still primitive, quiet areas you can go to and access to less developed trails. She appreciates the ungroomed trails during winter, and during summer, trails like Abe's Trail and Stumpy's Summer Trail.

Winter and summer on the trail system are very different – a winter with significant snowfall brings out the best in the trails. Assuming we have significant snowfall, the trail system works well in winter.

In both winter and summer there are trails for all of the different types of users.

Bike use on the trails is growing quickly both winter and summer. In winter, the fat tire bikers have very limited places to go and perhaps grooming another trail (if there is community support for this) could give them more options. In summer, mountain bikers are damaging trails such as Abe's Trail that are not built to withstand bikes. The heavy bike use is damaging both the trail tread and the hiking experience. Developing more mountain biking trails such as the GMBA bike park will help with user conflicts and hopefully prevent further damage to some trails.

One of Carolyn's concerns with the Girdwood trail system is Upper Valley access. There is no longer trail access via airport property because the airport now enforces trespassing. The Upper Valley is accessible via Moose Meadows in the winter but not in the summer. Most Girdwood residents value not having to get in a car to access trails. Alyeska Resort is the only place to park and they have limited parking at times. Carolyn understands that airport access is not likely to be resolved with this trails plan. The loss of trail access through airport property has impacted many trail user's experience.

There is a desire by some people for an easier (than the 5k) multiuse trail for skiers that are not advanced, and dogs are allowed. Carolyn understands this idea but is unsure where a trail of this type could go due to terrain and impacts on surrounding areas.

Carolyn believes many Girdwood residents would be happier with a narrower multi-use trail maybe 8-10 ft. clearance max rather than 20ft. A trail of this type would provide a better experience both winter and summer than a wider trail. If a trail of this size and impact were considered, it's likely they would fit better and meet less community resistance.

The Lower Valley area is wet and probably not ideal for new trail development. The lower valley sees less snowfall than the upper valley and for economic development, proximity to the resort is beneficial for some. Connectivity to the other ski trails would be a problem.

Over the next 15-20 years Carolyn hopes Girdwood will continue to have trails that satisfy all users while preserving natural areas. The trail system should have a place for everybody.

Carolyn would like to see improved trail access and new bridges to tie some loops together. Iditarod Trail used to connect Girdwood from North and South before the trail was washed out and the connection was lost. There used to be a connection from the School to Beaver Pond before the flood of '94 took out the cottonwood tree bridge. Girdwood couldn't afford to replace the tree with a bridge.

Carolyn would also like to see attention paid to the lower valley trails.

The Wagon Trail has been all but forgotten by most because there isn't real access at either end. It's a beautiful historic trail. It needs a trailhead. It would be nice to somehow connect it to the Joe Danich trail to create a loop rather than walking on the railroad tracks which is not legal. There are other Girdwood trails that lack access.

Maintenance of current trails is a lot for the Trails Committee to manage. Hired summer crews and volunteer work parties have been helpful in recent years. The Trails Committee heavily relies on locals who use the trails to help with maintenance.

For maps to be effective, parking and trailheads must be addressed to accommodate the visitors and be easily accessible.

The Trails Committee is finishing a signage and waypoint project on Beaver Pond Trail with historic interpretive panels that will be unveiled end of May, 2020. The panels have historical information about the trails and surrounding area. The signs include emergency locator info to aid with rescue efforts. The Trails Committee hopes to set a standard for having similar signage throughout the system. While over-signing can detract from a trail experience, some signing is important.

Trail projects to complete:

- Rebuilding Virgin Creek Falls trail. This is the shortest and most popular trail in Girdwood that has been worn down by overuse.
- Lower Iditarod – Grant funds have been requested for this project.

Girdwood should keep focus on improving and maintaining existing trails as they see more users.

Girdwood Trails Plan  
Stakeholder Interviews: Girdwild  
March 16, 2020  
Summary Report  
Interviewee: Brenden Raymond-Yakoubian  
Huddle AK: Holly Spoth-Torres, Taylor Smith  
Conducted via Webex

## QUESTIONS

- What is your general perception of the Girdwood trail system?
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## SUMMARY

Girdwild views this plan from the perspective of it being a trails and natural spaces plan.

The Girdwood trail system has positives and negatives – there is some poor trail building, illegal trail building, and environmental damage – but also some incredible trails. The Virgin Creek Falls trail is an iconic example of trail damage due to overuse.

The relationship between Winner Creek and 5k Nordic Loop is problematic – 5k is too viewable from Winner Creek and the trail is too wide in some areas (e.g. 90 ft. instead of 30 ft.). Mistakes made in the past should be fixed, but nobody should be penalized. Moving forward, there should be a better approval process and design standards created.

Girdwild would like to see a trail and natural spaces plan, and approval processes, that are clear and inclusive to everyone. Future trails should be held to standards that respect the diversity among users – not just one group. Girdwild will value a process and a plan where everybody gets something. It is possible to have natural spaces and a diversity of trails in Girdwood. It would also be possible to have in the 5K/Winner Creek area a great 5K, great mountain bike trails, and a forested Winner Creek Trail with a restored viewshed.

Girdwild is in favor of wild, natural areas, and primitive trails. Trails can in some cases help access natural areas. All trails should be low impact and beautiful. While Girdwild would love to see all primitive and wild/natural spaces, they understand the community's desires are diverse and require a

trail and natural spaces system that respects all user groups. Girdwood itself is gorgeous, but the trail system is not at this point. There are natural spaces in and around Girdwood. There are primitive experiences that are fantastic and should not be damaged.

If a set of principles and design guidelines could be agreed upon it could likely alleviate a lot of trail problems. For example, the principle of not seeing one trail from another would go a long way toward that; other things would likely happen by default if you followed that – low impact, beautiful trails that are not harming the area.

If the trails and natural spaces plan goes well, many challenges can be avoided over the next 15 years. If business as usual continues, it's going to be a challenge, because there may be battles about every trail-related proposal. It's not smart community planning to not have a plan and process for a diverse trails and natural spaces system that serves all the user groups. It's short and narrow-sighted. It's a missed opportunity to highlight the natural beauty that many value.

The trail system feels out of balance in terms of types of trails and natural space opportunities. There are some proposals for new trail work and existing projects which take away from the few remaining primitive experiences in the community of Girdwood.

Girdwild is not sure if there are too many people on the trails as is often stated. There are some days during high season where this might be true, but it doesn't seem to hold through the entire season, and Girdwild thinks this may be being used as a bad argument to build more trails.

Parking is potentially an issue, but there is a balance between protecting certain lands and creating access to them. Girdwild is hopeful that the Girdwood Trails Plan Subcommittee might answer this question – 'what should we do, what should we not do?'

Girdwild believes all user groups, themselves included, value not having to drive out of the community to access the types of trails and natural spaces they would like to use.

Concerned that "missing connections" may not be the right question to ask right off the bat as it potentially threatens natural spaces, and it misses the point that significant interconnections already exist. Girdwild suggests thinking about the trails themselves before thinking about how to connect them and thinking first about a system of diverse trails and wild natural spaces. Girdwild would be very concerned about proposals to build new trails through wild, natural, and primitive trail areas.

Primitive trails have a high value, and the existence of natural spaces without trails also have a high value. It is valuable to be able to view unimpacted natural spaces; they also have other values, e.g. existence value, habitat and ecosystem values, etc. Experiences on primitive trails in and near natural areas are also important. Girdwood's natural spaces are as close to pristine as it gets in a community.

Trail and natural space projects that need to be completed right now – the designation of protected wild/natural spaces; addressing overuse damage in the Virgin Creek Falls trail area; and remediation of problems of the 5K (especially the impacts of 5k on Winner Creek Trail viewshed, excessive clearing by the 5K, and the overuse of gravel for the 5K loop).

Grooming is good to have on certain trails but shouldn't necessarily be expanded unless there's an agreement around which trails. The qualities and values of primitive and other trails should be

considered, e.g. there are unfortunately now some trail experiences that are high impact, overly sterile, or road-like. Maintenance has the potential to constantly increase damage.

Wayfinding can lead to overuse but can also help with safety issues. A good signage system can be a protector of natural spaces and can foster ownership, and a sense of community.

**GirdWild - Girdwood Trails Plan Stakeholder Interview with HuddleAK -**  
**Some supplemental notes and ideas**

- Our preference is for only preserved natural/wild spaces, and some beautiful primitive trails. Short of that, however, we are OK with the development of a beautiful, diverse, environmentally-friendly interconnected system of trails and natural/wild spaces.
- We should designate certain areas in and near the community as no-trail and primitive-trail only areas.
  - We should have a system of such wild/natural spaces
  - Some information about this has been/is being presented to the Girdwood Area Plan/Imagine!Girdwood team (January 2019 and March 2020); please see that for this project as well
  - Some candidates, among others:
    - Virgin Creek Area
    - Stumpy's Ridge/Forest/Meadows Area
    - Areas near Beaver Pond Trail
- Some Trails and Natural Spaces Principles would like to see adopted:
  - Should not be able to see one trail from another
  - All our trails should be beautiful
  - Trails should be as low impact as possible (width, materials, tree cutting, etc.)
  - Trails should not harm sensitive historical, cultural, and ecological features
  - Trails should not damage the qualities of the area they are going through
  - Trail development should be climate-resilient. For example, cutting down trees is shooting ourselves in the foot at many levels (natural beauty, harms the climate which sustains our unique economy, etc.). Building wider trails because of snow-cover issues is short-sighted and demonstrates poor leadership.
  - There are many values associated with the natural world and we should respect those. Key among those are those associated with wild and natural spaces, including ecological protection, primitive experiences, quiet, solitude, etc.

Girdwood Trails Plan  
Stakeholder Interview  
Jonathan Lee: General Trail User  
Huddle AK: Holly Spoth-Torres, Taylor Smith  
March 25, 2020 @ 3:30pm

## QUESTIONS

- What is your general perception of the Girdwood trail system?
- What do you value most about the Girdwood trail system?
- What do you feel the Girdwood trail system does well? What is working? What are the strengths of the system?
- Where do you feel the Girdwood trail system could be improved? What is not working? What are the challenges within the system?
- As you look ahead to the next 15-20 years, what are the most significant challenges and opportunities for the Girdwood trail system?
- How balanced do you feel the trail system is in terms of types of trails? What are the key issues facing the trail system?
- Are there any 'missing connections' that you know of?
- What other thoughts would you like to share about the Girdwood trail system's future?
- Are there trail projects that you think need to be completed?
- What do you think about existing trail conditions and maintenance?
- What do you think about trail amenities (signs, parking, trailheads, etc.)

## SUMMARY

Jonathan is pleased with most of the Girdwood trail system outside of the 5k Nordic Loop. The location of the 5k loop is not necessarily a problem, however the process leading up to development and the way in which it was constructed were problematic.

The 5k loop looks like a road. The Nordic 5k loop is wider than a municipally maintained street and the trail is too close to Winner Creek trail. When people from out of town walk on Winner Creek, they ask 'what road/highway is that'? The width of the 5k loop is in violation of what was promised in writing and verbally before construction. The Nordic Ski Club said it would only be viewable from 1-2 places, but that's not the case.

What Jonathan values most about the trail system in Girdwood is that it provides easy to access wild nature without bush whacking. Youth and out of town guests require easier access for safety and a pleasant experience. The trail system makes it possible to access the backcountry. Exercise is not Jonathan's primary reason for using the trails. Going to the gym or running on the street provide exercise but being on the trails offers an experience out in nature. The trail system in Girdwood also provides access while protecting outdoor spaces from erosion. Social and informal trails can cause a lot of erosion. Nature is preserved by preventing people from walking anywhere they would like.

The North Face trail is beautiful as it allows you to get into high country, and the trail was done with little disruption. Upper Winner Creek Trail is very minimally disruptive, and the route gets you way out of town. The hand tram is accessible and given the huge numbers of people that go there, the impact to

the surrounding area is still minimal. The trail system in Girdwood allows low impact access to the backcountry. Girdwood has wonderful ungroomed trails that can be used all winter. There are opportunities to snowshoe, cross country ski, walk by the river, etc.. Overall, access to backcountry spaces with low impact is what Jonathan values most about Girdwood's trail system.

The level of maintenance and grooming that the Girdwood trail system receives currently is good. Maintenance is low impact and makes the trails accessible to people without creating lasting negative effects. Maintenance providers are not cutting down a lot of trees in order to groom so groomed trails look like ski trails. In the summertime, if you didn't know about a trail that's groomed in the winter then you would not notice it.

There are ungroomed trails for those who want to be in the trees and wild, natural spaces and for those that just want to ski can do that. The 5k Nordic Loop is good for the users it was built for and the skate skiers love it. The 5k came at a really high cost and cleared a huge piece of land. The 5k seems to be a commercial for Alyeska Resort to tout and advertise because it meets international racing standards.

Other than the challenges that came with the Nordic 5k, Jonathan loves the trail system in Girdwood. There are a lot of concerns about where the trail system might go from here and less concern about the state of the trail system right now. The current trails in Girdwood could be brushed out a little more, but there are funding restraints.

Over the next 15-20 years it will be important to consider preservation of the natural beauty that drew so many of Girdwood's residents to live there. Trails in general can create access to the backcountry or they can lead to the decimation of the backcountry. If a community continues to loop trail upon trail, eventually there are no longer natural spaces where you don't see gravel or development. Anchorage has those qualities but it's an urban environment, natural spaces are unique to Girdwood and should remain. Many Girdwood residents came a long way to live in a beautiful, natural place that looks much the same as it did 100 years ago. Girdwood is quite pristine. If natural spaces are not set aside, there may not be much remaining in the future. If you don't want natural spaces paved, there needs to be a boundary or designation.

Girdwood has some very natural trails that are minimally maintained (i.e. Stumpy's Trail) and those are really valued. There are concerns among the community about paving in general and having highly developed trails right next to primitive experiences. This same scenario unfolded with Winner Creek, which used to be primitive and quiet but provides a different experience now. It's a prime example of why the impact of new trails on the viewshed of existing trails should be thought about with trail development.

Establishing a trail on Max's Mountain will be difficult because of property ownership, but if a trail is not constructed people will continue to make trails. Erosion continues to happen in that area year after year. The formal trail starts at the end of Timberline. There is a very short 'official' trail to Virgin Creek and from that point people take off uphill. That Virgin Creek Falls area will continue to get trampled if a well-built trail isn't created.

The 5k loop was an example of how Jonathan thinks trails should not be constructed. Trails should be built by professional companies who specialize in building trails. Professional trail builders know what

the problems are and how to avoid what was done on the 5k. Hopefully in the future trails in Girdwood can be built by those who follow a code of ethics for trail building so trails are not built like roads.

By designating certain areas to be preserved (i.e. wetlands, the area surrounding Stumpy's trail) Girdwood can avoid pitfalls over the next 15-20 years. In 20 years, the wetlands and Stumpy's look a lot like they do now. A portion of what the Mountain Bike Alliance has planned will impact pristine areas. That mountain bike park may be better received by the community if placed somewhere that's already 'scorched earth' (i.e. near the 5k). A designated mountain bike park would be nice to keep bikers off the Winner Creek trail.

An accessible, class one, primitive-type trail that creates better access to the upper valley and preserves backcountry nature would be nice to have. Trails such as this would make the backcountry accessible without bushwhacking and make backcountry experiences possible for people who don't have the knowledge or skills to safely trudge through the rainforest with a compass. Over the years Girdwood will need more single use trails (hiking only, skiing only, etc.). Sharing trails is easy when there's not as many users. If use and population increase on the Girdwood trail system, more designated trails will be needed. People generally practice good trail etiquette, but tourists aren't sure of the rules and ride bikes very fast and don't acknowledge dogs or kids. Single use trails will need to happen in the future.

Balance among trail types and use is 'okay'. Biking and hiking only trails are already needed in Girdwood. Winner Creek trail has already reached the point of needing to be single use during the summer, especially on the weekends. Locals generally avoid Winner Creek during those times and a biking only trail nearby would be good. Single-use enforcement on trails is hard to do and unfair to the mountain biking community. If mountain bikers had a place to go, they would use it and enforcement wouldn't be too bad. It would be nice if the 5k Nordic Loop was open to dogs. Is it so crowded that it needs to be ski only and people can't pass around kids or dogs? Weekends are crowded on other trails and it's sometimes an issue with people passing or bumping into one another.

A missing connection that would be nice to tie together is the Lower Joe Danich trail along the riverbank. It could create more access but people who live near the trail like it disconnected. There is an access point from the end of Timberline Dr. in the cul-de-sac, the trail connects from that point to where the Upper & Lower Danich trails meet. Access right now is a little difficult and there's a need for a trailhead there, but there's no parking in the cul-de-sac to accommodate more traffic.

The tram is wonderful, but there have been injuries and a death. A bridge sounded like a great solution until the cost of construction came up. Grant opportunities would be good to evaluate the feasibility of a bridge in the hand tram's place. Ultimately, several bridges may be needed to cross and create connectivity. If a bridge is the solution, it should be done carefully and mindfully. The bridge should be cognizant of what the land looks like and should not destroy the natural beauty people come to see.

There are no trail projects that Girdwood needs to hurry to complete. Trail projects should slow down and take their time rather than ushering things through as has been done in the past. Bike trails should be completed, but not necessarily what's proposed now by the Mountain Bike Alliance right now. Most of what the Mountain Bike Master Plan proposed is good if time is taken to do the process right and construction is done well.

Maintenance on Girdwood's trails is great when it happens, some trails do go long periods without upkeep. It would be nice to see more energy invested in maintaining existing trails in Girdwood. That's part of building trails right, there needs to be money to maintain it in before construction happens. Beaver Pond has been good in recent years but still becomes overgrown even when it's brushed out. Upper Winner Creek has drainage and erosion issues that should be fixed. Those issues make the trail unusable and impact the landscape. Upper Winner Creek is not marked on the winter map because the trail gets into a hazardous avalanche zone quickly. Upper Winner Creek is shown on the summer map. The Iditarod Trail gets very little maintenance as you go up farther (parallel to Crow Creek). The Iditarod Trail gets harder to follow when you get to the alders and that area could be brushed out.

More wayfinding and signs could be useful if they are unobtrusive and don't detract from the landscape. Signs can be clear without being billboards. The intersection of the Beaver Pond and bike path is not well signed. Winner Creek is no bikes for the first .7 miles and that's not well marked. People from out of town who aren't using good etiquette may just be unaware because it isn't marked or signed. Most people will follow rules if they can see them.

Virgin Creek Falls trailhead needs the parking situation addressed. It's very difficult to build on because of its location and proximity to the canyon. Beaver Pond parking is good. California Creek trail parking was upgraded 10 years ago, and weekends are crowded but there is generally enough space. The rail depot provides a lot of parking and the 5k loop seems adequate as well. There's almost always enough parking near Alyeska Resort and users accessing the North Face. There is parking for the 5k (the maps are old and don't show the road that goes from Alyeska to the 5k loop), it could be outgrown in a few years but it seems good now.

Overall, there's a lot of energy that goes into new projects and the community of Girdwood has not invested enough into maintaining and taking care of what already exists.

A trails master plan with areas designated for wild spaces and Class 1-4 trails will go a long way towards peace and harmony in the valley. A good plan will help everyone panic less. People on both sides (those who want to preserve and those who want to develop) will know that there is space designated for both of those things.

## Girdwood Trails Plan

### Stakeholder Interviews

#### Landowners & Managers

April 13, 2020

Shelley Rowton (Heritage Land Bank), Matt Wedeking (Chugach State Park Operations Manager)

Huddle AK: Holly Spoth-Torres, Taylor Smith

Jason Stancil (USFS Chugach National Forest)

Kurt Hensel (Chugach State Park Superintendent) and Ben Corwin (Chugach State Park Chief Ranger) responded to the questions via email

### QUESTIONS:

- What is your general perception of the Girdwood trail system?
- What do you value most about the Girdwood trail system?
- What do you feel the Girdwood trail system does well? What is working? What are the strengths of the system?
- Where do you feel the Girdwood trail system could be improved? What is not working? What are the challenges within the system?
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- What do you think about existing trail conditions and maintenance?
- What do you think about trail amenities (signs, parking, trailheads, etc.)

### SUMMARY:

The Girdwood trail system is a very complicated network that traverses many land-owners making decision-making and project authorizations very complex. Communication between land management agencies and the community is relatively good.

The Girdwood trail system serves as a terminus, and destination of the Indian to Girdwood National Recreational Trail (Bird to Gird). The trail system provides connectivity (in Girdwood) to the Bird to Gird Trail, the Crow Pass (National Historic Iditarod Trail), and the Beaver Pond Trail. The trail system creates access into Chugach State Park from the California Creek Trailhead.

There are few options for accessing Chugach State Park using Girdwood's trail system. Abe's Trail and California Creek are relatively challenging hikes. Beaver Pond is an entry level trail that enters and leaves Chugach State Park. The Bird-to-Gird trail, a class 4 bike path managed by the State Park, is one of the most popular trails in the valley. The Girdwood trail system offers almost anything that a user would want to do (skiing, biking, snow shoeing, Nordic or skate skiing). Motorized use is not permitted on the Girdwood trail system. The Girdwood trail system has minimal parking areas and lacks formal trailheads. The Nordic 5k has the only formal trailhead within the system.

There are existing trails and trail building that are not formalized or documented in any way. Formalizing takes a lot of money, effort, and coordination. Landowners and managers do not intend or wish to slow

down trail progress. They are supporting the Mountain Bike (MTB) Alliance and would like to see the new bike trails be constructed this summer. Unfortunately, a lot of what agencies can do rests on the development of the Trail Plan. The final Trail Plan will provide a focused path forward for the community and land managers.

HLB would like this Trail Plan to identify some potential trail locations to improve system connectivity. If an identified connection is on property intended for residential development, a relocatable easement would likely be issued in order to avoid impeding future development by placing a trail in the wrong place. There is some risk for user groups because trails may need to be relocated. HLB has equitable title but not patent to a lot of our land in Girdwood. This means that HLB can authorize some things but land cannot be transferred. In order to plat out the trails on the Nordic 5k and transfer the trails to Parks and Recreation or a user group, it could cost millions of dollars. DNR requires a survey for HLB to receive patent. The entire parcel needs to be surveyed, not just the trail portion.

Cost of survey is the primary reason HLB does not have patent. The State of Alaska holds the patent and will sometimes tentatively approve the Municipality/HLB receiving land before the patent is received from the federal government. Trails and easements are considered a disposal.

The process to develop new trails currently follows this order: authorization for entry, construction, survey for the legal description, transfer of the easement. HLB is working to make this process easier and removing the requirement for survey-grade location of the trail.

Over the next 15-20 years, the major challenges for Girdwood's Trail System will be access, connectivity to Chugach State Park, planning for growth, maintenance, and revenue. It will be challenging to balance the growth of the trail system and the growth of the community.

The Chugach State Park follows recommendations applicable to the Girdwood area from the following planning documents: Chugach State Park Access Plan Draft (2010) p 72-74, and the Chugach State Park Trails Plan (2009) Chapter 4, p. 24. The Chugach Management Plan contains plans to create connectivity between Beaver Pond and Bird-to-Gird as well as plans to formalize the desire path between Abe's Trail and California Creek.

There is little State Park land that can be developed for trails due to topography. The MTB Alliance has made inquiries about suitable land. Beaver Pond trail can accommodate bikes, but Abe's Trail was not constructed for biking. A hiking route from Abe's Trail up to Penguin Ridge was proposed at one time as well as a bike trail into Bird Valley.

HLB's next steps are contingent upon this updated Trails Plan. The Nordic Ski Club has also paused their next step until the plan gets done. HLB is supportive of the MTB Alliance efforts as their projects within next few years are proposal within the Nordic 5k loop and because this project will not expand the footprint of the trail system.

Land managers support the designation of primitive areas but have concerns about how those spaces will be accessed. In order to set aside land for natural spaces and primitive experiences, landowners and managers need more information. Where specifically should be preserved and what is the rationale behind selecting that area?

Balance in the trail system right now may be skewed towards biking. Fat tire and downhill biking is happening everywhere. There are some user conflicts. Many people walk on the Nordic 5k trail. Abe's Trail generates a lot of reports of conflict between hikers and bikers. Most people in Girdwood have

their favorite secret meadows and trails, so there are plenty of spaces where trail users can be alone. Landowners and managers receive notice of snow machine use on park lands, near Beaver Pond, and in Moose Meadows.

The conditions in Girdwood make the trail system challenging to maintain. There are thin, poor soils that are subject to compaction and erosion and the climate is conducive to rapid vegetation growth that needs continual maintenance.

Access and parking are issues that need to be addressed at Virgin Creek Falls. If the community supports this idea, it is possible that in the future HLB could purchase and propose that the small lot across Alyeska Highway from Forest Service be designated trailhead parking. There is a large gravel area for parking down by the Depot and DOT that fills quickly. Beaver Pond is a popular access point. There were 5 new parking spaces put in when the road was widened, but it is not enough to meet demand. Moose Meadows could accommodate a parking lot extension into the soccer field area. That parking area could be bumped out to fit about 15 more spaces. There was a plan with the State Park to complete that addition at some point.

A solution for the Hand Tram is needed, especially as accidents have been fatal. Chugach State Park applied for a Forest Service program that will allow construction of a bridge using materials in the project area. A site has been selected, but funding has not been received. Construction of this bridge will not replace the hand tram but will provide another creek crossing alternative. It will stop the 1-2 hour wait that is believed to contribute to accidents.

The Nordic Trail parking lot is a prime example of “if you build it, they will come”. The parking lot is always full. Parking is the Planning Department’s primary concern with trail expansion in Girdwood. Planning wants to ensure that there is adequate parking to meet increased demand and use. The MTB Alliance has an informal agreement with Alyeska Resort about the last lot at the resort serving as overflow. Parking needs to be expanded before the trail system can grow.

There are several right-of-ways that could connect Alyeska to Beaver Pond and there are many social trails in that area. The social trails could be good connections for the lower valley.

Before any trail projects get completed within the Chugach State Park boundary, there should be a plan to address access, parking, and connectivity.

Other projects to complete:

- Take better care of what we have – maintain existing trails to a higher standard.
- Completion of the Upper and Lower Iditarod improvements
- Some sections of Winner Creek will need to be improved in the future due to heavy use
- Beaver Pond maintenance and improvements
- California Creek could be improved to meet the conditions of Abe’s Trail
- Wagon Trail tread and access improvements A connection across the top of Mt. Alyeska for hikers. When the North Face trail is open to bikers, hikers get cut off and must turn around
- A loop through the cemetery. This addition could connect into Iditarod Trail.
- Upper Virgin Creek

Girdwood Trails Plan  
Stakeholder Interview  
Mountain Bike Alliance

Girdwood Mountain Bike Alliance: Dan Starr (GMBA-President), Nick Georgelos (GMBA-Vice President), Rich Peterson (CPG & GMBA Board member), Ben Kohler (GMBA member at-large)  
Huddle AK: Holly Spoth-Torres, Taylor Smith

### QUESTIONS

- What is your general perception of the Girdwood trail system?
- What do you value most about the Girdwood trail system?
- What do you feel the Girdwood trail system does well? What is working? What are the strengths of the system?
- Where do you feel the Girdwood trail system could be improved? What is not working? What are the challenges within the system?
- As you look ahead to the next 15-20 years, what are the most significant challenges and opportunities for the Girdwood trail system?
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- Are there any 'missing connections' that you know of?
- What other thoughts would you like to share about the Girdwood trail system's future?
- Are there trail projects that you think need to be completed?
- What do you think about existing trail conditions and maintenance?
- What do you think about trail amenities (signs, parking, trailheads, etc.)

### SUMMARY

Girdwood has a good trail system but there are not many mountain bike-specific trails and features. Beaver Pond has been accessible to mountain bikers for a while. There are small paths and some claim that it's an extensive network, but, it's not. The Mountain Bike (MTB) Alliance has added to the trail system, but there are still not many trails. The MTB alliance constructed 1.5 miles of trails and plans for future trails that would bring the total to 6 miles. The MTB Alliance includes plans for downhill specific trails as the uphill trails already exist by utilizing the Nordic trails. The 6 miles of trail is long term and part of the MTB Alliance Master Plan. In the Summer of 2020, we propose to add an additional ½ mile or so of trail will be added to what exists.

The MTB Alliance values the passionate community of trail users in Girdwood. There are a lot of people and volunteers that help the MTB Alliance and Girdwood in general. The trail system is well taken care of, but there is always room for improvement. The MTB Alliance values that the trails get used a lot and brushed out or maintained because one group or another takes on the responsibility to maintain the trails. Girdwood has a diverse set of trails ranging from very well-built mountain bike trails to rustic hiking and biking trails. Girdwood has a diverse user group and people tend to get along. During COVID, the amount of people using trails and getting along was great to see. In general people use all the trails in a multitude of ways.

Partnership and communication between the Trails Committee, Nordic Ski Club, and the City of Girdwood has been good. Those groups have encouraged MTB Alliance and there's been a lot of

support. The existing trail system is a decent start for utilizing corridors and creating connectivity. Changes to the trail system have established that Girdwood likes mountain biking as transportation in the valley. The number of people traveling to Girdwood to use the trails is a great start, but the potential to have a trail system for people who want to pedal is greater. Girdwood could become a destination or very well known within the mountain biking community.

The Girdwood trail system has some good corridors, but some pieces are poor quality due to certain trails not being used that much. The Iditarod Trail is an example of this. The lower portion of the trail is being improved but the upper section is not a great trail to ride. The upper section of the Iditarod Trail needs a lot of work that hasn't been done in years. Beaver Pond gets brushed out, but it needs drainage and trail maintenance work. Many of Girdwood's existing trails could use a helping hand to stay in better shape. Upper Iditarod and Beaver Pond Trails could probably be bikeable year-round with water mitigation, drainage work and maintenance year-round.

The process to develop trails is cumbersome from the MTB Alliance perspective. The process is long, unclear, and there are many agencies to go through. The MTB Alliance understands the need for public process but it goes through so many groups before even including the landowners. The key with this trails plan is that we all want the future plan to be nailed down. When we propose a trail there should be a clear path to do so. People are wasting their time trying to figure out what they need to do to get ready to build.

The next 15-20 years in Girdwood could go well regarding the trail system. The warmer the summers get the longer the summer biking season will be. This could result in increasing riders and desire for trails, the MTB community will just continue to grow in these conditions. Girdwood has a need for more trails (and better trails) to sustain an increase in MTB traffic. Improvement and development to summer trails specific to mountain biking will increase.

Nordic skiers are seeing more and more people on bikes and there is a good network with the 5k loop, with some additional infrastructure the trails could be used year-round for mountain biking within that network. Trails are a way to preserve our open spaces and the process tests Girdwood's ability to work together to move forward. Recreation has the potential to become part of conservation, rather than having untouchable spaces. People want to go out, explore nature, and have silence. Motorized equipment is used to groom the trail system in the winter, but not to recreate. Ideally Girdwood will have people exploring the spaces in different ways and utilizing the trail system in different ways year-round.

A track sled device can go places a snow machine can't. If MTB Alliance can build it, they can groom it – there's a lot of potential. With grooming you start to create more formal trails that connect neighborhoods. Girdwood residents could bike and ski to dinner or the post office instead of driving. When this idea of grooming trails was brought up to the Trails Committee last month the reaction was positive. The process by which to approve and do it correctly is not specific or clear.

In the future, creating a process for creating new trails that is fair and being good stewards of the land will be one of the greatest challenges. The sooner a process and plan are agreed upon that everyone can follow, the better it will be for the community.

The MTB Alliance does not groom the trails they've already built. The trails they currently have built require access through 5k Nordic loop which is ski-only. Until the Nordic Ski Club allows the MTB Alliance some form of access through that area, or there is another access point, grooming cannot be achieved.

A good test for any community is opening a process like this to public input. Just because people come regularly and say they don't want trails – what percentage of the population do they represent? What percentage does the MTB Alliance or tourists that come to visit the valley represent? If a survey finds that 90% of people want more developed trails, that response should drive decision making and development. How do you survey or get this data? There are enough people saying that they want trails and very few people saying that they don't – maybe the approach should be to add trails and feel out where the limit is. Designate and set aside some spaces where there will not be trails built and be good neighbors and stewards. The MTB Alliance is not telling those who don't want trails 'tough luck' – there's enough room in the Girdwood valley for both.

If you were to look at a satellite overlay of Girdwood that shows every snowshoe or other informal trail, the whole valley would be lit up. Those who say they don't want new trails might not need them. As a mountain biker, you need a trail or a groomed path in the winter. Mountain biking requires different conditions and maintenance than putting on snowshoes and going wherever you want. It's not a long distance to walk up Winner Creek until there's no trail. Realistically, we're talking about a small fraction of the Girdwood Valley that is developed with trails.

There is a group in Girdwood that doesn't want to see any new trails. If the MTB Alliance had to designate a place in the Girdwood valley for no new trail development, they would start with the wetlands. The wetlands are a lot of land that's usable in the wintertime, but not the other seasons. Moose Meadows to Glacier Creek creates a nice corridor. The MTB Alliance will not be disappointed if the proposed Forest Loop doesn't happen because it's not at the top of their list. GMBA would be more interested in Forest Connection trail from behind the church, along Glacier Creek to a connection with the Girdwood Bike Park at the CPG cat road. Girdwood is looking at the Forest Loop area, it's not a bad area to look at for preserving as natural space. More people want trails in that area than don't.

The MTB Alliance thinks it could be more productive to shift the conversation from trail vs. no trail to the density of trails. The community of Girdwood generally doesn't like trails that are large enough for grooming equipment. Girdwood tends to prefer trails that are large enough for people to travel on but not overly developed.

The MTB Alliance is not opposed to building in the Forest Loop/Stumpy's Trail area, but the Nordic Ski Club has taken that project on. If this project proceeds, the MTB Alliance encourages a connecting trail from the Forest Loop. The portion of the trail along the river and Stumpy's trail was very contentious. The trail goes North and crosses the Cat Track – it creates connectivity and access to the top of the MTB park. The trail is a highly valuable connection and useful loop. The Nordic Ski Club will drive the design of the Forest Loop since skiing requires a larger footprint.

During wintertime the wetland areas are connected, it would be great to have the same connectivity in the summertime. The proposed connection above would create summertime connectivity while keeping bikers out of the meadows. There are quite a few trails that cannot be used in the summertime, so there's less connectivity (i.e. CPG's cat road, Moose Meadows, Upper meadows nordic trails, Nordic 5k, part of the cat road out of wetlands).

The MTB Alliance Bike park is proposed on top of the 5k loop. The boundaries are the CPG Cat Road and Winner Creek Trail.

Upper Iditarod trail is not bikeable for most riders without improvement. MTB Alliance does not consider the trail part of the mountain bike system.

The MTB Alliance believes the more people on the trail system the better. We would like to see something better suited for bikes than the hand tram to cross Glacier Creek. The level of traffic for the hand tram is high. Development is likely to drive the installation of a bridge in the hand tram's place. New development near the school and along Iditarod Trail is anticipated soon. A connection across Glacier Creek north of the airport is desired. The lower Iditarod Trail has been updated and doesn't allow mountain biking. Losing this portion of trail cut off access to downtown. A connection that creates access from the middle or upper valley is a missing piece. Beaver Pond provides this to some degree but is not accessible by bikers of all levels.

Other trail projects that the MTB Alliance would prioritize:

- Finishing the current plans for MTB park
- Pump track
- Upgrade CPG's Cat Road corridor to allow summer traffic to access the bike park and equipment in to build more trails
- Crow Creek road corridor (Crow Creek neighborhood to Girdwood)
- Beaver Pond improvements
- Connect Glacier Creek to MTB Park
- Replace the hand tram with a bridge that allows bikes to cross
- Create bike access to highways in Turnagain Pass to connect to roadside paths (like Bird to Gird)
- Upgrade existing trail on at Alyeska Resort to create connection (wood features at resort need to be reconstructed with gravel)
- A second MTB park higher up in the valley

Providing amenities and signage to encourage use on more sustainably built trails will draw users off the trails in Girdwood where people would like to see less users and a more primitive experience maintained.

There has been illegal trail building for biking in the area between California Creek, Abe's Trail, and Beaver Pond that has created lasting issues. People hike and bike those three trails and the area a lot, but there are bike specific features that were constructed illegally that haven't been taken care of. Neither Chugach State Park nor the Municipality of Anchorage have addressed the illegal trail building. The MTB Alliance does not condone illegal trail building.

There is terrain in the Chugach State Park that's suitable for biking, especially near California Creek trail. The possibility of building bike specific trails in this area of Chugach State Park has not been pursued so it's unclear what the State's thoughts are on this development.

The MTB Alliance has spoken with the Chugach State Park Superintendent to obtain permission to groom Beaver Pond and portions of the meadow in winter to create better bike access. The State Park responded that their goal is to promote recreation, aside from a CUP (Conditional Use Permit) to

operate machinery, there was no hesitation to begin the process of issuing a permit for grooming those areas. Even with a permit and access granted from the State Park, it's likely that user conflicts would still exist between hikers and bikers in the Beaver Pond area.

The MTB Alliance has a Master Plan that outlines development for the mountain bike park. The Municipality of Anchorage expressed concerns about parking and placed the responsibility to develop parking on the MTB Alliance. If everyone uses the trails, why is the responsibility on one user group? We understand that parking needs to be part of the plan as it ties user groups and trails together for a functional system, but it doesn't seem fair for one user group alone to be responsible. Most of the bikers leave from their home to access trailheads and don't require parking. Relocating trailheads and providing adequate parking is a solution to the issues Girdwood is facing. There are plans and solutions to address the parking issue, but it's unclear who will pay for these plans. Alyeska Resort provides parking, but trailhead specific parking needs to be improved to accommodate the current level of use.

The MTB Alliance has installed signage on mountain biking trails. The US Forest Service is developing signage for Girdwood Trails. It makes sense to implement a universal wayfinding system across the valley for consistency.

CPG (Chugach Powder Guides) use of the trail system with the snow cat is key to their businesses. Due to changes at Alyeska Resort, new access to the trail system will be needed, especially as the valley continues to develop. Over the last 10 years, it has not been possible to operate the snow cats each year due to levels of snow fall. CPG and MTB Alliance would like to reroute the cat road so they are accessible with 4 ft. of snow. That reroute seems unlikely at this time. CPG would like to see the reroute happen in partnership with MTB Alliance, Nordic Ski Club, and the Trails Committee.

In the Glacier-Winner special use area that is state land, the process for awarding permits has been changed. The permits are no longer exclusive use for commercial recreation. The changes in permitting have deterred CPG from investing. It's positive that other people can use the area and CPG doesn't have to worry about losing the permit. However, it has changed CPG's outlook on making physical investments. If CPG were to invest in improvements, all commercial operators permitted in the area would benefit. CPG's plans for the special use area will depend on climate and other operators entering.

In reference to the winter and summer maps of the Girdwood trail system, the view needs to be expanded because most of the trails go much farther up valley. The map currently doesn't look at the whole valley. The marked Snow Cat trail is an informal trail. It's a clearing with no dirt work.

## QUESTIONS

- What is your general perception of the Girdwood trail system?
- What do you value most about the Girdwood trail system?
- What do you feel the Girdwood trail system does well? What is working? What are the strengths of the system?
- Where do you feel the Girdwood trail system could be improved? What is not working? What are the challenges within the system?
- As you look ahead to the next 15-20 years, what are the most significant challenges and opportunities for the Girdwood trail system?
- How balanced do you feel the trail system is in terms of types of trails? What are the key issues facing the trail system?
- Are there any 'missing connections' that you know of?
- What other thoughts would you like to share about the Girdwood trail system's future?
- Are there trail projects that you think need to be completed?
- What do you think about existing trail conditions and maintenance?
- What do you think about trail amenities (signs, parking, trailheads, etc.)

## SUMMARY

Paul sees a lot of positive potential within the Girdwood trail system. He values the ability to access trails from his front door. The Girdwood trail system offers a little bit of something for everybody but needs improvements in accessibility, wayfinding, and signage.

Trail accessibility is a challenge for Girdwood. The Girdwood trail system does not have clear trailheads or access points. Local knowledge and many years of experience are required to find trailheads within the system. Trail users are unable to get information such as distance, difficulty, and route of a trail before they head out. There is no central clearinghouse for trail information. A simple website with trail details could be used to temporarily solve this issue. Issues with signage and accessibility seem easy to correct.

Over the next 15-20 years, Paul would like to see a better-connected trail system. There are many examples of residents and neighborhood kids taking trail building into their own hands to utilize spaces not easily accessible by trails. Girdwood has many unmanaged trails without clear easements. There are many trails and places which the community likes to use that should be formalized and better connected.

The process with HLB and the order of operations to designate trails should be clear to everyone. Trail planning is difficult without HLBs plans and intentions being clear. Over the years several subdivisions have been planned for, but their current status is not known. The community feels at a standstill for improving, proposing, and building trails. There is concern that the trails will need to be relocated in the future due to development.

Paul would like to better understand what result HLB and MOA Planning desire from this Trails Plan process. There are many acres in the valley that HLB wants to subdivide eventually, but there has been no recent report from the HLB as to what the most current plans are. Should Girdwood establish rules about trails and subdivisions that should be sent to HLB? Utility easements could be designated trail easements so that if a subdivision comes in, the easements become trails.

Paul finds the process with HLB confusing because it is unclear what comes first. Is trail access reserved before land is subdivided for housing or are the processes concurrent? The process should be articulated and confirmed so that everyone understands. If Girdwood decides on the best place for a trail, could it be reserved and HLB build around it?

Over the next 15-20 years the greatest challenge facing the Girdwood trail system is overuse (for some of the trails). The number of non-Girdwood residents using the trail system has increased in recent years. Anchorage and its 300,000 residents are just 50 minutes north and could cause inundation. Overuse and increased traffic have a significant impact on Girdwood and their responsibility for trail maintenance. Parking lots are not suited to handle this increase in traffic. A connection from the Arlberg lot up to Winner Creek trail would keep people out of the hotel parking lot. This connection would be especially helpful in the winter.

Zoning should be implemented regarding allowed uses on trails at some point. Mountain biking has steadily increased in popularity. Bikes on unhardened or partially hardened trails can be destructive. The financial burden to remediate the trails is growing.

Soil conditions must be considered for a mechanized area with bike trails or designated hardened trails. Some of Girdwood's trails (California and Abe's trail) need mechanized activities minimized or they will be ruined quickly. In the last 5 years Abe's Trail has changed radically due to bikers riding brakes down steep portions. The trail has experienced wear and tear and is eroding and getting muddy.

Beaver Pond is partially designed for bikers with its wide, hardened trails. If some improvements were made, it would be great trail riding for bikes. It creates a perfect loop route returning on Iditarod Trail. Girdwood should encourage and support improving Beaver Pond for bikes. The Mountain Bike Alliance used good trail building techniques with good drainage. The social bike trails are not good. They were put in steep areas and are not sustainable.

Paul feels that the trail system is balanced. Bikers would probably like to ride everywhere but the vegetation and precipitation in Girdwood prevents that. The soil and building conditions for trails are not the same in Girdwood as Anchorage. Trail planning and development processes in Girdwood need to be aware of bicycle enthusiasts' needs.

Paul supports that The Nordic Ski Club is pushing for more trails. The proposed Forest Loop would be a multi-use design without steep hills. The Forest Loop would offer a totally different atmosphere and options for a broader user group.

Projects that should happen:

- A trail from the proposed forest loop through Perpetual Meadow then along the glacier Creek Rim to Winner Creek Trail. This would provide a loop through the Arlberg Trailhead so hikers would not need to use the hand tram or double back on the same route.

- The Virgin Creek Trail updates
- Danich Trail Area Subdivision & Road – The area of land around Danich Trail is better than anything in the valley for a subdivision. A small road through that area connecting to the Seward Hwy South of Girdwood would offer an escape route in case of an emergency. HLB should determine which portion they would want for a subdivision and where a road might go. From that point, Girdwood could plan trails they would like in this area.
- Hand Tram – Bridge replacement. The hand tram creates a ‘bottle neck’ in the Girdwood trail system.
- Bike Trails and updates to 5k area for bikers. Zones should be considered – for example, from the Snow Cat Rd. to Winner Creek (East Valley) could be mechanized and from the Cat Rd. to Glacier Creek (West Valley) could be non-mechanized. Aside from the Forest Loop going in, this would be multi-use.

Paul’s observation is that a lot of people like to use the trails but not as many people volunteer to work on them. The need for maintenance is only going to increase as traffic and use increases. As Girdwood builds more trails, every trail will require more maintenance. Does Girdwood pay for it, lean on residents to maintain trails, or let the trails degrade? In the long-term, the community of Girdwood needs to think about the ability to maintain trails before they are built.

Paul’s wife shared a suggestion regarding airport access. The hangar gate is now locked as the airport enforces trespassing. There is some space above the road cut at the meadow. A trail parallel to the road with a footpath could give access through this area. The airport might make an exception for a footpath that stays away from the runway.

Girdwood Trails Plan  
Stakeholder Interview  
Girdwood Nordic Ski Club  
March 25, 2020 at 2:30pm

Attendees: Holly Spoth-Torres, Deb Essex, Taylor Smith  
Conducted via GoTo Meeting

## QUESTIONS

- What is your general perception of the Girdwood trail system?
- What do you value most about the Girdwood trail system?
- What do you feel the Girdwood trail system does well? What is working? What are the strengths of the system?
- Where do you feel the Girdwood trail system could be improved? What is not working? What are the challenges within the system?
- As you look ahead to the next 15-20 years, what are the most significant challenges and opportunities for the Girdwood trail system?
- How balanced do you feel the trail system is in terms of types of trails, parks, and permitted uses on public lands?
- What are the key issues facing the trail system?
- Are there any 'missing connections' that you know of?
- What other thoughts would you like to share about the Girdwood trail system's future?
- Are there trail projects that you think need to be completed?
- What do you think about existing trail conditions and maintenance?
- What do you think about trail amenities (signs, parking, trailheads, etc.)

## SUMMARY

The trail system has improved significantly over the last 10 years. The Girdwood trail system has improved from a local's knowledge trail network to a system people outside the community can enjoy. Winner Creek, and the National Historic Iditarod Trail have been the best known trails and now smaller singlet-track trails are being mapped and gaining popularity. Through grant writing, invested user groups, the Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Heritage Area, and the historic designation for the Iditarod Trail, trails have gone from local-only to something the community is showcasing. Girdwood is creating a network, and something for visitors to explore and share their experience. It's shifted from 'what do we want in Girdwood' to 'what experience do we want as a user groups? Trails are opening to more users on a year-round basis.

The Nordic Ski Club values that Girdwood residents can access a temperate rain-forest from their driveways. Almost everyone in town is 2 minutes, or less, from a trail. The proximity of trails and the lack of human influence are valued. Anchorage's trails have so many signs of the urban environment - there are telephone wires, easements, fences, etc. That infrastructure doesn't exist in Girdwood forests – you

are instantly in the forest surrounded by spruce, hemlock, moss and listening to birds; that is unique to the Girdwood valley.

The strength of the trail system is that it caters to the local community. During COVID-19, while everything is shut down, including Alyeska Mountain, the Nordic Ski Club is still grooming every day. The trails are one of the only outlets people have for keeping their sanity and getting fresh air. The number of users went from 100 per day to 300-400 per day. The trail system is the lifeline for fitness. It's a vehicle for mental and physical health.

The Girdwood Nordic Ski Club provides maintained trails that any level of hiker, biker, skier, skijorer, can access- from beginner to advanced. Alyeska Resort used to groom all the multi-use trails once per month using a snow-cat but can not access meadows anymore and discontinued that service. More trails are accessible in Girdwood in the winter versus summer because the open meadows are frozen, and with accumulated snow, create open spaces to ski. Recreation and use of the meadows depend on snow levels, and it takes 2 feet of snow for the meadows to become accessible for grooming. Winter signage is another strength of the system. Today there's more focus on safety and accessibility in the trail system. Deb feels this is evidenced by more participation in the kid's program (from 20-30 kids a season up to 80 in the '19-'20 season). There are people who traditionally were downhill skiers adding cross country to their yearly routine because it's more accessible.

The Girdwood Trails Management Plan states connected and dedicated trails as a value. Existing trail conditions are working towards that goal. The entire Girdwood Valley is divided into quadrants by natural features and the road system (Glacier Creek, Crow Creek, and Glacier Creek) and the Alyeska Highway – this segments the valley into 4 quadrants. Connectivity could be improved by developing loops utilizing the out and back trails within these quadrants. Trails that are looped create better access for rescues and allow for more accessibility. There's a time lag between plans and action, and Girdwood Nordic Ski Club are listening to the community to provide the "missing pieces" for the desired user experience within the valley.

The 'missing pieces' and needed projects are:

- At the moment, there's no way to cross the Glacier Creek other than the hand tram. Recent accidents on the hand tram will probably result in a much needed bridge. The hand tram was not designed for its current level of use in mind, it is so loved that constant maintenance is required. The USFS maintains Iditarod and Winner Creek to a high standard – the hand tram is the link between the two trails.
- North of the airport property, the Nordic Ski Club has a proposal to develop a year-round multi-use trail system. This proposed development would do a few things: One, allow people using the Nordic 5k or Winner Creek to circle back to a different parking lot. Two, allow emergency crews better access to the hand tram area (8 ft trail vs. a 6 ft trail) and upper valley area. Three, provide a hard surface trail with an open canopy to allow more user days on a groomed multi-use trail system.

An informal survey conducted by the Nordic Ski Club a few years ago found that many of the surveyed people would like to see the additional connections described above. From that survey, we were surprised to learn that the #1 trail among community members use is the bike path along the Alyeska Highway, and a close second are the Alyeska Resort trails. There is an assumption among the community that trails like Winner Creek, or Iditarod Trail are the most used, but people surveyed showed they

gravitate towards multi-use, accessible, more developed, higher grade trails. When the Girdwood Nordic Ski Club builds a trail (like the Tour of Anchorage- 10 ft. trail) where people can pass on a multi-directional trail system, and users consider it safe with moderate grades, this trail would see a lot of use (according to survey results).

The Nordic Ski Club would like to see every hard-surfaced trail in Girdwood on a map. More users equal more stewardship. Trail users like trail systems and knowing how long it takes to walk that loop or route. Estimated trail times are now commonly part of trail signage and will be placed on the Girdwood Nordic Ski Club maps.

A challenge over the next 15-20 years will be building the forest loop and connections. The trail is in a temperate rainforest that 'eats' gravel. Building and construction will be tedious but constructing the 5k Nordic Loop taught the Girdwood Nordic Ski Club how to approach a capital trail project to ensure success and minimize damage. There is community support for the project at this time. The real challenge of these projects is messaging and communication before, during, and after construction. The Nordic Ski Club wants to work with the community, as the trails are for the community, and belong to the community. This new multi-use trail system will be like the Tour of Anchorage trail with fun, rolling hills that are open to everyone - including bikes and dogs.

If Girdwood's population was the size it was 20 years ago, these previously mentioned challenges wouldn't be arising. These are good conversations to be having as Girdwood is growing and opportunities for local recreation are growing at the same pace. The Nordic Ski Club has the chance to create a win-win situation. Their goal is to provide connection and a fun, safe experience for all user groups. Anytime someone can recreate in Girdwood without driving 30-45 minutes away from town (minimum) it's a win. Another unspoken win is the emergency services like the Girdwood Fire Department utilizing improved and maintained trail systems to reduce response times and increase their access injuries in remote areas.

The Girdwood community members used to walk at the airport taxi-way and runway as a "trail", but due to obvious safety precautions, the Girdwood Airport doesn't allow trespassing. The Airport Road is heavily use by recreationist that still walk under the airport fencing, but if an alternative route in the forest was developed, people may use those trails instead of the airport taxiway.

The process to develop trails is tedious but necessary. The Girdwood valley is confined, so the arduous process will make better trails in the end. There are many variables in the approval process, and the effectiveness of the community process often depends on how many people show up, who votes, etc.

Construction is expensive in Girdwood and as a result projects take more time and more money than planned. The 5 Kilometer Nordic Loop is a prime example. Even with the lessons learned from the 5K Loop, and cost-saving measures, the 4K loop and connections being planned will be expensive to construct. The trees in Girdwood are tall and extremely beautiful. The Spruce and Hemlock each bring their own challenges to both navigate around and fell with minimal impact to the surrounding area. It is difficult to visually assess Hemlock tree health. Trails must also be well constructed for drainage. If the trails are not constructed well, the tread won't drain water. If you don't control the water, the water will control the trail.

There is not much of user conflict among the Nordic community. The more people who use the trails, the better. Over the past few years the outlook on grooming conditions has changed – it used to be frustrating when dogs and multiple-use activities destroyed freshly groomed trails, however now we view this positively – heavily-used multi-use trails means more people are outside being active.

The trailheads are at capacity every day with the number of users it currently sees. The parking lot at Moose Meadow could be expanded. Most people who live in Girdwood head out to the trails from their homes and don't need trailhead parking. People Mover has been pulled into discussions around trail head accessibility from homes (bike rack on the bus, a Nordic Ski pin for a free ride, etc.).

Many of the designated trail heads do not have infrastructure or amenities to support the current level of traffic. Previous agreements alleviated those pressures, but they dissolved with changes in property ownership. Some trail users park at the resort, but there is no data on how many, or the people accessing the backcountry from Resort property.

Membership in the Nordic Ski Club has been growing every year. The trail system is not about Nordic skiers, it's about all trail users. How can the Nordic Ski Club groom for bikers, hikers, and everyone? In the summer, Nordic trails have less mud, good lines of sight, and a sidewalk-like safety buffer. The summer trail use is on the rise with dog owners, moms with strollers, and bikers and hikers. Snowfall came later in the 2019-2020 season but there was still a lot of traffic on the Nordic trails as opposed to the meadows which were waiting for the two feet of snow accumulation. The goal of the Nordic Ski Club is to create healthy trails for a healthy community.

## **Girdwood Nordic Ski Club Stakeholder Interview**

Amendment:

On July 16, 2020, Deb Essex of the Girdwood Nordic Ski Club (GNSC) shared that they had made significant changes to their future plans. The GNSC will no longer pursue construction of the Forest Loop trail mentioned in this stakeholder interview. They will be preparing a long-term trail vision that aligns with the adopted Girdwood Trails Plan.

Please contact Deb Essex with further questions regarding these changes:

Deb Essex

[deb@skigirdwood.org](mailto:deb@skigirdwood.org)

- Trail Maintenance (level required, current funding available, maintenance agreements)
- Access
- Trailhead Amenities (parking, restrooms, trashcans, dog stations, etc.)
- Connectivity to Nearby Trails
- Wayfinding and Signage
- Trail Classification (Class 1-4)
- Desired Level of Awareness and Use

#### APPENDIX – Detailed Interview Summaries

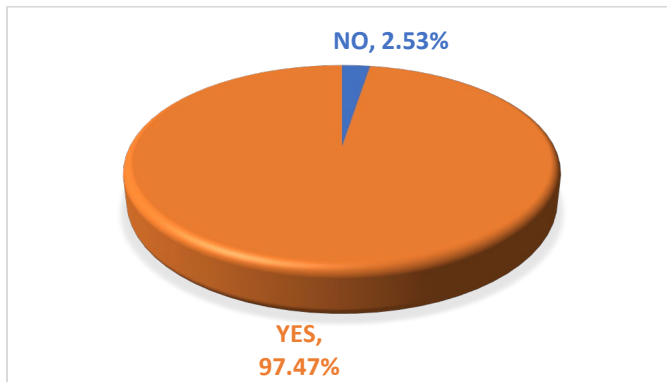
## Girdwood Trails Master Plan Public Meeting Activities Summary

November 19, 2020

### VALUES

Access, Health & Well-Being, Experience, Community Identity, Explore & Learn, Natural World, Stewardship, Diversity & Inclusivity

QUESTION: Do these values align with your values for Girdwood trails and natural spaces?



Row Labels	Percentage	Responses
NO	2.53%	2
YES	97.47%	77
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>79</b>

QUESTION: If you selected NO, what values do not align with your values for Girdwood trails and natural spaces?

ANSWER:

ACCESS (2)  
EXPERIENCE (2)  
NATURAL WOLD (3)  
COMMUNITY IDENTITY (2)  
HEALTH & WELL BEING (1)  
EXPLORE & LEARN (1)  
DIVERSITY & INCLUSIVITY (1)

QUESTION: What values do you think are missing?

ANSWERS:

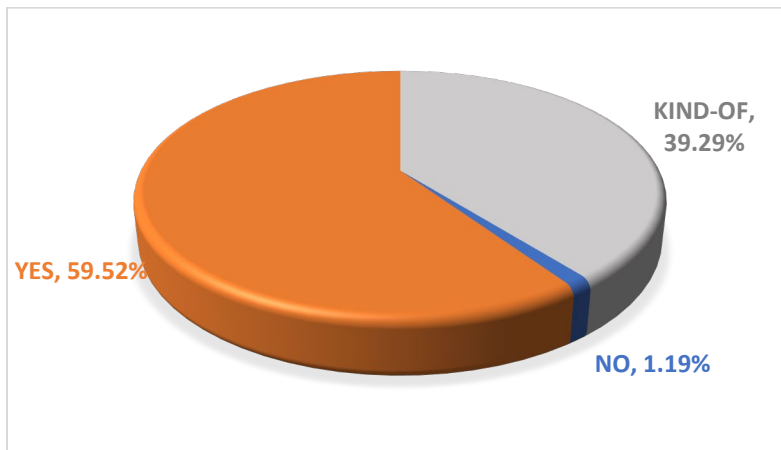
Recreation  
Economic Development  
Eco-Tourism  
Social Connections  
Fun  
Forward-Looking  
Transportation

Competitive Sport  
 Community Involvement  
 Connectivity  
 Cultural & Indigenous Heritage  
 Adventure

## VISION

Girdwood aspires to create an interconnected, diverse, beautiful system of trails and natural spaces that well-serve the community.

QUESTION: Does this vision statement align with your vision for Girdwood trails and natural spaces?



Row Labels	Responses	Percentage
KIND-OF	33	39.29%
NO	1	1.19%
YES	50	59.52%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

QUESTION: Is there anything in the draft vision statement that you would like to change or add? What do you feel is missing?

ANSWERS:

ADD/MISSING

Abundance

Multi use

Wildlife & Visitors

ADD "and its guests"

ADD "community and visitors"

add abundance of trail opportunities

Economic Development is missing

Needs to be more about fun, recreation, and economic development

To be a premier outdoor recreation location in south-central Alaska

Economic component is missing.  
 Sustainable  
 Balance among our natural values and our outdoor recreation economy.  
 Multiple comments about balancing trail development with the natural setting.  
 Designate natural spaces  
 Desire for growth of the trail system  
 Maintable  
 Multiple comments about thinking big and bold.

## CHANGE

The word beautiful it is too subjective and not measurable  
 "something for everyone" could be more explicit  
 'Aspires' needs to go.  
 I like 'Aspires'  
 More action-oriented and forward looking.

## GOALS

### GOAL 1: PLAN

Provide a balance and diversity of trail and natural area experiences that minimize user conflicts and are consistent with the Girdwood Area Plan and the Girdwood Valley Trail Management Plan.

### GOAL 2: DEVELOP

Build sustainable trails using a common set of design principles with a clear project approval process.

### GOAL 3: CONSERVE

Identify, designate, and protect trails and natural spaces through proper processes.

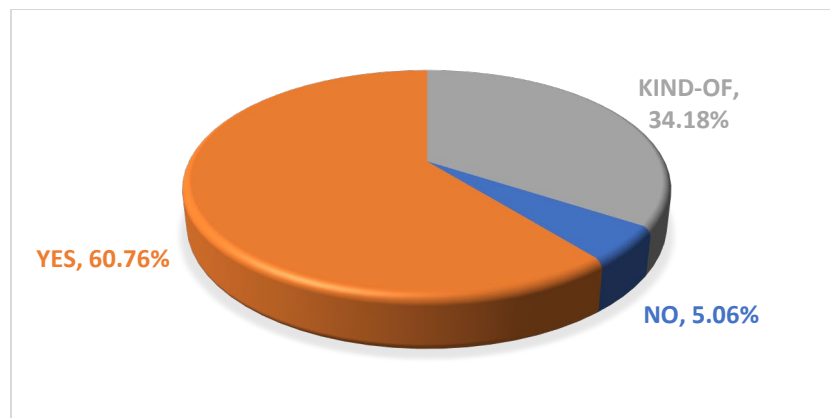
### GOAL 4: MAINTAIN

Trails and natural spaces are maintained for safety, the desired user experience, and to conserve natural resources.

### GOAL 5: SUSTAIN

Provide adequate funding, planning, support, and stewardship for trails and natural spaces.

QUESTION: Do these goals align with your goals for Girdwood trails and natural spaces?



Row Labels	Percentage	Responses
KIND-OF	34.18%	27

NO	5.06%	4
YES	60.76%	52
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>83</b>

QUESTION: Is there anything in the draft goals that you would like to change or add? What do you feel is missing?

ANSWERS:

Change develop to build – many agree with this, some disagree and like “develop”.

Promote economic development

These are tactics to bigger visionary goals

Plans and processes are important, but each of those words appear 3 times in multiple goals. I think one goal should be good planning and clear processes, and the others should focus more clearly on our desired objectives. more good trails

2/develop: should include designating natural spaces. they aren't just for conservation. Also for recreation - see many examples around the world.

“Common set of design principles” was confusing to many.

Goal 3: wary of "designating" as being restrictive to future maintenance or improvement

Goal 6: Attract

Goal 6: Shred

Goal: Girdwood should have the best trail system in Alaska.

Maintain: Regular maintenance for safety.

Would like to see trails that help youth progress their skills.

Add protect ecosystem.

## **Girdwood Trails Plan Public Review Draft: Public Comments**

The Girdwood Trails Plan Public Review Draft was available for public review from June 18 – July 26, 2021. Over the course of the comment period, approximately 2000 written comments were received from over 120 people.

### **Comment Card Comments**

What do you like best about the plan?.....	1
What concerns do you have about the plan?.....	4
What do you think needs to be added to the plan?.....	9
What do you think needs to be removed from the plan?.....	13
What else do you want to tell us?.....	15

### **Project Specific Comments**

Trail Project Comments T1 – T14.....	21
Bridge Project Comments B1 – B6.....	48
Trailhead Project Comments TH1 – TH13.....	53
Natural Space Project Comments NS1-NS3.....	60
Mountain Bike Area Project Comments MB1 – MB3.....	73
Special Project Comments SP1 – SP2.....	80

### **Project Specific Comments**

Existing Trail Comments.....	81
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### **Project Specific Comments**

Elements Missing from the Plan Comments.....	82
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### **Comments Received by Email + Not Provided on Comment Cards.....83**

## COMMENT CARD COMMENTS

Commenter	Comment
<b>What do you like best about the plan?</b>	
<b>TRAILHEADS &amp; PARKING</b>	
D. Penn	I like the idea of increased parking by the train station.
M. Donnelly	I like that you are working on connecting many of the existing trails and improving access points.
K. Sandberg	Trailheads are well thought out.
C. Stinson	I absolutely love the idea of expanding our trailheads in the valley.
J. Love	I am also in favor of the proposed trailheads and their improvements. To be able to utilize the trail system in this Valley with my 5 young kids and know we would have access to bathrooms, etc throughout the day would be amazing.
K. Trautner	Pleased to see plans for improved and expanded trailheads
E. Steinfort	I love the numerous ways to walk loops that are being added in this plan. I also really like the trail head improvements.
M. Leeds	I like the trailhead improvements.

<b>CONNECTIVITY + ACCESS + BRIDGES</b>	
K. Trautner	Pleased to see bridges to provide better access to and continuity of trails.
C. & J. Fox	We like the parts of the plan that encourage trails that are accessible to users of all abilities. We like trails that connect different parts of the community and allow access via modes of transportation other than by car. We like ideas of building bridges or other trail connectors to form loop trails.
K. Tryck	The effort being taken to provide an integrated and inter-connected trail system for all users.
M. LaRose	Very happy to see much needed bridges and connections.
Z. Behney	The interconnectedness of the proposed new trails. I love connecting loops rather than out & backs or
J. Sauer	The ideas of adding bridges and some good connector trails.
E. Stone	I like the tendency towards loops instead of there and back.
A. Davis	I like the emphasis on bridges over glacier creek. I like the trail proposal to link upper and lower valley.
C. Doherty	I like that there are plans for more connections between existing trail.
B. Sullivan	Trail connectors and bridges with class 3 trails listed - exhibits foresight for immediate needs to connect existing, established trails.
J. Kohler	I like the proposed bridges (B5 + B1 + B6). The bridges will be an excellent way to connect trails in the valley.
B. Kohler	B1, B5, B6. These would be great to connect trails throughout the Valley. They should connect 4 season multi-use trails to other trail networks.
D. Knutson	There are a number of proposed projects that will improve access to existing trails in the valley. Specifically the Virgin Creek Bridge Glacier Creek Mid valley bridge and a bridge at the hand tram location and trailhead improvements at the nordic loop.
A. Romerdahl	I appreciate the comprehensive approach taken to look at connectivity throughout the entire valley.
M. Leeds	I love the numerous ways to walk loops that are being added in this plan.

<b>MULTI-USE/ADDRESSING USER CONFLICTS</b>	
S. Thomas	The attempt to provide a mix of trails for different user groups.
K. Trautner	Addressing all users, all areas of the valley and especially single track bike trails to avoid user conflicts - all area great.
E. Stone	I like creating safe and coherent trails for residents and visitors.
J. Lee	I believe it does a very good job of balancing the competing aspirations of a lot of competing groups.
C. Brodin	I believe this plan represents compromise between all of the different trail users and interests.
J. Jenkins	I think this plan shows clearly a balance between users and wise inclusive community input.
A. Romerdahl	I appreciate balancing the needs and wants of the various stakeholder groups.

**MORE TRAILS**

M. Weaver	More trails will benefit this community immensely! Those who live here would love more multi-use summer and winter trails.
Anonymous 2	I like that it is expanding Girdwood.
P. Zug	My ability to speak up for 4 season trails. There are some people who want to go back in time and not adjust to the changing demographic of citizens who want more trails. I like that because it's so obvious.
D. Higginbotham	adding trails
T. Weaver	More trails the better of our community will be served. Trails are great for winter and summer use. More trails means more options to explore and see our valley.
R. Hutchins-Cabibi	I like that the plan has some new trails proposed!
A. Romerdahl	I support the development of all trails and features noted in the plan, and believe that future trail development is vital to the continued utilization of the valley by both residents and visitors to allow for appropriate uses of all types.

**VISION & GOALS**

C. Stinson	I fully agree with the stated values, vision, and goals of the plan.
Anonymous 3	Overall I agree with the vision of the trail plan proposed.
E. Teixmen	I like it's overall vision and that it's taking into consideration the future growth in users.
K. Bowlin	Any efforts to create a robust, multi use, year round trail system is a bonus for the families that live in Girdwood as well as a draw for visitors. A community with a healthy trail system is a healthy community.
J. Lee	I can not tell you how happy I am, to see plans being made to ensure that my son, and any future grandkids can sit down and relax, and listen to the sound of the wind in the tops of spruce and hemlock giants that are older than our country.
J. Dow	I appreciate the thoughtfulness that has gone into the plan for inclusiveness.
C. Krueger	The frame work (value, vision, goals) and intention of the plan has been done very well.
B. Renfro	I like the vision statement.
C. Renfro	I like the vision statement.

**NATURAL SPACES**

C. Brodin	I think the natural spaces are important to preserve natural areas and experiences while other areas are developed.
H. Earl	Natural spaces. Would be even better with more.
J. Wuerth	Preserving your natural areas should remain a high priority to your community.
Anonymous 11	I like the natural spaces. I would like to see them designated for protection. It is important to have these areas for primitive hiking, for use of wildlife, and to future generations. There should also be a natural space along Beaver Pond Trail.
J. Lee	I am pleased to see the inclusion of designated Natural Spaces. I strongly support all three of these proposals.

**MOUNTAIN BIKE AREAS**

C. Stinson	I love adding Mountain Bike Areas within the valley.
A. Davis	I am happy that MB specific trails exist in the plan.
K. Trautner	I really like MB1-MB3.
J. Thomas	The mountain bike areas.
M. Thomas	The mountain bike areas.
C. Doherty	I really like that there are plans for more mountain bike specific trails, I absolutely agree that having designated trails will reduce conflict and provide better recreation for everyone. I think the mountain bike community has shown an ability to build sustainable and safe trails and should be assisted in providing more for Girdwood rather than held back with red tape and delays.

J. Kohler	MB2 Project is a great idea - it's already near a durable trail network to build off of. It also gives people another avenue to ride Mt. bikes that is more accessible and not as demanding as Downhill Mt biking at the resort.
B. Kohler	MTB-2, This is a great place to start MTB development. There is a durable trail network in place to build off of. As well as provide access.

#### TRAIL PROJECT APPROVAL PROCESS

R. Peterson	Defining the approval process if the most valuable part of the plan to me.
H. Munter	The plan helps improve the visibility and transparency of the approval and development process.
D. Essex	I also feel the definition of trail approval process has been defined quite well.
L. Dechamps	communicating approval processes.
A. Schumacher	communicating approval processes.

#### TRAIL PLAN PROCESS

M. Cospier	I like that we are having this conversation as a community.
S. Davis	Congratulations a lot of work went into this trails plan. It provides a framework for future planning and decisions on priority projects to be funded.
K. McDermott	There has been a lot of work devoted to this plan and it shows.
K. Sandberg	The thought and effort that went into it.
Anonymous 1	I like that there is cooperation and input from a variety of viewpoints. Lots of thought and expertise and valuable time went into the plan for the benefit of the community, even those of us who participated minimally.
Anonymous 3	I appreciate the fruits of all those involved with putting this together.
P. Crews	The plan is easy and interesting to read. The information packet was well thought out. It was presented in a way that was easy to understand and use.
B. Young	The packet of info is fastastic! Well put together and very informative.
J. Wuerth	The plan is a well-constructed document and addresses a number of issues.
M. Szundy	Im very impressed with the professional, inclusive and integrated approach reflected in this proposal.
L. Maurer	It is very well-conceived and visually presented. It is more information than I have ever seen on this topic, and greatly appreciated.
M. Medovaya	Very comprehensive, detailed, informative.
Anonymous 4	The process has been good
H. Munter	I appreciate the comprehensive and inclusive plan. It's obvious a lot of work and thoughtful care went into this process. The plan considers climate change as an important point to consider in the trails plan.
J. Love	There are many amazing proposed projects that I am fully in favor of and would love to see implemented in
R. Peterson	The fact that we are making one! It obviously has been a large and complicated undertaking, and I am grateful that we have such great community members that are willing to sacrifice their time to benefit the community.
P. Zug	There are many people who put lots of time into the process. That is appreciated.
J. Lee	Just the fact that we could have a comprehensive, well-integrated plan, instead of the chaos of evaluating one idea at a time. This will hopefully take some of the fearful speculation out of the process.
B. Dugan	Comprehensive - lots of detail
B. Germain	Everybody from all user groups had an opportunity to add input while it was being created.
M. Hammond	That you are taking public comment into consideration before you implement this trails plan.
J. Jenkins	I think this plan shows wise inclusive community input.
P. Wilson	It seems attainable for a 15-20 year plan. Many projects that will need individual funding and that will take time to complete.
A. Romerdahl	I believe it is a balanced plan and will result in a long range road map to support future trail development.
B. Renfro	I like that there is a plan.
C. Renfro	I like that there is a plan.
B. Renfro	It is obvious from reading through the entire plan that people really care about developing and maintaining a quality trail system.

C. Renfro	It is obvious from reading through the entire plan that people really care about developing and maintaining a quality trail system.
L. Hinderman	I think it is important to plan for current and future use. I think sometime the Trails Committee underestimates the numbers and types of trail users and it is important to plan ahead.

#### TRAIL INVENTORY + MANAGEMENT

D. Essex	That all the current trails are identified. A solid inventory of trails is an important first step to see the missing connections and and create additional trail access within the valley. To date, this plan has the most up-to-date information about Girdwood trails, the trail class, the designed use, and the surrounding trailheads.
B. Burnett	This is a good inventory of current trails.
L. Deschamps	I love identifying all trails. I appreciate definining trails.
A. Schumacher	I love identifying all trails. I appreciate definining trails.

#### SPECIFIC PROJECTS IDENTIFIED IN THE DRAFT PLAN

B. Renfro	I think that quality trail infrastructure and signage best way to protect the natural environment in Girdwood in the long term.
C. Renfro	I think that quality trail infrastructure and signage best way to protect the natural environment in Girdwood in the long term.
B. Crews	T12, B1, B5 and B6. Any of these by themselves would be awesome, and together they would be awe-inspiring!
S. Halverson	Of the proposed trails I find T1 most interesting. The second best proposal is the T2 and B1 if built as a true class 2 (not any higher class)
L. Hinderman	I like the addition of developing some of the trails that few people know about like Joe Danich & Wagon Trail and connector trails in that area.
G. Hoessle	I really appreciate how Class 2 & 3 trails have been honored and supported, those are my favorite
S. O'Brien	This plan is thorough and answers a lot of questions as it is. I really like that we are finall getting some hiking only trails. We use ski and bike trails, but do like to go out in the woods to hike without concern of having to jump off the trail I like that every user group has something even the open space users. Finally the mroe primitive trails are being recognized as trails. I like that we are not hardening all trails to level 4 as level 4 trails in the summer are not enjoyable to those of us who like to be more in the woods.

### What Concerns Do you Have about the Plan?

#### Concerns about the Vision

B. Sullivan	This plan does not have a 10-15 year vision, providing 1-5 year goals instead. The connections, trails and draft lacks foresight for the future of the Girdwood Valley, its visitors year round, and most importantly, a climate with extreme weather events.
J. Thomas	The overall the lack of ambition of the plan.
M. Thomas	Overall, the plan is lackluster.

#### Natural Space Designation Concerns

K. Bowlin	Locking up land with a Natural Space designation. Alaska has plenty of primitive trails, we need more trails in the valley that are accessible to families with small kids and older people, trails that can be used by small kids on bikes, mothers towing their children in chariots, and people jogging with their dogs.
S. Bowlin	Locking up land with a Natural Space designation. Alaska has plenty of primitive trails, we need more trails in the valley that are accessible to families with small kids and older people, trails that can be used by small kids on bikes, mothers towing their children in chariots, and people jogging with their dogs.

C. & J. Fox	We believe the designation of large amounts of "Natural Space" close to the community will keep Girdwood from developing useable trails for the general community. It's important to have trails families can use to get from their homes to other parts of the community and just to get outside and enjoy nature. NS1 and NS2, in particular, seem to be designed to restrict enjoyment of these parts of our valley to only more able and confident users. It may be many years before this plan is updated, and restricting the use of large swaths of land in the Girdwood valley to a small group of users for the long term seems unwise.
P. Crews	I am concerned that the over designation of Natural Spaces with its restrictions and definitions would prevent this plan from delivering to the community the trails and connections that the plan's goals, visions and objectives call for.
M. Weaver	NS1, NS2, + NS3 - all projects only serve the interests of a small group of people, not the majority. These areas will not disturb wildlife or forestry if developed. There is an incredible amount of wilderness that will already remain undisturbed. These areas are already accessed - would be nice to have official trails.
T. Weaver	NS1, NS2, NS3. All 3 of these projects will serve the interests of a minority rather than the majority of our community. There is plenty of wilderness. Even animals like trails. Please do not do these projects.
A. Schumacher	I'm concerns about the "open space" words and what they mean and how they fit to what we all see as a future for sharing trails. I feel this has moved too fast without considering other uses, especially for the class 3 and 4 multi use areas.
B. Renfro	I worry a little about the "Natural Spaces". There are a lot of natural space in and around the valley. Not everyone is physically capable of recreating in the "Natural Spaces" as defined. Many of the social trails that are located in the "Natural Spaces" are awesome at different times of the year, but not year round and certainly not for all users. I also worry that NS1, NS2, & NS3 are going to be prohibitive to connectivity if the trail system continues to expand and includes multiple uses. My feeling is that the natural spaces aren't inclusive enough and would only truly benefit the most able-bodied. I love the "Natural Spaces" but this isn't about me. The trails should be for everyone.
C. Renfro	I worry a little about the "Natural Spaces". There are a lot of natural space in and around the valley. Not everyone is physically capable of recreating in the "Natural Spaces" as defined. Many of the social trails that are located in the "Natural Spaces" are awesome at different times of the year, but not year round and certainly not for all users. I also worry that NS1, NS2, & NS3 are going to be prohibitive to connectivity if the trail system continues to expand and includes multiple uses. My feeling is that the natural spaces aren't inclusive enough and would only truly benefit the most able-bodied. I love the "Natural Spaces" but this isn't about me. The trails should be for everyone.
L. Deschamps	I'm concerned about the "open space" words and what they mean and how they fit to what we all see as a future for sharing trails. I feel this has moved too fast without considering other uses, especially for the class 3 and 4 multi use areas.
C. Doherty	I am concerned about the proposed conservation spaces,
J. Dow	I am concerned that the designation of natural space is overly restrictive. We have extensive natural space in our valley. The areas proposed to be natural space are not easy to navigate as they are - and when they are navigated it can (and does) lead to destruction of the forest floor and even creek beds (this is something I have seen, not just a "I wonder if...") Social trails develop when individuals attempt to link trails or areas. Our forest floor is as fragile as the cryptobiotic soil of the desert. This leads to erosion, drainage issues, and can lead to lost hikers following what they believe to be a trail. Established and well marked trails can prevent this. Perhaps the grade 2 trails will do this.
K. Trautner	I am not sure about the value of NS1-NS3 designations
D. Knutson	I don't agree with the need for specificity designating natural space. If these areas are to be used with primitive recreation in mind such as walking, it will create a network of unplanned trails in turn causing more of an erosion issue.
M. LaRose	Very unhappy to see the anti bike agenda in the "natural space" areas. I both bike and hike/run and believe these users can coexist on trails.
C. Stinson	More generally, the proposed Natural Area have no place in the plan as they are incongruent with the stated vision and values of the plan.
R. Peterson	I am concerned that the plan might not accurately represent what the majority of trail users and residents want, specifically the natural spaces definition.

B. Burnett	This plan was funded to be a TRAILS PLAN – not a Trails & Natural Spaces Plan! This plan will not be a document that creates new land use regulations. The community does not support this new land classification. All references should be removed from the next draft of the plan.
D. Essex	The "Natural Space" zones have completely disrupted any future trail proposals outside the mountain bike zones. Moreover, the "Natural Space" Zones were colored in without a chance to see topography, land ownership, or seasonal use. Basically, all uplands were colored in white
B. Kohler	Natural Space does not align with the vision of the plan.
J. Kohler	Over 50% of the proposed plan is for natural space. We live in natural space. This does not meet the vision of the plan that is to improve connectivity + access to trails that are sustainable and it is not equal or balanced.
J. Sauer	The natural space designations.
B. Sullivan	The plan continues to use the term 'Natural Space,' despite previous comments and strong suggestions to discontinue its use. The phrase remains vague and is interpreted differently by many. Furthermore, this terminology has not been used in any previous Girdwood area plan, is over used and is therefore extremely stale in the otherwise attractive presentation of plan. Existing definitions of "Open Space" and "Recreational Areas" could be used instead, as in previous plans, which would at least provide consistency and comprehension by a majority.
J. Thomas	The amount of area dedicated as "natural space."
M. Thomas	The amount of area dedicated as Natural Space.
P. Wilson	The natural space areas seem to dominate the map which is good for protection and concerns me that we're limiting access to this areas with only class 1 or 2 trail development. I support the desire to keep the area wild but I'm concerned allowing only class 1 & 2 will lead to future degrading of the area as users create new social trails to get around problem spots like mud from poor trail development and limited allowed maintenance. A good quality built and maintained class 3 trail keeps users on the trail and the wild space around them untracked.
E. Steinfort	I am unclear on the definition and utility of "natural space" as used in this plan.
M. Leeds	I am unclear on the definition and utility of "natural space" as used in this plan.

#### Concern there isn't enough Natural Space Designation

J. Wuerth	As we develop more of our natural areas we often regret the decision. It seems we may never regret protecting natural spaces.
D. Merrill	Not enough Natural Spaces

#### Concerns about Feedback Received

J. Wuerth	My main concern is that people may provide feedback that encourages a reduction of the size of the proposed natural areas or even their elimination.
C. Brodin	I'm concerned that the voice for more developed trails will be heard louder than the voice for natural space and less developed trails. Every voice needs to be heard.
S. O'brien	I am concerned that there is no hiking organization and the comments from bike and ski will override the hiking comments due to the amount of comments and their vast email lists.
C & J Fox	Most of the input to the plan seems to be from only 3 user groups, the Mountain Bike Alliance, the Nordic Ski Club, and the community members who prefer primitive trails. We know there has been community outreach, but most of our local friends and our guests are interested in the creation of more highly developed trails than this plan reflects.

#### Trails Use Restriction Concerns

M. Donnelly	I am concerned about biking listed as prohibited on many of the access or connectors (T2 - T10 - T11 - T12). Some hiking trails (T12) could easily be used in the winter with fat tire bikes.
P. Zug	Limiting of user groups from certain proposed trails. Barring bikes or mechanized vehicles. This means no grooming in winter. No winter bike use. Imbalance of class 1&2 trails versus class 4&5. 3.25 miles of class 5 trails existing the remainder is bike paths - we need more new 4 season trails.

E. Teixmen	I don't like the fact that 3.9 miles of trail to be built or improved is proposed to exclude bikers. This while no new trails propose to exclude hikers and be designated "bike only" trails. The language and intent shows a disconnection to many if not the majority of trail users. I would wager that in the next 5-10 years bikers and fat-bikers will surpass hikers in total user numbers. I think many know this and are concerned that unless they designate areas as "natural spaces" they will have to share "their" trail with bikers. This kind of segregationist thinking is unacceptable and very short sighted. All trails should be designated based off of user impact. User conflict results from a lack of etiquette, not from a trail designation.
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#### Mountain Bike Areas - Not Enough

A. Davis	Not nearly enough area dedicated to MB specific trails. And MB3 is not easily accessible and would require significant funds just to reach the area with trail building equipment, making this zone unrealistic. If MB3 is to be kept, then there should be connection allotted for flow trail between MB2 and MB3. MB2 should be wide open to MB development, and needs year round access.
C. Doherty	Flow trails are great and should absolutely be involved in the plan, but should not be the only type of trail that is focused on or allowed to be built. There should be a variety of trails being built for all ability levels, with a focus on starting with beginner trails (which already exist) and then adding in trails for more advanced riders.

#### Mountain Bike Areas - Too Much

H. Earl	Too many acres reserved for bike trails. Not proportionate to actual use.
B. Dugan	Too much given to bicycles. I dont want to be run over by bikers when I'm walking.
S. Dugan	Possibly too many proposed bike trails.

#### Trail Classification Concerns

A. Sassi	I would like to make sure that the plan has an equal measure of all classes of trails. It looks like we currently have a disproportionate amount of class 1/2 trails and leaves out the Class 3/4 trails.
L. Hinderman	I feel some parts of the plan are too restrictive in the type of trail design especially in high use areas. Class 1 & 2 are the majority of the plan when class 3, 4 & 5 get the majority of the use. This should be a consideration.
B. Kohler	Trails class 1&2 restrict users in summer, even more so in winter.
J. Thomas	Too much focus on Class 1 & 2 trails.
M. Thomas	The lack of Class 3+ trails for multi-use (specifically xc skiing and biking) shows a complete lack of understanding or appreciation for the popularity of the winter multi-use trails in the valley. The organizations that are currently building and maintaining trails here are GNSC and Bikewood. Trails they create are Class 3+, so limiting those trails by excluding them from the plan is very frustrating as a trail user.
K. Trautner	Too many class 4 trails? I prefer class 3 plus more single track bike trails.
D. Essex	Class 3 & 4 ideas were deleted without a clear reason why. To exclude Class 3 & Class 4 multi-use trails for the community does not align with community surveys.
K. Tryck	There are not sufficient inter-connected class 4 and 5 trails.
B. Crews	The Plan states there is a need for more class 3&4 trails (p. 16), but I don't feel this was adequately addressed.
J. Kohler	There needs to be more multi use trails for 4 seasons.
M. Leeds	I desire more class 4 and 5 trails on this plan. This summer I hiked frequently with a visually impaired person and with family members with minor mobility issues. I myself am an unskilled biker. All these uses require class 4 and 5 trails, so building more miles of this type would be a great benefit to me and our community.

#### Concerns that Trail Development is Limited/Restricted/Not Enough

C. Stinson	Our Valley doesn't need to restrict our trails to class 1 or 2. These trails are not aligned with the primary trail users and prevent valley residents from using our trails to safely commute to workplaces in the lower valley. In my 15 years of experience maintaining trails in the coastal alaskan environment, class 1 & 2 trails are a hazard to users as they do not provide durable surfaces in all weather types leading to slips, trips and falls. Wildlife encounters are also more hazardous on class 1 & 2 trails. Why would you put our residents and visitors at risk?
K. McDermott	My main concern with the plan is that excludes a lot of area to more developed trails. There is plenty of room for Class 1 & 2 trails along with Class 3 trails and the trails can share bridges.
H. Munter	I disagree with the assessment that Nordic Skiing will become marginal in current years. Yes, the seasons will be shorter and more volatile. But the activity will still be feasible for much longer seasons than in comparable resort towns, and there will still be a growing number of participants. Girdwood has a shortage of trails compared to similar resort towns.
B. Burnett	This plan does not go far enough in proposing new trails, trail management and trail based recreation. This is supposed to be a guiding document. Where are the world class trail projects? A world class trail system would have mountain huts, access to the receding glaciers on the skyline, connect to the Southern Trek, and inspire adventure, achievement, and advocacy.
C. Doherty	I think there should be more of a focus on XC ski trails, and the ability to groom and maintain them during all types of snow years.
M. Szundy	Im concerned that there could be limited trail development. In some adventure tourism mountain villages, bike trail building is an ongoing endeavor. This brings huge economic impact, supporting jobs and builds a community that prioritizes a healthy lifestyle.
M. Leeds	I desire longer trail(s) be added leaving the valley.

#### Implementation + Funding Concerns

Anonymous 1	The expense.
Anonymous 2	Not happening or the plan not working.
Anonymous 3	Some of the proposals are very long term and not likely, such as the connector bridge over Glacier Creek. I would imagine full scale development in the Hulton Hills and resort expansion with a highway bridge in that area before a bridge for a trail only.
R. Peterson	I would also encourage the approval process to be as streamlined as possible, with some guarantee of timeliness.
R. Peterson	Gathering volunteers, funding and short building season are all hurdles to building new trails in Alaska and should be considered.
Anonymous 4	A little bit ambitious and in some areas aggressive
B. Germain	Some ideas are far fetching - such as bridge across upper winner creek (T5). Also there is no priority for projects. It becomes who raises the most money first gets their project funded.
J. Jenkins	It certainly is ambitious, but I don't know which trails or bridges will be constructed and on what timeline.
DJ. Kiland	To extensive. We are concerned about the cost, resources, and volunteer support to maintain additions to the existing trail systems. The existing trails are diverse and adequate enough for our needs.
S. O'brien	Parking lots, bridges, bathrooms are expensive.

#### User Conflict Concerns

Anonymous 1	The conflict with bicycles on shared trails. The feeling of special interest and outsidersness of bike proponents.
K. Sandberg	That there are multiple agendas that seem to be conflict, and it seems there is not enough elimination of those conflicts. *multiple trails in same space, trails that end nowhere.
B. Crews	So many multi-use trails may lead to future user conflicts. I think mountain biking is becoming exponentially more popular.

#### Trail Management Concerns

D. Merrill	Grooming of the upper meadows
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J. Lee	Social trails and vague routes are shown as "Existing Trails".
S. Thomas	This is a minor concern, I hope it does not become too difficult to navigate the trails via accepted uses. For example, if I am riding a mountain or fat bike, will I have trouble creating a route without violating trail usage? Reading the plan and the map gives me the impression of this group goes here, and that group goes there. It might be good to emphasize how the various multi-use trails provide a means to travel to different specialized areas or travel the entire valley without violating trail designations.

#### Wetland and/or Wildlife Concerns

M. Cosper	Disregard for fish/bird/wildlife needs. Girdwood does a good job of giving them their space, but this plan does not seem to take that in to account.
E. Stone	The development of more developed trails in the Virgin Creek area. This is critical bear habitat and we have already encroached on the other side of Glacier Creek.
B. Young	It seems to be super ambitious, so many plans + proposals and my concern is moving too fast with all the proposals. I admit I am not very up to speed on this kind of process.
J. Lee	Some proposals (e.g. T2 and the bridges) do not seem to take beavers into account.
S. O'Brien	I am concerned about our wetlands in general in Girdwood as we are developing many Class C so the conservation and protection of class A is important and I'd like that to be mentioned. I'd like to incorporate information on salmon streams bear feeding zones. Lower Iditarod is already bear heavy and the Danish even more so. I'd like us not turn into a trail system that draws users in to bear feeding zones.

#### Trailheads, Signage, Access, + Connectivity Concerns

M. Cosper	Too many trailheads. When are you "on the trail" when there are trailheads every 500'.
D. Penn	I don't like the trend of access trails to existing trails. It really breaks the feeling of solitude and nature with increased access points. None of our trails are so far apart that they cannot be accessed from their current trail heads. I also do not support trails that parallel existing trails.
B. Crews	I don't think the lack of visible trailheads and adequate parking was addressed sufficiently, particularly a viable, concrete plan for the Virgin Creek neighborhood.
C. Doherty	I think it should be made sure that there will be the ability to easily connect all the trails around Girdwood in the future.
R. Hutchins-Cabibi	I am concerned that there is no plan for connecting the upper Timberline neighborhood with a trail that would allow bikers, hikers and strollers to connect to other neighborhoods.
D. Knutson	Virgin Creek access/parking must be improved.
D. Knutson	The plan lacks access to alpine trails. There are a number of alpine trails that could be better accessed from the valley that would greatly increase the amount of recreation opportunities.
J. Thomas	Lack of trail connections to neighborhoods in particular upper timberline.
M. Thomas	Lack of trail connections to neighborhoods (upper timberline especially).
P. Wilson	lack of trail development to connect neighborhoods and provide alternative to walking streets with traffic.
P. Wilson	Lack of planning for trail signs and maps. I constantly run into people lost on our trails. Good public maps and trail signs would improve the experience.

#### Other Concerns

M. Cosper	Gentrification of my town. It feels like you are preparing Girdwood for an onslaught of rich people to move here and drive up housing costs even further. Putting/further developing trails where people have no business being.
B. Crews	I never felt that there was sufficient, accurate, research done about the kinds of trails people want. I felt the information we had was from a small, not-very-random, sample. I fear the Plan may be more of a reflection of the Committee's desires than an accurate reflection of what a majority wants.
R. Hutchins-Cabibi	I am concerned that the plan approaches the equitable and balanced value from a land area perspective rather than a trails perspective.

#### What do you think needs to be added to the plan?

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A. Davis	Would like to see MB specific trails along crow creek road top to bottom. Would also like to see MB trails behind Timberline Dr, along Danitch trail.
B. Burnett	This plan ignores already approved/designed Nordic trail developments. The Forest Loop is not accurately represented. The community is in favor of developed 4 season multi-use trails that can be groomed (with full size equipment) in the winter. This plan needs to include these trail projects.
D. Higginbotham	The most used trail in the winter is Moose meadows. It is marshy in the summer and spring. Can you add boardwalks to Moose Meadows to make it usable all year round. It would help connect all the trails in the upper valley.
E. Steinfort	I desire more improvements to existing trails, including increasing the times of year that trails can be used, increasing benches along trails, and adding picnic spots and mini playgrounds. I desire longer trail(s) be added leaving the valley. Most of all, I think significant consideration is needed to parking and toilets.
M. Cospers	Address fish/wildlife/bird space concerns. Address infrastructure concerns. Who/how is going to rescue people when they get hurt and lost. I've seen the population of this town jump from ~2000 people to almost 3000 in the last 20 years, but where is the infrastructure to support that. Consider all the beaver ponds along CA creek.
S. Davis	A supplemental document that lists those projects to be funded and completed first. As projects are completed, update the supplement with the next set of projects. This supplement can be updated annually (or as needed) without having to update the entire plan. Reference the supplement in the Master Trails Plan.
M. Donnelly	Do we need to add some dogsled or skijoring trails or even horseback riding trails?
K. McDermott	More emphasis on creating & linking trail loops from the upper and lower valley.
K. Sandberg	1 - Hiking only trails and biking only trails. 2 - User conflicts should be foreseen and addressed. 3 - Long range and short range projects identified as such. 5-10 yr. ; 10-20 yr. 4 - Actual removal of current Abe's Trail Bike Trail, Revegetate.
E. Teixmen	Several miles of "new" trails. Most of the plan just improves existing trails or builds short "connector" trails. This is great but without several new trails open to bikes and hikers then its not much more than a re-mix of the same old tune. I also think new and old trails need to be built or upgraded to support narrow gauge grooming for winter. Having a groomed surface that is wide enough for two users to pass and xc skiers to wedge will greatly improve the experience. Many times I've encountered skiers stuck in xc width ruts unable to slow down or stop because they can't wedge. Bikes have the advantage with much shorter stopping distances due to disk brakes and studded tires.
E. Stone	I would like to see GNS Club's proposal for a multi-use loop in NS2 reconsidered.
A. Romerdahl	Although not specifically a trail, it would be great to see the inclusion of areas designated for biking skills development. This could include a pump track (a common feature in recreational communities) as well as skills areas designed for kids and other beginner mountain bikers. This could potentially be incorporated into one of the currently designated areas, but would need to have easy access and be located close to a designated parking area/trailhead to allow for easy access.
Anonymous 1	Toilet facilities. Trash cans. Water points where possible.
Anonymous 2	More trails for both runners, walkers and skiers.
H. Earl	More natural space.
P. Zug	Plan needs to reflect community user needs. Current proposal tilts away from majority of users and favors minority users equally. Please let trails needs determine what class trails are built. Not individuals prejudice or short sitedness.
Anonymous 3	In the short term I think an effort should be made up valley to replace the hand tram with a foot bridge. Also I'd like to see expansion of the mt. bike areas.
H. Munter	Is there any way to substantially guarantee reasonable timeliness in trail development? The trails depend on volunteer labor and funding and that is so much easier if there are shorter timelines. Trailheads should be considered more dynamic. For example, moose meadows parking and 5k parking should be interchangeable; same with parking in town or in the lower valley.

C. & J. Fox	The more primitive trails could have "Natural Space" corridors restricted to the trails themselves and to parts of their viewsheds. Maintaining some primitive trails is desirable. The already approved Forest Loop multi-use trail. Upgrade Danisch trail to a class 3 or 4 trail with connection to the Lower Iditarod Trail for easy access between Timberline neighborhoods and both Old Girdwood and the current town center. Level 3 or 4 trail to connect parking lots P11 to P12 to take the some pressure off the Arlberg parking lot.
Anonymous 4	Nothing
A. Davis	More MB specific trails. More trails in general. More glacier creek side focus for hiking/walking specifically.
D. Higginbotham	Moose meadow improvement
L. Maurer	Winner Creek Trail Extension
B. Renfro	Not included in the plan is a maintained trail connection between Abe's Trail and the high alpine to provide safe access down from "Penguin Ridge" south of Gentoo. Girdwood to Penguin/Penguin to Girdwood is an incredible route. Unfortunately, it lacks connectivity and as a result, many people bushwhack and route find on and off of the ridge. Even seasoned locals get lost or turned around when descending in to Girdwood. This route becomes more popular every year creating more wear and tear on this beautiful mountain side. With a defined trail the vegetation is protected, we have a safe route and we would be one big step closer to having a world class trail system.
C. Renfro	Not included in the plan is a maintained trail connection between Abe's Trail and the high alpine to provide safe access down from "Penguin Ridge" south of Gentoo. Girdwood to Penguin/Penguin to Girdwood is an incredible route. Unfortunately, it lacks connectivity and as a result, many people bushwhack and route find on and off of the ridge. Even seasoned locals get lost or turned around when descending in to Girdwood. This route becomes more popular every year creating more wear and tear on this beautiful mountain side. With a defined trail the vegetation is protected, we have a safe route and we would be one big step closer to having a world class trail system.
A. Sassi	The approved Forest Ski loop multiuse trails should be included on the map where the black T10 dot is located. We say in our vision statement that we strive to be a world class trail system. This plan skirts near that, but could do more. We have wilderness all around us, the town area should not have areas that cannot be developed. Easements can allow for more wilderness between development.
Z. Behney	Please re-consider Paul Crews' Proposed Trail linking Lower Virgin Creek to a 4 Season Joe Danich Route. This could be a great travel corridor for the entire Alyeska basin. Let's honor Paul's Legacy!
B. Burnett	This plan should be a trail map to current and proposed world class trails, trail systems and trail based recreation. This plan should propose how we pay for new trials and maintain the trail system. There should be plans to bring North consultants from trail system managers such as Mountain Trails Foundation or Methow Valley and plans to send G'wood delegations to trail destinations for collaboration and consultations w/ successful organizations/managers. Our trail system should support organized youth athletics: XC Skiing, School District XC Running (the Nordic Loop is the only "Home Court" venue for the Girdwood Grizzlies) and MTB events. Our trail system should support organized community athletics and education.
D. Essex	The local Stakeholder's updated comments and concerns, local business's & guiding/tourism companies' comments, Alyeska Resort, comments, HLB & Municipal planner comments, etc. I feel that land ownership and zoning should be an added map, and integrated on all maps, as well as a summer and winter trail use distinction be a map within the plan. I feel strongly that the zones "Natural Space" should reverted back to "recreational space" and "open space" to be in alignment with all previous plans, and in alignment with the vernacular used in statewide and national trail plans. If nothing else, then add a "Class 3 and 4 Proposed Areas" so the Girdwood Nordic Ski Club members have the same opportunity to create trail potential as the primitive trail and mountain bike advocates. Our trails were deleted.
J. Lee	A Natural Space, or other wildlife protection along lower California Creek. This issue never really came up until near the end of this whole process.

K. Tryck	Class 4 and 5 trails provide for the highest number of users for: 1. Emergency service vehicle for health and safety 2. Wild fire prevention vehicles 3. Smooth walking and travel for the disabled 4. Sufficient view scape distances to prevent surprising wild animals 5. two direction travel for multiple use <del>6. trail maintenance vehicles</del>
B. Crews	1) More connectivity from the Alyeska Basin to the lower Valley. Upper Danich doesn't really exist and Lower Danich ends at the RR. 2) Max's Trail, Ragged Top Trail and Penguin Ridge Trail are shown on the map as if they are truly trails. They are informal, social trails that need discussion, planning, and improvement as much as the new trails in the Plan. Unfortunately, they mostly lie outside of the lands that the Municipality manages, so while they are very much a part of the Valley's trails, they can't be part of the Plan.
L. Deschamps	I think that "natural space" should be noted as "recreational space" or "open space" and we should allow all stakeholders to have input.
J. Dow	improvements to the Max's mountain trail. It is a dangerous trail with few switchbacks. The trail changes often depending upon the strength of the hiker. It is an example of how branching social trails can cause problems.
S. Dugan	Before adding more trails of any kind, the parking at trailheads needs to be addressed.
B. Germain	Priority list from users.
S. Halverson	1) Trails within Girdwood proper are likely best built to Class 3, 4, and 5. Trails stemming out to the land s out of the inhabited areas should be class 2 and 1. This should be added to the overall guiding principles. 2) Guidance needs to be clear about bikes traveling downhill on multi-use trails. It's not a good mix for downhill bike travel with hikers, kids, dogs. 3) Guidance needs to be clear about winter bikes not riding on XC trails that are classic set. As in the trails throughout the proposed NS2 zone.
L. Hinderman	Making sure the language includes ways to upgrade the plan for communitys needs going forward. A review every 5 years? A way to address changes to N.S. 1/2/3 should the need arise in the community.
G. Hoessle	Nothing, it's amazing!
R. Hutchins-Cabibi	Connectivity between the Upper Timberline neighborhood and lower valley areas. Connectivity between MB2 & MB3 More Nordic ski club input and representation within the plan. I would like to see a map with other land use agencies nearby trails and the connections between Girdwood trails and those public and private trails.
J. Jenkins	I think a sequence of what is most important or vital to accomplish. Maintenance will be most important to consider as more people come to use our trails.
D. Knutson	Access to alpine trails. The California Creek trail could be maintained to improve access to Penguin ridge without additional planning. This access would benefit both summer and winter users and open up a large area above the alder line as well as improve safety and reduce traffic on other trails in the valley. Parking at the Virgin Creek trailhead should be improved, or possibly moved to the highway, hopeful that the study will provide a thoughtful solution.
B. Kohler	4 season multi-use trails w/the bridge projects that allow users to recreate throughout the valley w/o using the roads. Encourage trail stewardship, maintaining a trail should not looked down upon. Recreation and conservation go hand in hand. Developed trail make spaces special for all who use them.
J. Kohler	More multi use trails for all seasons. Trails that can be groomed in winter and accessed in the spring, summer, fall.
C. Krueger	Accessibility to upper alpine terrain and chughach state park / national forest lands. More inconclusive to muliti-use activities. Non mechanized designation to be changed to non motorized (including electric and internal combustion). otherwise remove skiing and snowshoeing from the definition as these activities require mechanized equipment.

M. Medobaya	<p>I think Girdwood needs a way to communicate to the public about trail locations and trail options. I am not aware of an easily accessible map of Girdwood trails apart from those few that are popular (and struggle with overuse like Virgin Creek Falls and Winner Creek). We really need to find a way to inform visitors (and resident) about the variety of options - and utilize existing trails better. Perhaps a centralized database of trails? Hosted on Girdwood tourism sites?</p> <p>Many many trails already built and available do not get used enough because of lack of public knowledge about them. Wayfinding helps but marketing and publicity needs to happen as well.</p>
S. O'Brien	<p>I think we need to look at Girdwood as a whole. We have Forest Service trail, Alyeska Mountain trails that are not considered here. There are a great deal of mountain biking only trails which I am in no way opposed to. The 5 k is ski only. I would like more hiking only. I'd like us as a community to consider education of users as a goal. I'd like to as mentioned above consider our wildlife ... As the parent of a special needs child who has slower reactions processing multi use trails can be tricky and at times unsafe. Please make sure that there are hiking only trails so we experience stress free trails. We use all the trails, but with our child mainly hike.</p>
J. Sauer	More cross country ski trails.
A. Schumacher	I think that "natural space" should be noted as "recreational space" or "open space" and we should allow all stakeholders to have input
E. Steinfort	In addition to the above (picnic tables, benches, mini-playgrounds, a new extra-long trail, and tread/drainage improvements), I would like a viewing/interpretive area in the vicinity of the Speedway mall/Old Girdwood/Girdwood train station. Also, I would like short trails to new fishing spots which don't require crossing the railroad tracks and have safe spots for fishing on the bank.
B. Sullivan	<p>A neighborhood playground off Timberline with several neighborhood small trail connectors to enable kids and families to travel by bike or foot, without having busiest streets in town. The Forest Loop, which is a named trail that has not yet been developed, but was designed and proposed to the Girdwood citizens. Class 4 and 5 trails for Nordic skiing in the Upper Valley, including the Forest Loop. Solar powered lighting on the Nordic 5k for seasonal lighting and the proposal of more lighting at all trailheads, powered by solar. Developed Danich trail, so more than 50% of Girdwood can bike, walk, or ski toward Old Girdwood without using the busy and often noisy bike path.</p>
M. Szundy	<p>I believe our community would benefit from a zone where there could be "freedom to build". For example, single track Bike trails, winter and summer. This makes most sense in the Nordic track area, BM2 Im surprised to not see a "pump track" herein. Seward has an excellent one that would be a great fit in our community. Due to Alaska's unique Winter-Summer trail use demarcation- I think it would be smart to have a more demarcated delineation. That is, our winter access is wholly different from summer trails (EG: Moose meadows)</p>
J. Thomas	Forest loop trail as a class 3+ trail. This is already approved by GBOS, land use and Girdwood trails committee. There should be additional narrow track grooming up valley along the perimeter of the meadows. There needs to be additional easy/ family trails in the valley.
M. Thomas	Forest Loop trail as a class 3+ trail since it was already approved by GBOS (including LUC and Trails Committee). There should be additional narrow gauge grooming up valley in the meadows. There should be additional family-friendly trails in the valley (class 3+).
S. Thomas	Perhaps it's not needed, but I think e-powered devices need to be addressed. One-wheels, ebikes and other motorized devices. What is defined as motorized use vs. mechanical use? Are there compelling reasons for the natural areas to be kept primitive? Wetlands, wildlife, difficulty of establishing trails?
T. Weaver	I appreciate this plan. I do not know of anything I would add. Any trails I am in agreement with.
P. Wilson	<p>Limited class 3 networks in Natural spaces that allow bikes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-More trails connecting to neighborhoods and through neighborhood using green belts</li> </ul> <p>Turning the 5k into a multi-use trail until the other multi-use trails are ready in the wetlands. The 5k gets limited use because its restricted to skiers only a majority of the time but it's most well developed of all winter trails.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-T14 should be connected to blueberry pass.</li> </ul> <p>plan for public trail maps and signs with each trail</p>

B. Young	Regarding the bike trails - I feel like they need to be separate trails from hiking! Especially with eBikes which have become numerous and are fast! How about one outer loop around the valley - from Beaver Pond Trail, Gird to Bird path to Old Girdwood, to Lower Iditarod over to Cali Creek to Beaver Pond or to Wagon Trail.
M. Leeds	In addition to the above (picnic tables, benches, mini-playgrounds, a new extra-long trail, and tread/drainage improvements), I would like a viewing platform in the vicinity of the Speedway mall/Old Girdwood/Girdwood train station. Also, I would like short trails to new fishing spots which don't require crossing the railroad tracks and have safe spots for fishing on the bank.

### What do you think needs to be removed from the plan?

D. Penn	I feel that T3, T5, and T12 are projects that should be removed from the plan.
S. Halverson	T8, T9, T5, B2, MB3
B. Crews	T2 north branch, T3 north of Ruane, T5 east of Alyeska Hwy, T12 between Stumpy's Summer Trail and T13 (Forest Loop Trail area). B2, TH3.
S. O'Brien	I am most concerned with MB1 and its impact on the trails in that area. Multi use trails below downhill trails can be hectic. Beaver Pond is a local and Anchorage wide favorite hiking trail.
K. Sandberg	1 - The committee members need to think about the crowded space and eliminate some trails and spaces. 2 - MB1 - and rethink this. Take out illegal bike trails.
B. Burnett	Remove all reference to "Natural Space" and all of the restrictions proposed by this minority of trail users. These trail users do not represent the vision of the GTP or our community.
J. Dow	removed or redefined - the natural space designations.
R. Hutchins-Cabibi	Natural Spaces. This is a land use designation and that is not within the scope of the plan subcommittee, nor of the plan.
P. Crews	I think the term Natural Spaces should be removed and replaced with a commonly defined term that allows sensible trail development and conservation protections. The restrictions that define Natural Spaces are not compatible with what this plan needs to accomplish.
M. LaRose	"Natural Space" designations excluding bikers.
M. Weaver	NS1, NS2, NS3
C. & J. Fox	NS1 and NS2
P. Zug	Natural Areas 1 2 & 3. Far too restrictive - follow good sense when building 4 season trails. Provide 4 season hardened rough not through wetlands - around them whenever possible.
C. Stinson	All Natural Spaces and Trails that would be restricted to Class 1 and 2.
K. McDermott	NS1
A. Davis	Please remove the "non-mechanized" discriminant from NS2 and T2. Would like to continue to share these winter trails as a biker and xc skier.
A. Sassi	NS 1 or land area designators in general.
Z. Behney	Natural Spaces - we are surrounded by restricted land - Chugach National Park and Chugach State Park. Please don't lock up widely used tracks and that are close to our doorsteps - instead lets responsibly develop recreation opportunities for a lot of our community members. Regardless of their ability to climb over down trees in trails.
D. Essex	All use of the term "Natural Space". All areas labeled "Natural Space" should be reverted to "Recreational Area". These "natural space" areas cover all valley uplands terrain without consideration of approved trail proposals, previous Girdwood Land Use Plans and Trail Plans, or community surveys. The Proposed Trail + Natural Space Network map should be deleted. That map does not represent the wishes of the community and Class 3 & 4 proposals were deleted while primitive and mountain bike areas created. This map is not congruent with previous land use plans, trail plans, or the previous approved plans referenced within this document. This map should be deleted, and recreated with zones for Class 3 & 4 trail systems.
L. Deschamps	The "natural space" notation sounds great if not understood. However, it is very restrictive in my view. "Recreational area" makes more sense and can then also be respected as needed.
D. Knutson	Designated natural space should be removed. This "natural space" occurs automatically in creating maintained trails. These maintained trails will better protect the natural space from erosion by unplanned users. As use in the valley continues to increase, this will become more and more important.

B. Kohler	Natural Spaces. This seems to be a land use issue, not trails. Natural space surrounds us. Natural space and the 1-2 class trails restrict access, hinders connectivity. Over 60% of residents responded w/recreating as what they want more of. Natural space does not align w/the Value, Vision or Goals of the community majority. It seems a vocal minority is trying to take control of the plan/process.
J. Kohler	Natural spaces - we live in an amazing valley. Having more established trails will help keep it that way.
A. Schumacher	the "natural space" notation sounds great if not understood. but it is very restrictive in my view."recreational area" makes more sence and can then also be respected as needed. class 3/4 proposals should still be put back in.
B. Sullivan	NS1, NS2, NS3. As I have previously commented, these shaded areas are idea topography for interesting features, terrain, and therefore trails out of the wetlands. The access is established and trails can connect from the existing trails near the Upper Valley. Scenic and accessible trails could be designed and loved here best. Remove "Natural Space" terminology from this plan.
J. Sauer	Natural space designations.
J. Thomas	Natural spaces should include all classes of trails. This currently appears to reserve about 1/3 of the valley for one specific user group. Can you do the same for Mountain biking and more developed class 3+ trails? if not the scale needs to be adjusted. The Girdwood Valley is surrounded on 3 sides by state park and national forest. We don't need to reserve the remainder of the valley.
M. Thomas	Natural spaces should include all classes of trails and uses or be completely eliminated. Unless an equal portion of the area can be designated for each specific user group i.e. Mountain Bike and Nordic Ski areas equal in size to the NS areas, I cannot support any Natural Space designation.
T. Weaver	NS1, NS2, NS3
R. Peterson	NS1, NS2 and NS3. As these trails are on Heritage Land Bank lands and not defined as wilderness area, they should not be treated as such.
E. Teixmen	Any trail that excludes bikes. There is simply no justification. The impact is the same or less than hikers, they are quiet (certainly more so than the dozens of aircraft flying overhead), they do less damage to trails in the winter than hikers, and they stop faster than XC skiers. Also any "Natural Space" designation. This kind of designation is based on nothing more than emotion and feelings. Its intent is clearly to segregate usership over ownership with no impact data to back it up.
Anonymous 2	I don't think anything needs to be removed.
H. Munter	I would encourage removing the language about avalanche hazard. The only avalanche zones that should receive this kind of wrapper are on the bird to gird path where active mitigation can take place.
Anonymous 4	Any bridge or trail proposal that would increase traffic through a neighborhood - specifically Alyeska basin!
B. Renfro	I think there are a lot of awesome elements to this plan! Let's build some well-thought-out trails that add to our community for those who live here as well as visitors to this beautiful valley.
C. Renfro	I think there are a lot of awesome elements to this plan! Let's build some well-thought-out trails that add to our community for those who live here as well as visitors to this beautiful valley.
B. Germain	Trails that serve same user groups being proposed next to existing trails.
DJ Kiland	Any additions that will require additional operating and maintenance costs, resources and volunteer support should be removed from the plan.
C. Krueger	Designated zones for a single purpose. i think this should be a trail by trail decision, not entire zones.
M. Szundy	Nothing. But If budget is an issue: Maybe the lower valley bridges, B1 and the Virgin Creek Bridge B3. IF, (and i mean if), the NS1 is adopted as a Natural Area, then the T2 trails could be dropped to T1 quality.
B. Young	Keep things simple as possible, good traffic flow of connectors and not too many trails all over everywhere. Keep in mind this is a small compact valley. When is enough going to be enough?

**What else do you want to tell us?**

M. Cospier	Although I'm glad we're having this conversation, I feel like all the proposed trails are a bit ambitious. Is there any discussion on how much money it will take to maintain all these upgrades and new trails? Are your upgrades going to force people out because you caused this town to become too expensive to live in? It's already happening! Are voices from people living outside Girdwood amplified by access to these project plans?
S. Davis	I recommend identifying those projects that will be pursued first (in the supplement), based on two conversations: cost of project compared to the available funds, select projects that represent the "low hanging fruit" and can be accomplished readily. Also consider current use/resident traffic. Select high use projects over those with infrequent or low use. A combination of these two considerations should allow the committee to identify the first phase projects.
M. Donnelly	TH10 - great idea to work with Alyeska Resort. Currently many people use the last parking lot where the church is - this does not always work if the church is having a big event such as a wedding. The area all belongs to Alyeska and not the church.
K. McDermott	Girdwood is getting more visitors each summer, I would love to see more options for both visitors and residents to enjoy both hiking and biking trails.
K. Sandberg	1 - GTP Committee listing is inaccurate. 2 - Take out cute icons - detracts on Page 7, 33, 34 3 - Proposed is spelled wrong in first column "Present" page 15.
K. Sandberg	Thank you to the committee members for their time and effort.
E. Teixmen	I love what this valley has to offer and the potential it holds. There is significant opportunity to make Girdwood a trail based destination and drive a sustainable economic boost to the community. I see many communities embracing winter and summer cycling, hiking, and skiing, to the communities benefit. I think we would be foolish not to use our outdoor resource to build trails and spaces that embrace this kind of sustainable recreation based economy.
E. Stone	Planning for new developments is exciting, but we should remember that whatever we build we need to maintain and we should make sure that we don't build more than we can maintenance.
C. Stinson	The developed areas of our valley, including areas with existing and proposed trails, are all surrounded by existing 'natural spaces'. It really bothers me that our trail plan proposed natural spaces within our existing trail network. We do not need these proposed natural spaces anywhere in our trail plan. Please do not restrict use to the vast majority of our current and future trail users and stewards. Remove all three proposed Natural Spaces in this plan.
K. Bowlin	Let's create a world class trail system in this valley!
S. Bowlin	Let's create a world class trail system in this valley!
A. Romerdahl	Thank you for all of your hard work on this, I am excited to see the plan move forward and to see the trails and features start coming to fruition.
Anonymous 2	I'm exhausted by how roads and trails are not being maintained. Potholes are a major concern for bikers and I'm concerned the municipality won't pay for any of the roads being built.
P. Zug	I'm 73 years old. Have lived on Timberline drive since 1983. The area behind my house is being selfishly preserved by groups who don't want to benefit the community with improved trails. Timberline drive is currently the only walking route choice to go to post office. Why can't a trail be made on public land?
P. Zug	(comment part 2) General Comment: If modifications are not done to this proposed plan to include more multi use class 4 trails I will vote against it. Please try to reflect the majorities wishes. Not the vocal minority or the nimby's.
Anonymous 3	This plan is for development of the valley trail system only, but more immediately I would like to focus on accessing the Alpine. Improved general grade 1-2 switchback type trails on upper Abe's and ragged top trails.
H. Munter	I just want to say that the people that live in Girdwood volunteer a tremendous amount of time and effort. Community members are on multiple boards, participate in fundraisers, and donate their time and effort and money in countless ways. I really hope that as we continue to flesh out our awesome valley we can ease the burden on the people developing and supporting trails.
C. & J. Fox	The form is very hard to fill out for online input. That's why we just copied and pasted the final page into Word.
M. LaRose	Thank you for the opportunity to comment and for all the effort that went in to this plan!
T. Mercurio	Thank you, trails committee, for this amazing document. So much work has gone into it - it is so comprehensive. I hope much (if not all of it) of it can come to fruition. It is a hopeful glimpse into our future in Girdwood.

M. Weaver	Thanks for reviewing!
Anonymous 4	The balance shown in the summary on pg 20 is evidence of a well harmonized trail system. While a few more miles of class 4 may seem needed there is something for everyone here. Continue to avoid lop-sided user demands - everyone is served with this plan.
A. Davis	Overall, I am pro-trail of all varieties. My specific concerns are related to mountain biking. I appreciate the mountain bike areas allotted in the draft map, however do not think there is enough space allotted. I think there are a few terms used that are misleading. Non-mechanized to me describes walking only, but in this plan it includes xc skiing which i believe is mechanized. Natural space areas to me describes nature preservation... but in this context it is still open to walkers/hikers/xc skiers. THANK YOU for all your hard work and time! Our community has a lot of opinions, because we all care deeply for this place.
L. Maurer	We would like to see greater personal communication regarding trail access and development. Opportunities such as the Girdwood Trail Plan, Imagine Girdwood are greatly appreciated, but it is difficult to comprehend the governance and reach of each. We appreciated the opportunities to participate in virtual meetings this year, as regularly scheduled in person meetings in the past have been at times with other commitments. However, lengthy roll-call procedures result in less time for content and input. We hope that future conversations regarding this plan can be offered both virtually and in person to allow for greater input.
Anonymous 5	There are many areas in the plan that traditional trail biking (summer and winter) is proposed to be restricted. Please note that there is no enforcement mechanism in the valley to stop biking from happening on restricted trails. Please don't create a document that promotes unrest in the community where people might try to enforce usage on certain trails. Specific examples included below. •It seems that this plan has several components that attempt to close off or limit access and outdoor recreational opportunities in the valley. There is a general lack of inclusive, accessible, and multiuse trails in the plan. Loop biking trails and wider Nordic ski trails are not represented in plan. There is limited information on electric bicycles or other electric modes of transportation. One wheels, electric unicycles, etc. Please consider guidance as they are becoming more popular and widely used. There is a lack of Class 3 connectedness in the lower valley connecting Timberline Road and the Seward Highway. Please expand a trail so a full valley loop can be created for inclusive multi use.
Anonymous 5	Any new bridge in the Valley should be developed to a standard to allow rescue vehicular access. Normally this can be accommodated in Class 3 width for an ATV.
Anonymous 5	As Trailheads are developed with facilities the budget for upkeep must be raised. Please note this in the plan. Consider latrines at all trailheads. Standardize language for facilities in new trailheads.
Anonymous 5	"Natural Spaces" is a concept that belongs in the Girdwood Area Plan not the Girdwood Trail Plan. If this is a trails plan, it needs to specifically deal with existing or proposed trails within the planning area. If a specific area needs to have less developed trails than others just reflect them as Class 2 or lower. Please refence other agency plans across the state for example the Chugach State Park Trails Plan. It seems these Natural Spaces are creating natural space restrictions on trails throughout the designated areas.
Anonymous 5	There is an understanding that people in the valley want areas that have non mechanized trail uses for quiet and reflection. These areas exist throughout the Valley. Specifically, the trails along the bluff behind the mine roads, the social trails along the Glacier and Virgin Creek, The hike up Max's mountain. Also, the Girdwood Valley is surrounded by Chugach State Park and the Chugach Natural Forest. There are plenty of places to find solace without blocking trail development in the Valley.
Anonymous 5	Many of the three proposed Natural Spaces block existing use. (Whether or not it is actually legal)
B. Renfro	Letter attached (see additional comments logged under "Comments received not on Comment Cards."
C. Renfro	Letter attached (see additional comments logged under "Comments received not on Comment Cards."
D. Merrill	I am not sure why this beautiful valley needs to be covered in more better trails. I don't agree with more better trails because it seems to be bike trails not hiking trails. This sounds like it is coming straight from the resort. I can live with more biking trails but not in every corner of the valley
P. Crews	I think Holly did a great job putting this packet together after a very difficult year of online meetings. Margaret did a great job distributing the information. I look forward to understand the comments that were submitted.

A. Sassi	more trail development and connectivity throughout the valley. A trails plan that extends access and connectivity to all neighborhoods in the valley, forward thinking with bridge connections over Glacier Creek and Winner Creek for year-round recreational use, and open space protected for future recreational development that includes Nordic ski trail development.
Z. Behney	We live in a rainforest. Trails that are not maintained or "held hostage" to the small part of our population who are opposed to the trail maintenance seem to be more impacted by users. Down trees and poor drainage and thick brush encourage users to step off trail to avoid obstacles. It seems like this ultimately makes a bigger impact on the land. Could we emphasize brushing on all trails due to the incredible growth rates we see each summer?
B. Burnett	Thank you for your efforts GTP committee! Let's get this right and put forward something spectacular! At the community meeting back in June, there were about 100 super passionate young, smart, capable trail advocates (and about 5 Natural Space trail advocates). This group was buzzing w/ excitement, scribbling lines w/ sharpies and talking in terms of "can do". This plan should drive diverse trail development, support funding and maintaining an ever expanding trail network, and it should be what inspires the next "best trail in Alaska". Girdwood can be the best trail town in AK! We should have a multi-use, multi-mode trail network accessible to all ability levels; that challenges one to explore the natural environment, that motivates one to be active in the natural world, supports the healthy development of our youth, delivers athletic & economic opportunities for families, is a source of pride for the community, and at the end of the day; one most excellent walk in the woods!
D. Essex	I love all trail classes and use 1 through 5 on a weekly basis. Most of Girdwood residents don't know or care what class of trail they are using - they choose by activity. That is what is missing in this plan. What activities are most desired in the valley, and how can we create network to support those activities while conserving open space for quiet recreation and environment protection. How do we address climate change and the non-sustainable use of the Class A wetlands in Girdwood? How do we respect and adhere to previous land use plans concerning trail development? Economic benefits resulting from a healthy trail network is a missing conversation from this plan, and perhaps should be added right after adapting to climate change, safety and rescue plans on Girdwood trail system, and much needed parking.
J. Lee	Tremendous thanks to the people who worked so hard to overcome competition and look for consensus. You have my deep gratitude.
K. Tryck	The trail down from the ball field to old Girdwood is excellent. Many people derive pleasure taking this walk. Primary inter-connected trails in the valley need to be more like this, classification 4 and 5. This way the most people--children, grandparents, disabled folk with limited options, people on bikes-- can enjoy our natural setting. Trails like this one will give us the access to provide rapid emergency services in times of need.
Anonymous 9	All trails should be maintained as trails. This means logged out and cleared to a passable level. If it is on the map it should be logged out and cleared. More bike trail areas and better connectivity. Natural spaces should not be lumped in with trails.
Anonymous 11	The plan seems balanced. I like that.
C. Brodin	Neighborhood Trailheads and parking are a problem. The balance between promoting trails while not negatively impacting the people who live nearby is hard to find. Most of our trails have always been multiuse, but with the tremendous increase in biking, we need to designate some trails to hiking/skiing only.
B. Crews	The actual Plan (rather than just the packet for the meeting) is really well done. The graphics are interesting, the range of topics covered is large but concisely worded. I haven't really taken the time to compare it side by side with the Trails Management Plan, but I think this Master Plan will make the Management Plan more clear and concise as well.
L. Deschamps	I love our Girdwood trails. I just see some really heavy use in some areas and want to keep reflecting the needs of the community (and the important tourism). While protecting wetlands, yet adding connections and parking are important. The Girdwood community wants to recreate and these plans are much needed.
C. Doherty	Thank you for all your work making Girdwood an amazing place to be.

J. Dow	I attempted to travel most of the trails before submitting my comments. I was not able to robustly participate in the trails or land use committee meetings due to my work schedule. Girdwood is becoming a summer destination in and of itself - not just as a "down the road from Anchorage." We will have more hikers and riders arriving every year. Although I would love to have local's only trails - it is not going to happen. Even our so-called private, hidden, or secret trails are found, posted on various social media or hiking sites, and people seek them out. I want to continue to enjoy our valley and not see every meadow or hillside criss crossed with destructive social trails. I want recreationalists to enjoy our valley and not have the local population resent them.
S. Halverson	1) Bikers illegally cutting and "grooming" trails needs to be stopped. I was, and am, in favor of the new bike trails in the Nordic 5K area, but bikers as a group should not be rewarded with several new zones due to their illegal work. The easiest example is what has happened to Abe's Trail. If bikers are given trails at Abe's, its reasonable that they be restricted from any use of the California Creek trail. 2) The labels of Class 1-5 of the trails is not so good. How is North Face not a class 3, Stumpy's Water trail is better labeled a Class 4, Crow Pass trail more likely Class 3, California Creek more likely Class 3. It makes a difference in the overall percentage of class types in your summary. **Please publish, online, all the comments you receive in this comment period. Thank you for the work on this project.
M. Hammond	I want to comment about preserving as much habitat for wildlife with little to no impact by humans. Also, I am adding, keep the natural look of nature as much as possible when adding new trails.
L. Hinderman	I would like to point out that in most cases trails that are specific to one type of skiing are rarely developed. If a trail is designated classic only it is because it was developed a long time ago and is too expensive to upgrade. Trail design now includes all types of skiing, but especially the kind of equipment needed to groom
G. Hoessle	Thank you so much! Girdwood is growing and our trails have not! This plan is so exciting for our future.
R. Hutchins-Cabibi	I support Crewsers plan for connectivity between arrays within the valley. I am disappointed it was not included in the draft plan. I can not support the current draft of the Girdwood Trails Plan as presented.
DJ. Kiland	Appreciate the opportunity to comment on the plan.
D. Knutson	It seems there is an underlying fear of the effects of trail development. If viewed in the long term, planned trails will better serve the community and protect the natural environment through coordination of different user-groups, and avoiding erosion that occurs with unplanned or game type trails being tromped in by users in attempts to access other areas. Strategically planning access trails will help to avoid this. Another note that should be made, is that the forest will take over. Years ago when the Bear Lake trail was developed to create a loop connecting Lost Lake, this trail was made using 4-wheelers and other equipment. At the time this was extremely contentious. Fast-forward to now and the Bear Lake trail has become a Class-1 type trail, with no evidence of equipment
B. Kohler	The survey showed the community wants recreational opportunity. I want there to be quiet developed trails as well as 4-season multi-use. Over 50% of our trails are class 1-2. We need more class 3-4 that can be used year round. Where have we streamlined the trail approval process? Does this plan say we are finished developing trails??
J. Kohler	There should be a more streamlined way to approved new trails. It should not take more than 2 months to get a project approved. NS1, NS2 + NS3 do not meet the vision the trails community or the desire of the community which is for more established trails. that or multiuse.
S. O'Brien	Thank you for all you have done for our outdoor community. Please keep in mind that the loudest voice is not always the majority. :) I am concerned with the letter that the NSC sent to its email list that was refusing to vote yes on the plan. They have a large email list and the tone of that letter was less than positive/ collaborative. I am concerned that there is a belief that the most comments win when the original goal was to have something for every group. I really appreciate that the current plan draft does just that.
A. Schumacher	I love our girdwood trails. I just see some really heavy use in some areas and want to keep reflecting the needs of the communitiy (and the important tourism). while protecting wetlands. connections and parking are huge. understanding the needs also huge.

E. Steinfort	thanks, I'm excited for these improvements and more which will make our town a destination for outdoors fun!
B. Sullivan	Holly has done an excellent job working with a group of local individuals with uncompromising, differing views and limited stakeholder representation, considering the proposed future of the Girdwood valley. I was disappointed the volunteer committee fell short of their task within the timeframe provided financially to create a plan with feedback from participating community members, and the majority of Girdwood recreation community's voice. They are the ones on the trails, supporting the trails with memberships, and the tourists are coming. This is a ski town. We need restrooms, trash, recycling, and dog waste pick up to keep all of the valley clean. This is supposed to be a Trails plan. Trails bring people somewhere, allow people to be in an outdoor, natural environment. Trails bring people together and on loops. Out and backs are not ideal and not preferred.
M. Szundy	I believe that the Alaska Railroad could be pressed to help fund improved access linking the Girdwood rail Depot with the Lower Iditarod Trail. Many folks currently go under the bridge to get to the Bird to Gird trail, so its in their best interest for risk management to improve upon that route. Consider leaving some trails "off the map", perhaps in the NS zones. We thank you!! Keep up the great work!!!
J. Thomas	This committee appears to have ignored the public feedback from the first public meeting where the public clearly asked for more trails. My hope is they do not ignore the public again in this round of comments. IN ITS CURRENT FORM THIS IS NOT A PLAN I WOULD SUPPORT.
M. Thomas	This trail plan was a waste of community time. It's clear that the feedback from the first community input session was ignored. The input from this community input round will also be ignored in favor of those community members with the time to dedicate to fighting for what they want instead of what the majority of the community wants. Girdwood needs to look to the future for the community instead of longing for the past.
K. Trautner	I do not want to see more class 5 trails! Our class 4 trails seem more fitting for our environment - Overall I cannot say how much I appreciate all the hard work that so many have done to produce this planning document. The maps are easy to use and clearly identified. Thank you!
T. Weaver	Thank you for serving our community w/ your time and energy.
P. Wilson	I really appreciate the efforts of my neighbors who have put so much time into this plan. It needs to pass so we can move forward with more great trails for Girdwood.
J. Wuerth	I urge you to remain steadfast regarding protecting your natural spaces. The wildlife and children of future generations will be thankful.
S. Dugan	It seems to be well thought out however it might have been better to overlap the maps.

## PROJECT SPECIFIC COMMENTS

Commenter	Comments	Response
T1 - Separated Grade Crossing: RR Bridge @ Alyeska Highway		
M. Donnelly	I feel this project should be a priority as it makes a much needed connection between a few different trails. To add to it could extend south along the railbed to the Danich trail. This would get a lot of people off the tracks!	Acknowledged
K. Bowlin	This should be done, people are already frequently using this as a trail but it's proximity to the train tracks make it dangerous.	Acknowledged
S. Bowlin	This should be done, people are already using this as a trail but it's proximity to the train tracks make it dangerous.	Acknowledged
J. Love	I am highly in favor of all of these proposed trails projects! Especially as a resident of the Lower Valley I appreciate the effort to upgrade and add more trail opportunities to our end. All of us with young families would appreciate it! (comment also logged for T1-T8)	Acknowledged
H. Munter	Please try to design the trail in a way that it doesn't wreck the sledding hill!	Consideration will be given with trail development
LaRose M.	Very supportive of this as a major priority. Much needed connection between areas to avoid dangerous highway crossing or train track path.	Acknowledged
Anonymous 5	Trail exists already. Providing legal and safe access should be worked into the Alyeska highway/Seward Highway intersection project.	Alaska DOT has been requested to include this trail improvement in their project
S Shoffner	Emphatically in support (full comment by email)	Acknowledged.
B. Burnett	Strongly Support. Great community support for a connector that will improve trail connectivity in the Valley	Acknowledged.
D. Essex	Important connection. Class of trails that connect with bridge should match USFS standard of lower NHIT which is a Class 4	Acknowledged.
M. Hawes	Trail exists already. Providing legal and safe access should be worked into the Alyeska highway/Seward Highway intersection project.	Alaska DOT has been requested to include this trail improvement in their project
T. Lydon	This is an important missing link to build connectivity both within Girdwood and to the Gird-Indian Trail. This connector aids bike/hike commuting in the valley, connects to an important recreational resource, and can provide economic benefit by attracting recreationists to the valley. It's also in an area that is not sensitive wildlife habitat.	Acknowledged
Pe. Ostroski	Resources could be allocated to expand the network instead of investing in short connections where a throughway may already exist nearby and accomplish a similar goal. (comment logged for T1, T5, T3, T7)	Acknowledged. It is important to include and protect these connections in the official trail plan for Girdwood. Your comment will be considered as implementation/funding decisions are made.
Anonymous 7	YYY (comment from map)	Acknowledged

B. Crews	Trail T1 provides access from the Parking TH1 to trails on the SE side of Alyeska Highway. TH3 should be eliminated, as the access from Alyeska Hwy is tight or else would require major roadwork to be done. If the ARR parking lot at TH1 could instead become a major parking area, it would save money as well as create parking in that area that is directly accessed from the Seward Highway rather than creating turns off Alyeska Highway. Perhaps a turning lane is needed on the Seward Highway to turn onto Toadstool Dr. (comment logged for T1 and TH3)	Acknowledged
L. Deschamps	I feel that the class of trails that connect with bridge should match USFS standards of lower NHIT (class 4)	Acknowledged
B. Dugan	Not needed - not much room under the Alyeska Highway bridge along the Railroad. One can take the existing trail up to the highway and cross to the bike path.	Acknowledged
S. Dugan	I bike lower Iditarod all the time, also Gird to Bird so a connection would be great.	Acknowledged
B. Germain	I'd love to see this happen.	Acknowledged
S. Halverson	I like this proposal and hope it happens.	Acknowledged
L. Hinderman	Support all new trails: Only concern is the trail classification on some trails. If it is a multi use/multi season trail design should be at least class 3 and if it is a high use trail that is used in the winter grooming machines should be considered class 4. (comment logged for T1-T14)	Acknowledged
G. Hoessle	Great idea, yay for connecting trails	Acknowledged
J. Jenkins	This trail connection with adequate signage and parking is of upmost important considering how many people bike the paved bike path from Bird. I consider this the number one trail connection to complete into Girdwood. Currently trail signage for lower Iditarod is impossible to locate for those not familiar with the area and this could be resolved with this trail connection.	Acknowledged
M. Medovaya	Strongly support. This will provide access to LIT, for non-locals (non-Old Girdwood folks in particular) and Girdwood residents. (comment logged for T1 and TH5)	Acknowledged
J. Sauer	I'm in favor of Trails 1-9. (comment logged for T1-T9)	Acknowledged
A. Schumacher	I feel that the class of trails that connect with bridge should match USFS standards of lower NHIT (class 4)	Acknowledged
E. Steinfort	(connector between Lower Iditarod to Bird-Gird) this trail is super important and I am really excited to have it as soon as possible!	Acknowledged
E. Steinfort	(new trails in Old Girdwood/Speedway mall area) I desire additions of benches, picnic spots, a neighborhood playground, and a Turnagain viewing area here. (comment logged for T1, T3, TH1)	Acknowledged
M. Leeds	(new trails in Old Girdwood/Speedway mall area) I desire additions of benches, picnic spots, a neighborhood playground, and a Turnagain viewing area here. (comment logged for T1, T3, TH1)	Acknowledged
K. Trautner	Excellent idea -	Acknowledged
B. Young	Yes	Acknowledged
M. Leeds	this trail is super important and I am really excited to have it as soon as possible	Acknowledged
T2 - Wagon Trail - Lower Joe Danich Connection		
C. Davidson	As much as I'd like to keep this area more isolated and private, it is a lovely trail and it could become part of a connected trail system that would expand hiking, biking and foraging access. (comment also logged for B3)	Acknowledged
M. Donnelly	Don't see why trail needs 2 routes, one route to connect Wagon Trail to Danich is enough. I would like to see bikes allowed on this so we can also bike a loop. If not all year maybe allow bikes in Winter like they do with Middlefork in Anchorage.	Acknowledged

	K. Sandberg	1 - Impossible to develop a sustainable Wagon Trail. It is swamp and should be left along. 2 - Realistically cut off Wagon "trail" that is not part of the circle. 3 - Remove upper T2 branch.	Acknowledged
	E. Teixmen	It seems pretty exclusionary to build a trail that excludes all except hikers. It also strikes me as odd to designate it a natural space when there is a railroad and a major highway passing through it. The sound of a locomotive air horn is somehow tolerated but not cyclists? I don't get the logic there and I don't like that cyclists are being excluded when the impact they impose is the same as hikers and even less in winter as hikers post-hole trails. This route is used quite a bit by fat-bikers in the winter and combined with the glacier creek trail makes for a great lower valley loop	Acknowledged
	E. Stone	Serious consideration should be given to both of these projects. This is the last bear habitat in Girdwood proper and is the area they fish and forage in the summer. Primitive trails as they exist are alright but adding a bridge and developed trails into the Virgin Creek area is a bad idea. We will have people hiking and biking both sides of the creek with nowhere for peoples to escape people. (Comment also logged for B1)	Acknowledged
	C. Stinson	This trail should be developed to class 3 or 4 standards. This trail provides a critical scenic trail to commute to workplaces in the lower valley like the Tesoro Mall and USFS station Class 1-2 trails are not conducive the vision of our Girdwood Trails providing world class recreation to our visitors. Furthermore, restricting this trail to class 1-2 will not improve connectivity or access which goes against the key plan themes. Class 1 & 2 trails are too restrictive in our valley. Class 1 & 2 trails are a safety hazard in our rainforest environment and not sustainable to maintain to safe standards	Acknowledged
	J. Love	I am highly in favor of all of these proposed trails projects! Especially as a resident of the Lower Valley I appreciate the effort to upgrade and add more trail opportunities to our end. All of us with young families would appreciate it! (comment also logged for T1-T8)	Acknowledged
	Anonymous 4	This crosses wetlands and will give entry to sensitive areas up valley - please do not encourage this trail improvement.	Acknowledged
	A. Davis	I would be extremely disappointed if bikes were to be prohibited on T2. As a biker and xc skier, I have enjoyed fat biking and sharing these winter trails with all users for the past 8+ years.	Acknowledged
	Anonymous 5	The Wagon Trail exists already. It is traditionally hiked from the SWD HWY up the edge of Virgin Creek. To the start of the Wagon trail (where the Virgin Ck. sign is at edge of railroad). A safe connection is needed and would be welcome near the railroad tracks. The Danich trail is heavily used for biking in the winter and should be developed as a Class 3 trail to connect the lower valley to the potential trailhead area at the end of Timberline.	Acknowledged

P. Crews	<p>My hikes through this area have demonstrated to me that there are multiple practical routes for T2. It should be strongly considered that in the future there may be a Girdwood to Portage pedestrian pathway. The soon to be replaced bridges in Portage will be built to accommodate a pathway. T2 would be the most logical route by utilizing bridge B1. A Girdwood to Portage pedestrian trail would encourage the establishment of a trail head and parking in the old Virgin Creek gravel pit. Although the sub committee previously discussed parking at that location and decided that the location would not work, the issue should be revisited.</p> <p>The location already serves the wagon Trail and Orca Mountain Trails although parking is along the Seward Highway. The use of that gravel pit, if possible at all, would be years in the future. We should be prepared to utilize the location for a trail head if the opportunity arises. B2 is located within NA1 on the plan map. The Natural Area prohibition of developing trails beyond class 2 parameters would not allow the development of a Girdwood to Portage trail at this location. A B2 developed trail corridor should be established through NA1 or else the restrictions against developed trails through Natural Areas should be removed or the Natural Area should be relocated. B2 might initially be developed to class 2 standards but it should follow the alignment of a future developed trail.</p>	Acknowledged
Schwing Shoff	Emphatically in support (full comment by email)	Acknowledged
B. Burnett	Support. These will both be great trail network projects in the Alyeska Subdivision. Trails should connect communities. Route trails to avoid Class a wetlands a build trails to support MTB activity – T2 should include upgrades to Danish Trail (comment logged for T2 & T3)	Acknowledged
D. Essex	Great connection idea. Re-route areas to avoid using boardwalk (costly) and avoid Class A wetlands	Acknowledged
M. Hawes	The Wagon Trail exists already. It is traditionally hiked from the Seward Highway up the edge of Virgin Creek. To the start of the Wagon trail (where the Virgin Ck. sign is at edge of railroad). A safe connection is needed and would be welcome near the railroad tracks. The Danich trail is heavily used for biking in the winter and should be developed as a Class 3 trail to connect the lower valley to the potential trailhead area at the end of Timberline.	Acknowledged
R. Brandon	More specifically, the proposed trail currently known as the Danish trail connecting with a proposed parking area located off the Seward Hwy near the old Alaska Railroad gravel pit, listed as trail number 9. The trail itself, I feel is an unnecessary link to other trails already in use. And it is one of the very few trails that should always remain in its wilderness/primitive state. The proposal to provide parking access off the Seward Hwy is a dangerous point of auto access in that it is located on a corner that would cause for numerous accident prone events as drivers would be slowing down, and stopping traffic in both directions. (comment from logger: not sure this is in the right spot)	Acknowledged
J. Lee	See comments for NS1, regarding the utterly critical nature of this area for wildlife habitat. I recommend against this proposal.	Acknowledged
T. Lydon	I'm not opposed to a connector trail facilitating travel between the Wagon and Joe Danich trails. This might then be connected to T1 if there is a time when the railroad upgrades or repairs its bridge over Glacier Creek in a way that supports a pedestrian crossing.	Acknowledged
T. Lydon, cont.	However, I don't support T2 as mapped. First, the northwest spur is redundant with the southwest spur and Lower Virgin Creek Trail, adding an unnecessary trail and human traffic through what is identified as a natural space. I would support development of the trail as drawn but only with the southwest spur. Much of that trail already exists in the form of game trails and unofficial user trails. But I would only support this as a Class I trail development, not as the Class II currently proposed.	Acknowledged

	T. Lydon, cont.	In my mind, the T2 proposal is critically flawed because the proposed Class II condition class exceeds the current trail class conditions of the Wagon and Danich. If constructed as proposed, Class II conditions would dead-end at their junctions with the Class I trails. I think it's reasonable to anticipate this would quickly drive public expectations to improve parts or all of the Wagon and Danich trails to Class II conditions, bumping those currently primitive single-track trails to a higher level of development than I think is appropriate for the proposed Natural Space 1. That public expectation also seems likely if the proposed B1 bridge were constructed.	Acknowledged
	T. Lydon, cont.	To recognize the undesirable dead-ending of the proposed T2 trail's Class II conditions, I think the T2 proposal would more closely reflect reality if it proposed upgrading the Wagon and Danich trails to Class II. In my mind, that would give the public a more realistic view of what a new T2 Class II trail would mean for Natural Space 1.	Acknowledged
	T. Lydon, cont.	Of course, a better alternative more suited to the natural space is to design T2 as a Class I trail. This would provide consistency among Natural Space 1 trails and a nice balance in recreational need between the more bike-friendly west side of the valley and the more pedestrian-friendly trails on the east side.	Acknowledged
	T. Lydon, cont.	Lastly, the Danich Trail as it exists today is an amazing summer and wintertime resource, especially for residents of Alyeska Basin. It is an intact route that also provides non-mechanized commuter access to the lower valley in summer and winter. It's Class I condition rating allows for continued clearing of the trail and even limited development structures where necessary. Its present Class I condition also provides an important counterbalance to the more developed trails on the west side of Glacier Creek.	Acknowledged
	Anonymous 7	N (comment from map)	Acknowledged
	B. Crews	Both Wagon Trail and Lower Danich Trail are currently accessed from the Virgin Creek neighborhood. Creating a loop trail with T2 would bring in more traffic to that already stressed neighborhood. It would be irresponsible to build this connector trail before bridge B1 is built or until there is a solution to the Virgin Creek TH parking problem. When B1 is built, Lower Danich Trail will provide access to the Lower Valley directly from the Timberline neighborhoods. Lower Danich should be Class 3 and bikable, which will help meet our goal of connectivity. Since Class 3 trails and biking are not allowed in a Natural Space, NS1 should not include Lower Danich Trail. If T2 is Class 2, I think Wagon Trail should be as well. Finally I would eliminate the northern "Y" of T2 as I think this additional "cutoff" trail is unnecessary.	Acknowledged
	J. Dow	I would advocate for this trail to be a grade 3 trail -	Acknowledged
	B. Dugan	Yes on all the above (comment logged for T2, T4, T5, T6)	Acknowledged
	S. Dugan	I live in the area and would like the trails to be joined and only class-2.	Acknowledged
	B. Germain	Would love to see this happen. Great for birding + moving people to other areas of the valley.	Acknowledged
	S. Halverson	I like the look of these ideas. Please built to Class 2 though. Not Class 3, 4, or 5. (comment logged for T2, B1).	Acknowledged
	Helmbrecht E.	I believe that limiting trails to one type of use or eliminating certain uses will only create animosity between cultures in this town. Fat biking and cross country skiing should be seen as equals in the valley. We all know that folks will be riding on trails regardless, so why not welcome it. It is fine if a trail is not suitable to bike for a trailhead sign to state that, but to make it 'not allowed' will just upset folks when they see one another on the trails, which will undoubtedly happen. Please keep Alaskan trails open for anyone to enjoy. It's easy enough to put a sign that says to respect others at the trailhead. Keep Girdwood friendly and respectful toward others. (comment logged for T2, T8, T12, T13)	Acknowledged

	L. Hinderman	Support all new trails: Only concern is the trail classification on some trails. If it is a multi use/multi season trail design should be at least class 3 and if it is a high use trail that is used in the winter grooming machines should be considered class 4. (comment logged for T1-T14)	Acknowledged
	G. Hoessle	Yes! Keep it at a class 2 though. I have used this trail for 25 years and enjoy the primitave feeling of being out there. More users and easier to use would be amazing.	Acknowledged
	L. Hunter	Project T2/NS1- I love the idea of improving and growing the trail network on the east side of Glacier Creek between Timberline and the Railroad. I tried running back there last summer and it was to bushy to see where the trail went. However, I believe in multi-use trails. Designating the entire NS1 as hiking only limits future development. This could be a fabulous multi-use area. I would love to be able to pedal up and ride an interconnected trail network down to the future Glacier Creek Bridge (B1) in old Girdwood and then pedal home!!! You could put in hiking only trails as well as multi-use trails. With the proper signage, the conflict between hikers and bikers should be resolved. Also, the TH9, and TH10 do not make geographical sense for this area. Everyone will park at TH2, TH3, TH4, TH5, and TH6. (comment logged for T2, NS1)	Acknowledged
	S. O'Brien	We have an ongoing conversation about traffic in our residentail neighborhoods. T2 will increase traffic up Timberline. There is already an issue with Virgin Creek. Where will people park? The residential streets are not able to sustain more traffic or trail parking along the street. Is the parking at B1? If so that will need to happen before t2. I appreciate keeping it more primitive in that area as the public has already given comments on this. If the danish is to be deveoped please keep it a primitive hiking trail level 1. There are plenty of summer biking and winter ski areas. This will be a great nature trail for hikers with no user conflict. We don't have that yet.	Acknowledged
	J. Sauer	I'm in favor of Trails 1-9. (comment logged for T1-T9)	Acknowledged
	M. Thomas	I like the location of this trail but think it should be a class 3+ trail so that it is bike & family friendly. The existing trails connecting T2 to the Timberline neighborhood should also be developed to class 3+ to create easy access to old town from that neighborhood.	Acknowledged
	B. Young	No - wait and see - the proposed trail crosses the middle of a natural habitat and a lot of wetlands - the existing trails, in thin black lines covers enough access on either side - I strongly disagree building a trail across the middle of that green NA1 natural area! It's mostly pond and marsh area.	Acknowledged

T3 - Lower Valley Trail Loop Connection			
	D. Penn	I don't feel this project is needed or a high priority given it's proximity to the road as well as the redundancy and parallel with the current Iditarod Trail.	Acknowledged
	M. Donnelly	Great idea - like it! (comment also logged for T4)	Acknowledged
	E. Teixmen	This trail seems somewhat redundant when the glacier creek trail and Ruane already traverse the same section of land. Making a loop in this area seems like crowding a lot into a small area that's pretty much right next to a fairly busy highway. Depending on how close it's proximity to the highway it will be subject to plow snow being pushed onto it and create a potential hazard for users.	Acknowledged
	E. Stone	I don't really see the point in this trail as we already have the Iditarod trail along Glacier Creek. I like the idea of the T5 connector to form a loop, but T3 is too short and we will need to maintain it if we develop it.	Acknowledged
	J. Love	I am highly in favor of all of these proposed trails projects! Especially as a resident of the Lower Valley I appreciate the effort to upgrade and add more trail opportunities to our end. All of us with young families would appreciate it! (comment also logged for T1-T8)	Acknowledged

	B. Napolitano	Same as above (see B. Napolitano comment on T5). These trails should be almost a qualifier for Beaver Pond + California/Abe's. My concern is lesser experienced people take a class 3 build to a class 2 and get into more than they can handle.	Acknowledged
	Anonymous 5	This trail exists. The proposed improvement would be redundant to the Lower Iditarod Trail that was just upgraded. No issue with it being left in the plan just <u>not a high priority for development.</u>	Acknowledged
	P. Crews	The south half of T3 should be class 4. That section of the trail already exists on a wide utility easement. That section of Trail will connect sections of the lower Iditarod trail which is class 4 and sections of the paved highway bike path which is class 5. The section of proposed new T3 between Ruane Road and T5 should be studied carefully. That area parallels California Creek and is bear habitat during salmon season.	Acknowledged
	Schwing Shoff	Emphatically in support (full comment by email)	Acknowledged
	B. Burnett	Support. These will both be great trail network projects in the Alyeska Subdivision. Trails should connect communities. Route trails to avoid Class a wetlands a build trails to support MTB activity – T2 should include upgrades to Danish Trail (comment logged for T2 & T3)	Acknowledged
	A. DuPont	As is described in the 2020 Girdwood Valley Trails Management Plan, California Creek is a critical waterway for salmon, steelhead, and Dolly Varden. As a result, this area is a draw for both black and brown bears every summer. The riparian habitat around the creek provides key forage and shelter for bears. While bears and humans do generally coexist and share trail space in the Girdwood valley, both species of bears have been observed using the California Creek riparian area for day bedding, food caching, and routine foraging. Trail placement within this area would result in the disruption and displacement of bears, pushing them into less desirable habitat, into the backyards of the community and increasing the likelihood for conflict. (comment logged for T3, T5 and B2)	Acknowledged
	D. Essex	Great connection idea, both the west and east side of Glacier Creek is in need of a <u>Class 3 trail for residents to connect to town</u>	Acknowledged
	M. Hawes	This trail exists. The proposed improvement would be redundant to the Lower Iditarod Trail that was just upgraded. No issue with it being left in the plan just <u>not a high priority.</u>	Acknowledged
	J. Lee	See comments for NS1, regarding the utterly critical nature of this area for wildlife habitat. I recommend against this proposal.	Acknowledged

	T. Lydon	I support a T3 Class IV trail from the Alyeska Highway to Ruane Drive, which could facilitate connection to the proposed T4 and the Lower Iditarod Trail. However, I'm strongly opposed to the proposed section of T3 north of Ruane Drive. That also means I oppose B2 and the section of T5 east of the Alyeska Highway. The area that T3 (north of Ruane) and T5 (east of Alyeska Highway) propose to intersect is maybe the most valuable wildlife habitat in the lower valley. It is already a tightly constricted corridor for wildlife that would only be further tightened by the proposed trails. This would degrade wildlife habitat, undermine the enjoyment of wildlife expressed in the Values section of the document, and may displace wildlife, causing dangerous human-wildlife interactions either to trail users or residents of nearby neighborhoods. Additionally, the amount of beaver activity in the area north of Ruane makes it a fiscally unwise area for trail development. The area is spawning habitat for at least four species of Pacific salmon and important feeding and breeding habitat for black and brown bears. It's a well-used corridor for bears, coyotes, hares, marten, moose, and likely others that may include lynx. These and other species use the area to access snow-free areas in spring, early vegetation, late-summer berries, and more. And it's home to a thriving population of beavers. Proposed bridges and boardwalks would likely be flooded by beaver activity, making upper T3 and eastern T5 poor investments. (comment logged for B2, T5, T3)	Acknowledged
	Pe. Ostroski	Resources could be allocated to expand the network instead of investing in short connections where a throughway may already exist nearby and accomplish a similar goal. (comment logged for T1, T5, T3, T7)	Acknowledged
	P. Zumstein	I am very opposed to the T3 trail, primarily because it is a redundant trail, as the lower Iditarod provides completely adequate access to the lower valley. This trail section would not be a good investment, especially with general statements in the plan like "Structures are permitted to traverse wetlands". The amount of "structures" aka expensive turnpikes, puncheons, and bridges would be overwhelming, and would be a nightmare for maintenance, therefore not worth the cost that would be consistently sunk into perpetuity. Again, the lower Iditarod trail, with it's recent improvement makes this trail unnecessary. In addition, this swath of land running along California creek is a key wildlife corridor that allows animals to travel up and down valley unmolested and without needing to cross into yards and properties. I will discuss this further in T5.	Acknowledged
	B. Crews	T3 is easily buildable along the utility easement from the USFS to Ruane Rd. In my mind, this is the very reason to build this "bonus" short loop trail. I would not extend this trail beyond Ruane Rd as I think the trail will be unsustainable and that bridge B2 is an unnecessary expense. For these same reasons, and because I think it would create a safety hazard with people crossing Alyeska Hwy, I would not extend T5 across Alyeska Hwy to join T3 and connect to the Lower Iditarod Trail. I really like the idea of T5 from the Beaver Pond Trail to the Alyeska Bike Path. BPT is too long for many people, and I personally do not much like the southern end of this trail. I think it would be great to build this short cut off the Beaver Pond Trail. (comment logged for T3 and T5)	Acknowledged
	B. Dugan	No on the above. Not needed (comment logged for T3, T7)	Acknowledged
	S. Dugan	All other trails, I did not comment because I don't think they are needed. We have enough trails already and parking is a terrible problem. (comment logged for T3, T4, T5, T7, T9, T10, T11, T13, T14)	Acknowledged

	L. Hinderman	Support all new trails: Only concern is the trail classification on some trails. If it is a multi use/multi season trail design should be at least class 3 and if it is a high use trail that is used in the winter grooming machines should be considered class 4. (comment logged for T1-T14)	acknowledged
	G. Hoessle	Yes please, keep us class 2 & 3 trail lovers happy	Acknowledged
	M. Medovaya	This proposed trail is a waste of resources, in my opinion. I am a frequent user of the Lower Iditarod Trail, and I seldomly see people on the trail - my point is, the LIT is not being utilized, and it is now an excellent trail. Building another barely-used trail that parallels it (even to create a loop) seems unwise. My strong belief is that we need to improve access and information about existing trails. Last point about T3 - there is already a loop potential between the bike path and LIT. No need for additional trail	Acknowledged
	J. Sauer	I'm in favor of Trails 1-9. (comment logged for T1-T9)	Acknowledged
	E. Steinfert	(new trails in Old Girdwood/Speedway mall area) I desire additions of benches, picnic spots, a neighborhood playground, and a Turnagain viewing area here. (comment logged for T1, T3, TH1)	Acknowledged
	M. Leeds	(new trails in Old Girdwood/Speedway mall area) I desire additions of benches, picnic spots, a neighborhood playground, and a Turnagain viewing area here. (comment logged for T1, T3, TH1)	Acknowledged
	B. Young	I don't see a real need for this trail - there is the bike path on the west side of Aly Hwy and the Lower Iditarod trail on the East side of Aly Hwy	Acknowledged

T4 - Ruane Road Trail Connection to Lower Iditarod			
	S. Davis	Significant investment has been made to the Lower Iditarod trail making it very popular with residents. Build on this investment by develop connectors to this trail. (comment also logged for T5)	Acknowledged
	M. Donnelly	Great idea - like it! (comment also logged for T3)	Acknowledged
	J. Love	I am highly in favor of all of these proposed trails projects! Especially as a resident of the Lower Valley I appreciate the effort to upgrade and add more trail opportunities to our end. All of us with young families would appreciate it! (comment also logged for T1-T8)	Acknowledged
	Anonymous 5	Trail exists. Supportive of improvement.	Acknowledged
	Anonymous 6	This should be the first project to be tackled! Easily doable, and with the recent trail upgrades it's a shame that a stroller or bike trailer can't do a "half loop."	Acknowledged
	P. Crews	Should be constructed to class 4 bicycle standards. T4 will connect the lower Iditarod Trail (class 4) with a paved Ruane Road and the highway bike path (class 5).	Acknowledged
	Schwing Shoffner	Emphatically in support (full comment by email)	Acknowledged
	Anonymous 10	I also like the idea of a Ruane connector to Iditarod.	Acknowledged
	B. Burnett	Support - Trail connects Old G'wood to New G'wood. Trails should connect communities.	Acknowledged
	D. Essex	Yes - but no parking lot. Address whether people can park along road.	Acknowledged
	M. Hawes	Trail exists. Supportive of improvement.	Acknowledged
	T. Lydon	This is an excellent proposal that can facilitate connectivity for residents and visitors between the Alyeska Highway and Lower Iditarod.	Acknowledged
	L. Deschamps	Would an option to park along the road vs. adding parking lot be helpful? Otherwise support.	Parking is currently allowed the access and signage indicates where
	B. Dugan	Yes on all the above (comment logged for T2, T4, T5, T6)	Acknowledged
	S. Dugan	All other trails, I did not comment because I don't think they are needed. We have enough trails already and parking is a terrible problem. (comment logged for T3, T4, T5, T7, T9, T10, T11, T13, T14)	Acknowledged

	L. Hinderman	Support all new trails: Only concern is the trail classification on some trails. If it is a multi use/multi season trail design should be at least class 3 and if it is a high use trail that is used in the winter grooming machines should be considered class 4. (comment logged for T1-T14)	Acknowledged
	G. Hoessle	Yes! Great idea.	Acknowledged
	B. Kohler	Great idea. Many people use this already, it would compliment 4-season multiuse of the Lower Iditarod trail.	Acknowledged
	J. Sauer	I'm in favor of Trails 1-9. (comment logged for T1-T9)	Acknowledged
	A. Schumacher	would like option to park along the road? vs adding parking lot. otherwise support	Parking is currently allowed the access and signage indicates where
	B. Young	Yes -	Acknowledged

T5 - Beaver Pond to Lower Iditarod			
	S. Davis	Significant investment has been made to the Lower Iditarod trail making it very popular with residents. Build on this investment by develop connectors to this trail. (comment also logged for T4)	Acknowledged
	D. Penn	Building a connection to the Beaver Pond trail is entirely unnecessary given the other trail priorities. It is not a long trail as it is and building a cutoff will diminish the solitude of this lower valley trail. The Beaver Pond trail is also now the only lower valley trail that is still an actual trail and not built to larger design specs. (which I believe is a good thing)	Acknowledged
	M. Donnelly	Like this idea but not high on priority list.	Acknowledged
	K. Sandberg	Too many connectors - pick one (comment also logged for T7)	Acknowledged
	K. Bowlin	This on is a natural and should be constructed.	Acknowledged
	S. Bowlin	This on is a natural and should be constructed.	Acknowledged
	J. Love	I am highly in favor of all of these proposed trails projects! Especially as a resident of the Lower Valley I appreciate the effort to upgrade and add more trail opportunities to our end. All of us with young families would appreciate it! (comment also logged for T1-T8)	Acknowledged
	H. Munter	Very supportive of this project, as it will make the beaver pond trail much more accessible.	Acknowledged
	B. Napolitano	Class 3 development seems too high for this Beaver Pond is a challenging trail and should remain as such. If the connector trail is built as a class 3 further development seems likely on BP. Some trails in the valley need to be challenging. Let's not dumb it down so much that the trails lose their character. I would hate to see what's currently happening to upper winner happen to Beaver Pond. Class 2 @ max	Acknowledged
	N. D'Alessio	As a Girdwood resident and active trail user I do not agree with the new "T5" trail connection going up Juniper drive to connect the Beaver Pond trail. This would be right next to private property and I know the people who live around that corridor enjoy the quiet woods there. Trail users would be right next to where residents are trying to enjoy their privacy and the peace and quiet of their property. Parking will also likely be a major safety issue even though it's not listed as official trailhead parking. I live on Juniper drive and if even one car is parked at the end it can make it impossible to get out, or to get a fire truck or other emergency vehicle up there. Further, the driveway is steep and in the winter cars slide down and would hit a parked car or potentially hit a pedestrian/biker. Also, in general, I just don't see the need for that trail connection. Otherwise, I am all about public outdoor recreation, maintained trails, bike trails and all of this to support our community and local economy. Thanks for all your work on this! It's a well done document and plan, very exciting for the Girdwood valley and our	Acknowledged
	Anonymous 5	Trail exists. Supportive of improvement.	Acknowledged

	B. Burnett	Not a Priority. When parcels are developed, the developer should build the trails as part of the project	Acknowledged
	A. DuPont	As is described in the 2020 Girdwood Valley Trails Management Plan, California Creek is a critical waterway for salmon, steelhead, and Dolly Varden. As a result, this area is a draw for both black and brown bears every summer. The riparian habitat around the creek provides key forage and shelter for bears. While bears and humans do generally coexist and share trail space in the Girdwood valley, both species of bears have been observed using the California Creek riparian area for day bedding, food caching, and routine foraging. Trail placement within this area would result in the disruption and displacement of bears, pushing them into less desirable habitat, into the backyards of the community and increasing the likelihood for conflict. (comment logged for T3, T5 and B2)	Acknowledged
	D. Essex	Another creative trail connection. Avoid using boardwalk for this connection. This connection and B5 are important to connect the east and west sides of Girdwood's trail system.	Acknowledged
	M. Hawes	Trail exists. Supportive of improvement.	Acknowledged
	J. Lee	UPPER HALF: I am a little skeptical about having it cross the Alyeska Highway. IF this can be done safely, then I support the upper half. LOWER HALF: I do not support the lower half. See comments for NS1, regarding the utterly critical nature of this area for wildlife habitat.	Acknowledged
	T. Lydon	I support a T3 Class IV trail from the Alyeska Highway to Ruane Drive, which could facilitate connection to the proposed T4 and the Lower Iditarod Trail. However, I'm strongly opposed to the proposed section of T3 north of Ruane Drive. That also means I oppose B2 and the section of T5 east of the Alyeska Highway. The area that T3 (north of Ruane) and T5 (east of Alyeska Highway) propose to intersect is maybe the most valuable wildlife habitat in the lower valley. It is already a tightly constricted corridor for wildlife that would only be further tightened by the proposed trails. This would degrade wildlife habitat, undermine the enjoyment of wildlife expressed in the Values section of the document, and may displace wildlife, causing dangerous human-wildlife interactions either to trail users or residents of nearby neighborhoods. Additionally, the amount of beaver activity in the area north of Ruane makes it a fiscally unwise area for trail development. The area is spawning habitat for at least four species of Pacific salmon and important feeding and breeding habitat for black and brown bears. It's a well-used corridor for bears, coyotes, hares, marten, moose, and likely others that may include lynx. These and other species use the area to access snow-free areas in spring, early vegetation, late-summer berries, and more. And it's home to a thriving population of beavers. Proposed bridges and boardwalks would likely be flooded by beaver activity, making upper T3 and eastern T5 poor investments. (comment logged for B2, T5, T3)	Acknowledged
	T. Lydon	I don't know enough about the west half of T5 to comment, but please see my comments under T3 for my opposition to the east half of T5.	Acknowledged
	Pe. Ostroski	Resources could be allocated to expand the network instead of investing in short connections where a throughway may already exist nearby and accomplish a similar goal. (comment logged for T1, T5, T3, T7)	Acknowledged
	P. Zumstein	I am very opposed to the T5 trail section East of Alyeska highway and the associated B2 bridge. (Comment logged for T5, B2 and expanded comments are in the section showing comments not on comment cards)	Acknowledged

B. Crews	T3 is easily buildable along the utility easement from the USFS to Ruane Rd. In my mind, this is the very reason to build this "bonus" short loop trail. I would not extend this trail beyond Ruane Rd as I think the trail will be unsustainable and that bridge B2 is an unnecessary expense. For these same reasons, and because I think it would create a safety hazard with people crossing Alyeska Hwy, I would not extend T5 across Alyeska Hwy to join T3 and connect to the Lower Iditarod Trail. I really like the idea of T5 from the Beaver Pond Trail to the Alyeska Bike Path. BPT is too long for many people, and I personally do not much like the southern end of this trail. I think it would be great to build this short cut off the Beaver Pond Trail. (comment logged for T2 and T5)	Acknowledged
B. Dugan	Yes on all the above (comment logged for T2, T4, T5, T6)	Acknowledged
S. Dugan	All other trails, I did not comment because I don't think they are needed. We have enough trails already and parking is a terrible problem. (comment logged for T3, T4, T5, T7, T9, T10, T11, T13, T14)	Acknowledged
B. Germain	Great idea. More connectivity of trails in lower valley.	Acknowledged
S. Halverson	No to this proposal. Too high an impact on the households in the area and there is a connector to the lower Iditarod just a half mile away off Ruane. The proposed zone is a valuable wetland too. (BTW, I don't have my home in this area. It would affect them a lot though.) (comment logged for T5 and B2)	Acknowledged
L. Hinderman	Support all new trails: Only concern is the trail classification on some trails. If it is a multi use/multi season trail design should be at least class 3 and if it is a high use trail that is used in the winter grooming machines should be considered class 4. (comment logged for T1-T14)	Acknowledged
G. Hoessle	Yes. Great idea.	Acknowledged
L. Hunter	I like the idea of connecting the beaver pond trail somewhere in the middle, running the whole way is to much for me sometimes. But I would not put it coming down Juniper, across the highway and through the neighborhoods on the low side of Alyeska Highway. That will negatively effect residents. I think it should come down Ruane and use the existing California Creek bridge. (comment logged for T5, B2)	Acknowledged
J. Jenkins	Considering how many people use Beaver Pond trail, a cut through to Lower Iditarod makes good sense. I applaud this trail knowing many people in the neighborhood who would use it to make connections to Crow Creek Road and town center.	Acknowledged
S. O'Brien	This trail crosses Alyeska highway. This does not apper to be safe trail practice. Having connected trails is a nice idea, but we don't need them to connect in so many location. Is this the right thing for non-adult (child) trail users with a highway crossing? There would need to be a crosswalk or light, but still not the safest.	Acknowledged
J. Sauer	I'm in favor of Trails 1-9. (comment logged for T1-T9)	Acknowledged
B. Young	Yes	Acknowledged

T6 - Barren Avenue to Alyeska Highway		
S. Davis	Many families living in the Alyeska Basin/Timberline Rd neighborhoods use this shortcut to the townsite and Alyeska Highway. This trail should be a priority.	Acknowledged
M. Donnelly	Trail should be made similar to the underpass on the west side of Glacier Creek. (comment also logged for B4)	Acknowledged
K. Sandberg	yes, yes	Acknowledged
K. Bowlin	This should be constructed, it would allow many residents access to the city center area without having to walk on Timberline which is heavily trafficked with cars travelling too fast.	Acknowledged
S. Bowlin	This should be constructed, it would allow many residents access to the city center area without having to walk on Timberline which is heavily trafficked with cars travelling too fast.	Acknowledged

J. Love	I am highly in favor of all of these proposed trails projects! Especially as a resident of the Lower Valley I appreciate the effort to upgrade and add more trail opportunities to our end. All of us with young families would appreciate it! (comment also logged for T1-T8)	Acknowledged
T. Mercurio	The possibility of accessing the town via a trail from the basin is great. It will serve the basin well.	Acknowledged
Anonymous 5	Trail exists. Supportive of improvement.	Acknowledged
P. Crews	This should be a class 4 trail that is smooth enough for a regular bicycle and adequately wide for 2 bicycles to pass. Class 4 bicycle parameters encompass all user groups. That trail should be rerouted to high ground along the Danich Trail to avoid the current wetland problems.	Acknowledged
Schwing Shoffr	Emphatically in support (full comment by email)	Acknowledged
B. Burnett	Strongly Support – trails should connect communities	Acknowledged
D. Essex	Social trail that can be handled by volunteers after new housing is completed.	Acknowledged
M. Hawes	Trail exists. Supportive of improvement.	Acknowledged
J. Lee	Three words to remember about this proposal: Yes, Yes and Yes! This connector route is already heavily used, and with good reason. It is an ideal shortcut from downtown to the neighborhood. Some short sections of raised walkways, and switchbacks with more sustainable grade would do wonders to save the area from erosion and general degradation.	Acknowledged
T. Lydon	This could be one of the most important connector routes for the east side of the valley. The trail is currently in poor condition, but it provides great connectivity for Alyeska Basin residents to access the town center and the bus route by foot or bike. It could go a long way in encouraging biking and walking and a safe route for kids headed to the Girdwood School. Just a great idea.	Acknowledged
Anonymous 7	Y (comment from map)	Acknowledged
B. Dugan	Yes on all the above (comment logged for T2, T4, T5, T6)	Acknowledged
S. Dugan	This area needs more safety issues - from Cabanaland to town center, class-3 only, not paved, boardwalk ok.	Acknowledged
L. Hinderman	I support this project, but having lived on Timberline Dr. for 35+ years I would like to see this trail go all the way up Timberline. Using the edge of NS1 which is the other side of the powerline, the "not in my backyard" excuse could be avoided. There are no sidewalks of any kind on Timberline so all pedestrian traffic is in the road, including kids on bike. This would be an answer to a real safety problem.	Acknowledged
L. Hinderman	Support all new trails: Only concern is the trail classification on some trails. If it is a multi use/multi season trail design should be at least class 3 and if it is a high use trail that is used in the winter grooming machines should be considered class 4. (comment logged for T1-T14)	Acknowledged
G. Hoessle	Yes, Great idea!	Acknowledged
B. Kohler	This is a great idea, could this be extended so it can be access from parts further up the valley in this neighborhood? The roads in this neighborhood can be very busy. Dangerous for older + younger users. Cant we get the kids that live here a safe way to school?	Acknowledged
J. Kohler	Great idea. Would be much better for community + trail users if it could be extended further up the valley.	Acknowledged
S. O'Brien	This project helps enhance an already roughed out wet trail that is short cut from Alta/Alpina to downtown. This is a positive addition to the trail map. It will also protect the wet areas that are currently being covered in throw away lumber and pallets. Great addition! I'd like to see this as one of the first trails considered.	Acknowledged
J. Sauer	I'm in favor of Trails 1-9. (comment logged for T1-T9)	Acknowledged

M. Szundy	This trail could be a local community trail only- not advertised to visiting public. This could also help with liability concerns on private land. Im wondering if this concept (of "discrete trails") has been mentioned or considered? The same might be considered to appease those who worry about too much traffic on their favorite "secret trails".	Acknowledged
P. Wilson	Great idea. Make it a class 3 or4 trail that kids can ride and provides a safe crossing underneath Alyeska highway. Make good line of sights. We currently use this a lot with our grandchildren but it's rain boot only type of adventure that requires you to keep a look out for broken board and nails. Making it a real trail will be so neat.	Acknowledged
B. Young	Yes	Acknowledged

#### T7 - Crow Creek Road to Beaver Pond Trail

M. Donnelly	Great idea to establish this route prior to building in Mt. Bike area 34. This should be designed and built through Girdwood Mountain Bike Alliance to ensure proper construction.	Acknowledged
K. Sandberg	Too many connectors - pick one (comment also logged for T5)	Acknowledged
J. Love	I am highly in favor of all of these proposed trails projects! Especially as a resident of the Lower Valley I appreciate the effort to upgrade and add more trail opportunities to our end. All of us with young families would appreciate it! (comment also logged for T1-T8)	Acknowledged
Anonymous 5	Completely unnecessary. Conflict is very limited on existing trails. If MB1 actually is developed, then a new trail for uphill downhill use could be considered. But the bikers would want to ride it uphill as well. Also, there is no trailhead parking at this location.	Acknowledged
B. Burnett	Strongly Support – Purpose built MTB trails in this zone are appropriate. MB1 zone should cover all this land that T7 traverses	Acknowledged
D. Essex	Good trail proposal to avoid user conflict	Acknowledged
M. Hawes	Not a priority. Conflict is very limited on existing trails. If MB1 actually is developed, then a new trail for uphill downhill use could be considered. But the bikers would want to ride it uphill as well. Also, there is no trailhead parking at this location.	Acknowledged
Pe. Ostroski	Resources could be allocated to expand the network instead of investing in short connections where a throughway may already exist nearby and accomplish a similar goal. (comment logged for T1, T5, T3, T7)	Acknowledged
Anonymous 7	Y (comment from map)	Acknowledged
B. Dugan	No on the above. Not needed (comment logged for T3, T7)	Acknowledged
S. Dugan	All other trails, I did not comment because I don't think they are needed. We have enough trails already and parking is a terrible problem. (comment logged for T3, T4, T5, T7, T9, T10, T11, T13, T14)	Acknowledged
T. Halverson	The description paragraph is confusing. It says the trail brings downhill bikers from mountain bike area 34 (where is that on the map?). It says it will bring bikers from area MB3 (North Mountain area?). It says its near the proposed cemetery. *The cemetery should have priority to this land and its not appropriate to have a downhill bike trail right next to, or within, the cemetery.	Bike are 34 and MB3 are typos. The label for this area should be MB1 and will be corrected. Coordination will occur with the cemetery before the plan is finalized.
L. Hinderman	Support all new trails: Only concern is the trail classification on some trails. If it is a multi use/multi season trail design should be at least class 3 and if it is a high use trail that is used in the winter grooming machines should be considered class 4. (comment logged for T1-T14)	Acknowledged
G. Hoessle	Mmm, interesting idea. I like it, and understand conflict of user groups. Biking is growing, let's not stifle it! I have ridden Beaver Pond for 27 years. It's in the best shape ever now!	Acknowledged

	L. Hunter	This is very confusing. What is MB34? MB3 is in the upper valley nowhere near Crow Creek Rd or Beaver Pond. Is this suppose to be MB1 near Abes and Beaver Pond? Confusing...needs to be re-written and QC'ed prior to publishing.	Bike are 34 and MB3 are typos. The label for this area should be MB1 and will be corrected.
	DJ Kiland	Abe's trail. Retain Abe's Trail for hiking only.	Acknowledged
	S. O'Brien	In theory this sounds like a good idea. Trying to keep Beaver Pond only uphill is not something that can be controlled without actually designating the trail as this. How will this bike traffic be directed? This goes with my comment below that if we heavily increase biking up in this area it will naturally become more bike traffic on Beaver Pond.	Acknowledged. The intent is to designate this section for uphill bike traffic only. Other uses can go both directions.
	J. Sauer	I'm in favor of Trails 1-9. (comment logged for T1-T9)	Acknowledged
	K. Trautner	This has a lot of merit	Acknowledged
	B. Young	Yes	Acknowledged

T8 - Toe Slope Trail - California Creek to Iditarod			
	K. Sandberg	Way too many trails, especially T9. Reduce the amount. (comment also logged for T9)	Acknowledged
	E. Stone	There seem to be quite a few convoluted trails coming from California Creek to Crow Creek Rd. Can we make 1 with a connector? The current proposal seems unnecessary and, if we build it we have to maintain it. (comment also logged for T9)	This trail network is already included in an adopted plan, the Crow Creek Neighborhood Land Use Plan. Additionally, residential development is currently being considered for this area (Holtan Hills) – it will be important to require the development of trails within the neighborhood as well as connectivity out of the neighborhood to the Upper Iditarod and other important community connections.
	C. Stinson	These trails should be developed to class 3 or 4 standards. Class 1-2 trails are not conducive the vision of our Girdwood Trails providing world class recreation to our visitors. Futhermore, restricting this trail to class 1-2 will not improve connectivity or access which goes against the key plan themes. Class 1 & 2 trails are too restrictive in our valley. Class 1 & 2 trails are a safety hazard in our rainforest environment and not sustainable to maintain to safe standards. Class 1 & 2 trails create hazardous human -wildlife interactions and are not safe. (comment also logged for T9)	Acknowledged
	J. Love	I am highly in favor of all of these proposed trails projects! Especially as a resident of the Lower Valley I appreciate the effort to upgrade and add more trail opportunities to our end. All of us with young families would appreciate it! (comment also logged for T1-T8)	Acknowledged
	B. Napolitano	Very excited this is being discussed! Class 2 construction all the way. These trails would add so much more diversity to what we currently have. (Comment logged for T8, T9, T10, T12)	Acknowledged
	Anonymous 5	Most these trails exist in some way. Support development to Class 3 trail. Many of these areas need to be surveyed and protected if possible prior to development by Pomeroy. (comment logged for T8 & T9)	Acknowledged

	P. Crews	Would require re-construction or new construction of trails and possibly a bridge at California Creek. A good project to plan for but down the priority list.	Acknowledged
	Schwing Shoff	Emphatically in support (full comment by email)	Acknowledged
	B. Burnett	Strongly Support – These trails and connectors should be built as the Crow Creek Neighborhood and G'wood Cemetery are built. (comment logged for T8 & T9)	Acknowledged
	D. Essex	Low on the priority of trail proposals, but should remain a proposed trail connection in the Girdwood Valley	Acknowledged
	M. Hawes	Most of these trails exist in some way. Support development to Class 3 trail.	Acknowledged
	T. Lydon	I admit this is a little much for me to wrap my head around right now. I appreciate the draft plan creating an opportunity for me to better understand this area. My early thoughts are: oToe Slope Trail: consider condition Class I to ensure the Girdwood trail system affords ample opportunity for travel in areas with remote character, especially in areas at the margin of the valley where wildlife habitat remains least disturbed. Or consider not developing this trail at all since it is redundant with T9 and existing trails. The travel route is still there if the trail is not developed. oCrow Creek Byway: It would be nice to have safer and less dusty pedestrian alternative to Crow Creek Road. The trail would be valuable if the road become higher speed/higher volume. It's closeness to the road minimizes intrusion on additional habitat. It'd be great to include this as part of a Crow Creek Road upgrade. oInter-meadow Trail: I support improvements in this corridor.	Acknowledged
	B. Crews	T8 is shown on the map as connecting to a trail on the north east side of California Creek and crossing California Creek about 1 /8 of a mile from TH8. I remember that trail and a bridge there about 35 years ago but the bridge is definitely gone and I think the trail is as well. I like this trail in concept, but I think it needs a bridge over California Creek as I think such a "Circum-Valley Loop" will be a popular trail. I would not build the connection shown on the map just below TH9 as there is a connection just up-valley where T8 crossed the Ragged Top Trail. I would also eliminate TB between Ragged Top Trail and the Middle Iditarod, and just have TB end where it intersects Ragged Top Trail.	Acknowledged
	B. Dugan	Yes on all the above (comment logged for T8, T9, T12)	Acknowledged
	S. Dugan	Good idea. Beaver pond to Iditarod - Class 1 or Class 2 only. NO Bikes.	Acknowledged
	S. Halverson	No to these. If a housing development goes in here, it could be addressed then before final approval of the developers plans. (comment logged for T8, T9)	Acknowledged
	E. Helmbrecht	I believe that limiting trails to one type of use or eliminating certain uses will only create animosity between cultures in this town. Fat biking and cross country skiing should be seen as equals in the valley. We all know that folks will be riding on trails regardless, so why not welcome it. It is fine if a trail is not suitable to bike for a trailhead sign to state that, but to make it 'not allowed' will just upset folks when they see one another on the trails, which will undoubtedly happen. Please keep Alaskan trails open for anyone to enjoy. It's easy enough to put a sign that says to respect others at the trailhead. Keep Girdwood friendly and respectful toward others. (comment logged for T2, T8, T12, T13)	Acknowledged
	L. Hinderman	Support all new trails: Only concern is the trail classification on some trails. If it is a multi use/multi season trail design should be at least class 3 and if it is a high use trail that is used in the winter grooming machines should be considered class 4. (comment logged for T1-T14)	Acknowledged
	G. Hoessle	Yes, please and thanks for keeping it at a class 2!	Acknowledged
	J. Sauer	I'm in favor of Trails 1-9. (comment logged for T1-T9)	Acknowledged

J. Thomas	There hasn't been any historic interest in developing these trails. Why are these here? (comment logged for T8, T9)	This trail network is already included in an adopted plan, the Crow Creek Neighborhood Land Use Plan. Additionally, residential development is currently being considered for this area (Holtan Hills) – it will be important to require the development of trails within the neighborhood as well as connectivity out of the neighborhood to the Upper Iditarod and other important community connections.
B. Young	Yes	Acknowledged

T9 - Crow Creek Neighborhood Trails		
K. Sandberg	Way too many trails, especially T9. Reduce the amount. (comment also logged for T8)	Acknowledged
E. Stone	There seem to be quite a few convoluted trails coming from California Creek to Crow Creek Rd. Can we make 1 with a connector? The current proposal seems unnecessary and, if we build it we have to maintain it. (comment also logged for T8)	This trail network is already included in an adopted plan, the Crow Creek Neighborhood Land Use Plan. Additionally, residential development is currently being considered for this area (Holtan Hills) – it will be important to require the development of trails within the neighborhood as well as connectivity out of the neighborhood to the Upper Iditarod and other important community connections.
C. Stinson	These trails should be developed to class 3 or 4 standards. Class 1-2 trails are not conducive the vision of our Girdwood Trails providing world class recreation to our visitors. Futhermore, restricting this trail to class 1-2 will not improve connectivity or access which goes against the key plan themes. Class 1 & 2 trails are too restrictive in our valley. Class 1 & 2 trails are a safety hazard in our rainforest environment and not sustainable to maintain to safe standards. Class 1 & 2 trails create hazardous human -wildlife interactions and are not safe. (comment also logged for T8)	Acknowledged
B. Napolitano	Very excited this is being discussed! Class 2 construction all the way. These trails would add so much more diversity to what we currently have. (Comment logged for T8, T9, T10, T12)	Acknowledged
Anonymous 5	Most these trails exist in some way. Support development to Class 3 trail. Many of these areas need to be surveyed and protected if possible prior to development by Pomeroy. (comment logged for T8 & T9)	Acknowledged

	P. Crews	Excellent choice by previous residents and planners. I have always thought that route needed a trail.	Acknowledged
	Schwing Shoff	Emphatically in support (full comment by email)	Acknowledged
	B. Burnett	Strongly Support – These trails and connectors should be built as the Crow Creek Neighborhood and G'wood Cemetery are built. (comment logged for T8 & T9)	Acknowledged
	M. Hawes	Most of these trails exist in some way. Support development to Class 3 trail.	Acknowledged
	T. Lydon	I admit this is a little much for me to wrap my head around right now. I appreciate the draft plan creating an opportunity for me to better understand this area. My early thoughts are: oToe Slope Trail: consider condition Class I to ensure the Girdwood trail system affords ample opportunity for travel in areas with remote character, especially in areas at the margin of the valley where wildlife habitat remains least disturbed. Or consider not developing this trail at all since it is redundant with T9 and existing trails. The travel route is still there if the trail is not developed. oCrow Creek Byway: It would be nice to have safer and less dusty pedestrian alternative to Crow Creek Road. The trail would be valuable if the road become higher speed/higher volume. It's closeness to the road minimizes intrusion on additional habitat. It'd be great to include this as part of a Crow Creek Road upgrade. oInter-meadow Trail: I support improvements in this corridor.	Acknowledged
	Anonymous 7	Y (comment from map)	Acknowledged
	B. Dugan	Yes on all the above (comment logged for T8, T9, T12)	Acknowledged
	S. Dugan	All other trails, I did not comment because I don't think they are needed. We have enough trails already and parking is a terrible problem. (comment logged for T3, T4, T5, T7, T9, T10, T11, T13, T14)	Acknowledged
	S. Halverson	No to these. If a housing development goes in here, it could be addressed then before final approval of the developers plans. (comment logged for T8, T9)	Acknowledged
	L. Hinderman	Support all new trails: Only concern is the trail classification on some trails. If it is a multi use/multi season trail design should be at least class 3 and if it is a high use trail that is used in the winter grooming machines should be considered class 4. (comment logged for T1-T14)	Acknowledged
	G. Hoessle	Awesome!	Acknowledged
	M. Medovaya	Very similar to my T3 comments. Again, I hike Middle Iditarod a lot, and I barely see other people - this great trail does not get enough usage, why construct new trails before utilizing existing trails?	Acknowledged
	J. Sauer	I'm in favor of Trails 1-9. (comment logged for T1-T9)	Acknowledged

	J. Thomas	There hasn't been any historic interest in developing these trails. Why are these here? (comment logged for T8, T9)	This trail network is already included in an adopted plan, the Crow Creek Neighborhood Land Use Plan. Additionally, residential development is currently being considered for this area (Holtan Hills) – it will be important to require the development of trails within the neighborhood as well as connectivity out of the neighborhood to the Upper Iditarod and other important community connections.
	B. Young	Yes	Acknowledged
T10 - Cross Valley Trail			
	M. Donnelly	Need to allow bikes and make all of these multi use. T10 priority since airport doesn't want to allow use on their land. T12 could be designated as bikes only in winter. (comment logged for T10, T11, T12)	Acknowledged
	C. Stinson	This trail should be developed to class 3 or 4 standards. Class 1-2 trails are not conducive the vision of our Girdwood Trails providing world class recreation to our visitors. Furthermore, restricting this trail to class 1-2 will not improve connectivity or access which goes against the key plan themes. Class 1 & 2 trails are too restrictive in our valley. Class 1 & 2 trails are a safety hazard in our rainforest environment and not sustainable to maintain to safe standards.	Acknowledged
	P. Zug	Minimum of class 3 trail design.	acknowledged
	B. Napolitano	Very excited this is being discussed! Class 2 construction all the way. These trails would add so much more diversity to what we currently have. (Comment logged for T8, T9, T10, T12)	Acknowledged
	T. Mercurio	I would love to avoid the airport and DOT.	Acknowledged
	Anonymous 5	Supportive. Need legal access. If you limit it to Class 2 hiking you eliminate an awesome Biking loop in the Valley. Please make it Class 3 Biking.	Acknowledged
	P. Crews	The HLB has had plans to offer residential lands up Crow Creek Road for many years. The Holton Hills project confirms that Girdwood will grow up the valley along Crow Creek Road. The T10 project should be expanded to include the upgrading and reconstruction of the Iditarod Trail between B5 and Crow Creek Road. T10 should conform to bicycle class 4 double lane standards and should be considered a commuter route to the hotel from downtown or Holton Hills. The distance to the hotel from downtown via unpaved roads and trails using T10 is about the same as from downtown to the hotel on pavement via the ski resort base area. Although a trail 10 project is likely well into the future especially because of the cost of building bridge 5, we should plan this trail for a time when an expanded parking lot TH Parking 12 is constructed and there is a people and e powered transportation demand from the Crow Creek side of the valley. Bridge 5 should be constructed to be able to carry light weight 4 wheel vehicles and snow machines allowing for medical evacuations or extreme highway bridge	Acknowledged

A. Sassi	It should be class 4 to complement the new trail 13. Trail 10 could be an important trail in the future. Trail 10 should cross Stumpys trail at the B4 line and should not become part of Stumpys trail. Stumpys trail traverses some steep terrain in that area making a trail upgrade invasive to the assigned use of Stump's trail.	Acknowledged
B. Burnett	NO - This conflicts w/ an already approved trail proposal. This trail will not be part of a sustainable trail network.	Acknowledged
D. Essex	No. This trail conflicts an approved trail proposal. It is redundant and leads to a no sustainable social trail.	Acknowledged
M. Hawes	Supportive. If you limit it to Class 2 hiking you eliminate an awesome Biking loop in the Valley. Please make it Class 3 Biking.	Acknowledged
T. Lydon	Seems like a good solution to steering traffic away from airport land.	Acknowledged
B. Crews	I think with B5 being one of the few ways of crossing Glacier Creek, T10 will be a major cross valley connection trail. I think it should be built to Class 3 standards instead of Class 2 as listed in the Master Plan.	Acknowledged
B. Dugan	No on the above (comment logged for T10, T11, T13, T14)	Acknowledged
S. Dugan	All other trails, I did not comment because I don't think they are needed. We have enough trails already and parking is a terrible problem. (comment logged for T3, T4, T5, T7, T9, T10, T11, T13, T14)	Acknowledged
L. Hinderman	Support this trail. It could be used to access future trails.	Acknowledged
L. Hinderman	Support all new trails: Only concern is the trail classification on some trails. If it is a multi use/multi season trail design should be at least class 3 and if it is a high use trail that is used in the winter grooming machines should be considered class 4. (comment logged for T1-T14)	Acknowledged
G. Hoessle	Thanks for keeping it a class 2!	Acknowledged
J. Sauer	I am not in favor of this trail because it conflicts with an earlier approved trail proposal.	Acknowledged
B. Young	Yes	Acknowledged
T11 - Arlberg Connection to Winner Creek Trail		
M. Donnelly	Need to allow bikes and make all of these multi use. T10 priority since airport doesn't want to allow use on their land. T12 could be designated as bikes only in winter. (comment logged for T10, T11, T12)	Acknowledged
C. Stinson	I do not support this addition unless additional parking spaces are added to the existing parking lot located at the Girdwood Nordic Trailhead.	Acknowledged
J. Raymond-Ya	P39: T11 – I do not agree with this 'necessary' language. On high-use days when people are parking along the roadside it is never because there is no parking in the Alyeska lot. It is because they don't want to walk or ski on the (winter-groomed) sidewalk over to the trailhead. They should be encouraged to do that before building a trail through wetlands and further impact the WC trail experience. There are no prohibitions to access Winner Creek trail from the 'resort' side, nor from the Crow Creek road side	Acknowledged
P. Zug	Needs to be multi use.	Acknowledged
Anonymous 5	Supportive, Class 3.	Acknowledged
P. Crews	Hopefully in conjunction with a TH 11 expansion.	Acknowledged
B. Burnett	Strongly Support development of additional trail access to WCT and improved trail head facilities at end of Arlberg	Acknowledged
D. Essex	Yes. This is a heavily used area, and a much needed connect for users to access Winner Creek Trail from public land.	Acknowledged
M. Hawes	Supportive. Class 3.	Acknowledged
Anonymous 7	N (comment from map)	Acknowledged
B. Dugan	No on the above (comment logged for T10, T11, T13, T14)	Acknowledged

	S. Dugan	All other trails, I did not comment because I don't think they are needed. We have enough trails already and parking is a terrible problem. (comment logged for T3, T4, T5, T7, T9, T10, T11, T13, T14)	Acknowledged
	L. Hinderman	This trail would especially protect the Nordic Trail in the winter. Walker and runner on this trail in winter is a safety concern. It would give summer users a way to get to the winner creek trail without going through the resort.	Acknowledged
	L. Hinderman	Support all new trails: Only concern is the trail classification on some trails. If it is a multi use/multi season trail design should be at least class 3 and if it is a high use trail that is used in the winter grooming machines should be considered class 4. (comment logged for T1-T14)	Acknowledged
	G. Hoessle	Yes, it's time	Acknowledged
	J. Sauer	I support these trails. (comment logged for T11-T14)	Acknowledged
	B. Young	Yes	Acknowledged
T12 - Glacier Canyon Rim Trail			
	C. Davidson	I would like to see this trail improved to Class 2 as it would make the traveling more enjoyable.	Acknowledged
	D. Penn	The Canyon Rim area trail does not need any improvement. The river access areas are already greatly impacted by people using this currently unmarked trail. Inviting this increased usage upstream on Glacier Creek is not something I am in support of as it will significantly increase the impact along the river banks and that fragile environment. Please don't improve this trail.	Acknowledged
	M. Donnelly	Need to allow bikes and make all of these multi use. T10 priority since airport doesn't want to allow use on their land. T12 could be designated as bikes only in winter. (comment logged for T10, T11, T12)	Acknowledged
	K. Sandberg	NO. Too many trails in this space. T12 - too close to Stumpy's and unnecessary at this time. T13 - too wide. Why is this necessary? When right next to groomed meadows - No. Needs to be only 4' across if built. (comment logged for T12 & T13)	Acknowledged
	J. Raymond-Ya	Page 39: T12. This trail basically already exists and is entirely walkable, skiable, snowshoe-able, etc. It should be maintained in its primitive state, as part of the surrounding Natural Space.	Acknowledged
	P. Zug	Must be multiuse. Must be improved to class 3 trail minimum.	Acknowledged
	B. Napolitano	Very excited this is being discussed! Class 2 construction all the way. These trails would add so much more diversity to what we currently have. (Comment logged for T8, T9, T10, T12)	Acknowledged
	T. Mercurio	Yes! Please try to keep this proposed trail a class 1 trail. As so much of it is through the trees I would hate to see it too wide. It would be a wonderful addition to existing trails in that area.	Acknowledged
	A. Davis	Our community needs a river side trail. Glacier creek is gorgeous and access is currently limited. T12 makes perfect sense. Ideally a river side trail that loops and connects over to the iditarod trail. I'm not opposed to making this hiking/skiing specific and/or keeping this class 1.	Acknowledged
	Anonymous 5	Trail exists. For some reason the Forest Loop, approved by Girdwood Trails Committee and the Heritage Land Bank is not in plan for this area. There is a natural space designation that covers the area. This doesn't make any sense with the community support behind the development of this trail for multi-use recreational opportunities. Please add the forest loop back in at Class 3 for all users.	The Forest Loop is not currently included in this draft because GNSC stated in May of 2020 that they were "no longer seeking the 4 to 5k Loop just north of the Airport (Forest Loop)." The project team responded accordingly and removed the trail.

	D. Merrill	I would like to see the upper meadows and Stumpys trail stay ungroomed and mostly primitive. Girdwood needs wilderness trails along with improved trails but not always more better trails. Keep the long standing trails as is. I have been skiing these trails and enjoying them for over 40 years.	Acknowledged
	P. Crews	Trail 12 should be a hardened class 3 summer walking trail designed in concert with a narrow non excavated wilderness classic ski route when possible. A hardened trail 12 is in conflict with the natural space designation on the draft map. T12 will receive considerable hiking traffic and will not be sustainable if it is not hardened. This area has been zoned for trails for decades. NS2 land designation should be placed away from T12. The north end of the trail should end at junction with the improved cat road at the high point of the cat road before it descends to Winner Creek	Acknowledged
	Schwing Shoff	Emphatically in support (full comment by email)	Acknowledged
	Z. Behney	The Stumpy's Summer trail is a gem but is inaccessible due to lack of maintenance/restrictive trail classification. Pleaes consider allowing this trail to be improved/maintained so more of our community members can enjoy it! Small signs on this and other primitive routes in the valley would be awesome!	Acknowledged
	B. Burnett	I support a hardened surface trail that will built to accommodate MTB & Hiking	Acknowledged
	D. Croghan	Also, the desire to squeeze another trail in between two existing (T13) trails is totally unnecessary. This already happened with the Nordic 5k and we have seen the devastation that was left squeezing in that trail.	Acknowledged
	D. Essex	I support this trail as a Class 2 to 3 trail on hardened surface and avoiding wetlands. This should be a hiking only trail in the summer, and routed safely to be a ski trail in the winter. This trail should connect up to the Winner Creek trail and designed for easy to moderate travel.	Acknowledged
	M. Hawes	Trail exists. For some reason the Forest Loop, approved by Girdwood Trails Committee and the Heritage Land Bank is not in plan for this area. There is a natural space designation that covers the area. This doesn't make any sense with the community support behind the development of this trail for multi-use recreational opportunities. Please add the forest loop back in at Class 3 for all users	Acknowledged
	B. Raymond-Ya	• With reagard to the part of the proposed T12 trail which would involve new trail bending over to connect to T13 - and thus cutting through the Stumpy's Area Natural Space - I recommend this be removed. My desire is to not see new trails in the Stumpy's Area Natural Space, including new primitive trails at least for the foreseeable future.	Acknowledged
	Anonymous 7	N (comment from map)	Acknowledged
	C. Brodin	I support this proposed trail only if it is built as described. A level 2 trail at the most and no bikes allowed. It is important to preserve and provide a natural route up the valley for locals and visitors. The bikers and hikers who prefer a more developed trail experience will have 3 other trails to choose from.	Acknowledged
	B. Crews	In my opinion, T12 could be the finest trail in Girdwood. I'm guessing a lot of other people will think so too, so I feel T12 should be built to Class 3 standards rather than Class 2. As this would not be allowed within NS2, I think T12 should be located just outside NS2, providing periperal access to this wild space. T12 is simply a re-route of Stumpy's Summer Trail (SST) to get SST out of the meadows and into the uplands. Therefore, I would not extend T12 down to T13, but would have T12 join SST at the south end of the meadows. SST should be Class 3 where applicable. Finally, I would use T10 to re-route SST away from DOT airport property. T12 could create a loop trail route with both Winner Creek Trail or Middle Iditarod Trail, using bridges B5 and B6. Parking could be TH 11, 12 or 13.	Acknowledged
	B. Dugan	Yes on all the above (comment logged for T8, T9, T12)	Acknowledged
	S. Dugan	This should be hiking only, no bikes. Class 2 only.	Acknowledged

	B. Germain	Why? Just walk on Stumpy's trail.	Project intent is to establish a trail out of the wetlands with creek views.
	S. Halverson	Should be class 1 only. A very special area of our valley that would be a shame to cut up to develop an "easier" trail. As a community I think we want zones like this close to town and not very developed. We could be forward thinking and <u>progressive to maintain this as primitive as possible.</u>	Acknowledged
	Helmbrecht E.	I believe that limiting trails to one type of use or eliminating certain uses will only create animosity between cultures in this town. Fat biking and cross country skiing should be seen as equals in the valley. We all know that folks will be riding on trails regardless, so why not welcome it. It is fine if a trail is not suitable to bike for a trailhead sign to state that, but to make it 'not allowed' will just upset folks when they see one another on the trails, which will undoubtedly happen. Please keep Alaskan trails open for anyone to enjoy. It's easy enough to put a sign that says to respect others at the trailhead. Keep Girdwood friendly and respectful toward others. (comment logged for T2, T8, T12, T13)	Acknowledged
	L. Hinderman	Support all new trails: Only concern is the trail classification on some trails. If it is a multi use/multi season trail design should be at least class 3 and if it is a high use trail that is used in the winter grooming machines should be considered class 4. (comment logged for T1-T14)	Acknowledged
	G. Hoessle	Thank you for keeping it a class 2, very special area and sensitive to development	Acknowledged
	J. Jenkins	I do not feel this trail deserves consideration. It is located within a proposed natural area and there already exists a primitive trail that follows the same <u>direction. I appreciate some areas remaining primitive.</u>	Acknowledged
	J. Sauer	I support these trails. (comment logged for T11-T14)	Acknowledged
	B. Young	Yes	Acknowledged

T13 - Upper Valley Multi-Use Trail			
	M. Donnelly	Go for it! Would love to see these additions (comment also logged for T14)	Acknowledged
	K. Sandberg	NO. Too many trails in this space. T12 - too close to Stumpy's and unnecessary at this time. T13 - too wide. Why is this necessary? When right next to groomed meadows - No. Needs to be only 4' across if built. (comment logged for T12 & T13)	Acknowledged
	K. Bowlin	I'm in favor of both of these projects. (comment logged for T13 & T14)	Acknowledged
	S. Bowlin	I'm in favor of both of these projects. (comment logged for T13 & T14)	Acknowledged
	J. Raymond-Ya	Page 39: T13 - there is a multiuse trail/s in the upper valley: WCT. 5K. Different trails at different times of year, but multiuse already exists here. See above <u>comments about 6+ trails leading to same area</u>	Acknowledged
	J. Love	Yes please to both of these. We need more adequate multi-use trails in the Valley. And the amount of traffic the Cat Track sees warrants adequate improvements. (comment logged for T13 & T14)	Acknowledged
	H. Munter	Please make this trail wide enough that it collects snow, and smooth enough that it can be groomed with little snow. This is a really great link in the upper valley nordic skiing, which desperately needs more class 4-5 terrain that is less steep <u>than the existing 5k loop (which is great).</u>	Acknowledged
	L. Maurer	We are very enthusiastic about an upland multi-use loop in the Upper Valley, that provides for greater nordic ski opportunities. We loved groomed ski trails, and <u>welcome increased multi-use trails that allow all to enjoy.</u>	Acknowledged
	Anonymous 5	Please remove the natural area verbiage as this is a trails plan. Supportive.	Acknowledged

	Anonymous 6	This seems redundant. You can already skate ski here (cat road) & Winner Creek is already a family friendly multi-use route into 4 corners. This would look like a wide road & make approaching 4 corners too easy - you should have to work @ least a little (winner creek) to get to this gem. Also not convinced skate skiers are a large & growing demographic.	Acknowledged
	P. Crews	Project T13 should be considered very closely in order to decide what we really want to do. The trails plan subcommittee discussed two significant topics relating to T13. Topic 1 that the trails plan sub committee discussed was the need to upgrade the cat road to a 4 season trail connecting to Winner Creek trail. Such an upgrade would require some new summer trail construction in the low lands where the winter cat road crosses wet ground and some upland construction. Some sections of the 5K Nordic loop might be used for this purpose during the summer when a winter snow trail is not available. The section of the cat road that climbs the hill from the wetlands is wide and can support two way winter traffic except for a hill at the bottom. A suitable route there for a separate easy winter up trail through an alder meadow is available on the east side of the trail. The cat road is the ONLY winter down trail that should be considered. The cat Road claims the fall line and it is wide. It minimizes traversing. It follows the natural skiing line. Any proposal to construct a ski trail paralleling the cat road to the west in the upland should be discarded. The earth work and tree clearing required to construct a new trail there would need to be wide because of the steep grades and side slopes and skier safety concerns. The Cat Road already claimed the good skiing terrain. Many people would be reluctant to ski the trail because it would be too steep for them to negotiate. The cat road is the best winter down route. A separate summer bicycle down trail should be routed through the existing bike park from the high point of the cat road near Winner Creek. Any new trails that that parallel the Cat Road in the uplands should be constructed on the east side of the Cat Road in the areas already dedicated to excavated ski and biking trails.	Acknowledged
	P. Crews (cont	<b>Topic 2</b> that the trails plan sub committee discussed was the development of an easy loop route around the upper Arlberg Meadows. The trail is designed to be an easy 4 season trail targeting recreational walkers, bikers and beginning and intermediate skiers. This should be considered as a separate project. T13A? The best route departs from the cat road near where the cat road leaves the wet land and begins up the hill toward Winner Creek. The route traverses the gravel moraine ridge that separates the Upper Arlberg and Secret meadows. This is the best route because: 1) 1It is the right length for the targeted user groups. 2Nearly the total route traverses dry ground over gravel. 3The grades are not steep. Side hill slopes are not difficult. 4The route minimizes user conflicts with winter skiers who utilize the ungroomed outer meadows trails. 5The route is hidden in an area that is seldom visited.	Acknowledged

P. Crews (cont)	A second route departs the cat road up the hill from the wetlands then traverses the ridge that separates Secret and Perpetual Meadows. This is a poor route for a number of reasons including: 1 This route is too long for the target user group. 2 The grades are too steep for the target user group. 3 Many sidehill areas are steep and would require extensive clearing and excavation in order to build a wide trail that would be safe for skiing. 4 The route traverses bedrock spines in areas where gravel sources would likely be difficult to find. 5 The route traverses significant distances through the forest where the trees grow on or slightly above the bedrock where water runs under the root mat. Disposal of many large trees would be difficult here because excavation will expose the water table and muddy ground. Water flow across the line of the trail will be disrupted. Flowing water across the trail would require considerable maintenance. Glaciering and overflow water would be a problem in the winter. 6 The route will cause user conflicts with winter skiers who utilize the ungroomed outer meadows trails. (Comment includes map on page 7)	Acknowledged
Schwing Shoff	We believe T13 and T14 need to be redrawn to reflect a previously proposed route.	Acknowledged
B. Burnett	Strongly Support when route is built as a hardened surface trail in upland terrain. It should be built to groom w/ minimum snow. Good EMT access up valley. This trail should complement other GNSC 4 season multi use trails	Acknowledged
D. Essex	Yes! But the description should NOT read that it borders "east side of natural area 2" This multi-use trail provides a connection from the proposed Forest Loop up valley to the CAT track for a fun winter loop, and eventually year-round loop. It addresses the need for upland trails, rather than wetland trails, for increased user days (6" of snow needed to groom hardened surface trails, and 2' of snow needed to groom in wetland) This is also a crucial connection for fire and rescue up to the Winner Creek Trail and future Glacier Creek bridge. This trail proposal should be shown where the GNSC proposed with latitude to work with topography to avoid wetlands	Acknowledged
M. Hawes	Please remove the natural area verbiage as this is a trails plan.	Acknowledged
Pe. Ostroski	With the consideration to access the alpine for all user groups, it seems imperative that the existing Cat road becomes useable in the summer to the top of Notch and Sunnyside. This would open up an incredible opportunity for world class trails using an existing corridor. It would also provide a way to gain proper elevation, as an "up route" to many trails. (comment logged for T13, T14)	Acknowledged
C. Brodin	This proposed trail has the potential to dramatically affect Stumpy's Winter and Summer Trails. It may be possible to squeeze this trail in one way and use the Snow Cat trail as the other half if it has to be a loop trail. An entire new level 4 loop will never fit in that area without negative impact to the area.	Acknowledged
B. Dugan	No on the above (comment logged for T10, T11, T13, T14)	Acknowledged
S. Dugan	All other trails, I did not comment because I don't think they are needed. We have enough trails already and parking is a terrible problem. (comment logged for T3, T4, T5, T7, T9, T10, T11, T13, T14)	Acknowledged
B. Germain	Too many trails in one area. This is proposed as providing for a loop multi-use trail. The cat track is already there, just upgrade it to make a connecting loop w/Nordic trail and Winner Creek. There is already a heavy use concentration in the upper valley. This would just overload the area + the cause another parking lot to be needed.	Acknowledged

	Helmbrecht E.	I believe that limiting trails to one type of use or eliminating certain uses will only create animosity between cultures in this town. Fat biking and cross country skiing should be seen as equals in the valley. We all know that folks will be riding on trails regardless, so why not welcome it. It is fine if a trail is not suitable to bike for a trailhead sign to state that, but to make it 'not allowed' will just upset folks when they see one another on the trails, which will undoubtedly happen. Please keep Alaskan trails open for anyone to enjoy. It's easy enough to put a sign that says to respect others at the trailhead. Keep Girdwood friendly and respectful toward others. (comment logged for T2, T8, T12, T13)	Acknowledged
	L. Hinderman	Support all new trails: Only concern is the trail classification on some trails. If it is a multi use/multi season trail design should be at least class 3 and if it is a high use trail that is used in the winter grooming machines should be considered class 4. (comment logged for T1-T14)	Acknowledged
	G. Hoessle	Great idea, can't wait!	Acknowledged
	J. Jenkins	This multi use trail would be a good addition for skiers to loop onto snow cat track back to Alberg parking.	Acknowledged
	B. Kohler	This is great!! Lets keep developing 4-season multi-use trails that connect trail networks and neighborhoods.	Acknowledged
	S. Ostroski	With the consideration to access the alpine for all user groups, it seems imperative that the existing Cat road becomes useable in the summer to the top of Notch and Sunnyside. This would open up an incredible opportunity for world class trails using an existing corridor. It would also provide a way to gain proper elevation, as an "up route" to many trails. (comment logged for T13, T14)	Acknowledged
	J. Sauer	I support these trails. (comment logged for T11-T14)	Acknowledged
	B. Sullivan	Trail needs to be routed as proposed, not as drawn on this map.	Acknowledged
	K. Trautner	Great!	Acknowledged
	P. Wilson	This new hard surface Nordic trail should connect with the Cat trail and make it better by taking it out of the wetlands and building it in uplands. Maybe connect it to the existing 5k and winter route to Winner Creek.	Acknowledged
	B. Young	? Why is it needed when there is an existing trail parallel? (the thing black line)	T13 would create a class 4, multi use trail that connects to the snow cat trail to create a loop once seasonal conditions allow grooming of the frozen wetland. Class 4 construction will allow for early season, multi use winter activities where the wetlands don't allow.

T14 - Snowcat Trail Improvements			
	M. Donnelly	Go for it! Would love to see these additions (comment also logged for T13)	Acknowledged
	N. Waggoner	I am commenting in support of improving the Cat trail for mountain bike and improved hiking access. A mountain bike specific down trail should be included.	Acknowledged
	K. Bowlin	I'm in favor of both of these projects. (comment logged for T13 & T14)	Acknowledged
	S. Bowlin	I'm in favor of both of these projects. (comment logged for T13 & T14)	Acknowledged
	J. Raymond-Ya	Page 39: T14 should remain a winter, snow-cover only trail	Acknowledged

J. Love	Yes please to both of these. We need more adequate multi-use trails in the Valley. And the amount of traffic the Cat Track sees warrants adequate improvements. (comment logged for T13 & T14)	Acknowledged
H. Munter	If the snowcat route can be moved off of the wetlands and into the forest and the trail surface hardened to the standard of the 5k, it will be usable access for commercial and private groups with much less snow than the current route. This trail is a critical and heavily used route for private and commercial backcountry skiers. It provides access to some of the only backcountry terrain that is appropriate to ski during storms and elevated avalanche hazard in the region.	Acknowledged
B. Napolitano	Great example of an area to use class 3 or 4 development. increased uses in this very underutilized terrain would help users summer + winter. Having a developed trail for the up will give users more energy once up there in the MB3 zone.	Acknowledged
R. Peterson	If the snowcat route can be moved off of the wetlands and into the forest and the trail surface hardened to the standard of the 5k, it will be usable access for commercial and private groups with much less snow than the current route. This trail is a critical and heavily used route for private and commercial backcountry skiers. It provides access to some of the only backcountry terrain that is appropriate to ski during storms and elevated avalanche hazard in the region.	Acknowledged
Anonymous 5	Supportive	Acknowledged
P. Crews	YES	Acknowledged
Schwing Shoff	We believe T13 and T14 need to be redrawn to reflect a previously proposed route.	Acknowledged
B. Burnett	STRONGLY SUPPORT – Anything to improve this alignment is a win for multiple user groups	Acknowledged
D. Essex	YES! This is a popular winter travel trail, and sees much use in the summer even without hardening- especially with the Arlberg parking area close by. This trail is a well-known and well-traveled landmark in Girdwood and the trail-hardening would be a win-win for CAT skiers, winter trail users, summer hikers and berry-pickers, and bikers. It will alleviate some of the summer use of the extremely popular Winner Creek Trail. It has great line of sight and would be popular for locals to take their dogs on a fun hike/hike	Acknowledged
M. Hawes	Supportive	Acknowledged
Pe. Ostroski	With the consideration to access the alpine for all user groups, it seems imperative that the existing Cat road becomes useable in the summer to the top of Notch and Sunnyside. This would open up an incredible opportunity for world class trails using an existing corridor. It would also provide a way to gain proper elevation, as an “up route” to many trails. (comment logged for T13, T14)	Acknowledged
B. Dugan	No on the above (comment logged for T10, T11, T13, T14)	Acknowledged
S. Dugan	All other trails, I did not comment because I don't think they are needed. We have enough trails already and parking is a terrible problem. (comment logged for T3, T4, T5, T7, T9, T10, T11, T13, T14)	Acknowledged
L. Hinderman	Support all new trails: Only concern is the trail classification on some trails. If it is a multi use/multi season trail design should be at least class 3 and if it is a high use trail that is used in the winter grooming machines should be considered class 4. (comment logged for T1-T14)	Acknowledged
B. Kohler	This would be a great way to access MTB2&3. Also serve as a multi-use 4-season trail.	Acknowledged

	S. Ostroski	With the consideration to access the alpine for all user groups, it seems imperative that the existing Cat road becomes useable in the summer to the top of Notch and Sunnyside. This would open up an incredible opportunity for world class trails using an existing corridor. It would also provide a way to gain proper elevation, as an “up route” to many trails. (comment logged for T13, T14)	Acknowledged
	J. Sauer	I support these trails. (comment logged for T11-T14)	Acknowledged
	B. Sullivan	Trail needs to be routed as proposed, not as drawn on this map.	Acknowledged
	M. Szundy	Im in support of the proposed snowcat trail improvements.	Acknowledged
	K. Trautner	Definitely needed	Acknowledged
	B. Young	Yes	Acknowledged

B1 - Glacier Creek Trail Bridge - Lower Valley			
	K. Sandberg	a priority	Acknowledged
	E. Stone	Serious consideration should be given to both of these projects. This is the last bear habitat in Girdwood proper and is the area they fish and forage in the summer. Primitive trails as they exist are alright but adding a bridge and developed trails into the Virgin Creek area is a bad idea. We will have people hiking and biking both sides of the creek with nowhere for peoples to escape people. (Comment also logged for T2)	Acknowledged
	H. Munter	If possible, put the bridge in a relatively deep and slow spot in the river. There isn't enough access to glacier creek, and kids would love another place to get in the river on a hot summer day.	Acknowledged
	M. LaRose	Very supportive of this bridge.	Acknowledged
	Anonymous 4	No thanks Lower Valley wetlands will take a beating eventually. Place bridges up valley a bit where damage is already done.	Acknowledged
	Anonymous 5	Please remove the “Virgin Creek Natural Area” language in a trail plan. Supportive of this bridge concept. It would need to be multiuse to support biking and winter use and provide a crucial access link to the roads at the end of Timberline.	Acknowledged
	P. Crews	Bridge 1 should be constructed to be able to carry light weight 4 wheel vehicles and snow machines allowing for medical evacuations, fire emergencies or extreme highway bridge emergencies. B1 should connect to a class 4 Danich Trail commuter route from the Timberline neighborhood.	Acknowledged
	Schwing Shoffr	We support all of the bridge projects in this proposal.	Acknowledged
	Z. Behney	Yes please!	Acknowledged
	B. Burnett	Strongly Support – Build to best practices from USFS. We need a lower valley Glacier Creek crossing	Acknowledged
	D. Essex	Glacier Creek Bridge. Yes! This bridge should meet USFS standards.	Acknowledged
	M. Hawes	Please remove the “Virgin Creek Natural Area” language in a trail plan. Supportive of this bridge concept. It would need to be multiuse to support biking and winter use and provide a crucial access link to the roads at the end of Timberline.	Acknowledged

T. Lydon	This proposed bridge crosses a dynamic section of Glacier Creek susceptible to flooding and shifting river channels. It is vulnerable to erosion or loss from flooding unless it is built to a standard that would likely well exceed the trail condition classes that exist on the east side of Glacier Creek and that are most appropriate for the proposed natural space. A better alternative is to work with the railroad and other parties, or wait until a time that the railroad bridge needs upgrading, to seek a pedestrian crossing that is tied to the existing railroad structure further downstream. In either case, bridges across lower Glacier Creek are likely to increase wintertime mechanized traffic on the east side of the creek and within the natural space intended for non-mechanized travel. The current lack of bridges helps preserve a non-mechanized environment in Natural Space 1.	Acknowledged
Pe. Ostroski	These projects seem to take the most logical connectivity points across the waterways. (comment logged for B6, B3, B1)	Acknowledged
Anonymous 7	N (comment from map)	Acknowledged
B. Dugan	No on all bridges - not needed (comment logged for B1-B6)	Acknowledged
S. Dugan	Too expensive and not needed. (comment logged for B1-B6)	Acknowledged
S. Halverson	I like the look of these ideas. Please built to Class 2 though. Not Class 3, 4, or 5. (comment logged for T2, B1).	Acknowledged
J. Sauer	I am in favor of all these bridges. My top priority is the Glacier Creek Bridge/Upper Valley. Having the handtram non-operational these past few years has been a huge negative for living/recreating in Girdwood. (comment logged for B1-B6)	Acknowledged
B. Young	Yes to all 6 (comment logged for B1-B6)	Acknowledged

B2 - California Creek		
M. Cospers	Although the project says it's just a bridge, this is a whole new section of trail that I am against building, as there is currently no trail there. The California Creek corridor is used by: black/brown bears, moose, all species of salmon, beaver, birds and more. Segmenting this corridor would take space away from the wildlife and push bears into neighborhoods directly adjacent. In addition, beavers have ponded up several areas of wetlands in this area with their dams and I'm sure they will continue to do so in the future. There is access to the lower Iditarod via Ruane, which seems like a more appropriate, already available, place to put a developed trailhead.	Acknowledged
Anonymous 5	Supportive	Acknowledged
Schwing Shoff	We support all of the bridge projects in this proposal.	Acknowledged
B. Burnett	Support for connectivity	Acknowledged
A. DuPont	As is described in the 2020 Girdwood Valley Trails Management Plan, California Creek is a critical waterway for salmon, steelhead, and Dolly Varden. As a result, this area is a draw for both black and brown bears every summer. The riparian habitat around the creek provides key forage and shelter for bears. While bears and humans do generally coexist and share trail space in the Girdwood valley, both species of bears have been observed using the California Creek riparian area for day bedding, food caching, and routine foraging. Trail placement within this area would result in the disruption and displacement of bears, pushing them into less desirable habitat, into the backyards of the community and increasing the likelihood for conflict. (comment logged for T3, T5 and B2)	Acknowledged
D. Essex	Great connection idea and should meet USFS standards	Acknowledged
M. Hawes	Supportive	Acknowledged
J. Lee	See comments for NS1, regarding the utterly critical nature of this area for wildlife habitat. I recommend against this proposal.	Acknowledged

	T. Lydon	I support a T3 Class IV trail from the Alyeska Highway to Ruane Drive, which could facilitate connection to the proposed T4 and the Lower Iditarod Trail. However, I'm strongly opposed to the proposed section of T3 north of Ruane Drive. That also means I oppose B2 and the section of T5 east of the Alyeska Highway. The area that T3 (north of Ruane) and T5 (east of Alyeska Highway) propose to intersect is maybe the most valuable wildlife habitat in the lower valley. It is already a tightly constricted corridor for wildlife that would only be further tightened by the proposed trails. This would degrade wildlife habitat, undermine the enjoyment of wildlife expressed in the Values section of the document, and may displace wildlife, causing dangerous human-wildlife interactions either to trail users or residents of nearby neighborhoods. Additionally, the amount of beaver activity in the area north of Ruane makes it a fiscally unwise area for trail development. The area is spawning habitat for at least four species of Pacific salmon and important feeding and breeding habitat for black and brown bears. It's a well-used corridor for bears, coyotes, hares, marten, moose, and likely others that may include lynx. These and other species use the area to access snow-free areas in spring, early vegetation, late-summer berries, and more. And it's home to a thriving population of beavers. Proposed bridges and boardwalks would likely be flooded by beaver activity, making upper T3 and eastern T5 poor investments. (comment logged for B2, T5, T3)	Acknowledged
	P. Zumstein	I am very opposed to the T5 trail section East of Alyeska highway and the associated B2 bridge. (Comment logged for T5, B2 and expanded comments are in the section showing comments not on comment cards)	Acknowledged
	B. Dugan	No on all bridges - not needed (comment logged for B1-B6)	Acknowledged
	S. Dugan	Too expensive and not needed. (comment logged for B1-B6)	
	S. Halverson	No to this proposal. Too high an impact on the households in the area and there is a connector to the lower Iditarod just a half mile away off Ruane. The proposed zone is a valuable wetland too. (BTW, I don't have my home in this area. It would affect them a lot though.) (comment logged for T5 and B2)	Acknowledged
	L. Hunter	I like the idea of connecting the beaver pond trail somewhere in the middle, running the whole way is to much for me sometimes. But I would not put it coming down Juniper, across the highway and through the neighborhoods on the low side of Alyeska Highway. That will negatively effect residents. I think it should come down Ruane and use the existing California Creek bridge. (comment logged for T5, B2)	Acknowledged
	J. Sauer	I am in favor of all these bridges. My top priority is the Glacier Creek Bridge/Upper Valley. Having the handtram non-operational these past few years has been a huge negative for living/recreating in Girdwood. (comment logged for B1-B6)	Acknowledged
	B. Young	Yes to all 6 (comment logged for B1-B6)	Acknowledged

#### B3 - Virgin Creek Bridge

	C. Davidson	As much as I'd like to keep this area more isolated and private, it is a lovely trail and it could become part of a connected trail system that would expand hiking, biking and foraging access. (comment also logged for T2)	Acknowledged
	Anonymous 4	No! Drawing more people into the end of a neighborhood with one road access is a detrimental move that cannot be reversed - once peace/quiet gone it can never be returned.	Acknowledged

L. Maurer	We are fortunate to live close to several trail access points. We have noticed increasing Virgin Creek trail access, as well as daytime and overnight parking on our property. We welcome the opportunity to be a part of this conversation regarding trail development, access, parking, and access across the creek. We greatly value the beauty and natural state of this area, and support the ecologically-sensitive creation of and access to a Virgin Creek Natural Space. (Comment logged for B3 TH4 NS1)	Acknowledged
Anonymous 5	Supportive, please support the existing use of Winter Biking	Acknowledged
P. Crews	Decisions about location should depend upon resolution of Virgin Creek traffic and other problems.	Acknowledged
Schwing Shoffner	We support all of the bridge projects in this proposal.	Acknowledged
B. Burnett	Support - Will improve connectivity to the trail network in this zone	Acknowledged
D. Essex	Great connection idea along with the re-routing of the Wagon Trail to create sustainable trail system of the Lower Virgin Creek/Wagon Trail/Joe Danich trail area. Creating this trail system could help alleviate some of the road traffic to the Upper Virgin Creek trail head.	Acknowledged
M. Hawes	Supportive. Virgin Creek Bridge and parking should be adjacent. Please put the parking at the end of Virgin Creek Drive, not the end of Timberline. The trail is so short, a large parking area would create an even shorter trail and a super lame experience. Use HLB land. See TH4.	Acknowledged
Pe. Ostroski	These projects seem to take the most logical connectivity points across the waterways. (comment logged for B6, B3, B1)	Acknowledged
B. Dugan	No on all bridges - not needed (comment logged for B1-B6)	Acknowledged
S. Dugan	Too expensive and not needed. (comment logged for B1-B6)	Acknowledged
B. Germain	Yes, legal, easy access to the wagon trail would be great.	Acknowledged
J. Sauer	I am in favor of all these bridges. My top priority is the Glacier Creek Bridge/Upper Valley. Having the handtram non-operational these past few years has been a huge negative for living/recreating in Girdwood. (comment logged for B1-B6)	Acknowledged
B. Young	Yes to all 6 (comment logged for B1-B6)	Acknowledged

B4 - Improve Connectivity at Glacier Creek Bridge at Alyeska Highway		
M. Donnelly	Trail should be made similar to the underpass on the west side of Glacier Creek. (comment also logged for T6)	Acknowledged
Schwing Shoffner	We support all of the bridge projects in this proposal.	Acknowledged
B. Burnett	Strongly Support – Improve the chances more G'wood kids ride their bikes to school. Traffic will only increase over the next decade. Connection to Forrest Fair Park should be improved when west side of bridge trail under Aly Highway is improved	Acknowledged
D. Essex	Definitely! Continues to be a safety concern and the growing community and tourism numbers make this a soon-to-be priority.	Acknowledged
M. Hawes	Supportive	Acknowledged
T. Lydon	I'm not sure if I'm understanding this right. But it'd be great to have a safe highway underpass for the existing trail that is shown on the map as the proposed T6.	Acknowledged
Anonymous 7	Y (comment from map)	Acknowledged
B. Dugan	No on all bridges - not needed (comment logged for B1-B6)	Acknowledged
S. Dugan	Too expensive and not needed. (comment logged for B1-B6)	Acknowledged
J. Sauer	I am in favor of all these bridges. My top priority is the Glacier Creek Bridge/Upper Valley. Having the handtram non-operational these past few years has been a huge negative for living/recreating in Girdwood. (comment logged for B1-B6)	Acknowledged
B. Young	Yes to all 6 (comment logged for B1-B6)	Acknowledged

B5 - Glacier Creek Trail Bridge - Middle Valley - (north of airstrip)			
	Anonymous 0	Efforts to build a bridge should be diverted to building a small surf wave for stand up paddle boards and whitewater kayaks.	Acknowledged
	C. Davidson	Hugely in favor of connecting the valley	Acknowledged
	H. Munter	A bridge at the mouth of the canyon (before Glacier Creek braids out) would really improve safety and access for kayaks and packrafts running the river, allowing easy takeout above the braids.	Acknowledged
	T. Mercurio	Great idea to connect trail with a pedestrian bridge. I hope it happens.	Acknowledged
	Anonymous 4	Yes!	Acknowledged
	A. Davis	I strongly support building bridges across Glacier creek to allow for a river side trail loop. I think all bridges should be wide enough for wheelchair access if trails someday develop to allow for wheelchair access to these areas. (comment logged for B5 & B6)	Acknowledged
	Anonymous 5	Supportive	Acknowledged
	P. Crews	This could be a very important connector bridge in the future.	Acknowledged
	Schwing Shoff	We support all of the bridge projects in this proposal.	Acknowledged
	B. Burnett	Support when included in development of Crow Creek neighborhoods and connecting multi use trails are part of plan (not T10)	Acknowledged
	D. Essex	YES!! This has been proposed before in recreational planning and will be an important connection to loop the east and west side of the valley. It should connect the Iditarod trail with either the Forest Loop or the proposed Canyon Rim Trail and be built to USFS standards as it connects to the NHIT (National Historic Iditarod Trail). This connection could also alleviate pedestrian trespassing on Girdwood Airport property - which is a growing safety concern	Acknowledged
	M. Hawes	Supportive	Acknowledged
	B. Dugan	No on all bridges - not needed (comment logged for B1-B6)	Acknowledged
	S. Dugan	Too expensive and not needed. (comment logged for B1-B6)	Acknowledged
	J. Sauer	I am in favor of all these bridges. My top priority is the Glacier Creek Bridge/Upper Valley. Having the handtram non-operational these past few years has been a huge negative for living/recreating in Girdwood. (comment logged for B1-B6)	Acknowledged
	B. Young	Yes to all 6 (comment logged for B1-B6)	Acknowledged

B6 - Glacier Creek Trail Bridge - Upper Valley Hand Tram			
	C. Davidson	Hugely in favor of connecting the valley	Acknowledged
	S. Davis	We support addressing this need. The trail is too popular and trail users must wait to cross the gorge. A suspension bridge might be able to utilize existing infrastructure. Public safety, popularity of trail and need to connect with trail on opposite side make this project a huge priority.	Acknowledged
	E. Teixmen	Yes! Yes! Yes! Very much in favor of a bridge to replace the hand tram and restore connectivity to the winner creek trail.	Acknowledged
	K. Bowlin	This makes sense, I'm in favor of it.	Acknowledged
	J. Love	I am in favor of this. But I am also in favor of seeing the Hand Tram remain in operational status. The accidents in recent years are devastating and tragic, but they are minimal compared to the numbers of people who have safely utilized this special resource. The addition of a pedestrian bridge would alleviate the amount of traffic utilizing the Tram and make the entire area much safer and less rushed.	Acknowledged
	H. Munter	The best bridge would be two bridges, one across crow creek going east and then another bridge higher up glacier creek. This would improve access to the river for kayaks and packrafts.	Acknowledged

M. LaRose	Based on use and issues I believe replacing the hand tram crossing with a bridge should be one of the highest priorities.	Acknowledged
Anonymous 4	Number one priority please	Acknowledged
A. Davis	I strongly support building bridges across Glacier creek to allow for a river side trail loop. I think all bridges should be wide enough for wheelchair access if trails someday develop to allow for wheelchair access to these areas. (comment logged for B5 & B6)	Acknowledged
Anonymous 5	Supportive	Acknowledged
B. Renfro	This will affect the largest number of trail users of all types and ability levels, summer and winter. This should be the highest priority.	Acknowledged
C. Renfro	This will affect the largest number of trail users of all types and ability levels, summer and winter. This should be the highest priority.	Acknowledged
P. Crews	This should be a top priority.	Acknowledged
Schwing Shoffr	We support all of the bridge projects in this proposal.	Acknowledged
A. Sassi	I would like the bridges and projects numbered to reflect their priority. If not in the nubering of the projects then in a section of prioritization would be excellent. <u>Bridge 6 should be a high priority.</u>	Acknowledged
B. Burnett	Strongly Support – This will be a significant connector in the Southern Trek Trail Project	Acknowledged
D. Essex	Glacier Creek Bridge - Yes! I believe this is in motion, and will bring additional safety to one of Girdwood's most popular trails. A bridge will also be an additional connection of the east and west up river from a mid-valley bridge north of the airport. This inter-looping of trail systems is one of the goals of this trail plan, and allows users to choose from various trailheads as a starting point.	Acknowledged
M. Hawes	Supportive	Acknowledged
Pe. Ostroski	These projects seem to take the most logical connectivity points across the waterways. (comment logged for B6, B3, B1)	Acknowledged
B. Dugan	No on all bridges - not needed (comment logged for B1-B6)	Acknowledged
S. Dugan	Too expensive and not needed. (comment logged for B1-B6)	Acknowledged
B. Germain	Yes, a bridge would lessen accidents @ the hand tram + encourage people to hike for the natural beauty instead of just to ride the hand tram.	Acknowledged
DJ. Kiland	We support the construction of a bridge to replace the hand tram due to the trams safety issues.	Acknowledged
D. Knutson	This bridge should be made the highest priority and will benefit the most number of users at all ability levels.	Acknowledged
J. Sauer	I am in favor of all these bridges. My top priority is the Glacier Creek Bridge/Upper Valley. Having the handtram non-operational these past few years has been a huge negative for living/recreating in Girdwood. (comment logged for B1-B6)	Acknowledged
E. Steinfort	(hand tram replacement with bridge) this will restore and upgrade the Lower Winner Creek trail and I am excited to have it as soon as possible! I think this should be a top priority with respect to how much planning and costs are associated with it. This trail is incredibly popular with visitors and locals, alike. It's <u>volume has reached bridge stage.</u>	Acknowledged
P. Wilson	It's time to build the bridge and reconnect this trail. The trail use and demand has outgrown what the tram can responsibly handle. Plus I don't like waiting in line when hiking.	Acknowledged
B. Young	Yes to all 6 (comment logged for B1-B6)	Acknowledged
M. Leeds	this will restore and upgrade the Lower Winner Creek trail and I am excited to have it as soon as possible!	Acknowledged

	H. Munter	This trailhead should be considered parking for all valley trails, including those in the upper valley.	Acknowledged
	Anonymous 5	Needed. Plenty of space and land opportunities.	Acknowledged
	B. Burnett	Strongly Support - When combined w/ T1	Acknowledged
	B. Burnett	Strongly Support ALL Trailhead improvements. All G'wood trails should have a dedicated trailhead w/ parking and wayfinding. (comment logged for all TH proposals except TH3)	Acknowledged
	D. Essex	Yes. A better trailhead and RR station area in general is much needed in this area. This is a popular parking area already, and improved amenities could alleviate overcrowded trailheads within the Girdwood Valley.	Acknowledged
	M. Hawes	Needed. Plenty of space and land opportunities.	Acknowledged
	B. Dugan	No on both. Not needed (comment logged for TH1, TH2)	Acknowledged
	M. Hammond	Coming from Anchorage my husband and I have parked at this Depot trailhead many times to walk the path/trail often with our dog on leash. There is a homeowner near there and a more definite parking area would handle all of we users plus keep us from bothering that homestead.	Acknowledged
	J. Jenkins	the Girdwood Depot Trailhead upgrades are most important if we consider the tourists/bikers who come to Girdwood. Many come to eat and use local services. Negotiating and agreement with the Alaska Railroad for parking, trailhead historical information, and restrooms would also benefit the railroad.	Acknowledged
	J. Sauer	I'm in favor of all the proposed trailheads, except I don't think we need TH3. (comment logged for TH1-TH13)	Acknowledged
	E. Steinfert	(new trails in Old Girdwood/Speedway mall area) I desire additions of benches, picnic spots, a neighborhood playground, and a Turnagain viewing area here. (comment logged for T1, T3, TH1)	Acknowledged
	M. Leeds	(new trails in Old Girdwood/Speedway mall area) I desire additions of benches, picnic spots, a neighborhood playground, and a Turnagain viewing area here. (comment logged for T1, T3, TH1)	Acknowledged

TH2 - Glacier Ranger District Trailhead			
	Anonymous 5	Lower priority than TH1.	Acknowledged
	B. Burnett	Strongly Support ALL Trailhead improvements. All G'wood trails should have a dedicated trailhead w/ parking and wayfinding. (comment logged for all TH proposals except TH3)	Acknowledged
	D. Essex	I am in favor of all the trailhead proposals except for TH3. With a trailhead proposal near the RR Depot, and a user-agreement with the USFS, the tunnel under the Alyeska Highway provides access to the east side of the highway. (comment logged for T2-T13)	Acknowledged
	M. Hawes	Lower priority than TH1.	Acknowledged
	Anonymous 7	Y (comment from map)	Acknowledged
	B. Dugan	No on both. Not needed (comment logged for TH1, TH2)	Acknowledged
	J. Jenkins	I support the work of pursuing a parking agreement with USFS since it already has a paved parking lot. This appears to be a great collaboration and an easy connection to the Lower Iditarod trail marker across the road.	Acknowledged
	J. Sauer	I'm in favor of all the proposed trailheads, except I don't think we need TH3. (comment logged for TH1-TH13)	Acknowledged

TH3 - Lower Valley Trailhead			
	E. Stone	This would require a ton of work and materials to create a parking lot here, and it is close to two different designated parking areas. This parking log should be removed from the project list.	Acknowledged
	Anonymous 5	Completely unneeded. This would create more issues than it solves. Focus on TH1 and parking at the USFS.	Acknowledged

	B. Burnett	Do Not Support - Sounds very expensive.....	Acknowledged
	D. Essex	I am in favor of all the trailhead proposals except for TH3. With a trailhead proposal near the RR Depot, and a user-agreement with the USFS, the tunnel under the Alyeska Highway provides access to the east side of the highway. (comment logged for T2-T13)	Acknowledged
	M. Hawes	Completely unneeded. This would create more issues than it solves. Focus on TH1 and parking at the USFS.	Acknowledged
	B. Crews	Trail T1 provides access from the Parking TH1 to trails on the SE side of Alyeska Highway. TH3 should be eliminated, as the access from Alyeska Hwy is tight or else would require major roadwork to be done. If the ARR parking lot at TH1 could instead become a major parking area, it would save money as well as create parking in that area that is directly accessed from the Seward Highway rather than creating turns off Alyeska Highway. Perhaps a turning lane is needed on the Seward Highway to turn onto Toadstool Dr. (comment logged for T1 and TH3)	Acknowledged
	B. Dugan	.No, there is no room for it due to steep slopes. Other parking available by the RR depot,.	Acknowledged
	J. Sauer	I'm in favor of all the proposed trailheads, except I don't think we need TH3. (comment logged for TH1-TH13)	Acknowledged
	B. Sullivan	Bathrooms near/at the train depot would provide some kind of trailhead in our community. The approximate number of vehicles for parking lot is shortsighted.	Acknowledged
	P. Wilson	This location is not realistic to build a new a trail-head/parking lot. The slope and terrain plus the sight line for entering and leaving Alyeska highway make it difficult to build anything of quality. Put energy towards the other trail-heads like TH1 and expanding parking at TH 11.	Acknowledged

TH4 - Virgin Creek Falls Access Study			
	C. Davidson	This is a significant problem area. Traffic to this trail is unsupportable. I am strongly in favor of a separate Virgin Creek Trailhead. If more trails are connected in this area, users can access from other locations which will allow for a longer hiking experience and minimize the clogged traffic jam at the end of Timberline.	Acknowledged
	S. Davis	Parking at these trailheads should be a priority. (comment also logged for TH7)	Acknowledged
	T. Mercurio	Yes! This neighborhood needs a bonafide parking lot and trailhead.	Acknowledged
	Anonymous 4	While this is a study about access this whole area does not need more or even better access. We have failed our trails miserably by noticing the over use too late. Please do not pursue more access. -No more access- Fix the trail - for sure - but no more access.	Acknowledged
	L. Maurer	We are fortunate to live close to several trail access points. We have noticed increasing Virgin Creek trail access, as well as daytime and overnight parking on our property. We welcome the opportunity to be a part of this conversation regarding trail development, access, parking, and access across the creek. We greatly value the beauty and natural state of this area, and support the ecologically-sensitive creation of and access to a Virgin Creek Natural Space. (Comment logged for R3 TH4 NS1)	Acknowledged
	Anonymous 5	Supportive. Please utilize HLB land off Turin or Virgin Creek Rd for expanded parking area. Provide trail connections to Virgin Creek Falls. This would relieve the parking issues on Timberline as well as provide pedestrian access that is not on the road. This is a similar parking solution providing access to Chugach State Park where the parking is located throughout local neighborhoods.	Acknowledged
	B. Burnett	Strongly Support ALL Trailhead improvements. All G'wood trails should have a dedicated trailhead w/ parking and wayfinding. (comment logged for all TH proposals except TH3)	Acknowledged

	D. Essex	I am in favor of all the trailhead proposals except for TH3. With a trailhead proposal near the RR Depot, and a user-agreement with the USFS, the tunnel under the Alyeska Highway provides access to the east side of the highway. (comment logged for T2-T13)	Acknowledged
	M. Hawes	Supportive. Please utilize HLB land off Turin or Virgin Creek Rd for expanded parking area. Provide trail connections to Virgin Creek Falls. This would relieve the parking issues on Timberline as well as provide pedestrian access that is not on the road. This is a similar parking solution providing access to Chugach State Park where the parking is located throughout local neighborhoods.	Acknowledged
	Pe. Ostroski	Key infrastructure improvements for expanding the trail network and preparing for potential user increase. (P4) Strongly agree to create a parking area that the neighbors are comfortable with.	Acknowledged
	B. Dugan	No.	Acknowledged
	L. Hinderman	Given the amount of traffic in this area something has to be done about the parking to protect the neighborhood.	Acknowledged
	D. Knutson	This access study should be prioritized. This trailhead is very popular and accessed primarily by vehicle. There is no parking and it creates a problem in the neighborhood by increasing traffic on Timberline Dr.	Acknowledged
	J. Sauer	I'm in favor of all the proposed trailheads, except I don't think we need TH3. (comment logged for TH1-TH13)	Acknowledged

TH5 - Karolius Trailhead			
	Anonymous 5	Supportive	Acknowledged
	B. Burnett	Strongly Support ALL Trailhead improvements. All G'wood trails should have a dedicated trailhead w/ parking and wayfinding. (comment logged for all TH proposals except TH3)	Acknowledged
	D. Essex	I am in favor of all the trailhead proposals except for TH3. With a trailhead proposal near the RR Depot, and a user-agreement with the USFS, the tunnel under the Alyeska Highway provides access to the east side of the highway. (comment logged for T2-T13)	Acknowledged
	M. Hawes	Supportive	Acknowledged
	B. Dugan	Yes.	Acknowledged
	S. Dugan	This trailhead on the east side of Glacier Creek is definitely needed for lower Iditarod, baseball fields and forest fair.	Acknowledged
	M. Medovaya	Strongly support. This will provide access to LIT, for non-locals (non-Old Girdwood folks in particular) and Girdwood residents. (comment logged for T1 and TH5)	Acknowledged
	J. Sauer	I'm in favor of all the proposed trailheads, except I don't think we need TH3. (comment logged for TH1-TH13)	Acknowledged
	B. Young	No! to TH5, T7, TH13 Too big, too many parking spaces resulting in too much traffic on the trails! Small parking lots limit the number of people on trails! Do we want to turn our trail system into those like Zion Nat'l Park has! If you have ever hiked that area it is a zoo - all season long everyday, every hour! NO! Keep parking limited! (comment logged for TH5, TH7, TH13)	Acknowledged

TH6 - Girdwood Town Center Trailhead Improvements - with restroom			
	Anonymous 5	Supportive	Acknowledged
	B. Burnett	Strongly Support ALL Trailhead improvements. All G'wood trails should have a dedicated trailhead w/ parking and wayfinding. (comment logged for all TH proposals except TH3)	Acknowledged

	D. Essex	I am in favor of all the trailhead proposals except for TH3. With a trailhead proposal near the RR Depot, and a user-agreement with the USFS, the tunnel under the Alyeska Highway provides access to the east side of the highway. (comment logged for T2-T13)	Acknowledged
	M. Hawes	Supportive	Acknowledged
	Anonymous 7	Y (comment from map)	Acknowledged
	J. Sauer	I'm in favor of all the proposed trailheads, except I don't think we need TH3. (comment logged for TH1-TH13)	Acknowledged

TH7 - Moose Meadows			
	S. Davis	Parking at these trailheads should be a priority. (comment also logged for TH4)	Acknowledged
	C. Stinson	This Trailhead improvement should be prioritized above all other trailheads	Acknowledged
	Anonymous 5	Supportive, add latrine. This one should be a high priority.	Acknowledged
	D. Merrill	More parking is needed for Moose Meadows. If this lot IS expanded it should not impact the residential roads. No cars should flow out on to Aspen Mountain Road. All traffic in and out should be from Arlberg Road. There should be NO lighting as this will impact northern night sky viewing	Acknowledged
	B. Burnett	Strongly Support ALL Trailhead improvements. All G'wood trails should have a dedicated trailhead w/ parking and wayfinding. (comment logged for all TH proposals except TH3)	Acknowledged
	D. Essex	I am in favor of all the trailhead proposals except for TH3. With a trailhead proposal near the RR Depot, and a user-agreement with the USFS, the tunnel under the Alyeska Highway provides access to the east side of the highway. (comment logged for T2-T13)	Acknowledged
	M. Hawes	Supportive, add latrine. This one should be a high priority.	Acknowledged
	B. Dugan	definitely yes.	Acknowledged
	S. Dugan	This trailhead needs many more parking spaces. Totally full in winter with people parking on Arlberg road.	Acknowledged
	J. Sauer	I'm in favor of all the proposed trailheads, except I don't think we need TH3. (comment logged for TH1-TH13)	Acknowledged
	P. Wilson	This is greatly needed as Moose Meadows can be very popular on a good skiing day. More parking is needed and will hopefully reduce the pressure of parking on Aspen Mountain.	Acknowledged
	B. Young	No! to TH5, T7, TH13 Too big, too many parking spaces resulting in too much traffic on the trails! Small parking lots limit the number of people on trails! Do we want to turn our trail system into those like Zion Nat'l Park has! If you have ever hiked that area it is a zoo - all season long everyday, every hour! NO! Keep parking limited! (comment logged for TH5, TH7, TH13)	Acknowledged

TH8 - Beaver Pond Trailhead			
	Anonymous 5	Supportive, attempted during bridge redesign a few years ago.	Acknowledged
	B. Burnett	Strongly Support ALL Trailhead improvements. All G'wood trails should have a dedicated trailhead w/ parking and wayfinding. (comment logged for all TH proposals except TH3)	Acknowledged
	D. Essex	I am in favor of all the trailhead proposals except for TH3. With a trailhead proposal near the RR Depot, and a user-agreement with the USFS, the tunnel under the Alyeska Highway provides access to the east side of the highway. (comment logged for T2-T13)	Acknowledged
	M. Hawes	Supportive	Acknowledged
	B. Crews	If lines were painted on the two pull-outs showing diagonal parking, people would no longer parallel park. This could create more space for parking with very little effort or expense.	Acknowledged
	B. Dugan	all No. (comment logged for TH8, TH12, TH13)	Acknowledged

	J. Sauer	I'm in favor of all the proposed trailheads, except I don't think we need TH3. (comment logged for TH1-TH13)	Acknowledged
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#### TH9 - Girdwood PreK-8 School Parking - Parking Agreement

	Anonymous 4	Pursue parking agreements everywhere there is existing parking in town. (comment logged for TH9 and TH10)	Acknowledged
	Anonymous 5	Supportive	Acknowledged
	B. Burnett	Strongly Support ALL Trailhead improvements. All G'wood trails should have a dedicated trailhead w/ parking and wayfinding. (comment logged for all TH proposals except TH3)	Acknowledged
	D. Essex	I am in favor of all the trailhead proposals except for TH3. With a trailhead proposal near the RR Depot, and a user-agreement with the USFS, the tunnel under the Alyeska Highway provides access to the east side of the highway. (comment logged for T2-T13)	Acknowledged
	M. Hawes	Supportive	Acknowledged
	B. Crews	I think the dirt lot on the right before the school should become TH parking. During school hours, there are limited parking spots open. In addition, the Lower Iditarod Trail is hard to find, as access involves either walking ing through the playground or walking back down the bike path to the utility road. Trail signage would be out of place and hard to see. It would be best if trail traffic involving unaffiliated adults were kept separate from school kids in the playground. A trail could be built from the dirt lot to the Middle Iditarod Trail and wayfinding signage installed	Acknowledged
	S. Dugan	Both good areas for expansion of parking. (comment logged for TH9, TH11)	Acknowledged
	J. Sauer	I'm in favor of all the proposed trailheads, except I don't think we need TH3. (comment logged for TH1-TH13)	Acknowledged

#### TH10 - Alyeska Resort Parking Agreement

	Anonymous 4	Pursue parking agreements everywhere there is existing parking in town. (comment logged for TH9 and TH10)	Acknowledged
	Anonymous 5	Supportive	Acknowledged
	B. Burnett	Strongly Support ALL Trailhead improvements. All G'wood trails should have a dedicated trailhead w/ parking and wayfinding. (comment logged for all TH proposals except TH3)	Acknowledged
	D. Essex	I am in favor of all the trailhead proposals except for TH3. With a trailhead proposal near the RR Depot, and a user-agreement with the USFS, the tunnel under the Alyeska Highway provides access to the east side of the highway. (comment logged for T2-T13)	Acknowledged
	M. Hawes	Supportive	Acknowledged
	J. Sauer	I'm in favor of all the proposed trailheads, except I don't think we need TH3. (comment logged for TH1-TH13)	Acknowledged

#### TH11 - Airlberg Trailhead Expnsion

	L. Maurer	We frequently use the nordic ski trails, particularly the 5K loop, and support the expansion and further development of the nordic trail system. We are fortunate to be able to access the trails by foot or by ski. We have observed the frequent traffic congestion at the parking lot, and lack of restroom facilities, and the challenges associated with those issues. We support plans to address the problem. Further comment: lack of a turn-around configured parking lot makes for great difficulty backing and out maneuvering	Acknowledged
	Anonymous 5	Supportive. Also, high priority.	Acknowledged

	Anonymous 6	Great idea. Please make sure this includes a joint trailhead kiosk for all involved parties in the area - MUNI / USFS / GNSC / GMBA / Alyseka. Complex zone with overlapping management and differing allows uses and rules of the trail.	Acknowledged
	B. Renfro	This parking lot was just constructed and it is already overcrowded, especially when the snow conditions are good. Trailhead parking is a huge issue worldwide during pandemic times. Unprecedented numbers of people are recreating outside and parking is a major bottleneck. These people are hooked now and they'll <u>continue to come back and recreate.</u>	Acknowledged
	C. Renfro	This parking lot was just constructed and it is already overcrowded, especially when the snow conditions are good. Trailhead parking is a huge issue worldwide during pandemic times. Unprecedented numbers of people are recreating outside and parking is a major bottleneck. These people are hooked now and they'll <u>continue to come back and recreate.</u>	Acknowledged
	B. Burnett	Strongly Support ALL Trailhead improvements. All G'wood trails should have a dedicated trailhead w/ parking and wayfinding. (comment logged for all TH proposals except TH3)	Acknowledged
	D. Essex	I am in favor of all the trailhead proposals except for TH3. With a trailhead proposal near the RR Depot, and a user-agreement with the USFS, the tunnel under the Alyeska Highway provides access to the east side of the highway. (comment logged for T2-T13)	Acknowledged
	M. Hawes	Supportive	Acknowledged
	S. Dugan	Both good areas for expansion of parking. (comment logged for TH9, TH11)	Acknowledged
	L. Hinderman	Absolutely necessary to add parking to this area and restrooms. I use the 5K Nordic trail a lot in both summer and winter. Hundreds of people are now using <u>this area.</u>	Acknowledged
	D. Knutson	This should be made a priority as use has increased greatly.	Acknowledged
	J. Sauer	I'm in favor of all the proposed trailheads, except I don't think we need TH3. (comment logged for TH1-TH13)	Acknowledged

TH12 - Middle Iditarod			
	Anonymous 5	Supportive	Acknowledged
	B. Burnett	Strongly Support ALL Trailhead improvements. All G'wood trails should have a dedicated trailhead w/ parking and wayfinding. (comment logged for all TH proposals except TH3)	Acknowledged
	D. Essex	I am in favor of all the trailhead proposals except for TH3. With a trailhead proposal near the RR Depot, and a user-agreement with the USFS, the tunnel under the Alyeska Highway provides access to the east side of the highway. (comment logged for T2-T13)	Acknowledged
	M. Hawes	Supportive	Acknowledged
	B. Dugan	all No. (comment logged for TH8, TH12, TH13)	Acknowledged
	J. Sauer	I'm in favor of all the proposed trailheads, except I don't think we need TH3. (comment logged for TH1-TH13)	Acknowledged

TH13 - Winner Creek Gorge Trailhead			
	Anonymous 5	Supportive, 20 cars may be too small. Consider 50.	Acknowledged
	B. Burnett	Strongly Support ALL Trailhead improvements. All G'wood trails should have a dedicated trailhead w/ parking and wayfinding. (comment logged for all TH proposals except TH3)	Acknowledged
	D. Essex	I am in favor of all the trailhead proposals except for TH3. With a trailhead proposal near the RR Depot, and a user-agreement with the USFS, the tunnel under the Alyeska Highway provides access to the east side of the highway. (comment logged for T2-T13)	Acknowledged
	M. Hawes	Supportive	Acknowledged

	B. Dugan	all No. (comment logged for TH8, TH12, TH13)	Acknowledged
	J. Sauer	I'm in favor of all the proposed trailheads, except I don't think we need TH3. (comment logged for TH1-TH13)	Acknowledged
	B. Young	No! to TH5, T7, TH13 Too big, too many parking spaces resulting in too much traffic on the trails! Small parking lots limit the number of people on trails! Do we want to turn our trail system into those like Zion Nat'l Park has! If you have ever hiked that area it is a zoo - all season long everyday, every hour! NO! Keep parking limited! (comment logged for TH5, TH7, TH13)	Acknowledged

NS1 - Virgin Creek Natural Space			
	K. McDermott	NS1, Virgin Creek Natural Space, is too big an area to be set aside for natural space. NS1 is adjacent to the west edge of Alyeska Basin and should have multiple trail uses. There is plenty of room in NS1 to accommodate single track mountain bike trails and class 1 & 2 hiking trails.	Acknowledged
	E. Teixmen	The segregation of bikes in these areas is totally unacceptable, then to combine that with the MB1,2,3 that doesn't exclude hikers seems an awful lot like putting cyclists on a reservation. All the trails should be open to used based on their impact to the land. Winter hikers to more to degrade trail surface via post-holing than bikes and the NS designation is simply a way to segregate trail users. The judgement of whether or not a trail is "ridable" should be left to the rider. Studies have shown that bike tires (especially fat tires) produce less psi on the ground than most hikers. (Comment logged on NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged
	C. Stinson	I do not support the creation of natural spaces if the trail construction is limited to class 1 & 2 and use is restricted to mechanized trail use. We have plenty of natural spaces all over our valley surrounding our trail corridors. Why would we restrict these areas? NS 1 in particular can and already serves as a corridor to commute to workplaces in the lower valley. This area should allow for more use types & motorized trail grooming. Class 2 trails can not be safely maintained in the rainforest environment and present a hazard to trail users and promote negative wildlife encounters.	Acknowledged
	A. Romerdahl	The trails plan limits mechanized activities within this space, which would include limiting fat tire biking during the winter. This area has historically been utilized by fat tire bikes in the winter months. Fat tire bikes do not damage these trails or impact the natural features of the area. Also, fat tire biking does not result in user conflicts of any significance (if at all). Recommend including this historical use as allowable within the plan. Also, recommend that These trails be properly maintained at a level that includes brushing and clearing of downed trees and obstacles and support of appropriate trail surfaces. This will allow for safer trails and minimize trail "wander"	Acknowledged
	J. Raymond-Ya	Page 36/p42: The Virgin Creek "primitive" Natural Space needs to be restored to encompass the area all the way over to Wagon on the east and Glacier on the west. Parking is not required for this designation - it is keeping status quo. In this area: not 'building trails' - maintaining trails.	Acknowledged
	P. Zug	Space between Seward highway and thru to Alyeska Highway marked NS1. There are no hardened trails from Virgin Creek past timberline drive homes all the way to Alyeska Highway - the area needs a four season trail which is multiuse avoiding wetlands where ever possible. There is lots of dry areas to build trails adjacent to wet areas. This designation of NS1 makes it difficult or impossible for old folks to use the area (due to rough terrain) and parents w/small kids. Also in this area during winter bikes have traveled on packed snow for 40 years - it must be multi use and remain multi use. Get rid of this natural area off the plan.	Acknowledged
	M. LaRose	Strongly disagree with exclusion of bikers from this area. I would support excluding e-bikes/motorized.	Acknowledged

	R. Peterson	While I do agree that preservation of natural spaces is vital to our community, I do not agree with the scope and definition of the "Natural Spaces" in the current plan. I do not agree that we need to paint a broad stroke for where can or cannot build a type of trail or limit user groups, but rather these should be considered on a project by project basis using the proposal process. If "Natural Space Area's" included in the plan, I don't think having bicycles and winter grooming prohibited should be part of that plan. If 61% of the people want 4' multi use trails, we should not prohibit them being constructed in large swaths adjacent to the population.	Acknowledged
	M. Weaver	It would be a real shame if the NS projects became a reality. NS1 especially - it is behind our house. I would love to see more trails in the already trafficked area. NS1 would make it impossible. I vote No! on NS1.	Acknowledged
	L. Maurer	We are fortunate to live close to several trail access points. We have noticed increasing Virgin Creek trail access, as well as daytime and overnight parking on our property. We welcome the opportunity to be a part of this conversation regarding trail development, access, parking, and access across the creek. We greatly value the beauty and natural state of this area, and support the ecologically-sensitive creation of and access to a Virgin Creek Natural Space. (Comment logged for B3 TH4 NS1)	Acknowledged
	Anonymous 5	Remove. OR provide Class 3 trail open to bikes connecting Lower Valley trails to Timberline Road. This new "natural space restriction" would eliminate the traditional use of winter biking on the Danich trail. Also, suggesting that access via TH9, TH10, or TH12 does not make sense.	Acknowledged
	Anonymous 6	I don't have a particular issue with these locations, but don't understand why natural areas are part of this plan. Shouldn't LUC say where is/isn't appropriate for trails, then just color within those lines? Generally though development should occur in town and we're otherwise surrounded by "natural areas" in the state park and national forest. (Comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged
	D. Merrill	Keep these areas natural Any trails should be primitive and narrow.	Acknowledged
	P. Crews	I object to NS1 as presented. Natural space trail restrictions as presented would exclude many potential users from enjoying trail experiences through wilderness settings. Trail class 2 restrictions prevent the development of important connector and commuter trails that our residents want. If Natural spaces do not include class 3 and 4 trails then the Natural Spaces should be mapped outside the developed trail corridors. Natural Space 1 should not include any land area north of Lower Virgin Creek Trail including the trail itself. The area from there north to the Alyeska Highway should become Park Land. Natural Space 1 should not include any land west of the Danich Trail including the trail itself. Natural Space 1 should not include a corridor for Trail B2. B2 might become an important trail route in the future.	Acknowledged
	Schwing Shoffr	Do not support. (full comment via email)	Acknowledged
	A. Sassi	This plan should not make land designation besides proposed trails. I believe that is a land use issue. I have specific issue with NA1 because it would not allow the future development of a multiuse, commuter trail from the Upper Timberline neighborhood to the New Townsite and Old Girdwood.	Acknowledged
	Anonymous 10	I would like to express my support of the natural spaces identified on map #8 and throughout the plan. These areas should be left primitive. I use these areas for hiking and to pick berries, and they are beautiful as they are. Natural spaces are important for our community. (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged
	Z. Behney	This area is in close proximity to a large portion of Girdwood's population. It could provide access to incredible accessible trails to users of all ages. If it is not constricted to primitive trail restrictions - without the option to clear downfall or brush cutting young children & mobility impaired citizens are unable to use this network - Please consider devoting areas further from our neighborhoods for primitive trails/N Spaces - "Progressively Primitive"	Acknowledged

B. Burnett	Strongly OPPOSE any NS designations. These do not reflect the will, wants or desire of the community. Open space is where one builds all of our trails in this valley. The proposed restrictions do not support sustainable trails, community connections or multi use trail based recreation. (comment logged for NS1, NS2 & NS3)	Acknowledged
D. Croghan	I support all the primitive spaces remaining primitive including Stumpy, Virgin Creek and Winner Creek.	Acknowledged
D. Essex	No. This is restrictive, exclusive, and does not represent the proposals presented by the community, the community surveys, or stakeholder feedback. Natural Space, as defined in this plan, is a wilderness zone, and does allow for a proposed Class 3 trail connection. There were over 45 people at the Virgin Creek Falls trail on Saturday ... at one time! A sustainable trail loop within this Timberline/Nirgin Creek area could alleviate some of the road traffic, and provide a safe connection to Alyeska Highway for the neighborhood. This area should remain an Open Space.	Acknowledged
M. Hawes	Remove. OR provide Class 3 trail open to bikes connecting Lower Valley trails to Timberline Road. This new "natural space restriction" would eliminate the traditional use of winter biking on the Danich trail. Also, suggesting that access via TH9, TH10, or TH12 does not make sense.	Acknowledged
J. Lee	I strongly support this proposal, for two reasons: good for people, good for the rest of the ecosystem, especially wildlife. This area has loved, appreciated and greatly enjoyed for decades, by area residents and guests. The primitive trails-- unhardened summer trails and ungroomed winter trails-- offer a place to relax and enjoy with dogs, kids, grandkids and grandparents, without the worry of being run over by the faster-moving crowds on many other trails. To develop this area would be to take it away from one user-group, to give to another. This would be most unethical. This area (along with the bordering section of Glacier Creek) is also of critical importance for wildlife. It is critical for moose in the winter, and for bears in the summer. Though moose spread throughout the valley in summer, this area is one of only two areas in the valley where they congregate in the winter, because of the extensive willow thickets. This same area is critical to bears in the summer. Both black and brown bears, from across a wide area, migrate to our valley every summer, to catch salmon along the western edge of NS1 and the lower Glacier and California Creeks riparian zone, just to the west. Any development here would lead to frequent encounters with bears defending their most critical food source.	Acknowledged
Pe. Ostroski	Natural areas should be in a different proposal separate from the Trails Plan. (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged
B. Raymond-Ya	• I unequivocally support keeping the Virgin Creek Natural Space (NS1), Stumpy's Natural Space (NS2), and Upper Winner Creek Natural Space (NS3) in the Plan as primitive, non-mechanized natural spaces. The point of these areas is to provide areas that are needed and perfect for not only in/near community conservation, but also (and most importantly in terms of this process) primitive trail recreation - especially the Virgin Creek and Stumpy's areas, which are the crown jewels of Girdwood's world-class primitive trail areas. (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged
B. Raymond-Ya	• The Virgin Creek Natural Space should remain in the plan, and be restored to its original, larger extents (i.e. from the creek over to the Wagon Trail as the outer boundaries). This is imperative, especially now as the Holtan Hills HLB RFP proposal threatens the Stumpy's natural space area; if that development occurs, the Virgin Creek Natural Space would be the only truly near-community primitive natural space plan left in this Plan, and so it must remain and in its full extents.	Acknowledged

B. Raymond-Ya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing conditions speak against the proposed fork trail (proposal T2) in the Virgin Creek Natural Space. With the exception of a connection to Wagon Trail, such connections already exist, as outlined in information provided to the GTP during earlier parts of its process. There are two primitive trails accessible via Danich trail as well as Virgin Creek and Turin Roads, all of which connect those three trails in looping fashion. Needing a connection to Wagon is all that would remain to be 'needed,' and could be accomplished via a trail outside the VCNS (which makes more sense if the plan is to upgrade Wagon to class 3 and groom it), or inside the VCNS by a small primitive trail and footbridge. However, 'needing' to connect to Wagon is a dubious 'need,' because that trail has no means of direct legal trailhead access on either end, and this is unlikely to change in the near future if ever, especially on the highway side. (comment logger Mandy notes: not sure this comment is in the right place)</li> </ul>	Acknowledged
Ch. Wilson	This draft document restricts trail use and development on a large chunk of the upper valley and lower valley to primitive trails only. In particular, we object to the designation of two large areas shown as NS1, NS2 and NS3 on the Proposed Trail + Natural Space Network map. These are not the appropriate places to put restrictive limitations on trail use and future development. (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged
Anonymous 7	Y (comment from map)	
Anonymous 8	I support the natural areas and the mtn bike areas <3 from Crow Creek (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3, MB1, MB2, MB3)	Acknowledged
L. Deschamps	No. I don't think this proposal fits with public opinion or what I see on the trails. Virgin Creek falls can be so busy! we need a sustainable trail loop to cut down on walking and road pressure. Open space could be best for this area.	Acknowledged
J. Dow	The proposed Natural Space 1 - Virgin Creek Natural Space: This is located next to a proposed trail for bicycles and bordered by the wagon trail and Joe Danich trails. I foresee numerous and destructive social trails if a more robust trail network is not put in place. The proposed natural space has the virgin creek lower trail within in. Identifying it as such would not allow for trail upgrade(see comment on Joe Danich trail) and only promote social trails to connect these area. We have plenty of natural space in this valley. Allowing for more robust trails (grade 3 or 4) in this area will likely protect the forest by creating easier to follow paths and not encouraging social trails.	Acknowledged
B. Dugan	all Yes. (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged
S. Dugan	I am for keeping all the natural space we can! I have lived here 45 years and I worry about our valley filling up with too many people. Trails. Airplanes. Etc. (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged
B. Germain	Important to keep these to preserve "wilderness" of our valley. (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged
M. Hammond	Kincaid Park in Anchorage has recently established a bicycle riding set of many trails criss-crossing the well established walking/biking trail. Keeping the bicycles off the walking-ski-running trails has been a great help. But I am concerned about these bicyclists impact on wildlife. That is why I support keeping these backwood areas free from developing further. Your plan of increasing trails in more populated (human) areas should save these backwoods area for non-human species. My concerns should also address the NS1 nature space as well. (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged

	L. Hunter	Project T2/NS1- I love the idea of improving and growing the trail network on the east side of Glacier Creek between Timberline and the Railroad. I tried running back there last summer and it was to bushy to see where the trail went. However, I believe in multi-use trails. Designating the entire NS1 as hiking only limits future development. This could be a fabulous multi-use area. I would love to be able to pedal up and ride an interconnected trail network down to the future Glacier Creek Bridge (B1) in old Girdwood and then pedal home!!! You could put in hiking only trails as well as multi-use trails. With the proper signage, the conflict between hikers and bikers should be resolved. Also, the TH9, and TH10 do not make geographical sense for this area. Everyone will park at TH2, TH3, TH4, TH5, and TH6. (comment logged for T2, NS1)	Acknowledged
	R. Hutchins-Ca	This is a massive area to limit access in. It looks roughly the size of all three mountain bike areas combined. This area should contain the desired primitive trails but additional trails should be considered as neighborhood connectors and travel corridors for all users. I disagree with the management practice of limited signage. While we want to be conscientious of sign use, we have a process for signage being placed, we should use that process to approve sign placement. The trails currently in this area are poorly signed and this has lead to multiple offshoots eroding the forest and meadows. This area has immense potential for winter recreation opportunities with the right grooming. I am concerned that this designation will limit access for other user groups such as the Nordic ski Club in the future.	Acknowledged
	B. Kohler	This project does not align with the Value, Vision, Goals. This restricts connectivity, restricts access. Class 1-2 trails aren't usable for the majority. These trails are further restricted for users in the winter. This is clearly an attempt to restrict trail use and development by a vocal minority. Does not reflect community desires. NIMBY	Acknowledged
	J. Kohler	These projects do not align to the Value, Vision + Goals of the trails community. It restricts the connectivity of the trails and the users that access these trails. This restricts not only trail use by limiting users but future development as well. The community desires more multi use trails, not limiting trails to class 1 & 2. (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged
	S. O'Brien	Thank you for considering our fragile Class A Wetlands as natural areas. They are already being used in its primitive form in the winter and summer and are highly enjoyed by our community. We are daily/weekly users in this area. Skiing and fat biking is happening in the winter already when the wetland is frozen. The summer traffic is in the woods not the wetland as it is too fragile in the summer. Keeping it as is or lower level 1-2 allows for the community to keep using it as we love it. This allows hikers a place to go that is not hared off and not multiuse.	Acknowledged
	J. Sauer	I am against all 3 "natural space" designations. They are unreasonably restricted and these designations don't reflect previous community input and/or what most residents and visitors to Girdwood want. Thoughtful trail planning and construction is what is needed, not closing off spaces. (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged
	A. Schumacher	No. I don't think this proposal fits with public opinion or what I see on the trails. Virgin Creek falls can be so busy! we need a sustainable trail loop to cut down on walking and road pressure. open space could be best for this area	Acknowledged

	B. Sullivan	Closing and designating these areas does not serve the interest of most Girdwood community and future recreation in the Girdwood Valley. These areas have best drainage and scenery for recreation of all kinds. Groups need to be able to create trails here now and future. Community has commented this area be utilized for recreation including ski trails and multi use trails. Snowshoeing trails could also be included here. (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged
	J. Thomas	There should be a trails connecting upper timberline and the spur roads off of timberline to T6 (class 3 and single track mountain bike) There should be a mountain bike area in part of this location.	Acknowledged
	J. Thomas	Should be open to biking and all classes of trails or be eliminated. (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged
	M. Thomas	The designation of "natural space" in the trail plan is ridiculous. The valley is surrounded by State Park and National Forest which limits the land available to trail development. The valley floor does not need to be designated for low class trails and non-mechanized use when the entire surrounding area is already limited in development. The valley needs more class 3+ trails that are more family (stroller, etc.) and bike friendly not areas that further limit it. (comment logged for NS1 NS2 NS3)	Acknowledged
	T. Weaver	All of the NS projects I would not like to see become a reality. NS1 area is behind my house. I would prefer to see/have more trails that I could use and access from my back door. NS1 would make that impossible. I vote no on NS1.	Acknowledged
	P. Wilson	I like the idea of perserving this land so it cannot be developed in the future but encourage at least class 3 trail network Is built In it to allow access for most users. especially those aging or families with young children. A class 3 trail system should connect lo the neighborhoods via Turin road. that allows users to get off Timberline and provide a wild land route to either Alyeska highway via T6 or down valley via Joe Danish. Joe Danish should be developed as a class 3 loop trai that connects by bridge to the Lower Iditarod. The class 3 trails should allow bikes. The rest of NS1 could be preserved with little to no trail development. This provides access for users of all abilities and keep the areas in between in their rural natural state. I'm older hiker so I really enjoy a good class 3 trail.	Acknowledged
	J. Wuerth	Given the extent of the proposed development in this plan, it is critical that each of the three natural areas remain part of the plan. Keep them as proposed and the benefits will last for lifetimes to come. (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged

NS2 - Stumpy's Natural Space			
	E. Teixmen	The segregation of bikes in these areas is totally unacceptable, then to combine that with the MB1,2,3 that doesn't exclude hikers seems an awful lot like putting cyclists on a reservation. All the trails should be open to used based on their impact to the land. Winter hikers to more to degrade trail surface via post-holing than bikes and the NS designation is simply a way to segregate trail users. The judgement of whether or not a trail is "ridable" should be left to the rider. Studies have shown that bike tires (especially fat tires) produce less psi on the ground than most hikers. (Comment logged on NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged
	C. Stinson	I do not support the creation of natural spaces if the trail construction is limited to class 1 & 2 and use is restricted to mechanized trail use. We have plenty of natural spaces all over our valley adjacent to our existing trail cooridors. These natural spaces are not aligned with the values, vision, and goals that you laid out in the Girdwood Trail Plan. Specifically, I believe that these natural spaces are so restrictive that they risk jepardizing the economic integrity of our recreation opportunities for which this plan is intended to protect.	Acknowledged

A. Wilson	In the first GTP comment period, the participating community asked for Class 3 and 4 trails, for all ages and abilities, the most. However, this latest draft document restricts trail use and development on a large chunk of the upper valley to primitive trails only. In particular, we object to the designation of two large areas shown as NS2 and NS3 on the Proposed Trail + Natural Space Network map. These are not the appropriate places to put restrictive limitations on trail use and future development. We ask that you remove these two Natural Space designations from the plan and map. (comment also logged on NS3)	Acknowledged
K. Bowlin	I am adamantly opposed to designating this as a natural space which precludes future use as a multi-use year round trail. This area is a natural extension of our groomed nordic trails and shouldn't be utilized as such. Trails hereMB should be designed to a class 3 or 4.	Acknowledged
S. Bowlin	I am adamantly opposed to designating this as a natural space which precludes future use as a multi-use year round trail. This area is a natural extension of our groomed nordic trails and shouldn't be utilized as such. Trails hereMB should be designed to a class 3 or 4.	Acknowledged
A. Romerdahl	The trails plan limits mechanized activities within this space, which would include limiting fat tire biking during the winter. This area has historically been utilized by fat tire bikes in the winter months. Fat tire bikes do not damage these trails or impact the natural features of the area. Also, fat tire biking does not result in user conflicts of any significance (if at all). Recommend including this historical use as allowable within the plan. Also, recommend that These trails be properly maintained at a level that includes brushing and clearing of downed trees and obstacles and support of appropriate trail surfaces. This will allow for safer trails and minimize trail "wander"	Acknowledged
J. Raymond-Ya	Page 36/p43: Stumpy's "primitive" Natural Space needs to be restored to encompass more area to the south, and to expand east to the CAT track - eliminate T13. This area: not 'building trails' - maintaining trails.	Acknowledged
C. Wilson	In the first GTP comment period, the practicing community asked for class three and four trails for all ages and abilities the most. However the last draft a document restricts trail use in development on the large chunk of the upper valley to primitive trail use only. In particular, we object to the designation of two large areas shown as NS2 & NS3 on the proposed trail and natural space network map. These are not the appropriate places to put restrictive limits on trail use and future development. (Comment logged for NS2 & NS3)	Acknowledged
P. Zug	Current and past winter use has included bikes. Winter grooming snow machines would be banned under these classifications. We need a 4 season hardened trail for all users from 4 corners next to Stumpys (Conways) route through to Crockets Bridge. Delete this natural area from plan.	Acknowledged
P. Zug	(comment regarding Stumpys Winter Trail #27 on existing conditions map) This trail cannot bar bikes or grooming vehicles if in the future it is demanded by community users. There are lots of great routes through this "natural area corridor" and terrain to make 4 season hardened trails - (that's what should be planned)	Acknowledged
J. Love	I am adamantly opposed to this. This Valley is in desperate need of more adequate multi-use trails, especially for winter time recreation. The ability to thin and spread people out would be a huge plus in my opinion. And this area is a clear connector to our Nordic Loop and should be constructed to comparable standards.	Acknowledged
M. LaRose	Strongly disagree with exclusion of bikers from this area. I would support excluding e-bikes/motorized.	Acknowledged
M. Weaver	I vote no! More trails will enhance the wilderness in our valley.	Acknowledged

	A. Davis	I would be extremely disappointed if bikes were to be prohibited on NS2. As a biker and xc skier, I have enjoyed fat biking and sharing these winter trails with all users for the past 8+ years.	Acknowledged
	Anonymous 5	Remove. The Forest Loop that was approved by the Girdwood Trails Committee and the HLB is not included in the plan. Please put this back in – another multi use trail in this area would be fantastic and provide additional options and spread users out. Ideally the Forest Loop would accommodate Nordic skiers, bikers (summer and winter), and walkers/runners (summer and winter). This “natural space restriction” blocks existing and future accessible, inclusive, class 3 multiple use trail systems	Acknowledged
	Anonymous 6	I don't have a particular issue with these locations, but don't understand why natural areas are part of this plan. Shouldn't LUC say where is/isn't appropriate for trails, then just color within those lines? Generally though development should occur in town and we're otherwise surrounded by "natural areas" in the state park and national forest. (Comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged
	P. Crews	Natural space restrictions that prevent the hardening and preservation of trails in the future are counter-productive to efforts to preserve our land. NS2 has been zoned for recreation and trails for many years. The Natural Space designation in that area should be removed from the plan if its restrictions prevent responsible planning and construction of sustainable trails. Regarding Natural Spaces in General: I think that Girdwood people would like to conserve our lands but they also want to visit our lands. We must include residents who can not or do not want use rough class 2 trails over important routes. If Natural Spaces do not include class 3 and 4 trails we should remove the Natural Space designations from the draft plan or else move Natural Spaces away from important developed trails.	Acknowledged
	Schwing Shoffr	Do not support. (full comment via email)	Acknowledged
	Anonymous 10	I would like to express my support of the natural spaces identified on map #8 and throughout the plan. These areas should be left primitive. I use these areas for hiking and to pick berries, and they are beautiful as they are. Natural spaces are important for our community. (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged
	B. Burnett	Strongly OPPOSE any NS designations. These do not reflect the will, wants or desire of the community. Open space is where one builds all of our trails in this valley. The proposed restrictions do not support sustainable trails, community connections or multi use trail based recreation. (comment logged for NS1, NS2 & NS3)	Acknowledged
	D. Croghan	I support all the primitive spaces remaining primitive including Stumpy, Virgin Creek and Winner Creek.	Acknowledged
	D. Essex	No. First, there is no "Stumpy's trail system". The summer route was pre-Stumpy. It was an animal route that locals would use to hunt moose. It is a social trail, and is not sustainable as it travels through Class A wetlands. Second, this area has been repeatedly zoned and defined as Open Space and Recreation Zone. In 2006, HLB commissioned a trail feasibility study to determine where to add multi-use trails to this area. I agree that the primitive trail should remain primitive, but I completely disagree with this proposed Natural Space covering all the uplands of the Girdwood valley, and blocking future trail system development.	Acknowledged
	M. Hawes	Remove. The Forest Loop that was approved by the Girdwood Trails Committee and the HLB is not included in the plan. Please put this back in – another multi use trail in this area would be fantastic and provide additional options and spread users out. Ideally the Forest Loop would accommodate Nordic skiers, bikers (summer and winter), and walkers/runners (summer and winter). This “natural space restriction” blocks existing and future accessible, inclusive, class 3 multiple use trail systems	Acknowledged

Pe. Ostroski	Natural areas should be in a different proposal separate from the Trails Plan. (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged
B. Raymond-Ya	• I unequivocally support keeping the Virgin Creek Natural Space (NS1), Stumpy's Natural Space (NS2), and Upper Winner Creek Natural Space (NS3) in the Plan as primitive, non-mechanized natural spaces. The point of these areas is to provide areas that are needed and perfect for not only in/near community conservation, but also (and most importantly in terms of this process) primitive trail recreation - especially the Virgin Creek and Stumpy's areas, which are the crown jewels of Girdwood's world-class primitive trail areas. (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged
B. Raymond-Ya	• The Stumpy's Natural Space should remain and be restored to its original, larger extents.	Acknowledged
Ch. Wilson	This draft document restricts trail use and development on a large chunk of the upper valley and lower valley to primitive trails only. In particular, we object to the designation of two large areas shown as NS1, NS2 and NS3 on the Proposed Trail + Natural Space Network map. These are not the appropriate places to put restrictive limitations on trail use and future development. (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged
Anonymous 7	Y (comment from map)	Acknowledged
Anonymous 8	I support the natural areas and the mtn bike areas <3 from Crow Creek (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3, MB1, MB2, MB3)	Acknowledged
L. Deschamps	No. I don't agree that this fits the natural space definition. It goes through class A wetland and it serves social need some of the year. However, it does not belong with being a natural space and blocking ongoing trail options.	Acknowledged
J. Dow	Again - the valley has adequate natural spaces surrounding it. I can support maintaining this area as non-mechanize but I do not support limiting the area to grade 1-2 trails. It is bordered by areas with robust trails - not having obvious access will likely lead to unsupported and destructive social trails. If trails are in place, people are much more likely to follow them and not go off on their own. (comment logged for NS2 and NS3)	Acknowledged
B. Dugan	all Yes. (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged
S. Dugan	I am for keeping all the natural space we can! I have lived here 45 years and I worry about our valley filling up with too many people. Trails. Airplanes. Etc. (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged
B. Germain	Important to keep these to preserve "wilderness" of our valley. (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged
M. Hammond	Kincaid Park in Anchorage has recently established a bicycle riding set of many trails criss-crossing the well established walking/biking trail. Keeping the bicycles off the walking-ski-running trails has been a great help. But I am concerned about these bicyclists impact on wildlife. That is why I support keeping these backwood areas free from developing further. Your plan of increasing trails in more populated (human) areas should save these backwoods area for non-human species. My concerns should also address the NS1 nature space as well. (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged
L. Hunter	Great location for a Natural Space. The flat lying wetlands area are great places to designate for walking, hiking, and XC. This is also great because it is near the Resort. Tourists can check out a beautiful, quiet part of Girdwood without the fear of multi-use traffic. This would be a perfect area to take my mom, who doesn't do hills, but loves to go outdoors. As long as there is one multi-use trail that connects B5 to the rest of the trail network, I agree NS2 would be a great Natural Space.	Acknowledged
R. Hutchins-Ca	Limits on signage should be done through the trails committee to manage trail users as needed. NS3 should not exist. Limiting the possibility of connectivity between the two MB2 & MB3 areas will create islands of use rather than an interconnected system of trails. (comment logged for NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged

B. Kohler	This project does not align w/ the Value, Vision, Goals. This community wants more recreation, more connectivity, more access. This project restricts w/trail class, and restricted use. Not authoring mechanized use? Is this "w" Wilderness? This project is at the end of an airport. It gets flown over 12 months a year. Better suited to 4 season multi use trails.	Acknowledged
J. Kohler	These projects do not align to the Value, Vision + Goals of the trails community. It restricts the connectivity of the trails and the users that access these trails. This restricts not only trail use by limiting users but future development as well. The community desires more multi use trails, not limiting trails to class 1 & 2. (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged
S. O'Brien	I support open space. I understand open space is not locked up land, but allows for hiking and cross country skiing in the primitive form. This is a user group in itself, but is open for all folks who like to go off trail. People are already using the proposed open space areas. (comment logged for NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged
J. Sauer	I am against all 3 "natural space" designations. They are unreasonably restricted and these designations don't reflect previous community input and/or what most residents and visitors to Girdwood want. Thoughtful trail planning and construction is what is needed, not closing off spaces. (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged
A. Schumacher	no. I don't agree that this fits the natural space definition. it goes through class A wetland. it serves social need some of the year. but it does not jive with being natural space and blocking ongoing trail options.	Acknowledged
B. Sullivan	Closing and designating these areas does not serve the interest of most Girdwood community and future recreation in the Girdwood Valley. These areas have best drainage and scenery for recreation of all kinds. Groups need to be able to create trails here now and future. Community has commented this area be utilized for recreation including ski trails and multi use trails. Snowshoeing trails could also be included here. (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged
J. Thomas	There is already an approved class 4 (trails committee & GBOS) trail in this area that is not included in the plan. The trail (forest loop trail) should be included in this area. Should be narrow track grooming along the perimeters of the meadows during winter in this area similar to moose meadow toward the end of last winter.	Acknowledged
J. Thomas	Should be open to biking and all classes of trails or be eliminated. (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged
M. Thomas	Why isn't the forest loop trail that was approved by trails & GBOS included in this area? The NS designation is not appropriate here since there is already a trail that is Class 3+ approved for this area. This designation seems like a way to undermine the development of a trail that has already been approved by the community. There should also be additional narrow-gauge grooming in the meadows. This was a very successful low/no-impact winter use of the meadows (done in Moose Meadows winter 2021).	The Forest Loop is not currently included in this draft because GNSC stated in May of 2020 that they were "no longer seeking the 4 to 5k Loop just north of the Airport (Forest Loop)." The project team responded accordingly and removed the trail.
M. Thomas	The designation of "natural space" in the trail plan is ridiculous. The valley is surrounded by State Park and National Forest which limits the land available to trail development. The valley floor does not need to be designated for low class trails and non-mechanized use when the entire surrounding area is already limited in development. The valley needs more class 3+ trails that are more family (stroller, etc.) and bike friendly not areas that further limit it. (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged

	T. Weaver	I believe more trails would benefit our community. There is more than enough area in our valley that will never be disturbed. Please do not go ahead with NS2. I vote no on NS2.	Acknowledged
	J. Wuerth	Given the extent of the proposed development in this plan, it is critical that each of the three natural areas remain part of the plan. Keep them as proposed and the benefits will last for lifetimes to come. (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged

NS3 - Winner Creek Natural Space			
	E. Teixmen	The segregation of bikes in these areas is totally unacceptable, then to combine that with the MB1,2,3 that doesn't exclude hikers seems an awful lot like putting cyclists on a reservation. All the trails should be open to used based on their impact to the land. Winter hikers to more to degrade trail surface via post-holing than bikes and the NS designation is simply a way to segregate trail users. The judgement of whether or not a trail is "ridable" should be left to the rider. Studies have shown that bike tires (especially fat tires) produce less psi on the ground than most hikers. (Comment logged on NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged
	C. Stinson	I do not support the creation of natural spaces within the existing trail network of our valley. We have plenty of natural spaces adjacent to our existing trail corridors, and access to the State Park Wilderness area. Natural spaces are not aligned with the vision of this plan.	Acknowledged
	A. Wilson	In the first GTP comment period, the participating community asked for Class 3 and 4 trails, for all ages and abilities, the most. However, this latest draft document restricts trail use and development on a large chunk of the upper valley to primitive trails only. In particular, we object to the designation of two large areas shown as NS2 and NS3 on the Proposed Trail + Natural Space Network map. These are not the appropriate places to put restrictive limitations on trail use and future development. We ask that you remove these two Natural Space designations from the plan and map. (comment also logged on NS2)	Acknowledged
	K. Bowlin	I am adamantly opposed to designating this as a natural space which precludes future use as a multi-use year round trail. This area is a natural extension of our groomed nordic trails and shouldn't be utilized as such. Trails hereMB should be designed to a class 3 or 4.	Acknowledged
	S. Bowlin	I am adamantly opposed to designating this as a natural space which precludes future use as a multi-use year round trail. This area is a natural extension of our groomed nordic trails and shouldn't be utilized as such. Trails hereMB should be designed to a class 3 or 4.	Acknowledged
	A. Romerdahl	While designated as class 1/2 trails, these trails should be properly maintained at a level that includes brushing and clearing of downed trees and obstacles and support of appropriate trail surfaces. This will allow for safer trails and minimize trail "wander".	Acknowledged
	J. Raymond-Ya	Page 36/p43: Winner Creek "primitive" Natural Space. This area: not 'building trails' - maintaining trails.	Acknowledged
	C. Wilson	In the first GTP comment period, the practicing community asked for class three and four trails for all ages and abilities the most. However the last draft a document restricts trail use in development on the large chunk of the upper valley to primitive trail use only. In particular, we object to the designation of two large areas shown as NS2 & NS3 on the proposed trail and natural space network map. These are not the appropriate places to put restrictive limits on trail use and future development. (Comment logged for NS2 & NS3)	Acknowledged

P. Zug	This relatively flat area is prime for mult use 4 season hardened trails. The act of setting aside "natural areas" to not be developed is a land use issue and had no business being in a trails plan. A trails plan needs to reflect the growing and ageing population's need for more 4 season hardened class 3 & 4 trails. Delete this natural area from plan.	Acknowledged
M. LaRose	Strongly disagree with exclusion of bikers from this area. I would support excluding e-bikes/motorized.	Acknowledged
M. Weaver	More nordic trails are needed, especially in the area of NS3. I vote no!	Acknowledged
Anonymous 5	Remove. If needed, this should be discussed in the Girdwood Area Plan. This could inhibit development of new ski terrain or other uses. It is an odd location since it is accessed by biking or winter ski use.	Acknowledged
Anonymous 6	I don't have a particular issue with these locations, but don't understand why natural areas are part of this plan. Shouldn't LUC say where is/isn't appropriate for trails, then just color within those lines? Generally though development should occur in town and we're otherwise surrounded by "natural areas" in the state park and national forest. (Comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged
Schwing Shoff	Do not support. (full comment via email)	Acknowledged
Anonymous 10	I would like to express my support of the natural spaces identified on map #8 and throughout the plan. These areas should be left primitive. I use these areas for hiking and to pick berries, and they are beautiful as they are. Natural spaces are important for our community. (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged
B. Burnett	Strongly OPPOSE any NS designations. These do not reflect the will, wants or desire of the community. Open space is where one builds all of our trails in this valley. The proposed restrictions do not support sustainable trails, community connections or multi use trail based recreation. (comment logged for NS1, NS2 & NS3)	Acknowledged
D. Croghan	I support all the primitive spaces remaining primitive including Stumpy, Virgin Creek and Winner Creek.	Acknowledged
D. Essex	No. There is no reason for this. It is flanked by two well-known primitive trails in the Girdwood Valley (Berry Pass and Crow Pass). This is area has been defined in previous plans as a future recreational area and commercial recreational area. This was not discussed at any length in the GTP committee.	Acknowledged
M. Hawes	Remove. If needed, this should be discussed in the Girdwood Area Plan. This could inhibit development of new ski terrain or other uses. It is an odd location since it is accessed by biking or winter ski use.	Acknowledged
Pe. Ostroski	Natural areas should be in a different proposal separate from the Trails Plan. (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged
B. Raymond-Ya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I unequivocally support keeping the Virgin Creek Natural Space (NS1), Stumpy's Natural Space (NS2), and Upper Winner Creek Natural Space (NS3) in the Plan as primitive, non-mechanized natural spaces. The point of these areas is to provide areas that are needed and perfect for not only in/near community conservation, but also (and most importantly in terms of this process) primitive trail recreation - especially the Virgin Creek and Stumpy's areas, which are the crown jewels of Girdwood's world-class primitive trail areas. (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3)</li> </ul>	Acknowledged
Ch. Wilson	This draft document restricts trail use and development on a large chunk of the upper valley and lower valley to primitive trails only. In particular, we object to the designation of two large areas shown as NS1, NS2 and NS3 on the Proposed Trail + Natural Space Network map. These are not the appropriate places to put restrictive limitations on trail use and future development. (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged
Anonymous 8	I support the natural areas and the mtn bike areas <3 from Crow Creek (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3, MB1, MB2, MB3)	Acknowledged
L. Deschamps	No, I see no advantage in this. There are 2 well traveled primited trails flanking this area (berry pass and crow pass).	Acknowledged

J. Dow	Again - the valley has adequate natural spaces surrounding it. I can support maintaining this area as non-mechanize but I do not support limiting the area to grade 1-2 trails. It is bordered by areas with robust trails - not having obvious access will likely lead to unsupported and destructive social trails. If trails are in place, people are much more likely to follow them and not go off on their own. (comment logged for NS2 and NS3)	Acknowledged
B. Dugan	all Yes. (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged
S. Dugan	I am for keeping all the natural space we can! I have lived here 45 years and I worry about our valley filling up with too many people. Trails. Airplanes. Etc. (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged
B. Germain	Important to keep these to preserve "wilderness" of our valley. (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged
M. Hammond	Kincaid Park in Anchorage has recently established a bicycle riding set of many trails criss-crossing the well established walking/biking trail. Keeping the bicycles off the walking-ski-running trails has been a great help. But I am concerned about these bicyclists impact on wildlife. That is why I support keeping these backwood areas free from developing further. Your plan of increasing trails in more populated (human) areas should save these backwoods area for non-human species. My concerns should also address the NS1 nature space as well. (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged
L. Hunter	As stated before I don't agree with designating places like NS1 and NS3 as hiking only. I think that limits the possibility for future development. With MB3 being uphill from NS3, I think that designation will cause major conflict. There needs to be the opportunity to connect the MB3 downhill trails with the bottom of the valley and the winner creek bridge. We can designate some hiking only trails within the NS3 and MB3 zones, these should be multi-use areas that allow for hiking only and downhill biking only trails. (comment logged for NS3, MB3)	Acknowledged
R. Hutchins-Ca	Limits on signage should be done through the trails committee to manage trail users as needed. NS3 should not exist. Limiting the possibility of connectivity between the two MB2 & MB3 areas will create islands of use rather than an interconnected system of trails. (comment logged for NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged
B. Kohler	This project does not align with Value, Vision + Goals. It restricts use and recreational development. Which the community majority wants. We are surrounded by protected space. Lets develop trails that lead there? This feels like a land grab by a vocal minority.	Acknowledged
J. Kohler	These projects do not align to the Value, Vision + Goals of the trails community. It restricts the connectivity of the trails and the users that access these trails. This restricts not only trail use by limiting users but future development as well. The community desires more multi use trails, not limiting trails to class 1 & 2. (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged
S. O'Brien	I support open space. I understand open space is not locked up land, but allows for hiking and cross country skiing in the primitive form. This is a user group in itself, but is open for all folks who like to go off trail. People are already using the proposed open space areas. (comment logged for NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged
J. Sauer	I am against all 3 "natural space" designations. They are unreasonably restricted and these designations don't reflect previous community input and/or what most residents and visitors to Girdwood want. Thoughtful trail planning and construction is what is needed, not closing off spaces. (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged
A. Schumacher	no. I see no advantage in this. there are 2 well traveled primited trails flanking this area (berry pass and cros pass)	Acknowledged

	B. Sullivan	Closing and designating these areas does not serve the interest of most Girdwood community and future recreation in the Girdwood Valley. These areas have best drainage and scenery for recreation of all kinds. Groups need to be able to create trails here now and future. Community has commented this area be utilized for recreation including ski trails and multi use trails. Snowshoeing trails could also be included here. (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged
	J. Thomas	Mountain bike area 3 should extend to MB2. This natural space doesn't make sense here. (comment logged for NS3, MB3)	Acknowledged
	J. Thomas	Should be open to biking and all classes of trails or be eliminated. (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged
	M. Thomas	The designation of "natural space" in the trail plan is ridiculous. The valley is surrounded by State Park and National Forest which limits the land available to trail development. The valley floor does not need to be designated for low class trails and non-mechanized use when the entire surrounding area is already limited in development. The valley needs more class 3+ trails that are more family (stroller, etc.) and bike friendly not areas that further limit it. (comment logged for NS1 NS2 NS3)	Acknowledged
	T. Weaver	This area would be great for summer and winter use. I would love to see more nordic trails in this area. I vote no on NS3.	Acknowledged
	J. Wuerth	Given the extent of the proposed development in this plan, it is critical that each of the three natural areas remain part of the plan. Keep them as proposed and the benefits will last for lifetimes to come. (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3)	Acknowledged

MB1 - Beaver Pond			
	C. Davidson	Hugely in favor of all M.B. trails development	Acknowledged
	K. McDermott	These two areas are uphill and steep making it almost impossible to ride without pushing a bike or mechanical assist. Trails like these can work if there is a shuttle possibility. Without that, trails will not be sustainable when they are this steep. (comment also logged for MB2)	Acknowledged
	K. Sandberg	I find this dysfunctional and dangerous. In between 2 hiking trails? First remove all illegal mt. bike trails and revegetate. Then rethink this - T7 is the down route? Make it biking only. Separate these out with signage. This, to me, is the most challenging problem in the valley and must be better thought out. Why not put the bike trails south of Abe's and have a separate down track. No use of hiking trails	Acknowledged
	N. Waggoner	I am providing a general comment of support for construction of mountain bike trails in all three of the proposed locations. Girdwood deserves a world class mountain bike trail network.	Acknowledged
	K. Bowlin	MB1 2 and 3 should be built as well. Girdwood has very few well constructed mountain bike trails which is unusual for a ski and outdoor adventure town. (comment logged for MB1, MB2 and MB3)	Acknowledged
	S. Bowlin	MB1 2 and 3 should be built as well. Girdwood has very few well constructed mountain bike trails which is unusual for a ski and outdoor adventure town. (comment logged for MB1, MB2 and MB3)	Acknowledged
	J. Love	I am in favor of all of these. More accessible and well constructed mountain bike trails in this Valley would be a welcome addition, for locals and visitors alike. (comment logged for MB1, MB2 & MB3)	Acknowledged
	B. Napolitano	Flow. Hire the Geo team for this project, they get it.	Acknowledged

A. Davis	I strongly support mountain biking specific trail development in all areas! However, I am disappointed by the minimal area dedicated to MB on the current trails map. MB2 should be opened to more development and for year round access. I would like to see MB trails developed along crow creek road from top to bottom. I also would like to see MB trails built along the Danitch trail behind timberline Dr. I support MB1 development. MB3 doesn't make a ton of sense without a connection between MB2-3. (Comment logged for MB1, MB2 and MB3)	Acknowledged
Anonymous 5	Interesting proposal. Was Chugach State Park consulted with the no biking regulations in this section of the park? Supportive	Acknowledged
Anonymous 6	Curious to understand why mountain bike areas don't include plans for individual trails. Hopefully standards of what is acceptable within these areas can be spelled out so it isn't just a blank check to do whatever within these polygons. Hope to see balance of skill level appropriate bike trails, green to black. (Comment logged for MB1, MB2, MB3)	All trail layout and design is very site specific for all uses. However, sometimes it is easier to define the control points of a proposed route for other trail uses like hiking and walking. Rather than identify conceptual loops that will most likely get changed, we have identified areas where this type of trail is appropriate and then let the experts design in detail as appropriate.
P. Crews	Yes! (comment logged for MB1, MB2, MB3)	Acknowledged
Schwing Shoff	Support all proposed Mountain Bike Areas (full comment by email)	Acknowledged
Z. Behney	Both of these are super! This is a potentially great asset to our community - The sport of Mtn Biking is booming - the resort is seeing increased ridership if we build it they will come! (comment logged for MB1 & MB3)	Acknowledged
B. Burnett	Strongly Support – This Zone should extend East to Crow Creek Road and take advantage of the “shelves” along the lower reaches of Abe’s & Cali Creek Trails. This zone will support dense ladder layout of purpose built MTB/multi use (One Wheel) trails. Must utilize uplands ground to build sustainable trails that avoid streams & wetlands. This zone should be built out similar to Anchorage Hillside trail system and managed in a similar manner.	Acknowledged
D. Essex	YES! I support all the purpose-built mountain bike flow trail in the Girdwood valley. Biking is the fastest growing sport, and the trails up to this point are both designed well, and loved by community members and visitors. These mountain bike areas are an important economic driver for Girdwood, and financially supported by a non-profit and Bikewood members. (comment logged for MB1, MB2, MB3)	Acknowledged
M. Hawes	Supportive	Acknowledged
Pe. Ostroski	A good start to the greater vision. Expand into the mountains and alpine to allow for more to gain more vertical drop. Plan well designed up routes to access alpine terrain with designated descents with natural feel. Propose a mix of natural hand built downhill trails along with machine built trails (Propose more vertical gain) (comment logged for MB1, MB2, MB3)	Acknowledged

B. Raymond-Ya	•While I know the idea is to find a way to reconcile the pressure mountain bike trail activities are having on the Abe's area, proposing to put a mountain bike area in the Abe's trail area (proposal MB1) could be seen as rewarding the unauthorized trail building there. This is especially so because there is no entity who is planning to build an actual park there, meaning this polygon could be seen as endorsing the unauthorized activities to continue. Getting mountain bike trail-building out of that area was a key part of the rationale for the mountain bike trail development in the 5K area. What we should have instead is a part of the Plan is to engage other entities to help stop unauthorized mountain bike activities; for example, GMB/Bikewood could do education in the biking community about this, and HLB and the State Park could work together to monitor the Abe's area towards the end of stopping the unauthorized biking activities.	Acknowledged
Anonymous 8	I support the natural areas and the mtn bike areas <3 from Crow Creek (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3, MB1, MB2, MB3)	Acknowledged
C. Brodin	This biking area needs to be separate from Abe's Trail. Abe's Trail and California Creek Trail need to be hiking only. No bikes allowed. These traditional hiking trails are being very negatively impacted by bikes.	Acknowledged
L. Hinderman	Support all MB Trail and can see some cross over in the winter with additional ski trails in the winter. (comment logged for MB1, MB2, MB3)	Acknowledged
R. Hutchins-Ca	I support the development of mountain bike trails in these areas. I am concerned that NS3 limits possible connectivity between MB2 & MB3. I would support MB connectivity over NS3. (comment logged for MB1, MB2, MB3)	Acknowledged
S. O'Brien	MB1 it will heavily increase mountain biking on Beaver Pond/Abes & California Creek. There are more bike trails in our valley between Alyeska, MB 2/3 & center of 5K than other user groups, I think this might create user group conflicts. There are many biking options from multiuse to biking only including the resort. Creating more trails education for all users should happen now. There is no where that states right of way practices such as bikes yeild to hikers. Our trail community is not educatng users and this needs to happen before more multiuse trails are created	Acknowledged
J. Sauer	I support these, so long as they are as nice a trails as the other new mountain bike trails around Girdwood. (comment logged for MB1, MB2, MB3)	Acknowledged
B. Sullivan	In support. (comment logged for MB1, MB2, MB3)	Acknowledged
M. Szundy	Im in support of more single track trails developed. Small house is a great example of a well designed and built trail for all ages. There is room for dozens more in that zone alone. (comment logged for MB1, MB2, MB3)	Acknowledged

MB2 - Near the Nordic 5K		
C. Davidson	Hugely in favor of all M.B. trails development	Acknowledged
K. McDermott	MB2 is a natural place for more single track, expanding on the existing trails. There is two issues with this space. One, it is all uphill and somewhat difficult for novices to access. Two, in the winter the nordic loops prevent access to the single track for fat bikes. Perhaps the cat track can be improved to allow access to that area.	Acknowledged
K. McDermott	These two areas are uphill and steep making it almost impossible to ride without pushing a bike or mechanical assist. Trails like these can work if there is a shuttle possibility. Withoug that, trails will not be sustainable when they are this steep. (comment also logged for MB1)	Acknowledged
N. Waggoner	I am providing a general comment of support for construction of mountain bike trails in all three of the proposed locations. Girdwood deserves a world class mountain bike trail network.	Acknowledged
K. Bowlin	MB1 2 and 3 should be built as well. Girdwood has very few well constructed mountain bike trails which is unusual for a ski and outdoor adventure town. (comment logged for MB1, MB2 and MB3)	Acknowledged

	S. Bowlin	MB1 2 and 3 should be built as well. Girdwood has very few well constructed mountain bike trails which is unusual for a ski and outdoor adventure town. (comment logged for MB1, MB2 and MB3)	Acknowledged
	J. Raymond-Ya	Page 36/p43: MB2 - keep these trails away from the Winner Creek trail; new MB trails should not further degrade the WC viewshed or soundscape	Acknowledged
	J. Love	I am in favor of all of these. More accessible and well constructed mountain bike trails in this Valley would be a welcome addition, for locals and visitors alike. (comment logged for MB1, MB2 & MB3)	Acknowledged
	B. Napolitano	Building more to add to what's currently out there would be fantastic for bikers of all ages and abilities. Some trails should be a little "old school" - techy and challenging.	Acknowledged
	R. Peterson	I disagree with the statement "Additional trails in MB1 will not be authorized until a parking agreement is in place, Arlberg is expanded, or another parking solution is identified". I would argue that the trailhead for the mountain bike trails could be considered multiple places, homes, downtown, the bike path parking etc. I would also point out that waiting for the parking lot to be built before building more trails will not discourage more use, but rather increase user conflicts.	Acknowledged
	A. Davis	Very excited about mountain bike specific trails! However, disappointed by the few areas dedicated to MB. The nordic 5k makes the most logical sense for mountain biking development given that the 5k already exists allowing access for trail building equipment and use of preexisting trails. I strongly advocate for year round access to these mountain bike trails especially as global warming makes grooming for xc skiing difficult, while fat biking is available year round. I have two concerns about MB3: that there is no current summer access to MB3 and this will require substantial development and significant funds just to get mountain bike trail equipment back to MB3, and that there isn't connection between MB2 and MB3 for flow trails between. MB3 is also a great place for hiking. I believe that MB up tracks are great multi-use and can be shared with hikers. (comment logged for MB2 & MB3)	Acknowledged
	A. Davis	I strongly support mountain biking specific trail development in all areas! However, I am disappointed by the minimal area dedicated to MB on the current trails map. MB2 should be opened to more development and for year round access. I would like to see MB trails developed along crow creek road from top to bottom. I also would like to see MB trails built along the Danitch trail behind timberline Dr. I support MB1 development. MB3 doesn't make a ton of sense without a connection between MB2-3. (Comment logged for MB1, MB2 and MB3)	Acknowledged
	Anonymous 5	Supportive. Continued development.	Acknowledged

	Anonymous 6	Curious to understand why mountain bike areas don't include plans for individual trails. Hopefully standards of what is acceptable within these areas can be spelled out so it isn't just a blank check to do whatever within these polygons. Hope to see balance of skill level appropriate bike trails, green to black. (Comment logged for MB1, MB2, MB3)	All trail layout and design is very site specific for all uses. However, sometimes it is easier to define the control points of a proposed route for other trail uses like hiking and walking. Rather than identify conceptual loops that will most likely get changed, we have identified areas where this type of trail is appropriate and then let the experts design in detail as appropriate.
	P. Crews	Yes! (comment logged for MB1, MB2, MB3)	Acknowledged
	Schwing Shoff	Support all proposed Mountain Bike Areas (full comment by email)	Acknowledged
	B. Burnett	Strongly Support – Build out MTB and Nordic Trail system similar to Kincaid and manage similar to Kincaid	Acknowledged
	D. Essex	YES! I support all the purpose-built mountain bike flow trail in the Girdwood valley. Biking is the fastest growing sport, and the trails up to this point are both designed well, and loved by community members and visitors. These mountain bike areas are an important economic driver for Girdwood, and financially supported by a non-profit and Bikewood members. (comment logged for MB1, MB2, MB3)	Acknowledged
	M. Hawes	Supportive.	Acknowledged
	T. Lydon	I'm not opposed to mountain biking development in the upper valley, but it'd be easier to comment on the proposal if it showed specific trails. I'm more easily in favor of MB2 development, which should be a focus well before new development in the MB3 area. MB2 also makes sense for its close access to the biking trails on the resort, which might also be improved and expanded to provide more mountain biking opportunities. (comment logged for MB2 & MB3)	Acknowledged
	Pe. Ostroski	A good start to the greater vision. Expand into the mountains and alpine to allow for more to gain more vertical drop. Plan well designed up routes to access alpine terrain with designated descents with natural feel. Propose a mix of natural hand built downhill trails along with machine built trails (Propose more vertical gain) (comment logged for MB1, MB2, MB3)	Acknowledged
	Anonymous 7	Y (comment from map)	Acknowledged
	Anonymous 8	I support the natural areas and the mtn bike areas <3 from Crow Creek (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3, MB1, MB2, MB3)	Acknowledged
	C. Doherty	Highly supportive of this plan and think it should be prioritized. The existing trails are very well built for all skill levels and there is plenty of opportunity for more trails within the bounds of an area that has already been developed. I understand the concern with parking, but as many cyclists ride to the trails from all around Girdwood, I don't think that there is any reason to delay starting construction while it is decided.	Acknowledged
	L. Hinderman	Support all MB Trail and can see some cross over in the winter with additional ski trails in the winter. (comment logged for MB1, MB2, MB3)	Acknowledged
	R. Hutchins-Ca	I support the development of mountain bike trails in these areas. I am concerned that NS3 limits possible connectivity between MB2 & MB3. I would support MB connectivity over NS3. (comment logged for MB1, MB2, MB3)	Acknowledged

	S. O'Brien	These seem like great places to have bike trails. Users can do the resort downhill move to the upper valley or bike trails on the 5k. This allows for 1 parking lot to serve all the bike trails. (comment logged for MB2, MB3)	Acknowledged
	J. Sauer	I support these, so long as they are as nice a trails as the other new mountain bike trails around Girdwood. (comment logged for MB1, MB2, MB3)	Acknowledged
	B. Sullivan	In support. (comment logged for MB1, MB2, MB3)	Acknowledged
	M. Szundy	Im in support of more single track trails developed. Small house is a great example of a well designed and built trail for all ages. There is room for dozens more in that zone alone. (comment logged for MB1, MB2, MB3)	Acknowledged
	M. Thomas	These areas should be expanded to create one large mountain bike area. This would also remove NS3. (comment logged for MB2, MB3)	Acknowledged
	P. Wilson	Full support for the continued development of these mountain bike trails.	Acknowledged

MB3 - End of the Snowcat Trail			
	C. Davidson	Hugely in favor of all M.B. trails development	Acknowledged
	N. Waggoner	I am providing a general comment of support for construction of mountain bike trails in all three of the proposed locations. Girdwood deserves a world class mountain bike trail network.	Acknowledged
	K. Bowlin	MB1 2 and 3 should be built as well. Girdwood has very few well constructed mountain bike trails which is unusual for a ski and outdoor adventure town. (comment logged for MB1, MB2 and MB3)	Acknowledged
	S. Bowlin	MB1 2 and 3 should be built as well. Girdwood has very few well constructed mountain bike trails which is unusual for a ski and outdoor adventure town. (comment logged for MB1, MB2 and MB3)	Acknowledged
	J. Raymond-Ya	Page 36/p43: Re MB3 – it isn't clear why it is considered sustainable to build MB trails in fragile alpine areas in the midst of a climate change crisis	Acknowledged
	J. Love	I am in favor of all of these. More accessible and well constructed mountain bike trails in this Valley would be a welcome addition, for locals and visitors alike. (comment logged for MB1, MB2 & MB3)	Acknowledged
	B. Napolitano	100% into this and its location	Acknowledged
	A. Davis	Very excited about mountain bike specific trails! However, disappointed by the few areas dedicated to MB. The nordic 5k makes the most logical sense for mountain biking development given that the 5k already exists allowing access for trail building equipment and use of preexisting trails. I strongly advocate for year round access to these mountain bike trails especially as global warming makes grooming for xc skiing difficult, while fat biking is available year round. I have two concerns about MB3: that there is no current summer access to MB3 and this will require substantial development and significant funds just to get mountain bike trail equipment back to MB3, and that there isn't connection between MB2 and MB3 for flow trails between. MB3 is also a great place for hiking. I believe that MB up tracks are great multi-use and can be shared with hikers. (comment logged for MB2 & MB3)	Acknowledged
	A. Davis	I strongly support mountain biking specific trail development in all areas! However, I am disappointed by the minimal area dedicated to MB on the current trails map. MB2 should be opened to more development and for year round access. I would like to see MB trails developed along crow creek road from top to bottom. I also would like to see MB trails built along the Danitch trail behind timberline Dr. I support MB1 development. MB3 doesn't make a ton of sense without a connection between MB2-3. (Comment logged for MB1, MB2 and MB3)	Acknowledged
	Anonymous 5	Maybe additional mountain bike trails in this area but no need to designate it as a Mountain Bike area. Multiple recreation groups can coexist without conflict.	Acknowledged

	Anonymous 6	Curious to understand why mountain bike areas don't include plans for individual trails. Hopefully standards of what is acceptable within these areas can be spelled out so it isn't just a blank check to do whatever within these polygons. Hope to see balance of skill level appropriate bike trails, green to black. (Comment logged for MB1, MB2, MB3)	Acknowledged
	Anonymous 6	Not sure this is necessary. Since this is a 15 year plan seems reasonable to start with MB1 & MB2 and reevaluate once that build out is complete if more is needed. With MB3 pushing into the most undeveloped area it seems like it should be tackled later, if the community decides MB1 & 2 aren't meeting demand.	Acknowledged
	B. Renfro	I think this is an important part of continuing to grow and improve the trail system in Girdwood. These trails would benefit multiple user groups, not just the mtb crowd.	Acknowledged
	C. Renfro	I think this is an important part of continuing to grow and improve the trail system in Girdwood. These trails would benefit multiple user groups, not just the mtb crowd.	Acknowledged
	P. Crews	Yes! (comment logged for MB1, MB2, MB3)	Acknowledged
	Schwing Shoff	Support all proposed Mountain Bike Areas (full comment by email)	Acknowledged
	Z. Behney	Both of these are super! This is a potentially great asset to our community - The sport of Mtn Biking is booming - the resort is seeing increased ridership if we build it they will come! (comment logged for MB1 & MB3)	Acknowledged
	B. Burnett	Sure, Why Not?	Acknowledged
	D. Essex	YES! I support all the purpose-built mountain bike flow trail in the Girdwood valley. Biking is the fastest growing sport, and the trails up to this point are both designed well, and loved by community members and visitors. These mountain bike areas are an important economic driver for Girdwood, and financially supported by a non-profit and Bikewood members. (comment logged for MB1, MB2, MB3)	Acknowledged
	M. Hawes	Maybe additional mountain bike trails in this area but no need to designate it as a Mountain Bike area. Multiple recreation groups can coexist without conflict.	Acknowledged
	T. Lydon	I'm not opposed to mountain biking development in the upper valley, but it'd be easier to comment on the proposal if it showed specific trails. I'm more easily in favor of MB2 development, which should be a focus well before new development in the MB3 area. MB2 also makes sense for its close access to the biking trails on the resort, which might also be improved and expanded to provide more mountain biking opportunities. (comment logged for MB2 & MB3)	Acknowledged
	Pe. Ostroski	A good start to the greater vision. Expand into the mountains and alpine to allow for more to gain more vertical drop. Plan well designed up routes to access alpine terrain with designated descents with natural feel. Propose a mix of natural hand built downhill trails along with machine built trails (Propose more vertical gain) (comment logged for MB1, MB2, MB3)	Acknowledged
	Anonymous 8	I support the natural areas and the mtn bike areas <3 from Crow Creek (comment logged for NS1, NS2, NS3, MB1, MB2, MB3)	Acknowledged
	C. Brodin	Very concerned about impacts of developing this mountain bike park including impact of summer hiking up the snow cat trail. Are they really going to ride or push their bikes up there? Concerned it will be motor assist to access.	Acknowledged
	L. Hinderman	Support all MB Trail and can see some cross over in the winter with additional ski trails in the winter. (comment logged for MB1, MB2, MB3)	Acknowledged

	L. Hunter	As stated before I don't agree with designating places like NS1 and NS3 as hiking only. I think that limits the possibility for future development. With MB3 being uphill from NS3, I think that designation will cause major conflict. There needs to be the opportunity to connect the MB3 downhill trails with the bottom of the valley and the winner creek bridge. We can designate some hiking only trails within the NS3 and MB3 zones, these should be multi-use areas that allow for hiking only and downhill biking only trails. (comment logged for NS3, MB3)	Acknowledged
	R. Hutchins-Ca	I support the development of mountain bike trails in these areas. I am concerned that NS3 limits possible connectivity between MB2 & MB3. I would support MB connectivity over NS3. (comment logged for MB1, MB2, MB3)	Acknowledged
	D. Knutson	I am excited about this potential trail system. It will benefit all user-groups by deconflicting other trails in the valley.	Acknowledged
	S. O'Brien	These seem like great places to have bike trails. Users can do the resort downhill move to the upper valley or bike trails on the 5k. This allows for 1 parking lot to serve all the bike trails. (comment logged for MB2, MB3)	Acknowledged
	J. Sauer	I support these, so long as they are as nice a trails as the other new mountain bike trails around Girdwood. (comment logged for MB1, MB2, MB3)	Acknowledged
	B. Sullivan	In support. (comment logged for MB1, MB2, MB3)	Acknowledged
	M. Szundy	Im in support of more single track trails developed. Small house is a great example of a well designed and built trail for all ages. There is room for dozens more in that zone alone. (comment logged for MB1, MB2, MB3)	Acknowledged
	J. Thomas	Mountain bike area 3 should extend to MB2. This natural space doesn't make sense here. (comment logged for NS3, MB3)	Acknowledged
	M. Thomas	These areas should be expanded to create one large mountain bike area. This would also remove NS3. (comment logged for MB2, MB3)	Acknowledged
	P. Wilson	Good to see this option as the future of E-bikes will make this area accessible.	Acknowledged

SP1 - Areawide Wayfinding			
	L. Maurer	Yes! Significant improvement is needed here. It is difficult to find and access many trails, even for long-term residents. It should not take a personal invitation to discover a trail. Organized hikes and trail access opportunities would be welcomed and appreciated.	Acknowledged
	Anonymous 5	Utilize the standard developed for the new Beaver Pond and Lower Iditarod signage. Provide guidance with examples in plan.	Acknowledged
	B. Burnett	Strongly Support both as they are key components of Trail Based Recreation best practices (comment logged for SP1 & SP2)	Acknowledged
	D. Essex	The signage is improving in the valley, ans I support an effort for additional wayfinding to trails.	Acknowledged
	M. Hawes.	Utilize the standard developed for the new Beaver Pond and Lower Iditarod signage. Provide guidance with examples in plan.	Acknowledged
	R. Hutchins-Ca	I strongly support the special projects. Improved signage and way finding in the Girdwood Valley can help manage trail use and users and truly showcase the diversity of our "World Class Trail System." A circumvalley trail or system of trails is very important to me. I am concerned that the proposed NS areas will limit the possibilities for this type of connectivity. (comment logged for SP1, SP2)	Acknowledged

SP2 - Girdwood Valley Circum-Valley Loop			
	J. Love	Yes! Yes! Yes! This sounds awesome!	Acknowledged
	Anonymous 5	There is a desire for recreational enthusiasts of all kinds of user groups for this circum- valley loop. Please make sure it is built up to Class 3 with biking allowed and not cut off by a "natural space restriction". Inclusive, accessible trail for all. Not just for the able footed.	Acknowledged

	B. Burnett	Strongly Support both as they are key components of Trail Based Recreation best practices (comment logged for SP1 & SP2)	Acknowledged
	D. Essex	Looping and connecting the trails within the Girdwood valley is one of the goals of this GTP. Leaving your vehicle in the driveway is a key value in Girdwood, and being able to experience a looped trail system valley wide a fantastic opportunity for Girdwood	Acknowledged
	M. Hawes	Supportive, but make it inclusive for biking use. No need to exclude these users.	Acknowledged
	R. Hutchins-Ca	I strongly support the special projects. Improved signage and way finding in the Girdwood Valley can help manage trail use and users and truly showcase the diversity of our "World Class Trail System." A circumvalley trail or system of trails is very important to me. I am concerned that the proposed NS areas will limit the possibilities for this type of connectivity. (comment logged for SP1, SP2)	Acknowledged

EXISTING TRAIL COMMENTS			
T20 Winner Creek Trail Extension			
	L. Maurer	We live across from this trail access point, and do not see it mentioned in the plan. In spring/summer months, we observe (and experience) people having difficulty safely accessing the trail by foot or bike. Some simple trail work could help to improve safety at this access point, which becomes very steep, rocky, and eroded during times of high rainfall. Overgrowth of brush is also an issue with limited visibility, and increasing bear activity. In winter months, grooming of the ski-back trail has created greater opportunity for access. However, poor grading and unmanaged vegetation results in ski patrol snow machines becoming stuck. We would be happy to provide greater feedback.	Acknowledged
5 California Creek Trail			
	DJ. Kiland	Retain as hiking only	Acknowledged
	D. Knutson	California Creek Trail should be maintained to provide access to Penguin Ridge. Currently this trail barely exists and could provide summer and winter access to a large area that could be used by multiple user groups. This could spread out use to other trail systems in the valley.	Acknowledged
8 Joe Danich Trail			
	E. Steinfert	this is a cool route! I desire improvements to make it 4 seasons, including bridges and minor muskeg improvements/protections.	Acknowledged
	M. Leeds	this is a cool route! I desire improvements to make it 4 seasons, including bridges and minor muskeg improvements/protections.	Acknowledged
	B. Sullivan	Joe Danich trail needs to be class 4, for multi direction and neighborhood, commuter use. A trail with minimum clearing, like 2 or 3, will be overgrown in a typical season and require maintenance. Locals need alternative routes than the bikepath to get anywhere in Girdwood. This corridor will become further crowded with human powered travel, Etravel, pets and modes of transportation, while next to a busy, loud highway. By creating alternative routes, conflicts and rules can be avoided.	Acknowledged
11 Max's Mountain Trail			
	E. Steinfert	I desire additions of benches and a picnic spot near the falls and improvements to the tread and drainage of this increasingly popular trail. It almost goes without saying that the parking trail head will need improvement. I'm sure the neighborhood would appreciate it.	Acknowledged
	M. Leeds	I desire additions of benches and a picnic spot and improvements to the tread and drainage of this increasingly popular trail	Acknowledged
21 Lower Winner Creek Trail			

E. Steinfort	I desire addition of a picnic spot on this trail. Additionally, a safety improvement is needed: People are regularly turning onto Upper Winner Creek by accident. I desire the sign at the tee be made more shiney and contrast-ed font with an explanatory map added. On upper Winner creek, I desire a 2nd "x miles to Berry Pass, x miles to Creek" sign be added in the vicinity of the rock garden with "x miles to tee to Hotel Alyeska Parking" written on the back to encourage needed u-turns	Acknowledged
M. Leeds	I desire addition of a picnic spot on this trail. Additionally, a safety improvement is needed: People are regularly turning onto Upper Winner Creek by accident. I desire the sign at the tee be made more shiney and contrast-ed font with an explanatory map added. On upper Winner creek, I desire a 2nd "x miles to Berry Pass, x miles to Creek" sign be added in the vicinity of the rock garden with "x miles to tee to Hotel Alyeska Parking" written on the back to encourage needed u-turns	Acknowledged

COMMENTS ON ELEMENTS MISSING FROM PLAN		
Anonymous 5	Trail access around the back of lots near Virgin Creek. They need to be shown on this plan.	Acknowledged
Anonymous 5	Trail development off the end of Turin and Virgin Creek Road. These trails exist and need to be improved to support the expansion of use in the area. Class 3 Biking	Acknowledged
Anonymous 5	Connection between T1 and the start of the Wagon Trail at Railroad Junction. Trail makes more sense along the edge of the railroad easement.	Acknowledged
Anonymous 5	Cemetery Trail system?	Acknowledged
Anonymous 5	The extension of the Lower Iditarod trail between the end of Karolius to the Glacier Creek Bridge.	Acknowledged
P. Crews	Untitled project Forest Loop Trail: These trails have been approved by the Trails committee and the GBOS. They should be included within the next draft plan map. The Forest Loop trails would provide additional easy walking, biking and skiing trails that the community wants. The forest loop area provides excellent trail building conditions. (comment includes map on page 9)	Acknowledged
P. Crews	Unlisted Project Danich Trail: The design and actual construction of the Danich trail as a class 4 commuter link between Old Girdwood, Downtown and the Timberland neighborhoods of Turin, Carolina and Barren Avenue should be a high priority. The visions, goals and objectives of this plan direct us to connect our neighborhoods by trails. Several dry routes are possible to achieve this goal. Currently social trails on parts of that route are beginning to show signs of social trail environmental stress especially in wetland areas. The best route should be plotted and the trail should be built to protect the land as soon as possible. The commuter trail should eventually be extended to Old Girdwood, likely in conjunction with the construction of bridge 1. The distance from Turin Drive to the Ice Cream shop via the Danich Trail is about 1.7 miles. The distance from Turin drive to the Ice Cream Shop via downtown is 3.5 miles.	Acknowledged
P. Crews	Unlisted Project Timberline Neighborhood Park: The land north of and including the Lower Virgin Creek Trail should be designated as Park Land dedicated to multi-use recreation including: 1 Easy trails through the forest for walking, biking and skiing. The trails should be designed for all ages and most ability groups. 2 A gazebo for neighborhood use. Picnic tables. Swings. 3 A kids bicycle pump track that is close to peoples' homes. 4 The neighborhood commuter trail to downtown and Old Girdwood. (refer to map from page 11 of comment)	Acknowledged

	P. Crews	MB 4: There should be a small mountain bike facility for kids in a park off the end of Turin or Carolina. Perhaps the park allows only walking or biking access with no trail parking on neighborhood streets. Moms will not want their kids to go biking at California Creek or Arlberg because that is far from home but a Timberline facility would be close.	Acknowledged
	M. Hawes	•Trail access around the back of lots near Virgin Creek. They need to be shown on this plan.	Acknowledged
	M. Hawes	•Trail development off the end of Turin and Virgin Creek Road. These trails exist and need to be improved to support the expansion of use in the area. Class 3 Biking	Acknowledged
	M. Hawes	•Connection between T1 and the start of the Wagon Trail at Railroad Junction. Trail makes more sense along the edge of the railroad easement.	Acknowledged
	M. Hawes	•The extension of the Lower Iditarod trail between the end of Karolius to the Glacier Creek Bridge.	Acknowledged
	L. Hunter	Project NS4 - If you are looking to increase the Natural Space areas within the Glacier Valley, I would recommend the space between California Creek and Glacier Creek, south of the town site. That is another beautiful wetlands areas that is flat, and would likely cause less user conflict as there is already a multi-use trail accessing that part of the valley.	Acknowledged

## COMMENTS RECEIVED BY EMAIL + NOT PROVIDED ON COMMENT CARDS

Comment	Response
Comment by J. Raymont-Yakoubian received by email	
Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this draft plan. Below are my comments and suggestions:	
Thank you to the Subcommittee and facilitators for their work on the plan to-date.	
I support the Plan as-written. While I do not personally like all of the proposed trails/projects, I still support the Plan and believe that it significantly serves the majority of groups that utilize the valley for various recreation and related pursuits.	
I am very supportive of natural spaces, as defined in this Plan, and am also supportive of the specific natural spaces (the “NS” areas on the map) outlined in this Plan.	
I think this plan can implement important conservation actions for the valley and at the same time encourage positive human-environment relationships through supporting engagement with mature, intact (or mostly intact) ecosystems.	
I am an active and frequent user of the areas included within (and around) natural spaces 1 and 2 on Plan maps, and would continue to use those spaces if they were formally designated as a result of this Plan. I have used these spaces for hiking, skiing, snowshoeing, foraging, nature photography, wildlife viewing, solitude and quite, meditation, yoga, spiritual practices, and also appreciate these spaces generally for their natural character, habitat values, ecosystem services, and other qualities.	Acknowledged
I am supportive of creating designated and contained spaces for mountain bike-specific trails (the “MB” areas on the map). I think this will reduce conflict between user groups.	Acknowledged
I would like for this plan to be called a ‘trails and natural spaces plan’ to more accurately reflect the content and scope.	Acknowledged
Natural space is not used consistently throughout – some locations say ‘natural area’ where they should say ‘natural space’	Acknowledged
I recommend adding the Muni’s Indigenous land acknowledgement to the beginning of this plan	Acknowledged
I think there are gaps in the ‘existing conditions’ information in the plan. The tables provided don’t seem to accurately reflect our current trail classes or mileage. Also, at one point Huddle told the Subcommittee that there were staff (or contractors?) that were out on the trail system documenting ‘existing conditions’, but we never heard any kind of reporting back about that work. Existing conditions should have included an actual GPS route for each trail, and a description of the trail, including areas that are ‘problematic’ (erosion, onioning, etc.). - not just building more and more	Acknowledged
On page 6, I recommend you also discuss all of the public comment on the plan and process that has been received by the Subcommittee both in written and oral format.	Acknowledged
Page 6: clarify what the 2 public meetings were.	Acknowledged
Page 6: The Subcommittee (not ‘Girdwood residents’) identified and developed values...	Acknowledged

Page 7: Values graphic – almost all of the statements are missing “natural spaces”. For example, “Experience: Girdwood Trails provide a variety of outdoor experiences” – should be revised to, “Experience: Girdwood Trails <i>and natural</i> spaces provide a variety of outdoor experiences”. Please revise the ‘values statements’ on pages 7 and 33 to all include natural spaces, as was intended.	Acknowledged
Page 7: I don’t recall a discussion of ‘safe’ when it comes to trails and natural spaces. I don’t necessarily want to know I am going into a ‘safe’ experience. It is also totally subjective - what is ‘safe’ for me could be outrageously unsafe for an inexperienced visitor. I think this language needs to be clarified or revised.	Acknowledged
Page 7: Goal 1 (here and elsewhere in the doc) should say ‘natural space experiences’ (not ‘area’)	Acknowledged
Page 8 map: natural ‘spaces’, not ‘areas’ in the key	Acknowledged
Page 8 map: Why was ‘NS2’ shrunk from previous versions of the map? That was not discussed by the Subcommittee and was done by the map-maker. My understanding was that it would be restored and corrected to include land over to the east, up to the CAT track. Please restore NS2 so that it includes the land between Glacier Creek and the CAT track.	Acknowledged
Page 8 map: Why has the location of T12 moved to now include the building of a new section of trail? Based on this map, the trail would cross both wetlands and AK DOT&PF lands, which is not feasible. I think it should be removed.	Acknowledged
Page 8 map: Where did T10 come from?	T10 is proposed to provide a connection to B5 from Arlberg
Page 8 map: Why is NS1 shrunk? That was not discussed by the Subcommittee and was done by the map-maker. My understanding was that it would be restored and corrected to include land over to the east, up to Wagon Trail. Please restore NS1 so that it includes the land between Glacier Creek and the Wagon Trail.	Acknowledged
Page 8 map: T2 is unnecessary and would cross wetlands.	Acknowledged
Page 8 map/page 36: It is totally unclear to me why the community and the Municipality would need, want or allow so many trails all leading to essentially the same place. It does not improve the ‘functionality’ of the trail system to have all of these existing and proposed trails leading to 4 Corners. It makes no sense.	Acknowledged
Existing Stumpy’s summer trail	
Existing Stumpy’s winter trail	
Proposed T12	
Proposed T 13	
Existing CAT track	
Existing Winner Creek trail	
Existing/future MB2 area trails	
Page 10: Fig 1: Please add that the existing GAP discussed system of natural spaces	Acknowledged
Page 10: Fig 1: I think it would be helpful to provide links to all of these plans so readers can access them.	acknowledged
Page 10: Fig 1: It is unclear where the info in the ‘CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE GIRDWOOD TRAILS PLAN’ column came from? Is this from the facilitators, or taken directly from the plans being referred to?	Acknowledged
Page 16: there should be a link to the 2019 GAP survey results if this plan is going to utilize them.	Acknowledged
Page 16: the Natural Spaces paragraph needs to be re-written. Primitive trails <i>are</i> trails, so the language doesn’t make sense. Also, the concept of natural spaces (under that term or similar terms/same concept) has been discussed, written about in plans, and in some cases enacted in the valley for decades.	Acknowledged

Page 16: 'out-and-back' trails are not necessarily a bad thing. Not every trail needs to be a loop.	Acknowledged
Page 20: Please correct - there is no 'nordic ski area' managed by GNSC. There is the 5k trail.	Acknowledged
Page 20: Not all 'winter/snow' only trails need to be upgraded/accessible in non-winter/snow months. It is totally fine to have winter only trails. Not every trail needs to be a 'four-season' trail.	Acknowledged
Page 22: It is no longer true that all groomed trails are in the 'upper valley' – there are now portions of trails in the lower valley that are also groomed for Nordic skiing	Acknowledged
Page 22: Please clarify what is meant about the snow storage issues for ABS trails?	Acknowledged
Page 22: The community has major concerns about the AHC bike path sweeps. The bike trail is an important travel route and I think the concerns should be discussed here (existing conditions, maintenance/issues with current trails, etc.)	Acknowledged
Page 24: Please clarify what 'limited amenities' for bikers means?	Acknowledged
Page 26: Please note that the bike path goes across the 'pedestrian bridge' also crosses Glacier creek	Acknowledged
Page 26: A year-round crossing is a 'desire', not a need.	Acknowledged
Page 26: This plan mentions multiple times that good cooperation and planning is needed for our 'complex system'. I agree; and I think that Alyeska should be involved in explicit conversations about parking issues at GTC and the Subcommittee. It has been said multiple times that they will never agree to a long-term parking agreement, but they have never been invited by GTC (as far as I know) to have a public conversation about this. They may not agree to it, and that is their prerogative, but I don't think we can take it off the table until they have publically addressed this.	Acknowledged
Page 26: I have not noticed trash as a major problem on trails - even on VC Falls or Winner Creek. Sometimes there is trash, but dog waste (summer and winter) is a much bigger problem. I do not want to see trash cans dispersed through the length of our trails. I'd rather see education signage and littering enforcement warnings, and trashcans at trailheads/parking areas.	Acknowledged
Page 26: The 5K Nordic loop needs to be remediated to bring it within the 30 foot easement, and the view shed of Winner Creek trail that was destroyed by 5K construction needs to be restored. I'd like to see more discussion of fixes to known 'problem areas' and maintenance of our existing built-trails in this plan – including 5K remediation and restoration.	Acknowledged
Page 31: How was 'seem to skew' determined? And in terms of 'safety' – again, this is highly subjective –what do you mean by 'safe'?	Acknowledged
Page 31: change to "Natural Spaces for Primitive Trail Experiences"	Acknowledged
Page 32: 'creek crossings will need to be addressed' is not accurate. <i>Some</i> might need to be addressed.	Acknowledged
Page 32: Please revise 'processes' language: transparency and streamlining are not equivalent	Acknowledged
Page 36: Please clarify what 'equitably' dispersed bridges are?	Acknowledged
Page 39: T12. This trail basically already exists and is entirely walkable, skiable, snowshoe-able, etc. It should be maintained in its primitive state, as part of the surrounding Natural Space.	Acknowledged

P39: T11 – I do not agree with this 'necessary' language. On high-use days when people are parking along the roadside it is never because there is no parking in the Alyeska lot. It is because they don't want to walk or ski on the (winter-groomed) sidewalk over to the trailhead. They should be encouraged to do that before building a trail through wetlands and further impact the WC trail experience. There are no prohibitions to access Winner Creek trail from the 'resort' side, nor from the Crow Creek road side.	Acknowledged
Page 39: T13 - there is a multiuse trail/s in the upper valley: WCT. 5K. Different trails at different times of year, but multiuse already exists here. See above comments about 6+ trails leading to same area	Acknowledged
Page 39: T14 should remain a winter, snow-cover only trail	Acknowledged
Page 36/p42: The Virgin Creek "primitive" Natural Space needs to be restored to encompass the area all the way over to Wagon on the east and Glacier on the west. Parking is not required for this designation - it is keeping status quo. In this area: not 'building trails' - maintaining trails.	Acknowledged
Page 36/p43: Stumpy's "primitive" Natural Space needs to be restored to encompass more area to the south, and to expand east to the CAT track - eliminate T13. This area: not 'building trails' - maintaining trails.	Acknowledged
Page 36/p43: Winner Creek "primitive" Natural Space. This area: not 'building trails' - maintaining trails.	Acknowledged
Page 36/p43: MB2 - keep these trails away from the Winner Creek trail; new MB trails should not further degrade the WC viewshed or soundscape	Acknowledged
Page 36/p43: Re MB3 – it isn't clear why it is considered sustainable to build MB trails in fragile alpine areas in the midst of a climate change crisis	Acknowledged
I would appreciate some additional discussion of climate change and how it may impact future trails development and the maintenance of existing trails	Acknowledged
Thank you, again. Please contact me if you have any questions about my comments and suggestions for the Plan - I would be happy to discuss them further.	
end of comment by J. Raymont-Yakoubian	

Comment from A. Wilson received by email	
Thank you for the opportunity to review and provide comment on the Draft Girdwood Trails Plan (GTP). My sincere appreciation to the tireless volunteers on the GTC and GTP Subcommittee who have helped guide this process over many years.	Acknowledged
My wife and I own a condo in Girdwood and spend a lot of time in the Girdwood valley recreating (year-round) on the local trails and at the resort with our children and friends. Both of us have lived and trained (I was a member of the US Ski Team and my wife was a member of the US Biathlon Team) in a number of world-class resort towns around the globe.	
In the first GTP comment period, the participating community asked for Class 3 and 4 trails, for all ages and abilities, the most. However, this latest draft document restricts trail use and development on a large chunk of the upper valley to primitive trails only. In particular, we object to the designation of two large areas shown as NS2 and NS3 on the Proposed Trail + Natural Space Network map. These are not the appropriate places to put restrictive limitations on trail use and future development.	Acknowledged
We ask that you remove these two Natural Space designations from the plan and map.	
We support a four-season trail network that supports all trail abilities and modes of recreation. We advocate for a more forward-thinking and inclusive trail plan that:	

· Provides opportunity for expanding Class 3 and 4 trail networks within the Girdwood valley recreational zones that have been established in previous plans.	
· Identifies spaces for future recreational development that include more Nordic ski and bike trail development. Currently, the majority of the existing winter recreational trails are in Class A wetlands that do not lend to year-round use.	
· Includes the Forest Loop (north of the airport) that has been approved by the Girdwood Trails Committee and Heritage Land Bank. This loop is not included in the GTP Draft maps.	
· Provides bridge connections over Glacier Creek and Winner Creek for year-round recreational use.	
· Provides opportunity for future Nordic trail development north of the CPG Winner Creek bridge area.	
· Emphasizes the importance of signage and wayfinding in making access to all trail classification levels inclusive and equitable.	Acknowledged
When you designate this area as a natural space with only primitive trails and minimized signage, you are excluding a very large contingent of potential trail users. Great trails with well-planned signage are a key component of what attracts residents, weekenders (like us), and tourists to resort towns like Girdwood. The trails and resort are key economic drivers and valuable components of a healthy, vibrant community. Thank you for considering our comments.	Acknowledged
End of comment from A. Wilson.	

Comment from Ch. Wilson received by email.	
Thank you for the opportunity to review and provide comment on the Draft Girdwood Trails Plan (GTP). I would like to extend my appreciation to the volunteers on the GTC and GTP Subcommittee who have helped guide this process over many years.	
My wife and I are property owners in Girdwood and divide our time living in Girdwood through the year. We have 2 boys who have grown up enjoying the Glacier Valley as well as Alyeska Mountain throughout the winter and summers. During the winter months skiing, Alpine and Nordic are our primary sports however we also enjoy Fat Biking and trail walking. Through the summer months we spend a lot of time hiking the trails through the valley as well as single track and downhill mountain biking.	Acknowledged
This draft document restricts trail use and development on a large chunk of the upper valley and lower valley to primitive trails only. In particular, we object to the designation of two large areas shown as NS1, NS2 and NS3 on the Proposed Trail + Natural Space Network map. These are not the appropriate places to put restrictive limitations on trail use and future development.	Acknowledged
We ask that you remove these three Natural Space designations from the plan and map.	
We support a four-season trail network that supports all trail abilities and modes of recreation. We advocate for a more forward-thinking and inclusive trail plan that:	
· Provides opportunity for expanding Class 3 and 4 trail networks within the Girdwood valley recreational zones that have been established in previous plans.	
· Identifies spaces for future recreational development that include more Nordic ski and bike trail development. Currently, the majority of the existing winter recreational trails are in Class A wetlands that do not lend to year-round use, we would like to see these trails accessible for year round access.	

· Includes the Forest Loop (north of the airport) that has been approved by the Girdwood Trails Committee and Heritage Land Bank. This loop is not included in the GTP Draft maps.	
· Provides bridge connections over Glacier Creek and Winner Creek for year-round recreational use.	
· Provides opportunity for future Nordic trail development north of the CPG Winner Creek bridge area.	
· Emphasizes the importance of signage and wayfinding in making access to all trail classification levels inclusive and equitable.	Acknowledged
When you designate this area as a natural space with only primitive trails and minimized signage, you are excluding a very large contingent of potential trail users. Great trails with well-planned signage are a key component of what attracts residents, weekenders, and tourists to resort towns like Girdwood. The trails and resort are key economic drivers and valuable components of a healthy, vibrant community. Thank you for considering our comments.	Acknowledged
End of comment from Ch. Wilson	

Comment received from C. Wilson by email	
Thank you for this opportunity to review and provide comments on the draft Girdwood trails plan. Our sincere appreciation to the tireless volunteers on the GTP & GTC Subcommittee who have helped to guide this progress over the many years.	
In the first GTP comment period, the practicing community asked for class three and four trails for all ages and abilities the most. However the last draft a document restricts trail use in development on the large chunk of the upper valley to primitive trail use only. In particular, we object to the designation of two large areas shown as NS2 & NS3 on the proposed trail and natural space network map. These are not the appropriate places to put restrictive limits on trail use and future development.	Acknowledged
We ask that you remove these two Natural Space designations from the plan and the map.	Acknowledged
When you designate this area as a natural space with only primitive trails and minimize signage you are excluding a very large contingent of potential trail users. Which includes myself and my husband and our family with four grandchildren. We all have places in Girdwood. My husband and I made Girdwood our permanent home 13 years ago. We do enjoy the beauty of Girdwood and the outdoor activities it has to offer. Hope we can enjoy more class three and four trails in the future with our family.	Acknowledged
End of comment received from C. Wilson.	

Comment received from T. Martinjak by email	
What makes Girdwood such a unique place?	
The current trail proposal should be a reflection of something that shows potential for us all, not 15yrs. Let's think of "layers," more than just one generation to come.	
I'm a physician who works in Anchorage but love what this town has to offer. I am extremely fortunate to be able to reside full time here.	
It's been quite a year. After long hours at the hospital gowned in PPE--I found solace in my backyard, Girdwood Valley. Long bike rides, trail runs, and ridge top hikes were the best medicine for me.	

Regarding the current plan; why do these trails not reach and push us higher into the mountains? The people that recreate and live here thrive in this terrain, but it stops pretty much at what's currently already in place. Further infrastructure such as the bridges proposed are a great idea, but why not add huts? Push higher into the alpine, <u>larger vertical gains.</u>	T-14 is a proposed trail that will access the Alpine areas of Girdwood.
We are a young community and shouldn't be so lackadaisical in its future planning. GV should be on par with other international destinations. We want trails that <u>challenge us all.</u>	Acknowledged
<u>Mountain biking and natural areas should be on separate proposals.</u>	Acknowledged
However, a shared up route is where hikers and bikers can coexist as in many other places. A family of young kids, teens, and grandparents can all experience the same views. Then at the top there can be multiple designated routes down. These could rotate or flip flop each year as to not disturb too much vegetation. Further development beyond the Cat road would achieve this. Machine built lower trails allow for safe skill progression. Steeper class 1 off shoots from a shared uproute would allow for safer and more challenging trails to progress as our biking community continues to grow. Parking should continue to be considered and expanded upon.	Acknowledged
It is our opportunity to show younger generations proper land development and caring for our forests can coexist. Poor land planning now will limit the potential of what Girdwood has to offer.	Acknowledged
We appreciate the volunteers and all the effort and time you have put into the future of our community and to let us all have a voice.	Acknowledged
End of comment received from T. Martinjak	

Comment by email from B. Renfro	
My name is Brett Renfro. I am very excited at the prospect of further trail development in the Girdwood area. I work full-time, but am also a wife and a mom. My favorite thing to do with my two young daughters and my husband is to go out <u>and enjoy the trails.</u>	
We have discovered that there is a limited number of trails accessible enough for our small kids. Although we recognize our kids will not be small forever, there will always be someone in our current position living or recreating in the Girdwood valley. Some of the trails we enjoy as a family in the spring quickly become over-grown and <u>impassible in the summer.</u>	Acknowledged
As a blanket statement, I would love to see more development/establishment of Class 3 and 4 trails and connectivity to create a large system throughout the area that is <u>enjoyable year-round.</u>	Acknowledged
Something I feel is unnecessary on the plan are the large, designated "natural spaces." Although I think that natural space is extremely important, we are fortunate enough to be SURROUNDED by natural space. If these large areas are established, it will limit the development of trails within them. Only a very select/limited number of people will actually be able to access and enjoy them. I think it is more important to make the area in and around our community accessible for everyone who lives here and also for the thousands of people who visit every year. This will lighten the traffic on the already popular trails, and create a more enjoyable and less-crowded experience for everyone out and about.	Acknowledged
I want to express my great appreciation to everyone who has been working on this. It's easy to read a plan and form an opinion, but to truly develop a plan is a lot of work. I hope the committee finds all the comments and opinions they receive helpful and constructive, and I hope the committee and the community can find a way to give every Girdwood citizen and visitor a piece of what they are looking for in the outdoors.	Acknowledged

End of comment from B. Renfro
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Coment from C. Renfro received by email		
	Thank you for the opportunity to comment,	
	Vision: Girdwood aspires to be a World-Class outdoor recreation destination offering residents and visitors a balance of trails and natural spaces that are interconnected, diverse, and sustainable. Girdwood's trails and natural spaces are vital to our community well-being, identity, and economy.	Acknowledged
	My family and I love it here so much. Being close to the Girdwood trails summer and winter is the reason we are here. We love all types of outdoor activities. We fish or pack raft Glacier Creek, we run and hike everywhere, we mountain bike on the trails or road bike to Bird. We stroll or bushwhack/route-find though the woods. In the winter we ski at the resort, xc ski, ski tour and winter bike. Sometimes we do all of those things in a day just to see if we can. Recreating in the outdoors with our family and friends is super important to us. We want a vibrant trail system for our children, but also for their children	Acknowledged
	The benefits of properly-designed, well-thought-out trails are many, but one crucial benefit that is often overlooked is environmental preservation. A well-designed trail greatly decreases the wear and tear on the surrounding environment that social trails create. You can see this happening on many trails in South Central Alaska, but also on trails in Girdwood that are and are not listed here on the GTP Draft map. Proper trail development and maintenance in Girdwood is so important for the long term sustainability and protection of the natural environment. To say that designating areas as "Natural Spaces" will, in a sense, protect them from being over-developed is a misnomer. Numerous social trails exist in these areas already and many of these trails are completely unmaintained and have poor drainage making them destructive to walk on.	Acknowledged
	After reviewing the GTP Draft and speaking with a number of our friends and neighbors who are familiar with the draft, these Natural Spaces (NS1,NS2,NS3) could be problematic for long term sustainability, connectivity and quality inclusive trail development. The use classification states that these areas would only allow for class 1-2 trails. This makes it difficult for people who are less able (small children, the elderly, those who are otherwise disabled) to move freely and safely on the trail. This is also prohibitive to cyclists (summer and winter)	Acknowledged
	Girdwood is surrounded by a lot of natural space that will only ever be accessed by the most able-bodied backcountry users. We think that it is super important that everyone be able to have easy access to the trail system, but most importantly the people who live and recreate here the most (the residents). The connectivity and ease of use for children and the elderly is also of utmost importance.	Acknowledged
	So build the trails! And maintain the existing trails that are part of our community. Let's be an example of what good trail development looks like and get ALL the people outside enjoying this valley because it is awesome.	Acknowledged
	Thanks for listening! We'll see you on the trail	
End of comment by C. Renfro		

Comment from J. Boer received by email	
I am unable print out this form, fill it out, scan it, and send it in at present. Please accept my comment on this proposed plan in this electronic format as I understand today is the last day to comment, and I very much want my voice to count.	

I am very much in support of responsible trail development in Girdwood as proposed in this plan and inclusive of additional trails I understand will be a part of this plan. We are lucky in Girdwood to have ample space to balance interests including preservation of our wild spaces and habitat AND recreational opportunities for residents and visitors. I believe we have room to expand recreational infrastructure, and that expansion does not materially impair natural habitats we all hold dear.	Acknowledged
Thank you for accepting my comment, and for all the hard work put into this plan.	
End of comment from J. Boer	

Comment from E. Corral received by email	
I'm Evan Corral, a Girdwood resident, lifelong Alaskan, employee of the Anchorage Fire Department, and a recreational enthusiast. I spend my time off from work whitewater kayaking, mountain biking, surfing, hiking, skiing, and enjoying being outside. I raced D1 collegiate Nordic skiing for 2 years. I also claim to be an environmentalist and unlike a lot of people, I do not want a lot of further development in Girdwood. The exception to this is trails.	
I am writing to give input to the proposed trail plan for the Girdwood Valley. While the plan shows great trails improvements, I see a major issue. The issue lies within the natural spaces NS2 and NS3. These natural spaces effectively pen off any expansion of the existing nordic ski trails to where they are proposed to expand. It also makes connecting the proposed mountain bike areas MB2 and MB3 very difficult.	Acknowledged
Our nordic trails are world class, and have hosted collegiate NCAA races. I have personally talked with the athletes, and they were fully impressed by the trails. The expansion of our nordic trails would help our community both recreationally and economically. Nordic skiing is a sport that provides a life-long skill that can be enjoyed late into life. It also brings in more users from other areas that will spend money in our town.	Acknowledged
The development of further mountain bike trails is also very important for our valley. We are currently at least 10 years behind other states as far as bike trails go. With the current upswing in the population of bikers, and the decrease in our snowfall, we do need to embrace the mountain bike user group.	Acknowledged
I do believe that there is a spot for the natural spaces to be in the Girdwood Valley, however the current areas where they have been placed to not make sense and are not practical. Please contact me if you need any more comments or have any questions.	
End of comment from E. Corral	

Comment from Schwing and Shoffner received by email	
Please accept these comments on the Girdwood Trails Plan.	
We are land and home-owning, full-time, year-round residents in Girdwood, Alaska.	
We greatly appreciate a multi-season, multi-user trail system in Girdwood.	
We live at the bottom of Crow Creek Road and every year, our road only gets busier and busier with cars and trucks, pedestrians, runners and bikers as they head for the trailheads further up the road. We have seen the parking lots at these few trails full to overflowing. We see more and more people on our daily dog walks and runs on these trails with each passing season.	

<p>We fully support the construction of more trails in Girdwood. To limit the number of full-access multiuse trails is a detriment not only to the growth of our community, but also inadequately addresses current pressure on existing trails. We need more trails so that what already exists doesn't get overused, damaged and crowded.</p>	
<p>One of our major concerns in the GTP is on page 3 of the GTP "Proposed Trail + Natural Space Network" Map, raises serious concerns for us. We have fewer trails in Girdwood presently than we did nearly six decades ago, but there are more and more people coming to visit and recreate in our community outdoors than ever before. This kind of restriction on land use hinders the growth of our community and limits what we are able to do in our own back yard. We use trails in Girdwood on a near daily basis. We want to be able to use even more of the land that surrounds us in a healthy and sustainable manner. The Natural Space Network essentially creates a wilderness designation right here in our town. We have doubts that this reflects the community majority and reflects only the desires of a select few. As well, "Natural Space Network" is a new and manipulative term in the GTP and it is inappropriate for any trails plan in a community like Girdwood. A natural space network limits any option to expand class 3 and 4 trails networks and it also limits the users. Furthermore, this map fully erases or relocates proposals that community members and committee members in attendance to Trial Committee meetings had already drafted, which plays to a minority, but again, not to the majority. Trails should be accessible to everyone, especially when they are public and the majority of the public's input should be considered, regardless of any risk of conflict. The public includes, bikers, hikers, runners, people with well-behaved dogs, skiers – everyone, not just "natural space users." It's unclear who those individuals would be. On the ground here in Girdwood, any day of the week, it's clear who the trail users are. Instead of cutting trail users off, let's protect the waterways and wetlands that are fragile while still allowing them to get to know the land around them.</p>	Acknowledged
<p>This new Natural Spaces designation also limits the following:</p>	
<p>The opportunity for expanding Class 3 and 4 recreational trail networks</p>	
<p>Winter or summer biking in these areas</p>	
<p>Groomed winter trails - even narrow-gauge grooming, which is extremely valuable to us as avid cross country skiers.</p>	
<p>The opportunity for a Class 3 transportation corridor within the Timberline neighborhood along the east side of Glacier Creek</p>	
<p>The opportunity for future Nordic trail development north of the CPG Winner Creek bridge area. This is also extremely important to us as we cross country ski on a daily basis in the winter and we are avid backcountry skiers.</p>	
<p>The approved Forest Loop trail system proposal by the GNSC</p>	Acknowledged
<p>We support a better future for the above-mentioned locations. We want those places to be developed and fully utilized by enthusiastic trail users in our community. Further, we feel strongly that this community needs more year-round, multi-use trails. Many of our existing trails are not accessible in the summer, because they are wetlands. AS our community continues to grow, as visitors increase in numbers during all seasons and as the climate continues to change, we need to think responsibly about how best to adjust to the needs of both residents and tourists far into the future. We need more trails, lest the ones we currently have and use become nothing other than clogged super highways</p>	

There are also items missing from the current GTP that have approval from the Girdwood Trails committee and the Heritage Land Bank. This includes the "Forest Loop." Why is this not included in the current plan?	The Forest Loop is not currently included in this draft because GNSC stated in May of 2020 that they were "no longer seeking the 4 to 5k Loop just north of the Airport (Forest Loop)." The project team responded accordingly and removed the trail.
Like many of our friends in neighbors who also call Girdwood their full-time home, we want more trails for all ages and abilities. Trails not only provide the community with a vast array of health benefits, they offer access to all kinds of people. While a ski lift ticket can cost \$100 per day, trails come with a very low price tag to the user, making outdoor recreation accessible to all races and classes - in short trails do not discriminate. Trails are also an incredible educational tool, and deeply needed at a time when it's growing increasingly difficult for younger generations to disconnect from electronics and screens. Study after study after study shows the mental health benefits of outdoor recreation on trails. Furthermore, as the community becomes an increasingly more popular spot for outdoor recreation, we need to think wisely about how best to welcome so many individuals to our community and reap the benefits of their visitation. Let's not limit trail access but make it easier for people to spread out and do what they love outdoors. They'll be more willing to spend their time and money in our community. We welcome them all.	Acknowledged
Let's look to other communities like Bend, Oregon, Boise Idaho, Bellingham, Washington and Salt Lake City, Utah where trails are easily accessible right in the backyards of the people who live there. As well, those people welcome visitors and reap the many benefits from business revenue that stays in those places. Perhaps it's even more beneficial to look locally, so let's use to Juneau, Alaska and Fairbanks, Alaska as examples to set up Girdwood for a bright future. In both of these great towns, residents and visitors share a robust network of year-round, multi-use trails that enrich individual lives and the community as a whole. That's the place we want to live. It's the place we want to raise our children. We hope for a GTP that allows our community to thrive, not one that stymies our ability to get outside.	Acknowledged
Our Feedback of the GTP:	
We do not support any of the proposed Natural Spaces.	Acknowledged
We support all of the Proposed Mountain Bike Areas on MB1 through MB3	Acknowledged
We emphatically support T1, T2, T3, T4, T6, T8, T9, T12	Acknowledged
We believe T13 and T14 need to be redrawn to reflect a previously proposed route.	Acknowledged
We support all of the bridge projects in this proposal.	Acknowledged

End of comment from Schwing and Shoffner received by email

Comment from S. Gottstein received by email

Thank you and I extend my sincere appreciation for the opportunity to provide comment on the Draft Girdwood Trails Plan. I want to recognize the volunteer efforts and commitment to all that went into the development of this draft plan.	Acknowledged
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I have been a full time Girdwood resident since 2005 and a part time Girdwoodian since the early 1990's. I work as a clinical therapist for children and families in Anchorage who have experienced complex trauma and/or negative mental health symptoms in their lifetime. I am a licensed clinician by the state of Alaska and a trained wilderness therapist at a community mental health clinic. I have been a lifelong environmentalist, conservationist, preservationist, and recreationalist. I provide this background information, because my comments on the GTP are connected to community mental health, resilience, recreation, and sustainability.	Acknowledged
Accessing trails, spending time in nature, and recreating in a variety of capacities is not only linked to an individual's mental and physical health, overall wellness, and longevity, but easy and regular access to nature and trails is what supports resilient communities. Being able to access trails builds resiliency and connectivity within a community. When we are able to access nature and recreation activities, we see marked improvement in community members mental health, use of healthy coping skills, and decreased disease. Accessing nature fosters environmental stewardship, activism, and community engagement. I believe that access to trails should be equitable, diverse, and inclusive. I wholeheartedly align with the vision and mission statements on the draft plan.	Acknowledged
The natural space designation appears exclusive or rather, not inclusive to the breadth of trail users. In addition, the inclusion of primitive trails within this development appears to do several adverse things; One, existing primitive trails deter easy access, proper drainage, and sustainable design that leads to users venturing off trail and therefore supporting a wider footprint to areas. Secondly, the sanction for such trails appears to limit any sustainable development of trails that future generations in the valley and trails users. It offers limitations on opportunity for future input, changes, or needs of the future generations of our public land users.	Acknowledged
An incredible way to conserve a landscape is to build a well-built trail. This deters other off trail impacts to the area resulting in trail scars. We can reference many older Alaskan trails in the Chugach State Park that would have much reduced or non-existent scarring, if trails were built initially. In addition, people live in our community, visit our community, and enjoy our community for its natural beauty and access to nature. If we sequester such access to primitive trails, we are limiting where users can travel to, and favoring those with the ability or specific recreation function to be able to use such trails.	Acknowledged
The initial construction of a class 3 or 4 trail is much different in appearance than what a trail matures to be in a very short period with vegetation regrowth. Example of a Class 3 trail being the Beaver Pond trail. That trail often feels overgrown and certainly is utilized as a single-track trail.	Acknowledged
An additional point is that deferring any trail building until increased parking is built negatively impacts the needs of our increased usership.	Acknowledged
In short, please remove the two natural space designations from the plan and map, as well as the parking restriction.	Acknowledged
As a weekly trail user, invested environmentalist, and one who cares about the preservation and sustainable development of our community- I support increased trail development in the otherwise proposed ways to support equal and inclusive use of our public trail systems.	Acknowledged
End of comment from S. Gottstein	
Comment by email from D. Croghan	

I have been very concerned how the last few sub committee meetings regarding the GTP were handled; specifically two members writing in new and very aggressive ideas on how the map should change and be presented to public. The committee did not favor the changes in part because it was too late in the process to add the radically different plans that had been discussed many times at these meetings. Unfortunately I see the map that was presented to the public did indeed include some of the new trails and cutting away many natural spaces. I feel this was not a good representation of what the map was intended to look like and once again it caused confusion to many who do not truly understand the scope and implementation of what the proposed lines all over the map would do to our beloved outdoor wildness experience in the natural setting of the Girdwood Valley!	Acknowledged
I believe Stump's area should remain as is and not have new trail shoots (in either direction) be constructed. The lines that are drawn on the map indicate a new class 4 trail and I am adamantly opposed to this in all respects. We most certainly do not need to keep cutting the forest back to access these primitive trails which would obviously change the experience on those trails. Also, the desire to squeeze another trail in between two existing (T13) trails is totally unnecessary. This already happened with the Nordic 5k and we have seen the devastation that was left squeezing in that trail	Acknowledged
The Girdwood valley has enough class 3, 4 and 5 existing trails which serves the community well and that's good. I support the primitive and natural spaces and this also serves the community well and that's good. Class 1 trails are totally under represented by those who indeed use them often. These trails are vital to myself and the many, many people that use them. I have heard many, many people agree with me and share the same value that these trails offer year round	Acknowledged
I support all the primitive spaces remaining primitive including Stumpy, Virgin Creek and Winner Creek.	Acknowledged
And if any muni department reads my comments let me make it very clear that it is extremely important that the Stump's area stay primitive (and at the very least the way it is now) and I am opposed to any future Alyeska Resort development in this specific area.	Acknowledged
End of comment by D. Croghan	

Comment by email from A. DuPont	
Thank you so much for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Girdwood Trails Plan. I acknowledge and appreciate all the work that has gone into this process and wholeheartedly support the trails planning process.	
This comment is from Girdwood Bear Aware as a local, citizens formed and community supported non-profit. Our mission is to reduce human-bear conflict in Girdwood and we are permitted with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in our mission related work. In 2022, we aim to complete a Human Bear Conflict Management Plan for the community that will outline and identify community goals and strategies for living alongside bears in the Girdwood Valley. Although that plan is forthcoming, we would like to see an acknowledgment of wildlife habitat, and specifically bear habitat, within the Trails Plan that is currently not captured.	Acknowledged

With that in mind, this comment is primarily aimed at the proposed trails and infrastructure within the California Creek drainage. That is inclusive of trails noted as T3 and T5 as well as the B2 bridge. As is described in the 2020 Girdwood Valley Trails Management Plan, California Creek is a critical waterway for salmon, steelhead, and Dolly Varden. As a result, this area is a draw for both black and brown bears every summer. The riparian habitat around the creek provides key forage and shelter for bears. While bears and humans do generally coexist and share trail space in the Girdwood valley, both species of bears have been observed using the California Creek riparian area for day bedding, food caching, and routine foraging. Trail placement within this area would result in the disruption and displacement of bears, pushing them into less desirable habitat, into the backyards of the community and increasing the likelihood for conflict. Furthermore, when looking at existing trails along the Alyeska bike path and well developed Lower Iditarod Trail, trail development running parallel feels both needless and structurally unsustainable.	Acknowledged
Aside from the California Creek drainage, there are no other areas noted in the plan that present an immediate concern for trail development through the lense of bear habitat. However, overall, we feel that wildlife habitat should be included for consideration throughout the plan in a way that is not reflected in the current plan.	Acknowledged
End of comment from A. DuPont	

Comment by email from M. Edgington	
I appreciate the hard work which went into developing this draft plan, but I feel for a variety of reasons it has fallen short of the plan document we need to support the critical importance of trails to the economic activity and quality of life of Girdwood, and to the vision and goals of the community.	
I do not believe this plan is ready for adoption.	Acknowledged
While I also have thoughts on specific trail projects, I'm going to keep my public comment to a few broader issues about the plan.	
1) The scope of the plan is too limited. We "aspire to be a world-class recreation destination" yet the projects are parochial. I really hoped for a grander set of proposals including wider connectivity to the Chugach National Forest lands to the north and east and Chugach State Park to the west. I would encourage more coordination with the Forest Service to develop a broader vision.	Acknowledged
2) The trail plan does not incorporate the plans for the trail system and bridge at the cemetery, nor address the recent HLB plan for development along Crow Creek Road and the area immediately north of the airport. While details of the latter proposal are surprisingly scarce, it clearly has the potential of shaping the development of the mid-to-upper valley, and the trails plan should be delayed until it can be incorporated.	Acknowledged
3) The plan should address the future land ownership of the primarily recreational areas in the valley. HLB is a land bank not a recreational land manager, and several parcels in the mid valley should pass to Girdwood Parks & Recreation for better alignment between the use and management.	Acknowledged
4) The biggest issue is that the trails plan veers too far into the area of Land Use, which is well beyond the scope of this document and the remit of the sub-committee. Any declarations by the trail plan on dedicated use, e.g. Open Spaces, or downhill single track, will be overridden by the new Land Use plan coming within the next 6-12 months. At the minimum it is premature to try to declare restrictions and land usage in this subsidiary plan with the comprehensive plan pending.	Acknowledged

End of comment by M. Edgington

Comment by email from D. Essex

Thank you for your time and energy creating this GTP Draft. Monumental effort with Girdwood being the benefactor.	
I am writing this as a concerned community member, and of course, a Girdwood Nordic board member. You were hired to create a Girdwood Trails Plan - not a Trail and Open Space, Trail and Natural Space, Trail and Park Space...a Girdwood Trails Plan. There is precedent set in the Alaska State Park System: Statewide Framework (1982) under Tony Knowles administration to define the open spaces and create a park map and plan...but that is not the task at hand. No inventory of Natural Spaces had been presented prior to show a need or justification to create more, yet it has now completely altered and erased basic trail proposals - both approved and awaiting approval - in the Girdwood Trails Plan. The term "Natural Spaces" is defined as a wilderness zone in Alaska State Park System, and nowhere is that term used in any municipal plan, Chugach State Park plan, USFS plan, or previous Girdwood plan. I have looked.	Acknowledged
Successful trail planning naturally creates open spaces with good trail buffers and sustainable trail routing. Historically, as a community grows, more trails are created for both transportation and recreation. When these needs are not met, social trails start to pop up and the well-maintained trails in place are overloaded. This is where we are in Girdwood. The majority of our trails were not designed for recreation, but are the remnants of old mining and logging roads. Rerouting is in order. The trails maintained by the USFS and Alyeska Resort are so popular most locals avoid them. Timberline neighborhood is dismayed by the traffic and trash left at the Virgin Creek trailhead. People are walking in Class A wetlands in the summer because Alltrails app says its a trail.	Acknowledged
The central parking and trail connections to parking/trailheads is crucial in the plan. You have presented this concept and it should remain the main focus. I also presented this idea and drew these connections on the GIS mapping exercise, but they were erased. I also drew a multi-use trail connection from the Arlberg parking area up valley to connect to the CPG CAT track, but it was pushed aside. That mapping exercise changed this plan for the worse. Two user groups were given zones, but no one else. One user group filled in ALL non-developed uplands in the Girdwood valley as a wilderness zone. That isn't planning. I have seen this before in Girdwood.	Acknowledged
Prior to the Girdwood Nordic Ski Club, HLB commissioned a feasibility study for 20 Kilometers of winter ski trails in Girdwood. The Girdwood Trails Committee was fearful it would be too close to Stumpy's trail, so only a small area between the CAT trail and Winner Creek Trail was allowed for development. When the trail was developed, people of course were shocked of the proximity to Winner Creek Trail. Including me. Had the trail planning discussion not been a fear based debate, but a parking and trail connection discussion leading a path for trail planning up valley - the 5K Loop would not be seen from the Winner Creek trail. Once the 5K Loop was developed, we received a grant from the USFS and had Nick Georgelos design a bike trail connection from Winner Creek Trail to the 5K Loop to reduce user-conflict on Winner Creek trail. This was voted down in the Girdwood Trails Committee. The result - four social trails have popped up between these trails with poor routing. The sad irony of fear based decisions blocking trail proposals, is the creation forest and wetland damage with poorly routed social trails.	Acknowledged

The Girdwood Nordic Ski Club's mission is to create a world-class Nordic/Multi-Use trail system within the Girdwood Valley for year-round enjoyment. The current GTP does not align with our mission as it restricts the majority of uplands in the valley and upper valley to primitive trails only - no groomed trails and no biking. Never before has this restriction been submitted in a land use plan, trails plan, parks and open space plan, transportation plan, or Resort development plan in Girdwood. It eliminates:	Acknowledged
The opportunity for expanding Class 3 and 4 recreational trail networks as presented	Acknowledged
Winter or summer biking in these areas	Acknowledged
Groomed winter trails - even narrow-gauge grooming	Acknowledged
Previous designation as Open Space and Recreation Zone set in previous plans	Acknowledged
The opportunity for a Class 3 transportation corridor within the Timberline neighborhood along the east side of Glacier Creek	Acknowledged
The opportunity for future Nordic trail development north of the CPG Winner Creek bridge area.	Acknowledged
The approved Forest Loop trail system proposal by the GNSC	The Forest Loop is not currently included in this draft because GNSC stated in May of 2020 that they were "no longer seeking the 4 to 5k Loop just north of the Airport (Forest Loop)." The project team responded accordingly and removed the trail.
Currently, the majority of Girdwood's groomed winter recreational trails are through Class A wetlands. Class A wetlands do not lend to year-round use. Our continued goal is to develop hard-surfaced recreational trails to be utilized year-round to increase user days, proactively adjust to climate change, and protect the Class A wetlands.	Acknowledged
We currently have a proposed plan north of the airport called the "Forest Loop" approved by the Girdwood Trails Committee and Heritage Land Bank which will eventually proceed to the Urban Design Commission. This trail layout is not included in the GTP Draft maps, but should be included as it moves forward. During the past thirteen years, the GNSC has heard the voice of the community growing louder in support for more multi-use trail development and trail connectivity throughout the valley. Following the first GTP comment period, Class 3 and 4 trails were what the participating community asked for the loudest - trails for all ages and abilities. Trails developed by local nonprofits are providing infrastructure to improve the health of residents and visitors, and are an important economic driver for Girdwood. The user-based trail funding is working and thriving in Alaska.	Acknowledged
My Feedback of the GTP Draft include:	

All areas designated as "Natural Space" to be deleted, and the Girdwood Trails Plan be created as contracted. This term is new to Girdwood Area Plans, and is not in alignment with "Open Space" and "Recreational Areas" as in previous plans, or any other municipal plan in the State of Alaska. The definition matches that of a "Wilderness Zone" as defined by the Alaska State Park System: Statewide Framework (1982). I love the progressive primitive trails in Girdwood - it defines Girdwood - but zoning all undeveloped uplands to "wilderness zones" with no biking allowed, and no potential Class 3 or 4 trails, does not serve a growing community. As it stands, there were more developed Nordic trails in Girdwood in 1969 than there are today. Instead, let's create strong boundaries around the rivers, streams, wetlands, and trails to create wilderness zones through the valley without restricting trail connections and trail proposals in uplands.	Acknowledged
The Proposed Trail + Natural Space Network Map should be redrawn to reflect the Girdwood Trails Plan this community wants to see. This map weighs heavy to the minority as it erased, or moved, trail proposals drawn by community members and committee members in attendance. To me, this map no longer represents the proposals presented. If the primitive trails and mountain bike advocates have a designated proposal area, then so should the Multi-Use Class 3 & 4 advocates. The GNSC should have the same latitude to have areas of trail proposals instead of a line bordering a new restrictive area. Routing trails should be determined by primary use and topography, not out of fear of offending another user-group.	Acknowledged
No on NS1 through NS3	Acknowledged
Yes on MB1 through MB3	Acknowledged
Yes to T13 and T14 - but routed as proposed, not as currently drawn	Acknowledged
I support a four-season trail network that supports all trail abilities and modes of recreation, while keeping Girdwood progressively primitive. I would like to hear from Community Members, Stakeholders, Residents, and Local Businesses that enjoy and benefit from a healthy trail system. I strongly feel that both our local community and visitors want recreation opportunities year-round by a connected existing trail system and protected corridors within this beautiful valley.	Acknowledged
Thank you for your time, and for your help planning for all of Girdwood trails – primitive, developed, social, paved, single-track and CAT track - they all lead to fun!	Acknowledged
End of comment b D. Essex	

Comment from M. Hawes received by email	
•There are many areas that traditional trail or mountain biking (summer and winter) is proposed to be restricted. Please note that there is no enforcement mechanism in the valley to stop biking from happening on restricted trails. Please don't create a document that promotes unrest in the community where people might try to enforce usage on certain trails. Specific example included below.	
•It seems that this plan has several components that attempt to close off or limit access and outdoor recreational opportunities in the valley. There is a general lack of inclusive, accessible, and multiuse trails in the plan. Loop biking trails and wider Nordic ski trails are not represented in plan.	Acknowledged
•There is a lack of Class 3 connectedness in the lower valley connecting Timberline Road and the Seward Highway. Please expand a trail so a full valley loop can be created for inclusive multi use.	Acknowledged

<p>•“Natural Spaces” is a concept that belongs in the Girdwood Area Plan not the Girdwood Trail Plan. If this is a trails plan, it needs to specifically deal with existing or proposed trails within the planning area. If a specific area needs to have less developed trails than others just reflect them as Class 2 or lower. There is an understanding that people in the valley want areas that have non mechanized trail uses for quiet and reflection. These areas exist throughout the Valley. Specifically, the trails along the bluff behind the mine roads, the social trails along the Glacier and Virgin Creek, The hike up Max’s mountain. Also, the Girdwood Valley is surrounded by Chugach State Park and the Chugach Natural Forest. There are plenty of places to find solace without blocking trail development in the Valley. Many of the three proposed Natural Spaces block existing use.</p>	Acknowledged
End of comment from M. Hawes	

Comment by email from Kirchner Cushman	
Thank you for the opportunity to review the Draft Girdwood Trails Plan. I am very excited to see investment in the positive growth of this community.	Acknowledged
My husband and I own a condo in Girdwood and spend an increasing amount of time year round, recreating in the Girdwood Valley as our kids grow.	Acknowledged
In the first GTP comment period, the participating community requested more Class 3 and 4 trails for all ages and abilities. However, this latest draft document restricts trail use and development of a large section of the upper valley to Class 1 and 2 trails only.	Acknowledged
When you designate areas as a natural space with only primitive trails and minimized signage, you are excluding a large contingent of potential trail users. Great trails with well-planned signage are a key component of what attracts residents and tourists to resort towns like Girdwood. I believe that even Class 1 and Class 2 trails should have signage.	Acknowledged
We also request that the NS2 and NS3 areas have the Natural Space designation removed from the plan and map to allow for future trail development. With climate change and impacts to down valley snow pack, it is important to maintain flexibility for year round trail access, especially groomed and maintained nordic trails in the winter and mountain bike and hiking trails in the summer.	Acknowledged
The community would benefit from nordic trail access in the lower or mid valley with trailhead parking access that would reduce pressure on upper valley trailhead use. This could be executed via a Class 4 trail that parallels California Creek at the old townsite and passes through the proposed TH5 or the TH4.	Acknowledged
Currently, many users access Penguin ridge via Abe's trail and then a bushwack to the ridge. Users often tell stories of getting lost. It would be beneficial to have a marked Class 1 trail from Abe's trail to Penguin ridge. Another location that would benefit from signage and some trail improvement near the top of the forested area is the trail that accesses Ragged Top mountain across from the Iditarod parking lot. A little guidance can go a long way to ensuring the safety of trail users.	Acknowledged
We advocate for a forward-thinking, four season, inclusive trail plan that:	
· Provides opportunity for expansion of Class 3 and 4 trail networks within the Girdwood valley recreational zones that have been established in previous plans.	Acknowledged
· Identifies spaces for future recreational development that include more Nordic ski and mountain bike trail development. Currently, the majority of the existing winter recreational trails are in Class A wetlands that do not lend to year-round use.	Acknowledged

· Includes the Forest Loop (north of the airport) that has been approved by the Girdwood Trails Committee and Heritage Land Bank. This loop is not included in the GTP Draft maps.	Acknowledged
· Provides bridge connections over Glacier Creek and Winner Creek for year-round recreational use.	Acknowledged
· Provides opportunity for future Nordic trail development north of the CPG Winner Creek bridge area.	Acknowledged
· Provides opportunity for future Nordic trail development down valley and mid valley with a connector trail.	Acknowledged
· Emphasizes the importance of signage and wayfinding in making access to all trail classification levels inclusive and equitable.	Acknowledged
The trails and ski resort are key economic drivers and valuable components of a healthy, vibrant community.	
End of comment by Kirchner Cushman	

Comment by email from T. Lydon	
Thank you to the committee and others who have put time into developing a draft trails plan. I agree a strategic plan is needed and I wholeheartedly support stewardship of our existing trails and development of new trails, both from community health and economic benefit perspectives.	
I enjoyed reviewing the draft plan and appreciate the vision put forward. I also appreciate the maps and helpful descriptions of the proposed trails and I agree with the emphasis on sustainability, maintenance, smart access, and travel connectivity within the valley.	
I have project-specific comments below but will start with a few overarching thoughts. I have not had the time to engage in this process or attend many meetings, so my apologies in advance if my comments address issues that have already been resolved or are covered in other documents.	
<i>Timing of Public Review</i>	
I do not think July is a good time to seek public review. Many Girdwood residents are too involved in commercial fishing, the recreation and tourism industry, fieldwork, and/or daycare for their children to put ample time into the draft plan. I hope another opportunity is offered to community members at a slower time of year.	Acknowledged
<i>Wildlife Habitat</i>	
One of my top concerns about the plan is the level of consideration given to wildlife habitat. From the values/vision/goals overview down to the specific trail proposals, wildlife habitat is described primarily within the context of wildlife viewing or other forms of human experience. But the plan lacks a treatment of wildlife habitat as a stand-alone value that can be affected either positively or negatively by trail design and development. I think wildlife habitat needs (rather than merely human access to the natural world, as presently described under Values) should be adopted as a value that is then incorporated throughout the plan.	Acknowledged
The plan would benefit from a description of the wildlife habitat that exists in our valley and the specific resources that are important to wildlife. For instance, our valley is rich with moose calving areas, winter moose range, bear feeding and breeding habitat, beaver dams, salmon streams, bird nesting and rearing habitat, and much more. A data-supported map of our valley's habitat resources would be a useful tool for residents to use when considering the trail proposals. This level of consideration would be good for both wildlife and the human enjoyment of wildlife that is emphasized in the plan.	Acknowledged

Acknowledging the presence and diversity of wildlife habitat does not necessarily mean not building trails. But it can prompt mitigations in design or consideration of tactics like seasonal trail closures that give wildlife some space during critical times like spring. Seasonal closures in other parts of the country are sometimes voluntary, which might not result in 100% compliance but still affords space and serves to raise public awareness about the wildlife habitat needs we all value.	Acknowledged
Additionally, with so much wildlife habitat close to our neighborhoods, a better presentation of how proposed trails intersect with habitats is an important safety consideration for human-bear interactions and other potential wildlife issues. Trail development has safety implications for both trail users and those living close to trails.	Acknowledged
Identifying wildlife habitats would also ensure designation of natural spaces aligns to the greatest practical degree with wildlife needs.	Acknowledged
<i>Trail Class Conditions</i>	
I agree with rooting the plan in the system of five trail condition classes used by the US Forest Service. However, I think it's essential that a packet of public review materials should include a more detailed description of the classes. Figure 4 of the public review draft is not adequate for giving the public an idea of proposed levels of development.	Acknowledged
An easy remedy is to include in the packet a table that describes the trail class matrix, which is included in the Girdwood Valley Trails Management Plan. Importantly, this resource describes the constructed features and trail elements within each class (i.e. bridges, boardwalk, drainage features, etc). Descriptions of constructed features are an essential tool for readers considering the draft plan's proposed trails and their impact on wildlife habitat, soils, hydrology, neighborhoods, recreational experience, <u>visitor use levels, and parking needs.</u>	Acknowledged
In contrast, the photos provided in Figure 4 provide almost no detail and could very easily be misinterpreted by readers. This is especially true for the Class I and Class II definitions, which represent a vitally important end of the trail development spectrum, where opportunities for remoteness, primitive recreation, and wildlife habitat needs are best protected.	Acknowledged
<i>Natural Space</i>	
Thank you to the committee for including natural spaces as a way to maintain balance and diversity of trail types and experiences. One important thing it does is secure non-mechanized travel routes, which are good for wildlife and people. As someone who enjoys multiple forms of recreation, I do wish the natural spaces were larger and that a fourth area would be created, perhaps north of town so there's greater opportunity for people and wildlife to find connectivity between natural spaces.	Acknowledged
It would be helpful if the Girdwood Trails Plan included a fuller definition of natural spaces and a well-rounded vision of their purposes. To me, trails in such areas would be designed and developed in a way that emphasizes wildlife habitat, clean water, intact soils and vegetation, and primitive-scale human opportunities that might include subsistence, foraging, route-finding, and enjoyment of undeveloped spaces.	Acknowledged
I am not opposed to trails in natural spaces, but I feel strongly that they should be limited to Class I. The USFS design parameters for Class I trails allow for regular clearing and construction of some bridges and other features to protect resources and accommodate access. They provide great opportunities for hiking, snowshoeing, skiing, and other non-mechanized activities that are important to preserve in our valley.	Acknowledged

Class II trails entail a greater degree of constructed features, wider tread, wider clearing of vegetation, and other features consistent with moderate development. Those design features easily bump a trail toward the more developed end of the spectrum and are more easily susceptible to intrusion by mechanized uses. Class II trails often lead to higher traffic density and greater public pressure to continue increasing the development level, at a cost to an area's wildlife and natural character. In contrast, Class I trails set a clear standard that maximizes enjoyment of remoteness and natural character and are less susceptible to creep toward escalating development	Acknowledged
Specific wildlife habitat needs should be considered for all Girdwood trail development, but it should be an especially high priority for trails in natural spaces. This includes considering how the density of trails in a natural area may affect wildlife habitat and connectivity. Natural Spaces 1 and 3 show a low trail density, but Natural Space 2 appears to have a trail density that would not give wildlife much space from people. If new trails were built in Natural Space 2, as proposed, I think it would be appropriate to also consider decommissioning some redundant trails in that area to lower its trail density and allow more room for wildlife needs.	Acknowledged
<i>Trail Density</i>	
The Girdwood valley has an estimated 30 trails totaling nearly 100 miles. Additionally, the valley has an unknown number of miles of user-developed trails leading in and out of neighborhoods. In areas like lower Max's, where housing has increased in recent years, user-developed trails are proliferating. Across the valley, such trails entail various degrees of grade choice, vegetation clearing, and development features. They are also adding to trail density in the valley and their effect should be considered as the committee plans adding new trails.	Acknowledged
Our trail system is an amazing resource for residents and visitors. I support construction of new trails in the valley, especially those that build connection within our existing trail network. I also support construction of trails and designation of areas designed specifically for mountain biking. But I also encourage the committee to maintain a focus on the existing trail system. It includes many good trails that can be upgraded or linked to nearby trails. In some areas described below I am concerned that proposed new trails create too much trail density, at a cost to wildlife habitat, solitude opportunities, and the enjoyment of our valley's natural character. As we commit to building new trails, I recommend we also consider decommissioning a few trails that might be redundant or suffer from poor design, erosion, unnecessary intersection with habitat, or other issues. But the fact that trail decommissioning is difficult and often unpopular is more reason to carefully consider how our existing trail network can be maintained or upgraded before adding new trails. I also encourage continued coordination with the ski area to maximize use of that already developed area to accommodate multi-use and other trails.	Acknowledged
End of comment from T. Lydon	

Comment by email from Pe. Ostroski
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<p>We are fortunate Girdwood is considering a revised trail plan for the future development and management of our land for recreation with the goal of becoming a world class outdoor recreation destination. We are also fortunate that input is taken seriously from the community as we work through creating a plan that is diverse and addresses the ever-growing need for high quality recreational opportunities in Glacier Valley. This plan and open comment period provide a chance to ensure we are thinking in a macro-sense where trails make their way into the alpine, and where we can have a variety of experiences outside of trails along the valley corridor. The current plan proposed should be recognized as a start, or first draft, but is in no way a roadmap to truly becoming a world class recreational destination.</p>	Acknowledged
<p>Let us recognize that Girdwood is a special place in Alaska where we don't see excess use of motorized recreation, poor land-use planning or unsustainable practices within our valley. It is clear that we don't want to lose our identity of a natural place, but a natural place can still be maintained with a larger vision of progressive trails. Girdwood has access to the alpine and the ability to connect ridges from each side of our valley. We sit amongst beautiful mountains, forests and rivers that should be incorporated into a world class trail system. Our system can provide ample opportunities along the valley floor, but should also push upward into the mountains that we live in.</p>	Acknowledged
<p>Many of us have experienced other world class recreational destinations such as Whistler, Bellingham, Coastal Oregon, Crested Butte, Tahoe, and destinations all over Europe. Girdwood holds similar geographic characteristics to these places. What we lack is the infrastructure of trails, huts and access to experience the upper mountains landscape. The potential to have 4000' elevation gain and challenging trails exists within our valley. We should look at the geography around us and aim to use this as a differentiating factor when proposing trails. Could there be a mileage goal, and a vertical drop goal...? With our terrain, we should have at least double the proposed amount of mileage. A vertical feet goal should be considered.</p>	Acknowledged
<p>In addition to expanding the imagined plan for Girdwood, the trail classification should not have strict parameters for each user group. In particular, bike trails come in many shapes and forms and should be looked at as a mix of classes, not just cornered into the fully developed flow category. There are proven sustainable ways to maintain trails outside of grade and surfacing that should be explored for our valley. A simple example of this is rotating trails every other year to allow organics to rework the surface and revegetate the trail.</p>	Acknowledged
<p>Concerning connectivity trails: (T1, T5, T3, T7) Resources could be allocated to expand the network instead of investing in short connections where a throughway may already exist nearby and accomplish a similar goal.</p>	Acknowledged
<p>Bridges: (B6, B3, B1) These projects seem to take the most logical connectivity points across the waterways.</p>	Acknowledged
<p>T13, T14: With the consideration to access the alpine for all user groups, it seems imperative that the existing Cat road becomes useable in the summer to the top of Notch and Sunnyside. This would open up an incredible opportunity for world class trails using an existing corridor. It would also provide a way to gain proper elevation, as an "up route" to many trails.</p>	Acknowledged
<p>Natural Areas: Natural areas should be in a different proposal separate from the Trails Plan.</p>	Acknowledged
<p>Trailhead/Parking: Key infrastructure improvements for expanding the trail network and preparing for potential user increase. (P4) Strongly agree to create a parking area that the neighbors are comfortable with.</p>	Acknowledged

MTB areas: A good start to the greater vision. Expand into the mountains and alpine to allow for more to gain more vertical drop. Plan well designed up routes to access alpine terrain with designated descents with natural feel. Propose a mix of natural hand built downhill trails along with machine built trails (Propose more vertical gain)	Acknowledged
In general, I think the plan could have a drastically larger vision that incorporates the goals identified by the community. We should be proposing trails that bring people into the mountains to experience our unique area. It cannot be overlooked that trails of a world class caliber, (using Whistler or any British Columbia town as an example) will bring economic sustainability to the area. Look at the increase of Mountain bikes in the state, and world. Recognize that we have the terrain to create something very special and unique to the State of Alaska.	Acknowledged
Girdwood is a vibrant community poised to create a world class trail destination, with progressive ideas and terrain to support the vision. As a community we identified values and established a vision to aspire to be a world class outdoor recreation destination. Let's use this opportunity to think big with our goals and expand beyond the valley floor with new development ideas.	Acknowledged
End of comment from Pe. Ostroski	

Comment received by email from Ph. Ostroski	
Greetings to all from North Conway, NH.....well...Intervale, actually, but folks normally have not heard of Intervale.....	
Yes, I know, why in the world would someone from NH be sending comments about your plans??	
LOTS of reasons.....besides coming to Girdwood since 2009 and owning a condo at Snow Raven since 2018....	
VERY quick background.....	
I have been involved in our mountain bike community here in NH for 20+ years now..... former White Mountains NEMBA board member....New England Mountain Bike Association.....leader and coach in the creation of the Kennett High School Mountain Bike Team in 1999, and board member of the newly formed White Mountain Bike Coalition here in the Mount Washington Valley in NH.	
Our area, like Girdwood, was kinda slow off the blocks when mountain biking was evolving. Having to deal with the USFS, besides state and local conservation lands, I have a fairly long rear view mirror to look into and see where we have been here and where we need to go.	
North Conway is now developing into a prime New England mountain bike destination. Like Girdwood, we are a tourist driven economy, with all of the positives and negatives that come with it.	
Our local groups had the vision to able to work with all of the local land stewards over the last twenty years to move the needle forward to provide high quality riding for all ability levels, with keeping the needs of multi-use in our limited area, NH being the size it is.	
The pandemic just emphasized so much the needs for folks to get out and luckily, we have the basic infrastructure and trail systems here to handle the ever larger crowds....even on a busy weekend, once you leave the trailhead, you really don't see that many riders.	
Please understand that the trail system was not developed overnight, but over years of planning and volunteer work.	
Girdwood now has the opportunity to plan and look ahead.....the demand is only going to increase.	

	Proper planned growth, with a more forward looking vision for progressive trails to me only makes sense.....anything less is really shooting yourself in the foot.	
	Destination mountain bike riding is here now.....everything from the Kingdom Trails in East Burke, Vermont, the flow trails being used and built in Bentonville, Arkansas desert riding in Fruita, Colorado, and Moab, Utah. The ski town of Park City, Utah has trails all over the Deer Valley, Park City and the Canyons.	
	This of course does not even scratch the surface of the ski areas that are now booming with bike parks, like Alyeska and around the US and Canada, say Whistler.	
	Girdwood now has the chance to become a summer destination mountain biking venue.	
	The mountain bike train has left the station, and if you have the facilities, people will come to drive the economy in Girdwood and share with the locals what Alaska has to offer.	
	We have had a few of the nay-sayers in our community who bemoan the mountain bikers, but the activity is here to stay, and Girdwood could be a perfect spot.	
	We have always tried very hard to plan our mountain bike growth over the years....NEVER...ready, fire, aim.....	
	Most of the mountain bikers in our part of the world are most environmental conscious, as they really get "it" and understand how things need to be done so they can enjoy their passion.	
	I have seldom agreed with "change".....not always for the better.	
	With that being said, with the ever increasing population and demand for outside recreation, notably mountain biking, PLANNED growth is the key to the future, both here in North Conway and Girdwood.	
	Access needs to be planned and created to ensure that the Girdwood Valley can move into the future with sustainable growth and infrastructure for outdoor adventures but allowing access to the alpine and eliminating natural spaces from any trails plan.	
	Just imagine for a minute, the Alps of Europe, with such a huge population and relatively small land mass, if they eliminate their alpine area for such activities.	
	With proper planning, Girdwood can still maintain its flavor and create an destination mountain bike area to please visitors and locals alike, to say nothing of creating opportunities to teach the local youth about sustainability and responsibility for the local gem which is their home.	
	You have before you a chance to make Girdwood way better than what it is now, but this will NOT happen without the vision and planning that is needed to provide the trail access that is in such demand.	
	Again, PLANNED growth needs to be the key to Girdwood's and the mountain biking community's future.	
	The many young trail users need to be listened to.....I can just imagine the depth of local trail builders and athletes who live in and near Girdwood that could be an invaluable source.	
	At 73 I HAVE seen lots of change in many aspects of life, and you just can't argue with evolution....we all need to embrace this and move forward with proper foresight.	
	Thanks for listening.	Acknowledged
End of comment from Ph. Ostroski		

Comment from B. Raymond-Yakoubian		
	Overall Comment	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If some easy but important fixes are made (e.g. the extents of the primitive natural spaces), and the primitive natural spaces are not trimmed away at any further, the maps represent a job well done in creating a system that serves everyone, is inclusive and diverse, and meets our identified values.</li> </ul>	Acknowledged
<u>Specific Comments</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I unequivocally support keeping the Virgin Creek Natural Space (NS1), Stumpy's Natural Space (NS2), and Upper Winner Creek Natural Space (NS3) in the Plan as primitive, non-mechanized natural spaces. The point of these areas is to provide areas that are needed and perfect for not only in/near community conservation, but also (and most importantly in terms of this process) primitive trail recreation - especially the Virgin Creek and Stumpy's areas, which are the crown jewels of Girdwood's world-class primitive trail areas.</li> </ul>	Acknowledged
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Virgin Creek Natural Space should remain in the plan, and be restored to its original, larger extents (i.e. from the creek over to the Wagon Trail as the outer boundaries). This is imperative, especially now as the Holtan Hills HLB RFP proposal threatens the Stumpy's natural space area; if that development occurs, the Virgin Creek Natural Space would be the only truly near-community primitive natural space plan left in this Plan, and so it must remain and in its full extents.</li> </ul>	Acknowledged
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Stumpy's Natural Space should remain and be restored to its original, larger extents.</li> </ul>	Acknowledged
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing conditions speak against the proposed fork trail (proposal T2) in the Virgin Creek Natural Space. With the exception of a connection to Wagon Trail, such connections already exist, as outlined in information provided to the GTP during earlier parts of its process. There are two primitive trails accessible via Danich trail as well as Virgin Creek and Turin Roads, all of which connect those three trails in looping fashion. Needing a connection to Wagon is all that would remain to be 'needed,' and could be accomplished via a trail outside the VCNS (which makes more sense if the plan is to upgrade Wagon to class 3 and groom it), or inside the VCNS by a small primitive trail and footbridge. However, 'needing' to connect to Wagon is a dubious 'need,' because that trail has no means of direct legal trailhead access on either end, and this is unlikely to change in the near future if ever, especially on the highway side.</li> </ul>	Acknowledged
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mountain bikes should not be allowed in any season in the Virgin Creek area. The Virgin Creek Natural Space should be primitive and non-mechanized. In addition to maintaining the desired trail user experience (which is primitive and non-mechanized), there also already appears to be significant damage being done to wetlands in that area seemingly as a result of winter biking and shoulder-season biking and hiking. This is one of the densest grouping of wetlands in the Girdwood valley and the most valuable riparian habitat and cluster of primitive trail experiences in the entire near-community portion of the valley, and it needs to be protected.</li> </ul>	Acknowledged
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The existing Stumpy's offshoot trail (which is above the meadows and goes along the canyon rim) should remain a class 1 trail (especially the part between the final meadow and the Winner Creek Trail, which is an area that, to my mind, should categorically never have anything in it except that existing primitive trail). It offers an excellent class 1 trail experience, while also providing an opportunity for orienteering activities which could be a growing economic and recreation use in the valley.</li> </ul>	Acknowledged
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With regard to the part of the proposed T12 trail which would involve new trail bending over to connect to T13 - and thus cutting through the Stumpy's Area Natural Space - I recommend this be removed. My desire is to not see new trails in the Stumpy's Area Natural Space, including new primitive trails at least for the foreseeable future.</li> </ul>	Acknowledged

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The GNSC has made statements recently which run contrary to information provided earlier. Recently they have indicated that they are pursuing the Forest Loop. The Forest Loop should not be added into any maps, in case anyone is entertaining that idea. There is no feasible access to the trail, which has not changed. The project has since sat for years doing nothing, having not gone to either UDC or the Assembly, while others in the community have presented ideas which are readily implementable for the area. The proposed trail also never had a valid approval at the GBOS level, whose votes on the trail were shown by the Board of Ethics to be contrary to the Muni ethics code. There was also discussion at the HLB in the past about this permission being pulled back because of the problems related to the contractual/easement violations in the construction of the 5K, which were discovered only after HLB approved the Forest Loop. And, additionally, last year the President of the GNSC wrote to the GTP, as an addendum to their stakeholder interview, unequivocally stating the GNSC was no longer pursuing the Forest Loop project.</li> </ul>	Acknowledged
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The GNSC appears to be intimating just now at nearly the last minute that they want the Danich trail to be essentially a class 3 commuter trail. However, on 9/17/2021 the President of the GNSC as a member of the GTP stated that her idea for a loop connection in the Virgin Creek area could be primitive (see page 9 of the meeting minutes), and on 2/2/2021 that same Subcommittee member stated that the Danich/Virgin Creek area is and should remain primitive (see the minutes for this as well). It is my strong view that the Danich trail and surrounding Virgin Creek area should always stay primitive; the participating public has resoundingly said that for years not only in the Girdwood Trails Plan meetings but also in other Girdwood meetings.</li> </ul>	Acknowledged
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>While I know the idea is to find a way to reconcile the pressure mountain bike trail activities are having on the Abe's area, proposing to put a mountain bike area in the Abe's trail area (proposal MB1) could be seen as rewarding the unauthorized trail building there. This is especially so because there is no entity who is planning to build an actual park there, meaning this polygon could be seen as endorsing the unauthorized activities to continue. Getting mountain bike trail-building out of that area was a key part of the rationale for the mountain bike trail development in the 5K area. What we should have instead is a part of the Plan is to engage other entities to help stop unauthorized mountain bike activities; for example, GMBA/Bikewood could do education in the biking community about this, and HLB and the State Park could work together to monitor the Abe's area towards the end of stopping the unauthorized biking activities.</li> </ul>	Acknowledged
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There should be discussion in the draft plan of revegetation and potential closure or relocation of portions of the existing Nordic 5K loop. There was an HLB investigation (which produced a report) which clearly demonstrated the trail was built in violation of its construction contract and easement agreement - and that this has not been remediated. The trail regularly exceeds its allowed easement width and utilized far more sources of gravel than were permitted. HLB itself is requiring revegetation efforts. It is also far too close to the Winner Creek Trail for a good deal of its length.</li> </ul>	Acknowledged
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The trail class percentages on page 20 are off. In one way, they are off because some trails have multiple trail classifications. But more importantly, they are off because the US Forest Service has been upgrading the upper Winner Creek Trail from a class 2 to a class 3 trail. This makes a significant change in the percentages.</li> </ul>	Will review this item
General Comments	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There were two purposes for this plan. The first was visioning a trails plan that was inclusive of <u>all</u> recreation uses - which includes primitive trails and the land requirements to ensure they are good experiences (indeed the world-class experiences that they already are). The plan is to serve the whole community, it is for the entire trails spectrum, and it is for the entire spectrum of recreation usages. That is the scope. Yet for some reason, the primitive natural spaces in this plan have constantly been trimmed at, sometimes for no stated reason whatsoever, or even because of inaccurate reasoning. Secondly, this Plan was designed to help move shovel-ready projects forward. Only two private groups in this town have shovel-ready projects; GMBA/Bikewood, and GirdWild. Both have presented to various fora about their concepts and have worked extensively with the landowners. Yet for some reason there have been constant attempts, which unfortunately the process has allowed to continue, to subvert the natural spaces work. It is worth noting that GMBA/Bikewood is getting three times the amount of bike parks they came in asking for, and their proposals are never trimmed back at all, yet in contrast GirdWild's work is constantly being undermined. This must stop.</li> </ul>	<p>Acknowledged</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The natural spaces here are not a blank spot on the map for insertion of random ideas. Nor are they just for conservation. They represent the areas required for our world-class primitive trail experiences, and are the best use of these areas for Girdwood. They also represent areas which one local stakeholder (GirdWild) has consistently been advancing as part of a system of natural spaces, which has been called for for decades in local planning. There is no reason they should be modified, especially while other proposals consistently remain unchanged and unquestioned (e.g. GMBA/Bikewood's).</li> </ul>	<p>Acknowledged</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the natural spaces are trimmed back further, then this Plan will lose all of its cohesion, it will not be within its scope of work, and it could very well lose support amongst those who have been supporting the natural spaces parts of the plan. If the built-trail community is going to insist on getting what they want everywhere in the valley, and are not willing to compromise on a few treasured primitive area gems, and if that is accommodated, then this Plan will fail in many key goals, not the least of which is providing hope that the community can take a step back from the trails conflicts by ensuring everyone gets something. With a model of 'everyone gets something' effected via designating a few areas as primitive natural spaces, this Plan could actually enable more trail work to proceed at a much quicker pace than in the past, because conflict would be reduced.</li> </ul>	<p>Acknowledged</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The discussion on page 18 in the “Demand for Expanded Trail and Natural Space Network” could be misleading to a reader. In the area plan townhall, for example, natural spaces were overly restrictively defined as just conservation. Yet it still remained a high priority for the community. Natural spaces are also, for example, usable for small primitive trail recreation among other things, and if they had been correctly identified as such, they almost certainly would have garnered even higher numbers, e.g. some of the narrow-trail support. Other work by the area plan which has gathered data of some sort or another has indicated robust support for natural spaces. The take-home message that “This data suggests a desire for more trails and natural spaces within the Girdwood Valley” is certainly spot-on. In the following paragraph, FYI, it is not true that natural space discussion has not been focused on extensively in the history of Girdwood-related planning efforts. It has been found directly in 1985 Anchorage Park, Greenbelt, &amp; Recreation Facility Plan; 1997 Municipality of Anchorage Areawide Trails Plan; both the 1995 Girdwood area plan and work in the current Girdwood area plan; 2006 Crow Creek Neighborhood Land Use Plan; and the HLB 5-year workplan. (And, as an aside, contrary to certain claims which have been raised recently, Girdwood is not ‘progressively primitive,’ i.e a situation where the near-community areas are built trails and the system gets more primitive as you move away from the community. This is demonstrably false; Girdwood has and values primitive trails right in the community itself. Additionally, the natural spaces concept used in this Plan’s process is not unusual;</li> </ul>	
<p>it references existing zoning, it is focused here on protecting half of the trails spectrum, it is found in numerous planning documents in one way or another, and there have been approximately a dozen mechanisms used to enshrine such types of spaces in Girdwood over the years.)</p>	<p>Acknowledged</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Following on the above comments, the descriptions of Natural Spaces should be consistent. What are proposed in this plan - and for good reason - are <u>primitive</u> natural spaces. To reiterate, given the scope of this plan, this is not a topic up for debate. We are talking about all recreation uses, about planning for the whole community, and about the entire trails spectrum 0-5. These primitive natural spaces are about protecting the class 0-2 end of the trails spectrum, and without them this becomes something it is not, a class 3-5 only trails plan. As a reminder, in terms of trails, primitive natural spaces simply entail being spaces which provide the conditions necessary to ensure good primitive trail experiences, and which stay as near as they are now into the future. Those conditions are things like: having enough space around them to have a functioning ecosystem; to ensure quiet soundscapes and undisturbed viewsheds exist; and to ensure the trails are non-mechanized class 1 and 2 max. Just as mountain bike trails and parks have certain requirements to facilitate the desired experience within them, so do primitive trails and the spaces for</li> </ul>	<p>Acknowledged</p>
<p>End of comment from B. Raymond-Yakoubian</p>	

Comment received by email from C. Scher		
	I had a couple comments on the plan; sorry for the last day notice.	
	I've been thinking about the plan a great deal and a few things keep coming up in my mind.	
	1. Prioritize projects: Right now it seems that all the projects have equal weight and value. I would suggest adding either a score or a timetable for the projects, similar to the AMATS MTP. Although I think a score is best, for the subcommittee, it may be easier to agree on 2-4 year projects and 5-10 year projects.	Acknowledged
	2. The "natural spaces" concern me: First, I understand the desire for primitive recreational activities. However, without established trails areas can get overused and damaged. Without signage, there is risk for injury or death, and the areas generally seem exclusionary. I think it would be better to provide reserve areas for natural vegetation and wildlife if you are going to set aside areas like this.	Acknowledged
	3. Wilderness island effect: I am all for more trails, and especially more accessible and accommodating ones. I also wish there were more trail crossings of Glacier Creek. However, looking at all the proposed trails at once, assuming they all go in, it breaks up large areas of previously undivided nature. What this creates are wilderness islands, or areas where species end up in isolation and increasingly reduced in population, health, and balance. These trails pay little attention to streams and their protective riparian areas that serve as wildlife corridors; they create multiple barriers to migration	Acknowledged
	These are my main comments, and I'm sure my little ones (i.e. spelling will get caught up by someone else). Looks like a good plan, though and I appreciate all the information, mapping, and efforts that have gone into it!	Acknowledged
End of comment by C. Scher		

Comment received by email from K. Tryck		
	I've watched Girdwood grow from a community of 125 to what it is today and the only thing for sure is change. Guiding this change is a big task and I'm pleased to see this product, particularly the efforts of the Nordic Ski Club whose trails come closest to serving the most people year round.	
	The population is 15 times greater today than it was in the late 1960s and it will continue to grow. More people will visit and they will use the all season trail system. The easier the essential primary access is for the most people, the better for all.	Acknowledged
	(other comments logged on comment card)	
End of comment from K. Tryck		

Comment received by email from P. Zumstein		
	Thank you for this opportunity. It is obvious the amount of work and dedication that was put into putting this all together cohesively. The following are my comments. Please note that I will be focusing on what I disagree with in the draft plan, though there are many aspects of it that I support and should be implemented.	
	<u>Wildlife Corridors and Habitat</u>	
	Wildlife habitat is truly needs to be identified as a value in the trails plan. Wildlife corridors are needed to maintain the populations of large mammals that occupy this valley with us. Building trails in areas of known travel, especially the areas that are eating and breeding habitat must be maintained. It is a safety issue to build trails in these locations, for both the trail user as well as nearby neighborhoods where the animals will inevitably be pushed into.	Acknowledged
	<u>T3 Trail Opposition</u>	

<p>I am very opposed to the T3 trail, primarily because it is a redundant trail, as the lower Iditarod provides completely adequate access to the lower valley. This trail section would not be a good investment, especially with general statements in the plan like "Structures are permitted to traverse wetlands". The amount of "structures" aka expensive turnpikes, puncheons, and bridges would be overwhelming, and would be a nightmare for maintenance, therefore not worth the cost that would be consistently sunk into perpetuity. Again, the lower Iditarod trail, with it's recent improvement makes this trail unnecessary. In addition, this swath of land running along California creek is a key wildlife corridor that allows animals to travel up and down valley unmolested and without needing to cross into yards and properties. I will discuss this further in T5.</p>	<p>Acknowledged</p>
<p><u>T5 East Side Trail and B2 Bridge Opposition</u></p>	
<p>I am very opposed to the T5 trail section East of Alyeska highway and the associated B2 bridge.</p>	
<p>A. Redundant</p>	
<p>a. According to the plan, the purpose of this trail is to create a more connected network of trails. "This trail would serve as a critical link in the valley's trail system, serving both the lower valley neighborhoods as well as visitors to the valley." The creation of this trail, much like T5, is unnecessary due to the lower Iditarod Trail and Ruane connection. It is only a few hundred yards down trail. Why try to create another connector point that is so close?</p>	
<p>B. Not worth the money</p>	
<p>a. The proposed location is heavily, and I mean heavily influenced by beavers. The plan states "Boardwalk structures can be used to cross wetlands where necessary". Whoever wrote that has not seen the proposed location because it would take more than boardwalk structures to cross the area let alone make it bikeable. This is truly not worth the investment unless you feel like moving all the boardwalks and the bridge every few years when the beavers reroute the creek again. Please look at <u>aerial imagery for the proposed area</u>.</p>	
<p>b. The bridge creation to support a redundant trail in a location inhospitable for trail creation, is a huge investment for very little return.</p>	
<p>C. Within Critical Wildlife Habitat</p>	
<p>a. The proposed trail location goes over what is probably the most important black and brown bear habitat in the lower valley. I have personally seen brown bears mating, fighting, fishing, and burying carcasses on many many occasions. All 5 species of salmon have been seen in that location, and that exact spot is the primary coho spawning ground in California Creek. This area needs to be kept undisturbed.</p>	
<p>b. With this much bear activity, a trail would have 2 primary effects in regards to human safety. One, there would be a significant increase in bear encounters with trail users, as the bears are unlikely to completely abandon their prime salmon fishing spot. These encounters would often be surprise bear encounters if the trail is built to Class 3 bike design parameters. Did I mention I've seen multiple brown bear sows with cubs there every year? Two, if there is enough trail traffic to push out the bears from this prime habitat (probably only outside of berry and salmon season), the bears are much more likely to use neighborhoods and/or the lower Iditarod Trail as their thoroughfares. These sound like undesirable situations for everyone, especially for a trail that is not very practical and extremely maintenance and expense heavy.</p>	

Again, I apologize for focusing on the negative here, but when I ask myself "is the juice worth the squeeze" for these proposed trails, the answer is absolutely not. It is not worth the time and investment of the community to pursue the development of these trails due to their inherent design flaws, negative impact to other equally important resources, and their redundancy.	Acknowledged
End of comment from P. Zumstein	

Comment received by email from R. Brandon	
As a resident of Girdwood since 1972, I have personally witnessed unbelievable changes and development in this valley.	Acknowledged
And the development of our Girdwood trail system has been fairly measured, and pretty carefully developed over time.	
But what I am seeing lately with several of these new proposals is reason to cause myself and others real concern over basically too much too soon.	
I understand that having a well thought out trails system is important for any community, but it is equally important that over building our trail system can be very detrimental in terms of overcrowding the entire area.	
The old adage that "if you build it they will come", fits my concerns to a "T".	
It only takes a brief glance at the current trails map to see that we already have more than a fair share of variety in trails already. And with the steady increase in tourism and residency in Girdwood, I can see a time in the not too distant future when almost all of our trails become as busy as the current Winner Creek trail is today.	
And any increase in the trails activity strips away from numerous reasons that so many of us enjoy them, like ruggedness, solitude, and contemplation away from others.	
More specifically, the proposed trail currently known as the Danish trail connecting with a proposed parking area located off the Seward Hwy near the old Alaska Railroad gravel pit, listed as trail number 9.	
The trail itself, I feel is an unnecessary link to other trails already in use. And it is one of the very few trails that should always remain in its wilderness/primitive state. The proposal to provide parking access off the Seward Hwy is a dangerous point of auto access in that it is located on a corner that would cause for numerous accident prone events as drivers would be slowing down, and stopping traffic in both directions.	
My main concerns regarding the current problems with the Virgin Creek fall, and parking problems are many, but I would like to see a workable parking solution, and even more important, I would like to see a significant reduction in traffic, and speeders on Timberline Drive.	
I urge you, for the sake of keeping Girdwood a special place, to please, please leave the above mentioned trails, and several others in their current and historic condition as Class 1, primitive status for all of us to enjoy as they currently are.	
End of comment from R. Brandon	

Comment from L. Hunter
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Let me start off by saying I LOVE that you are making plans to expand the trail network in Girdwood. As a full time resident of Girdwood, an avid walker, runner, hiker, biker, and novice XC skier, I am excited to see some new trails. After 6 years, I have done them all! I personally miss the connectivity of Winner Creek Trail across Glacier Creek. Biking, hiking, and running the Winner Creek Loop was one of my favorite trails in Girdwood. Also, XC on the primitive trails in the back of "NS2" is one of my favorite places to get some solitude.	Acknowledged
A bit more about me, I am a full resident and land owner here in Girdwood. I have been here for 6 years, and plan to raise a family in this town. My mind is on the future and long term expansion of the Girdwood trail network. I lived in a different resort town for 10 years and watch how it expanded rapidly and how the trail networks got busier and busier. That other resort town was able to make itself a world class summer resort by creating a network of trails that satisfies locals and tourists of all user groups. I understand the need for trail signage and designation to combat user conflict. Trail conflict is awful and it puts a bad taste in the mouth of all users. I want trails that are exclusive and trails that are multi-use. I don't want to be walking with my kids and grandparents on a trail and have some yahoos screaming by or hitting us. However, I also want to be able to ride downhill only mountain bike trails without the fear of a lost tourist standing in the middle of the trail, on a blind corner, and yelling at me (happened this weekend in the Alyeska Bike Park).	Acknowledged
I have horrendous hand writing, so I typed up the comment card section of the trails plan. (comments were logged in project specific location by Mandy)	Acknowledged
In summation, I love the idea of increasing the trail networks in Girdwood. This valley is growing and we need to keep the recreation opportunities growing as well. However, I believe that limiting an area to only one type of user group is inappropriate and can impede future development. If we are hoping to establish places for primitive hiking/walking only, I would recommend doing it in areas that are generally flat that are not attractive to downhill travel, or within a multi-use area. I also believe that signage is key to combatting user conflict. In general, people from out of town just don't know where they are or where they are going. As for as locals go, trail conflict will be caused by designating a trail that has been historically used as multi-use for one use only.	Acknowledged
Maps with "you are here"	Acknowledged
"Hiking only"	
"One-way traffic"	
"Down-hill traffic only"	
"Up-hill traffic only"	
"Beware of Downhill Traffic"	
"Multi-use"	Acknowledged
End of comment by L. Hunter	

Comment by S. Ostroski	
We are fortunate that community input is taken seriously as we work through creating a plan that is diverse and addresses the increasing need for high quality recreational opportunities in Glacier Valley. The surge of outdoor recreation created by the pandemic is a window into the future growth we will continue to see in the Valley. Let us use this experience as an opportunity for positive, natural, and economic growth, and ensure we are thinking in a macro sense. What happened to the community map that had trails moving up into the alpine? The current plan proposed should be recognized as a start, or first draft, but is in no way a roadmap to truly becoming a world class recreational destination.	Acknowledged

Not long ago the Girdwood community set a goal of becoming a world class recreation destination. The proposed plan is the antithesis of that goal. To be frank, I see the proposal is limiting and unimaginative. Girdwood is a special place in Alaska where we don't see excess use of motorized recreation, poor land-use planning or unsustainable practices within our valley. It is clear is that we don't want to lose our identity of a natural place, but a natural place can still be maintained with a larger vision of progressive trails.	Acknowledged
Destinations world wide have created thriving trail networks that support the local economies and bring positive, active visitors to their destinations. Locations such as Whistler and central Europe have similar geographic characteristics to Girdwood. Our goal may not be to become	Acknowledged
"Whistler", but to learn from what is out there and become our unique version of a recreation destination. As tourism in Alaska is predicted to increase, we should be aiming to provide trail experiences that rival these (aforementioned) destinations. Visitors will continue to come to our beautiful town whether improvements are made or not. It would make sense to be a place that attracts an active population that cares for the environment.	Acknowledged
With inevitable growth in mind, we need to consider a huge user group: the kids of Girdwood! There is no other healthy support of a community than a connective trail network. We have a responsibility to teach the future generation about sustainable growth. We also have a responsibility to consider their interests in this plan. The growth of gravity fed mountain biking must be heavily considered in this plan. To ignore this sport is to disregard the fastest growing mode of recreation. Creating a sustainable infrastructure now will set the Girdwood Valley up for success for the future generations of outdoor enthusiasts	Acknowledged
Growth in our world and Valley is inevitable. Let us be proactive and visionary, to create a progressive trail plan that will sustain positive visitors and economic growth. This should be started by creating access to the alpine and removing natural spaces from a trails plan. We should listen to the population of young trail users, as well as work with experienced athletes and trail builders that bring a wealth of knowledge to trail building and maintenance. It is possible to create world class recreation while keeping our character of wild Girdwood with imagination and planning. We should not settle for anything less	Acknowledged
End of comment by S. Ostroski	
Comment from S. Randich	

<p>As a resident of Gird wood I am concerned by the planned expansion of bike trails in this valley. It is important that a balance be maintained between the pedestrian and the wild, sacred places that exist in this beautiful place.</p> <p>Experiencing the tourist traffic at the end of Timberline Drive and the subsequent ill use of the forest on the path to the falls and the resultant busyness of a once quiet neighborhood cul-de-sac, I am wondering how opening up multiple loops in the Alta Meadow area will impact the surrounding neighborhood.</p> <p>Will cars park along the street? Will there be more foot traffic, dogs, and children? Will you impact a once narrow and primitive path that winds along the creek? Will opening up this route bring scores of visitors into the heart of our valley? Where locals reside?</p> <p>Is it not advantageous to leave developed trails in closer proximity to the resort? Why must a trail that the people in the Alta/Alpina neighborhood use to get away from the bustle of living in a resort town be expanded?</p> <p>Not every trail in Girdwood should be designated as a bike trail. There are all kinds of trail experiences and not every trails needs to be designated multi use. I enjoy walking or skiing that trail almost daily and it is relaxing to know I do not need to keep my ears tuned to the whir of bike wheels and look for a place to step off the path.</p>	Acknowledged
End of comment from S. Randich	

Comment from S. Wuerth	
As a Girdwood for the past 20 years, I have run, skied, hiked, biked and walked nearly every trail in the valley's trail system. Over those years, I have clocked easily more than 10,000 miles on Girdwood's trails. The valley's trails have helped prepare me for triathalons, marathons, ultramarathons and other distance events.	Acknowledged
The trails have also served as passage for commuting from my home in Upper Crow Creek to the town of Girdwood via mountain bike, hiking and running.	
I know these trails and environment well.	
Also, for the most part, throughout all those long miles, I am alone on the trails.	
Based on this experience (and former membership on the Girdwood Board of Supervisors), I offer a humble review of your draft plan.	
A) The demand for natural or open spaces free of development	
In order to justify an expensive and expansive plan such as the one proposed, it is incumbent on solicitors to demonstrate demand. The document emphasizes a "demand" for extensive trail work, but seems to understate a preference for natural spaces.	
As a frequent trail user, I have never seen a perceived "demand" play out to actual trail use	
(with the notable exception of the the Winner Creek trail to the hand-tram parking lot). Cross-country ski trails have not suffered overwhelming traffic. Even on busy weekends, I can count on one hand the number of ski tracks that have glided the trails before me on an afternoon. I rarely see bikers on the trails. I rarely see hikers, blueberry pickers or photographers. I encounter, usually, no one on the majority of the trails in the Girdwood valley. (I must confess I enjoy this privilege.)	
Meanwhile, in dedicating natural spaces, you please demand at no cost in perpetuity.	

When I had the privilege to serve on the Girdwood Board of Supervisors in the early 2000s, I was part of a community dialogue to build a Girdwood Area Plan. At that time, community planners showed a local preference for "open space" public lands off-limit for development. This desire has clearly not languished. Rather, a demand for open, or natural, space has increased over the years (as your own data indicates). This is no doubt a concern accelerated by an increase in development in the area and the threat of more construction by Alyeska Resort.	
Natural spaces are, of course, recreational spaces, places where people like myself like to hike, run and ski for the solitude nature provides, with primitive trail networks, protective havens for safe wildlife viewing, and for outdoor hobbies such as mushroom and blueberry picking.	Acknowledged
B) Impacts to cultural, heritage, wildlife, plant and other resources.	
Nowhere does the document include expected impacts to natural resources in the valley, much less does it include mitigation measures for those impacts.	
Along with an increase in trail building and trail use in the valley comes an increase in impacts to flora and fauna. Bear disturbance and conflict, for example, would rise should proposed trails be constructed (depending, of course, on whether there is a commensurate increase in trail traffic). The same disturbances would come to our region's wildlife: birds (particularly nesting raptors), moose, lynx, beaver, wolves, etc.	
Invasive species, such as dandelions, will spread to choke out natural biota and managers may be forced (as with Forest Service trails) to employ the use of herbicides to prevent proliferation.	Acknowledged
C) Prioritize natural spaces and primitive trails	
Consistent with planning in similar mountain communities across the West, including Canada, decisions should necessarily consider the area's most vital quality--their raison d'être--the area's natural, unadulterated habitat. Girdwood has shown a consistent preference for natural spaces, or "open spaces" since planning began, more than two decades ago, for the Girdwood Area Plan (referenced in the GTP). This community priority is evidenced by numerous studies and is reflected in the community's overwhelming rejection of proposals to develop a golf course and a railroad spur in the valley (the environmental impacts of which, alone, would have been cataclysmic).	Acknowledged
D) The outsized influence of special interest groups	
Though I am a dues-paying member of the Girdwood Nordic Ski Club and enjoy its ski trails, the organization does not speak for me. Trails were constructed at a width, for example, that is unnecessary for the size of our community. The GNSC has Olympic-sized dreams, but, when I ski its trails, it is clear that trail use is limited to the small number of cross-country skiers one would expect in a community of 2,000 souls.	
Meanwhile, Alyeska Resort has a record of using its outsized influence in the community to advance its commercial interests and of using public land and other resources, when it can, to facilitate development of holdings. No where can the latter claim be better exemplified than the construction of the Arlberg extension. The road, built with public funds, serves mainly as an access road for planned construction by the Resort.	
The plan includes "Snowcat Trail improvements". Which entity does this trail primarily serve? Who benefits financially from this trail? Why would public funds pay for, and maintain, a trail that serves the Resort almost exclusively?	

This type of "corporate welfare" makes some of the trails proposed for construction or improvement suspect. If Alyeska Resort wants trails for its customers, it can build its own trails on its own--leased--land holdings. Its influence on this plan, its comments on the plan, should immediately raise suspicions for policy makers and arbiters of the GTP.	Acknowledged
Conclusions	
The GTP draft smacks of a "build it and they will come" vision. The problem with this approach is that Girdwood lacks the infrastructure necessary should this trail network come to fruition. Where is the parking, public restrooms, and water for the supposed demand the plan seeks to satisfy? Where do the users of these trails dine (the town's few restaurants are already over-crowded)? Who provides maintenance for the expected traffic?	Acknowledged
Speaking of maintenance, where is funding to maintain these trails? The current trail system is woefully overgrown and requires constant trail work.	Acknowledged
In light of these comments, I urge planners to:	
A) Expand and protect open spaces/natural spaces in accordance with community planning goals that date back more than two decades.	Acknowledged
B) Reduce classification of trails T3, T4, T5, T6, and T7 from Class 3 to Class 2 trails and spread maintenance throughout existing trails to bring primitive trails to Class 2 trail level. Exclude the T14 (snowcat trail improvements) and MB3 as Alyeska Resort is the primary, if not sole, beneficiary.	Acknowledged
C) Gather and include data from the community to determine existing demand/trail use. Add a section in the plan that considers infrastructure improvements necessary for trail expansion.	Acknowledged
D) Consider motivations of interest groups and regard these comments as reflecting the beliefs of one person. No corporation or special interest should have a larger voice than any one individual in the Girdwood community.	Acknowledged
After all, there really aren't a lot of people using the trails.	
They're too afraid of bears.	
End of comment from S. Wuerth	

Comment by email from C. Kirchner	
Thank you for the opportunity to review the Draft Girdwood Trails Plan. I am very excited to see investment in the positive growth of this community.	
My husband and I own a condo in Girdwood and spend an increasing amount of time year round, recreating in the Girdwood Valley as our kids grow.	
In the first GTP comment period, the participating community requested more Class 3 and 4 trails for all ages and abilities. However, this latest draft document restricts trail use and development of a large section of the upper valley to Class 1 and 2 trails only.	
When you designate areas as a natural space with only primitive trails and minimized signage, you are excluding a large contingent of potential trail users. Great trails with well-planned signage are a key component of what attracts residents and tourists to resort towns like Girdwood. I believe that even Class 1 and Class 2 trails should have signage.	
We also request that the NS2 and NS3 areas have the Natural Space designation removed from the plan and map to allow for future trail development. With climate change and impacts to down valley snow pack, it is important to maintain flexibility for year round trail access, especially groomed and maintained nordic trails in the winter and mountain bike and hiking trails in the summer.	

The community would benefit from nordic trail access in the lower or mid valley with trailhead parking access that would reduce pressure on upper valley trailhead use. This could be executed via a Class 4 trail that parallels california creek at the old townsite and passes through the proposed TH5 or the TH4.	
Currently, many users access Penguin ridge via Abe's trail and then a bushwack to the ridge. Users often tell stories of getting lost. It would be beneficial to have a marked Class 1 trail from Abe's trail to Penguin ridge. Another location that would benefit from signage and some trail improvement near the top of the forested area is the trail that accesses Ragged Top mountain across from the Iditarod parking lot. A little guidance can go a long way to ensuring the safety of trail users.	Acknowledged
We advocate for a forward-thinking, four season, inclusive trail plan that:	
· Provides opportunity for expansion of Class 3 and 4 trail networks within the Girdwood valley recreational zones that have been established in previous plans.	Acknowledged
· Identifies spaces for future recreational development that include more Nordic ski and mountain bike trail development. Currently, the majority of the existing winter recreational trails are in Class A wetlands that do not lend to year-round use.	Acknowledged
· Includes the Forest Loop (north of the airport) that has been approved by the Girdwood Trails Committee and Heritage Land Bank. This loop is not included in the GTP Draft maps.	Acknowledged
· Provides bridge connections over Glacier Creek and Winner Creek for year-round recreational use.	Acknowledged
· Provides opportunity for future Nordic trail development north of the CPG Winner Creek bridge area.	Acknowledged
· Provides opportunity for future Nordic trail development down valley and mid valley with a connector trail.	Acknowledged
· Emphasizes the importance of signage and wayfinding in making access to all trail classification levels inclusive and equitable.	
The trails and ski resort are key economic drivers and valuable components of a healthy, vibrant community.	Acknowledged
End of comment by C. Kirchner	

Comments from various users via email that include group photos	
A. Power	We love the Girdwood nordic trails, and want to keep them ski-only!
J. Caterinichio	Save the Girdwood Trails
M. Earnhart	I love the Girdwood ski trails!
E. Eski	I love Girdwood Nordic !!
N. Hood	Keep Girdwood Trails Ski Only!
S. Legate	Girdwood xc ski trails
A. Maurer	Girdwood nordic <3
J. Power	We at the Alaska Regional Elite Group camp really love the Girdwood nordic trails!
I. Styvar	I love Girdwood Nordic trails!
O. Young	We love the Girdwood Nordic trails and want them to stay Nordic only
End of comments from various users via email that include group photos	

Comment by email from Z. Gallup		
If you are a sitting member of any Board or Committee with any authority at all in the planning, approval and/or Fate of the Girdwood Trail System please ask yourself the following and consider any Unintended Consequences for each and every trailhead on the current plan:		
• Are you proposing a trailhead that lands in a neighborhood?		
• If so, is there another place that traffic can be directed and collected to protect the value of the residents home and sanctuary?		
• Is there another place away from homes along that trail that can be a traffic collector that is not impacting safety and quality of life?		
• OR can there be multiple parking pockets spread out along the trail to eliminate the crowds and create a more interesting experience where the trail is concerned?		
• Are you planning for a trailhead that May become so popular and overrun with parked cars and users that it will affect the quality of life of the homes nearby?		
• Are you planning for a trailhead that may become so popular and overrun with parked cars that an emergency vehicle can still access the area?		
• What would you do if you had a trailhead at the end of your driveway that had approximately 50 cars and more people every single day at the end of your driveway?		Acknowledged.
I live on Timberline Drive. I am in favor of trails and have used the valley trails for my entire life. Unintended consequences have brought us to where we are today with the Virgin Creek Falls trail and trailhead.		Acknowledged.
As you know this trail has deteriorated from overuse and the access to the trailhead is unfortunately at the dead end of Timberline Drive at the far back end of the Alyeska Basin neighborhood. The area has become too popular. This has become an attractive nuisance that has for some time negatively affected the lives of those living in homes on Timberline Drive.		Acknowledged.
As a resident who spends a lot of time outdoors in my yard I have noticed the number of personal cars headed to the falls has increased tremendously in the last five years. I know this because about one third of visitors seem to stop and ask for directions.		Acknowledged.
Lately more and more people seem to be walking to the site; while that results in less car traffic I still call it traffic. Two years ago I noticed more 15 passenger vans, small time tour operators, buses of church groups and even high school celebrations spilling out large groups of people at the dead end, parking where they can in front of homes in what used to be a quiet peaceful place to live.		Acknowledged.
The residents at the end of the road regularly pick up litter and endure noise at all hours. People banging on your home door for help with a tire or directions or an injury is not synonymous with peaceful living....you get the idea. If there were a party house there all the residents could do something about it but a trailhead is another story.		Acknowledged.
The increase in traffic has been my main concern since I live on Timberline hill. My family and I have tried to reduce speed in many ways. We've created unofficial humorous signage. The Service Area installed signage for hidden driveways, which had to be taken out because the Muni doesn't put those signs on roads with 20 mph speed limits. We researched speed bumps and other options to calm traffic, but nothing can be done, largely because Timberline is a posted 20 mph road (unenforced) and it is unpaved. The Municipality is deaf to this problem even though speed control devices are used in other places on unpaved roads.		Acknowledged.

Our neighbors and I have made contact with specific organizations and people who advertise Virgin Creek Falls as an attraction/thing-to-do in Girdwood. Some of the companies that facilitate hiking were receptive to taking the trailhead off their site because they recognize that overuse is a death knell.	Acknowledged.
Unfortunately organizations that focus on commerce, making money by getting anybody into Girdwood for any reason were not receptive or helpful to the neighborhood. I and others have done what we can to alleviate the negative aspects of this attractive nuisance, Virgin Creek Falls trailhead.	Acknowledged.
So back to Unintended Consequences. My neighbors and I have no choice but to accept the way things are. This is what I am asking you to think about as you put together improvements to the trail system, so that more attractive nuisance trailheads do not develop in Girdwood. All the thought and planning in the universe cannot put the genie back in the bottle.	Acknowledged.
The Girdwood Area Plan, says something about every driveway is a trailhead. That has unintended consequences written all over it and will change the face of Girdwood if more care is not taken in providing thoughtful access to our trails. It does not have to be approached as a limitation but as an insurance against destroying neighborhood life.	Acknowledged.
I strongly urge you to consider the larger impact on neighborhoods with the current planning. Your decisions in the Girdwood Trails Plan are not just about trails and trailheads. Your decisions are vital to maintaining quality of life and the value of homes in Girdwood.	Acknowledged.
End comment by email from Z. Gallup	