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ACRONYMS | COMMON TERMS

ABS - Alyeska Basin & South Valley Trails
AHC - Alyeska Highway Corridor
ARRC - Alaska Railroad Corporation
BC - Backcountry
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
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 and natural space system. The GTP is a 10-15 year guiding document for the community, local trail and open space organizations, agencies, and elected officials that defines the Girdwood trail network and identifies trail and natural space 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, 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 and natural space projects over the next 10 – 15 years that will achieve the trail and natural space system that Girdwood envisions.

PUBLIC INPUT & PLAN DEVELOPMENT
The Girdwood Trail 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 about one-year and participants engaged in challenging conversations to find consensus around planning for a trail and natural space 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 Trail Committee (11 meetings, 4 workshops, 1 special meeting)
• 10 stakeholder interviews
• 2 public meetings
• Online interactive map that allowed for site-specific comments
• Public review Draft Trail Plan available for comment via an online comment portal

KEY PLAN THEMES
Over the course of the existing condition analysis and stakeholder engagement the following themes emerged, and this plan works to address them through the proposed trail and natural space network, proposed projects, and implementation plan:

• Girdwood Residents Value Access to Trails and Natural Spaces
• The Girdwood Trail System Should be Equitable and Balanced
• Improve Connectivity and Access to Trails
• Sustainable Trail Management & Maintenance is Important
• Streamline the Project Approval Processes

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 and natural spaces.
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 and natural spaces.

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 and natural spaces 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 and natural spaces are sustainable, well-planned, designed, constructed, and maintained now and for future generations.
- **Experience**: Girdwood Trails provide a variety of outdoor experiences.
- **Diversity & Inclusivity**: There are a variety of diverse trail experiences for everyone.
- **Recreation**: Trails and natural spaces provide safe, low-cost opportunities to get outdoors and recreate.
- **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.
- **Access**: Trails and natural spaces are easily accessible, provide safe access to outdoor recreation, everyday community destinations, and the alpine.

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.

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: CONSERVE**

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

**Goal 3: DEVELOP**

Build trails and establish natural spaces using sustainable design principles with a clear project approval process among landowners.

**Goal 4: MAINTAIN**

Trails and natural spaces are managed 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 and natural spaces.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This map will be updated at a later date. Please see the added page at the end for visuals representing project adjustments.
## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### NEW TRAILS

1. Separated Grade Crossing: Railroad Bridge at Alyeska Hwy (4)
2. Wagon Trail - Lower Danich Connection (2)
3. Lower Valley Trail Loop Connection (3)
4. Ruane Road Trail Connection to Lower Iditarod (3)
5. Beaver Pond to Lower Iditarod (2)  
   - **Alyeska Highway**
6. Barren Avenue to Alyeska Hwy (3)
7. Crow Creek Road to Beaver Pond Trail (3)
8. Toe Slope Trail-California Creek to Iditarod (2)
9. Crow Creek Neighborhood Trails (2-3)
10. Cross Valley Trail (2)
11. Arlberg Connection to Winner Creek Trail (4)
12. Glacier Canyon Rim Trail (2)
13. Upper Valley Multi-Use Trail (4)
14. Snowcat Trail Improvements (4)

### TRAILHEADS

1. **Girdwood Depot Trailhead Upgrades** - with restroom
2. Glacier Ranger District
3. **Lower Valley Trailhead**
4. Virgin Creek Falls Access Study
5. Karolius Trailhead
6. **Girdwood Town Center Trailhead Improvements** - with restroom
7. Moose Meadows Trailhead Improvements
8. Beaver Pond Trailhead
9. Girdwood PreK-8 School - Parking Agreement
10. Alyeska Resort Parking Agreement
11. Arlberg Trailhead Expansion - with restroom
12. Middle Iditarod
13. **Winner Creek Gorge Trailhead Expansion**

### BRIDGE PROJECTS

1. Glacier Creek Trail Bridge - Lower Valley
2. California Creek Bridge
3. Virgin Creek Bridge
4. Improve Connectivity at Glacier Creek Bridge at Alyeska Hwy
5. Glacier Creek Trail Bridge - Middle Valley - (north of airstrip)
6. Glacier Creek Trails Bridge - Upper Valley Hand Tram

### SPECIAL PROJECTS

SP1: Areawide Wayfinding (Not on Map)
SP2: Girdwood Valley Circum-Valley Loop
   (See map on page XX)

### PROPOSED NATURAL SPACES (NS)

- Virgin Creek Natural Space  - **Primitive Trails**
- Stumpy's Natural Space  - **Primitive Trails**
- Winner Creek Natural Space  - **Primitive Trails**

### PROPOSED MOUNTAIN BIKE AREAS (MB)

- Beaver Pond
- Near the Nordic 5K
- End of the Snowcat Trail

---

**Note:**

- **PT3** was removed and will be replaced as Girdwood Cemetery Trailhead in the next version of the plan.
PART 1 – INTRODUCTION + EXISTING CONDITIONS

INTRODUCTION

The community of Girdwood is nestled within the Glacier Valley in 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 draws 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, natural spaces, 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PLAN/STUDY</th>
<th>PLAN DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE GIRDWOOD TRAILS PLAN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Girdwood Area Plan, 1995</td>
<td>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 7 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.</td>
<td>The GTP and the GAP are being developed concurrently. It is extremely important that the updated Vision, Goals, &amp; 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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anchorage Park, Greenbelt and Recreation Facility Plan: Volume 3: Turnagain Arm, 1987</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### PLAN/STUDY

#### 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:

1. **Bird to Gird Milepost 0**: Work with ADOT&PF, DNR DMLW, ARRC, and the GTC and GBOS to establish and manage a small vehicular lot in this area for trail access.

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.

3. **California Creek Trail**: Work with HLB to establish a trail easement to ensure secure access across their lands is preserved. Work with the GBOS and GTC to maintain and manage the trail.

#### 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 nation).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PLAN/STUDY</th>
<th>PLAN DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE GIRDWOOD TRAILS PLAN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Girdwood South Townsite Master Plan, 2014      | This area master plan establishes the general arrangement of land uses, circulation and infrastructure systems for the Girdwood South Townsite including proposed vehicular and pedestrian circulation and the types of acceptable proposed development. | 1. Encourage transportation modes other than automobiles  
2. Locate trails and activity areas with particular care for solar access, views, protection from weather, and continuity of connections.  
3. Need recreational facilities, including expanded ski terrain, and more hiking or Nordic trails.  
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 doing the necessary surveying and project permitting. |
| 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. | 1. Sidewalk connectivity to nearby trail system.  
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.  
3. Trail connections between pods of development, between different trails, and between areas of the valley must be implemented. |
| 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. |
| Girdwood-Iditarod Trail Route Study, 1997 | This study determined a feasible route for the commemorative Iditarod Trail linking Turnagain Arm and Girdwood to the Crow Pass Iditarod Trailhead. The Girdwood Trails Committee realized that if the historic trail was restored, pedestrian opportunities could be enhanced valley wide. | Provides detailed route descriptions, design parameters, and general mapping of the Iditarod Trail through Girdwood. |
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 and visitor numbers increase every year. This plan will analyze the Girdwood Valley systematically to fully realize the community’s year-round trails and natural spaces.

Population

The original people of the Girdwood Valley were the Den’ina Athabascan who used the land to trap, hunt, and fish. In the 1950’s the population of the Girdwood Valley was low and mostly supportive of rail and highway construction efforts after gold mining ended during WW2. 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

Figure 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>POPULATION</th>
<th>CHANGE (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>2,658</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>2,570</td>
<td>22.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>2,091</td>
<td>71.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>1,221</td>
<td>111.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>577</td>
<td>300.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>128.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>-20.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>79</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: American Fact Finder, 2017, US Census
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 and natural spaces 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 boundary. 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 DNR, 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, natural spaces, and related trail development on Municipal land.

Girdwood Trail 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, Girdwood Mountain Bike Alliance, 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 including HLB and other Municipal authorizations.
PROPOSAL PROCESS FOR NEW TRAILS IN GIRDWOOD

1. **IDENTIFY**
   - Community and user-group need for new trail.

2. **CREATE**
   - Preliminary TMO and conceptual design. Contact MOA Planning Dept. for advice on planning and process.

3. **OBTAIN**
   - Land owner and/or land manager letter of support.

4. **INTRODUCE**
   - Preliminary TMO and conceptual design. Contact MOA Planning Dept. for advice on planning and process.

5. **DEVELOP**
   - TMO and proposed trail design. Design proposal needs to include:
     - Map of preliminary trail alignment.
     - Construction and design specifications.
     - Description of typical trail cross sections.
     - Plan for future maintenance and long-term sustainability.

6. **ENCOURAGE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**
   - One month prior to presenting the trail proposal to Girdwood Trail Committee, meeting notice shall be posted at the Post Office and on Girdwood’s Facebook Page. The notice is to be in accordance with subsection 21.03.020 H (Anyone within 1000’ of the project.) Copies of proposed plan to be placed in library and emailed out. Newspaper article suggested.

7. **PRESENT**
   - 7. Proposed trail design to Girdwood Trails Committee. (New Business)
   - 8. Proposed trail design to Girdwood Land Use Committee. (New Business)
   - 9. Proposed trail design to Girdwood Board of Supervisors. (New Business)

10. **PRESENT**
    - 10. Proposed trail design to Girdwood Trails Committee. (Old Business)

11. **IF APPROVED**
    - 11a. Proposed trail design to Girdwood Board of Supervisors. (Old Business)

12. **IF NOT APPROVED**
    - 10a. Girdwood Trails Committee (GTC) may form a subcommittee to resolve issues.
      a) If issues are resolved, the revised proposal is returned to GTC for a vote.
      b) If issues are not resolved, the original proposal is returned to GTC for a revote.

13. **UDC REVIEW NOT REQUIRED**
    - Urban Design Commission: Payment of fee
      - Pre-application conference
      - Application submittal
      - Department review and comments
      - Department report to Planning and Zoning
      - Urban Design Commission public hearing

14. **PRESENTATION & PUBLIC HEARING**
    - Easement request to Heritage Land Bank Advisory Committee. (two meetings)

15. **PRESENTATION & PUBLIC HEARING**
    - Anchorage Assembly (two meetings)

16. **OBTAIN**
    - Necessary permits: federal, state & local. Secure 105% of funding for project.

17. **OBTAIN**
    - Heritage Land Bank Early Entry Authorization for trail construction.

18. **OBTAIN**
    - The trail. Appoint a project manager to oversee construction. Land manager will designate a qualified inspector.

19. **SUBMIT**
    - Professional land survey to MOA for approval and as the basis for the easement document recorded w/ State of Alaska.

20. **SUBMIT**
    - Copies of all paperwork to GTC via Girdwood Parks & Recreation.

- if approved
- if not approved
*If not approved, proposal is not viable.
Demand for Expanded Trail and Natural Space 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 and natural spaces within the Girdwood Valley.

Areas for Primitive Trails

While the community planning process has historically focused on the development of new trails, there is a demand for areas within walking distance of town for primitive trail experiences including non-mechanized experiences, habitat protection, spaces for quiet and solitude, orienteering, wildlife viewing, and ungroomed skiing. Trails in these areas would be limited to class 2 standards unless use of trails within these areas warrants improved trail tread to protect the surrounding area.

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. Girdwood Mountain Bike Alliance 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, the Airport, and the Hand Tram 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 and natural spaces. 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 very 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: AVALANCHE PATH MAP

- High Hazard
- Moderate Hazard
- Island

Existing Trails

Map 2
**Existing Trails**

The GVTMP identifies more than 30 individual trails within the Girdwood Valley. The trails make up more than 75 miles winding through the Girdwood Valley and 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.

For planning purposes, it is important to understand the current distribution of trail classifications so that the community can plan for future trail and natural space projects that achieve the demand not currently being met by the current trail system.
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 area managed by the Girdwood Nordic Ski Club is nearby. However, due to soils and climate, there are remarkable winter-only trails through wetlands and meadows, providing trail experiences on frozen surfaces. However, 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. The takeaway is that 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 Class 5 (Fully Developed)
Trail Class 4 (Highly Developed)
Trail Class 3 (Developed)
Trail Class 2 (Moderately Developed)
Trail Class 1 (Minimally Developed)

Winter Only (Trail Class 4)
Winter Only (Trail Class 2)
Streets
Railroad
Creeks

Chugach National Park
Chugach State Park
Chugach State Park Wilderness
Parking
Trailhead
Hand Tram

TRAIL NAMES (TRAIL CLASSIFICATION #)
1 Girdwood to Indian Bike Trail (5)
2 Beaver Pond Trail (3)
3 Ayleska Highway Trail (5)
4 Abe's Trail (2)
5 California Creek Trail (1)
6 Ragged Top Trail (1)
7 Iditarod - Lower Trail (4)
8 Iditarod - Middle Trail (3)
9 Iditarod - Upper Trail (3)
10 Joe Danich Trail (1)
11 Wagon Trail (1)
12 Virgin Creek Falls Lower Trail (1)
13 Virgin Creek Upper Trail (3)
14 Max's Mountain Trail (1)
15 Shortcut from Bike Path to Davos (3)
16 Hightower Multi-Use Trail (5)
17 Tiny Creek Trail (3)
18 Athabaskan Environmental Physics Trail (3)
19 Deb's Way (3)
20 Moose Meadow Trails (4)
21 Verbier Way Bike Path (5)
22 Egloff Multi-Use Trail (5)
23 Winner Creek Trail Extension (3)
24 Winner Creek Trail Upper (2)
25 Winner Creek Trail (4 & 3)
26 North Face Trail (2)
27 Nordic 5K Loop (4)
28 Mt Ayeska: Center Ridge to Max's (1)
29 Snow Cat Trail (4)
30 Stumpy's Summer Trail (1)
31 Stumpy's Winter Trail (2)
32 Arlberg Bike Path (5)
33 Two Cents (3)
34 Small House (3)
35 Earnagain (3)
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. Hikers, mountain bikers, Nordic skiers, snowshoers, visitors, and residents use these trails. Some of the winter trails are on wet ground unsuitable for summer use. Trails range from class 1 to class 5. The popular Hand Tram that previously connected the two portions of the Winner Creek Trail is no longer functioning. 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 with significant maintenance requirements, especially regarding snow storage issues each winter. 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 Bike Path. There are four other paved bike path trails that radiate from it: the Hightower Pathway to the school, the Moose Meadow Pathway to Hotel Alyeska, The Egloff Pathway to the Library and the Bird-to-Gird Pathway. The Lower Iditarod 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 form 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 Holtan Hills subdivision. Most INHT segments are within this area (Girdwood Iditarod, Crow Pass, and both upper & most of lower Winner Creek Trails). The Athabaskan Environmental Physics (AEP) Trail, 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, and the Hand Tram at Four Corners is within this area.
Existing Trail Use

**Hiking/Pedestrian** – The Girdwood trail system currently sees a broad spectrum of hiker and pedestrian, from young children and first-time hikers on guided tours, to seasoned backpackers heading out for multi-day overnight journeys.

**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 range of trail users (new and experienced) and families with younger children.

**Biking** – The Girdwood to Indian 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 for bicyclists which can discourage multi-modal transportation for those who live in or visit Girdwood.

**Primitive Trail Experiences** – Many of Girdwood’s existing trails were once far more primitive experiences. Due to increased use and popularity, some of those once primitive trails have been developed to a higher standard. Primitive experiences are desired by many users and a balance between Trail classes should be maintained.

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 and the Department of Natural Resources, and United States Forest Service - Chugach National Forest. The Girdwood trail system is a complicated network that traverses multiple landowners. 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.
Trail Easements & Legal Access
All publicly managed trails should be legally accessible, protecting the trail from encroachments, protecting the public's access to the trail, but also respecting the property rights of private landowners. 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. Entirely within a dedicated Municipal park

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

Connectivity
Glacier Creek bisects the Girdwood Valley and the Hand Tram provides 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 can carry only a few people at one time and can operate only in summer months. Although very scenic and a unique experience, the Hand Tram cannot accommodate the current volume of traffic on Winner Creek Trail which has increased since improvements to the trail have been completed. The hand tram mechanical operation has not failed, however there have been accidents near the Hand Tram, including a fatality, and the MOA is exposed to liability. A year-round crossing to connect the two sides of the Winner Creek Trail is needed.

Access: Trailheads and Parking
The Girdwood Trails Management Plan states that identifiable trailheads with adjacent sufficient 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 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 church. 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. Deb’s Way/Airport Conflict is 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 DOT land as pedestrian traffic conflicts with airport operations. A mutually agreeable compromise to this would be beneficial, as connectivity to the trails is needed and would be used by general aviation, commercial aviation, and other trail users.

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. This will begin solution-driven conversations around trails that begin in Girdwood and enter Chugach State Park land.
EXISTING PARKING AND TRAILHEADS

P1: AK Railroad Depot
   20-30 spaces

P2: USFS Chugach Glacier
    District Ranger Station
    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
    20 spaces + 1 accessible

P8: Middle Iditarod
    4-6 spaces

P9: Winner Creek Gorge
    20 spaces + 1 accessible
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 reporting trail issues.

With multiple landowners and management 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 difficulty, allowed uses, ownership, safety, interpretation, rules & regulations, and wayfinding. Snow storage and berms should be considered in the implementation of wayfinding 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 when dogs are allowed and if they must be leashed reduces conflict. 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 Indian to Girdwood National Recreation 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 Girdwood Trails Management Plan 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 MOA 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 compete record of meeting agendas, summaries, and meeting materials can be found by visiting the following website: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1gPuYrLKRM9ovsAf4x7ThDh2CziVkZ4sl?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 the Girdwood Trails. The following groups and individuals were interviewed:

- GirdWild
- Girdwood Mountain Bike Alliance
- Alyeska Resort
- Girdwood Nordic Ski Club
- Ascending Path
- Landowners (Two meetings): Chugach State Park, Heritage Land Bank, Chugach National Forest
- General Trail Users: Three (3) 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 Trail 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 will be held in May or June of 2021 to share the Draft Girdwood Trails Master Plan with the public for review and comment.
Interactive Online Map

An interactive online mapping application was developed 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 and natural space 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](https://arcg.is/1PyHKf)

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

Girdwood residents and trail system users value the variety of activities that are possible within the trail and natural space 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 Alyeska Resort, is something the community of Girdwood highly values.
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 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.

Managing Allowed Uses
Due to the growing popularity of trail and nature-based activities such as biking, the balance as well as clear indication of allowed uses on trails 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 and areas 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 with very little walking, biking on paved trails, pushing a stroller on a trail through the forest, mountain biking, and backcountry hiking experiences. 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 in demand, 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.

Preserved Natural 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 area should be accessible, within short walking distance of the community, and provide primitive, non-mechanized trail experiences. The natural area with primitive trails should prioritize habitat protection, spaces for quiet and solitude, orienteering, wildlife viewing, and ungroomed skiing.
Improving and Managing Trail Access

There are many wonderful trails within the Girdwood trail system that are missing formal or improved access, 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 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 improved 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.

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.

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 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.

Connectivity

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.

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 community frustration about the current process and 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 and natural space projects over the next 10 – 15 years that will achieve the trail and natural space system that Girdwood envisions. This section of the GTP contains:

- A simple, long-range vision statement that describes Girdwood's aspirations for the trail and natural space 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 and natural spaces.

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 Trail Plan: 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.

Girdwood Trail 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 and natural spaces 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 and natural spaces are sustainable, well-planned, designed, constructed, and maintained now and for future generations.
- **Diversity & Inclusivity:** There are a variety of diverse trail experiences for everyone.
- **Recreation:** Trails and natural spaces provide safe, low-cost opportunities to get outdoors and recreate.
### GIRDWOOD TRAIL PLAN: 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: CONSERVE**
Identify, designate uses, and protect trails and natural spaces through proper processes.

**GOAL 3: DEVELOP**
Build trails and establish natural spaces using sustainable design principles with a clear project approval process among landowners.

**GOAL 4: MAINTAIN**
Trails and natural spaces are managed 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 and natural spaces.

**Figure 8**

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*Images of natural and trail scenes are shown.*
The Proposed Trail and Natural Space 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.

- Improve Connectivity and Access
- Improve Balance & Diversity of Trail & Natural Space System

Proposed projects are grouped into the following categories; New Trails (T), Bridge Projects (B), Trailhead Projects (TH), Proposed Natural Spaces (NS), Proposed Mountain Bike Areas (MB), and Special Projects (SP).

**How this Plan Improves the Balance and Diversity of the Trail and Natural Space System**

**Natural Spaces**

One way in which this plan improves the balance and diversity of Girdwood’s Trail and Natural Space system is by identifying natural areas that should remain entirely or predominantly in their natural state. Natural spaces serve a variety of purposes, including both conservation and recreation. Natural spaces are not solely for conservation and ecosystem services (such as providing wildlife corridors and habitat), but also can be used for primitive, non-mechanized recreation activities like trail walking, running, hiking, skiing, snowshoeing, orienteering, foraging, wildlife viewing, solitude, and meditation. Natural spaces are not areas that are ‘locked up’ or ‘off limits,’ but rather are places available and open to those who value a more primitive recreation experience.

**Mountain Biking Areas**

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.

**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.
SAME CHANGES AS THE MAP IN THE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (page 8 of this document)

This map will be updated at a later date. Please see the added pages at the end for visuals representing project adjustments.
GIRDWOOD TRAILS PLAN: PROPOSED TRAIL + NATURAL SPACE NETWORK

NEW TRAILS
1. Separated Grade Crossing: Railroad Bridge at Alyeska Hwy (4)
2. Wagon Trail - Lower Danich Connection (2)
3. Lower Valley Trail Loop Connection (3)
4. Ruane Road Trail Connection to Lower Iditarod (3)
5. Beaver Pond to Lower Iditarod (3)
6. Barren Avenue to Alyeska Hwy (3)
7. Crow Creek Road to Beaver Pond Trail (3)
8. Toe Slope Trail-California Creek to Iditarod (2)
9. Crow Creek Neighborhood Trails (2-3)
10. Cross Valley Trail (2)
11. Arlberg Connection to Winner Creek Trail (4)
12. Glacier Canyon Rim Trail (2)
13. Upper Valley Multi-Use Trail (4)
14. Snowcat Trail Improvements (4)

TRAILHEADS
1. Girdwood Depot Trailhead Upgrades – with restroom
2. Glacier Ranger District
3. Lower Valley Trailhead
4. Virgin Creek Falls Access Study
5. Karolius Trailhead
6. Girdwood Town Center Trailhead Improvements – with restroom
7. Moose Meadows Trailhead Improvements
8. Beaver Pond Trailhead
9. Girdwood PreK-8 School – Parking Agreement
10. Alyeska Resort Parking Agreement
11. Arlberg Trailhead Expansion – with restroom
12. Middle Iditarod Trailhead Expansion

BRIDGE PROJECTS
1. Glacier Creek Trail Bridge
2. California Creek Bridge
3. Virgin Creek Bridge
4. Improve Connectivity at Glacier Creek Bridge at Alyeska Hwy
5. Glacier Creek Trail Bridge – Middle Valley – (north of airstrip)
6. Glacier Creek Trails Bridge - Upper Valley Hand Tram

SPECIAL PROJECTS
SP1: Areawide Wayfinding (Not on Map)
SP2: Girdwood Valley Circum-Valley Loop
(See map on page XX)

PROPOSED MOUNTAIN BIKE AREAS (MB)
1. Beaver Pond
2. Near the Nordic 5K
3. End of the Snowcat Trail

SAME CHANGES AS THE LEGEND IN THE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (page 9 of this document)
PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS: PROPOSED TRAIL AND NATURAL SPACE 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 Girdwood to Indian Trail. This trail may also provide an important link if the Girdwood to Indian Trail ever gets extended south.

T2 Wagon Trail – Lower Joe Danich Connection
Develop sustainable trails that connects the Wagon Trail with the Lower Joe Danich Trail. The trails will provide a primitive loop in the lower valley. The trails should be constructed to Class 2 Hiking design parameters in the uplands as much as possible. Boardwalk structures and bridges can be used to cross wetlands where necessary.

T3 Lower Valley Trail Loop Connection
Build a trail connection in the uplands, where possible, between California Creek and the Alyeska Highway. 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. For the most ideal trail experience, the utility easement should be avoided. Structures are permitted to traverse wetlands. The trail should be located on HLB lands zoned GOS.

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 Lower Iditarod
Construct an east/west trail connection in the lower valley, creating a more connected network of trails across the lower valley. There is currently no east/west connection serving the lower valley west of the Alyeska Highway. 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 trail would be constructed to Class 3 Biking 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. If the trail is constructed before parcel 6-010 and/or 6-040 are developed the trail and associated easement will be relocated when the HLB parcels are subdivided and developed. *A bridge is required to cross California Creek (See B2).

T6 Barren Avenue to Alyeska Highway
Provide a trail connection from the neighborhoods of the middle valley to town center. This proposed trail connection would provide a more direct trail connection 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 kept outside of natural area 1 (NA1). Using HLB land zoned GOS and/or GCR-1. Designed to Class 3 bicycle design parameters. Trail would tie into existing trails before crossing the highway.

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 mountain bike area 3 (MB3). The 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 mountain bike area 3 (MB3), 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 will be relocated 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 is shown on many trail plans and 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 area of old growth rainforest, open marshes, small stream courses and waterfalls. This trail connection 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 will be relocated when/if the HLB parcel is subdivided and developed. This trail is identified in the Crow Creek Neighborhood Land Use Study.

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

- Crow Creek Byway – parallels the Crow Creek Road, 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 intetrie takes advantage of a small stream corridor through big timber; the Hemlock intetrie 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 will be relocated when/if the HLB parcels are subdivided and developed.

**T10 Cross Valley Trail**
Build a primitive trail connection to ensure the connectivity of Stumpy’s Summer Trail and avoid AK DOT&PF airport land. The trail should be constructed to Class 2 Hiking design parameters in the uplands.

**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 connection between this trailhead and the Winner Creek Trail. There is a trailhead to Winner Creek on Aleyska Resort property, but access to Winner Creek should be provided from public land.

**T12 Glacier Canyon Rim Trail**
Proposed upland route between Stumpy’s Summer Trail and the Glacier Canyon Rim between the southern portion and northern portion of Stumpy’s Summer Trail. The proposed trail is a primitive, non-mechanized trail constructed to Class 2 Hiking design parameters. The trail would be unhardened as much as possible, however it could hardening is minimally allowed to avoid braiding of trails, resource damage, and to achieve trail sustainability if desired.

**T13 Upper Valley Multi-Use Trail**
This trail would provide an upland multi-use loop for the Upper Valley. It would border the east side of natural area 2 and provide a trail link connecting skiing, biking, and hiking routes with the Arlberg parking lot. Designed to Class 4 Skate Skiing Design Parameters for 2-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 T13 and connecting MB3 to the bottom of the hill. This connection will separate faster and slower traffic minimizing user conflict.

ADD the following sentence to the end of the paragraph: This project should reconstruct/relocate the Snowcat Trail out of wetlands wherever possible.
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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROJECT</th>
<th>TRAIL DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>TRAIL CLASS</th>
<th>TRAIL LENGTH (mi)</th>
<th>DESIGNATED USE</th>
<th>MANAGED USE</th>
<th>PROHIBITED USE</th>
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<tr>
<td>T1</td>
<td>Separated Grade Crossing: Railroad Bridge at Alyeska Hwy</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>Bicycle</td>
<td>Multi-use: Hiking, Biking, Cross Country Skiing</td>
<td>Pack &amp; Saddle</td>
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<tr>
<td>T2</td>
<td>Wagon Trail - Lower Danish Connection</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>Hiking</td>
<td>Hiking</td>
<td>Dogsled, Biking, Pack &amp; Saddle</td>
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<tr>
<td>T3</td>
<td>Lower Valley Trail Loop Connection</td>
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<td>Multi-use: Hiking, Biking, Cross Country Skiing</td>
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<td>Ruane Road Trail to Lower Iditarod</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>Bicycle</td>
<td>Multi-use: Hiking, Biking, Cross Country Skiing</td>
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<td>Beaver Pond to Lower Iditarod</td>
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<td>Toe Slope Trail - California Creek to Iditarod</td>
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<td>1.3</td>
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<td>Hiking</td>
<td>Dogsled, Biking, Pack &amp; Saddle</td>
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<td>T9</td>
<td>Crow Creek Neighborhood Trails</td>
<td>2-3</td>
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<td>Bicycle</td>
<td>Multi-use: Hiking, Biking, Cross Country Skiing</td>
<td>Pack &amp; Saddle</td>
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<tr>
<td>T10</td>
<td>Cross Valley Trail</td>
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<td>Arlberg Connection to Winner Creek Trail</td>
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<td>Dogsled, Pack &amp; Saddle</td>
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<td>T12</td>
<td>Glacier Canyon Rim Trail</td>
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<td>Snowcat Trail Improvements</td>
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<td>Bicycle</td>
<td>Multi-use: Hiking, Biking, Cross Country Skiing</td>
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<td>Single-Use, Purpose-Built Mountain Biking Trails</td>
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<td>TBD</td>
<td>Mountain Biking</td>
<td>Mountain Biking</td>
<td>Dogsled, Pack &amp; Saddle, Skijor</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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

### SUMMARY: TRAIL CLASSIFICATION & LENGTH TOTALS (MI)

**OF EXISTING & PROPOSED TRAILS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Class 1</th>
<th>Class 2</th>
<th>Class 3</th>
<th>Class 4</th>
<th>Class 5</th>
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<td></td>
<td>20.75</td>
<td>25.17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>89.84%</td>
<td>92.04%</td>
<td>93.99%</td>
<td>89.27%</td>
<td>93.75%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 the Virgin Creek Natural Area and primitive trails on the east side of Glacier Creek. 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 Oldtown, consider a coordinated effort in partnership with the Railroad to include a pedestrian element. *Additional UDC review required.*

**B2** California Creek Bridge
Construct a pedestrian trail bridge across California Creek as part of the T5 trail project connecting Beaver Pond Trail to the Lower Iditarod Trail. The trail bridge will need to accommodate Class 3 Biking Design parameters.

**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 and complete a loop in the lower Valley. This project must be pursued in concert with the Virgin Creek Access Study (TH4).

**B4** Improve Connectivity at Glacier Creek Bridge at Alyeska Highway
This project will likely not result in the construction of a bridge; however 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, 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 Stumpy’s Summer 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
The Hand Tram provides the opportunity for trail users to cross Glacier Creek in the upper valley, however on many summer days, the demand for use highly exceeds capacity creating a long wait. A pedestrian bridge in this location would remove the connectivity barrier creating a more accessible, multi-use trail experience. Bridge should be wide enough to accommodate adjacent trails. *Additional UDC review required.*

Trailheads (TH)

**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 vaulted restroom. This trailhead can successfully accommodate Girdwood visitors who want access to lower valley trails and can be a great future trailhead for the Virgin Creek Natural Area when an authorized crossing of Glacier Creek is constructed.

**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
Build a new trailhead on HLB land east of the Alyeska Highway to access lower valley trails via the Lower Iditarod Trail. The trailhead should have the capacity for 8-10 vehicles, include a kiosk, sanitation, and other trailhead amenities. *Additional UDC review may be required.*
Virgin Creek Falls Access Study
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 traffic, parking, and trailhead conflicts in the neighborhood. *Additional UDC review required.

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 and natural space system via the Lower Iditarod Trail and will also be under consideration for other uses in the future and are likely to require parking.

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.

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.

Beaver Pond Trailhead
Implementing other simple trailhead improvements (Town Square, Anchorage School District, Girdwood PreK-8 School Parking Agreement, 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.

Girdwood PreK-8 School Parking – Parking Agreement
Pursue an official parking agreement with Girdwood PreK-8 School to provide authorized trail parking in this location. Install trailhead, wayfinding, and informational signage as authorized.

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.

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.

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.

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. *Additional UDC review may be required.

Proposed Natural Spaces (NS)

Virgin Creek Natural Space
Create a natural space in the Virgin Creek area that is kept in its primitive natural state. Allowed uses include primitive, non-mechanized recreation activities like trail walking, running, hiking, skiing, snowshoeing, orienteering, foraging, wildlife viewing, education, solitude, and meditation. Trails in the area should be kept to Class 1 and Class 2 Design Parameters. Mechanized trail use is not authorized. Trail boardwalk or bridge structures are authorized to avoid wetlands and streams. Signage should be kept to a minimum. Parking for this level of development would be required either via TH9, TH10, or TH2.
Stumpy's Natural Space
Create a natural space in the Stumpy's trail system meadows and forest area that is kept in its primitive natural state. Allowed uses include primitive, non-mechanized recreation activities like trail walking, running, hiking, skiing, snowshoeing, orienteering, foraging, wildlife viewing, education, solitude, and meditation. Trails in the area should be built to Class 1 and Class 2 Design Parameters. Mechanized trail use is not authorized. Trail boardwalk or bridge structures are authorized to avoid wetlands and streams. Signage should be kept to a minimum.

Winner Creek Natural Space
Create a natural space in the Winner Creek area that is kept in its primitive natural state. Allowed uses include primitive, non-mechanized recreation activities like trail walking, running, hiking, skiing, snowshoeing, orienteering, foraging, wildlife viewing, education, solitude, and meditation. Trails in the area should be built to Class 1 and Class 2 Design Parameters. Mechanized trail use is not authorized. Trail boardwalk or bridge structures are authorized to avoid wetlands and streams. Signage should be kept to a minimum.

Proposed Mountain Bike Areas (MB)

Beaver Pond
Provide purpose-built mountain biking flow trails (Class 2-3 bicycle design parameters) to the west of Abe's trail in the area between the California Creek drainages. This mountain bike area would alleviate user conflicts around the Abe's Trail/Beaver Pond/California Creek area. Beaver Pond Trail (out of trailhead 20) and a new built uptrack would be up routes for bicycle traffic and the proposed Crow Creek Road to Beaver Pond Trail 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 improved Beaver Pond Trailhead, or Four Valleys Community 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. 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. Additional trails in MB will not be authorized until a parking agreement is in place, Arlberg is expanded, or another parking solution is identified.

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. The down route should be located between NA3 and T14. 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 and natural spaces 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 Trail Plan presents a proposed trail and natural space 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/natural space managers including, but not limited to, the Municipality of Anchorage, Chugach State Park, US Forest Service, Girdwood Trails Committee, Girdwood Nordic Ski Club, Girdwood Mountain Bike Alliance, GirdWild, 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 provided the necessary review for many projects. Please reference the Proposed Trail and Natural Space Network project descriptions on pages 36 – 41 to identify the projects requiring additional Urban Design Commission or Planning and Zoning Commission approvals.
REFERENCES


Municipality of Anchorage, Planning Department. (2020). Development Master Plan Staff Analysis.


Graphic Representing Map Changes Required for the Following Projects:

T10: Cross Valley Trail
T13: Upper Valley Multi-Use Trail
Former NS2, New PT2: Stumpy’s Primitive Trails

T12

T13

PT2

MB2

B6

CROW CREEK RD

T12

T13

PT2

MB2

B6

CROW CREEK RD

T12

T13

PT2

MB2

B6

CROW CREEK RD

Forest Loop Trail

Public Review Draft

Approved Change

Forest Loop

Graphic Representing Changes to the Following Projects:

T3: Lower Valley Trail Loop Connection
TH3: Lower Valley Trailhead
B2: California Creek Bridge

T2: Wagon Trail - Lower Joe Danich Connection
Former NS1: New PT1 Virgin Creek Primitive Trails
Former NS3: New PT3 Winner Creek Primitive Trails

T14

T1

PT1

NS1

NS3

PT3

NS5

PT2

MB2

B6

CROW CREEK RD

T12

T13

PT2

MB2

B6

CROW CREEK RD

T12

T13

PT2

MB2

B6

CROW CREEK RD

Forest Loop
Additional Discussion topics for the February GTC Meeting Motions made by Paul Crews

Please take 5 minutes to read this before the meeting.

In the early 1990’s Girdwood started to develop its first comprehensive plan. Our citizens were surveyed in 1993 and most of the responses were addressed some of the same questions we are still addressing.

The HLB asked us to complete this trails plan before we ask the HLB for permission to build new trails.

The HLB is charged with developing some lands within the valley. New residential and commercial properties are being offered for development. The HLB is asking for guidance concerning our community’s desire for important new trail routes and corridors to assist in the process of planning for the future of our community. We should identify our important trail routes now.

The Trail Plan we pass should identify trails our community will want or need not only now but well into the future.

A stated Value within this draft plan that concerns ACCESS reads: Trails are easily accessible, provide safe access to outdoor recreation, everyday community destinations, and the alpine.

Another Value written within the draft plan says: “Trails provide access to the natural world to experience wildlife, wilderness, natural spaces, and functioning ecosystems”. A very large proportion of our population is asking for developed trails to attain that access.

The 1995 Girdwood Area Plan that is currently being modified established as a “Goal: Establish permanent trail corridors and public open spaces.”

It also called for: Improve resident pedestrian access to local trails, recreational facilities and natural areas. Establish a system of neighborhood parks with pedestrian access from nearby residential areas.”

Another Value written within the draft plan says: “Trails provide access to the natural world to experience wildlife, wilderness, natural spaces, and functioning ecosystems”. A very large proportion of our population is asking for developed trails to attain that access.

In April 2019 the GAP survey asked our community to prioritize what opportunities it wishes for Girdwood’s future. More than 61% of respondents indicated that new 4 foot wide trails for hiking/running, mountain biking and classic Nordic skiing should be prioritized.
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.

These words are written on page 12 of this draft plan: Encourage transportation modes other than automobiles. Need recreational facilities, including expanded ski terrain, and more hiking and Nordic trails.

The land where the Danich Connector trail would be routed is zoned for Commercial Recreation. At the time there were plans to build a golf course on that land. At this time trail construction may be allowed within this area.

Paragraphs from P32 of this draft trails plan are below:

Connectivity

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.
According to this draft trails plan, the purpose of the draft 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 trail and open space organizations, agencies, and elected officials that defines the Girdwood trail network and identifies trail projects that are supported by the community.

The latest Girdwood Area Plan Current Conditions Report calls for walking trails: "provide a planned walking pathways network to reduce the wear on natural vegetation and compaction of soils caused by random access.

The Imagine Girdwood Master Plan committee suggests a number of changes to the 2014 Girdwood south Townsite plan including: "Provide for a flexible mix of civic and commercial uses, adequate access, provide a range of modestly priced housing.

2014 Girdwood South Townsite Master Plan says “A more likely scenario is that the South Townsite area will become a hub of civic and park uses”. The plan calls for: “the inclusion of moderately priced market-rate housing, probably in a later phase of development”. It also calls for: “Connective multimodal infrastructure (trails, bike paths, weather sheltered sidewalks, shuttle bus stops etc) that encourage transportation modes other than automobiles”. The 2014 the 2014 Girdwood South Townsite masterplan asks to: “Improve year round pedestrian facilities and connections throughout the New Girdwood Townsite, adjacent parks, neighborhoods, and school”. Allows residential construction as large as

The 2007 Girdwood Area Community Survey identified the need for more civic and recreational facilities, including a high school, community recreational center, community pool, expanded ski terrain, and more hiking or Nordic trails.

The 2014 South Girdwood Townsite plan allows housing. The plan says:

“The Area Master Plan recommends a modest number of residential units (30 to 80 units) at moderate densities (6 to 14 units per acre). This implies a focus on duplexes and triplexes, cottage-style, single-family detached homes on land held in common and small multi-family structures (48-unit buildings). This housing would be situated south of the Phase 2 development shown on Figure 1.2.”

According to the latest Girdwood Area Plan update Girdwood currently has 1600 housing units and will need about 450 new housing units within 20 years.

According to the 2014 study suggests that Karolius Drive will one day connect to Ruane Road near the Transfer Site.
Open space and Development Reserve

South Girdwood Townsite
### Table 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Use Classification</th>
<th>Housing Type</th>
<th>Density (dwelling units per acre)</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential: Single-family</td>
<td>Single-family (attached and</td>
<td>2-4</td>
<td>Duplexes are permitted if in compliance with lot and design standards; an accessory dwelling unit is allowed with single-family dwelling per design standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(for lots fronting Aleyseka Highway west of Glacier Creek)</td>
<td>detached)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential: Multi-family</td>
<td>Duplex Multi-family</td>
<td>(2-8)</td>
<td>5-8 dwellings per acre density, or triplexes or greater structures require conditional use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial/Residential</td>
<td>Single-family Duplex Multi-family</td>
<td>5-20</td>
<td>5-10 units per acre require administrative site plan review; 10-20 units per acre require conditional use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>Single-family Duplex Multi-family</td>
<td>2-20</td>
<td>Residential units only allowed as secondary use, and must be located above first floor level, with a maximum of two stories.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resort</td>
<td>Multi-family</td>
<td>No maximum</td>
<td>Requires master plan approval through conditional use process; also must address seasonal/ transient employee housing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Recreation</td>
<td>Single-family Duplex Multi-family</td>
<td>No maximum</td>
<td>Residential units only allowed as secondary use, requires master plan approval through conditional use process.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### TMO Trail Class Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trail Class Attributes</th>
<th>Trail Class 1: Minimally Developed</th>
<th>Trail Class 2: Moderately Developed</th>
<th>Trail Class 3: Developed</th>
<th>Trail Class 4: Highly Developed</th>
<th>Trail Class 5: Fully Developed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tread &amp; Traffic Flow</td>
<td>Tread intermittent and often indistinct</td>
<td>Tread continuous and discernible, but narrow and rough</td>
<td>Tread continuous and obvious</td>
<td>Tread wide and relatively smooth with few irregularities</td>
<td>Tread wide, firm, stable, and generally uniform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obstacles</td>
<td>Obstacles common, naturally occurring, often substantial and intended to provide increased challenge</td>
<td>Obstacles may be common, substantial, and intended to provide increased challenge</td>
<td>Obstacles may be common, but not substantial or intended to provide challenge</td>
<td>Obstacles infrequent and insubstantial</td>
<td>Obstacles not present</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Class 2 trails can be difficult. Class 3 trails are easier and are preferred by most people.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designed Use HIKER/PEDESTRIAN</th>
<th>Trail Class 1</th>
<th>Trail Class 2</th>
<th>Trail Class 3</th>
<th>Trail Class 4</th>
<th>Trail Class 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Design Tread Width</td>
<td>Wilderness (Single Lane)</td>
<td>0” – 12”</td>
<td>6” – 18”</td>
<td>12” – 24”</td>
<td>Exception: may be 36” – 48” at steep side slopes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Wilderness (Single Lane)</td>
<td>0” – 12”</td>
<td>6” – 18”</td>
<td>18” – 36”</td>
<td>24” – 60”</td>
<td>36” – 72”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Wilderness (Double Lane)</td>
<td>36”</td>
<td>36”</td>
<td>36” – 60”</td>
<td>48” – 72”</td>
<td>72” – 120”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structures (Minimum Width)</td>
<td>18”</td>
<td>18”</td>
<td>18”</td>
<td>36”</td>
<td>36”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Surface</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Native, ungraded</td>
<td>Native, limited grading</td>
<td>Native with some onsite borrow or imported material where needed for stabilization, occasional grading</td>
<td>Intermittently rough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protrusions</td>
<td>≤ 24”</td>
<td>Likely common and continuous</td>
<td>May be continuously rough</td>
<td>May be common, not continuous</td>
<td>≤ 3”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obstacles (Maximum Height)</td>
<td>24”</td>
<td>14”</td>
<td>10”</td>
<td>8”</td>
<td>No obstacles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Grade</td>
<td>Target Grade</td>
<td>5% – 25%</td>
<td>5% – 18%</td>
<td>3% – 12%</td>
<td>2% – 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short Pitch Maximum</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum Pitch Density</td>
<td>20% – 40% of trail</td>
<td>20% – 30% of trail</td>
<td>10% – 20% of trail</td>
<td>5% – 20% of trail</td>
<td>0% – 5% of trail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Cross Slope</td>
<td>Target Cross Slope</td>
<td>Natural side slope</td>
<td>5% – 20%</td>
<td>5% – 10%</td>
<td>3% – 7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum Cross Slope</td>
<td>Natural side slope</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Clearing</td>
<td>Height</td>
<td>6”</td>
<td>6” – 7”</td>
<td>7” – 8”</td>
<td>8” – 10”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Width</td>
<td>≥ 24”</td>
<td>Some vegetation may encroach into clearing area</td>
<td>24” – 48”</td>
<td>36” – 60”</td>
<td>48” – 72”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoulder Clearance</td>
<td>3” – 6”</td>
<td>6” – 12”</td>
<td>12” – 18”</td>
<td>12” – 18”</td>
<td>12” – 24”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Turn</td>
<td>Radius</td>
<td>No minimum</td>
<td>2’ – 3’</td>
<td>3’ – 6’</td>
<td>4’ – 8’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designed Use</td>
<td>Trail Class 1</td>
<td>Trail Class 2</td>
<td>Trail Class 3</td>
<td>Trail Class 4</td>
<td>Trail Class 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CROSS-COUNTRY SKI</td>
<td>Single Lane</td>
<td>Typically not designed or actively managed for cross-country skiing</td>
<td>Typically not groomed</td>
<td>(or width of grooming equipment)</td>
<td>(or width of grooming equipment)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Groomed Width</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double Lane</td>
<td>6’ – 8’</td>
<td>8’ – 12’</td>
<td>12’ – 16’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structures (Minimum Width)</td>
<td>36’</td>
<td>36’</td>
<td>36’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Grooming and Surface Type</td>
<td>Generally no machine grooming</td>
<td>May receive occasional machine grooming for snow compaction and track setting</td>
<td>Regular machine grooming for snow compaction and track setting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protrusions</td>
<td>No protrusions</td>
<td>No protrusions</td>
<td>No protrusions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obstacles (Maximum Height)</td>
<td>12” Uncommon</td>
<td>8” Uncommon (no obstacles if machine groomed)</td>
<td></td>
<td>No obstacles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Grade</td>
<td>Target Grade</td>
<td>5% – 15%</td>
<td>2% – 10%</td>
<td>0% – 8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short Pitch Maximum</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum Pitch Density</td>
<td>10% – 20% of trail</td>
<td>5% – 15% of trail</td>
<td>0% – 10% of trail</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Cross Slope</td>
<td>Target Cross Slope</td>
<td>0% – 10%</td>
<td>0% – 5%</td>
<td>0% – 5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum Cross Slope (For up to 50’)</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Clearing Height (Above normal maximum snow level)</td>
<td>6’ – 8’ (or height of grooming machinery)</td>
<td>8’ (or height of grooming machinery)</td>
<td>8’ – 10’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Width</td>
<td>24” – 60” Light vegetation may encroach into clearing area</td>
<td>72” – 20” Light vegetation may encroach into clearing area</td>
<td>96” – 168” Widen clearing at turns or if increased sight distance needed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoulder Clearance</td>
<td>0” – 6”</td>
<td>0” – 12”</td>
<td>0” – 24”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Turn Radius</td>
<td>8’ – 10’ (or to accommodate grooming equipment)</td>
<td>15’ – 20’</td>
<td>≥ 25’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Design Parameters courtesy of the USDA.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designed Use</th>
<th>Trail Class 1</th>
<th>Trail Class 2</th>
<th>Trail Class 3</th>
<th>Trail Class 4</th>
<th>Trail Class 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BICYCLE</td>
<td>6&quot; – 12&quot;</td>
<td>12&quot; – 24&quot;</td>
<td>18&quot; – 36&quot;</td>
<td>24&quot; – 48&quot;</td>
<td>36&quot; – 60&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Tread Width</td>
<td>Single Lane</td>
<td>Double Lane</td>
<td>Structures</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>36&quot; – 48&quot;</td>
<td>36&quot; – 48&quot;</td>
<td>18&quot;</td>
<td>18&quot;</td>
<td>36&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Surface</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Protrusions</td>
<td>Obstacles</td>
<td>Design Grade</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Native, un-graded</td>
<td>≤ 24&quot;</td>
<td>24&quot;</td>
<td>Target Grade</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>May be continuously rough</td>
<td>≤ 6&quot;</td>
<td>12&quot;</td>
<td>5% – 20%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sections of soft or unstable tread on grades &lt; 5% may be common and continuous</td>
<td>≤ 3&quot;</td>
<td>10&quot;</td>
<td>5% – 12%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Native, limited grading</td>
<td>May be continuously rough</td>
<td>Uncommon, not continuous</td>
<td>3% – 10%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sections of soft or unstable tread on grades &lt; 5% may be common</td>
<td>May be common, not continuous</td>
<td>No protrusions</td>
<td>2% – 8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Native with some onsite borrow or imported material where needed for stabilization, occasional grading</td>
<td>Intermittently rough</td>
<td>Likely imported material, routine grading</td>
<td>2% – 5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stable with minor roughness</td>
<td>Sections of soft or unstable tread on grades &lt; 5% may be present, but not common</td>
<td>Uniform, firm, and stable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Cross Slope</td>
<td>Target Cross Slope</td>
<td>5% – 10%</td>
<td>5% – 8%</td>
<td>3% – 8%</td>
<td>3% – 5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maximum Cross Slope</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Clearing</td>
<td>Height</td>
<td>6&quot; – 8&quot;</td>
<td>8&quot;</td>
<td>8&quot; – 9&quot;</td>
<td>8&quot; – 9&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Width</td>
<td>24&quot; – 36&quot;</td>
<td>36&quot; – 48&quot;</td>
<td>60&quot; – 72&quot;</td>
<td>72&quot; – 96&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shoulder Clearance</td>
<td>0&quot; – 12&quot;</td>
<td>6&quot; – 12&quot;</td>
<td>6&quot; – 12&quot;</td>
<td>6&quot; – 18&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Turn</td>
<td>Radius</td>
<td>2&quot; – 3&quot;</td>
<td>3&quot; – 6&quot;</td>
<td>4&quot; – 8&quot;</td>
<td>8&quot; – 10&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designed Use</td>
<td>Trail Class 1</td>
<td>Trail Class 2</td>
<td>Trail Class 3</td>
<td>Trail Class 4</td>
<td>Trail Class 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-Country Ski</td>
<td>Single Lane</td>
<td>Typically not designed or actively managed for cross-country skiing</td>
<td>2’ – 4”</td>
<td>Typically not groomed</td>
<td>6’ – 8” (or width of grooming equipment)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Groomed Width</td>
<td>Double Lane</td>
<td>6’ – 8”</td>
<td>8’ – 12”</td>
<td>12’ – 16”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structures (Minimum Width)</td>
<td>36”</td>
<td>36”</td>
<td>36”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Grooming and Surface</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Generally no machine grooming</td>
<td>May receive occasional machine grooming for snow compaction and track setting</td>
<td>Regular machine grooming for snow compaction and track setting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protrusions</td>
<td>No protrusions</td>
<td>No protrusions</td>
<td>No protrusions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obstacles (Maximum Height)</td>
<td>No obstacles</td>
<td>12”</td>
<td>Uncommon (no obstacles if machine groomed)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Grade</td>
<td>Target Grade</td>
<td>5% – 15%</td>
<td>2% – 10%</td>
<td>0% – 8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short Pitch Maximum</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum Pitch</td>
<td>10% – 20% of trail</td>
<td>5% – 15% of trail</td>
<td>0% – 10% of trail</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Cross Slope</td>
<td>Target Cross Slope (For up to 50&quot;)</td>
<td>0% – 10%</td>
<td>0% – 5%</td>
<td>0% – 5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum Cross Slope</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Clearing</td>
<td>Height (Above normal maximum snow level)</td>
<td>6’ – 8”</td>
<td>8’ (or height of grooming machinery)</td>
<td>8’ – 10”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Width</td>
<td>24” – 60”</td>
<td>72” – 20”</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light vegetation may encroach into clearing area</td>
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<td>Widen clearing at turns or if increased sight distance needed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoulder Clearance</td>
<td>0” – 6”</td>
<td>0” – 12”</td>
<td>0” – 24”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Turn</td>
<td>Radius</td>
<td>8’ – 10”</td>
<td>15’ – 20” (or to accommodate grooming equipment)</td>
<td>≥ 25”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Design Parameters courtesy of the USDA.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designed Use</th>
<th>Trail Class 1</th>
<th>Trail Class 2</th>
<th>Trail Class 3</th>
<th>Trail Class 4</th>
<th>Trail Class 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nordic / Skate Ski: Snow Trail</td>
<td>Typically not designed or actively managed for skate skiing, although use may be allowed</td>
<td>Typically not designed or actively managed for skate skiing, although use may be allowed</td>
<td>6&quot; - 8&quot;</td>
<td>8&quot; - 12&quot;</td>
<td>12&quot; - 16&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Groomed Width</td>
<td>Single Lane</td>
<td>Double Lane¹</td>
<td>Or width of grooming equipment</td>
<td>Or width of grooming equipment</td>
<td>Or width of grooming equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Structures (Minimum Width)</td>
<td></td>
<td>8&quot; - 12&quot;</td>
<td>12&quot; - 16&quot;</td>
<td>14&quot; - 24&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>36&quot;</td>
<td>36&quot;</td>
<td>36&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Grooming and Surface</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td></td>
<td>May receive occasional machine grooming for snow compaction and track setting</td>
<td>Smooth compaction using implements designed for creating skate lanes.</td>
<td>Smooth compaction using implements designed for creating skate lanes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prolusions</td>
<td></td>
<td>No protrusions</td>
<td>No protrusions</td>
<td>No protrusions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Obstacles (Maximum Height)</td>
<td></td>
<td>8&quot;</td>
<td>No obstacles</td>
<td>No obstacles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Uncommon (no obstacles if machine groomed)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Grade</td>
<td>Target Grade</td>
<td></td>
<td>2% - 10%</td>
<td>0% - 8%</td>
<td>0% - 6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Short Pitch Maximum</td>
<td></td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maximum Pitch Density</td>
<td></td>
<td>5% - 15% of trail</td>
<td>5%-10% of trail</td>
<td>5-8% of trail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Cross Slope</td>
<td>Target Cross Slope</td>
<td></td>
<td>0% - 5%</td>
<td>0% - 5%</td>
<td>0% - 5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maximum Cross Slope (For up to 50’)</td>
<td></td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Minimum cross-slope (crowed or one side) should be 2% to promote drainage</td>
<td>Minimum cross-slope (crowed or one side) should be 2% to promote drainage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Clearing</td>
<td>Height (Above normal maximum snow level)</td>
<td></td>
<td>8&quot;</td>
<td>8&quot; - 10&quot;</td>
<td>At least 10&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Or height of grooming equipment</td>
<td>Or height of grooming equipment</td>
<td>Or height of grooming equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Width</td>
<td></td>
<td>6&quot; - 14&quot;</td>
<td>8&quot; - 18&quot;</td>
<td>8&quot; - 26&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Light vegetation may encroach into clearing area</td>
<td>Widens clearing at turns or if increased sight distance needed</td>
<td>Widens clearing at turns or if increased sight distance needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shoulder Clearance</td>
<td></td>
<td>0&quot; - 12&quot;</td>
<td>0&quot; - 24&quot;</td>
<td>0&quot; - 24&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Turn</td>
<td>Radius</td>
<td></td>
<td>15&quot; - 20&quot;</td>
<td>≥ 25&quot;</td>
<td>25&quot; - 30&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Or to accommodate grooming equipment</td>
<td>Or to accommodate grooming equipment</td>
<td>Or to accommodate grooming equipment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There have been comments made at recent meetings and a written motion submitted that have questioned the process encompassing the development of the Trails Master Plan. To help ensure that everyone understands the process, I am submitting for review by all GTC members the following excerpts from primary source documents.

The Huddle Scope of Work outlines how the Draft Plan was to move forward to a Final Plan.

I have included discussion taken from the GTC Subcommittee Minutes from their meeting on June 21, 2021, to clarify the intent of the subcommittee for proceeding. The GTC Subcommittee was a representative group of trails advocates who were selected by the Trails Committee and Huddle to help develop the Trails Master Plan. Unbeknownst to the GTC Subcommittee, the June 21, 2021 meeting turned out to be their final meeting. The process changed after this meeting because the GBOS voted on August 16, 2021 to suspend any more funds being directed to the contractor to complete the work that had been laid out up to that date.

The Minutes from the August 16, 2021 GBOS meeting clarify how the GTC in its entirety, rather than the GTC Subcommittee, became the body responsible for moving the Trails Master Plan forward.

The Minutes from the October, November, and December 2021 GTC meetings clearly lay out that GTC will first consider staff edits to the draft plan, then will consider other recommendations from the GTC as a body.

Every vote taken on the Draft Trails Master Plan from November 2, 2021 to January 4, 2022 was based on the process laid out in October, November, and December. If the ideas presented at the January 18, 2022 GTC meeting are not allowed to be considered and voted on, as was set out as the process, perhaps all previous votes taken on the Plan are no longer valid.

If it happens that the Draft Trails Plan is voted down at the February 1, 2022, GTC meeting and then subsequently any of the additional ideas which were submitted to GTC are accepted, I do not wish for there to be any doubt in anyone’s mind as to the validity of these actions. At no point has the process for the plan been violated. The GTC is doing exactly what we stated in the written record that we would be doing.

HUDDLE Scope of Work:

Activity C2 – Public Meeting(s)
The consultant will assist [GTC Subcommittee] in preparing for and hosting up to two public meetings in Girdwood. This public meeting will be in a Workshop Format to obtain stakeholders’ input on the Draft Plan’s Girdwood Trails [TBD] Plan Scope of Work DRAFT 3 2020-03-04 priorities. For each major component of the Plan, there will be a station at which stakeholders can learn more about the alternatives considered and the cost analysis completed. Input from stakeholders will be collected qualitatively and quantitatively. The consultant will provide a comment summary report, similar to a public scoping document. Based on recommendations from the summary report, [GTC Subcommittee] will direct final edits to the Final Plan. Key deliverables shall include but are not limited to:

• Venue Reservations
• Draft and Final Public Notices
• Draft and Final Visual Aids • Event Staffing
• Data Collection and Synthesis
• Public Meeting Summary Report
Activity C3 – Final Plan
The consultant will incorporate comments into the Draft Final Plan based outcomes from C3 and submit it for review to the [GTC Subcommittee]. The consultant will incorporate their edits and distribute at least one week before a planned workshop. [GTC Subcommittee] will host a one day review workshop to review the Final Plan with members of key decision makers. The goal of this workshop is to sign off on the content prior to publication. The consultant will develop and provide a Summary Report of Edits and a tracking matrix. Key deliverables shall include but are not limited to:

- Draft Final Plan
- Draft and Final Review Workshop Agenda
- Draft and Final Visual Aids
- Edit Summary Report and Comment Tracking Matrix

Girdwood Trails Plan Subcommittee Minutes, June 21, 2021

HST—Comments *(public comments on the Draft Plan)* will be put into a table and she and K. Kelley will have to decide whether to take that to the Trails Committee.

**K. Kelley**—We’d like to aim for early September to return comments and a draft back to the committee. We are open to discussing how to proceed with comments.

**R. Tenny**—Thinks the comments should go back to the committee for one last look before moving them to the next step. It’s only appropriate that we sign off on any changes.

**B. Raymond-Yakoubian**—Also likes idea of having comments back to subcommittee before moving on to the Trails Committee.

**P. Crews**—We spent a lot of time on the vision, values, and goals, and not as much time on map. I don’t think we came to consensus. If we can see public comments, have a public work session that only includes discussion, we could provide Holly and Kyle final direction before the plan moves on.

**C. Cope Hendrickson**—If we reconvene in September for a working session that is public, it will be difficult to get things done with a large public crowd, and we would still have to take public comment. A public fall meeting could push the project back another year.

**J. Lee**—Maybe we can have a private work session with a public presentation? He would like to see the comments come back to this subcommittee before moving the plan forward.

HST—The intent of this process and plan is public. Q: Is this group is willing to change the course of the plan based on the comments from the public?

A: **J. Lee**—Yes. It’s part of our job.

R. Tenny—Called to end the discussion. We know where a lot of conflict areas are. We need the public to speak and let the consultants make recommendations based on those comments. Then let this subcommittee review before moving the plan on. We hired consultants to look at this plan from another perspective. If the community wants to get more involved, they can attend a GTC meeting.

**M. Edgington** (Public Comment)—Has concerns with the process of this plan. He doesn’t believe comments need to come back to subcommittee. If you’ve missed something, that’s where the community comments come in. This group should not be a gate keeper to the public’s comments.

**K. Harrison** (Public comment)—The idea of consensus has been hard for this group. Now the work needs to go beyond this subcommittee. Bringing public comments back for the subcommittee to review will be an added expense. Let the public provide input and then let the plan move forward.

Concluding Thoughts: This subcommittee will meet again in September to review all the public comments before moving forward to the GTC.
GBOS Meeting Minutes, August 16, 2021

GTC request for approval of Huddle AK proposal to complete the Girdwood Trails Master Plan @ $22,680 from the Parks and Rec 406 account. Huddle Ak has worked hard with GTP subcommittee to produce draft Girdwood Trails Master Plan. Project has taken several more meetings and more outreach than originally budgeted for. Additional funds are needed to complete the project. Of the $22,680 that are needed, about $11,300 are already spent. The other $11,370 include additional subcommittee meetings.

Mike Edgington expresses that some of the work completed is outside of the scope of a trails plan and falls instead under the Area Plan. He believes that the subcommittee’s work is done and should not use more of the contractor time, he proposes approval of the funds already spent:

Motion: Girdwood Board of Supervisors moves to approve expense of $11,310 to be paid by the Girdwood parks and rec capital fund. Motion by ME, 2nd by JW

Proposed amendment: Add unspent funds of $7,400 for approval process to the motion. Motion by ME, 2nd by GW. Motion carries 5-0

Amended motion: Girdwood Board of Supervisors moves to approve $11,310 in previously spent funds and $7,400 in funds allocated for approval process to be paid by the Girdwood Parks and Rec capital fund. Motion by ME, 2nd by JW 5 in favor, 0 opposed Motion passes.

October 5, 2021 GTC Meeting Minutes:

Review of Girdwood Trails Master Plan Presentation provided by Holly Spoth-Torres (Huddle AK) and Kyle Kelley. Kyle and Holly have reviewed the comments, compiled them and provided the information in a document made available on the Girdwood Trails Plan webpage. A couple of comments were missing from the original compilation, an update will be posted. Some comments were opinions, some included questions which have been responded to. Review of the comments prompted recommendations to update the draft Girdwood Trails Plan. No changes have been made to the draft plan originally presented.

The ideas presented tonight are for GTC to consider as they work through public review of the plan. Originally the GTP Subcommittee was to review recommendation, however funding for this segment of Huddle contract was declined by GBOS. There is no obligation to accept the proposed recommendations. Recommendations have been discussed with HLB, Shelley Rowton.

These recommendations are proposed by Holly and Kyle. However, GTC members should review the plan and the recommendations, come up with their own recommendations to discuss at future GTC meetings. Whatever is ultimately approved by GTC will move on through local and MOA process.

November 2, 2021 GTC Meeting Minutes:

Structure for review of draft Trails Master Plan:
It is expected that GTC will decide that amendments to the draft plan will be considered. Chair recommends that the amendments proposed through public comment review will be addressed first, in the order they are provided in the Memo compilation in the meeting packet. Additional recommendations are be sent to GTC Admin: tylerms@muni.org to be included in the next meeting packet and addressed in the future. Recommendations should be provided in the same format as those in the memo: Classification (New Trail Project, Bridge Project, Trailhead Project, Natural Space Project, Mountain Bike Area Project); Statement of change recommended; paragraph of explanation.

December 7, 2021 GTC Meeting Minutes:

NOTE: Special meeting on Dec 14 to review the remaining existing recommendations may be extended to complete review. Jan 2022 meeting will be an opportunity to vote on the plan as updated, or for public to present additional recommended changes for GTC consideration at future meeting. If additional work sessions are needed, they will be considered for Jan 11, 18, 25.
Eryn Boone:

Suggested Change 1:
Trailheads on residential streets should be pedestrian/bike access only (i.e., trailhead parking not allowed on residential roads). The 2014 Girdwood South Townsite Master Plan encourages transportation modes other than automobile. This has also been a common theme for Girdwood planning in general, including in this Trails Plan, so it makes sense to apply it to trailheads in areas where traffic and vehicles have a negative impact on residents and visitors. Traffic on residential streets is a longstanding common complaint amongst residents. Additionally, in some cases, space does not allow for a parking lot in these residential areas. This applies to Virgin Creek Falls (end of Timberline) and any other future neighborhood trailheads. Alternatives for visitors to access these trails are: getting dropped off by shuttle or private vehicle, or parking at the nearest parking lot, such as the Daylodge. References to this topic in the plan: Page 32, “Improving & Managing Trail Access”; Page 26, “Access: Trailheads & Parking”

Suggested Change 2:
Recommendation to differentiate between activities allowed during winter/summer in Areas for Primitive Trails/Natural Space Areas. Main area of concern is in Natural Space area NS1 (Virgin Creek Natural Space), which is currently frequented in winter by people riding fat bikes, when conditions allow. Need to consider allowing different uses winter/summer seasons to accommodate this. Currently bikes are considered mechanized and not allowed in Natural Spaces, if I understand it right. Winter travel allows multiple paths to be made in the snow if desired for different activities (biking, skiing, snow shoeing, etc.), without impact to the environment after freeze-up and with adequate snow cover. The conditions that have to be present in order for a person to be able to ride a fat bike include a compacted snow surface, which protects from damage to the environment. The speed of fat biking is much slower than regular summer biking, and the sounds generated by fat biking are similar to snowshoeing or skiing on fish-scale skis. References to this topic in the plan: Page 35, “Natural Spaces”; Page 20, “Seasonal Trails”
Motions to introduce to the GTC.
Submitted Jan 10, 2022
Paul Crews
285 Higher Terrace Rd
Girdwood, Alaska 99587

Motion 1  Add to the draft plan a new class 3 trail traversing parcel 6-036 and other nearby lands generally following the route that is indicated on the attached map.

Motion 2  Add to the draft plan a new site to locate bridge 1. Remove from the draft plan the old location of bridge 1. Select the new location of bridge 1 to correspond with the southern termination of the trail described in motion 1.

Motion 3  Add new trailhead parking #14 near the southern termination of the trail described in motion #1.

Motion 4  Amend the approved recommended change of Natural Spaces description on P 35, Areas For Primitive Trails by adding the following sentence: Primitive Trails should be routed or rerouted onto sustainable alignments and hardened when necessary to assure trail sustainability.
### New Danich Connection Trail

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Class 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Phase 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.6 miles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Phase 2</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.8 miles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Cross valley connection
- Connects to Mining Roads Neighborhoods
- Old Girdwood connection
- New Parking Here? TH 14?
- Downtown Connection
- Cross valley connection
**New Danich Connection Trail**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New Danich Trail</th>
<th>Phase 1 Trail to Downtown Class 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Danich Trail</td>
<td>Phase 2 Trail to Lower Valley Class 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Danich Trail</td>
<td>The Upper Danich Trail is drawn as a trail on the map but very little trail really exists. Trails here are intermittent, are class 1 at best and do not exist at all for most of the route. Should we remove it from the draft map, mark it as a route only, or should we mark a sustainable trail alignment on the ground?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Danich Trail</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current winter route</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iditarod Trail Link</td>
<td>New Danich Trail Connection to Mine Road Neighborhoods, Old Girdwood and Uptown Girdwood. <em>Bicycle or walking travel from Turin to Hottentot Road via a New Danich Trail is 1.2 miles. The distance between the same destinations via Timberline Drive and the Alyeska Highway bike path is 2.4 miles.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Virgin Creek Trail</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relocate Bridge #1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Add: Parking Trailhead 14 | The area north of the Transfer Site is level with widely spaced cottonwood trees. This is likely one of the cheapest places to build parking. Signs on the Highway can direct Anchorage people to park there for middle valley trail use. This is a logical location for a major trailhead that can serve local residents and Anchorage visitors.
The New Danich Connection Trail

• Connects our neighborhoods.
• Draws more residents to trail use and the enjoyment of the out of doors.
• Promotes physical and mental fitness.
• Shortens the walking or pedal distance between Turin Drive and Hottentot Road by half.
• Moves trail users away from the river bluff.
• Allows forest trail access to downtown without walking or riding on city streets or paved pathways.
• Provides Timberline residents trail opportunities within walking distance of their homes mitigating the number expensive and destructive parking spaces we are faced with building at our trailheads. Many Timberline area houses have been there for 50 years. In five decades, the Timberline area residents have never had a usable trail to enjoy.
• Creates a new cross valley link.
• Creates a means to cross the valley in case of a catastrophic highway bridge failure.
• Provides new access for Old Girdwood, the Mine Road Neighborhoods and Alyeska Highway residents to the lower and mid valley trails.
• Creates winter loops with the Lower Iditarod, the river trails and the Timberline meadows Trail.
• If combined with new parking adjacent to the Transfer Site we could create a Mid Valley Trail Center that would attract our out-of-town users and would reduce parking pressure the Forest Service and Downtown. We could re-locate the Karolius #5 Trailhead to the ball field (plenty of space most of the time) and re-allocate those funds to extend the Lower Iditarod Trail along the Karolius Road shoulder to the ballpark.
• Traverses ground that allows easy trail building by Girdwood standards because the grades are not steep, the ground is well drained with a gravel sub structure and there are few water problems. The forest is generally well spaced which mitigates tree removals.
• Helps fulfill the community’s desire to create more class 3 trails.
• Acts as a non-auto commuter connector.
• Recognizes that our community will rely more in the future on non-gasoline combustion driven transportation and that electrically propelled bikes, e scooters, one wheels, and e skates will grow in popularity.
• Prepares our community for the future when we will have more trail users.
• Designating the trail and bridge as a pedestrian corridor may open funding opportunities.
There are big differences between Class 2 and class 3 trails. See the trails matrix below copied from page 36 of the current Girdwood Trails Management Plan.

Class 2 trails are meant to be narrow and rough including substantial obstacles intended to increase challenge. Class 2 trails are often steep. Vegetation is not cleared from the trail. Hiking on class 2 trails is often an athlete endeavor.

Class 3 trails are also narrow but substantial obstacles have been cleared from the walking line. Most trip hazards have been removed or covered with soil. Class 3 trails are flatter and easier to walk on. Overgrown vegetation can be cleared away from the trail. Class 3 trails are often used by less athletic individuals than those who use class 2 trails.
Things to think about

- An early mantra of the former trails plan subcommittee was “trails out my back door”.
- Another mantra was “connect our community with trails”
- The Timberline neighborhoods have not had any usable trails for fifty years.
- If Timberline residents have nice trails to enjoy near their homes we will not need as many parking spaces at our trailheads.
- Trailhead parking lots are expensive to build and maintain, they are land intensive and they eliminate forest.
- Building new parking lots may be more expensive than the cost of building the trails themselves.
- If we wish to improve our community’s physical and mental health, help the environment and use our cars less, we should build trails that make it easy for our citizens to use their feet, their pedals, or their skis.
- The electric age is upon us. Not only will we use our bikes and our feet more but we will see a big increase in the use of e bikes, one wheels, e scooters and e skates. We need to get ready.
- Girdwood’s population and trail use will grow. We need to get ready.
- We should develop foot travel routes that shorten distances between destinations in order to encourage pedestrian travel.
Personal Notes

I first visited Girdwood nearly 70 years ago as a child. The Old winding Seward Highway had recently been completed to the Kenai. They had recently paved the road.

I remember having lunch at the Little Dipper Inn, the little café/bar/hotel that was Girdwood’s happening place. It was located next to the railroad tracks on the west side of Old Main Street. I watched it burn down after the 1964 earthquake.

Anyway, there was no Alyeska Highway at the time. Post-earthquake money built the highway the next year. The old Crow Creek Road used to cross the tracks by the Little Dipper Inn then go up the overgrown road across from the Forest service that we now use to get to the Lower Iditarod Trail. The old Crow Creek Road was a two lane rough muddy mine road at the time. There were a few small houses along the road. A few of the original houses are still lived in.

The resort was built before the earthquake and the highway was then upgraded. The original route to the resort crossed the valley about where the Merc is now, then it crossed the river over a railroad flat car as a bridge. Travel continued up Davos Road and ended where Powder Hound is today. The Old Day Lodge parking lot was where the magic carpet lift is now located.

I helped my dad build one of the first shacks below the ski area in 1962. We used an outhouse and a wood stove. Not many people In Anchorage had money for real second homes in those days, especially right after the earthquake. There were a lot of shacks.

I have lived here full time more than 50 years now.

Every day I feel like the luckiest person in the world because I am a Girdwood resident.

So, I have witnessed all the change in Girdwood. What sticks in my mind though is that after 50 years the residents of the Timberline neighborhoods have never had a useful trail through the forest to enjoy. Our resident neighbors deserve better.

Paul Crews
Box 649
Girdwood
pbcrews@alaska.net
907 301 5252

I have explored our trail study areas many times. I know where most of our drainages run and where many of the wet places are. Some of my tracks appear on the next page.
These are some tracks I did not delete. I usually do not turn on my GPS tracker anymore because I usually know where I am.

Timberline area

Upper Valley area
First, thank you both for keeping this plan moving forward. I find it to be of enormous importance – for the Girdwood Mountain Bike Plan to move forward in the UDC, and especially since Girdwood will be on the “Alaska Long Trail” route bringing even more trail users to the valley. The general outdoor recreation boom the has everyone’s attention.

This entire plan is about the well-being of our community, our trails, and the enthusiastic visitors. To keep us all mentally and physically healthy through trail use, we have the important task to create a meaningful, fun, safe, and connected trail system that will keep the community returning to for years to come.

Thank you for your time.

1) I move that the primitive trail areas be removed from the maps.
   We all agree that un-developed areas are critical for wildlife and to everyone's enjoyment of the Girdwood Valley and its trail system. However, designating these specific areas will make it difficult to appropriately respond to increased use in any of these areas or address issues with infrastructure concerning altering use patterns. Inability to address these kind of issues could ultimately cause damage to the natural areas, wetlands, and trails that we all agree are so important. I ask that we focus on designating the trails – primitive through developed – with signage including trail names, maps, allowed uses, and distances. Designating specific areas as primitive trail areas' is a land use topic, not a trail subcommittee topic. Our task at hand was to create a Master Trail Plan. I was on the subcommittee and feel that we definitely fell short on our responsibility to create a dynamic plan of an expanding trail system to address increased usage, GTC goals of additional trail connection, signage, climate change impacts, access, and the positive economic impact of trail users. We should focus on trailhead signage including uses of the trails to keep the primitive trails and wetlands protected.
Area 1) Doesn’t allow for trail connection to neighborhoods from Town Center and between established trails. Leaving ones vehicle in the driveway is a key value in Girdwood, and having trails in our backyard have been stated as a value repeatedly. Well, this is our backyard. Let’s focus on protecting the wetlands and primitive trails in the lower valley while connecting a neighborhood route in the upper Timberline area from Alyeska Highway to Virgin Creek Trail to bypass the roads.

Area 2) Isn’t in alignment with previous land use plans referenced in Master Plan nor congruent with the Girdwood public surveys. The current primitive trail area inclusion in this Master Plan does not align with the GNSC’s mission to build and maintain a year-round multi-use trail system as it restricts the majority of uplands in the upper valley to primitive trails only - no groomed trails and no biking – summer or winter. 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. Previous plans and future plan should recognize this as a recreation corridor.

Area 3) Isn’t in alignment with previous land use plans referenced in this Master Plan. This area is flanked by two extremely 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.
2) I move to connect the Upper Joe Danich trail with the Virgin Creek Trail. This would be in response to the community’s comments and help alleviate Timberline traffic and over-crowded trailheads from the Timberline and Virgin Creek neighborhoods. A sustainable trail loop within this Timberline / Virgin Creek area could provide a safe connection to Hightower Town Square for the neighborhood, and from the Town Square parking to the Falls. 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. It would be ideal to keep the Lower Danich and Wagon Trail primitive, and to connect the Upper Danich and Upper Virgin Creek Trail up to the Falls.
3) **I move that we add back an Upper Valley Connector from the Forest Loop to the CPG CAT Track near the CAT Track Bridge.** While the exact area of the connector trail can be discussed in the future, showing a Class 4 year-round looped trail system is congruent with the community survey results and Girdwood Master Plan comments. The trail originally included in the plan was removed because people commented the space was crowded. Yet, if you look at the summer map the GTC created (shown below), no summer trails exist in this area. 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 20 Kilometers of multi-use trails to this area. I agree that the primitive trails should remain primitive, but I disagree with this proposed primitive area covering all of the uplands of the Girdwood valley west of the CAT track, thus prohibiting a future multi-use trail system development that includes summer or winter bike travel.
4) **I move that we delete the “Primitive Trail Experience” paragraph on page 24 of the Master Plan.** This is a false narrative. Girdwood’s existing trails were not more primitive as stated in the document, but in fact were once utility roads/ trails built for mining, hunting, and logging. (Abe’s, California Creek, Winner Creek, Danich, Virgin Creek, Crow Creek, Beaver Pond) These trails have been vanishing back into the forest (including the 1969 cross country ski race trail) or have to be constantly brushed to remain open.
Petitioner: Kate Sandberg

I. What is the desired change to Trails Plan?
   A. Remove the three primitive areas from the plan. This includes all text and maps.

   B. Replace with a protective buffer status of 100 feet on both sides of all valley floor class 1 and 2 trails. These buffers would be explained and identified by text and maps.
      - Some buffers may overlap or come up short by Glacier Creek.
      - Narrow gauge grooming is not allowed on these winter trails.

As of January 11, 2022, the following trails are included: Upper and Lower Danich, Wagon, Lower Virgin Creek, Abe’s, California Creek, Glacier Creek Ridge, Stumpy’s Summer and Winter, Upper Meadows Winter, and Toe Slope Trails

II. Why remove the primitive areas designation?
   - Not the stated purpose of the GTC to have large areas of designated land, but only to advocate for, protect, and maintain trails.

   “Statement of Purpose: The Girdwood Trails Committee (GTC) advocates for, protects, and maintains trails according to the guidelines of the Girdwood Trails Management Plan. The GTC reports to the Girdwood Board of Supervisors.” (Last revision, Sept. 2021)
      - Trails Committee would be unable to manage these lands under current HLB land ownership.
      - Suggested boundaries of these primitive areas are indistinct and unenforceable.
      - No area should be set aside for one purpose—designated biking areas include other trail development.
      - Many comments from the community are against this type of designation.

III. Why replace with protective buffer status of 100 feet on each side of all valley floor class 1 and 2 trails?
   - Focuses on the trails, not areas of land.
   - Is a measurable boundary and wider than an easement can be from HLB.
   - Becomes a stated goal of the Trails Committee to protect the more primitive trails from other encroaching trail development.
   - Easements for these trails can be sought as well.
   - Demonstrates that the Committee values all levels of trail environments.

Reference
Submitted by: Julie Raymond-Yakoubian

Motion: Vote to adopt the Girdwood Trails Master Plan as it is now (i.e. after incorporation of the votes on recommendations ending at the January 4, 2022 meeting), and add any new proposals that are voted on and accepted by GTC as an additional appendix to the Plan.

Rationale: This action recognizes new/added suggestions, but does now allow new proposals to turn the Plan into something that is not an actual Plan and that would constitute waste and abuse of public resources (including funds and previous volunteer efforts), and disenfranchisement of previous voters, votes, and work of volunteers.

Additional Rationale/Details:

- This approach allows everyone to continue to be heard. It allows for previously unheard/undiscussed ideas which are approved by GTC to be included in an appendix format to the main body of the Plan.
- This approach also acknowledges that post-January ideas/votes have not gone through the same extensive public process as the content of the main Plan, and are being added at the last minute and after a complete diversion from the scope of the Plan followed for years.
- At the same time, this approach also respects the previous work of the Plan Subcommittee and the public. Allowing the simple majority of votes on one day in February 2022 to potentially rewrite the plan constitutes poor planning at best and makes a mockery of the public process, which was designed to ensure our entire community is served and that a purposeful process was followed in drafting this Plan. This is not how community Plans are or should be written, nor how the public was promised over the course of years about how this Plan would be completed. To allow votes on these newly introduced ideas to rewrite the Plan means that all the previous work of the Subcommittee (including years of work, dozens of meetings, and untold hours of volunteer efforts), the participation of the public, 50 thousand dollars of public funds, and previous voters and votes become abused, wasted and disenfranchised.
- The public should be heard at any point in a legitimate process, but what is being proposed for post-January 4 is not legitimate, is outside the original scope (as pointed out by staff), and will be ignoring 2+ years of work over the course of at least 24 public meetings, 2 open houses, and a formal public comment period. This provided voluminous space for the public to make comment and input - which it did - in addition to the public's ability to submit or provide comment at over two dozen meetings (which they also did), making the argument that ideas from the public have not been heard, and that we must deviate from the scope and original process, untenable.
Recommendation for Change of Girdwood Trails Plan

Submitted by Michelle Tenny

Page 42: Trailhead 4

Proposed change: Title - Virgin Creek Falls Trailhead
(not access study)

Keep bullet points 1,2,3

Add bullet point 4:

Upon completion of the above mentioned study, and a review of the suggested alternatives by GTC there will be implementation of the preferred option.
Trails Plan Amendments
1/10/2022
Submitted by Justin and Mary Thomas

1) Add 3-5k loop class 4 trail north of T14.

The terrain here is more suitable for beginner/intermediate skiing or biking. This is one of the few remaining areas to develop this type of trail allowed in the plan. This would complement T14 (1.38 miles oneway with an average grade of 12.6% and 1,037ft of elevation gain), a trail that would be difficult for most beginner/intermediate users.

2) Amend description of primitive trails

Areas for Primitive Trails: One way in which this plan improves the balance and diversity of Girdwood’s trail system is by identifying areas where primitive trails are desired. Areas that prioritize primitive trails without prohibiting other uses serve a variety of purposes, including both conservation and recreation, non-mechanized recreation activities like trail walking, running, hiking, skiing, snowshoeing, orienteering, foraging, wildlife viewing, education, solitude, and meditation are the primary uses.
T3:

Build a trail connection in the uplands, where possible, between the Lower Iditarod trailhead and Ruane Road California Creek and the Alyeska Highway. 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. For the most ideal trail experience, the utility easement should be avoided. Structures are permitted to traverse wetlands. The trail should be located on HLB lands zoned GOS.

Reasoning:

- I would change the description of where the trail starts and ends to reflect the shortened version of T3 that was approved by GTC.
- I would remove the sentence about avoiding the utility easement as part of what would make this trail easy and inexpensive to construct is that it can make use of the utility easement.
- I would remove the sentence about “structures are permitted to traverse wetlands” because now that the trail ends at Ruane Rd, there aren’t any wetlands that need traversing.
- I am unsure about the sentence about locating the trail on HLB lands zoned GOS. Is that now a moot point since T3 has been shortened? It seems to me that this trail is located on utility easement land.

T5:

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. T5 would be constructed to Class 3 Biking design parameters. The trail alignment should use the existing Juniper Drive easement. If the trail is constructed before parcels 6-010 and/6-040 are developed, the trail and associated easement may need to be relocated when the HLB parcels are subdivided and developed.

Reasoning:

The staff recommendation for T5 that was approved by GTC did not include any specifics about how the trail description would change. This is a possible rewrite of the trail description in the Draft Master Trail Plan based on my understanding of the changes that staff recommended and that GTC discussed and approved.

- I propose that this sentence be removed from the staff recommendation that was approved by the GTC: T5 should only be considered a priority for development if Tract 18-A is developed.
  - I would remove this sentence because I think this trail connection would help create more loop options for the Beaver Pond trail.
  - Many residents of the Mine neighborhoods currently have to drive to get to the Beaver Pond trailheads. This intermediate access route would allow locals to have their “driveway as their trailhead”. This could help reduce the number of cars at the Beaver Pond trailheads.
  - The trail would provide an attractive amenity to a future neighborhood on Tract 18A.
- I changed the trail description wording on the last sentence from “…the trail…will be relocated…” to “…the trail…may need to be relocated …”. Hopefully, possible future development will be anticipated during the trail design process so that relocation is not necessary.
T6:
Provide a trail connection from the neighborhoods of the middle valley to town center. This proposed trail connection would provide a more direct trail connection 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 kept outside of natural area 1 (NA1) using HLB land zoned GOS and/or GCR-1. Designed to Class 3 bicycle design parameters. Trail would tie into the Alyeska Hwy Bike Path after crossing under the Alyeska Hwy Glacier Creek Bridge existing trails before crossing the highway.

Reasoning:
- I would remove the first sentence to reduce redundancy.
- I would assume this trail is going to go under the highway bridge rather than crossing the highway. We do not need to create another pedestrian crossing over Alyeska Hwy.

T7:
- Change the sentence from “…the trail…will be relocated…” to “…the trail…may need to be relocated …”. Hopefully, possible future development will be anticipated during the trail design process so that relocation is not necessary.

T8:
This trail is shown on many trail plans and 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. This trail connection 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 be will be relocated when/if the HLB parcel is subdivided and developed. This trail is identified in the Crow Creek Neighborhood Land Use Study.

Reasoning:
- T8 is shown crossing California Creek, but no bridge is mentioned in the text. A bridge would be a major hurdle in the development of T8 and should not be overlooked. In addition, it is important to note that the Girdwood Cemetery Plan includes a bridge over California Creek, so cooperation between GTC and the Cemetery Committee seems like a win-win arrangement.
- Hopefully, possible future development will be anticipated during the trail design process so that relocation is not necessary.

T9:
- Change the sentence from “…the trail…will be relocated…” to “…the trail…may need to be relocated …”. Hopefully, possible future development will be anticipated during the trail design process so that relocation is not necessary.
- No trail classes have been assigned to these trails in the Crow Creek Neighborhood Land Use Plan. In the Draft Trails Master Plan there is no mention of the trail class in the trail description. The only reference to trail class for T9 is in the chart on page 40. The class should be stated in the trail description to help clarify the mix of trails in the plan.
T11:
- No trail class is stated in this trail description. The only reference to trail class for T11 is in the chart on page 40. The class should be stated in the trail description to help clarify the mix of trails in the plan.

T12:
*This proposed trail creates an upland route between Stumpy’s Summer Trail and the Glacier Canyon Rim between the southern portion and northern portions of Stumpy’s Summer Trail. It would replace the sections of Stumpy’s Summer trail that traverse the wetlands of Perpetual, Island, and Last Meadows. The trail would create a loop option for hikers on the Winner Creek and Snowcat trails. The proposed trail should be a primitive, non-mechanized trail constructed to Class 2 Hiking design parameters. Because the trail is located in an Area of Primitive Trails, bikes and other mechanized uses would not be allowed on the trail. The trail should be hardened as necessary would be unhardened as much as possible, however it could hardening is minimally allowed to avoid braiding of trails, resource damage, and to achieve trail sustainability if desired.*

Reasoning:
- Stumpy’s Summer Trail, in its current form, crosses wetlands and meadows that cannot withstand foot traffic. The trail is only sustainable as far as the southern foot of Perpetual Meadow. T12’s purpose is to make Stumpy’s Summer Trail a sustainable and usable trail, all the way out to the Gorge. The current trail description does not make this purpose clear.
- The term “non-mechanized” is not strong enough. Many could interpret this wording as meaning “non-motorized”. If the purpose of using the term non-mechanized is to say bikes are not allowed, I feel it is best to keep it simple and perfectly clear, and just state bikes are a prohibited use.
- I believe this trail, due to its scenic qualities and the loop options it provides, will be a very popular trail. If the trail receives more traffic than it can handle, there could be braiding or mud-holes created by overuse. A goal of the Draft Trails Master Plan and the Trails Management Plan is to build sustainable trails. It is important that T12 can be hardened as needed to protect the trail and its surroundings.

T13:
The staff recommendation that GTC approved was to add the Forest Loop concept back into the Plan. Due to the development of Alyeska Village, the Forest Loop trail will need to be modified extensively. At least some conceptual version of this trail needs to be shared with GTC and added to the Plan before the Plan gets voted on.

T14:
- T14 is listed as 4 miles long in the Existing Trails chart on p. 20. The Draft Trail Master Plan says “improvements should be considered on both sides of Winner Creek trail” (p. 39). Then in the chart on p. 40, T14 is listed as 1.21 miles long. Does this mean that only 1.21 miles out of the 4 mile long trail are going to be upgraded from Class 1 to Class 4?
- Next to last sentence:
  On the north side of Winner Creek a separate, down route for bikes should be constructed separate from the multi-use T14 T13 and connecting MB3 to the bottom of the hill.

B3:
*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 and complete a loop in the lower Valley. This project must be pursued in concert with the Virgin Creek Access Study (TH4).*

Reasoning:
With the removal of T2 (Wagon Trail - Lower Danich Connection), there is no loop.
B7: (this is a new bridge that I propose be added to the Plan)

`Construct a pedestrian trail bridge across California Creek as part of the T8 trail project connecting Beaver Pond Trail to the Toe Slope Trail. This bridge is also included in the Girdwood Cemetery Master Plan, so bridge planning and construction could be shared between the GTC and the Girdwood Cemetery.`

TH56: (this is a variation on TH5 and TH6 that I am proposing)

There are no restrooms in Forest Fair Park or the campground. This area gets a lot of use from the playground, ballfields, frisbee golf course, and the Lower Iditarod trail. Rather than construct a restroom at TH6, which is on the other side of the highway from the park area, build one where it is most needed.

TH6 (Town Center Trailhead) is not directly connected to any trails and seems to me like an awkward fit as a trailhead. Rather than creating a TH that would be useful, TH6 really seems to be about trying to find a use for the Park & Ride lot.

I would propose instead that both TH6 and TH5 (Kariolus) could be combined into a TH by the ballfields. Easy-to-find connections could be built to the Lower and Middle Iditarod trails. There should be a restroom/permanent vaulted pit toilet constructed here to serve all the people that recreate in this area.

TH8: (Beaver Pond Trailhead)

`The Beaver Pond trailhead is often full. Implementing other simple trailhead 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.`

TH9:

Pursue an official parking agreement with Anchorage School District Girdwood PreK-8 School 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, given the planned development of the Holtan Hills subdivision. Perhaps this trail connection could be built as part of the Holtan Hills development.

TH11:

How big a parking lot is being proposed? I would propose an additional 30 spots at a minimum.

Natural Space Description on Page 35:

`Areas for Primitive Trails: One way in which this plan improves the balance and diversity of Girdwood’s trail system is by identifying areas where primitive trails are desired. Trails in these areas would be limited to class 2 standards unless use of trails within these areas warrants improved trail tread to protect the surrounding environment. Areas that prioritize primitive trails serve a variety of purposes, including both conservation and recreation, where non-mechanized recreation activities like trail walking, running, hiking, skiing, snowshoeing, orienteering, foraging, wildlife viewing, education, solitude, and meditation are the primary uses. Mechanized trail use, such as bikes or one wheels, is not authorized.`

- If a trail receives more traffic than it can handle, there could be braiding or mud-holes created by overuse. A goal of the Draft Trails Master Plan and the Trails Management Plan is to build sustainable trails. It is important that trails in NS1 can be hardened as needed to protect trails and their surroundings. The sentence I added is from the description for natural areas on p. 16 of the Draft Trails Master Plan.
- The terms “non-mechanized” and “primary uses” are not strong enough. Many could interpret this as meaning “non-motorized” or perhaps biking is a secondary use! If the purpose is to say bikes are not allowed, I feel it is best to keep it simple and perfectly clear, and just state bikes are a prohibited use.
**NS1:** (Virgin Creek Area of Primitive Trails)

Create a natural space in the Virgin Creek area that is kept in its primitive natural state. Allowed uses include primitive, non-mechanized recreation activities like trail walking, running, hiking, skiing, snowshoeing, orienteering, foraging, wildlife viewing, education, solitude, and meditation. Mechanized trail use, such as bikes or one wheels, is not authorized. Trails in these areas would be limited to class 2 standards unless use of trails within these areas warrants improved trail tread to protect the surrounding area. Trails in the area should be kept to Class 1 and Class 2 Design Parameters. Trail boardwalk or bridge structures are authorized to avoid wetlands and streams. Signage should be kept to a minimum. Parking for this level of development would be required either via TH9, TH10, or TH2.

NS2 and NS3 should adopt the same language.

**Reasoning:**
- The term “non-mechanized” is not strong enough. Many could interpret this wording as meaning “non-motorized”. If the purpose of using the term non-mechanized is to say bikes are not allowed, I feel it is best to keep it simple and perfectly clear, and just state bikes are a prohibited use.
- If a trail receives more traffic than it can handle, there could be braiding or mud-holes created by overuse. A goal of the Draft Trails Master Plan and the Trails Management Plan is to build sustainable trails. It is important that trails in NS1 can be hardened as needed to protect trails and their surroundings. The sentence I added is from the description for natural areas on p. 16 of the Draft Trails Master Plan.
- I would omit this sentence about parking. TH9 (Girdwood School), TH10 (Alyeska), and TH2 (Ranger Station) are all so far from NS1 that it would not even occur to people to use those parking areas.

**Amendment 1 to NS1:** (wording from the staff recommendation for NS1)

Recommend adjusting the boundary of NS1. The eastern boundary should extend and include Wagon Trail.

**Reasoning:**
- When we voted down the staff recommendation to move the boundaries of NS1, we effectively removed Wagon trail from the Primitive Trail Area. I think Wagon Trail should remain a Class 1 trail, now that T2 has been removed from the Plan, and that it should be within the boundaries of NS1.

**Amendment 2 to NS1:** (wording from the staff recommendation for NS1 with my modifications in blue)

The western boundary should be adjusted to remove the Lower Joe Danich Trail from NS1. This would allow the Lower Danich Trail to be upgraded to a Class 3 trail IF AND ONLY IF:
  - B1 is ever built and
  - a Class 3 connector trail from Lower Danich to Turin and/or Carlina Drive cul-de-sacs is built.

Because this connector trail would be a Class 3 trail within NS1, it would have to be granted an exception to the NS conditions stipulating primitive trails and no mechanized travel.

Upper Joe Danich would remain in NS1.

**Reasoning:**
- In any discussion of the Joe Danich trail, it should be specified whether you are talking about the Upper Danich trail or the Lower Danich trail. They are entirely different trails, although both are listed as Class 1. However, the Upper trail is barely discernable and has little traffic, while the Lower trail is really a Class 2 trail and has quite a bit of traffic.
- Currently, the Lower Joe Danich ends at the railroad right-of-way and any connection to Lower Girdwood involves illegal trespass on the railroad tracks and crossing the railroad trestle. This trail should not be encouraged as a connector trail by upgrading it to Class 3 until bridge B1 is constructed.
- Currently, the Lower Joe Danich is best accessed in summer by Lower Virgin Creek Trail. Lower Virgin Creek would remain in NS1 as a primitive trail. A new trail through the uplands from the Turin and/or Carlina Drive cul-de-sacs would be needed to create a summertime Class 3 link between the Timberline neighborhoods and Lower Danich. This trail would only be constructed if B1 was built.
- We have an overabundance of Class 1 trails and need more Class 3 trails, especially ones that are longer.
Amendment 3 to NS1:
Construct a neighborhood connector trail (Class 3, bicycle design parameters) in uplands from the Turin and/or Carlina Drive cul-de-sacs to connect to T6, the Barren Ave to Alyeska Highway Connector. Because this connector trail would be a Class 3 trail within NS1, it would have to be granted an exception to the NS conditions stipulating primitive trails and no mechanized travel.

Reasoning:
- This trail would allow residents to travel between Girdwood Town Center and the Timberline neighborhood without having to travel down Timberline Road.
- Timberline Road is busy and dusty, therefore neither safe nor enjoyable to walk/bike on.
- This trail, in combination with Lower Danich and the Lower Iditarod trail would provide a loop trail.

Amendment 4 to NS1:
If none of the 3 amendments above passed, maybe we could consider something like:
Bikes are allowed on the Lower Danich only during the winter.

Reasoning:
- At this time of year, the ground is frozen and there will be no damage to the trail tread due to bike traffic.
- Another concern that was raised had to do with this being a feeding area for bears. In the winter the bears are hibernating.
- There are precedents to this approach; in the winter the Nordic 5K is ski only, and in Anchorage, Rover’s Run trail is closed during spawning season due to bears feeding.
- Bikes have historically been allowed on the Lower Joe Danich.

MB1:
Provide purpose-built mountain biking flow trails (Class 2-3 bicycle design parameters) to the west of Abe’s trail and Beaver Pond trail in the area between the California Creek drainages. This mountain bike area would alleviate user conflicts around the Abe’s Trail/Beaver Pond/California Creek area. Beaver Pond Trail (out of trailhead 20) and a new built uptrack would be the up route for bicycle traffic and the proposed T7 Crow Creek Road to Beaver Pond Trail 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 improved Beaver Pond Trailhead, Cemetery trailhead, or Girdwood Pre-K-8 School Four Valleys Community School.

Reasoning:
- MB1 was originally put next to California Creek. It was moved away from the California Creek area early on.

MB2:
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 Hand Tram is in place. Additional trails in MB2 will not be authorized until a parking agreement is in place, Arlberg is expanded, or another parking solution is identified.

Reasoning:
- There was group consensus for protecting the Winner Creek viewshed and BikeWood was supportive of this language.
- The parking language was rejected at the January 4 GTC meeting.
p. 13
Population
The original people of the Girdwood Valley were the Dena’ina Athabascan who may have visited the valley to trap, hunt, and fish. (in our research for the Iditarod signs, we learned that it is doubtful an Dena’ina lived in the Girdwood valley). The town of Girdwood was established by goldminers in 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 rail and (the ARR was completed in 1923) highway construction efforts after gold mining ended during WW2. 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

p. 15
Revised Chart
• Remove reference to the Hand Tram from the Existing Physical Conditions section.

• Remove references to the Hand Tram from the Connectivity section. The Hand Tram is now history.

Access section:
Parking for trail access is available year-round at the USFS Ranger District Office, Beaver Pond Trail, Arlberg Lot and Moose Meadows Ski Trails. The following parking options are only accessible during summer: Crow Pass, Winner Creek Gorge, Middle Iditarod, and Upper Iditarod Trail, Upper Virgin Creek Trail.

Areas of Primitive Trails description
One way in which this plan improves the balance and diversity of Girdwood’s trail system is by identifying areas where primitive trails are desired. Trails in these areas would be limited to class 2 standards unless use of trails within these areas warrants improved trail tread to protect the surrounding environment. Areas that prioritize primitive trails serve a variety of purposes, including both conservation and recreation, where non-mechanized recreation activities like trail walking, running, hiking, skiing, snowshoeing, orienteering, foraging, wildlife viewing, education, solitude, and meditation are the primary uses. Mechanized trail use, such as bikes or one wheels, is not authorized.

Why is biking prohibited on the Toe Slope Trail? While I like that as a non-biker, it seems odd to be to make this trail non-biking when it connects the Iditarod and Beaver Pond trails, both of which allow biking.

Supplement to Trail Classification and Length Totals chart:
I found it striking that so many of the new trails in the Draft Trails Master Plan were very short in length. These new trails are doing an excellent job of providing connectivity between parking lots and trails, neighborhoods and trails, as well as between two trails. I decided to name any trail ≤ ½ mile a “connector” trail and any trail > ½ mile a “hiking” trail.

<table>
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<th>Trail Class</th>
<th>Total Number of Trails</th>
<th>“Connector Trails”: ≤ ½ mile</th>
<th>“Hiking Trails”: &gt; ½ mile</th>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The Snowcat Summer Trail is counted in this chart as a Class 4, which is its proposed class in the Draft Trails Master Plan.

There are a large number of new proposed trails that are Class 3.

However, the majority of all the Class 3 trails are short “connector” trails.

The chart above shows that 55% of the “hiking” trails are Class 1 & 2, as determined by number of trails.

The Summary Chart on p. 40 shows that 51% of all trails are Class 1 & 2, as determined by mileage.

I think these two charts illustrate that we need more Class 3 trails, especially Class 3 trails that are for recreating, rather than just “connecting”.
A parliamentarian, or parliamentary procedure consultant, is an expert in interpreting and applying the “Rules of Order” for meetings.

Some of the ways a parliamentarian can assist organizations include:

- Convention Parliamentarian
- Bylaws Consultant
- Bylaws Amendment or Revision Author
- Advisor to the Officers and Board of Directors
- Expert Witness
- Professional Presiding Officer
- Trainer in Parliamentary Procedure
- Presiding Officer Trainer
- Election Supervisor
- Planning Meeting Strategist
- Script Writer
Updates and other business:

- **Girdwood Trails Management Plan Subcommittee**: updated version is posted on the GBOS website. Management Plan meetings are on hold until Trails Master Plan is complete.

- **Girdwood Trails Master Plan** subcommittee has completed their work. Draft plan is in discussion at GTC.

- **Imagine! Girdwood** Imagine! Girdwood is focused on technical analysis and next steps. Funds are needed to continue the effort. Visit imaginegirdwood.org


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**Girdwood Trails Committee Financial Report**

As of December 31, 2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Account with Girdwood Inc.</th>
<th>$41,565.57</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Last Report 09/30/2021</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December, 2021 Transactions to Date:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donation for Trails Committee</td>
<td>$500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Account Balance</td>
<td>December 31, 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Amounts Reserved at this time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Grants Status report:**

- **KMTA 2022 Grant cycle**: Grant application due March 11.
- **Anchorage Park Foundation**: Grant application due in March 2022.
- **AARP Community Grant**: Application due March 2022.
- **KMTA Stumpy’s Winter Trail Interp sign**: Received 1:1 matching grant requested from KMTA for Stumpy’s signs.
- **RTP $75,000 for INHT Phase 2 from Industrial Park to Karolius & interp signs**: awarded with 90:10 match, started work in July. Reimbursement of $3702.56 has been submitted and approved. Final reimbursement and closeout of project is pending.
- **KMTA Virgin Creek Falls Trail**: $7,300 awarded with 1:1 match, Section 106 review complete. Work is 95% complete through summer parks and rec crew in 2020 and 2021 as well as 3 member SCA crew. Pending is some gravel distribution at the top of the trail and fabrication and installation of Trailhead Interp sign (spring 2022). Reimbursement will be initiated shortly.

**Other Girdwood Trail Partners Updates**

- **Kenai Mountains Turnagain Arm Heritage Area (KMTA)**: 2022 Annual Haiku Contest is on!
- **Girdwood Nordic Ski Club (GNSC)**: No report.
- **Bikewood**: No report.
- **Friends of Girdwood Trails**: No report.

Land Use and Girdwood Board of Supervisors: Review minutes on line at: [www.muni.org/gbos](http://www.muni.org/gbos).