

A photograph of a dense forest with many tall, thin trees. The ground is covered in moss and fallen branches. Sunlight filters through the trees, creating dappled light on the forest floor.

GIRDWOOD TRAILS PLAN

PUBLIC MEETING

NOVEMBER 19, 2020

AGENDA

6:00 - 6:15 welcome - overview - meeting etiquette

- Goals for Public Meeting
- Technology/Process Overview
- Meeting Etiquette

6:15 - 6:45 Project Presentation

6:45 - 7:15 Exercise #1: Values, Vision, Goals

7:15 - 7:45 Exercise #2: Objectives

7:45 Mapping Application Tutorial

GIRDWOOD TRAILS PLAN PURPOSE

Establish a 15-20-year plan to develop, protect, and promote Girdwood's network of trails and natural spaces for current and future generations.



A photograph of a small, clear stream flowing through a dense forest. The water is cascading over rocks and fallen logs, creating a small waterfall. The surrounding vegetation is lush and green, with many large leaves and ferns. The scene is captured from a slightly elevated perspective, looking down the length of the stream.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

GIRDWOOD TRAILS: PHYSICAL CONDITIONS

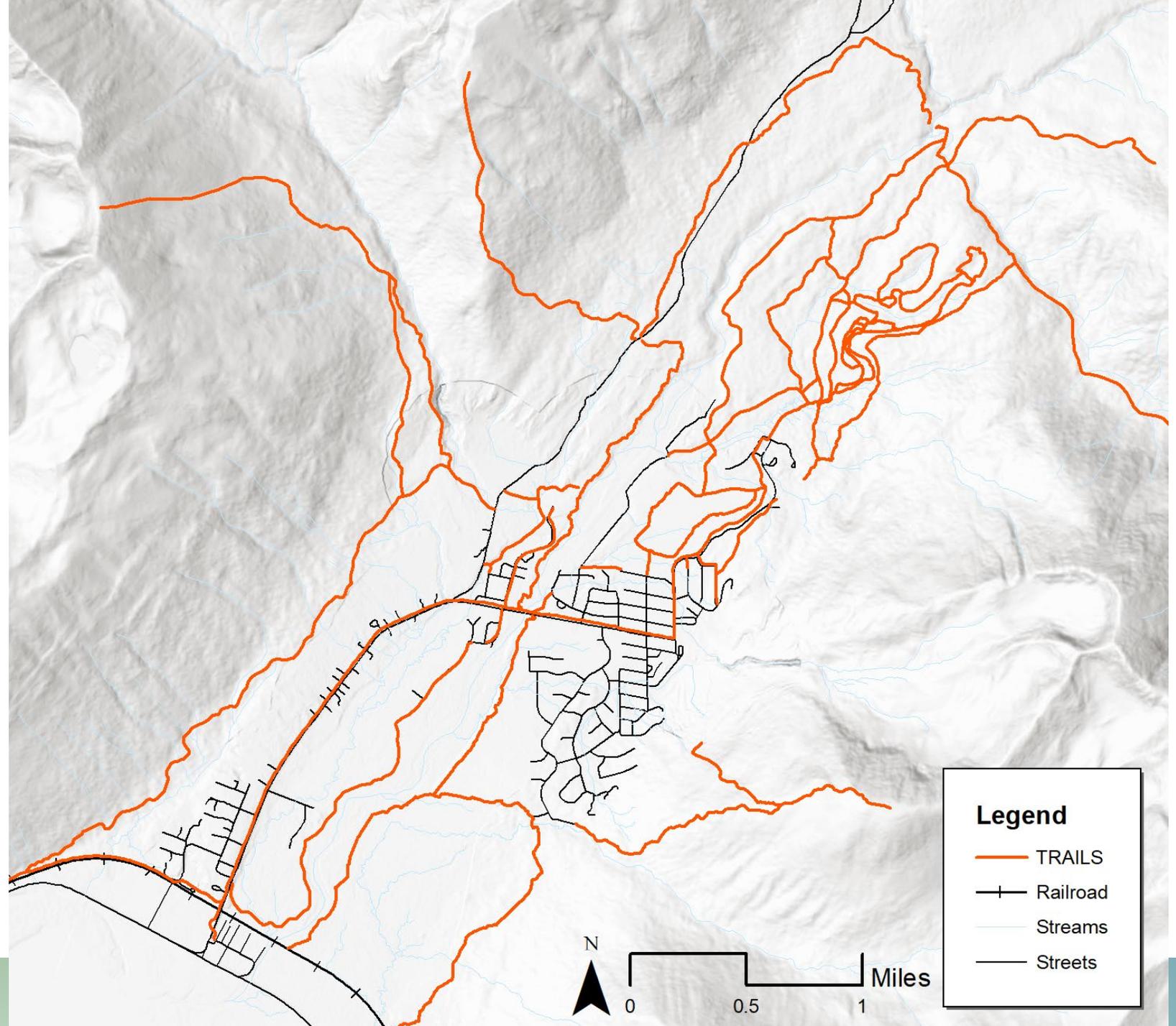
- Over 50 miles of trails in the Girdwood Valley
- Existing trails offer a variety of different uses with increasing demand for more trails and trail access.
- Girdwood's trails and natural spaces have world-class potential. With intentional planning, additional connections and signage, a more cohesive experience can be created.
- Soils, topography, and climate are factors that will drive future trail planning and sustainable trail development.



EXISTING TRAIL SYSTEM

NOTE TO COMMITTEE:

Before I label all the trails, landmarks, major roadways, I want to make sure this format is easier to read than the aerial. I think so - but want your opinion.



Trail Class 1
Minimally Developed



Trail Class 2
Moderately Developed



Trail Class 3
Developed



Trail Class 4
Highly Developed



Trail Class 5
Fully Developed



Total Trail Miles: 53.51

TOTALS	miles
Class 1	7.78
Class 2	11.89
Class 3	12.04
Class 4	9.57
Class 5	12.23

 Class is different than existing condition
 Not classified in the GVTMP

TRAIL	Trail Length	Trail Classification	Designed Use	Managed Use
Max's Mountain Trail	1.5	1	Hiking	Hiking
Ragged Top Trail	1.78	1	Hiking	Hiking
Snow Cat Trail	2.5	1	Snow Cat	Hiking, Skiing, Biking
Stumpy's Summer Trail	2	1		
Abe's Trail	1.01	2	Summer Hiking	Hiking
California Creek Trail	0.65	2	Hiking	
Joe Danich Trail - Lower	1.02	2	Bike	Multi-Use
Joe Danich Trail - Upper	1.05	2	Bike	Multi-Use
North Face Trail	2.25	2	Hiking	Hiking
Stumpy's Winter Trail	2.4	2	Cross Country Ski	Cross Country Ski
				Hiking/Backcountry
Virgin Creek Falls Upper Trail	0.25	2	Hiking	Ski Access
Virgin Creek Falls Lower Trail	0.5	2	Hiking	Bike/Hike/Ski
Winner Creek Trail Upper	2	2	Hiking	Hiking
Secret Meadow	0.76	2		
Athabaskan Environmental Physics Trail	0.25	3	Hiking	Hiking
Beaver Pond Trail	3.13	3	Mountain Bike	Multi-Use
Deb's Way	0.18	3		
Iditarod - Upper Trail	3.6	3	Hike	
Shortcut from Bike Path to Davos	0.13	3	Hiking/Pedestrian	
Wagon Trail	1.35	3	TBD	TBD
Nordic Trail	0.85	3	Winter Nordic Ski	
New GMBA Trails	0.85	3	Mountain Bike	
Iditarod - Lower Trail	2	4	Hike	
Moose Meadow Trails	1.82	4	Winter Multi-Use	Winter Multi-Use
				Winter Nordic Classic & Skate, Summer Multi-Use
Nordic 5K Loop	3.4	4	Winter Nordic Ski	Use
Tiny Creek Trail	0.65	4	Bike	Bike/Hike
Arlberg Bike Path	2	5	Bike	Bike/Pedestrian
Verbier Way Bike Path	0.28	5	Bike	Bike/Pedestrian
Alyeska Highway Trail	3.18	5	Bike	Bike/Pedestrian
Egloff Multi-Use Trail	0.17	5	Bike	Bike/Pedestrian
Hightower Multi-Use Trail	0.6	5	Bike	Bike/Pedestrian
Bird to Gird Bike Trail	6	5		
Winner Creek Trail	3.4	4 & 3	Hiking	Hiking

EXISTING TRAILS

Multi-Use	Skiing		Hiking		Biking		TBD		
Beaver Pond	3.13	Stumpy's (Winter)	2.4	Abe's Trail	1.01	New GMBA	0.85	Secret Meadow	0.76
Arlberg Bike Path	2	Nordic 5k	3.4	Stumpy's Summer Trail	2			Wagon Trail	1.35
Verbier Way Bike Path	0.28	Nordic Trail	0.85	North Face	2.25			Shortcut from Bike Path to Davos	0.13
Alyeska Highway	3.18			Upper Winner Creek	2			Deb's Way	0.18
Iditarod (Upper & Lower)	5.6			California Creek	0.65				
Joe Danich (Upper & Low)	2.07			Max's Mountain	1.5				
Moose Meadow	1.82			Ragged Top	1.78				
				Athabaskan Environmental Physics Trail	0.25				
Snow Cat	2.5								
Tiny Creek	0.65								
Virgin Creek	0.75								
Winner Creek	3.4								
Egloff Multi-Use	0.17								
Bird to Gird Bike Trail	6								
Hightower Multi-Use	0.6								
TOTAL	32.15		6.65		11.44		0.85		2.42



MULTI-USE



SKIING



HIKING/PEDESTRIAN



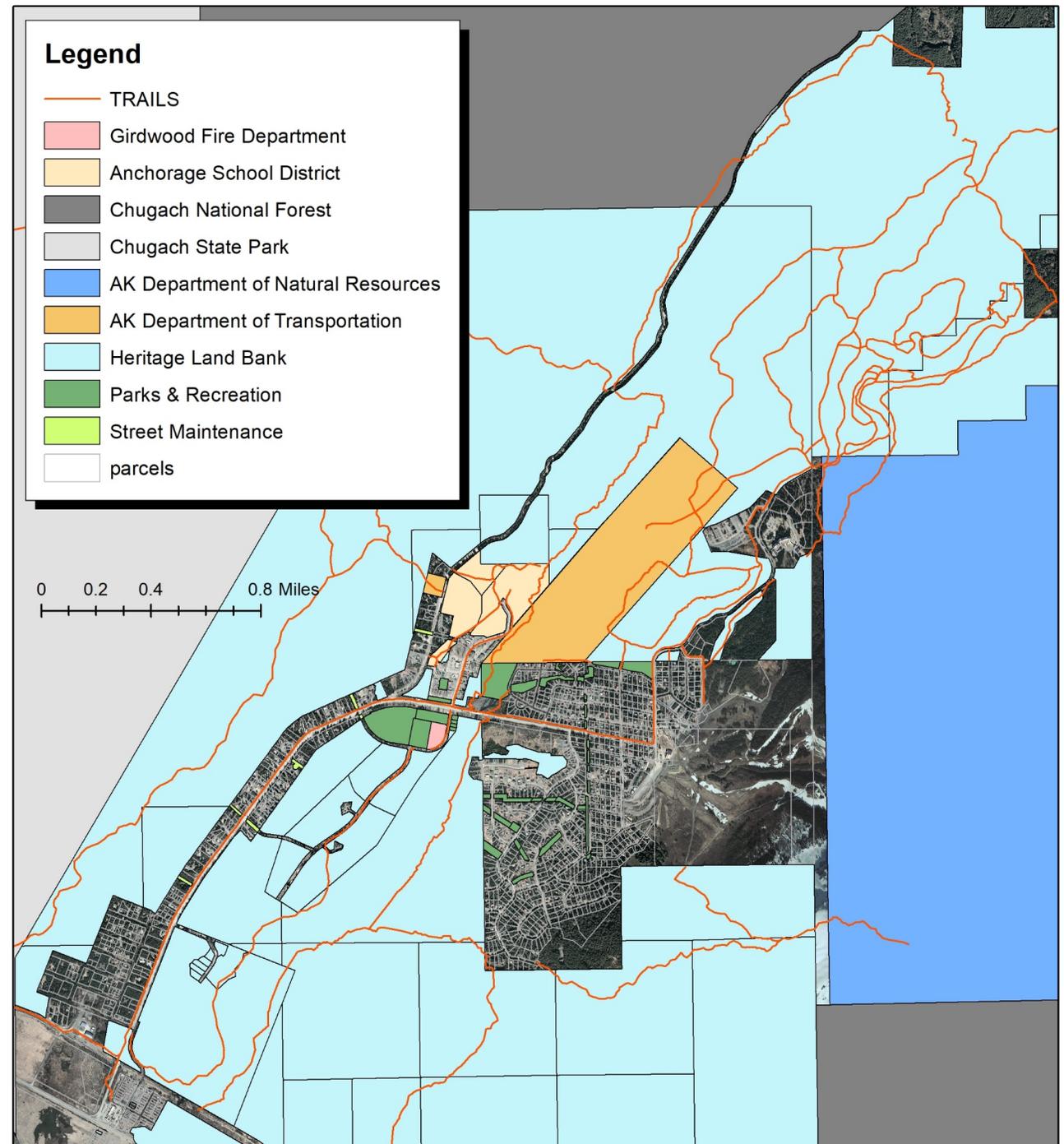
BIKING



PRIMITIVE TRAIL EXPERIENCES

LAND OWNERSHIP

- Land Ownership presents unique opportunities and challenges for the Girdwood trail system.
- The Girdwood trail system is a complicated network that traverses multiple landowners.
- Agency decision-making and project authorization processes vary.
- The land ownership situation requires a higher level of public collaboration during trail planning and management.





ACCESS: TRAILHEAD & PARKING

- The Girdwood Valley 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.

Girdwood Trails Plan Trail Access & Parking



Girdwood Trails Plan

Trail Access & Parking

ALYESKA PARKING

While Alyeska Resort has a large parking lot with significant space available, it is not a long-term solution and this assessment will not assume that use will always be allowed.

DEPOT



Available Parking: 20-30 cars between 2 lots. The lot can also accommodate RVs.

Access: Great parking for Bird to Gird and bicyclists.

Amenities: Trash can, portable toilet, bike racks. Portable toilet locked on weekend. Large kiosk.

RANGER STATION



Available Parking: 16 spaces + 2 handicap

Access: Located on the Alyeska Highway, Bike Path & Lower Iditarod Trailhead

Amenities: Bulletin Board with trail maps and business directory. Trash cans and bear resistant food storage.

BEAVER POND



Available Parking: About 16 unmarked spaces on road side.

Access: Access to Beaver Pond Trailhead.

Amenities: Trailhead marker. Kiosk. Emergency Information. Interpretive information and map.

MIDDLE IDITAROD TRAIL PARKING

Need to ADD

VIRGIN CREEK FALLS



Available Parking: 9-12 parking spaces on roadside. Residential area - driveways.

Access: Easy access to Scenic View for those who can't hike far.

Amenities: Trailhead marker, No Camping, and Backcountry warning for explosives.

MOOSE MEADOW



Available Parking: About 6 spaces.

Access: Access to Moose Meadow, Playing Field, Bike Path, Nordic Trails. Moose Meadow trailhead is unmarked. Many locals access Moose Meadow on foot.

Amenities: Trashcans, ADA portable restroom, mutt mitt dispensers.

ARLBERG PARKING LOT



Available Parking: 20 striped spaces + 1 handicap

Access: Connection via bike path. Access to Nordic Trails, Lower Winner Creek, and Moose Meadow.

Amenities: Trash can, mutt mitt dispenser.

HAND TRAM PARKING

NEED TO ADD

SIGNAGE & WAYFINDING



- Different landowners and management at trailheads throughout the system
- Wayfinding is not consistent in appearance or information provided.
- Confusion for trail users and first responders.
- Consider strategies to provide a safe and navigable trail system while reducing sign clutter.

CONNECTIVITY



Due to Glacier Creek bisecting the valley and the hand tram providing the only crossing within the trail system, cross-valley connections are limited.



Ensure that businesses, community resources, and every day destinations are connected by the trail system.



What connections would you like to see?

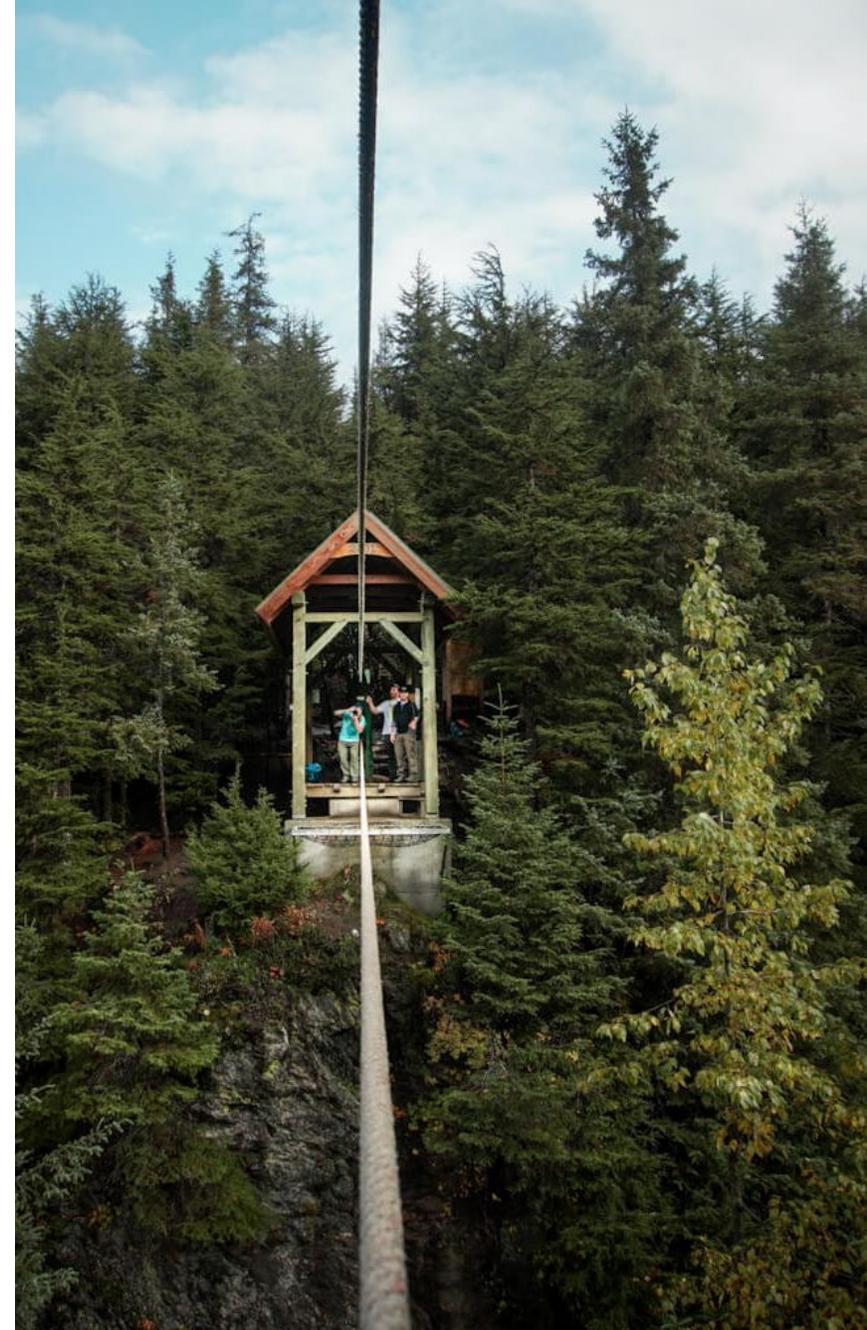
STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW PROCESS: COMMON THEMES

- Girdwood is a Trail Town and Residents Value Access to Trail-Based Recreation
- The Girdwood Trail System Should be Equitable and Balanced
- Trail Access
- Trail Maintenance
- Connectivity
- Project Approval Processes



STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS: PRIORITY PROJECTS IDENTIFIED

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





**GIRDWOOD TRAILS PLAN:
VALUES, VISION & GOALS**

Access

Health & Well-Being

Experience

Community Identity

Explore & Learn

Natural World

Stewardship

Diversity & Inclusivity

Girdwood Trail Plan: Core Values

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

Exercise 1

Poll #1: Do these values align with your values for trails and natural spaces in Girdwood?

Poll #2:

Are there values listed that you don't agree with?

What value do you not agree with?

CHAT BOX: Are there any values you feel are missing? Then DISCUSSION.

GIRDWOOD TRAILS PLAN: DRAFT VISION STATEMENT

Girdwood has an interconnected, diverse, beautiful system of trails and natural spaces that well-serves the community. There are experiences for everyone, from areas with no or primitive trails to areas with developed trails, and future generations will enjoy what we enjoy today. The system is well-planned, sustainable, resilient, and represents community values.

Poll 3: Does this vision statement align with your vision for Girdwood Trails & Natural Spaces?

ANNOTATION EXERCISE: Is there anything in the draft vision statement that would like to change or add?

CHAT BOX: What do you feel is missing? Then DISCUSSION



GIRDWOOD TRAILS PLAN: GOALS

Poll 4: Do these goals align with your goals for Girdwood Trails?

Poll 5: If you had to pick your favorite goal on the list, what would it be?

CHAT BOX: Is there anything you feel is missing? DISCUSSION

GOAL 1: PLAN

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

GOAL 2: DEVELOP

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

GOAL 3: CONSERVE

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

GOAL 4: MAINTAIN

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

GOAL 5: SUSTAIN

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

INTERACTIVE MAPPING TUTORIAL

WHAT'S NEXT?



VISIONING & EXISTING CONDITIONS

APRIL -
DECEMBER 2020

Stakeholder Interviews
Community Visioning
Document Review,
Data Collection
Girdwood Trails Plan
Subcommittee Meet-
ings & Worksessions
Public Meeting #1



DEVELOP THE DRAFT PLAN

JANUARY -
FEBRUARY 2021

Draft Plan
Development
Girdwood Trails Plan
Subcommittee
Meetings



SHARE THE DRAFT PLAN

FEBRUARY -
MARCH 2021

Public Meeting #2:
Present Draft Plan
Public Comment
Period



APPROVE THE PLAN

APRIL-MAY 2021

Girdwood Trails Committee
Review
Girdwood Board of
Supervisors Review
Heritage Land Bank
Advisory Commission
Review
Anchorage Planning &
Zoning Commission
Approval
Final Master Plan



IMPLEMENT THE PLAN

SUMMER 2021 &
BEYOND

Secure Project Funding
Complete Projects
USE THE TRAILS!

A photograph of a lush green forest. In the foreground, a gravel path leads up a slope, bordered by wooden planks. A wooden boardwalk runs across the middle ground, curving through the dense vegetation. The forest is filled with tall trees and a thick carpet of ferns and other green plants. A semi-transparent green overlay covers the left side of the image, containing the text "THANK YOU".

THANK
YOU

GTP Public Presentation edits/comments received from GTP Subcommittee members

Amanda Sassi:

First off, I LOVE the interactive map!! !!G should look at this as we progress. I'm excited to see if it works as well as it seems it will. No comments about how that works, it seemed fairly straight forward.

I have a couple comments on the presentation.

1. Girdwood Trails Plan Purpose: I support making the time frame 15-20 years as it was asked in the Stakeholder Interview Process slide.
2. Planning Context: it might be nice to mention who made these master plans for Girdwood specifically. Maybe that was already going to be noted in the speaking portion and doesn't need to be typed.
3. Values: the slide with sticky notes. It's sort of messy and hard to read. There are some multiples and I don't really understand why this slide is setup like this.
4. Girdwood Trails Plan: Goals: I know I'm a late comer and this seems to have been hashed out already, but I would have commented as a community member anyway as would others maybe. It seems like the natural spaces vs open spaces debate is a contentious one. I support keeping with the language already adopted into code within the muni: open spaces. From Title 21.9 it looks like natural areas is spoken to once as a type of open space and natural space isn't defined in code.

I would have the same comment from #4 for the vision values goals document. I will also be revisiting the GAP language to see if it's consistent though I'm guessing it's not and we will need to address it as a committee.

Brenden Raymond-Yakoubian: Comments for facilitators' advance work on presentation being developed for review at November 6, 2020 GTP meeting

I. Process comment re public input at upcoming Subcommittee meetings

- A. We should be taking public comment before making any decisions. Having it only at the end on days when we are making decisions makes the public comments 'after-the-fact,' which means it makes it almost certain that it won't be able to be meaningfully incorporated into the process. I'm not aware of any Muni body that solely takes public comment at the end of a meeting. We can remind people of the need to be concise if time becomes an issue.

II. Page-by-page review of draft slideshow and 9/1 vision and goals document

- A. Note: My review of the 9/1 Vision and Goals document is included in the relevant slideshow slides, below.
- B. Note: My main frustration at the last meeting was that the base document that this slideshow was built on - the draft Executive Summary - did not incorporate the substantial changes noted for it by the Subcommittee in previous meetings. This is why I insisted earlier about the importance of updating that Summary, because it was obvious it would have a lifespan beyond one meeting. I have done my best to incorporate that previous work by the Subcommittee and stakeholders into the draft of this presentation just by going off memory, but - as was requested without objection at two previous Subcommittee meetings - I request that the facilitators review those earlier meetings and comments received to do this necessary editing - not just for this slideshow, but for revising all of the Executive Summary, since it will become part of the record for this Plan.
- C. Slide 4: We should discuss more the temporal scope of our plan. Given how long it can take to, for example, fundraise for and build a trail, and the fact that this is dovetailing with our Area Plan, perhaps we should think about this more on the order of 10-20 years.
- D. Slide 6: The 1995 Area Plan calls for the creation of a 'system of open spaces' in Girdwood. It is important to note that, to show the continuity from then through now of the desire for such types of work.
- E. Slide 8:
 - 1. Revise second bullet to: "The Girdwood trail and natural spaces system has the structure, potential, and prime location of a world-class system; with intentional planning, designation and protection of natural spaces, building and protecting of trails, and adding connections and signage, a more cohesive experience can be created."
 - 2. Add another bullet after the first two: "Existing de-facto and designated natural spaces provide valuable ecosystem services and opportunities for recreation, quiet, meditation, adventure, and wildland experiences."
 - 3. Revise last bullet to: "While natural beauty and opportunity for recreation are abundant in Girdwood, there are some physical constraints and considerations to take into account for trails and natural spaces. This includes: factors impacting construction and sustainability of trails, and environmental conditions and factors (e.g. soil, topography, climate) for planning processes and other aspects of trails and natural spaces development and designation."
- F. Slide 9: Revise this slide to match the zones in the Trails Management Plan (available online at the Muni GBOS web page), as noted in previous discussions.

G. Slide 10:

1. Revise Stumpy's summer trail to also include the trail segment that is between the meadows and the bluff edge (as indicated in BR-Y's "Map 2" prepared for the 9-17-2020 worksession)

H. Slide 11:

1. Change title to "EXISTING TRAILS AND NATURAL SPACES". If you're going to make edits to the table for trail classes (which I don't think is terribly imperative for the townhall), I'd suggest using what was already in existence prior to this month, as some proposed edits by those working on the Trails Management Plan haven't yet received full public review until next month.
2. I think there could be value in adding a second mini-table on the left for natural spaces. Something like this:

Designated Natural Spaces
Park land - 1 (Moose meadows)
Rustic built and natural - 1 (Hand tram/ Four Corners area)
Primitive/Wild - 0 (currently only de- facto; needs designation work; 2 currently proposed: Virgin Creek area and Stumpy's Trails area)

I. Slide 12

1. I think this is supposed to be after Slide 13 and that Slide 13 is supposed to be part of the table on Slide 11.
2. Modify this to "Existing Trail and Natural Spaces Use," and add an icon (maybe like a meditating person sitting with knees folded?!) with something like this below it for text "Quiet and Solitude"

J. Slide 14

1. Change title to "FUTURE TRAIL AND NATURAL SPACE USE"
2. Change the list to:
 - Inclusive Opportunities
 - Designated Primitive/Wild Natural Spaces
 - Mountain Biking

K. Slide 15: I'd like to see the last bullet revised. This is pretty biased as it is now. Only parts of the community see things this way. A large segment of the community has also been very bothered by the routine lack of compliance with known, existing, easy-to-follow trail planning, building, and management rules. I'd make the following two revisions which are both bland enough not to come off as overly critical but accurately reflect all sides of the situation:

1. I'd revise the existing last bullet to this: "The landownership situation requires a higher level of collaboration during trail planning and management that often feels arduous to some in the community."
2. And I'd add a new last bullet below that which says "The landownership and trails management situation also requires working publicly and collaboratively to ensure compliance and proper development and management, and some in the community are concerned when this does not occur as it should."

- L. Slide 16: I don't understand what this is and what it's trying to show. Can't comment until knowing that.
- M. Slides 18 and 19: I wonder if there should be a parking icon at the Alyeska parking lots. I'm pretty sure I've heard Brian Burnett indicate (at a Trails meeting maybe?) that Alyeska has never had a problem with people parking in their lots to access trails. But maybe the situation is changed, and it would be good to check with him anyway since I'm not speaking for him/ Alyeska.
- N. Add to Slide 20: Perhaps add a bullet that says "Desire for some areas to remain with minimal or no trail signage so as not to negatively impact experience." I've heard this a lot from people including at these Subcommittee meetings.
- O. Slide 21: I'd modify the second one since some of them are connected, e.g. the school has the Athabascan Trail and trail connections over to Crow Creek area.
- P. Slide 21: Some fixes:
1. As has been noted previously, this is lacking other proposed future work, especially the proposed future natural spaces development in Virgin Creek and Stumpy's areas. If "future mountain bike park" is going to be noted, so should those be (even moreso because there technically is no 'bike park' - it's just a collection of trail easements).
 2. Following on #1 above, I'd recommend not using shaded-in polygons for the bike park and the natural space areas, to be consistent with the rest of the map - I'd recommend just contrasting bolded lettering in the general vicinities, as is done with the 5K usage annotation.
- Q. Slide 23
1. Modify second bullet: "The Girdwood Trails and Natural Spaces System Should be Equitable, Diverse, and Balanced."
 2. A bullet should be added about natural spaces since this is a priority for many people; currently most of the bullets are just about trails. I suggest this for a bullet: "Designating natural spaces"
 3. Priority Projects
 - a) Change bullet that says "Dedicated Areas for No New Trail Development" to "Dedicated/ Designated Natural Space Areas". If you have to put something about what that means re trails, could add in parentheses: "(e.g. areas with primitive only, no, or no new trails)", though I think that's not necessary.
 - b) Add to the Priority Projects: Remediation of trail problems (5K width and Winner Creek viewshed impacts; illegal trail building e.g. at Abe's). This has been mentioned by multiple stakeholders and Subcommittee members and is one of the longest-running and most consistent issues coming up with trails in Girdwood.
 - c) What is "Winner Creek Improvements"? Does this mean Upper Winner Creek Trail work? If so I remember hearing that (though it has a very controversial history), and 'improvements' is probably an overly-biased word in any case.
 - d) I'd modify the Virgin Creek one to say "Virgin Creek Trailhead and trail damage"
 - e) Important Note: All these priority projects should be noted on our spatial maps as well, when we come up with spatial maps representing the final Trails Plan.
- R. Slide 26
1. The post-it notes need to be 'cleaned up' i.e. made more presentable. The content is fine, it's just the presentation quality isn't there. Also there needs to be some sort of quick text describing this at the top, e.g. "These are values associated with trails and natural spaces which the Subcommittee has identified as existing in Girdwood."
 2. Remove any duplicates under a single heading (e.g. Wildlife has two post-its under "Natural World")

3. Some - though not all - of the ones which just say 'Trails' need to be saying 'Trails and NS':
 - a) Fix "Share Girdwood with others through trails" to say: "Share Girdwood with others through trails and ns"
 - b) Fix "Progressive Trails - looking to the future" to say: "Progressive Trails and NS - looking to the future"
 - c) Fix "Trails for Many Generations" to say "Trails and NS for Many Generations"
 - d) Change "Diversity of Trails" to "Diverse system of Trails and NS".

S. Slide 27

1. Make the changes to the questions suggested at the last Subcommittee meeting. E.g. get rid of the second set of questions (Are there values listed that you don't agree with? If so, which value(s)?)
2. First question - add Natural Spaces

T. Slide 28: change this to the one the Subcommittee agreed to on 9/1. I've added one minor wording change in bold to make it read clearer (remove bold later, if course): "Girdwood has an interconnected, diverse, beautiful system of trails and natural spaces that well-serves the community. There are experiences for everyone, from areas with no or primitive trails to **areas with** developed trails, and future generations will enjoy what we enjoy today. The system is well-planned, sustainable, resilient, and represents community values."

U. Slide 29

1. First question - add Natural Spaces after "Girdwood Trails"
2. Could condense the last two questions into something like "Is there anything in the Vision statement you would change or add?"

V. Slide 30

1. As with the Vision, the 9/1 work on goals is the baseline we should be working from, not these; please delete these and start the work from the 9/1 goals. As such, my main suggestion is to use the 9/1 goals, and my suggested edits from there (below) are based on those. Additionally, just a note: what are presented here currently in the slideshow are not goals. These are a narrative-ization, slightly modified from the perspective of one Subcommittee member, of certain identified values. (While I am eager and happy to hear and consider all opinions, it is worth noting in some cases these comments and the ones they were attached to better represent a single stakeholder-type perspective and not the synthetic type of work Subcommittee members in their role on this body should be working out. For example, this list relegates natural spaces to the "surrounding" of the community, and the comments they were attached to redefines natural spaces via semantics away from how natural space users think of them. That's antithetical to the view that we work out ways for everyone to get something, and is more of the 'applying one approach to everywhere' which we need to be getting away from if we want a future of needs being met and harmony in development.
2. Edited 9/1 goals:

GOAL 1: PLAN

- Develop a Trails (and Natural Spaces) Plan with two key elements: spatial and principles.
- Spatially we will craft a plan for a diverse, interconnected, beautiful system of trails and natural spaces in, near, and around the community that is consistent with our vision, values, user needs, and area plan.
- We will identify a set of principles to accompany the Plan, which will help ensure that Plan can be realized and adhered to, the Spatial plan and Vision are achieved, we perpetuate into the future the character of our community, and the Plan informs/dovetails with our evolving Trails Management Plan.
 - [Not for inclusion here, but to show what I mean, some ideas from my perspective of good principles: all our trails should be beautiful; avoid density problems e.g. adopt principle of not seeing one trail from another; trails being built properly and with oversight; trails built

environmentally-friendly; ensuring all major user groups continue to be served in terms of land use related to trails and natural spaces]

GOAL 2: DEVELOP

- Build trails using a common set of rules and guidelines as laid out in: 1) the GTC trails flowchart regarding the trails approval process, 2) the Girdwood Trails Management Plan regarding build and management, and 3) the Girdwood Trails Plan vision, values, goals, spatial plan, and principles.
- Develop a diverse system of natural spaces by designating and managing a number of natural space areas with wild/primitive qualities to accompany our other existing designated natural spaces (Moose Meadows and Hand Tram/Four Corners area).

GOAL 3: PERPETUATE [Conserve, Maintain, Sustain]

- As Girdwood development expands, continue to identify, designate, develop, manage, and protect trails and natural spaces through proper public processes alongside that future development.
- Trails and natural spaces are maintained for safety, desired user experiences, and conservation of natural resources.
- Provide adequate funding, planning, support, and stewardship for trails and natural spaces.

W. Slide 32: I don't know what is meant here so can't comment. I do have a general comment about public engagement: remember to also ask about natural spaces (and not just trails), and not to describe it in 'negative ways' which is often done accidentally but is not how they are seen by natural space users (i.e. it's not 'no more development here', it's 'conserved as it is to ensure primitive trail and wildland experiences, ecosystem services, Girdwood's lands heritage, etc. are maintained').

X. Slide 33: See my comments below on the Mapping Utility.

Y. MISSING SLIDES: We should also have (re)presented on maps at the townhall maps of ideas coming out of the Subcommittee. This includes:

1. Ideas presented in stakeholder interviews (e.g. Priority Projects, above)
2. Ideas presented by Subcommittee members in the worksession
3. Ideas discussed during Subcommittee meetings (including the upcoming Nov. 6 meeting)

This includes things which are currently missing on maps, including 'Priority Projects', and things like remediation related to the Nordic 5K, which was noted as a priority project in stakeholder interviews but wasn't incorporated in the Executive Summary.

Perhaps this can be done in the mapping utility and shown first to townhall attendees before opening up a map for them to annotate. Or maybe it's just easier/more sensible to do it as a series of slides.

III. Review of Mapping Utility and related issues

- A. I am a little skeptical of the wisdom and utility of simply presenting a blank map at the meeting and saying 'go'. We should discuss this more at the meeting.
- B. Analytical reminder: We must remember that what is received at this meeting is not statistically valid data in any sense of the phrase. It is valuable feedback, which we should consider, including whether or not to incorporate into our final plan. Why am I reminding us of this now, again? Because if past behavior is any indicator of future behavior, despite warnings about these fallacies, it seems likely we're going to hear in subsequent conversations things like: "Well, people said X..." (where X = a line on a map) or "Well, Yn people said Zn, but only Yn people

said Zn...” (where Ys = a number of people and Zs = particular ideas e.g. from the Subcommittee, and n = some numbers). Because that’s what has happened time and again before in Girdwood trails debates about data and “data”. This is why I’m warning so strongly and repeatedly about this now. What we get at this meeting is valuable - but only - ‘feedback’ and ‘input’ at most from one meeting, and not statistically valid data or otherwise authoritative thing which should dictate or determinatively guide 10+ years of future trails and natural space development in Girdwood.

- C. In addition to the ‘Analytical Reminder’ above, we don’t just have to set our internal expectations here, but also the expectations of the townhall public participants. We should probably have a statement about their participation being very valuable, while also indicating that the purpose of this is scoping and gathering feedback and input, and that there isn’t a guarantee that because you drew a line on the map that it means it will be incorporated into the final Plan.
- D. Review of mapping utility
 - 1. First off: I like it, nice work.
 - 2. I didn’t add all the ideas I would like to see here, I just tested it out a few times.
 - 3. Let’s make sure this works on Windows, Mac, iOS, and Android. I only tested it on Mac, where it worked.
 - 4. I’d suggest noting in the Splash screen that you can get this info to pop back up later by hitting the “I” icon at the top right.
 - 5. Comments about the Edit screen function:
 - a) Perhaps change the language away from “build” etc to “imagine a (trail, natural space, etc) here”?
 - b) Add a little instruction in the Edit screen indicating you can draw kinks etc with the lines - just so people know.
 - c) Can you make it possible to edit or delete your own things? I don’t see how to do this if you screw up a line or something.
 - d) Add to the Edit screen:
 - (1) To the icon pins: add an option with icon and text like “designate as a natural space”
 - (2) To the lines: add an option like “draw a line identifying a natural space to designate”
 - e) Curious: In the part of the description of each thing you add, how many characters can you type?
 - f) Do we have a planned method for asking people what they did and why?

IV. Miscellaneous comments

- A. Briefing note: Why use ‘natural space’ where it is being used for the Trails Plan (and Area Plan) instead of other terms e.g. ‘open space’

There has been some questioning over the use of ‘natural space(s)’ over other terminology at both the last meeting of each of the Trails Plan and Imagine!Girdwood (Area/Comprehensive Plan). This terminology has been developed and used at many meetings of these groups, and the questions/criticisms just recently raised all already well-considered. I thought it might be valuable to those who are newer to these processes or otherwise curious why this term distilled out of those discussions. There are in fact good and intentional reasons for choosing “natural space(s)” instead of ‘open space(s)’, ‘wild spaces/lands’, or something else.

Here are some of the reasons:

- 1. We have a clear definition. And it is this: The term ‘natural spaces’ is used to describe lands for which it is desired that they remain entirely or predominantly in their ‘natural’ state. This term encompasses other terms such as ‘open spaces’ and ‘wild spaces’. Such spaces are

currently found in a variety of the Girdwood valley's lands, including - but by no means exclusively - those zoned by the Muni as GOS (Girdwood Open Spaces).

2. Following on the above, we will/should have a glossary where this and other terms are defined in both plans. I trust the capacity of our audiences to read definitions.
 3. This is not a reference to zoning, so making it congruent with zoning language implies something we aren't doing. We are using a common lay term to refer to certain types of spaces.
 4. This is not precluding the use of 'open space' in terms of existing zoning (i.e. GOS) which will be referenced where appropriate.
 5. Natural spaces as we are using it exists in a variety of zoned areas, including but not exclusive to GOS. There are areas which are and can be treated as such in a variety of zoning areas. Thus using the zoning term creates or suggests a constriction that doesn't exist (i.e. that it only pertains to GOS-zoned lands). It could also make it difficult for the community to do something in a natural space (whether it's designating or preserving it, putting a trail in it, etc.) if we call it an 'open space' venture but it's in an area that's zoned-something-other-than-GOS.
 6. Use of 'natural spaces' also allows for incorporation with other or broader concepts as well, e.g. wild spaces/lands. It was designed as a way to pick the most common lay term ('natural') to encapsulate this variety of spaces (wild, natural, open, etc.)
 7. A variety of terms like this are used in other relevant planning documents, e.g. 'Natural Areas' in the Anchorage 2040 plan, 'natural open spaces', etc.
 8. Although this and similar terms are used in a variety of contexts, as far as I am aware there is a strong association and history between the term 'open space(s)' and urban development/ planning, which makes it less of an ideal fit for Girdwood.
 9. The target audience for this is not just planners but the regular audience. And it's become very clear in my own use of the terms over time during my involvement on these and related issues that the broad audience is not-infrequently confused by 'open spaces' (e.g. thinking it just refers to 'cleared' or non-forested lands, e.g. meadows).
 10. These documents (Trails Plan and Area Plan) have the potential to redefine code and zoning. Therefore we shouldn't feel restricted by existing zoning language. For example, we may come up with a Girdwood Natural Spaces (GNS) zone which is defined differently than GOS.
- B. Process suggestions for going forward after the upcoming Trails Plan townhall: I suggest after we have Subcommittee debrief from the townhall, we start thinking hard about how to synthesize all of our work into the draft final Plan. A possible way to do this is presented here for consideration:
1. Create all narrative portions of the Plan and make sure they are updated to reflect the views of the Subcommittee.
 - a) This includes, among other things, identifying a set of principles, some of which I think are pretty well universally agreed upon by this point. Here is a preliminary incomplete draft list, from my perspective:
 - (1) All user groups in the community should be served in the community. That means having a beautiful, interconnected, diverse system of trails and natural spaces in and near the community.
 - (2) Harmony with Vision, Goals, and Values identified for Trail Plan

- (3) Harmony with Area Plan
- (4) Identification of other key issues and principles that we agree on, e.g. from my view as noted further above: need for trails to be built correctly and beautifully, addressing density concerns (e.g. not seeing one trail from another), etc.
- 2. We list out and enumerate all of the different spatial ideas the Subcommittee has so far.
- 3. We identify gaps and address those e.g. through additions, subtractions, etc. (e.g. if there are no natural spaces, or mountain bike trails, coming out of #2 above, or certain values and needs not being met, we adjust accordingly)
- 4. We conduct a ‘vote’ (that we can revisit if people want to) on the numbered ideas which remain - Yay or Nay on whether these will be in the Plan.
- 5. For those on which don’t have consensus, we do this regarding them:
 - a) Further discussion, offer amendments, revote
 - b) If still no consensus, lay out the suite of options, and leave it as-is in the plan as “undecided,” and identify that these should go through the fullest public process, e.g. involving UDC in the future, because we had unresolvable conflict.

Example: Stumpy’s trail areas. If history is any indicator, I predict this will be one without consensus, at least at first. Some want natural space with no new trails, some want a trail in there (with various ideas for it, e.g. smaller, larger, groomed, ungroomed, etc.). Here’s how it could go using the above process: First: We’d all vote. Second: It would become clear there is not consensus. So, we’d all brainstorm and discuss a bunch of different ideas and amendments, e.g. no new trails, new trail or trails with provisions for density (e.g. just one trail in that area), construction/size (e.g. only 6ft wide, natural materials, etc.), use (e.g. non-mechanized, ungroomed), etc. Third: We’d re-vote. Fourth: If there’s consensus, great, it goes in the Plan in the agreed-upon way. If there isn’t, no problem, we just lay out the suite of possibilities in the Plan and state that any trail or natural space proposed in this area receive the most rigorous public process, including UDC involvement, in the future.

- 6. Have those ideas from #4 and #5 above turned into the final spatial map (with corresponding narratives) drafted by Holly, then everything reviewed by the Subcommittee (multiple times) and the public (with adjustments made accordingly after those reviews) and then move to final form.

Girdwood Trails Management Plan
Nov 19, 2020 Public Meeting Presentation

Comments – Jessica Szelag

Page 1

Page 3 – Meeting etiquette (General thought – I’m finding meetings with everyone’s cameras turned off less than welcoming. Admittedly, I do this too because I’m usually multitasking, but I think if people are speaking there should be an ask that videos are turned on. I also think people are being more aggressive because there’s not the personal face to face interaction in person meetings requires. Just a perspective to share).

Page 4 – Change to 20 year plan

Page 8 – text heavy but agree with all 4 bullet points

Page 9 – enlargen area of map with the zones being discussed (too much space for non Girdwood zones and hard to see)

Page 11 – absolutely need to use this data to help make decisions about future goals (ie. If there is a lack of class 4 in the valley, than a future objective should be to add more class 4 trails or improve a class 3 to class 4. Open space should not be included here – this is a trails plan and an open space plan is very different

Page 12 – A use is a verb, like walking, hiking, sitting, biking, skiing. Change “Primitive Trail Experience” to Open Space. A primitive trail experience is not it’s own unique action...it’s the type of place someone does something and doesn’t make sense as a use

Page 13 – this data is important. Flush out more and is there anything that can be concluded from this view of the data

Page 14 – Open spaces are “Natural Areas or Parks” as listed in the ANC 2040 Comp plan (Section 2, Page 29, Figure 2-1)

Page 15 – Remove bullet #3 and instead list logos of land owners. I think it’s better to say “The landownership situation requires a higher level of collaboration during trail planning and management that often feels arduous to the community.” Since it’s an opinion (though generally agreed upon)

Page 18 – label parking areas as they align with description on page 19

Page 21 – define “Gaps” here since they show up in key on Page 22 for first time

Page 22 – what is red dotted line? Label

Page 26 – showing the values this way is hard to read. I know it’s showing how the terms were grouped, but it’s pretty busy with all of the color and groupings all over the place. Maybe just make a new slide with the Main Values listed across the top and the sub values listed under each one?

Page 27 – Natural w=World sounds really weird IMHO. Maybe “Natural Environment”?

Page 28 –

[Vision statement #1:](#)

Trails and ~~natural spaces~~ open spaces are a cornerstone of life in Girdwood providing places for everyone people of all ages and all abilities to recreate. Girdwood has something for everyone. Our driveways are our trailheads and our backyards are gateways to natural spaces.

Commented [JS1]: Not a big fan of saying Gwood has something for everyone (too vague). Plus, what about snow machines, e-bikes, one wheels, or other uses that we're not accommodating for on trails

I get the spirit of "driveways as trailheads", but there's a risk in implying anyone can just park in people's driveways to go hiking. Also, not everyone has an open space next to their house

The other Vision Statement:

- This was not finalized at the August GTMP meeting per the meeting minutes and based on my participation. I find this vision statement way too descriptive about *how* the vision will be realized. The first sentence is fine it's the only sentence used.

Vision statement #2:

Girdwood has an interconnected, diverse, beautiful system of trails and natural spaces that well-serves the community and respect all trail users. There are experiences for everyone, from areas with no or primitive trails to developed trails, and future generations will enjoy what we enjoy today. The trails system are is well-planned, sustainable, resilient, and the trails system balances community conservation represents community value with economic opportunity

Commented [JS2]: Remove, why specifically list two types of trails? Also, they're not experiences

Commented [JS3]: Trying to also add in here is awkward. This is a goal

Commented [JS4]: Again, this is trying to fit in goals and objectives within the vision statement

Commented [JS5]: Remove. Too specific and descriptive for a vision statement

Page 30 – Trails should always come before "trails and open space". It's a Trails Plan first. Also, natural areas should not be used. Open space is a codified, known planning term. This plan should not introduce a "locally defined concept". Natural Areas is never mentioned in Title 21, Chapter 9. Open space is. An open space plan is also a different type of plan than a trail's plan and was not a part of the original scope

This is also a lot of text to absorb – consider listing 3-4 on each slide, remove bolded text and define each goal (I.e. STEWARDSHIP: Promote stewardship of Girdwood's trails and open spaces)

Page 32: examples to show before exercise of what you're looking for?

GTP Public Presentation edits/comments received from GTP Subcommittee members for Nov 6th Worksession

Paul Crews

Page 11 We will need to make some corrections on the chart after the meeting. We will need to decide for the plan whether we will upgrade some trails in the future so their numbers will change. Will we list what we will want for known future changes?

Page 13 We will need to doctor this chart and there will be more trails on it

Maps I could not figure out how to undo my mistakes and it was not clear how to submit it.

Carolyn Brodin

Girdwood Trails Plan Purpose

I thought we made changes to this at the last meeting..

Establish a 20-year plan to Develop, Protect, and promote Girdwood's trail network and natural spaces for current and future generations.(or something like this)

Existing trails and Trail use charts

What are we doing about the charts? They are incorrect and will cause confusion

Connectivity

Bullet # 2 doesn't make sense to me.

The school, library, and PO are all on the trails system

Existing condition overlay map is confusing at first

Stakeholder Interview Process

In the bullet that says

Increased Connectivity between existing Trails delete (Abe's Trail and California Creek Trail)

This was something I said during my interview...it is almost done and not worth having in the plan

Vision Statement

I prefer the statement from our 9/1 meeting

I found the map hard to work with...but that is probably just my lack of computer skill

Ron Tenny

I like vision wording in presentation better otherwise my only comment on presentation is it might be to many pages for public meeting and might be hard to fit into time slot. I like the format for final product but might want less for public meeting

HLB Comments – Shelley Rowton

Please see my comments below on the mapping exercise. My comments on the presentation are within the document itself and attached. I understand that I am not a subcommittee member, but I represent the largest landowner in GW and truly want this effort to succeed. All suggestions are made in the spirit of providing the best public meeting, and ultimately the best plan, to the people of Girdwood. HLB is invested both financially and operationally in this process.

I am, as always, willing to help in any way that I can. Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback in advance. I hope this proves helpful to the overall process.

- Basemap –
 - *Street* basemap is outdated. It doesn't contain the Arlberg extension which is especially relevant in the context of this plan. I think this is the one the app defaults to.
 - The *Topographic* basemap could be used as the default, as it does contain the updated streets.
 - This could also be rectified by using the Muni Streets layer.
- Widgets –
 - Having 4 different areas of buttons may be confusing for someone not familiar with geospatial apps.
 - Consolidate in one area.
- Additional layers – the following could be very useful to this process.
 - WMS Wetlands & WMS Streams
 - Avalanche Zones
 - Muni Property Information – the *Topographic* basemap does show property boundaries when zoomed in to a certain level, but ownership information is not available that way. This is useful to identify likely future trails/routes, but to also identify trespass trails that may need to be rerouted or secured through a legal instrument.
 - Chugach National Forest and Chugach State Park boundaries
 - Muni Contours 2015
 - Muni Streets
- Missing –
 - Full Snowcat Track is not shown (including new route around spa)
 - Opportunity for the user to mark natural spaces. This should not be relegated to “other.” It should have equal footing.
 - Users may want the ability to edit or delete their entries.
- Trails Layer –
 - Distinguishing winter, summer and year-round trails through symbology (color, pattern, thickness, etc) could be helpful.