



MEMORANDUM

P.O. Box 4100 ♦ FRISCO, COLORADO 80443

TO: MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL
FROM: SUSAN LEE, PLANNER
PETE SWENSON, NORDIC CENTER AND TRAILS MANAGER
RE: FRISCO TRAILS MASTER PLAN UPDATE
DATE: JUNE 22, 2021

Summary and Background: The Frisco Trails Master Plan (FTMP) was adopted in March 2017. The purpose of the plan was to inventory and map existing trails, recommend future trails, determine areas in need of wayfinding and maintenance, address bicycle and pedestrian connectivity throughout town, and prioritize projects for effective implementation. Since the plan's adoption, a great deal of progress has been made on implementing the various recommendations for hard and soft surface trail improvements throughout Town. The purpose of this work session is to provide Council with an update on the current status of improvements as well as have a discussion about priorities for future trail projects and enhancements.

Analysis: Recommendations in the plan are divided into four planning areas: Frisco's Gateway, Downtown Core, Peninsula Recreation Area, and Frisco's Backyard. Since the time of adoption a number of important trail projects have been pursued and implemented. Below is a summary of each of the planning areas and the progress made for that area. The Prioritization Matrix is also included and ranks each project on its safety value, access value, as well as its community priority as captured through the community engagement process. The purpose of the matrix is to guide implementation of projects in the short term and to start finding political support and funding for longer term, more visionary projects.

- **Planning Area 1: Frisco's Gateway (PA 1).** This area encompasses land within the Town of Frisco limits, including the commercial and residential areas surrounding the I-70/Exit 203 interchange with State Highway 9. It also includes United States Forest Service (USFS) land adjacent to Town in unincorporated Summit County. The FTMP recommends both soft surface trail connections and paved pathway connections for this area as well as new signage to improve wayfinding for the existing pathways in this area. No projects have been completed in PA 1 at this time.

The highest priorities for PA 1 are: striping and signage to improve the connection between the paved path along east SH 9 to the lakefront rec path via Lake Point Drive and Circle (C2/C3); a paved path along the west side of SH 9 from Lusher Court to the existing path south of Hawn Drive (C4); a paved sidewalk connection across the I-70 overpass to connect with the Meadow Creek Trailhead (C5); and a paved sidewalk/multi-use path between Beaver Lodge Road and 9000 Divide (C17). C17 was budgeted in 2019 but was canceled due to concerns from area homeowners. C4 (in front of Walmart) has stalled due to challenges in obtaining easements from private property owners in the area.

T3, the proposed soft-surface connection between Silverthorne's Salt Lick Gulch trail system and Frisco's Exit 203, also ranked high in the prioritization matrix. Pete Swenson has been involved in preliminary discussions with the USFS and the County regarding the implementation of this trail. Feedback from the USFS is that it should be combined with T7, a soft surface connection between Meadow Creek and North Tenmile Creek trailheads (see PA 2). If accepted as a project by the USFS, the combined T3/T7 would need NEPA approval.

- **Planning Area 2: Downtown Core (PA 2).** This area includes the commercial centers of Main Street, Summit Boulevard, and the Basecamp development, as well as all the residential areas north and south of Main Street. Efforts and projects completed in this planning area include:
 - Incorporation of plan recommendations in Colorado Department of Transportation's (CDOT) "Gap Project". Outcomes include: an underpass between the County Commons and the PRA to create a safe and separated connection, a sidewalk on the west side of SH-9 connecting Main Street to the County Commons intersection, and a paved multi-use path in front of the sanitation district and a more direct link to the intersection at Main Street and SH-9 (C18/C19).
 - The 2B Connector. This project was identified through the Trails Master Plan and created a new multi-use path along 2nd Avenue to connecting Main Street to the Rec Path and Peak One neighborhood, and a new multi-use path along Belford Street for safer and better access to the elementary school (C11/C12).

Town staff worked collaboratively with CDOT to successfully secure TAP Grants for both the PRA underpass and the 2B Connector.

Based in part on recommendations from the FTMP, the Granite and Galena Street corridors were identified as the most viable and attractive alternate routes for bicyclists parallel to Main Street (C9/C10/C14/C15). As such, staff has issued an RFP to study mobility and create a complete streets plan for the downtown area between, and including, Granite and Galena Streets. Staff is currently reviewing proposals for the Downtown Complete Streets Plan and will bring forward a resolution for contract approval at the July 13, 2021 Town Council meeting.

Several of the high priority projects for PA 2 require further study. These include creating a soft-surface trail along Tenmile Creek (T6), creating a soft-surface connection (on USFS land) between Meadow Creek Trailhead and North Tenmile Trailhead (T7 – see above), and creating a new paved path parallel to I-70 to connect the Basecamp development with West Main Street (C6).

Projects requiring more minor efforts for implementation include striping and signage for the attached multi-use paths along Creekside Drive and Larson Lane, and extending the path south between Belford and the rec path.

Wayfinding and Trailhead recommendations for this area include study and development of solutions for overcrowding at the West Main "park and ride" and Zach's Stop.

- **Planning Area 3: Peninsula Recreation Area (PA 3).** This area contains the PRA, which is primarily on National Forest Service land. At the time of adoption of the FTMP, the existing

trails were heavily used and in need of maintenance and re-routing at points to keep them sustainable. At the request of the USFS and with the support of Council, staff worked closely with SE Group, the USFS and the community in 2018 to plan further for this area. A Master Development Plan (MDP) was written, submitted to the USFS, and approved in June 2019 for work on these trails at the PRA. In June of 2019 the Town received a GOCO grant for \$168,390 from the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Department. The grant funded 15.5 miles of trail improvements and new trail construction. Grant funds paid for equipment rentals (excavator/mulcher/bulldozer), two temporary summer staff for two years, new signs and private trail building contractors for specific segments.

Goals of the MDP include improving recreational opportunities through improved summer and winter trails. Construction of several trail segments as originally noted in the Trails Master Plan and further outlined in the MDP include:

- A soft surface connection from the existing non-system trail behind the Water Dance neighborhood to the Peninsula (The existing hard surface trail connecting Water Dance and the Peninsula has been improved and signed – T8).
- A realignment of a short section of trail to connect the outer Peninsula trails to the lakefront trail, to create a new connection that avoids connecting directly to the campgrounds (T10, summer 2020).
- A soft-surface trail connecting the Pine Cove Campground with access points to the south to provide additional loops and disperse trail use across the system (T12, summer 2019).
- Soft surface trails near and around the Buzzsaw area to create additional loops and disperse trail use across the Peninsula trail system (T11, summer 2019-2025 for construction of trails approved in 2019 MDP)
- Re-routed trail to provide access to the Perimeter trail from the relocated Dickey Trailhead (T13, completed).

The importance of winter trails was also highlighted in the Frisco Trails Master Plan, with two primary recommendations:

1. Explore grooming the rec path all the way to Breckenridge along the new alignment by Lake Dillon. Thanks to the joint efforts of Summit County Open Space and Trails, the USFS, the Town of Breckenridge, and the Town of Frisco, this segment of the Rec Path is groomed twice per week between the Frisco Nordic Center and Gold Run Nordic Center.
 2. Pilot a fat biking loop at the PRA with the appropriate alignment determined by the Nordic Center. This happened during the 2018/2019 season with an initial pilot loop of 1.2 miles on TOF property near the maintenance building. The demands for fat bike grooming frequency (both increased staff and equipment), and additional mileage needed for a quality user experience has pushed possible expansion of the Fat bike trail network back to Winter 2022-2023.
- **Planning Area 4: Frisco's Backyard (PA4).** This area is expansive and encompasses the land located generally south and east of Frisco, comprising Mount Royal, Miner's Creek, Rainbow Lake, Ophir Mountain and Gold Hill. These are National Forest Service lands that

provide more of a backcountry experience. The overarching goal for this area is to have a well-maintained legitimized natural trail system right in Frisco's backyard. Frisco partnered with the USFS, Friends of the Dillon Ranger District and Wildlands Restoration Volunteers for work on the Masontown Trail in 2018 including the construction of bridges and boardwalks across the creek and sensitive riparian areas. This project has been the primary accomplishment in this area at this time.

Trail management discussions in PA 4 have been ongoing between the Town of Frisco and USFS for the past five years. As of 2021, the USFS has indicated interest in a partnership between the Town and the USFS to build, maintain and manage PA 4 trails after the work at the PRA is complete per USFS standards. The proposed management model is the same model as the USFS currently uses with the Town of Breckenridge: The Town of Frisco would pay for the NEPA process and write a management plan based on the 2017 Trails Master Plan. With USFS approval, the Town of Frisco would then be responsible (as is currently the case on USFS land in PA 3) to financially support the construction and maintenance of trails and to manage the environmental impacts of user groups in PA 4.

It is exciting to see the projects outlined in the FTMP come to fruition. The foundation that made these projects possible was the thoughtful planning that took place many years prior through the creation of the FTMP. In order to continue moving forward with implementation of the FTMP staff is recommending the following be considered for the 2022 budget as the next steps in implementing the FTMP:

- Complete a five-year update on the plan to incorporate completed projects and new community goals.
- Develop a management model for Council consideration to work with USFS to adopt existing non-system trails and to build additional trails in PA 4, Frisco's Backyard.
- Create a consistent signage and wayfinding plan for implementation throughout Town. Install new signage and complete striping recommendations as outlined in the FTMP.
- Study easements and feasibility for the creation of the Tenmile Trail (PA 2 Trail 6) and the connector along the west side of SH9 (PA 1 Connector 4).

Financial Impact: Financial impacts of further trail improvements have not been fully developed at this time. Trail and trail planning recommendations are for Council consideration and should direction be given to move forward with any of these recommendations, staff will provide an update as to cost implications at a later date. For informational purposes, implementation of the trail improvements noted above are included in the annual capital improvement budget. A summary of the past several years of the Trail Enhancement line item follows:

20-2000-5066 - Trail Enhancements

	Expenses
2017	\$ 67,449.85
2018	\$ 61,776.62
2019	\$ 95,395.22
2020	\$ 100,770.56
Budget 2021	\$ 139,195.00

Note that the above are the capital costs only, and do not include staffing or ongoing and future maintenance. It should also be noted that there are opportunities available to offset capital costs through grants – as noted above, the Town received a GOCO grant in the amount of \$168,390 for trail work at the PRA. In the future, Council may also choose to consider other funding sources such as sales tax or use fees to offset some portion of the cost of trail maintenance, as described in the FTMP.

Alignment with Strategic Plan: Per the 2020-2021 Town of Frisco Strategic Plan, both the implementation of the PRA Master Development Plan, and the creation of complete streets for the downtown core are Council goals. The Town recognizes that safe and efficient transportation corridors should be available and accessible to all users, especially modes that support a healthy, active lifestyle and support the environment. The plan also recognizes that recreational opportunities are essential to the Town's vibrancy, providing unique opportunities for visitors and locals to explore, play, experience, and share with the broader community. Mobility and vibrant recreation are central to the community's economic vitality and therefore high priorities for the Town Council to maintain and enhance for future generations.

Environmental Sustainability: Implementation of the FTMP supports environmental goals by improving multi-modal transportation connections and sustainability of the soft-surface trail network.

Staff Recommendation: Staff is seeking feedback and direction on future projects that Council would like to see prioritized and included in upcoming future budget discussions.

Reviews and Approvals: This report has been reviewed and approved by:

Diane McBride, Assistant Town Manager/Recreation Director
Bonnie Moinet, Finance Director
Jeff Durbin, Interim Town Manager

Attachments:

Attachment 1 – FTMP Prioritization Matrix
Attachment 2 – 2017 Frisco Trails Master Plan