



# Welcome

The presentation will  
begin at 5:30

Blodgett Open Space Master and Management Plan

## Agenda

Introductions

Meeting Purpose

Colorado Springs  
Open Space  
Information

Blodgett Open  
Space Master and  
Management Plan

Review Concerns

Next steps

Informal Open  
House



# BLODGETT OPEN SPACE MASTER AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

Neighborhood Meeting  
Jan. 22, 2024

Lonna Thelen  
Trails, Open Space and Parks (TOPS) Manager

David Deitemeyer  
Parks Sr. Landscape Architect



# MEETING PURPOSE

- Abundance of neighborhood communication
- Opportunity to **share the process**
- Opportunity to **share what we heard and how the plan was modified**
- **Engage** with project team and City staff



# COLORADO SPRINGS



Colorado Springs offers incredible parks and recreation opportunities



Essential for promoting physical activity, social interaction, and overall well-being



Our park system also enhances the quality of life for our residents by generating local jobs and business opportunities, making a significant impact on the Colorado Springs economy.



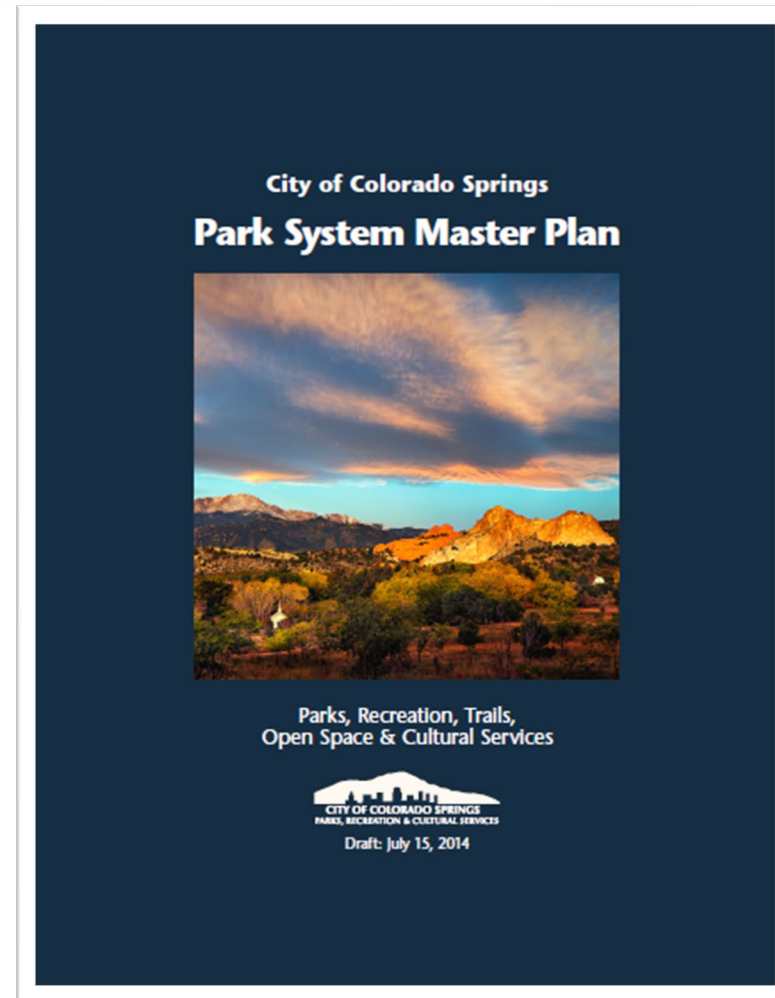
# COLORADO SPRINGS PARK SYSTEM MASTER PLAN



2014 Park system master plan guides the community vision of our Parks, Trails and Open Spaces

**Open space** – parcel of land set aside to retain land, water, vegetation, historic, cultural, and aesthetic features in their natural or primarily natural state.

These areas provide wildlife habitat, help share healthy growth, maintain scenic vistas, and provide recreational opportunities for the community.



# NATURAL AREA CLASSIFICATION



## Open Space

Acreeage: 10 acre minimum

Purpose/Function: Protect natural values. These areas may also provide opportunities for nature oriented, outdoor recreation

Management Guidelines: Emphasis is on resource protection. Public use to be determined on a case-by-case basis (Master Plan).

No more than 10% of site area can be dedicated to park uses, including roads, parking, environmental education/interpretation, picnic sites, and visitor support facilities



## Colorado Springs Open Spaces

- Austin Bluffs
- Black Canyon
- Blodgett
- Bluestem Prairie
- Corral Bluffs
- Fishers Canyon
- High Chaparral
- Red Rock Canyon
- Smith Creek
- Stratton
- Ute Valley
- Wild Horse Ranch



# Master Plan Process

Blodgett Open Space Master Plan



# PURPOSE OF MASTER PLAN

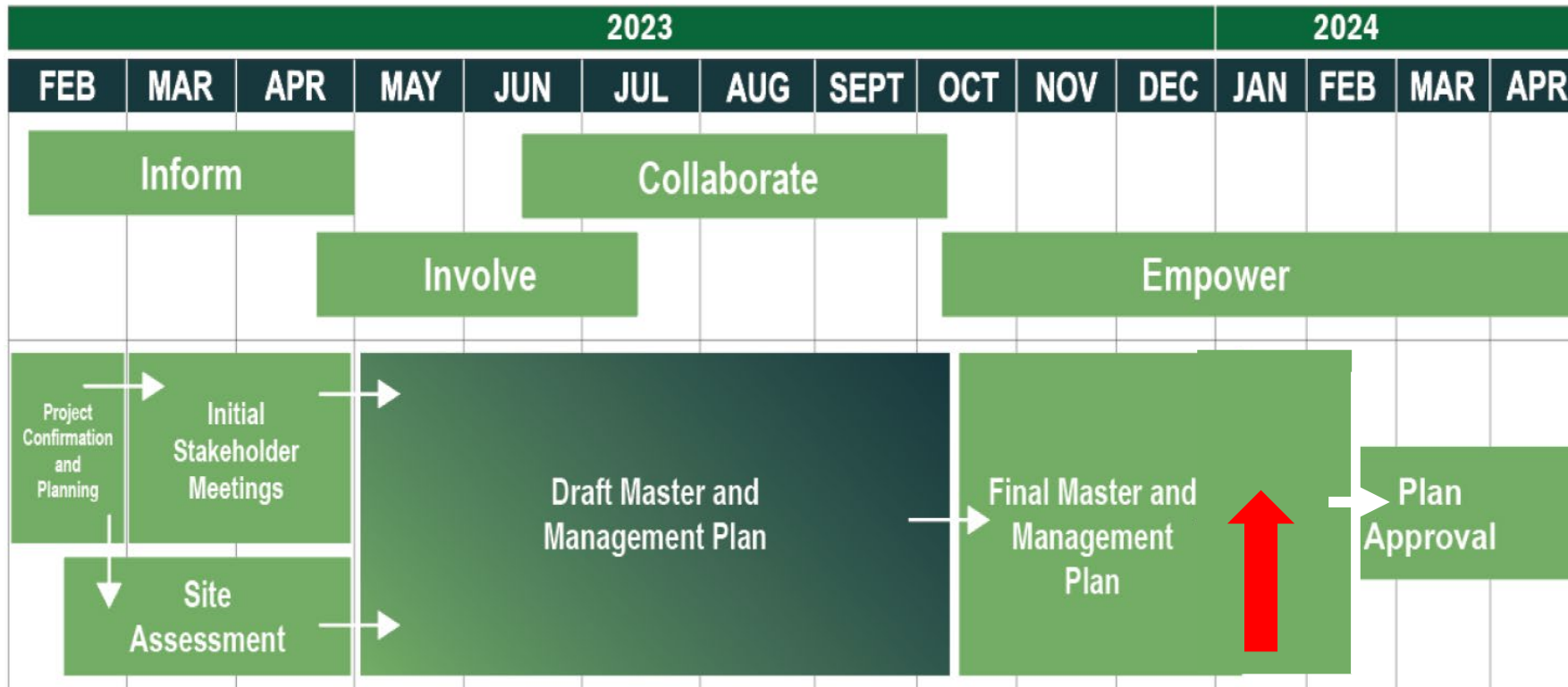
- Open Space acreage **increased**
- Balance current and future **recreational needs** of the community with **conservation** of resources
- Establishes a **comprehensive long-range plan** (15-20 years) of the Open Spaces
- Guide the **enhancement** and **management** of the open space
- Establishes an expectation with **access, management, community values**
- Address public access, wildlife, resource management, public safety, neighborhood concern







# PROCESS TIMELINE



## Process highlights to date

- 5 Stakeholder meetings
- 4 In-person meetings
- 3 Surveys
- 3 Community-wide work sessions
- 2 Feedback surveys
- 600+ online responses
- 1400+ citizen engagements

# BLODGETT OPEN SPACE

## Expand and Enhance Wildlife Habitat Areas

- Manage users with strategically planned trail system
- Expand habitat areas and promote wildlife corridors
- Restoration of habitat area through improved management

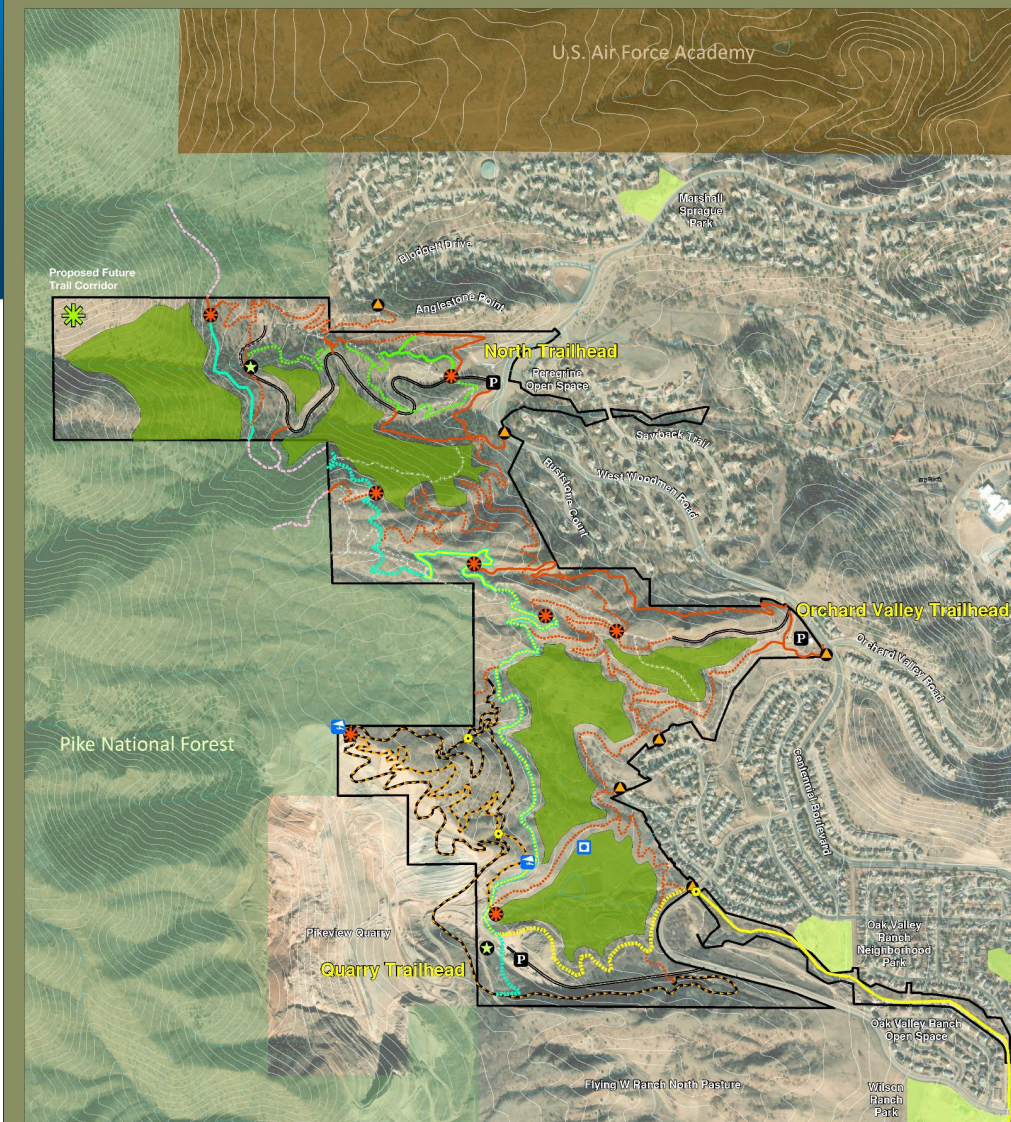
## Establish a Sustainable Trail System

- 13.7 miles master planned trail
- 11.8 miles closure and restoration
- 22.6% Net reduction of trails (rogue & existing) within the open space

## Non-motorized Recreational Use (mileage approximate)

- 9.4 miles of multi-use trail
- 0.5 miles of multi-use trail with uphill bike only
- 2.7 miles of Directional downhill bike trail
- 1.1 miles of Hiking only trail
- Paragliding access, programming area, track chair access

## Blodgett Open Space Master and Management Plan



### Legend

Blodgett Open Space	Special Use Area	Existing Designated Multi-Use Trail	Proposed Park to Peak Trail
Neighborhood Park	Neighborhood Access	Proposed Multi-Use Trail	Existing Park to Peak and Chamberlain Trail
Pike National Forest	Wayfinding Node	Existing Hiking Only Trail	Proposed Park to Peak and Chamberlain Trail
U.S. Air Force Academy	Grade Separated Crossing	Proposed Hiking Only Trail	Proposed Downhill Mtn. Biking Only Trail
Parking/Trailhead	Paragliding Launch Area	Existing Chamberlain Trail	Proposed Uphill Mtn. Biking and Multi-Use Trail
	Paragliding Landing Area	Proposed Chamberlain Trail	Access Road
	Protected Habitat Area	Existing Park to Peak Trail	Designated Trail to be Closed
		User-Created Rogue Trail*	<b>Note:</b> All social trails to be closed

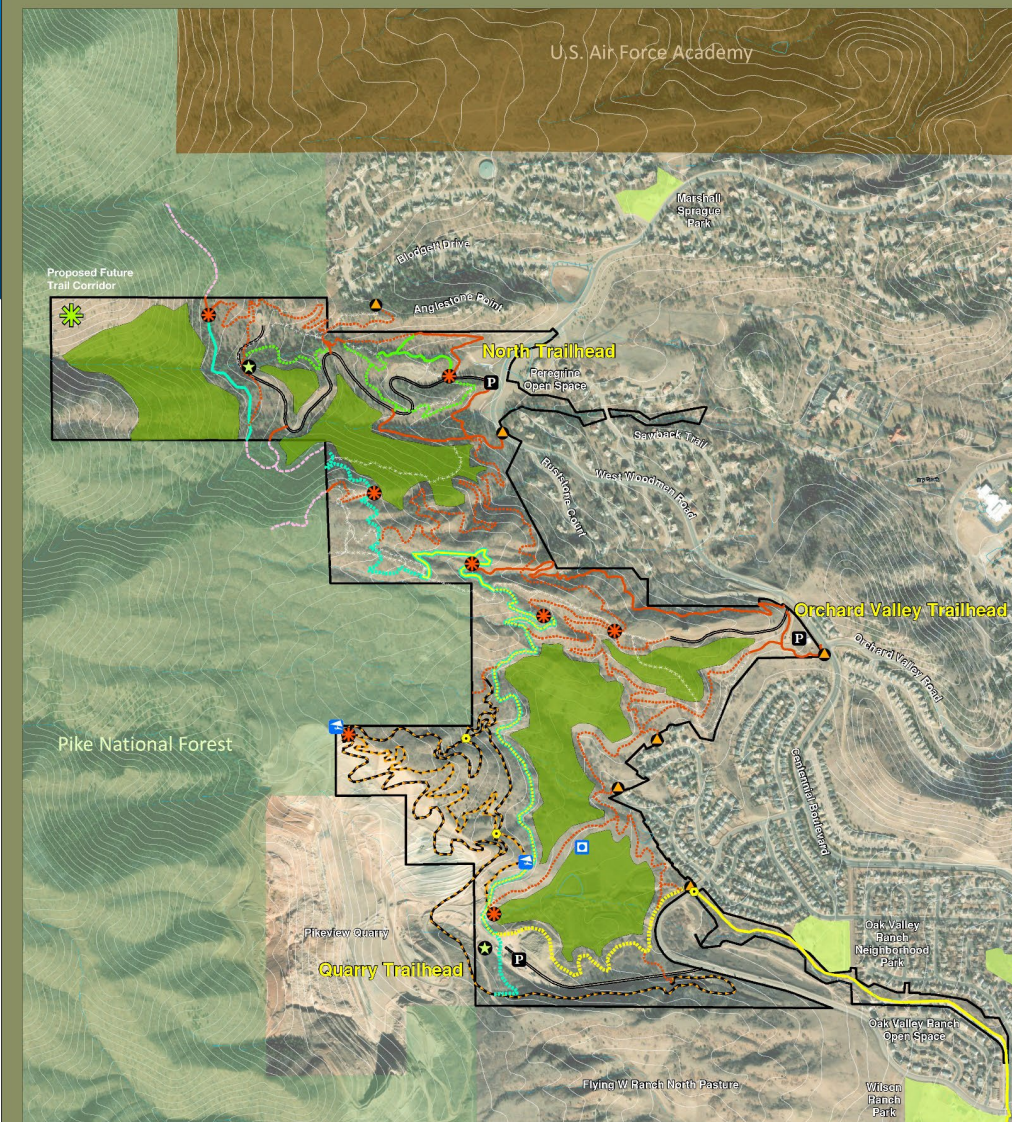
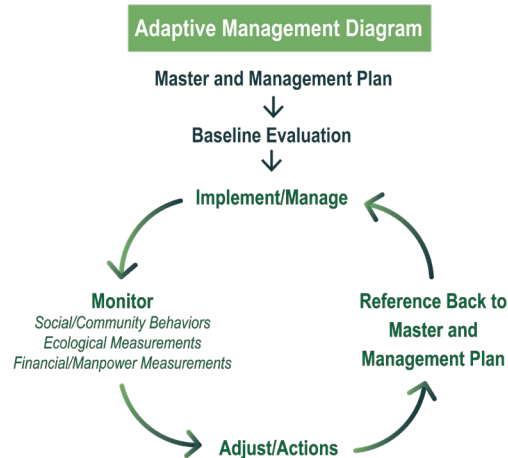
# BLODGETT OPEN SPACE

## Designate, Enhance and Improve Access

- Open space amenities
  - Trailheads
  - Neighborhood access
  - Trails
  - Interpretative
  - Wayfinding/Signage
- Regional connectivity
  - USFS preferred alternative plan
  - Connectivity to other Parks and Open Spaces

## Holistic and Adaptative Approach with the Management Plan

- Habitat enhancement, resource protection
- Forest health and noxious weeds
- Adapt to changing conditions, impact and trends



**Legend**

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\*subject to possible future Forest Service NEPA process

## Blodgett Open Space Master and Management Plan



# What We Heard

Blodgett Open Space Master and Management Plan



## **Robust engagement**

*We appreciate your time and effort to provide input on Blodgett Open Space*

*Grateful for the community sharing their ideas, thoughts, and concerns*

*Acknowledge differing of opinions and the plan represents balanced approach*

*The community's feedback shaped the Plan*

### **The Latest "By the Numbers":**

- *1400 + citizen engagement*
- *160 participants at October 17<sup>th</sup> workshop*
- *299 survey responses in 30-day period*
- *96 emails*

## **Common Concerns (no particular order)**

1. ***Public Communication of Master Plan Process***
2. ***Traffic Impacts***
3. ***Fire Evacuation***
4. ***Turning Blodgett into Theme Park***
5. ***Impacts on Property Values***
6. ***Security and Crime, Trailhead Management***
7. ***Trailheads/Parking***
8. ***Trails***
9. ***Wildlife***

## Concern/Feedback

### *Public Communication of Master Plan Process*

- Too fast of a process
- Too slow of a process
- Not enough public outreach nor clear communication from City



## Addressing the Concern

### *Process*

- Following recommendations of International Association for Public Participation (IAP2)
- Our planning process set March 2023 through March 2024
- Extended 1 month to review and address additional comments

### *Communication/Outreach*

*Consistent outreach process included:*

- Social Media, Next Door, and media coverage
- Trailhead kiosk flyers
- Stakeholder outreach, word of mouth
- Email list communication
- TOPS Working committee and Parks Advisory Board Updates

*High numbers of participation throughout process represented strong engagement*



*Oct 22, 2023: Community Workshop*

**WHAT WE HEARD**



## Concern/Feedback

### **Traffic Impacts**

- Increase in use
- More congestion
- Speeding in neighborhoods
- Proposed 4-way Stop at Woodmen/Centennial and Orchard Valley

### **Fire Evacuation**

- Evacuation details
- Increase in use impacts evacuation



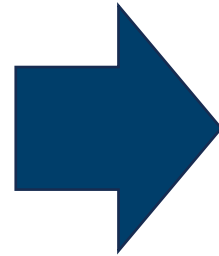
## Addressing the Concern

### **Traffic Impacts**

- Open Space use for the community
- Sustainably accommodate increase in open space use and impact
- Plan creates dispersed Open Space access
- Collaborate with Traffic Engineering and Police Department for issues outside open space
- Removed proposed 4-way stop with this Plan

### **Fire Evacuation**

- Blodgett Master and Management Plan guides the use and management of the open space over the next 15-20 years.
- Collaborate with Fire Department
- Community Wildfire Protection Plan
- Master Plan recommends fire mitigation to reduce risk
- Rangers can close the park, limit access in emergencies, and proactive closure as needed



**Colorado Springs Wildfire Ready**

<https://www.coswildfireready.org/>





## Concern/Feedback

### ***Turning Blodgett into Theme Park***

- *Bike Park at Quarry concerns*
- *Turning into an attraction*
- *Paragliding*



## Addressed in Plan

### ***Theme Park***

- *NO BIKE PARK WITH THIS PLAN. Bike Park concept would be discussed in a future planning process*
- *Bike-only and hiking only trails are included within the plan*
- *Open space limited to passive recreational use*
- *Priority in resource conservation*
- *Paragliding low-impact, non- motorized, fabric wing. Information added to plan*
- *Paragliding landing areas eliminated from neighborhood parks*

### ***Property Values***

- *Impact property values*
- *Over developing a natural area*



### ***Property Values***

- *Studied released in 2017 by the Trust for Public Land*
- *Parks in Colorado Springs raised the value of nearby residential properties by \$502 million*



**WHAT WE HEARD**

### ***Economic Benefits of Parks***

[coloradosprings.gov/parks/page/economic-benefits-parks](https://coloradosprings.gov/parks/page/economic-benefits-parks)



## Concern/Feedback

### **Security, Crime, & Trailhead Management**

- Address issue before more people come to open space
- Make more of a priority to address
- Increase in use and visitation
- Too much parking, no enforcement



## Addressed in Plan

### **Management related**

- Parks Staff does not have enforcement capabilities
- Work with CSPD and HOA's
- Consider security patrols at key times
- CSPD security audit of trailheads
- Gate closure management
  - All Open Space Parking behind gates
  - Consider earlier gate closures

### **Site Improvements \***

- Strategic site design to mitigate issues
- Site improvements may include: nighttime closure gates, lighting, increased visibility
- Site improvements may consider: automated gates and cameras
- Phased implementation of new parking stalls

\* Improvements subject to available funding



# CONNECT WITH THE CITY



## GoCOS

Website: <https://coloradosprings.gov/gocos>

Get the App: Search GoCOS

## Citizen reporting

- Maintenance issues and concerns,
- Management concerns
- Trail safety concerns

## Non-emergency Police 719-444-7000

- Crime reporting
- Public safety concerns

## GoCOS Communication

### GoCOS!

To report an issue or contact a city department, fill out the form below.



Log In Sign Up

Submit Questions, Requests, or Concerns  
If this is an emergency, please call 911.

Search...

#### Pothole

Report a pothole on City streets. Public Works will prioritize the repair with planned roadway maintenance and get you back to smooth travels!

#### Illegal Camps

Living in your vehicle is not a crime, please do not initiate a request unless there is a parking issue associated with the vehicle. If you are reporting an issue regarding RV camping, please call the CSPD non-emergency number, 719-444-7000.

#### Traffic Issues

Bikes, pedestrian lights and crossings, traffic signs/signals/markings, traffic timing, neighborhood traffic calming, etc.

#### Neighborhood Services

Code Enforcement Complaints, Neighborhood Cleanup Program, Zoning and Land Use Information, Homelessness Prevention and Response

#### Graffiti

Report graffiti anywhere in the city. You may also attach a picture.

#### Roads and Sidewalks

#### Streetlights/Power Outage/Water Main Break/Other Utilities

Streetlights, power outages, and water main breaks are the responsibility of Colorado Springs Utilities. If this is a police, fire, medical or other emergency, please call 911. Call 448-4800 for all other utility emergencies.

#### Water & Stormwater

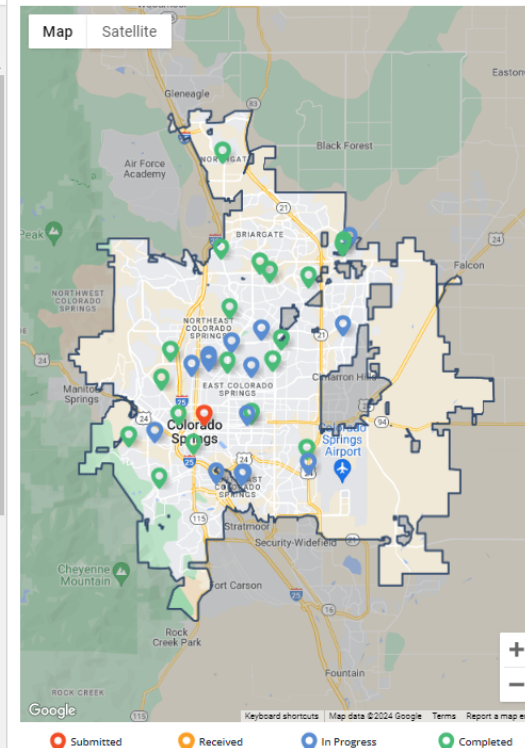
Broken Sprinkler/Watering Issues, Stormwater Questions, Spills and Illegal Dumping into Creeks

#### Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services

Adopt-A-Park/Trail, Cultural Services, Park or Trail Maintenance, Volunteer, Pikes Peak, Sports, Special Events

Map List

Keyword



## Concern/Feedback

### ***Trailheads/Parking***

- Too much parking provided
- Parking will create issues
- Parking in neighborhoods, in front of houses
- Not enough parking



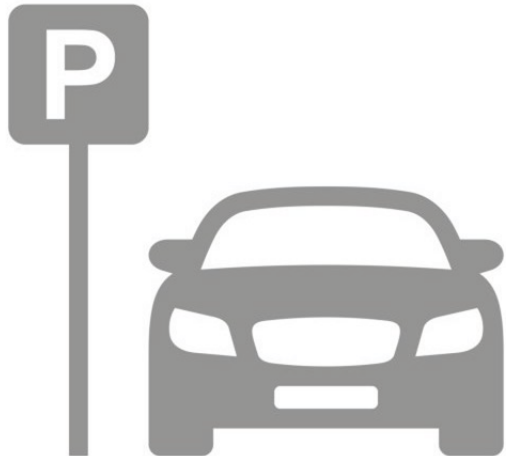
## Addressed in Plan

### ***Management Related***

- Move parking amenities internal to open space, all parking behind closure gates
- Focus to reduce on-street parking and neighborhood impacts
- Consider public access to Pike National Forest and Blodgett Peak
- Trailhead management strategies

### ***Site Improvements***

- Parking lot locations: disperse trailhead locations to reduce impact from single point of access
- Phases implementation to increase as needed over time
- Neighborhood access points for easy neighborhood access (Will not promote as trailhead for Blodgett Open Space)



<i>Park Property</i>	<i>Size (approximate)</i>	<i>Designated Parking</i>	<i>Parking Ratio (stalls per 10 ac)</i>
Blodgett OS	384 acres	24 spaces *	0.4
Bluestem Prairie OS	650 acres	15 spaces *	0.2
High Chaparral OS	54 acres	9 *	1.6
North Cheyenne Canon	1325 acres	398 *	3.0
Palmer Park	730 acres	391 *	5.4
Red Rock Canyon OS (and Bear Creek Cañon Park – High Drive)	2495 acres (1474 acres RRC and 748 BCC)	430	1.7
Stratton OS	318 acres	73 *	2.3
Ute Valley	538 acres (corrected)	77 *	1.4 (corrected)

*\* Indicates open space visitor parking also occurs outside designated trailheads, in neighborhoods, on public streets, adjacent schools and businesses and in undesignated parking areas.*

**Property Name:** Green highlight represents open space adjacent to Pike National Forest, where the Colorado Springs Park Property and parking areas are used for USFS trails and public access.

## OPEN SPACE PARKING ANALYSIS



Park Property	Size (approximate)	Designated Parking Spaces	Parking Ratio (stalls per 10 ac)
Blodgett OS	384 acres	116 (Phase 1) 246 (phase 3)	3.0 6.4
Bluestem Prairie OS	650 acres	15 spaces *	0.2
High Chaparral OS	54 acres	9 *	1.6
North Cheyenne Canon	1325 acres	398 *	3.0
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Stratton OS	318 acres	73 *	2.3
Ute Valley	538 acres (corrected)	77 *	1.4 (corrected)

\* Indicates open space visitor parking also occurs outside designated trailheads, in neighborhoods, on public streets, adjacent schools and businesses and in undesignated parking areas.

**Property Name:** Green highlight represents open space adjacent to Pike National Forest, where the Colorado Springs Park Property and parking areas are used for USFS trails and public access.

# OPEN SPACE PARKING ANALYSIS



## North Trailhead

-Image from 3/27/22

-30 cars on Woodmen

-11 cars in Trailhead



## North Trailhead

- Enlarge to 51 stalls total

- ALL Open Space parking within designated parking lot

-Improve safety on Woodmen Rd and bike lane

-ALL legal parking stalls behind nighttime closure gate

-Any additional parking would require public process

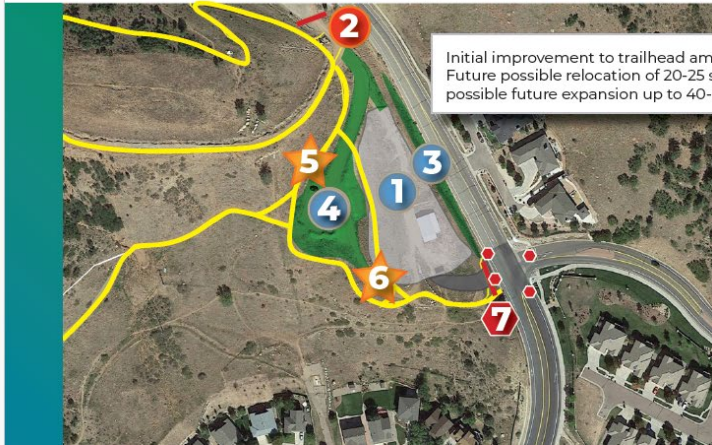


### North Trailhead

1. Potential future parking spaces. Includes Utilities access, landscape islands and possible retaining walls.
2. Utilities Access Gate
3. Trailhead Amenities: Restroom, Signage, Map
4. Nighttime Closure Gate

## Orchard Valley Trailhead

- As presented October 17, 2023



### Orchard Valley Trailhead

1. Future parking spaces. Includes landscape islands and landscape berm
2. Telecommunications Access Gate
3. Landscaped Berm
4. Current Parking and Future Restoration Area
5. Interim Trailhead Amenities
6. Trailhead Amenities: Restroom, Signage, Map
7. 4-way stop and Nighttime Closure Gate

## Addressed in Plan

### Orchard Valley Trailhead

- Went from 45 stalls to 15 stalls
- Eliminated the 4-way stop on Woodmen Road
- Adjusted Location of Trailhead Amenities (toilet)
- Relocation of a trailhead to lower level and access to Woodmen road would require an additional public process

## Orchard Valley Trailhead

- As Shown in Public Review Plan Jan 19, 2024



### Orchard Valley Trailhead

1. Existing Parking with up to 2 additional spaces
2. Nighttime Closure Gate
3. Telecommunications Access Gate
4. Trailhead Amenities: Restroom, Signage, Maps
5. Potential future trailhead area includes landscape islands and landscape berms - subject to additional public process
6. Potential Future Trailhead Driveway and Nighttime Closure Gate - subject to additional public process

## Toilet Placement

- Relocated the toilet location
- Necessary visitor amenity, alleviates other public health concerns



## Quarry Trailhead

- As presented Aug 22, 2023



### New Quarry Trailhead

1. New Trailhead with parking – up to 250 spaces
2. Location accesses new southern areas of BOS and possible future bike park.
3. Possible “pre-leash walk” dog run area.
4. Nighttime gate at Allegheny when BOS is closed.
5. Distance from Allegheny Drive may discourage nighttime nefarious activities.
6. Trailhead is removed from neighborhoods.
7. Possible use of existing building for regional trailhead/interpretive center or parks maintenance use or future bike park support.
8. Trail system connections needed.

## Addressed in Plan Orchard Valley Trailhead

- Went from 250 stalls to 180 stalls

- Phased implementation approach

- Start at 50, then increases based on indicators to 180

- Postponing consideration of Pre-hike Dog Run and Nature Based Playground

- Further expansion beyond 180 stalls would require an additional public process

## Orchard Valley Trailhead

- As Shown in Public Review Plan Jan 19, 2024



### Quarry Trailhead

1. Quarry Access Gate
2. Trailhead Amenities: Restroom, Signage, Maps
3. Limit of public vehicle gate
4. Initial Parking Area includes landscape islands
5. Potential Future Parking Expansion
6. Nighttime Closure Gate at Allegheny

## Concern/Feedback

### **Trails**

- Maintenance and safety concerns
- Keep trail difficulty
- Not enough hiking
- Too much bike influence



## Addressed in Plan

### **Management Related**

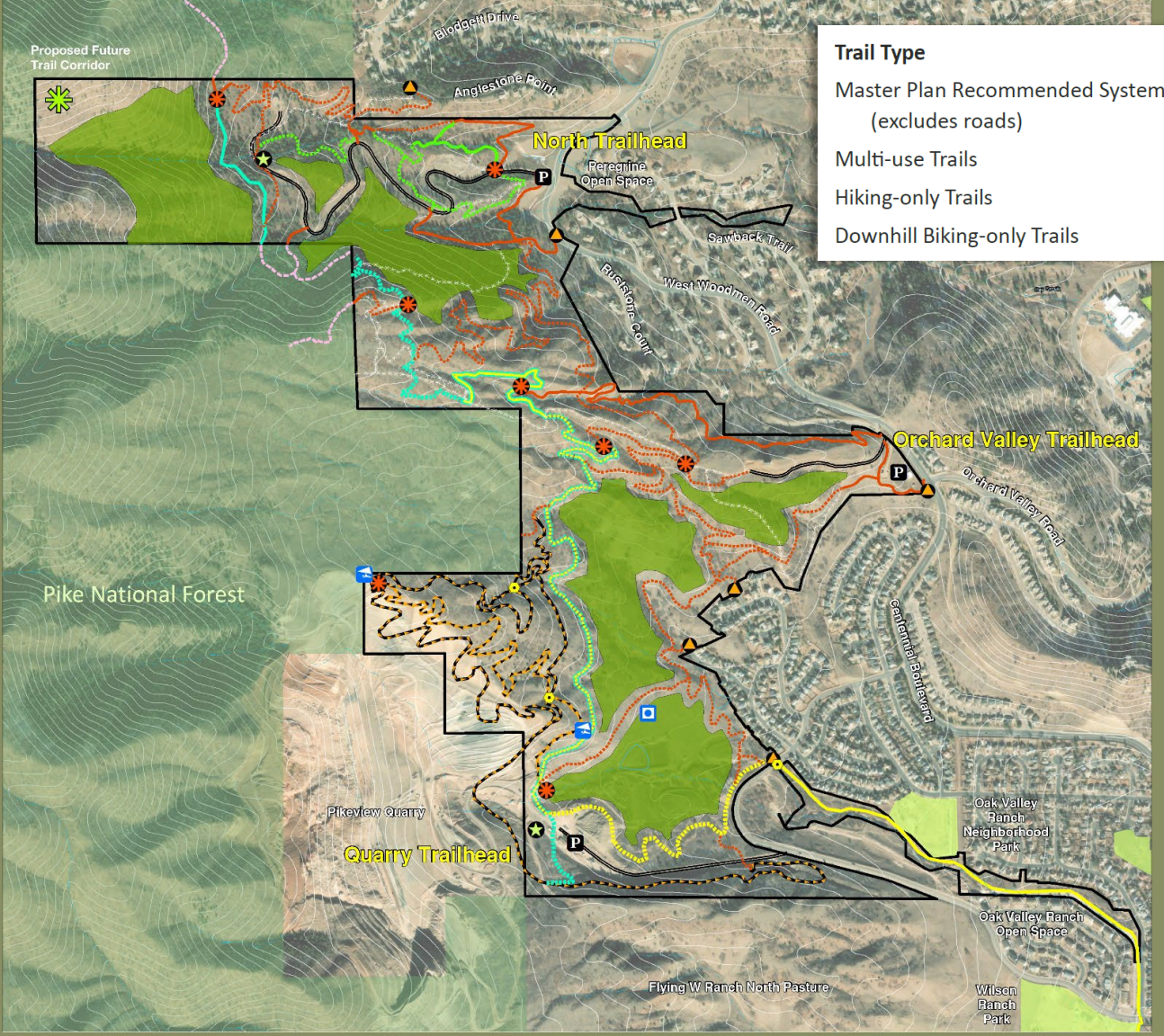
- Sustainable Master Planned trail system
- Balance Wildlife and resource conservation
- Improve user experience and safety, reduce maintenance costs/needs
- Adaptive management strategies to address changes, issues and use impacts

### **Site Improvements**

- Sustainable and resilient trail system professionally designed, built and managed
- Incorporate Single-Use Trails for experience and safety reasons (generated from public process)
- Incorporate "Difficult" rated trails
- Provide trail experiences for all levels and abilities



WHAT WE HEARD



Trail Type	Estimated Trail Mileage	Estimated Travel Time
Master Plan Recommended System Trails (excludes roads)	13.7 miles	
Multi-use Trails	9.9 miles	
Hiking-only Trails	1.1 miles	travel time at 3-4 miles/hour 22 to 16.5 minutes
Downhill Biking-only Trails	2.7 miles	travel time at 15-20 miles/hour 10.8 to 8.1 minutes

### Management Related

- Parks Department goal to provide non-motorized, multi-use trails for community



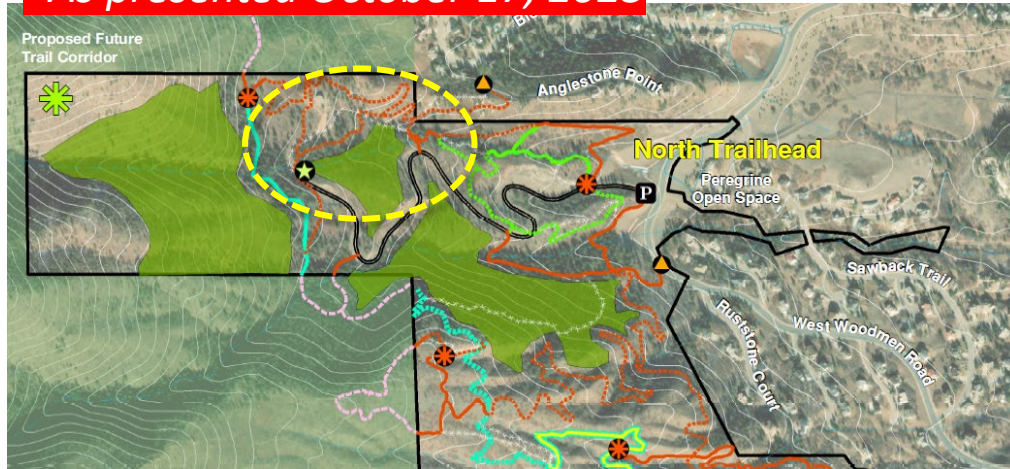
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## Hiking Only Trails

- As presented October 17, 2023

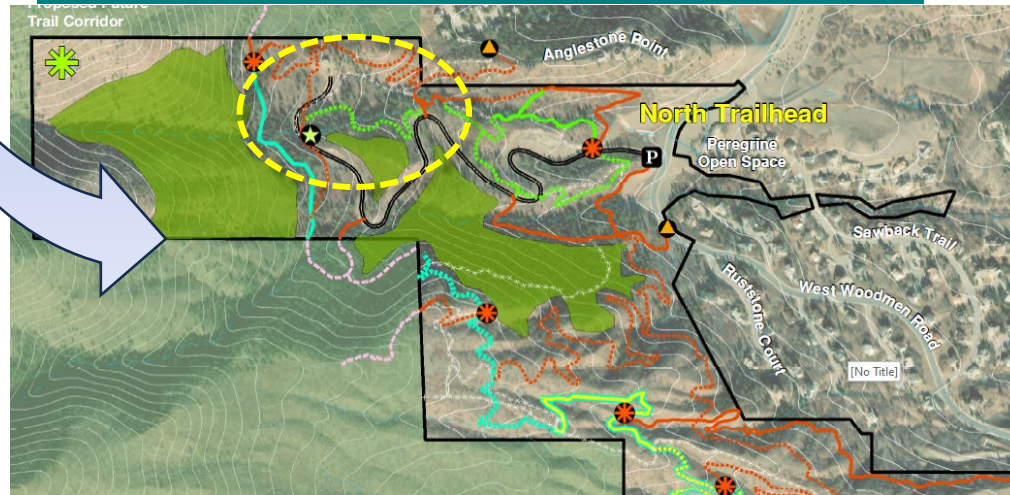


## Addressed in Plan Hiking Only Trails

- Increased Hiking Only Trails by 17% in north area
- Consideration of time spent on trail
- Multi-use with up-hill bike only trail
- Future opportunity to consider hiking only trail to Blodgett Peak with USFS NEPA Analysis

## Hiking Only Trails

- As Shown in Public Review Plan Jan 19, 2024



## Bike Only Trails

- Bike-only trails seek to reduce trail user conflict on multi use trails, addressing major concern we heard
- Strong support from community for bike only trails

WHAT WE HEARD

## Concern/Feedback

### **Wildlife**

- Keep undeveloped
- Impacts to Wildlife with more use
- More studies needed before moving forward

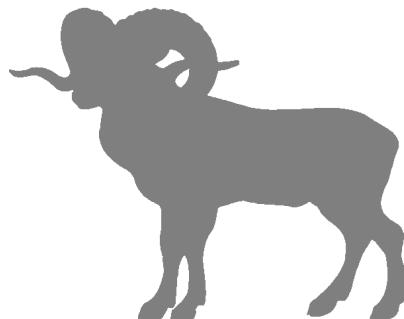
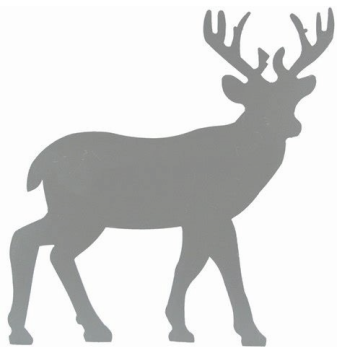


## Addressed in Plan **Management Related**

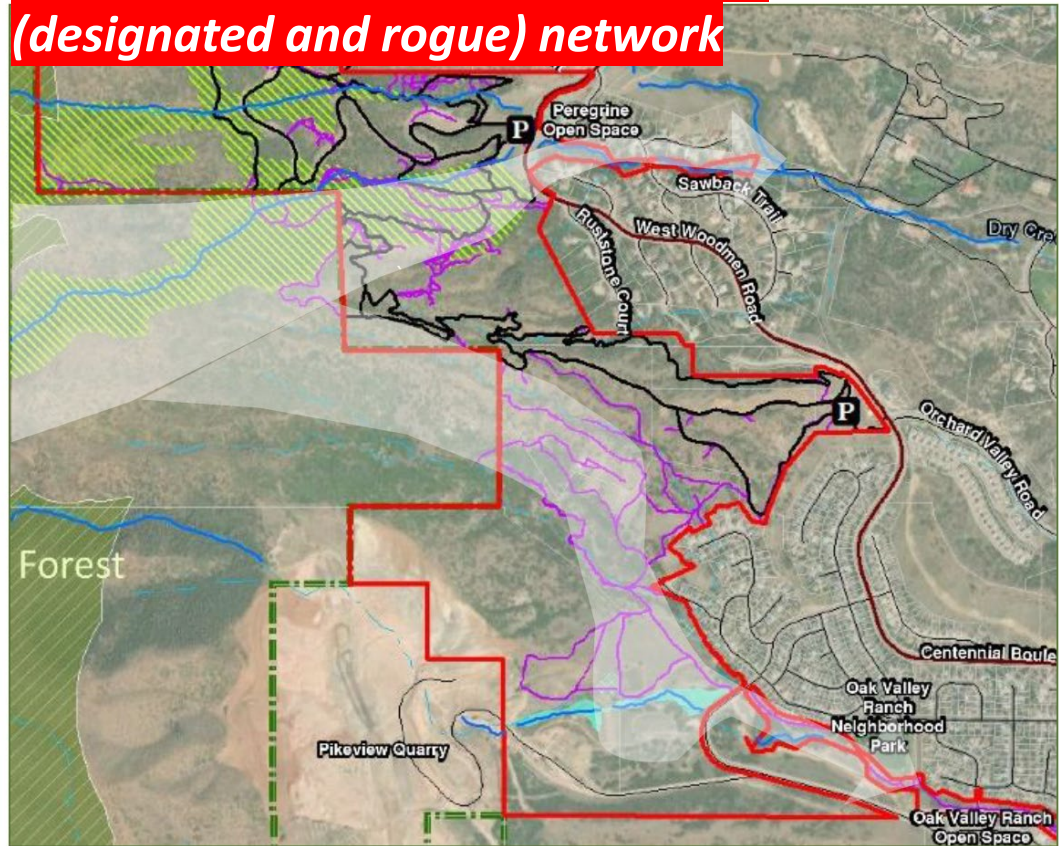
- Plan reflects community's strong commitment to habitat protection
- Continue and enhance monitoring and survey program
- Adaptive management strategies
- If impacts arise, implement:
  - Seasonal trail closures
  - Restricting dog use from open space
  - Closing trails, limiting public access

### **Site Improvements**

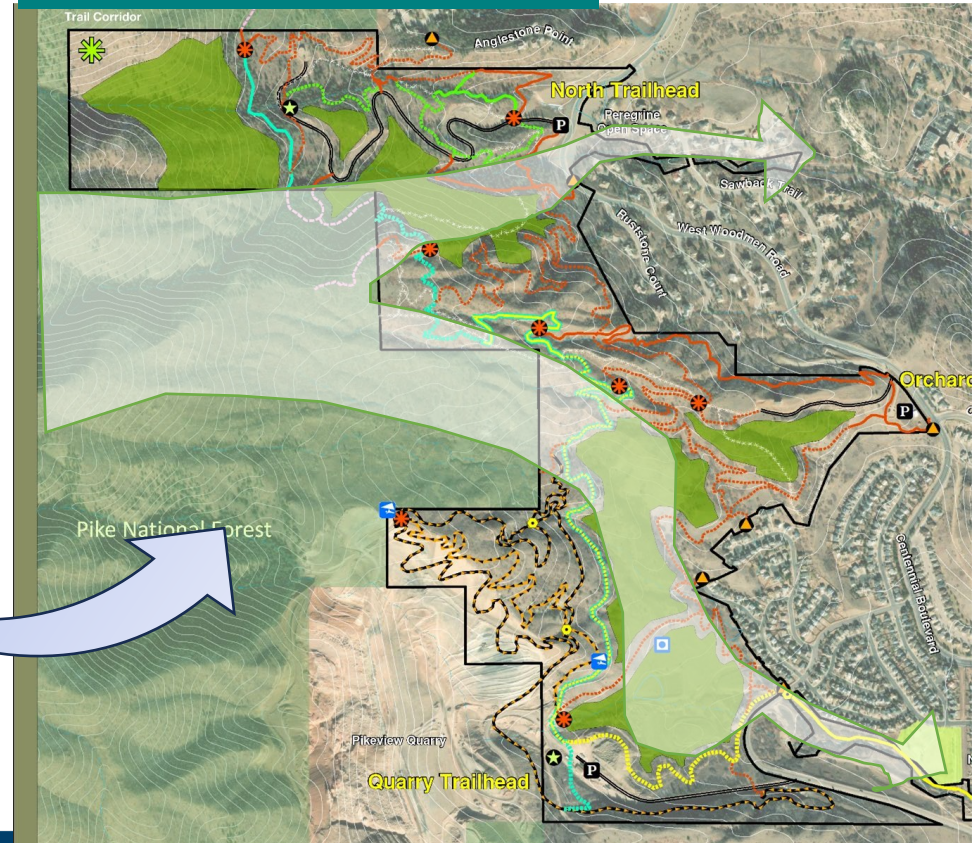
- Integrate two wildlife corridors and expanded/enhanced habitat areas
- Restore open space / habitat areas
- Establish a sustainable trail system
- Reduced Master Plan Trails plan by 1.5%
- Closure of 11.8 miles of unsustainable trails (existing and rogue). Overall reduction of trails by 22.5%



# Wildlife Corridor and existing trail (designated and rogue) network



# Wildlife Corridor and Proposed Master Plan Trail Network





# Next Steps

Blodgett Open Space Master and Management Plan



# NEXT STEPS



[Coloradosprings.gov/BlodgettMasterPlan](https://coloradosprings.gov/BlodgettMasterPlan)

## Online comment card

- Open until Feb 18, 2024

## Additional Public Meetings

### TOPS Working Committee

- March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024,
- and April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024 - Public Comment Opportunity

### Parks Advisory Board Presentation

- March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024

### Parks Advisory Board Final Approval

- April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024
- Public Comment Opportunity

## Upcoming Public Engagement

The screenshot shows the website for the Blodgett Master Plan. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'Home' and 'Stay Informed' (with an 'In Progress' indicator). Below this is a bell icon for notifications. A message from the city thanks the community for their participation and mentions that the Public Review Plan is now available, encouraging the public to fill out an online comment card. The 'Contact' section lists David Deitemeyer, PLA, ASLA, Senior Landscape Architect, with his email address. The 'Important Dates' section lists the Master and Management Plan Process Project Schedule (Spring 2023 - Spring 2024) and Plan Implementation (As project funds are available). The 'Public Engagement Opportunities' section is highlighted with a green bar and contains a 'TAKE THE SURVEY' button. Below this, there are sections for 'Upcoming opportunities', 'Public Review Plan' (with links to the plan and appendix), 'Blodgett Neighborhood Focus Meeting' (with date, time, and location), and 'Previous Engagement' (with materials from a community work session).





# Thank You!

Blodgett Open Space Master and Management Plan

