

# HINSDALE COUNTY



# RECREATION PLAN

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# 2016

*Prepared For the Rio Grande Watershed Emergency Action Coordination and Lake City/Hinsdale County*

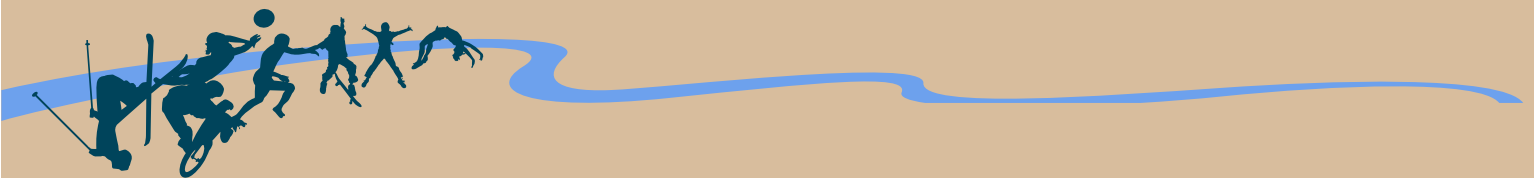


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# PURPOSE OF OUTDOOR RECREATION



## Purpose

The purpose of this master plan is to improve or increase outdoor recreation opportunities over the next 10 years. This master plan can offer Hinsdale County tools and strategies for enhancing the quality of recreation for local residents and visitors and enticing more tourism. This master plan can give direction about what types of recreation opportunities are available and where communities can build and facilitate recreation opportunities.

Hinsdale County's the community of Lake City. Other than Lake City, Hinsdale County contains mostly public lands and rural housing spread over 1,100 square miles. In addition it is one of the most rural counties in the state of Colorado.

Hinsdale County has grown by 1% each year with a 13% average annual income increase (LCDIRT Economic Impact NCA Study) and has some of the best recreation opportunities in the State of Colorado. Travel and visitation to Colorado has increased from 2012 to 2014 and those visitors were visiting national and state parks, hiking/backpacking, skiing, camping, fishing, biking, and mountain climbing. Hinsdale County provides all of these activities and is in a prime location to facilitate or further grow these popular trends. Having a plan will help to create, maintain, improve, and manage the high quality recreation Hinsdale County is known for. In addition, a good recreation plan will help bring community members together to focus on common goals for development, sustainability, and improvements. This plan will look at where the community is today, a vision for where it wants to be tomorrow, and determine how to move forward to a desired future. Additionally, this recreation plan will explore the ways that Hinsdale County can facilitate play, increase community wellness through exercise, explore and enjoy the outdoors, increase learning and awareness of cultural and historical landscapes, and provide economic benefit to Hinsdale County.



Photo Courtesy Kelly Ortiz

## Planning

Recreation planning for Hinsdale County will provide and promote diverse recreation opportunities, create community wellness, enjoyable play, and exploration and enjoyment of the outdoors. This plan will include all aspects of recreation including structured play (sports fields), city parks, such as Memorial Park and Town Park, the 3rd Street Garden, the Lake City Community School playground and gymnasium, recreation complexes such as the Armory/Fitness Center, local trails, ice climbing areas, lakes, rivers, the Alpine Loop, interpretation, fishing, boating, rafting, kayaking, visitors centers, and chambers of commerce, guided tours and other Hinsdale County events.

This master plan will also address other plans that are currently being used to study tourism trends, such as the Hinsdale Tourist Intercept Study, the Economic Impact Study, The Bottom Up Plan, Business and Resident Surveys, Community Plans, the Mainstreet Plan, and the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) Town Plan. This plan will also address the need for funding sources, site plans and marketing.

## Need For Recreation Planning

This section describes the master planning process and summarizes what Hinsdale County residents identified as important recreation features and needs. This plan will take those features and needs and prioritize them.

## The Challenges of Connecting More People To The Outdoors

This part of the plan addresses the challenges communities face in planning and implementing outdoor recreation with visitor needs and wants and the resources and funding available.

In this chapter we will discuss the challenge of providing high quality outdoor experiences, without compromising the natural or visual integrity of the natural resource that makes these experiences so special.

## The Benefits of Connecting More People To The Outdoors

This portion will address the known benefits such as the health and well-being of increased physical activity and being in the outdoors.

## Hinsdale County's Priorities and Implementation

Hinsdale County has hosted many public meetings to assess the availability, initiatives, funding, and demands on recreation resources in order to determine recreation priorities. This plan will address the resources available to host recreation activities and include a list of potential projects and ideas for implementation.

## Communication and Media

Hinsdale County is not unlike a lot of mountain communities in Colorado where electronic communication is not always available due to mountainous terrain and sporadic communications coverage. Given the demographics of new generation of visitors, it is important to talk about how these new recreationists prefer to gather information, and learn about recreation opportunities. There are many possibilities to provide outreach to visitors and this includes websites, social media, event blogs, and links to other opportunities in Colorado. A list of these are available in this chapter.

## The Master Plan's Target Audience

This plan will be dynamic in nature and will be able to accommodate Hinsdale County's growing needs, demographic changes, and changes to the resources. This plan will help Hinsdale County, it's residents and a growing number of seasonal residents to make the most of their recreational opportunities, while providing the most economic benefit without undermining the natural resources that make this place special.



Photo Courtesy Kelly Ortiz

## Community Recreation Committee

The Community Recreation Committee (CRC) has initiated this project and includes the Rio Grande Watershed Emergency Action Coordination Team (RWEACT), the Community Recreation Committee initiatives, as well as local business, municipalities, and chambers of commerce. Previous plans for Hinsdale County have been completed such as the Hinsdale Community Plan, the Lake City DIRT Plan, the Bottom Up Economic Development Goals and Strategies, and the Hardrock Revision Summary to explore economic development strategies.

Currently, Hinsdale County and Lake City has some of the best recreation opportunities and considered one of



the best places to live in Colorado.<sup>1</sup> Lake City's unemployment rate is 3.3% which is below Colorado's average of 4.4%. The median household income is \$51,058 and the per capita income is \$35,583.00. The future job growth for Lake City is predicated to exceed 34.60% in the future.<sup>2</sup> These elements provide a favorable environment for both recreation and economic growth in Hinsdale County. However, this growth needs to be managed in a way that provides a benefit for the local residents, community, visitors and natural resources. To do this, recreation planning, zoning, economics and natural resource planning have to work together. Good planning for Lake City should include all of these elements and a compilation of recreation strategies and ideas to keep up with a dynamic and changing client base.



Photo Courtesy Lakecityswitchbacks.com

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1 Data from [www.bestplaces.net](http://www.bestplaces.net)  
2 Data from [www.ycharts.com](http://www.ycharts.com)



# OUTDOOR RECREATION PATTERNS & NEEDS





## Goals of Community Recreation Planning

The goals and objectives of recreation planning will be to:

- Promote and improve recreation opportunities in Lake City and surrounding Hinsdale County while providing for the needs of the local community members and visiting public
- Provide an open forum for the exchange of ideas and address the needs of the local community members as well as the visiting public
- Continue to improve all aspects of the recreation plan
- Provide education and public outreach for recreation
- Promote protection, conservation and wise use of the natural resources
- Increase partnerships with public land agencies, private corporations, and others
- Increase economic benefits
- Ensure there is adequate access to trails and recreational amenities
- Promote recreational opportunities through marketing tools
- Encourage outdoor programs to get youth involved in recreation opportunities
- Implement recommendations for recreation development identified by the plan and Community Recreation Committee
- Consider the economic benefit to Hinsdale County when planning activities
- Welcome the involvement of residents, business owners, second home owners, and visitors

## Hinsdale County Recreation Needs

In October of 2013, the Hinsdale County Community Recreation Committee conducted an outreach through public meetings and presentations to gather community input on recreation needs, potential recreation projects, grant writing purposes, and barriers to quality recreation in Lake City and surrounding Hinsdale County. Through this extensive process, Hinsdale County Community Recreation Committee collected ideas for improving and expanding recreational opportunities, and increased awareness for undeveloped opportunities. They provided recommendations to the three elected boards (Town of Lake City, Hinsdale County and the Lake City School Board). These meetings were held in Lake City with the local residents. The recreation committee met 24 times in an 18 month period to help identify a list of priority projects, needs and important recreation features that will help produce an outstanding recreation experience for both residents and visitors. These are identified in order of importance:

- Armory
- Proposed Community Gym
- Pavilion at Memorial Park
- Improved Ski Hill
- Recreation Plan

Additionally, the Ute Ulay, Lake San Cristobal, trails, and other areas were also identified. These will be included as part of the overall recreation plan.

The Hinsdale County Recreation Committee completed the Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) Recreation Survey in 2013 that specifically addressed the needs for recreation improvements and support facilities to improve the recreation experience for local residents.

A separate river survey was completed by the Lake Fork Conservation District. This survey specifically address fishing, habitat and stream improvements, and recreational opportunities for Henson Creek.

In addition recreation surveys were completed during 2015 and the winter of 2016 as part of this Recreation Plan. Surveys were conducted on an individual basis in order to gather more information about the satisfaction



of recreation opportunities in and around Lake City and all of Hinsdale County, the un-met needs, and future potential recreation opportunities. These surveys were completed along the Silver Thread Scenic Byway at trailheads such as North Clear Creek Falls and interpretive sites such as Windy Point. Other surveys were completed at Continental Reservoir, the Alpine Loop, dispersed camping areas throughout Hinsdale County, Lake City Town Park, local business, phone interviews, and other locations within Lake City. Members of the Town of Lake City Trustees, Hinsdale County Commissioners, Lake City DIRT Board, Lake City Community School Board, Lake Fork Valley Conservancy Board of Directors, Chamber of Commerce, Alpine Rangers, and the Hinsdale County Trails Commission were surveyed to find out what their satisfaction was with the current recreation direction, needs, and missed opportunities. Finally, a focus group of children attending the Lake City Elementary, Middle and High School were surveyed asking them what their preferences were for recreation in their local community. These responses were compiled and documented in this plan along with previous survey information. Survey findings from the participants are summarized and helped to determine focus areas for the Hinsdale County Recreation Plan.

## Commonly Expressed Un-met Recreation Needs

### Visitor Recreation Surveys

A year round survey was conducted beginning in 2015 through 2016 that captured resident and visitor opinions while they were participating in different seasonal recreation activities from fly fishing, hiking, driving for pleasure and sightseeing, riding OHV's, biking, hunting, ice climbing, x-country skiing, and downhill skiing. The majority constituents that were surveyed as part of this plan reside in Colorado, however, some constituents surveyed reside in Texas, California, Oklahoma, and Iowa as well as international visitors. The survey respondents crossed all age groups from age 5 to 85 years. In the survey responses, the following needs and concerns were expressed by multiple groups or individuals:

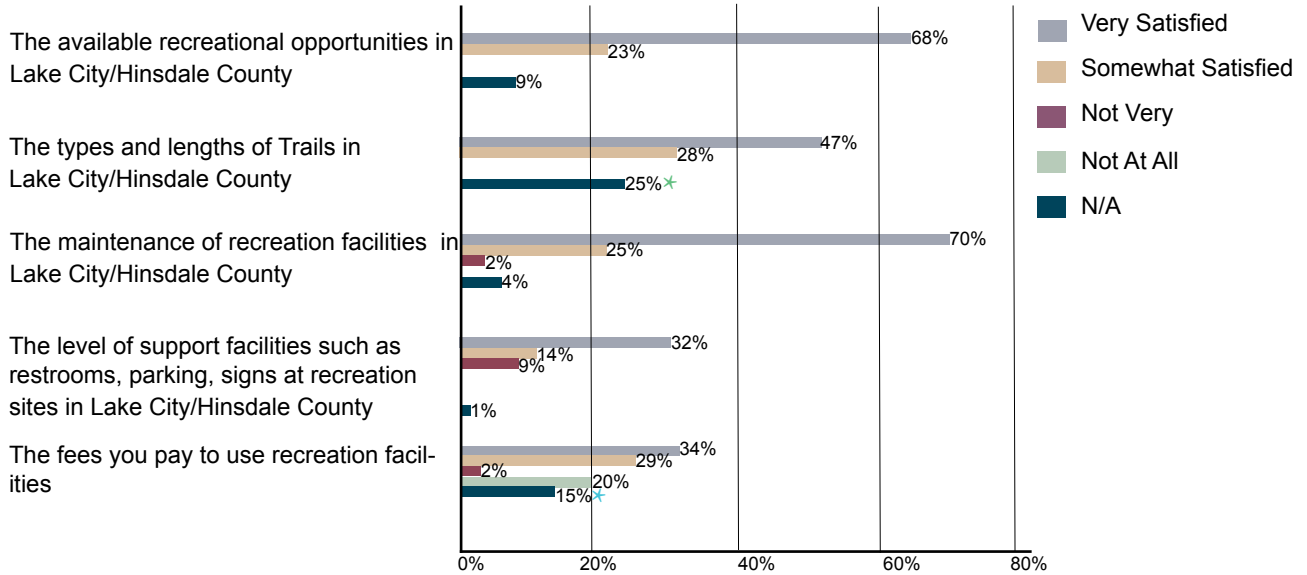
- Accessible Trails and Facilities
- More Diverse Trails
- Public Pool
- Non-motorized Trail Connections
- Community Center with Available Recreation Opportunities
- More Festivals/Tours-(Turning One Day Events into Two Day Events)
- Ski Area improvements
- Arts & Crafts and Other Fairs
- More Lodging and Food Choices (Extended Seasons)
- An OHV Loop Through Town That Connects The Alpine Loop
- A Facility For School Children To Have/Host Games
- Kayak and Paddleboard Rentals at Lake San Cristobal
- To Change Turning Restrictions in Downtown Lake City (Allowing OHV's)
- Need For Campgrounds
- Outdoor Education Activities
- Adequate Parking at Trailheads
- Improved Information About Things To Do in Lake City and Surrounding Hinsdale County
- Bathroom at Ice Climbing Area
- Ute Ulay and Heritage Tourism





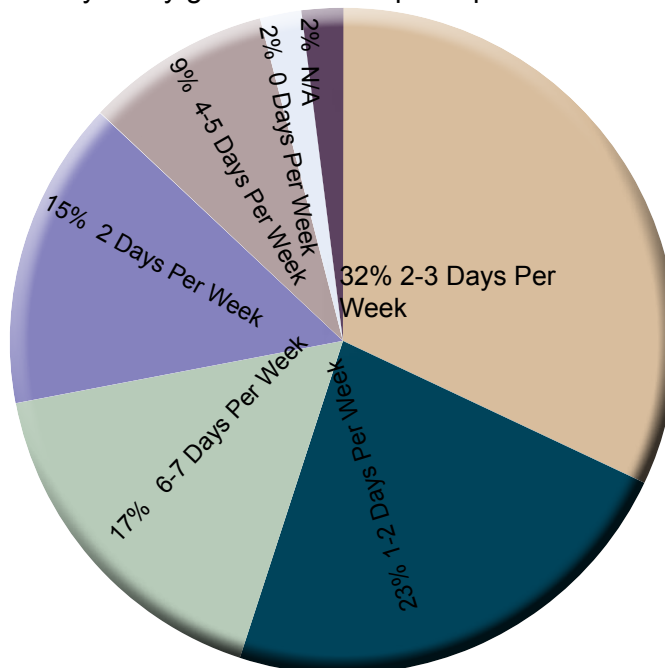
## Level of Satisfaction with Current Recreation Opportunities and Facilities

How satisfied are you with the following:



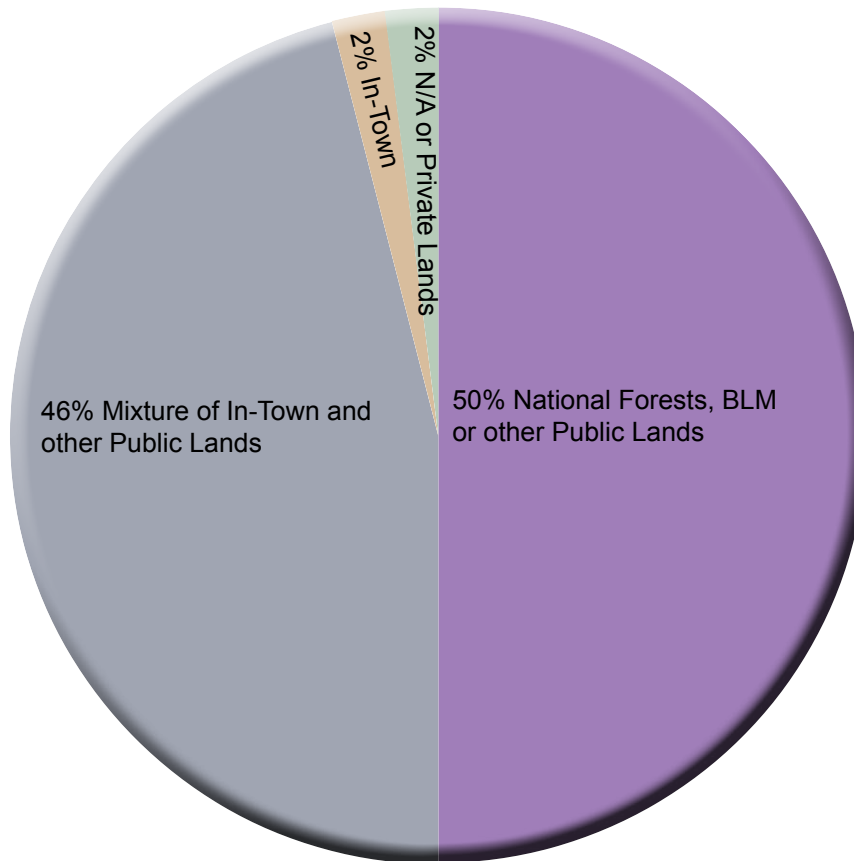
## Frequency and Types of Recreation Participation

The survey questions asked how often they participated in recreation activities. Many of the visitors and residents of Lake City said that they had times during vacations that they were participating in recreation activities everyday for 2 weeks. This was the case for many retired visitors, however in general most of the constituents interviewed engaged in recreation activities less frequently than this on a weekly basis. The 2% of visitors represented under N/A said they rarely get outside and participate in recreation activities.



\* A number of visitors were passing through and did not experience any trails or did not hike on any of Hinsdale County trails.  
 \* A number of visitors did not have to pay fees so had no comment on this question.

Participants in the survey were asked what location they preferred when engaging in recreation activities in Hinsdale County. A majority of the respondents (50%) preferred remote areas such as National Forests and other public lands. 46% of the respondents preferred a mixture of in town activities and remote public lands depending upon the activity. A small portion (2%) preferred only activities that take place in town and 2% preferred private lands.



Participants preferring remote activities, were often found at these locations. However, many were also interviewed in local parks within the city limits of Lake City. Many of the respondents were participating at local parks due to time constraints and the time of day the interview was conducted but indicated that on the weekends, their preference was to “get away” and get into nature to recuperate.

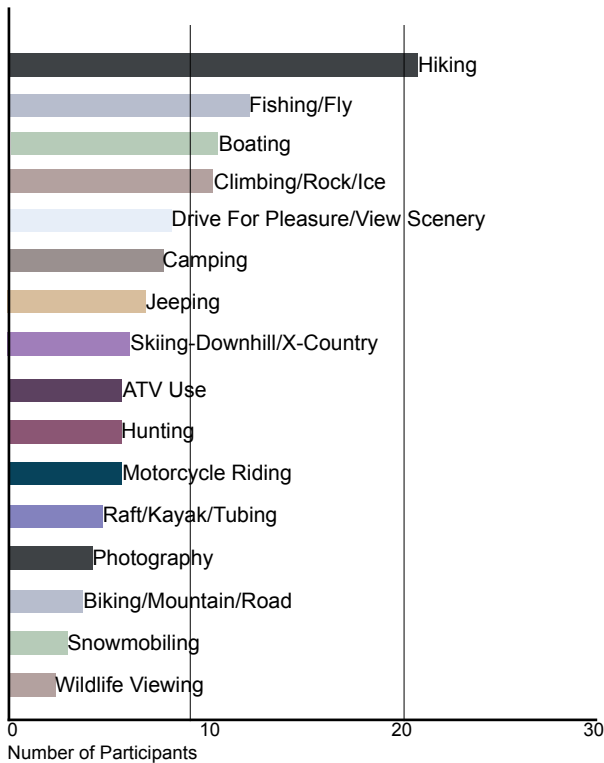
Of those who respondents that preferred in-town recreation opportunities, they indicated that they would like to see more opportunities in town for kids. When school children (K through 12th graders) were interviewed, they also indicated an interest in activities such as aquariums, zoos, a swimming pool, indoor climbing walls, indoor ice skating and roller skating, running tracks, trampoline gyms, skate park expansion, water parks, and other events that could be located in town. The activities that they identified as outdoor activities and away from town were ropes and zip-line courses, horse-back riding opportunities, rafting opportunities, sledding, cliff diving, and giant slides.





## Most Popular Recreation Activities

The constituents involved with the recreation survey participated in many different activities. Some of these activities were secondary to the primary activity such as OHV use being secondary to hunting. The most popular activities identified were hiking, fishing, boating, climbing, and driving for pleasure. Other popular activities are driving for pleasure, camping, and jeeping. However, fly fishing, water sports, and wildlife viewing were also popular.



It is important to note that with these activities, most constituents identified the need for additional support services to accompany their primary recreation activity. The following items were considered important parts of the recreation experience:

- Lodging
- Restaurants (both variety and availability)
- Shopping Opportunities

Many of the respondents indicated the importance of these facilities being open during the shoulder seasons of recreational activities as well as during the

peak times of activities. This is especially true during the hunting seasons and activities that take place during the winter season when most lodging and food services have closed. In the absence of support facilities, many visitors need to stay out of town or bring their own supplies due to the limited availability of supplies.

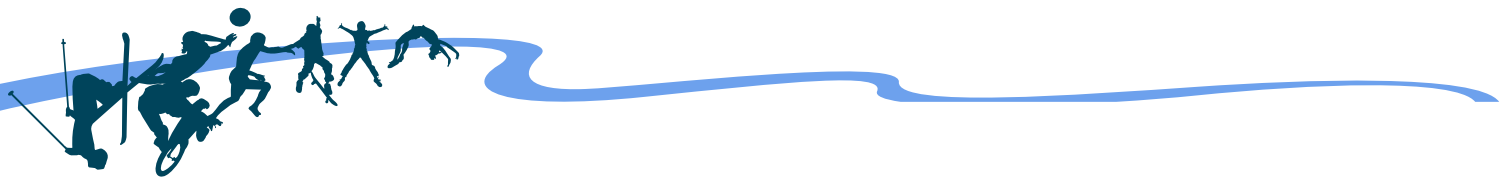
Constituents were asked if there would be any reason that they would not participate on activities on public lands. Most of the people surveyed felt that public lands and open space was important to their quality recreation experience as it supplied the beautiful backdrop to diverse recreation opportunities. Some respondents indicated that if public lands were located to far away for a short getaways, they may opt out of visiting public lands. Some respondents indicated that large crowds or fees would deter them from participating in recreation activities on public lands. Many people surveyed felt that public lands should offer free access because the management of these areas are paid for by tax dollars. About 25% of people surveyed felt that they would not have a problem paying fees for services on public land if the money went toward a good cause, such as keeping the site clean or managing the resource.

### Quotes From The Survey About Trails

"We've gotten lost on jeep trails. It would be nice to know if the trail loops or is heading toward a town and how long it will take to get there."

"It would be nice to be able to complete the Alpine Loop and get back to camp. This would mean driving my ATV through town. But I would have to break the law."

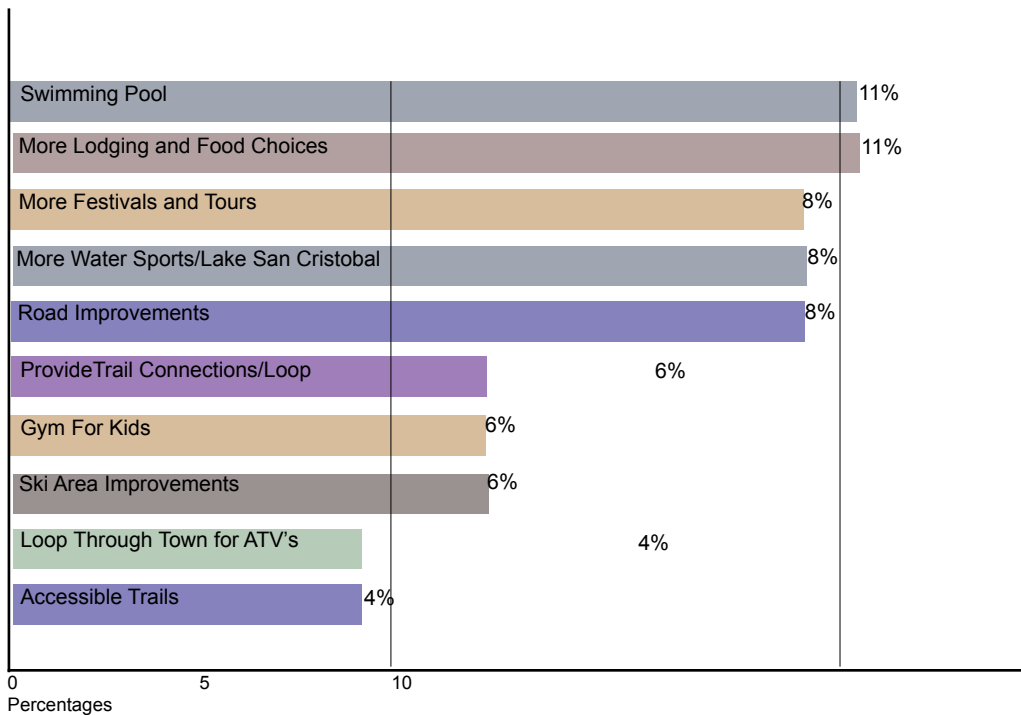
"Parking at the trailheads can be a pain unless you get there early enough."



## Demand for Additional Recreation Opportunities

The constituents were then asked to select what activities they'd like to have available to them while visiting Lake City and Hinsdale County. Many of the survey respondents expressed the need for available maps that showed the connections to all the Scenic Byways in the area and the special things to see and do highlighted at locations along the Byways and on maps. Some visitors felt that Hinsdale County currently provided a good mix of recreation opportunities. One visitor felt that there was a need to provide more sport climbing, rafting and biking opportunities. In addition, this respondent indicated that they did not know where to find any additional information regarding these other opportunities. They guessed that the visitor center or chamber of commerce may have the information but were unsure. Some visitors wanted more trails that provide diverse opportunities. Visitors also wanted the option for kayak and paddleboard rentals at Lake San Cristobal.

Other visitors indicated that they felt it was most important was to provide loop trails and allow OHV's access through town. For visitors that use OHV's to drive for pleasure or view scenery, they primarily rely on motorized trails. They indicated that they cannot complete the Alpine Loop because there is no way to drive through town to return to camp (unless they break the law). Some respondents indicated that they didn't always know everything about an area they visit and rely heavily on literature in hotels and chambers of commerce and they would like to see some promotional material that lists the "Top 10 Things To Do in Lake City". Some respondents replied that they love the atmosphere of Lake City and Hinsdale County and would like it to keep the small town feel with no changes. These particular respondents noted that they did not care for the larger recreation communities such as Vail or other towns along the I-70 corridor. Local constituents (residents of Lake City) indicated that a public pool would provide a good source of year round recreation and improve the local community wellness. In addition, local respondents felt that any recreation developments that can engage kids would be a priority. The following is a list of the activities that constituents would like to see available rated in order of the most requested recreation opportunities:



Other requests include better information for visitors, affordable housing, and economic growth for Lake City.

## Barriers To Recreation

During interviews, constituents identified the obstacles that may be preventing residents of Hinsdale County and visitors from participating in all of the available recreation opportunities. Many visitors did not know about all of the opportunities or recreational resources Hinsdale County has to offer. Many of the visitors would have liked to know more about what to do so that they could have participated in some of these activities.

### Availability of Information

Many visitors interviewed rely on the internet to find the information about a location they are visiting. Others used guide books and National Geographic Maps. However, once they arrived at Hinsdale County and Lake City they found that the information about where to go and what to do was limited. Many visitors say they rely on brochures and pamphlets at hotels, bed and breakfasts, and lodges. However, they did not find much information. Other visitors indicated a need for “one stop shopping” in terms of what to do while visiting Hinsdale County. Some visitors wanted more information regarding camping, some were looking for ideas on where to do short hikes that were not strenuous, and others were looking for things to do for seniors. One group of respondents said they would like to see a map of all the scenic byways in the areas and what to do on each of them as well as a list of the accessible trails.

### Signage

Visitors who were either visiting for the first time or were returning visitors indicated that they felt signage could be better. One group of survey respondents did not know that Wupperman Campground existed as they did not see the sign. However, they were able to find it during the second visit. They felt better signage at Lake San Cristobal would help visitors better identify the recreation opportunities. Additionally, the survey respondents asked where they could rent kayaks or paddleboards for this area as they wanted this opportunity in the future.

### Available Websites

The internet provided visitors some information about activities in Lake City, however, the respondents felt that they simply did not know where to go to participate in activities. Although they indicated that they

were finding things to do on their own while exploring, they felt that there was more that they hadn't discovered. One visitor at North Clear Creek Falls indicated that they had found some information on the Lake City Website that indicated where to go to see waterfalls, but they would have liked more information on this subject as well as others.

### Loop Trails and Connectivity

One item that many respondents mentioned during interviews was the need to be able to ride the Alpine Loop in its entirety on an OHV. The Alpine Loop road begins and ends in Lake City, however, on opposite ends of town. Currently there is no way for visitors riding their OHV's to be able to get back to camp without backtracking the entire Alpine Loop or hiring a service to transport their OHV back to camp. Many visitors commented that have to turn around at a half way point, to be able to return to their camping location. Many of these visitors indicated that they would like to be able to take advantage of Lake City's resources such as restaurants while traveling on the loop tour but are unable to do this. Other respondents also indicated the need for loop trails from town, by biking and hiking. These same respondents indicated a need for shorter loop trails and hikes that were not necessarily on the National Forests that required hours of hiking. Additionally, these same visitors wanted some options for accessible trails that provided small excursions longer than just a few hundred feet of trail.

### Quotes From The Survey About Signage

“Signage can be better. We didn't even know that Wupperman Campground existed when we first came here because it's not labeled on the sign.”



### Access for Americans with Disabilities In Lake City

Many respondents identified the need to accommodate visitors and residents with impairments by providing trails, facilities, as well as activities. This is also something that downtown businesses are currently attempting to address. Some sidewalks are not fully accessible (such as the wooden boardwalks in front of businesses). However, other sidewalks and trails are accessible. The Armory is moving toward providing for Americans with Disabilities (ADA) and is under construction. The Courthouse is not ADA, however, this is being worked on but has been met with difficulty due to the attempt at preserving the historic features of the building. Paying for ADA modifications can be expensive and the City is currently working on funding measures. In an attempt to address accessibility throughout the City, an accessible fishing pier was installed at Memorial Park, accessible restrooms are planned for installation and portions of the Henson Creek Trail were made accessible.

### Availability of Goods and Services in Lake City

Visitors on the shoulder seasons (especially in the fall) felt that there needed to be more services available to them after October and during hunting seasons. They indicated that most restaurants were not open and some respondents wanted more choices in accommodations as they were currently staying out of town. Many respondents to the survey indicated that when they come to Hinsdale County during the hunting season, they bring everything they need, because they know there are limited options for getting food or supplies.

### Adequate Parking at Locations In Town and at Trailheads.

Visitors and residents identified that parking during big events can be an issue. Trailhead parking is a problem during high season when a lot of visitors are using trailheads. Many respondents commented that they had to secure a parking spot early in the morning in order to be able to hike at many trailheads. This is especially true at trailheads that access peaks. Both residents and visitors alike responded that they understand that expanded parking in narrow corridors is challenging for safety reasons (such as fast moving vehicles along the Alpine Loop and not enough

room to pull off the road due to steep slopes). Respondents would like to see more parking available, especially if the aim of Lake City is to increase tourism. Well planned and adequate parking can make an experience safer and more enjoyable for visitors.

### Satisfaction With Recreation Opportunities and Facilities

Visitors and locals were asked if there was adequate information identifying where recreation opportunities were located.



Some of the respondents to the survey who answered yes to this question felt that the information was adequate, however the information was not excellent. And a few people responded that they answered yes but “for the most part”. Of the 21% who answered “no” they felt that visitors could only find the information if they knew where to look. Another respondent felt there was no information on where to camp and others responded that the information wasn’t easy to find.

Is there adequate information providing the types of trails and difficulty?



Is there adequate information about rules and regulations?



Many who answered “no” to this survey question, felt that the rules and regulations are not posted in all areas. Many who answered “yes” felt rules were posted everywhere.



Respondents were asked if there was adequate interpretive information. Of those visitors and residents that responded with “yes” indicated that they love the interpretation about the history of the area and find it interesting and informative.



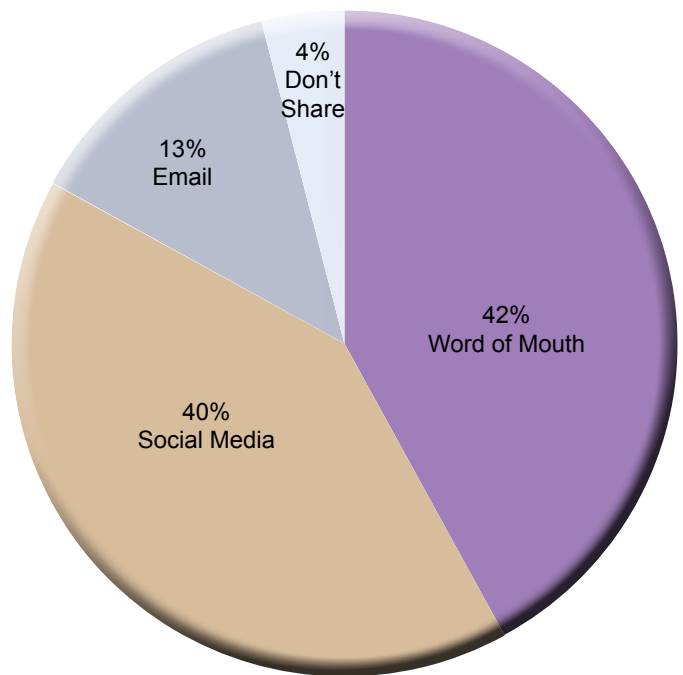
### The Power of Social Media

Many of the visitors and residents reported using mostly social media to talk about their experiences while vacationing. However, word of mouth is still used as well as email and flicker for photos. Most visitors indicated that Facebook was their primary social media choice for sharing vacation experiences.

In the past marketing has focused on radio, tv, direct mail, outdoor advertising, newsletters, newspapers, and magazines to attract visitors to goods and services. While these are all valid communication tools, social media is one of the faster growing ways to connect with people and share information about exciting recreation activities. There are hundreds of social media platforms and it provides a variety of features (such as ways to update and share information, post photos, videos, and discussions). The four biggest social media platforms are Facebook (more than 800 million users), Twitter (more than 100 million users), Youtube (streaming over 4 billion online videos a day)

and LinkedIn (with over 64 million users). However, agencies, municipalities, and organizations have a difficult time keeping up and lack the ability to provide all the amenities that social media provide. In addition, social media tools change frequently and the job of keeping up can be challenging. Even maintaining a website and continual updates can take work. Being able to adapt to a changing climate of social networking, providing interactive tools that help people get out and participate will be key in attracting people (especially a younger generation of participants) to Lake City and it’s surrounding recreation opportunities.

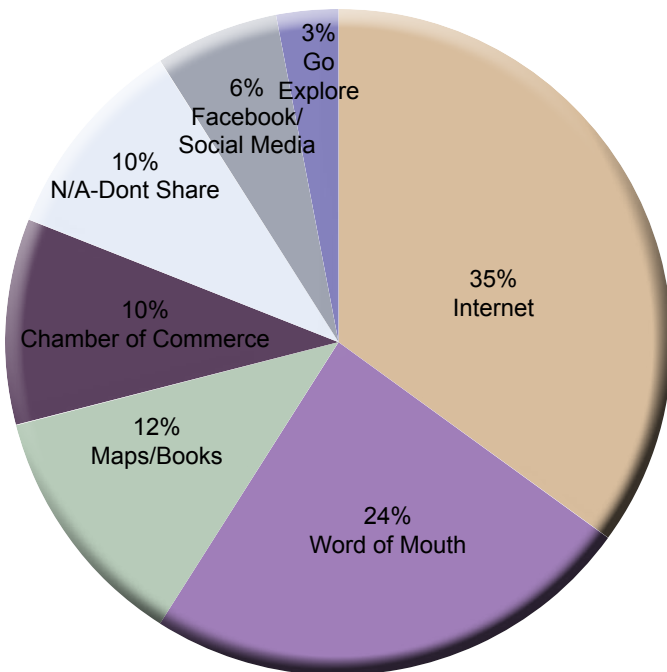
What media do you use to share information about your recreation experiences?



Social media is a powerful marketing tool, promotes growth, and creates opportunities for potential customers to discover your local areas goods and services. Municipalities, and parks and recreation can benefit greatly from its use. Communicating the most up to date information is vital to a generation of youth who have grown up with a computer readily accessible and cell phones that contain access to all the information on a computer. They will expect municipalities, government agencies and recreation providers to be responsive and ready for them.



Where do you go to get information about the available recreation activities?



### How To Benefit

Social media has taken over and municipalities can use this to their advantage. They can use social media to promote programs and services, facilities, events and encourage outdoor participation.

### Coupon Explosion

There are opportunities to provide coupons and memberships for activities, such as Groupon and Living-social. These websites have exploded in popularity and offer goods and services. They can be useful to get visitors interested in activities. There are opportunities for discounts for certain days to particular limits can help boost registration at events and activities.

### Managing Your Reputation

There are literally millions of people on the internet talking about everything and every person has a voice. They will talk about your community and organization, sometimes good and sometimes bad. There are ways to find out what people are saying about your organization. Google alerts, Twitter saved searches, and Socialmention are just a few ways to track how people feel about the goods and services you provide. This also provides an opportunity to get feedback on how you are doing.

### Social Media as a Location Based Marketing Tool

This social media tool can be used to provide deals, promotions, coupons and discounts to specials to customers in real time on mobile devices. This is usually provided by marketing platforms such as Foursquare, Gowalla, and Yelp. These services allow visitors to “check-in” to a physical location (park, restaurant, or recreation area). This rewards customers and provides enough value (discounts) for customers so that they will share their data with them.

### Social Media Use Policies

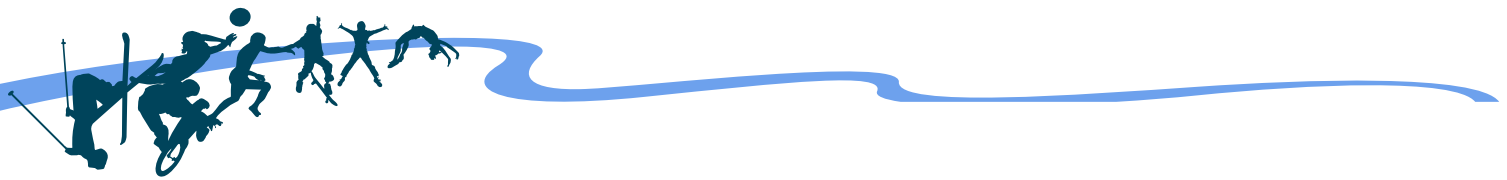
This media tool is changing the way we work and offers new ways to engage with customers. It can help build stronger more successful agency and business relationships, however, policy must be in place to ensure ethical and appropriate use. The following are taken from the State of Utah Social Media Guidelines.

- Ensure that your agency sanctions official participation and representation on social media sites.
- Stick to your area of expertise and provide unique, individual perspectives on what is going on at the State, and in other larger contexts.
- Post meaningful, respectful comments, no spam, and no remarks that are off-topic or offensive.
- Pause and think before posting. Reply to comments in a timely manner, when a response is appropriate.
- Respect proprietary information, content, and confidentiality.
- When disagreeing with others’ opinions, keep it appropriate and polite.

Often policies and guidelines have to be amended and updated as social media changes and platforms evolve.

It is clear that social media can provide some of the most cost effective, highly efficient marketing. This can include everything from marketing goods and services to fundraising, promoting programs and events and recruiting volunteers.<sup>3</sup>

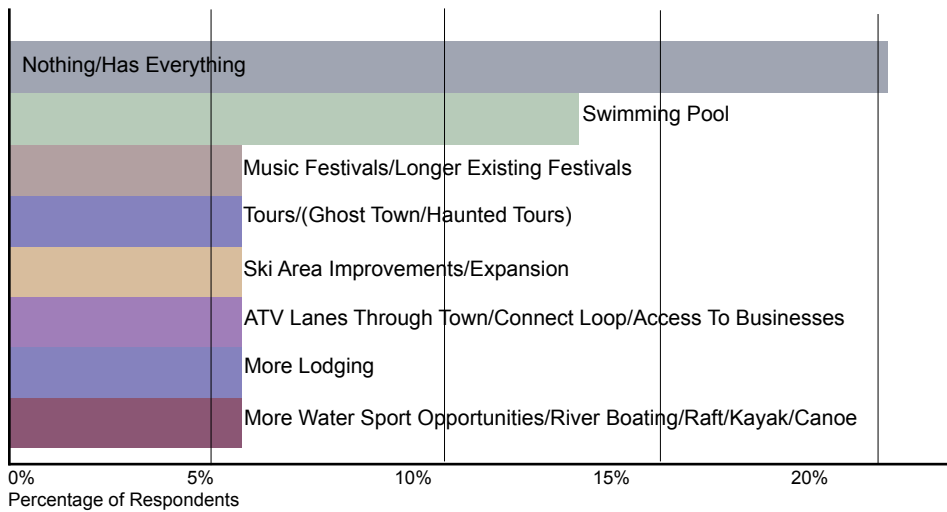
<sup>3</sup> www.nrpa.org Using Social Media Marketing to Promote Physical Activity and Health and Wellness in Parks-National Recreation and Park Association-Issue Brief



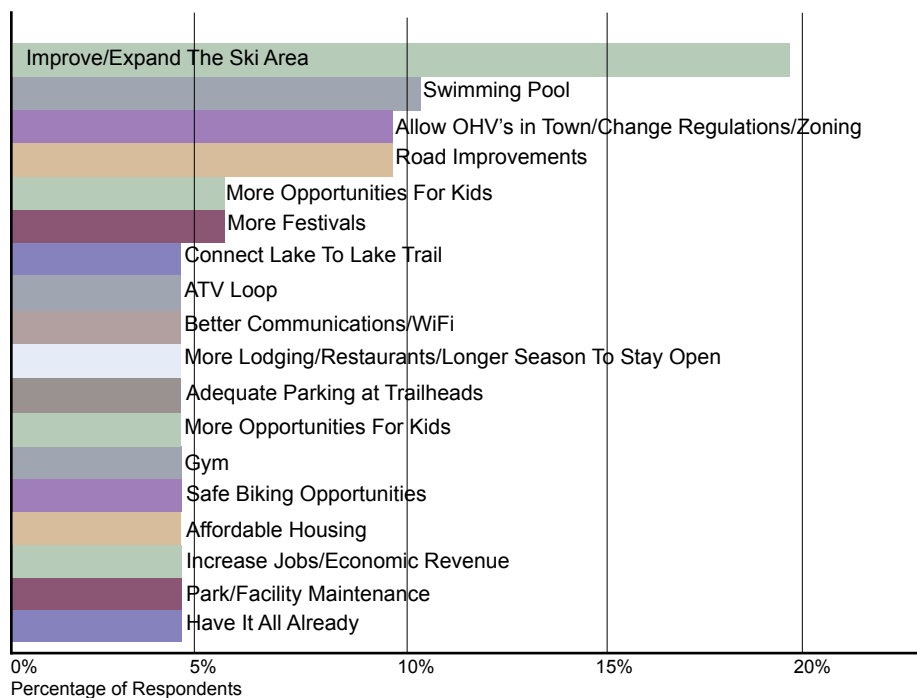
## Helping Improve The Visitors Experience

Managing services and recreation opportunities is key to attracting and keeping your customers satisfied. Recreation opportunities need to be well kept and cared for (such as clean restrooms, well kept campsites, picnic tables and fire rings are in working order and friendly hosts to greet visitors). Just as important as the recreation facilities being well kept and managed, is the infrastructure of the surrounding communities. If roads are bad or there is no parking, this can discourage visitation. Probably the most important part of the recreation experience is the ability to support visitors in the nearby community. Visitors will show up needing food, supplies, guides, restaurants and lodging. Support services need to be friendly, helpful, and be willing to serve their customers to encourage them to stay longer and spend their dollars.

When visitors were asked what activities you would like to see available to you in Hinsdale County/Lake City, survey respondents identified these top 8 responses:

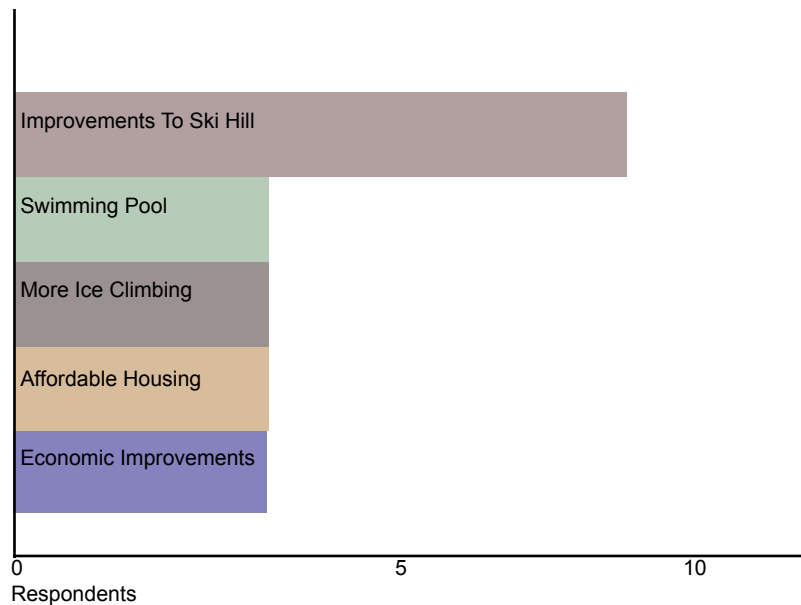


When constituents were asked what should be the funding priorities for Hinsdale County/Lake City, survey respondents identified these top responses from the recreation survey:



## Winter Recreation Experiences

Winter recreationists were interviewed during the February 2016 winter festival to determine the level of satisfaction that visitors had while participating in winter recreation activities. Many respondents felt that the lack of goods and services during the winter festival can be a barrier to an enjoyable stay in Lake City. Many visitors were not satisfied with the limited ability to acquire lodging and food during this time of the year and some participants camped out during their stay or stayed in other communities. About 1/2 of the respondents reported not being satisfied with the support services. The other 1/2 of the respondents felt satisfied with the support services. Most respondents loved the winter opportunities surrounding Lake City, but identified a need for more winter recreation activities. The following is a list of the top 5 priorities that the winter recreationists would like to see available in Lake City:

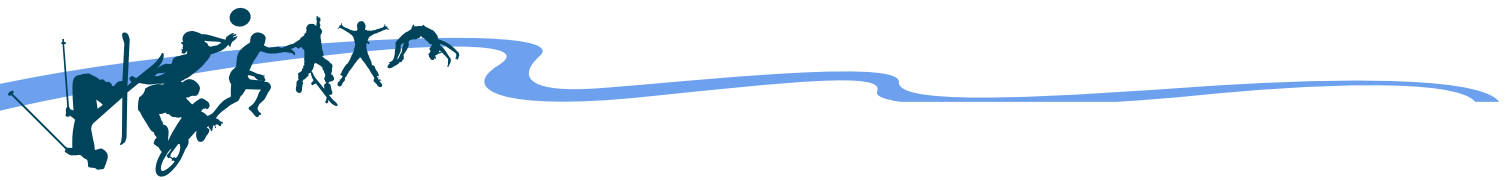


Many participants in the Winter Festival activities identified a need to include children in the races (such as the snowshoe race) as they felt that there were not enough activities for children.



Photo Courtesy Kelly Ortiz

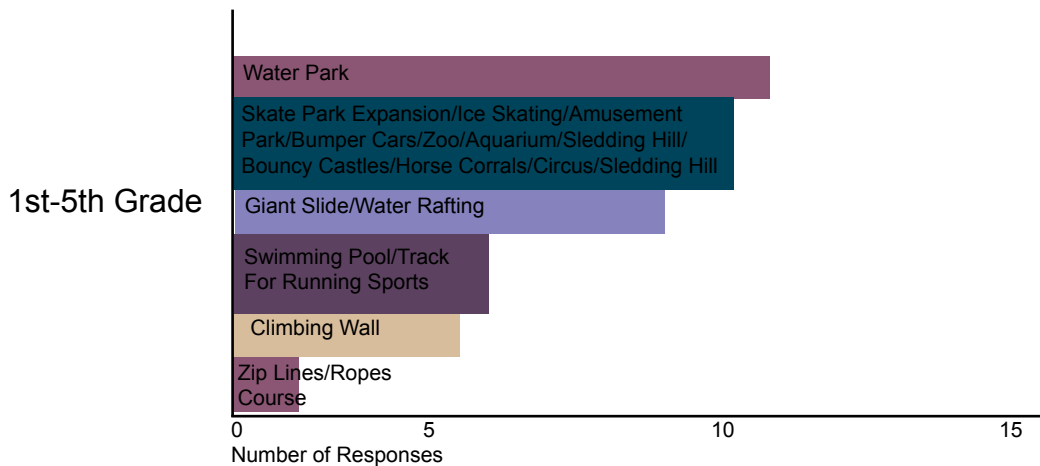
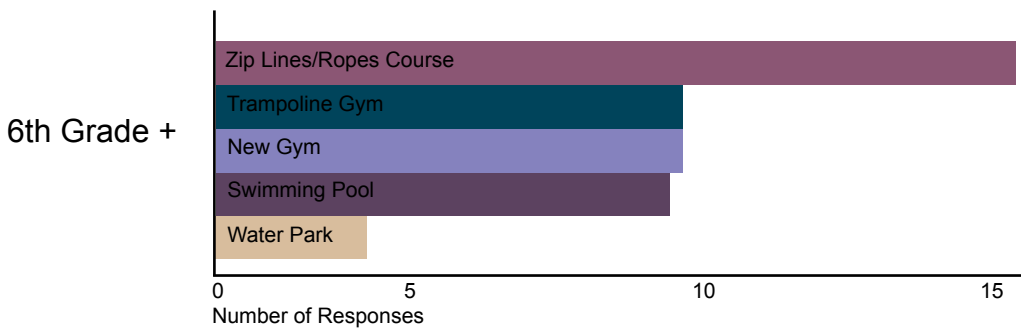
Roughly 65% of winter recreationists used “word of mouth” to share information and find out about opportunities. This may be due to the close group of ice/rock climbers in Colorado who know each other from similar events and share upcoming events. However, of the 41% that do use social me

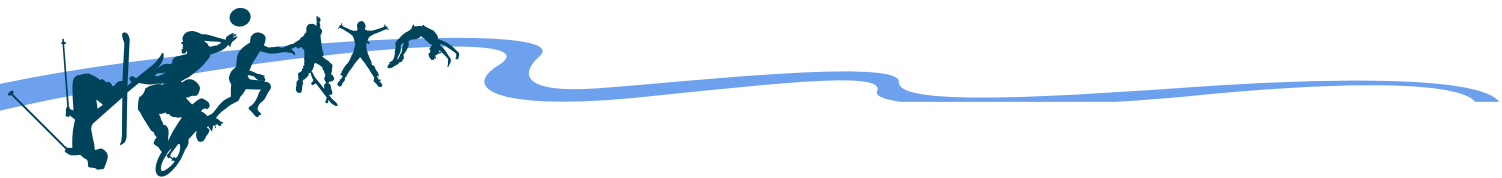


dia-they said they find out about ice climbing opportunities through “ReelRockTour.com” and “MountainProject.com”. Winter recreationists also wanted to see more advertisement directed toward Denver and the front range as they felt this would attract more participants to the Winter Festival.

### School Children’s Desire For Recreation Opportunities

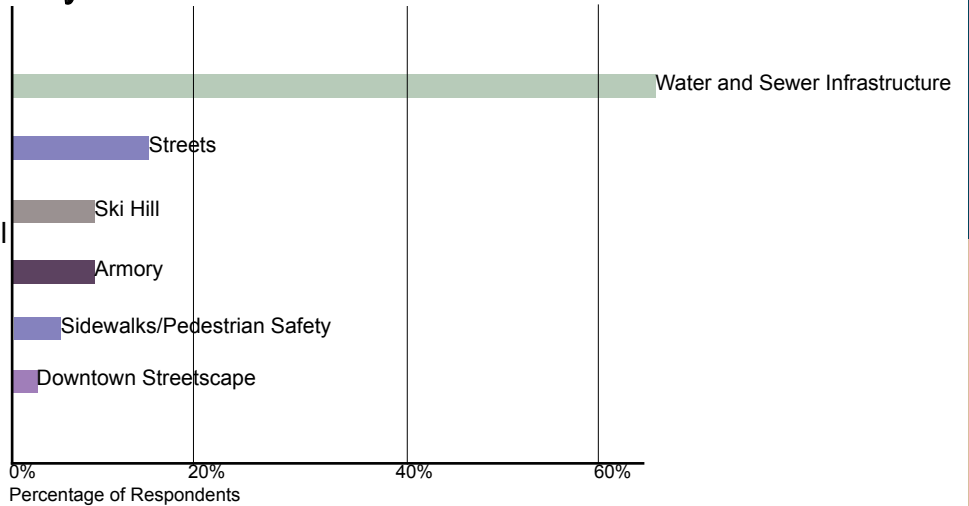
In the fall of 2015, the school children from the Lake City Community School were interviewed to find out what their preferences were for recreation activities in Lake City and Hinsdale County. The children were interviewed in 2 groups. The first group of children were from 1st to 5th grade and the second set of students were from 6th grade and up. These children were selected at random during recess and at the end of the school day. The participants from the school had many ideas and these were captured by listing the most popular items asked for below:





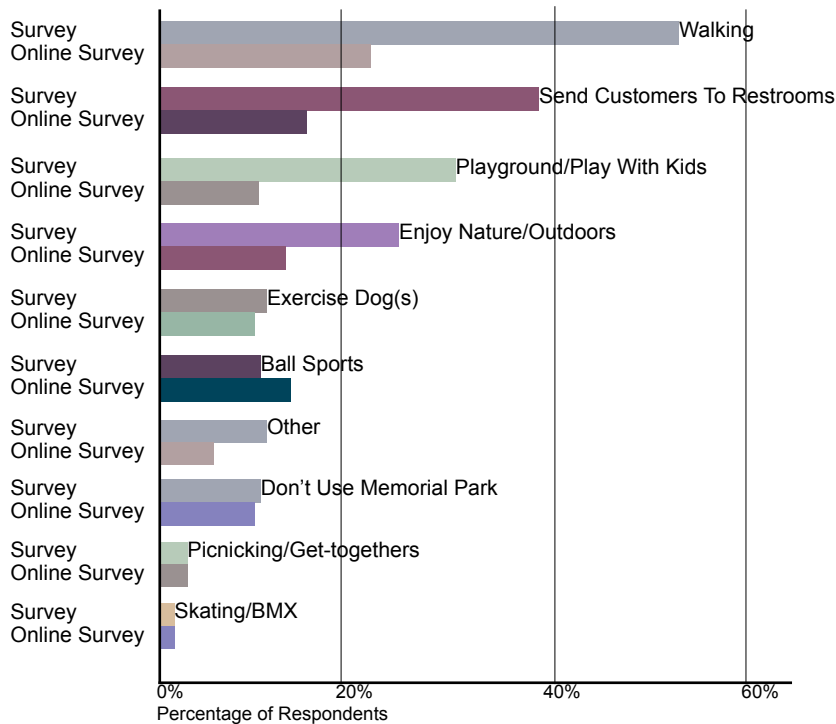
### Capital Improvement Plan Survey

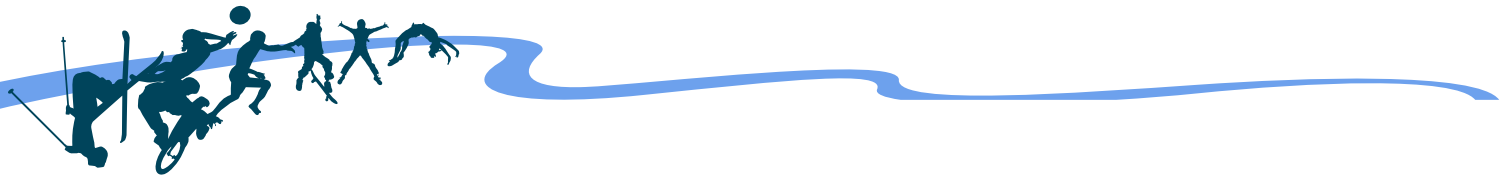
The Capital Improvement Plan surveys were completed over the last 2 years in Lake City. Of those surveyed, 84% of respondents lived in Lake City, 13% lived within Hinsdale County, and 2% from nearby Gunnison County. The majority of the local respondents of the Capital Improvement Plan survey conducted by the Community Recreation Committee indicate the need for infrastructure improvements, street repairs, the Armory, the Ski Hill, safety improvements, and economic development. The Capital Improvement Plan Online Survey was conducted with respondents from Lake City (81%) and from Hinsdale County (18%) with 2% of the respondents being visitors. The same questions were included on the online survey



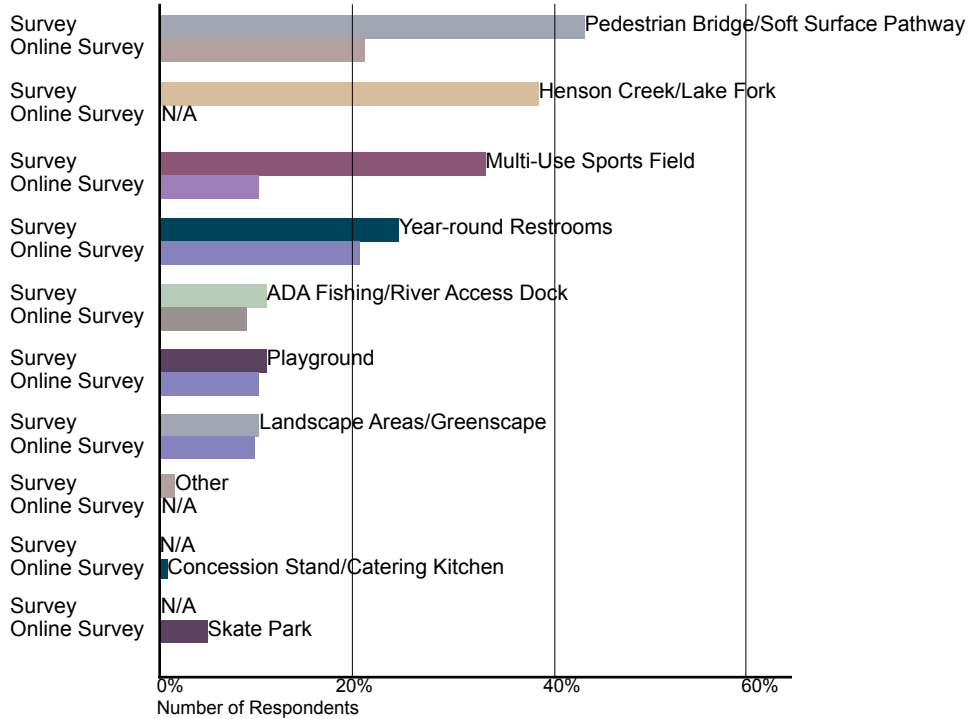
Detailed questions about Memorial Park, the Armory, Lake City Ski Hill and Lake City Infrastructure, streets and streetscapes were asked. These facilities are in need of improvements and are considered the important to the local residents.

Memorial Park is located on the east side of town and is one of the few locations where there is a large enough area to host group sports. Respondents used this park for various reasons listed below.

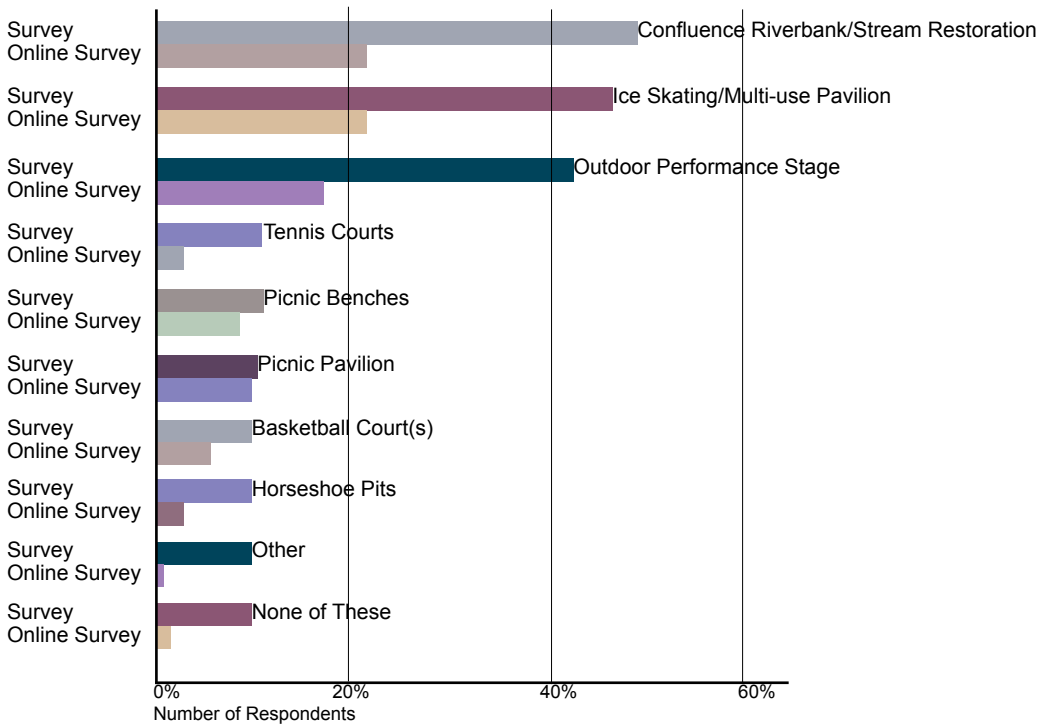




Respondents were then asked what are your top 2 features at Memorial Park that you use or value the most. The results are included for both the survey and the online survey.



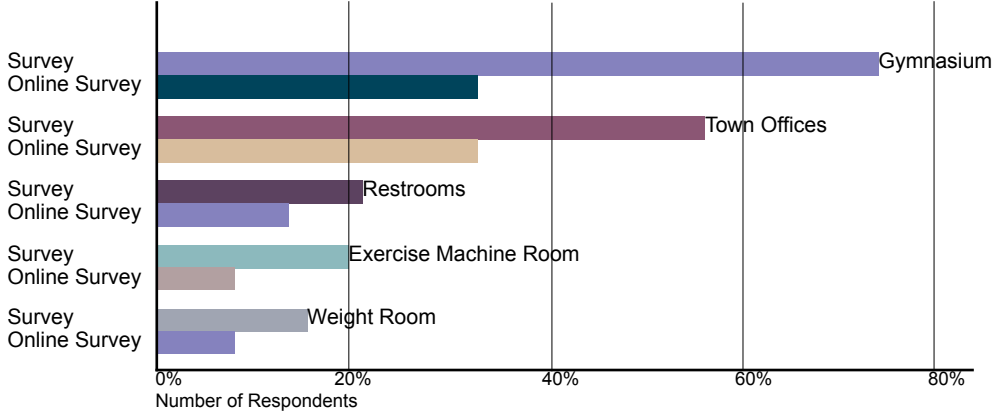
The respondents were then asked “Which of these would you most like to have at Memorial Park in the Future?”



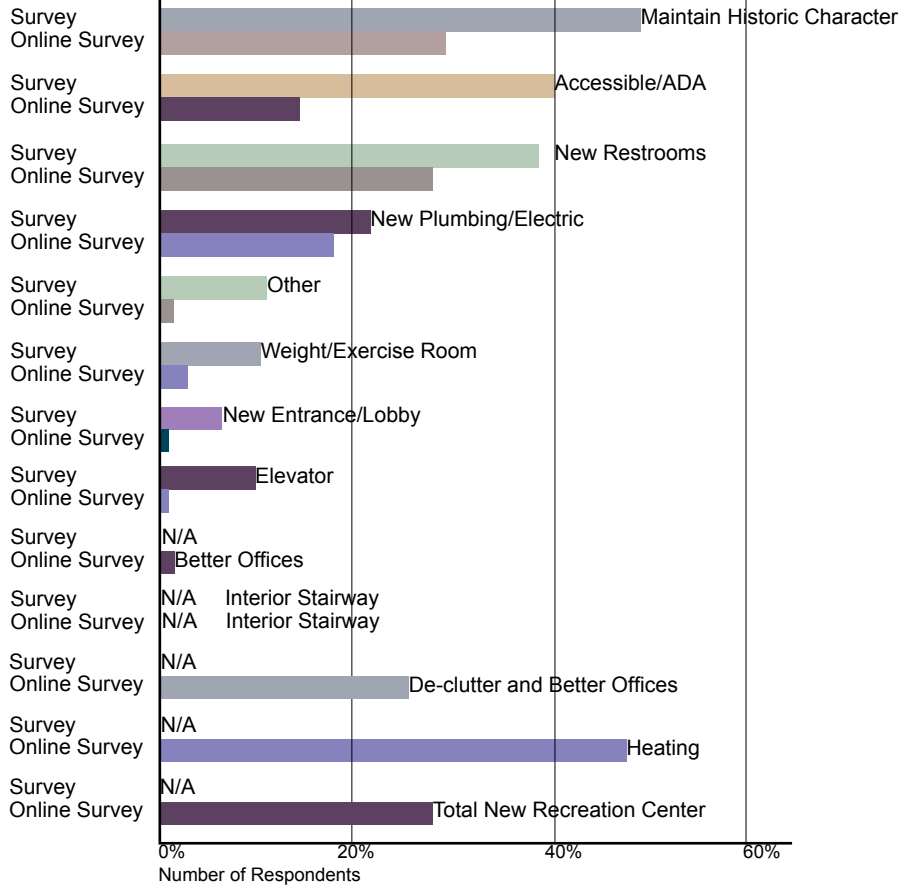


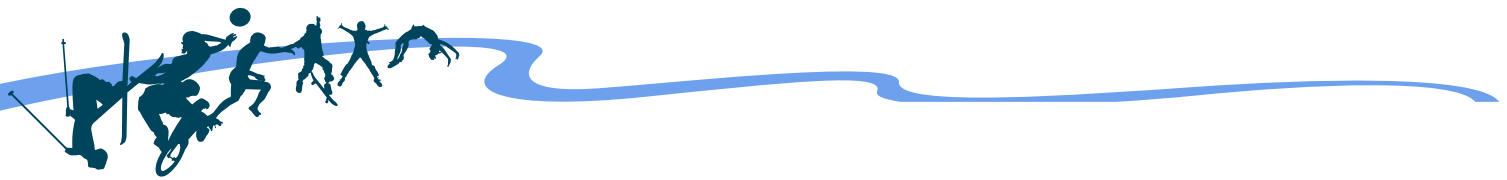
The Armory is a historic building located in downtown Lake City and has recently undergone renovations to better accommodate public use and indoor recreation activities such as workout classes and childrens events. 52% of the respondents felt that the Armory needed improvements. 32% of the respondents felt that the Armory did not need improvements and 16% were unsure.

The respondents were asked what top 2 features do you most often use at the Armory?



What Armory improvements are most important?



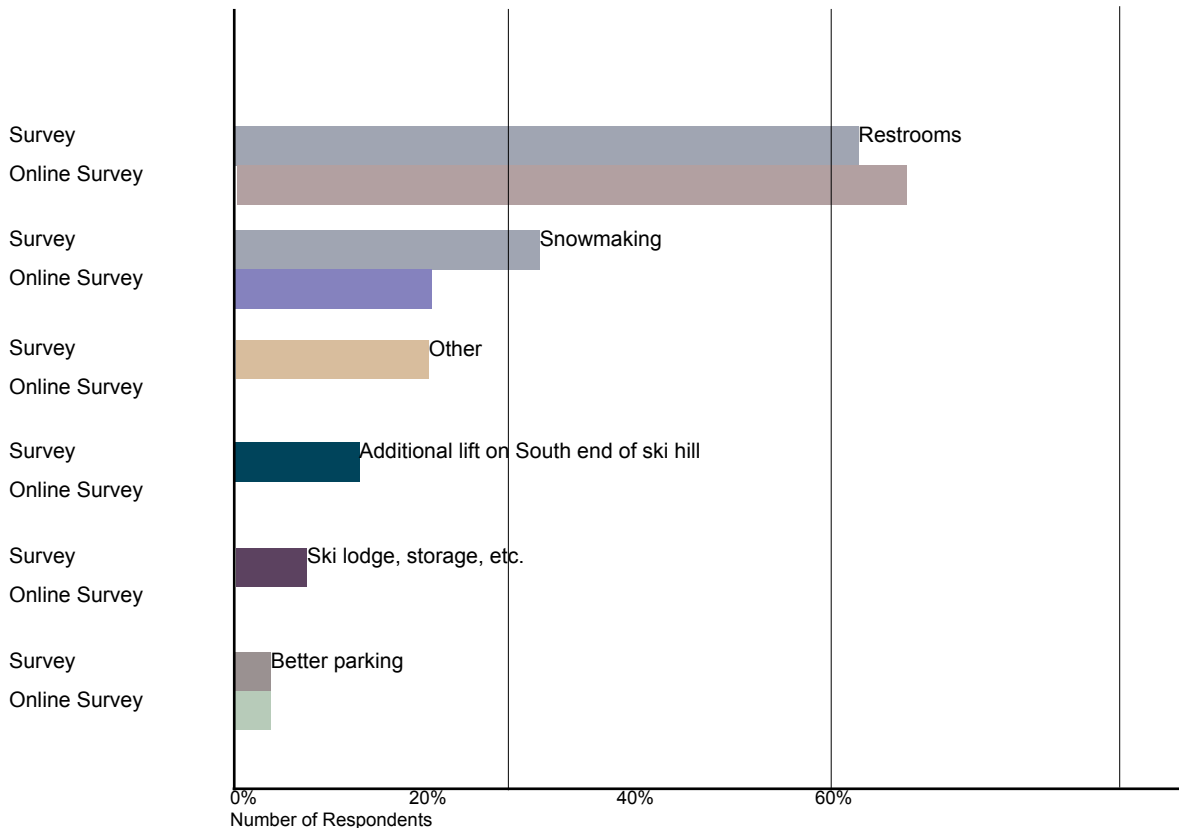


Additional questions were asked in the survey to determine the use, condition, and overall streetscape improvements of downtown. 74% of the respondents said they used the available sidewalks (72% for the online survey respondents).

For what purpose do you most frequently use sidewalks/boardwalks?



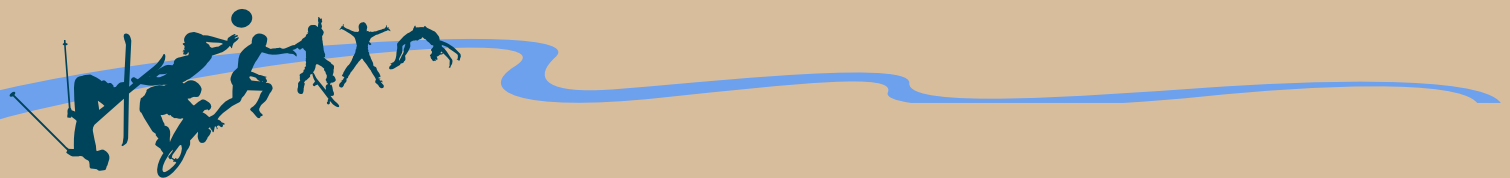
The overall recreation survey also identified the Lake City Ski Hill to be important by local residents. The Capital Improvement Plan asked the survey participants if the ski hill needed improvements and 53% of the respondents said “yes”, while 47% said “no”. The online survey of this question had 56% responding “yes” and 39% responding “no”. Additionally, the survey asked “What improvements would you most like to see at the ski hill?” The following indicates the response of those surveyed, including the online survey.







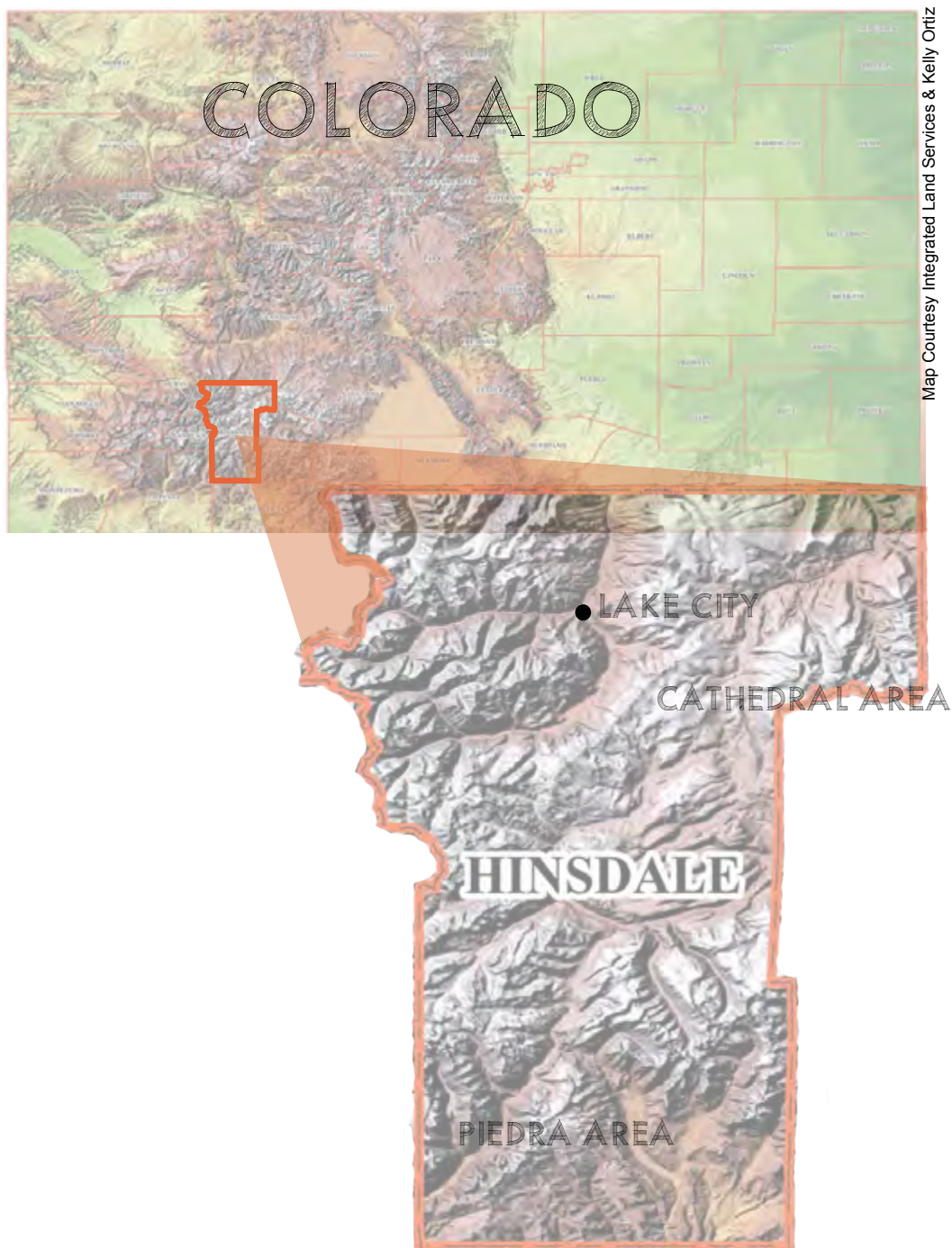
# CHALLENGES AND BENEFITS OF OUTDOOR RECREATION





## Challenges of Connecting People to the Outdoors

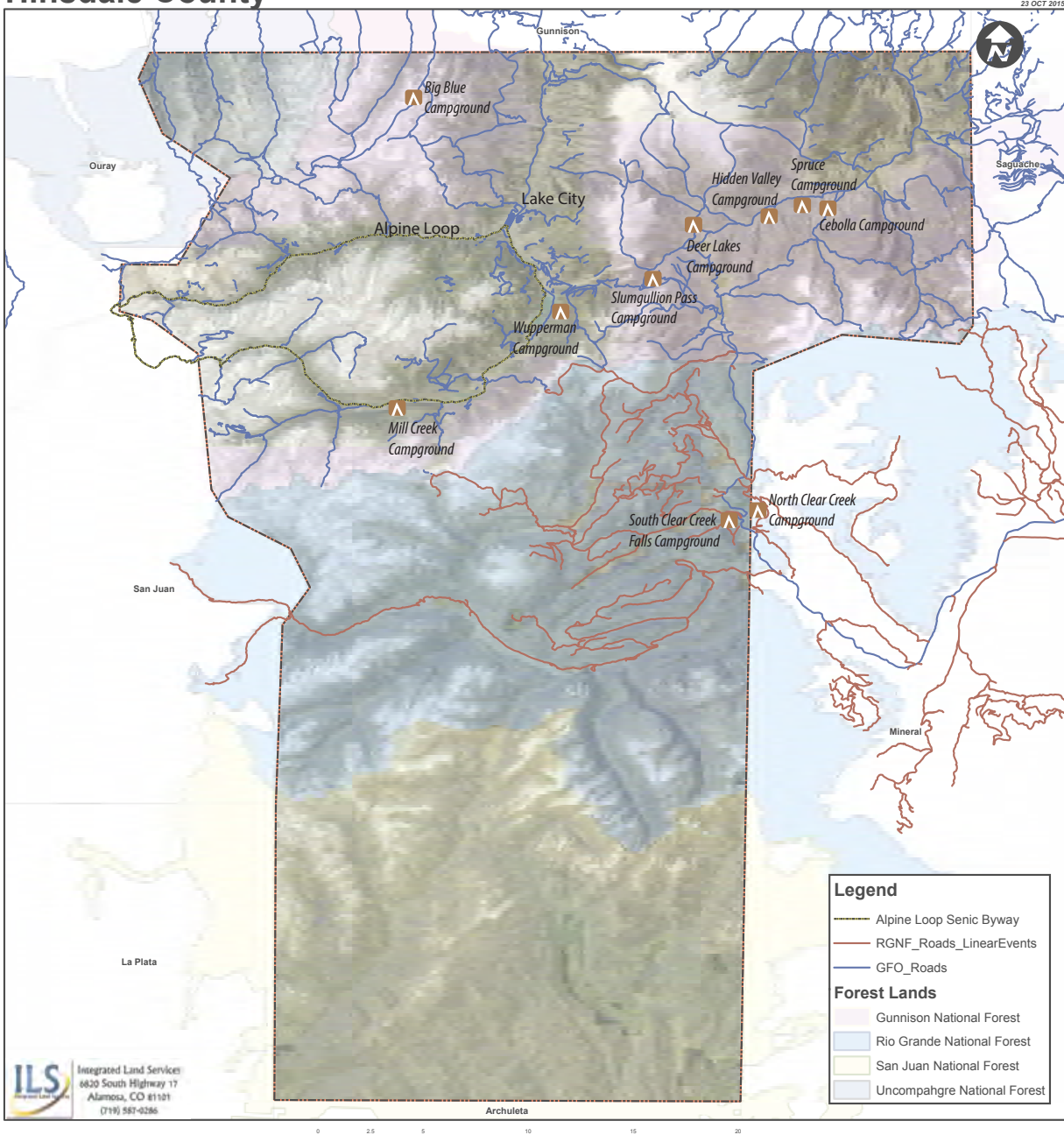
The challenges that any community faces in recreation planning can seem insurmountable. These challenges can be financial, problems with proximity and physical locations of activities, sustainability, lack of goods and services, and lack of information. Hinsdale County covers a large area of mountainous Colorado and communities can be located as far as 4 hours away from each other. Such is the case with the communities of Cathedral and the Piedra Area between Pagosa Springs and Durango in the Southwest corner of Colorado. Lake City is located in south central Colorado and planning for inclusion for these remote portions of Hinsdale County can be challenging. Additionally, these remote communities may identify or have similar trends to communities that are closer in proximity to other cities and counties not in Hinsdale County.





Hinsdale County and Lake City consist of 95% public lands and roughly 5% private or other lands. The surrounding public lands account for most of the available outdoor recreation opportunities in Hinsdale County. Visitors come to Hinsdale County and Lake City for remote recreation, wilderness experiences and the ability to hike trails to some of the fourteeners that surround Lake City. The surrounding Gunnison National Forest provides everything from hiking, hunting and fishing, climbing, riding bikes and OHV's, scenic drives, and camping. However, Lake City provides the hub for recreationists to obtain supplies, guiding, and tours. The primitive campgrounds on the forest have CXT toilets, picnic table and fires rings and Lake City has campgrounds that supply more amenities and allow for larger RV parking. Additionally private campgrounds and cabins allow the visitor to be closer to restaurants and grocery stores for supplies. Most visitors who stay in U. S. Forest Service campgrounds are located approximately 5-30 miles away. Hinsdale County's Wupperman Campground is the next closest camping location to camping in downtown Lake City.

### Hinsdale County



The main challenges of connecting visitors to the outdoors can be:

- Public Access
- Funding
- Lack of Goods and Services
- Universal Access
- Challenges with Public Lands
- Lack of Information
- Media Competing For Our Time
- Risks

### Public Access

Public use access across private lands as well as zoning can affect the success of recreation in communities. This is especially true for an aging population who depend more and more on other modes of transportation to reach public lands or facilities. Many communities are now planning special routes for bikes, OHV;s and golf carts to access facilities.

### Funding

Funding sources can be very sporadic or difficult to come by. Funding provides the basis for economic growth, either by cost sharing or encouraging other partners to jump into a project. Funding is one of the main components of recreation implementation.

### Lack of Goods and Services

The lack of goods and services in small communities can pose problems for visitors if the community is not able to handle large groups of people coming in for special events or recreation activities. Goods and services provided can include outfitting and guiding businesses, stores providing basic necessities such as food, outdoor equipment, fuel, as well as gift stores, and memorabilia, or healthcare and emergency services. Most importantly, there will be a need for lodging, restaurants, and improved visitor services with trained personnel to disseminate information on activities and special programs. Event planning teams can be part of goods and services to sustain economic diversity and promote further economic growth. Information needs to be disseminated on a

local level but also on a state and national level. The larger and more far reaching the events are, the more potential it has for success and impacts to the community both economic and environmental.

### Universal Access

Everyone should have a right to fully participate in community life, attend religious services, dining out, shopping, and enjoying community park facilities, or outdoor recreation activities. A disability is only a disability when it prevents someone from doing what they want or need to do. Although there are many recreation opportunities available to most people, there is still work that needs to be done to consider people with limited mobility to enjoy a wide range of activities. According to the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA), "the term 'disability' means an individual has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of his/her major life activities or there is a record of such an impairment or an individual is regarded as having such an impairment."<sup>4</sup>



Photo Courtesy Kelly Ortiz

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.ada.gov/pcatoolkit/chap6toolkit.htm>

<http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/implement/physical-social-environment/housing-accessibility-disabilities/main>

Severe disabilities affect about 12% of the U.S. population. Of those who are affected, about 18% has some level of disability. About 72% of people 80 and older has a disability and 11% for children ages 6-14. About 4% of the population over age 6 has a severe disability that requires personal assistance with one or more activities of daily life. For many countries, ensuring access for people with disabilities is the law. In the United States, ADA requires that public and government facilities, cities, towns, educational institutions, employers, and service providers make reasonable accommodations to serve people with disabilities. "Reasonable accommodations" means making changes that don't cause unreasonable hardship to the party making them or to others that the party deals with (students, customers, employees, program participants, etc.).<sup>5</sup>

Everyone has the right to live as normal a life as possible. Failing to do so wastes talent and energy. Many people with disabilities in all walks of life are competent at important jobs and do remarkable work. Denying people access to employment, education, or services wastes human resources and makes society poorer. People with disabilities add to the diversity of the community, making everyone's life richer. However, it is not always possible to make every activity accessible. For instance Lake City has many steep climbs to fourteen thousand foot peaks. For land managers providing this access, providing a fully accessible trail over steep terrain can be challenging (and in some cases downright dangerous). For people with a disability (depending upon the type) this can be challenging as well. As we begin to identify areas that can be made accessible, (such as trails, recreation facilities, parks, and facilities), we can begin to improve these facilities for everyone. When universal access is made available, it improves lives for everyone.

### Challenges on Public Lands

National Forests and the Bureau of Land Management can provide close to home recreation opportunities for millions of Americans. They are sometimes the most convenient places to experience nature.

Unfortunately, many organizations that provide outdoor experiences to youth can't get the required permits to take kids to these public lands, so they are unable to use public lands. The Forest Service requires organizations that take groups to a forest to obtain a "Special Use" permit if they charge participants a fee to lead an activity. Getting a special use permit takes a lot of effort and no new permits are available on some national forests. As a result, some forests are closed to organizations that do not have a permit.<sup>6</sup>

### Lack of Pertinent Information

With the advent of the internet, blogs, and Facebook, many communities are trying to keep up with changing media methods. Many communities have hard copy maps and brochures, internet, blogs, and other forms of communication to better reach their residents, visitors and customers, but not all have a single point of connection. Many communities are struggling to figure out which is the best way to reach people. In addition, other agencies and businesses are supplying maps, data, information, that may be pertinent to a particular portion of recreation activities or services. What is a community to do? It can be a struggle to provide the most up to date and important information to visitors to improve their recreation experience and find ways to locate all of the information in one location.



Photo Courtesy Kelly Ortiz

5 <http://www.ada.gov/pcatoolkit/chap6toolkit.htm>

<http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/implement/physical-social-environment/housing-accessibility-disabilities/main>

6 <http://wilderness.org/article/youth-organizations-national-forests#sthash.UwBgPBnG.dpuf> & The Wilderness Society ([wilderness.org/article/youth-organizational-national-forests](http://wilderness.org/article/youth-organizational-national-forests))

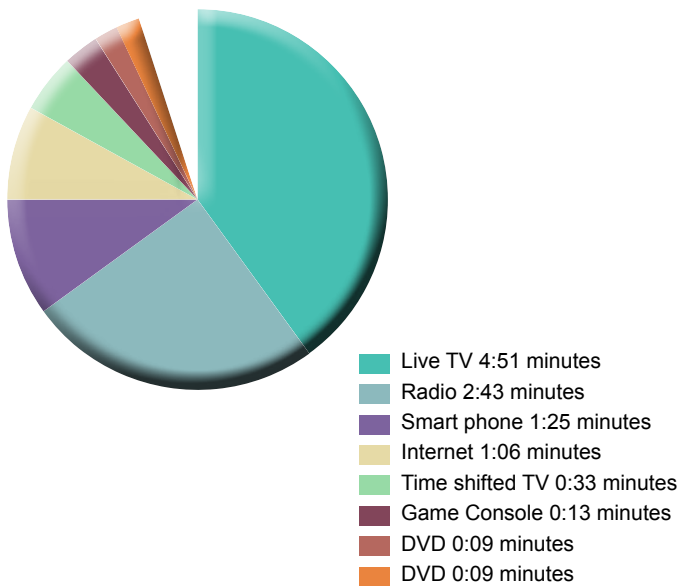


**Get Outside!**

Today, planning for outdoor recreation has a new set of challenges not seen in past generations such as the recent phenomenon called “nature deficit disorder”. This disorder, implies a generation of younger recreationists that rely almost completely on electronics and social media. This makes it hard for communities to compete for the attention of younger generations without the use of high tech media devices.



As media begins to play a bigger role in our lives, our outdoor environments can be in direct competition with other leisure choices such as digital entertainment and bombardment of commercial messages to encourage participation in other activities. A study from Statista.com has found that American adults are plugged into media over 11 hours per day.<sup>7</sup>



7 Data from www.Statista.com

Mobile usage is accelerating the growth of social media (such as Facebook) as more people use mobile devices such as smart phones and tablets. A survey by Google revealed that 60% of U.S. smart-phone users in 2012 said they visited social media daily. This is an increase from 54% in 2011. Based upon study by Pew Research, 69% of online adults were using social networking sites. In addition, more than 625,000 people join Google+ everyday and as of 2012, there were more than one billion monthly active Facebook users.

According to a 2013 study by the Joan Ganz Conney Center children ages 2 to 5 watch 3.5 hours of television a day and the Sesame Workshop found that children aged 5 to 9 spent 1.75 hours a day watching TV and another 1.25 hours watching videos. For children 8 through 10 they spent a total of 3.25 hours on TV's and videos. The Kaiser Family Foundation found that children ages 8-18 spend on average between 6.5 to 7.5 hours daily using electronic media devices for entertainment purposes.<sup>8</sup> A similar 2010 Nielsen study suggests that 36% of children between the ages of 2 and 11 use both media simultaneously.<sup>9</sup>

These elements are part of the overall “nature-deficit disorder that can contribute to a diminished use of the senses, attention difficulties, conditions of obesity, and higher rates of emotional and physical illnesses. Research also suggests that the nature-deficit weakens ecological literacy and stewardship of the natural world. These problems are linked more broadly to what health care experts call the “epidemic of inactivity,” and to a devaluing of independent play.<sup>10</sup>



8 Data from life.familyeducation.com/computers/television/65248.html  
 9 www. http://mashable.com/2011/03/14/children-internet-stats/#2VhNC7OHTGq5  
 10 www.childrenandnature.org/about/nature-deficit-disorder/

### Urban vs. Rural

In 2008, for the first time, more people live in cities than in rural or natural environments. In addition, our lives are stressed, over-programmed, and immersed in virtual learning instead of hands on or activity based learning. The result of this disconnect is less stewardship of lands and natural environments, less appreciation of biodiversity and all that the natural world offers, and less chance that our young people will be the new champions to protect the places they cherish. There is a need to find ways to connect with a generation of children who are continually connected to media to find information, and research opportunities in the activities they participate in.

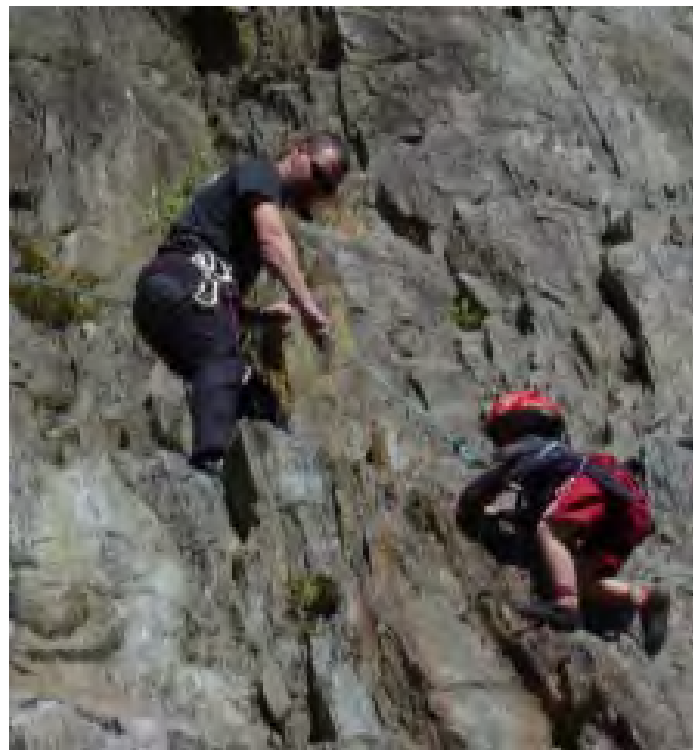
### 21st Century Diets

In addition, our diets have turned to fast food, we have unhealthy eating habits, drive more rather than bike or walk, and are more sedentary in our lifestyles overall. More than 68% of adults are considered to be overweight or obese. Among children aged 2 to 19 years old, 33% are considered overweight or obese.<sup>11</sup> Recent studies have shown that obesity numbers are starting to reverse and decline. However, many trends such as the advertising of less healthy foods, limited access to healthy affordable foods, and the greater availability of high energy dense foods and sugar sweetened beverages have contributed to the overall problem of obesity in both adults and children in the United States. “Nearly half of U.S. middle and high schools allow advertising of less healthy foods,<sup>12</sup> which impacts students’ ability to make healthy food choices. In addition, foods high in total calories, sugars, salt, and fat, and low in nutrients are highly advertised and marketed through media targeted to children and adolescents,<sup>13</sup> while advertising for healthier foods is almost nonexistent in comparison.”<sup>14</sup>

### Risk and Outdoor Play

Our values have changed in this new century where controlled environments are considered safe and the

natural world is perceived as posing more risks and there is fear of the unknown. The more we know how to avoid the natural risks, the less we fear nature. We see the natural world as a “nice to have” for children’s healthy growth and development and continual connection for all people to help them to feel fulfilled, recharged, and enriched. There is also a large disappearance of biodiversity in our modern day living and “the less we see, the less we value” (children & nature network-the new nature movement by Richard Louv).



11 Flegal KM, Carroll MD, Kit BK, Ogden CL. Prevalence of obesity and trends in the distribution of body mass index among US adults, 1999–2010. *Journal of the American Medical Association*. 2012; 307(5):491–97. Available online: <http://jama.jamanetwork.com/article.aspx?articleid=1104933>External Link Disclaimer & Ogden CL, Carroll MD, Kit BK, Flegal KM. Prevalence of obesity and trends in body mass index among US children and adolescents, 1999–2010. *Journal of the American Medical Association*. 2012; 307(5):483–90. Available online: <http://jama.jamanetwork.com/Mobile/article.aspx?articleid=1104932>External Link Disclaimer

12 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Children’s Food Environment State Indicator Report*, 2011

13 Institute of Medicine, *Food Marketing to Children and Youth: Threat or Opportunity?* Washington, DC, National Academies Press; 2005.

14 <http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/childhood/causes.html>

## Trends in Recreation

An Outdoor Foundation recent report surveyed nearly 11,000 Americans ages 6 and older in 2014. In their report entitled “Outdoor Recreation Participation, TopLine Report for 2015”, shows the overall trend in outdoor recreation participation dropped in the late 2000’s. However, due to nationwide efforts to reconnect youth to the outdoors, these participation numbers began to show slight increases until 2012. Again, in 2014, the participation level showed a decrease from 2013 in outdoor participation. The study shows:

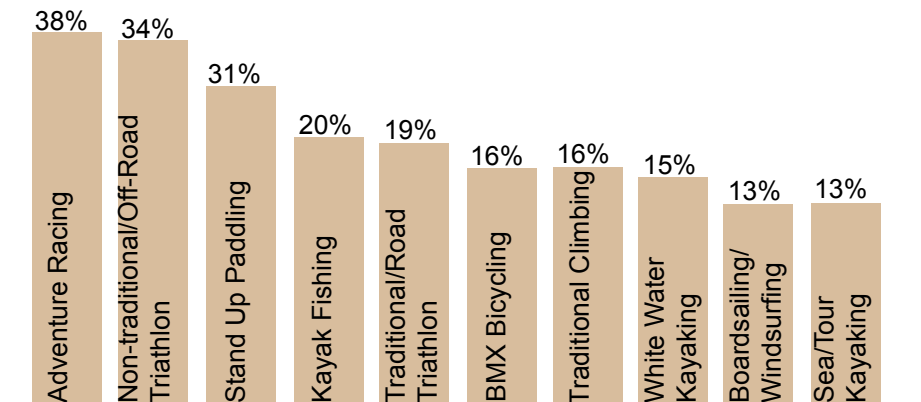
- Nearly half of all Americans 48.4% participated in at least one outdoor activity in 2014. This equates to 141.4 million participants and 11.8 billion outdoor outings
- Overall outdoor participation dropped by .8% since 2013 and, reached the lowest levels since 2006. This may have been due to inclement weather.
- Typical popular gateway activities of running and biking lost participants in 2014, but biking on stationary bikes and running on treadmills added participants to these activities.
- Paddle sports were the top outdoor activity for growth, showing increased participation by 38% from 2013 to 2014.
- Snow sports, such as tele-marking, snowshoeing, freestyle skiing and cross-country skiing, also grew significantly.<sup>15</sup>

The study also found that introducing outdoor recreation and physical activities early in life has a lasting impact on adults and their future participation in outdoor activities. Adults who are outdoor recreation participants, 82% report having a physical education class between the ages of 6 and 12 and 45% of outdoor recreation participants took part in outdoor activities from the ages of 6 through 12.<sup>16</sup>

However, there has been a recent increase in some outdoor activities over the last 3 years. This is an encouraging trend for engaging youth in the outdoors.



Top Outdoor Activities For Growth Over 3 Year Period



<sup>15</sup> Outdoor Foundation, Outdoor Recreation Participation TopLine Report 2015

<sup>16</sup> Outdoor Foundation, Outdoor Recreation Participation Report 2012  
www.outdoorfoundation.org





## Who influenced your decision to participate in outdoor activities?

Ages 6-12

	All	Males	Females
1. Parents	75%	75%	77%
2. Brother, sisters, or other relatives	36%	34%	39%
3. Friends	33%	34%	32%
4. Myself-no one else influenced me	13%	13%	12%
5. Community program-Boy Scouts, YMCA, neighborhood program, etc	13%	13%	12%
6. School program	12%	11%	14%

Ages 13-17

	All	Males	Females
1. Parents	64%	65%	63%
2. Friends	44%	46%	43%
3. Brothers, sisters, or other relatives	26%	26%	27%
4. Myself-no one else influenced me	20%	20%	20%
6. School program	12%	11%	12%
5. Community program-Boy Scouts, YMCA, neighborhood program, etc	10%	13%	5%

Ages 18-24

	All	Males	Females
1. Friends	53%	51%	55%
2. Myself-no one else influenced me	30%	29%	30%
3. Parents	30%	33%	27%
4. Brothers, sisters, or other relatives	25%	23%	27%
5. School program	7%	8%	7%
6. Experienced mentor (trained and skilled)	6%	9%	3%

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17 Graphic reproduced from the Outdoor Foundation's Special Report on Youth, The Next Generation of Outdoor Champions (2010). <http://www.outdoorfoundation.org/pdf/ResearchYouth.pdf>

## What motivates youth to participate in outdoor activities?

Ages  
6-12

	All	Males	Females
1. It's fun.	73%	74%	71%
2. I enjoy discovery and exploration.	42%	42%	41%
3. It's relaxing.	28%	28%	28%
4. I can participate in outdoor activities near my house.	28%	27%	28%
5. It's a great way to get exercise.	28%	26%	29%
6. I get to hang out with my friends.	27%	27%	28%
7. I like new experiences.	27%	25%	30%

Ages  
13-17

	All	Males	Females
1. It's fun.	52%	53%	50%
2. It's relaxing	37%	36%	38%
3. I get away from my usual routine.	34%	35%	32%
4. It's a great way to get exercise.	32%	32%	33%
5. I enjoy discovery and exploration.	32%	35%	28%
6. I get to hang out with my friends	32%	33%	30%

Ages  
18-24

	All	Males	Females
1. It's relaxing.	53%	51%	55%
2. It's a great way to get exercise.	30%	29%	30%
3. It's fun.	30%	33%	27%
4. I get away from my usual routine	25%	23%	27%
5. I enjoy discovery and exploration	7%	8%	7%
6. I want to be healthy	6%	9%	3%

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## What keeps youth from participating in outdoor activities more often?

Ages  
6-12

	All	Males	Females
1. I don't have the time.	24%	24%	24%
2. I am not interested.	22%	19%	26%
3. I have too much schoolwork.	22%	19%	24%
4. I am involved in other activities such as team sports or fitness activities.	20%	21%	20%
5. My parents don't take me on outdoor activities.	20%	22%	18%
6. I would rather spend free time watching TV or movies, surfing the internet or playing video games	20%	26%	13%

Ages  
13-17

	All	Males	Females
1. I don't have the time.	38%	34%	44%
2. I am not interested.	36%	37%	34%
3. I have too much schoolwork.	31%	28%	36%
4. I am involved in other activities such as team sports or fitness activities.	23%	20%	28%
5. My parents don't take me on outdoor activities.	22%	19%	26%
6. I would rather spend free time watching TV or movies, surfing the internet or playing video games	22%	27%	15%

Ages  
18-24

	All	Males	Females
1. I don't have the time.	58%	57%	59%
2. I'm not interested.	29%	30%	28%
3. I don't want to spend money on gear or equipment.	28%	24%	31%
4. I have too much schoolwork.	26%	28%	24%
5. I don't have friends to go with.	22%	19%	25%

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## What keeps youth who don't participate in outdoor activities indoors?

Ages  
6-12

	All	Males	Females
1. I'm not interested.	39%	35%	43%
2. My parents don't take me on outdoor activities	17%	16%	18%
3. I have too much schoolwork.	16%	10%	21%
4. I don't have the time.	15%	11%	18%
5. I would rather spend free time watching TV or movies, surfing the internet or playing video games	15%	16%	14%
6. I'd rather spend time with my friends.	11%	5%	15%
7. I don't want to spend money on gear or equipment.	11%	16%	6%
8. I don't know how to get started, what to do or where to go.	10%	14%	7%

Ages  
13-17

	All	Males	Females
1. I'm not interested.	54%	59%	50%
2. I have too much schoolwork.	29%	24%	33%
3. I would rather spend free time watching TV or movies, surfing the internet or playing video games	27%	36%	20%
4. I'd rather spend time with my friends.	26%	21%	30%
5. I don't have the time.	25%	21%	29%

Ages  
18-24

	All	Males	Females
1. I don't have the time.	47%	41%	51%
2. I'm not interested.	46%	51%	42%
3. I don't want to spend money on gear or equipment.	23%	18%	26%
4. I would rather spend free time watching TV or movies, surfing the internet or playing video games	20%	23%	17%
5. I have too much schoolwork.	19%	18%	21%
6. I don't like bugs or dirt.	13%	7%	18%

20

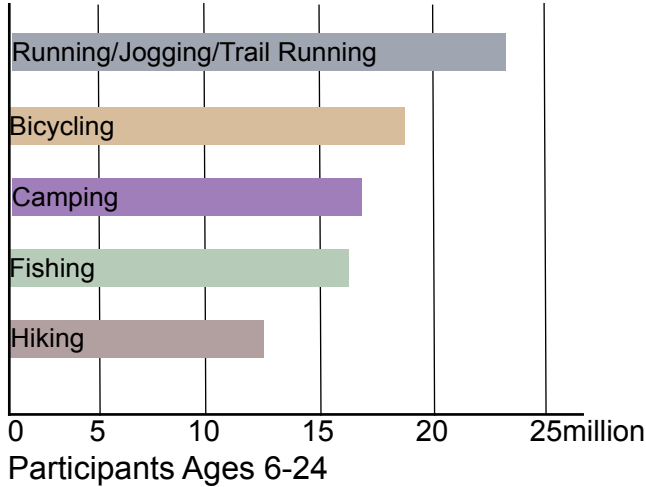
20 Graphic reproduced from the Outdoor Foundation's Special Report on Youth, The Next Generation of Outdoor Champions (2010). <http://www.outdoorfoundation.org/pdf/ResearchYouth.pdf>



## Trends in Recreation

Overall there were over 4.4 billion outdoor outings among youth ages 6-12 and 7.4 billion outdoor outings among adults aged 25 and older.

Most Popular Youth Outdoor Activities By Participation



Favorite Youth Outdoor Activities By Frequency

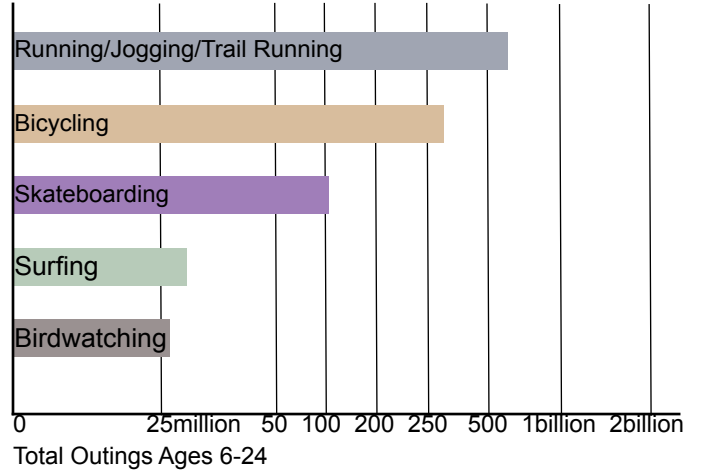
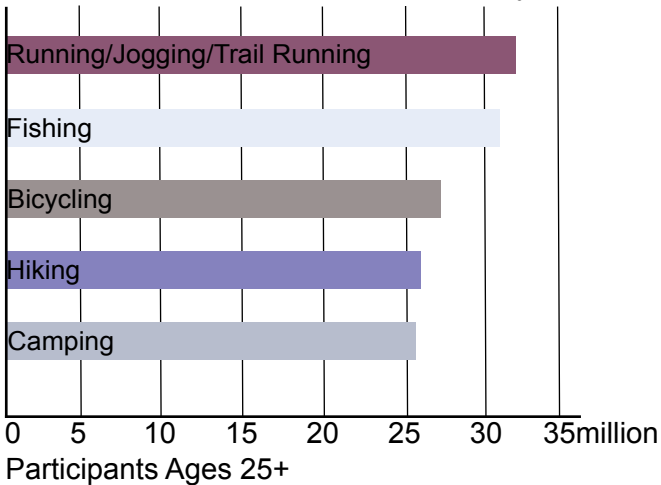
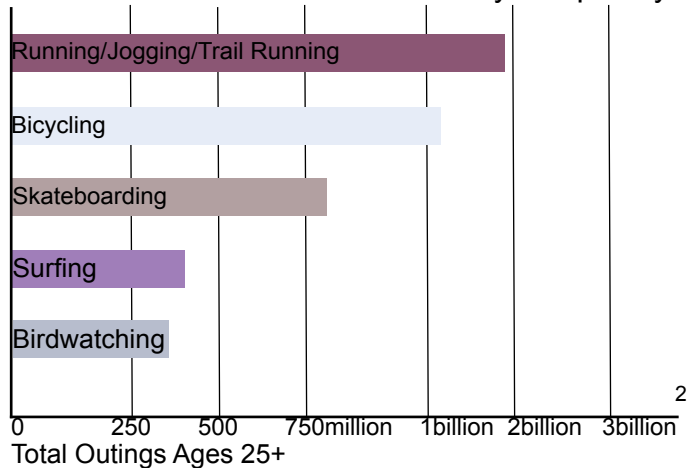


Photo Courtesy truministry.com

Most Popular Adult Outdoor Activities By Participation



Favorite Adult Outdoor Activities By Frequency



21 Graphic produced from data by Outdoor Recreation Participation, Topline Report 2015

## Benefits of Connecting People to the Outdoors

Overall urban environments can cause stress, fatigue, and irritability making focusing more difficult. When people move to a more natural environment the conscious brain can rest, replenishing and lowering anxiety and lowering heart rates.<sup>22</sup> The chance to escape the noise of urban environments can also relieve stress that may otherwise be expressed through aggression, drugs and alcohol. Connecting people with the outdoors has many benefits, however one of the biggest is physical and mental health benefits. Children who play in natural environments with imaginative and creative components foster language and collaborative skills.<sup>23</sup> Recreation, especially outdoor recreation can alleviate the impacts of life stress, and increase feelings of well-being and healing from adverse conditions.<sup>24</sup>

Getting outside to enjoy a beautiful day isn't a personal indulgence, it provides a benefit for your mind, body, spirit and the economy.<sup>25</sup> Hinsdale County and Lake City can play a significant role in the wellness revolution and take an active role in getting people outside to improve overall health.

### Good For The Mind

Outdoor recreation has psychological benefits, including stress reduction, improved self-esteem, confidence, creativity, spiritual growth, increased enjoyment, adventure and challenge from life. Additionally, regular physical activity (3-5 times per week) has been proven to reduce depression, improve sleep, increase learning capacity and keep the brain sharp.

### Good For The Body

Getting outside provides physical benefits, such as aerobic, cardiovascular, muscular fitness, and improved immune function. Outdoor recreation can lower the rate of type 2 diabetes and control blood glucose levels with just 2 hours a week of moderate

aerobic exercise. In addition, research shows that aerobic activity helps with muscle and bone strengthening that can prevent loss of bone density. Regular physical activity for participants who participate in outdoor recreation helps with arthritis, reduce the risks of some cancers (such as breast and colon). Further research has suggested it also helps reduce the risk of endometrial and lung cancer. Heart disease and strokes are the leading cause of death in the United States, and participating in exercise and moderate to intense aerobic activity for roughly 2 hours and 30 minutes a week can reduce the risk of these diseases. Finally, regular physical activity can lower blood pressure and improve cholesterol levels.



### Lower Health Care Costs

People who exercise regularly have 14 percent lower claims against their medical insurance, 30 percent fewer days in the hospital and 41 percent fewer claims greater than \$5,000.<sup>26</sup> "Exercise derived from recreational activities lessens health related problems and subsequent health care costs. Every year, premature deaths costs American companies an estimated 132 million lost work days at a price tag of \$25 billion. Finding and training replacements costs industry more than \$700 million each year. In addition, American businesses lose an estimated \$3 billion every year because of employee health problems".<sup>27</sup>

**Additionally, the nation continues to struggle with rising health care cost, an aging and dependent population, it will be important to consider parks and**

22 ([cbc.ca/liverightnow/tips-and-articles/30x30/connect-with-nature-to-reduce-stress.html](http://cbc.ca/liverightnow/tips-and-articles/30x30/connect-with-nature-to-reduce-stress.html))

23 World Forum Foundation Fjort, I. and J. Sageie-2000. The natural environment as a playground for children: Landscape description and analysis of natural landscape. *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 48 (1/2) 83-97.

24 (Wells, Nancy M. & Evans, Gary W. (2003). Nearby Nature: A buffer of life stress among rural children. *Environment and Behavior*, 35 (3) 311-330. Positive physical health benefits and decreased health problems and advanced motor fitness, including coordination, balance and agility (Fjortoft, Ingunn (2001). The natural environment as a playground for children: The impact of outdoor play activities in pre-primary school children. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 29 (2): 111-117.

25 Dr. Andrew Lepp, assistant professor of recreation, park and tourism management at Kent State

26 Feasibility Study: Corporate Wellness Program", City of San Jose Department of Parks, Recreation, and Community Services, 1988).

27 (National Park Service, 1983).The Case for Urban Open Space. Poole, William. 1993. Draft report prepared for Trust for Public Land, San Francisco, California.

recreation as a significant factor in improving overall wellness.

### Better Social Life

The great outdoors afford social benefits like bonding with like-minded people who enjoy outdoor activities and feeling and increased pride in self, community and nation. Additionally, being outside with family can be one of the most important bonding activities families can participate in.

### Great For The Outdoors

Outdoor recreation provides environmental benefits through increased environmental awareness. This awareness can translate into increased environmental involvement in issues affecting the resources.



Photo Courtesy USFS

### Healthy Children

Children are naturally curious and love to learn about the world around them. Children who spend time in nature have a better time focusing in school, helps to improve their concentration, increases creativity and fosters creative problem-solving. Outdoor recreation is vital to child development because it gives kids a chance to burn off energy, helps them recharge, helps kids to learn to interact with and understand the

natural world, offers a chance for social interaction with peers, helps to develop their powers of observation, assessment of risk, and provides a strong link between physical health and outdoor play at a young age.<sup>28</sup> A study by Sheridan Bartlett states that play is “a basic human drive”<sup>29</sup> and fundamental to child development and “that distinct changes in the brain occur as a result of play”.<sup>30</sup> The study further states that the potential for important early childhood learning takes place primarily in children’s play.<sup>31</sup>

In a recent report by the National Wildlife Federation, it shows that in the past 20 years, the use of antidepressants in pediatric patients has risen sharply, and the United States has become the largest consumer of ADHD medications in the world.<sup>32</sup> In addition, about 4.5 million U.S. school children have been diagnosed with ADHD, and have increased 3 percent each year since 1997, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The largest increase in antidepressant use was among pre-schoolers. This disorder can impair academic progress. Children who take part in outdoor play have lower risks to ADHD and helps them engage in lots of laughter which reduces blood pressure. Additionally, children suffering from ADHD have shown lesser behavioral problems and improved focus after playing outdoors. It is critical for concentration and attention. Schools that cut back on their recess saw a negative result in their overall school performance. Playing outdoors is therefore a key factor of academic success. Outdoor play also strengthens the immune system, enhances muscle function and reduces stress levels in children.

A recent study found that children who participate in outdoor play for several hours a day had significantly lower rates of eye complications like nearsightedness as compared to those who spent shorter periods of time outdoors. Outdoor play stimulates and engages all the senses of the children, which leads to proper development.

28 Kent State University [einside.kent.edu](http://einside.kent.edu)

29 [Healthyalbert.com/729.htm](http://Healthyalbert.com/729.htm)

30 Bartlett, Sheridan. “Children’s experience of the physical environment in poor urban settlements and the implications for policy, planning and practice.” *Environment and Urbanization*.(1999) vol 11 no 2 pg 68

31 Barlett (1999) & Parsons, Ashley. *Young Children and Nature: Outdoor Play and Development, Experiences Fostering Environmental Consciousness, And the Implications on Playground Design* (2011) pg 5

32 [www.benefitof.net/benefits-of-outdoor-recreation/](http://www.benefitof.net/benefits-of-outdoor-recreation/)

Health experts believe that children who explore and play outside are more likely to be self-motivated and adventurous. When children are capable of trying new things outside, they learn vital lessons that are going to help them as they grow. Such children have a higher likelihood of taking risks when they become adults. Children need challenging environments to test new skills and reach for new heights. They feel a sense of accomplishment and pride as they explore and discover their abilities on their own.



Photo Courtesy Kelly Ortiz

### Good For the Economy

Outdoor recreation is a powerful force in today's economy. Across the United States it generates millions of dollars, job opportunities for others, and consumer spending which leads to economic growth. In Colorado alone, outdoor recreation generated \$13.2 billion in consumer spending, \$4.2 billion in wages and salaries, \$125,000 in direct jobs, and \$994 million in state and local taxes. The outdoor industry is third in consumer spending after health care and insurance.<sup>33</sup> We spend this money on gear, vehicles, trips, food, lodging, and other travel related expenses. This creates jobs, supports communities, generates tax revenue and drives the economy especially in small towns like Lake City. This industry perpetuates healthy communities and quality of life for the residents of these communities and is an economic driver in the United States. Outdoor recreation can also lead to the preservation of natural, recreational and scenic areas needed for outdoor activities and increase the property values. In addition, people who regularly participate in outdoor recreation tend to be more productive at work.



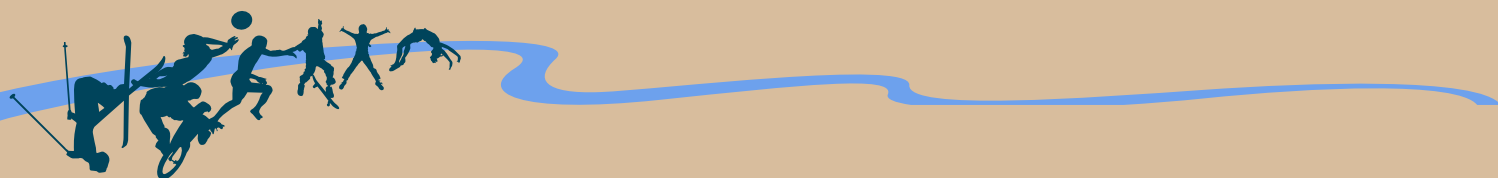
Photo Courtesy Kelly Ortiz

<sup>33</sup> [outdoorindustry.org](http://outdoorindustry.org)





# LAKE CITY & HINSDALE COUNTY INITIATIVES





## Hinsdale County Initiatives

Hinsdale County has developed initiatives as a direct result of the visitor surveys and the un-met recreation needs and desires to improve the visitor and residents recreation experiences and opportunities. This includes an effort to add recreation activities, expand the outdoor experience to more visitors, improve trails, improve communication efforts, and further outreach to attract visitors to come and play in Lake City.

Each of these initiatives has a list of potential projects for Lake City and surrounding Hinsdale County. These lists are not limited to these activities and may change or expand based upon visitor demand for services and new projects. These recreation initiatives are expected to happen over the next 10 years, however, as the visitor base expands, many of these projects may be implemented sooner. Many of these may need immediate implementation to attract a wider client base, while others are expected to grow with the community as it progresses toward a more economically diverse recreation-based community.

### 1. In-Town Facilities to Improve Wellness for Local Residents

Of all the surveys collected from local residents, they chose to improve In-town services for the local residents and school children. The opinions expressed by the survey respondents were in favor of enhanced recreation opportunities within town as many indicated that although summer recreation activities are abundant, there is a limited amount of recreation activities in town for year round local residents that are fairly isolated in Lake City. Year round available recreation opportunities are of critical importance to these year-round residents who have to travel long distances for activities such as playing school sports, swimming, and participating in childrens activities such as visiting the zoo, aquariums, and trampoline gyms.

One of the top needs that survey respondents identified was the need for a gymnasium. In addition to this, residents also indicated the importance of maintaining the historic character of buildings and making facilities ADA compliant. In addition to the gymnasium, many respondents indicated a need for a Colorado High School Activities Association (CHSAA) supported facility. Many of the students who want to participate in school sponsored events travel long distances to participate in these activities. The nearest location for these activities is in Creede Colorado (nearby Mineral County) that is approximately 1 hour away. Survey respondents also indicated a need for a community recreation center. This need was indicated as part of the Recreation Committee's survey in 2013. Local residents needed a year round facility to maintain health and wellness throughout the year. The Armory is located in a historic structure and provides classes as well as weight lifting, and limited kids activities throughout the year. Both of these projects are in the planning stages.





**Objective:** Continue to improve recreation facilities to local residents and provide a wide range of year round recreation opportunities to improve the quality of life for Lake City. This will include making facilities ADA accessible and welcome both residents and visitors.

**Potential Projects**

- New Gymnasium located at the Lake City School
- Armory upgrades
- Multi-Use Pavilion at Memorial Park



Photos Courtesy Kelly Ortiz

**Recreation Improvements For the Gymnasium**

- Host middle School and high School events such as:
  - Basketball
  - Volleyball
  - Wrestling

**Recreation Improvements For the Armory**

- Weight rooms
- Exercise Equipment (stationary bikes, treadmills, ellipticals, rowing machines, circuit training)
- Exercise Class Activity Space (yoga, Zumba, circuit training, Pilates)
- Maintain Historic Character
- Accessible ADA Standards

**Recreation Improvements For Memorial Park**

- Multi-Use Arena
- Indoor Ice Skating Rink
- Swimming Pool



Main View - Southeast Corner



View of the East Elevation



Looking South Down Gunnison Avenue



Overhead View from the Southeast



BEN WHITE ARCHITECTURE  
 LAKE CITY COMMUNITY SCHOOL  
 GYMNASIUM ADDITION  
 MARCH 23, 2015 CONCEPT DESIGN 6



Small Garden Park/Historic Armory



Native Garden Park/Downtown Lake City



Memorial Park



Memorial Park

Photos Courtesy Kelly Ortiz



There are 2 main parks in Lake City that provide the majority of recreation and community events. Memorial Park near Henson Creek and Town Park in downtown Lake City. These parks have limited space but can host events. Town Park has playground equipment and hosts annual wine festivals, craft fairs, and other events. Sporting events take place in Memorial Park. Memorial Park also contains a baseball field, skating rink and skate park as well as playground equipment. Adjacent from Town Park is a small native garden area that provides additional seating in downtown, as well as a small park next to the Armory. These parks are close in proximity, but serve similar purposes. Many of these spaces can be utilized for other resources. Currently, they provide downtown beautification, however, there is a need to make these spaces more functional given the demands of the community and visitors. Additionally, these parks need to be tied together. This can be completed by including park sculpture that ties one park to another, or interpretation or markers, similar park benches, picnic tables, lighting, planter type, or other architectural elements.



Photo Courtesy Pintrest



Photo Courtesy Kingsport.tn.gov



Both topography and access to public space in downtown Lake City prevent larger playing fields suitable for team sports, such as football and soccer for high school sponsored events. However, there is potential for the expansion of Memorial Park along the road adjacent to the park. There is a potential to redesign this park to provide defined parking, expanded use of the park, room for a pavilion, and field sharing for soccer and other team sports. This would require site planning to move sporting activities that have the least amount of work and money invested (such as moving the skate rink to the southeast near the fishing pier). Providing designated parking in this location and more defined roadways will keep the road from expanding toward the park facilities. Tree planting and vegetative barriers can provide finite edges that confine parking and road use. Additionally, defined parking, trails and planting can help restore the integrity of the creek bank along Henson Creek.



Map and Simulation Courtesy Kelly Ortiz & GoogleEarth

## 2. Connect, expand and enhance trail systems throughout Lake City and surrounding Hinsdale County.

During the survey process many visitors and residents expressed the need for more non-motorized and motorized trails (including accessible trails, connecting trails and ATV trails). This was one of the top requests on the survey when visitors and residents expanded on their explanations of what they would like to see in and around Lake City. Lake City will work with both public land agencies, non-profits, private land owners, and the City to attempt to provide this resource for both visitors and residents. This will include trail connections between existing trails and new trails as well as attempting to secure private land and work with public land agencies to continue trails.

**Objective:** Continue to improve both non-motorized trails and motorized trails, find opportunities for connecting trails, and continue to build upon the existing trail system (including the Lake to Lake Trail as well as the Alpine Loop). Where possible, make new trails and existing trails ADA accessible.

### Potential Projects

- Continue to expand and connect the Lake to Lake Trail System
- Connect the River Walk Trail System with the Water Dog Trail and the Lake to Lake Trail
- Connect Lake City with the Ute Ulay and other locations along the Alpine Loop
- Continue to find opportunities along Lake San Cristobal for Hiking, Mountain Biking, Cross Country Skiing, and motorized use such as (ATV use and Snowmobiles)
- Continue to expand the mountain bike opportunities at the Ski Area and connecting to the Lake to Lake Trail
- Provide connectivity from the River Walk Trail to Pete's Lake and continue to find opportunities to continue the trail around the Lake

### Potential Trail Projects For Motorized Travel

- Expand the trail system on the Alpine Loop-including providing a connection for OHV's and mountain bikers

### Potential Trail Projects For ADA

- Provide a range of trails (easy to difficult) that would accommodate ADA



Photo courtesy Kelly Ortiz

### Recreation Improvements

- Work with private land owners, city, non-profits and public lands to assist in trail planning and connection

### 3. Continue to improve opportunities for winter recreation.

Winter recreation opportunities and the Lake City Ski Area was identified as a features that needed additional attention. This ski area serves a small number of local residents and a small visiting population from surrounding Hinsdale County. This area has the potential to serve larger numbers of visitors and capture additional visitors during the shoulder months of spring and fall and the summer. The Recreation Committee expressed a need to explore opportunities to expand the ski area with new runs, lifts, and other seasonal activities. Further development of the ski area can help Lake City's economic growth.

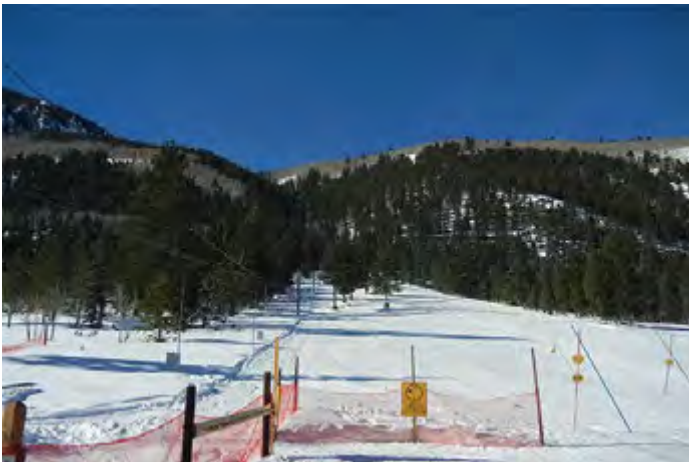
**Objective:** Continue to improve the amenities and recreation activities at the ski area for all seasons. Where possible make this area ADA accessible.

#### Potential Projects

- Provide new restrooms at the ski area
- Provide a warming hut at the ski area
- Provide activities at the ski area during the summer months
- Provide ice skating in town
- Provide more trails for snowshoeing, x-country skiing, and snowmobiling

#### Recreation Improvements For Winter-based Recreation

- Ski Area expansion, improvements and additional activities
- Provide yurts/huts for winter opportunities such as snowmobiling, x-country skiing, and snowshoeing
- Provide a pavilion or covered area to improve the ice skating opportunities and length of season
- Expand upon existing events



The Lake City Ski Hill

Photo Courtesy Kelly Ortiz



Ice Skating on Lake San Cristobal

Photo Courtesy Kelly Ortiz





Photo Courtesy Kelly Ortiz

Snowshoe race during the Winter Festival



Photo Courtesy Lakecityswitchbacks.com



Photo Courtesy Kelly Ortiz

Ice fishing on Lake San Cristobal



Ice climbing during the Winter Festival

Photo Courtesy Kelly Ortiz

#### 4. Provide opportunities at Ute Ulay and expand Heritage Tourism.

The Ute Ulay Mine is an undiscovered asset and potential opportunity, but is currently under utilized. It has been preserved for historic purposes, however, there are opportunities to tie this site to heritage tourism that can benefit the visitors wanting to learn more about the history of this area. This area is currently closed off to the public but visitors stop here to take photographs as they travel the Alpine Loop.

**Objective:** Develop and improve local resources related to historic features and find opportunities to expand Heritage Tourism.



Photo Courtesy Chris Ortiz

#### Potential Projects and Recreation Improvements

- Provide tour opportunities at Ute Ulay and other historic locations for Heritage Tourism along the Alpine Loop and locations within Hinsdale County
- Provide bike rental opportunities at Ute Ulay to visit each historic site
- Provide an inclusive map for visitors locating historic structures and history
- Provide connection from these sites to other recreation opportunities
- A passport can be developed that identifies all key historical sites to visit in Lake City with a checklist for visitors
- Identify what sites to visit in a day, two days, three days for Heritage Tourism on Lake City's website.
- A brochure or traveling tour can be developed that identifies stops throughout Lake City and Hinsdale County that talks about the significance of the historical sites
- Interpretive signing at each site
- Ghost Town/Haunted Tours to a series of historical sites seasonally

This site may have opportunities to provide recreation activities in addition to heritage tourism. The most important need at this location would be to provide information regarding the significance of the site. Most tourists who were interviewed at this site wanted to know more about what this site was used for and if efforts were underway for any improvements or tours. There are opportunities to tie this site to other heritage sites within Lake City and along the Alpine Loop (such as Pike Snowden Cabin). The location behind this area could possibly host overlooks, towers, zip-lines, and ropes courses for an additional way for visitors to view the overall site without entering buildings that may have structural issues.



Photo Courtesy Kelly Ortiz



## Is Heritage Tourism Right For You?

Hinsdale County and Lake City hosts many historical and cultural opportunities ready for exploration. Identifying, developing, protecting and promoting what is unique about your community is the essence of heritage tourism. This can be a delicate balancing act that requires strong partnerships between preservation and tourism promoters. A successful program requires that preservation and tourism has balance. It can offer a strong economic base as part of a bigger healthy economic plan.



Photo Courtesy Tombstonewalkingtours.com



Photo Courtesy McCain

Interpreters dressed in period clothing can immerse an audience in the story and take them back in time.

### Requires Research

Development of a heritage tourism requires research that can help build community pride and encourage preservation. Preservation of resources offers something unique for visitors. It requires that a community do more than put up historic preservation markers all over town telling people what building was used for what. Interpreting heritage resources can create an exciting experience for the visitor. This can be achieved through re-inactments of events and tours that allow the visitor to travel back in time.

### Steps to take to develop a successful heritage tourism program:

- Organize a Committee-Your heritage program will depend upon the local residents to embrace the idea and should have a wide range of interest from the community.
- Identify and Assess Your Communities Resources-What is in your area that has a potential for heritage tourism? This may include historic downtown areas, cemeteries, archaeological sites, cabins, and mines. These can be determined in order of priority as follows:
  1. Primary significance areas (such as focal points for your heritage tourism program)
  2. Secondary significance areas (these can be interesting sites that supplement your program)
  3. Stage for Activities (this is usually a location that provides a backdrop for special events)
  4. Filter out the information local people do not want to share (such as private cemeteries, or areas that you do not want to publicize)
  5. Identifying all support services needed to help your program succeed
- Develop A Plan with clear achievable goals and the ability to convey the message. This can mean staffing a program, number of days of week it will run, identifying funding strategies, coordinate with state and local organizations, visitor research (who visits), a strategic plan and evaluation process.
- Promote Your Community by providing walking tours, signage, museum exhibits, driving tours, and even beautifying your downtown. Additionally, the use of media to promote and advertise your program is important.
- Develop Visitor Services to provide lodging, food and other opportunities for people while they visit.



## Principles of Heritage Tourism

The National Trust for Historic Preservation began a heritage tourism assistance program which encourages the incorporation of these five principles into program development:

- Focus on authenticity and quality. Travelers today are educated and highly informed. They have many choices so a quality experience is critical to satisfying customers.
- Preserve and protect your resources. This will be essential to prevent the loss of the resources that attract heritage tourism.
- Make sites come alive. Telling the stories of the people who lived in your area is key to education and entertainment for visitors.
- Find your community fit and encourage local residents to be involved.
- Collaborate and form partnerships between local leaders in tourism, preservation, business and government to work toward a common goal.



## 5. Expand opportunities for water recreation and at Lake San Cristobal.

Lake San Cristobal is home to abundant recreation opportunities. Fishing, camping, and boating are a few of the many opportunities available to local residents and visitors. Lake San Cristobal is surrounded by lodging, a campground, many trails and has an access road that loops the Lake. This lake is popular with anglers and provides trophy fishing with fish reaching sizes of up to 25 lbs or more.

**Objective:** Develop and improve opportunities for recreation at Lake San Cristobal. Use the existing resources to improve visitor experiences and boost visibility of existing water-based recreation opportunities.

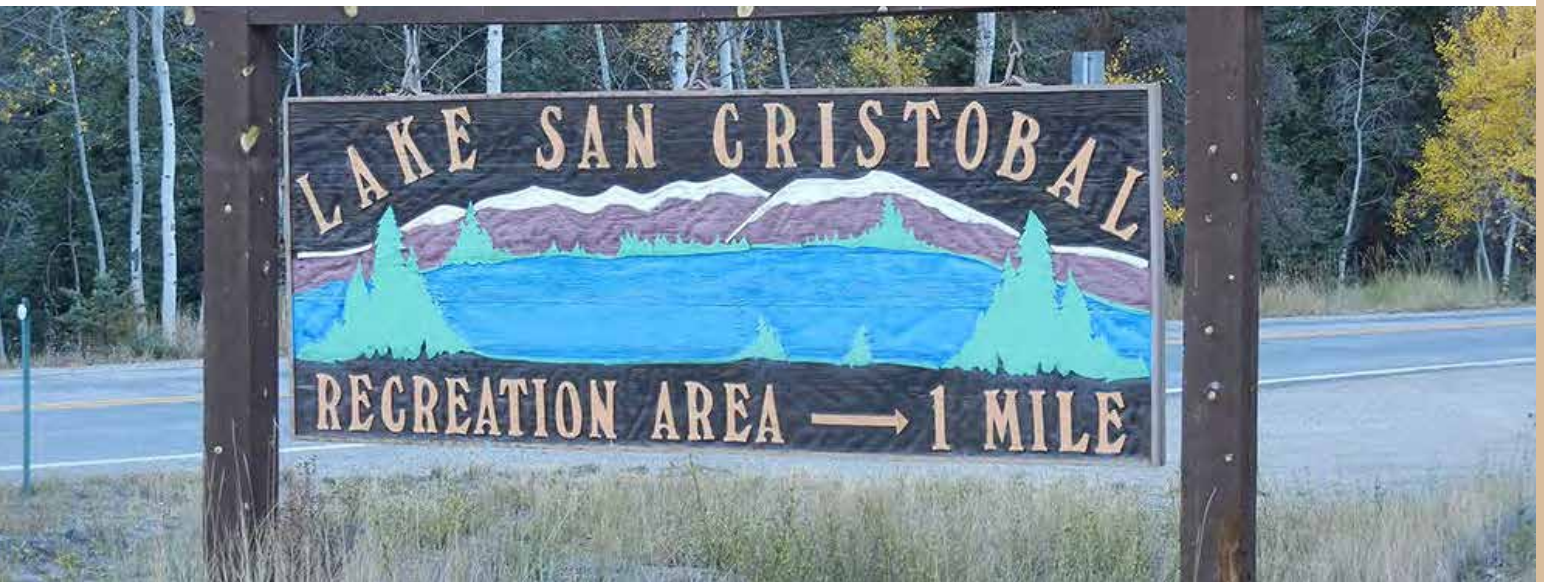
### Potential Projects

- Provide a beach area
- Provide amenities at the boat dock
- Provide an accessible trail/bike trail around Lake San Cristobal and connecting trail to downtown
- Provide additional camping opportunities



### Improvements

- Build an accessible boat dock for motorized small crafts
- Provide a watercraft store at the boat dock
- Provide additional recreation opportunities with rentals of kayaks as well as paddleboards at Lake San Cristobal



## 6. Promote Hinsdale County's recreation opportunities and increase outreach to attract more visitors and increased use by residents.

Raising awareness of the recreation opportunities may directly increase participation. Outreach about facilities, activities, festivals, and new opportunities can be accomplished using marketing techniques such as websites, blogs, advertising, brochures, and social media.

**Objective:** Over the next 5 years, develop media, websites, and advertising to promote outdoor recreation and events and improve opportunities for recreation at Lake San Cristobal. Use the existing resources to improve visitor experiences and boost visibility of existing water-based recreation opportunities.

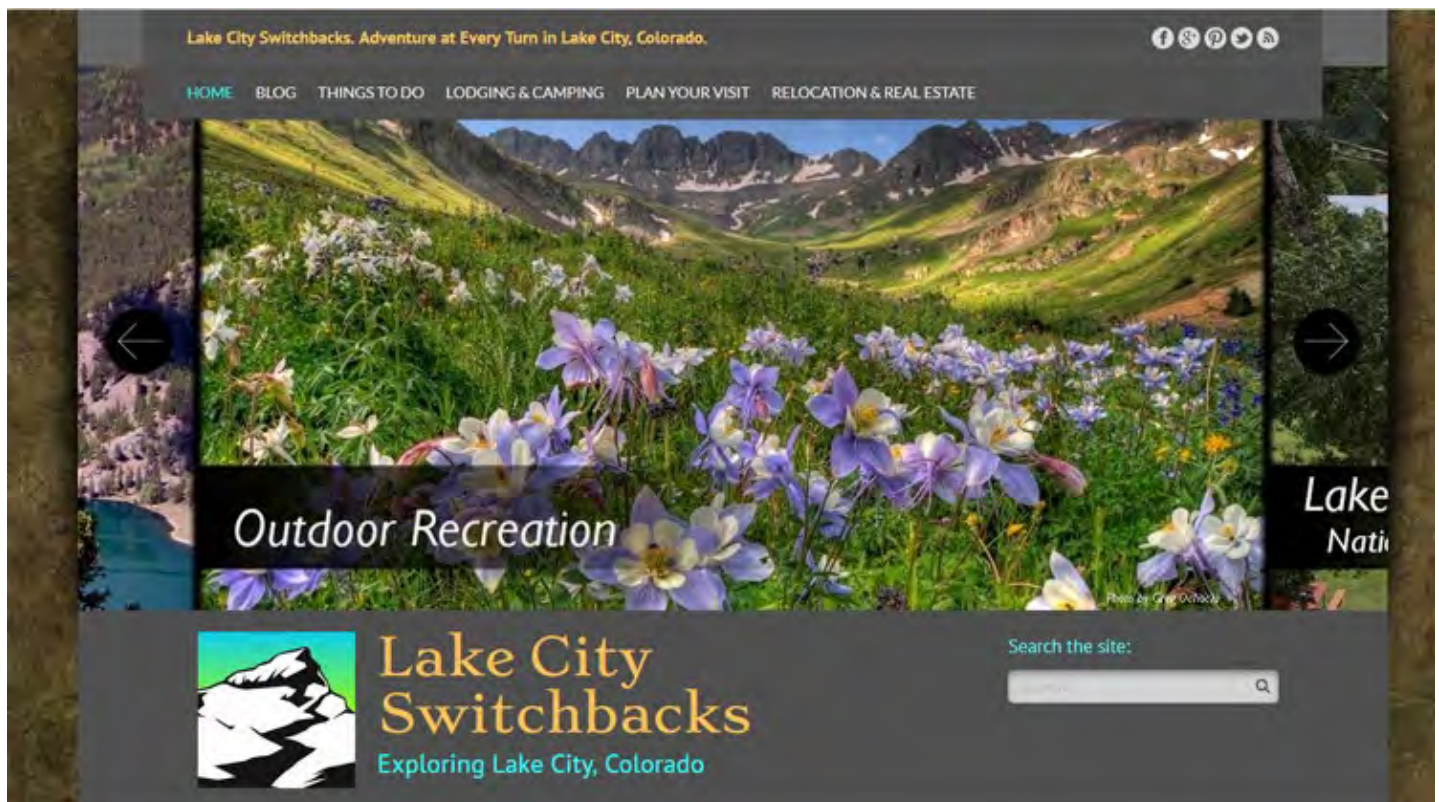
### Potential Projects

- Website Updates
- Facebook Notifications
- WiFi and Satellite at campgrounds and around visitor high use areas

### Improvements

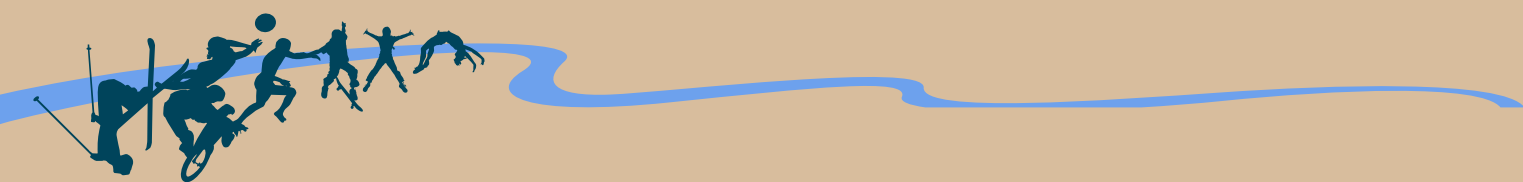
- Increase WiFi capacity in Lake City and Hinsdale County

- Increase use of social media
- Apps that help visitors locate recreation opportunities
- Websites and social media can advertise “what to do in Lake City or Hinsdale County if you have 1 day, 2 days, 3 days, 4 days”
- Advertise year round festivals to encourage participation in the future
- Encourage businesses to stay open longer and include hours of operation on the website





# OUTDOOR RECREATION TOOL KITS



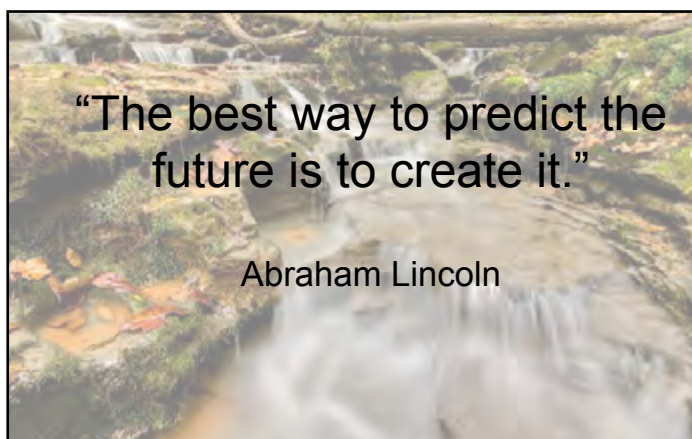
## Recreation Tool Kits and Implementation

Hinsdale County and Lake City parks and recreation services are provided by many different professionals, volunteers, business owners, and individuals who have a passion for recreation and the wellness of the community. Together this plan and these dedicated people can help to help produce world class recreation opportunities, preserve the natural environments, enhance safety, and protect Hinsdale County's valuable resource investments.

During the surveys, participants identified distinctive services, needs, information, trends and opportunities. These will be discussed in detail with recommendations and plans for achieving world class recreation. In addition, this chapter will include in the recommendations:

- Future trends and emerging areas
- Community economic vitality and the economic impacts
- Demographic and social and cultural trends
- Changing technology and communication
- Environmental stewardship opportunities
- Quality of life

This section includes tool kits for implementing the different opportunities that were identified by the participants as well as the Lake City Community Recreation Committee. Each of the tool kits includes a set of best management practices, a checklist, and a set of examples from other communities to use as a guide to provide a strategy for business owners, residents, and those who design and develop recreation projects in Hinsdale County.





## 1. BUILDING A COMMUNITY OF WELLNESS FOR LOCAL RESIDENTS AND VISITORS

Local outdoor recreation opportunities, such as availability to parks and other amenities, are critical to building healthy residents. The goal of outdoor activities are to provide physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual rewards as well as promoting physical health and self-sufficiency of a community. Outdoor activities that benefit the local community can also provide education, promote tourism and ultimately benefit the local economy. This priority will help Lake City and Hinsdale County inspire frequent use of existing green spaces, parks and trails.

### Best Practices For Building Healthy Communities

Lake City residents have identified the need for indoor and outdoor recreation facilities that will keep their community healthy, provide year round activities, and accommodate the local public school so that students are not required to travel to participate in intramural sports. These needs require upgrades to existing facilities, the building of new ones and better connections to parks and attractions within Lake City. The following is a list of items and amenities that can be included to improve the overall recreation experience for Lake City residents:

- Build a pavilion for multiple activities that is ADA
- Update facilities at the Armory (use state of the art equipment to encourage local residents and visitors to take advantage of the recreation facilities. This may mean providing WiFi connections at the Armory for guests who work out-or satellite connections to broadcast special events.
- Building a new gym at the high school that would accommodate both CHSAA activities and local community intramural sports activities
- Encourage festivals and outdoor concert events (1-2 days)
- Build an amphitheater and performance stages
- Explore ideas to incorporate a community water park (sprinkler/fountain park) with benches, picnic tables, grills, drinking fountains, and shade structures
- Use paving patterns to connect parks to each other
- Dog parks/bark parks
- Walking paths around existing parks with fitness stations
- Swings/Seating for adults
- Lawn game areas/bocce ball

### Increase Outdoor Programming at Parks, Lakes, and Rivers

Lake City can increase it's visitation and attract more

residents and non-local people by hosting special events. These activities can be hosted at recreation areas, rivers, trails, and historic sites:



Photo Courtesy Camille Richards  
Duck Race on Henson Creek

- **Climbing competitions (Alpine Academy/Ice Climb Competitions)**
- **Boot camp competitions (Tough Mudders)**
- **Painting classes (watercolor, acrylic, oils)**
- **Yoga**
- **Festivals/craft fairs (Wine/Renaissance)**
- **Paddleboard races**
- **Ultra-marathons (over the Alpine Loop)**
- **Winter festivals for ice climbing, ice fishing, cross country skiing**

### Co-locate Activities

Lake City can provide more services by sharing facilities. For instance, a ice rink may become an arena during the off season, a trampoline gym, a location to hold events (including 4H events, circuit training, or even dog shows). Local parks can offer parent activities (yoga) so that they can exercise while watching children play in the park. The school gym could be multi-funded and used as a location for community intramural games (such as basketball and volleyball).

## 1. BUILDING A COMMUNITY OF WELLNESS FOR LOCAL RESIDENTS AND VISITORS

### Utilize Joint-use Agreements to Increase Recreational Opportunities

This may mean establishing agreements to make school and community facilities open to residents outside regular hours.

### Upgrade Armory for Improved Recreational Activities

Lake City can provide state of the art facilities at the Armory that would cover many of the needs of the local residents. The Armory is currently under construction to make these improvements, however, addition items can be included to encourage resident participation:

- Provide WiFi and satellite connection to improve the individual workout
- Provide an area that would allow for assemblies and movie showings

### Connect Parks and Facilities

Neighborhood parks offer green space, a nearby location for play, and open-air classrooms for children. An interconnected system of parks and open space is more beneficial than creating parks in isolation. The parks within Lake City provide different experiences. The three parks located within close proximity to each other in downtown Lake City can provide multiple opportunities to the community and visitors. Additionally, these parks are connected to Memorial Park via the downtown walk to the Lake City River Corridor. Town Park offers the majority of the activities during festivals, however, providing connections can link activities simultaneously. Communities like Lake City can commit to future park connections, through acquiring land and easements to ensure recreation opportunities for residents and visitors.

### Improve Walking and Biking Opportunities

Lake City has a trail system that runs along Henson Creek, Pete's Swamp, the Alpine Loop, and adjoining public lands. These areas have the potential for connections through town, however, many residents have expressed that safety is a big concern when connecting from one park to another. Potential improvements for Lake City would include:

- Tree Planting along city streets and sidewalks that are directly connected to city parks
- Use Universal Access Design (ADA) along all sidewalks connecting to parks and along the river walk Trail System
- Use reduced speed limits to ensure the safety



Photo Courtesy [www.ibiketo.ca](http://www.ibiketo.ca)

of participants using parks and greenway crossings to access connecting parks or use crossing signals

- Sign greenway paths that connect to parks

### Promote Alternative Modes of Transportation For Getting Around Town

Highway 149 runs through the middle of Lake City that can carry heavy traffic during the summer and fall. This can present challenges to safe alternative modes of transportation such as biking or walking. Additionally, trail to trail travel involves crossing Highway 149 in at least 2 locations.

- Provide crossing signals, crosswalks, underpasses, overpasses or reduce speed zones in order to achieve safe crossing to access parks and trails
- Provide adequate lighting at crossings or blinking lights
- Use special bike or walking lanes can help separate traffic problems and keep residents, visitors and children safe while on the trails. This may be paths through town specifically for bikes
- Offer interpretive bike tours

## 1. BUILDING A COMMUNITY OF WELLNESS FOR LOCAL RESIDENTS AND VISITORS

- Tap into already in place bike events such as “Bike to Work Day”, etc
- Identify quiet areas and those that will accommodate OHV’s
- Sign roads “bikes must stay in traffic lane” to accommodate bikes on roads<sup>34</sup>
- Bike tours to different destinations
- Bike education and promotional campaigns (this can include inviting a bike manufacturer to Lake City to demo the latest bike styles

### Raise awareness of the health benefits of outdoor recreation

Lake City can provide state of the art recreation from climbing (rock and ice), world class mountain biking, hiking (as there are many fourteeners and wilderness areas to choose from), excellent OHV riding opportunities, and fishing along Henson Creek to name a few. Communicate the health benefits of outdoor recreation via social media and websites, that provide ideas for:

- What trails are best if you have 1 hour
- Where to go for a 2 hour hikes
- A 3 hour heritage tour
- 1 day in Lake City

Make sure these events and ideas are listed on the website along with lodging, restaurant choices and other fun ideas.



### Rent Equipment

Most visitors don't want to buy gear for a 1-2 hour

<sup>34</sup> A recent study in Oregon supports evidence that when cars are asked to share the road with bikes by allowing bikes in the driving lane, cars are more careful of bikes on the road-thus making it safer for bikers.

trip or carry it around if they are just passing through. Rental equipment can encourage visitors to stop and participate in an activity that they would not normally participate in. Giving them the option to rent equipment allows visitors to try out an activity and may encourage them to come back for a longer stay. Rental equipment does not necessarily have to be new items. Used equipment can be just as effective in providing quality recreation and can be purchased at a reduced price.

### Encourage Community Support to Care For Parks

To help residents feel a sense of ownership in their parks, it is important to include them in decisions regarding their parks. Organizing planting and maintenance days for the community can encourage people to nurture parks and open spaces, get them into the outdoors and connect with other people.



## 1. BUILDING A COMMUNITY OF WELLNESS FOR LOCAL RESIDENTS AND VISITORS

### Alternative Forms of Transportation

Lake City can rent or provide bikes, scooters and creative transportation on the honor system or through a pay station. Also consider alternative forms of transportation for the Alpine Loop Tour. Open-air vehicles or historic cars provide a unique experience.



Photo Courtesy [www.environmentalsciencedegrees.net](http://www.environmentalsciencedegrees.net)



Photo Courtesy [www.prweb.com](http://www.prweb.com)

### Consider Pop-up Parks

Pop-up parks are temporary public spaces that allow communities to try new ideas for public spaces. This would include shutting down roads for special events, using parking spaces to advertise small activities, open air cinemas, acrobats in the street, or dog shows. Pop-up parks can be small in size and provide just enough room for a game board.



Photo Courtesy Chad Emerson Pop-up Parks

No single park, no matter how large and how well designed, would provide citizens with the beneficial influences of nature; instead parks need to be linked to one another and to surrounding residential neighborhoods.  
—Frederick Law Olmsted

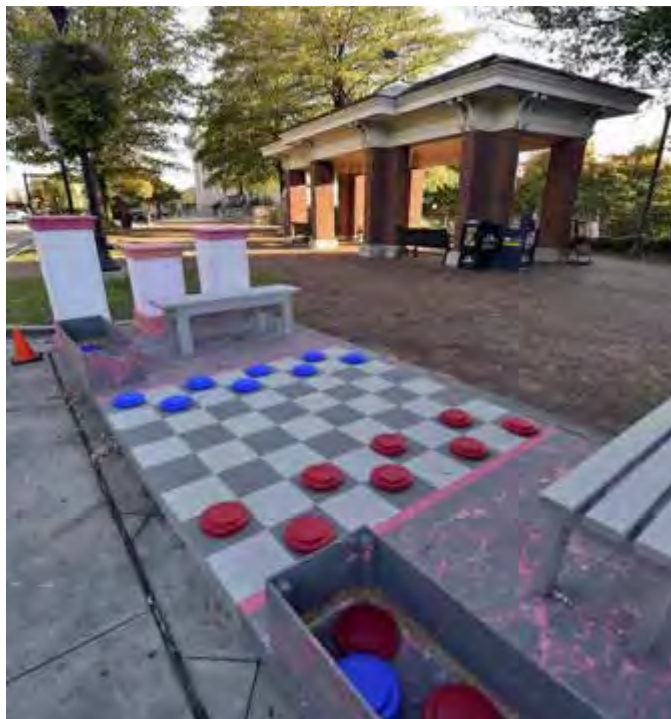


# 1. BUILDING A COMMUNITY OF WELLNESS FOR LOCAL RESIDENTS AND VISITORS

Pop-up parks can be small in size and provide just enough room for a game board. Consider putting down sod for a temporary activity or using palletts for adhoc seating.



pallets can become an outdoor theater or place for a unique event.



Board games can be even more fun when super-sized!



Photo courtesy Providence Day Pop-up Parks



Community movies held outdoors can increase a sense of community.



Photo Courtesy Chad Emerson Pop-up Parks



## 1. BUILDING A COMMUNITY OF WELLNESS FOR LOCAL RESIDENTS AND VISITORS

### BUILDING A COMMUNITY OF WELLNESS CHECKLIST

- Improve the walking and biking opportunities safely through town by providing sidewalks, overpasses, or underpasses, crosswalks, blinking lights/traffic lights, and signing
- Share facilities, playgrounds, fields and open space for both school and community
- Offer signing and maps available for park to park trails
- Host downtown events (pop up park events)
- Draw attention to Lake City's parks, trails, and green spaces using media and signing

## CASE STUDIES: BUILDING A COMMUNITY OF WELLNESS FOR LOCAL RESIDENTS AND VISITORS

Wellness doesn't just have to be about workouts and activities, but it can include fun events that involve eating right, moving and having fun! Special events such as local or speciality farmer markets, performances, operas, and workout events can potentially attract new businesses and residents to the community. They can also expand current businesses and help to promote larger events. Highlight the unique qualities of your area and put it on display to teach others what you have to offer. It could be a unique sport or local food only grown in your area.



Local foods offer opportunities to educate people about your special area.



Acrobatic events can be held in local parks or as part of pop-up parks in streets.



Workouts and trainings in local parks offer a sense of community and wellness and can attract observers.



## CASE STUDIES: BUILDING A COMMUNITY OF WELLNESS FOR LOCAL RESIDENTS AND VISITORS

Bike races can be hosted along the Alpine Loop and around Lake San Cristobal. Bike races in combination with other festivals can draw additional people who may not bike or accompanying family members.



photo courtesy ziffliaw.com

Bike share programs encourage outdoor participation.







## CASE STUDIES: BUILDING A COMMUNITY OF WELLNESS FOR LOCAL RESIDENTS AND VISITORS

**TUBE-A-PALOOZA**  
PARTY BUS &  
APPLE RIVER TUBING!  
Visit Us ONLINE For  
TICKET INFO!  
[www.RentMyPartyBus.com](http://www.RentMyPartyBus.com)

Lake City and Hinsdale County can build upon the resources that are available. Water resources can host races, fun events, and festivals.



A splash pad or spray pool are often in a public parks for water play that has little or no standing water. This eliminates the need for lifeguards or other supervision, as there is little risk of drowning. Waterparks can extend water recreation opportunities closer to downtown facilities, provide a cooling affect to nearby park visitors who are seated near the fountains, offer recreation diversity, and attract families.

## 2. SHAPING HINSDALE COUNTY INTO A RECREATION DESTINATION

Great Outdoor Recreation Opportunities not only satisfy the needs of local residents, but attract tourists, boost local economies, and help put Hinsdale County on the map as a recreation destination offering unique opportunities. The unique setting that Lake City sits within and the availability of nearby resources, such as Henson Creek, a myriad of trails, picturesque landscapes, the proximity to 3 Scenic Byways, and a host of available recreation activities, can bring people from all over Colorado, the United States, and the world. These visitors can have a unique appetite for technical apparel, footwear and equipment for outdoor activities driving the local economy forward. With innovation, and improved technology, Hinsdale County and Lake City can become Colorado's leading recreation community.

### BEST PRACTICES

#### Be Digitally Connected and Tie Existing Resources To Webpages

Many of the residents and visitors alike expressed the need for Lake City to provide more digital information. In addition, trends indicated that most young recreationists rely heavily on electronically for information about recreation opportunities. Lake City can capitalize on already in-use webpages and expand them as well as provide new websites, and improved WiFi service. The following items can be included to encourage visitor participation and world class recreation opportunities:

- Provide websites that match visitors with abilities, such as maps of easy trails, moderate and difficult trails. Additionally, these websites can also match visitors with time constraints to particular activities such as "How Long Does It Take To Drive The Alpine Loop?", "How Long Do You Need To Hike To the Top Of Uncompaghre Peak?"
- Provide "What To Do In 3 Days in Lake City", "What To Do in 5 Days in Lake City", "Places To See Before You Leave Lake City"
- Use the internet to target visitors all over Colorado and the US to attract them to Lake City for specific festivals, activities and recreation participation. Link or connect to other websites and similar activities to promote opportunities
- Link all recreation activities to one website

#### Map It!

Lake City has current information available to visitors through the Lake City Chamber of Commerce/visitor center, the US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, local businesses, maps, and brochures. However, many of the maps available to the public do not provide sufficient information. U.S. Forest Service

Maps provide roads, trails, campgrounds, and picnic areas, however, do not display critical information such as topographic data. National Geographic maps display very good topographic information but may not have the most up-to-date information on roads and trails. Recreation maps may contain information on places to stay or camp, but may not directly correlate with the public lands maps. Hinsdale County could produce a map that would provide all information that a visitor would need to know to participate in the many available recreation activities. The following are examples:

- Provide topographic maps that identify recreation opportunities on them, as well as facilities, ADA information, contact information as well as topographic information for orientation.
- Provide maps that show all of the available recreation opportunities such as rock climbing, kayaking, hiking, etc. Provide the amount of time it takes to reach these destinations, or time it takes to participate in a tour, hike, drive for pleasure, etc.
- Consider maps for each specific recreation activity such as all the places to find spectacular snowshoeing, great places to rock climb, etc.
- Provide maps at trailheads.

#### Partner with Neighbor Agencies

Hinsdale County contains 96% public lands. Lake City is located in the middle of these public lands and has tremendous partnering opportunities. Additionally, there are opportunities to partner with local businesses to provide additional information as visitors go to local sporting good shops for gear.

- Make sure that local businesses have the latest maps, brochures and information on available activities

## 2. SHAPING HINSDALE COUNTY INTO A RECREATION DESTINATION

- Provide annual updates to business owners about the types of recreation that is available and new developments in activities

### Provide a Range of Lodging and Restaurant Opportunities

Many of the survey respondents feel that opportunities for diverse lodging and eating out can be improved. One of the complaints by visitors was the lack of support facilities during the fall and winter season as most businesses are closing for the winter.

- Encourage lodging and restaurants to stay open longer to accommodate visitors during shoulder seasons (spring, fall and winter)
- Encourage hospitality, friendliness, and helpful attitude toward visitors through hospitality training for local businesses
- Provide reasonable housing opportunities for lodging and restaurant industry employees

### Provide Accessible Opportunities

Getting around in downtown Lake City can provide challenges for someone who needs special accommodations such as Americans with Disabilities. Curbs, thresholds, stairs, boardwalks, and narrow passages can present barriers to Americans with disabilities. A disability can be characterized in terms of physical, sensory, neurological, developmental, psychiatric, and learning limitations. Improving landscapes, sidewalks, and recreation facilities do more than provide accessibility for people with accessible needs, but helps families with baby strollers, bicycles, skateboarders, and other visitors as well. As improvements are made in downtown, many of the following considerations should be addressed:

- Where possible modify curb ramps, parking, and passenger loading zones, elevators, signage, entrances, and restrooms to be ADA
- Websites should be accommodating to people with visual and hearing difficulties
- Signage should be addressed using Braille and placed at heights that can be reached
- Consider sign language interpreters for visitor programs
- All restrooms should be accessible
- Trails can be built using hardened surfaces such as crusher fines and bentonite, paved, or built

using concrete for accessibility

### Provide a Ample Parking and Access to Local Businesses

Parking at recreation sites was identified as a situation that needs improving. Many respondents identified the difficulty in finding parking at trailheads unless you arrive very early in the morning. Additionally, many visitors and business owners responded about the inability of vehicles being able to turn into businesses that are on the opposite side of the street forces them to drive to the end of town to find a turn-around. The following is a list of recommendations to help improve parking and access to recreation:

- Provide a dotted line in downtown Lake City to provide for vehicles turning from either direction
- Expand parking opportunities, or adjacent parking opportunities
- Provide shuttle service to and from trailheads and recreation events



Photo Courtesy Kelly Ortiz

### Provide a Clean Support Facilities

Many of the respondents from the survey are very happy with the conditions of the facilities that Hinsdale County has to offer. Time and time again, respondents to the survey commented on the overall cleanliness of Hinsdale County facilities-especially on public lands. However, in town vandalism has been reported to occur in Lake City Town Park where toilets can be difficult to keep clean.

## 2. SHAPING HINSDALE COUNTY INTO A RECREATION DESTINATION

### Orient Visitors

As visitors arrive in Lake City and Hinsdale County, visitors need to be directed and familiarized to recreation opportunities, lodging, restaurants and places to obtain supplies and gear.

### Host Events to Attract A Wider Constituent Base

Event planning takes time, energy and people to help pull together resources. Races, adventure activities, and special programs can attract nation-wide attention through media promotions.

- Adventure racing (such as Tuff Mudders)
- Bike racing (both mountain and road bike)
- Film festivals
- Star gazing
- Unique tours and festivals

### Encourage Residents, Businesses, and Visitors Alike to Share Experiences Through Social Media Sites

Social media is a powerful tool to spread the word about events and opportunities. Survey respondents chose this as one of the primary methods for sharing

their experiences with friends and family. Social media is a powerful marketing tool that can generate participants in an activity and encourage future visitation.

### Install Effective and Consistent Signing

Lake City and Hinsdale County can benefit from consistent signing design for signing that will orient visitors and give visitors a sense of cohesiveness. Visitors indicated during the survey questioning that they have, on occasion, gotten lost or disoriented. This is particularly true on backcountry trails.

- Work with public agencies on consistent signing for trails within Hinsdale County
- Develop sign standards for all signing in Hinsdale County

### Celebrate Lake City/Hinsdale Counties Uniqueness!

Lake City and Hinsdale County can offer activities that many other communities cannot. This area is unique in that it sits in a blind spot for night-time artificial light. As a result, this area lends itself to spectacular night time viewing of planets, stars, comets, and eclipses.



Wally Pacholka / AstroPics.com

Photo courtesy Wally Pacholka/Astropics.com

## 2. SHAPING HINSDALE COUNTY INTO A RECREATION DESTINATION

Additionally, Lake City has some of the finest examples of the Victorian Era architecture with historic homes and businesses, mining ruins, and ghost town remnants. The number of historic building sites come with stories of local and colorful historical characters.

- Offer star gazing/preserve the night sky festivals
- Provide tours of historic sites
- Provide re-inactments of historical events to bring history to life

Lake City is situated in the middle of Hinsdale County which contains 5 fourteen thousand foot peaks:

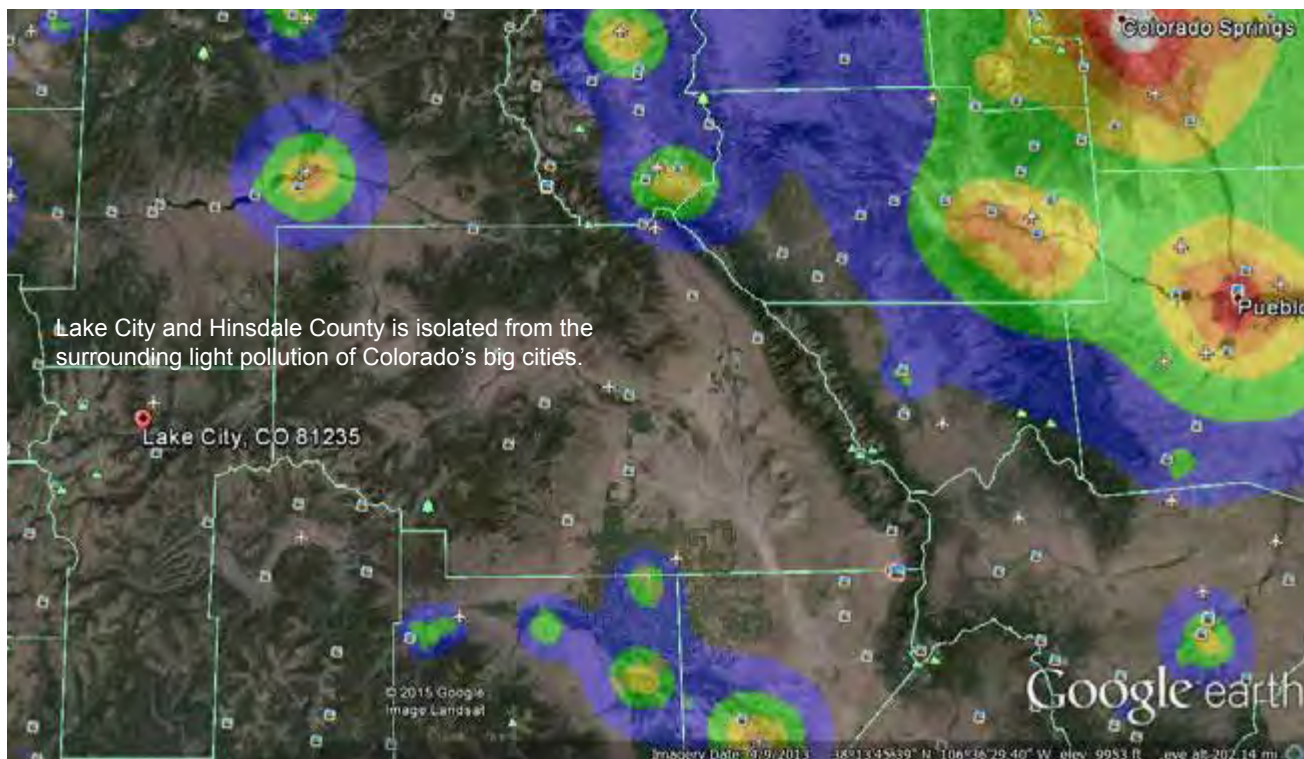
- Uncompaghe Peak 14,309 ft.
- Handies Peak 14,048 ft.
- Sunshine Peak 14,034 ft.
- Wetterhorn Peak 14,017 ft.
- San Luis Peak 14,014 ft.
- Red Cloud Peak 14,001 ft.

Lake City also sits adjacent to 4 of Colorado's State Scenic Byways: The SilverThread Scenic Byway, the Alpine Loop (connecting to the San Juan Skyway), and West Elk Loop. Additionally, Lake City has close proximity to 5 designated wilderness areas and 2 wilderness study areas:

- Uncompaghe Wilderness (102,198 acres)
- Powderhorn Wilderness (62,690 acres)
- Weminuche Wilderness (496,982 acres)
- Mt. Sneffels Wilderness (16,499 acres)
- La Garita Wilderness (124,487 acres)
- Red Cloud Peak Wilderness Study Area (38,495 acres)
- Handies Peak Wilderness Study Area (16,301 acres)

All of these areas are managed by the surrounding Public Lands that provide a wide range of opportunities on Rio Grande, Gunnison, and San Juan National Forest and the Gunnison Field Office of the Bureau of Land Management. Consider the following list of opportunities to promote the uniqueness of Hinsdale County and Lake City:

- Take advantage of night-sky viewing opportunities and develop programs based upon seasonal events in the sky
- Provide tours unique to Lake City such as "Who Walked This Way", "Historical Lake City Visits", or "Haunted Lake City Tours"
- Provide a map of all the connecting Byways and the special amenities along the Byways
- Climb the Fourteener's festivals
- All-terrain long distance, cross country runs





## 2. SHAPING HINSDALE COUNTY INTO A RECREATION DESTINATION

### RECREATION DESTINATION CHECKLIST

- Develop a recreation map, brochure and guide that is easy to use and provides inclusive and pertinent information
- Ensure that visitors can find trailheads and other recreation destinations. Evaluate existing signs and provide new signs and wayfinding
- Build an amenities list for visitors (a list of local shops, restaurants, gear stores, and lodging)
- Put together websites and brochures that inform visitors of what to do based upon length of stay in Lake City (What To Do In 3 Days, What To Do In 5 Days) and level of ability needed to participate in activities
- Inform local business owners about the community's recreation facilities and opportunities and encourage hospitality and friendliness to keep visitors returning to Lake City
- Direct visitors to the website for information about recreation activities
- Develop a Facebook page for Hinsdale County/lake City. Post images/videos/stories on Lake City/Hinsdale County Facebook Page
- Host and promote recreation events. Build upon the festivals already in place
- Evaluate accessibility when new recreation facilities or events are proposed
- Provide ample parking at new and existing recreation locations



# CASE STUDIES: SHAPING HINSDALE COUNTY INTO A RECREATION DESTINATION

Maps from Idaho shows the connections and special features along Idaho's Scenic Byways. This can draw people to explore all that the Byways have to offer within a particular region.



Festivals and promotions

Bike Rodeos



# CASE STUDIES: SHAPING HINSDALE COUNTY INTO A RECREATION DESTINATION

Due to Lake City and Hinsdale Counties remote location and proximity to several wilderness areas, there is a possibility for many types of backcountry excursions.

Lake City and Hinsdale County could become one of the premier destinations for night sky viewing and one of the International Dark Sky Association locations.



Photo Courtesy Shutterstock



### 3. PROVIDE TRAILS AND TRAIL CONNECTIONS

Trails are key to outdoor recreation and the variety of trails can enhance residents and visitors quality of outdoor recreation. A diverse amount of trails offer a variety of challenges to visitors of all abilities. It is impossible to make a trail that is accessible to everyone as each user has unique needs. Many times trail uses conflict, and designing a trail for one group of users will decrease the use in other users. For instance, a paved trail will provide great access for wheelchairs while trail runners will prefer a more challenging trail with a gravel surface to absorb impact on the body.<sup>35</sup>

#### BEST PRACTICES FOR DEVELOPING TRAILS

##### Providing Sustainable Trails

The key to providing “Best Practices” is to provide a full spectrum of trail opportunities is available. Recreationists like the trails that offer visual diversity, undulating paths, changes in scenery, diverse vegetation, and challenge. Trails are the device for immersing people into the outdoors in a relatively safe and controlled environment. A well designed trail will put visitors at ease to explore the surroundings around them, yet be able to turn around and find their way out of an unfamiliar environment providing a sense of accomplishment. Trails help protect the environment for years to come, provide preservation, appreciation of outdoor environments, and offer a great experience to visitors. Many of the elements of trail sustainability include:

- Proper design based upon grade and soils
- Proper settings (urban, rural and wilderness)
- Sustainable and Universal for all
- Provide visual interest and an enjoyable experience

##### Providing An Experience

Visitors are looking for an overall experience when utilizing trails. Scenery is an important component, however so is the experience. Trail character can describe the ruggedness (smooth vs rugged and rocky), corridor width (enclosed or open), frequency of undulation (variety of ups and downs or flat), and layout (tight corners or straight layout). The challenge of trails tests the fitness and ability of users no matter what level of visitors fitness. The length can be measured in distance or time and variety gives visitors an experience that keeps them engaged in the activity.

##### Sense of Place

Sense of place is defined by those characteristics that make a place special or unique. The sense of place for Lake City trails can vary by natural and cultural elements (such as topography and historical references). Trail design should be reflective of local sense of place and take advantage of the special opportunities on the landscape to make the activity memorable.

##### Places of Interest and Avoiding Sensitive Areas

Good trail design will identify areas of interest and direct visitors to those areas in interesting ways while avoiding environmental and culturally sensitive areas. This may mean avoiding sacred areas, but designing a trail to draw attention to scenic hot spots or overlooks.

##### Erosion Control and Good Design

Designing a trail with steep grades and soils that cannot support large numbers of visitors can cause trails to break up and wash away over time. Designing trails with the natural topography, mild trail grades, and frequent drainage can help alleviate trail erosion.



Photo Courtesy ueinteriors.com

35 <http://atfiles.org/files/pdf/ontario-design-construction-maintenance-sustainable-trails.pdf> Ontario's Best Trails: Guidelines and Best Practices for the Design, Construction and Maintenance of Sustainable Trails for All Ontarians

### 3. PROVIDE TRAILS AND TRAIL CONNECTIONS

Rolling trails can make trails more user friendly. Additionally, trail users like the use of undulating vegetation patterns. Visual diversity, provides variety and interesting viewing opportunities as trail users walk through different vegetation patterns (such as openings, closures, and scenic vistas).

#### User Conflicts

User conflicts are typically caused by one group of users interfering with the experience of another user. Common issues that arise with competing uses are overcrowding, visitors using different modes of travel trying to use the trails simultaneously, or some visitors traveling too fast on trails. Trails can be designed for similar uses, however, they are typically divided into two groups: trails for non-motorized uses versus motorized use. This helps alleviate most of the conflicts by different users. Additionally, designing trails for specific uses (such as mountain bikes or BMX bikes) can increase user satisfaction, or designing trails for different speeds can help deal with user conflicts. Education and good signing can help provide a better experience for all trail users.

#### Offer a Variety of Challenges

Trail users like to feel a sense of accomplishment during an outing. Providing trails from beginner levels up to the advanced level can help keep visitors and residents engaged.



Photo Courtesy Kelly Ortiz

#### Good Signing=Better Experiences

Very few visitors like to “bushwack” through the woods as a daily outing. Most visitors prefer to experience nature along well marked and easy to follow trails. This provides a sense of comfort for visitors while providing challenge and the ability to enjoy the outdoors.



Photo Courtesy Kelly Ortiz

The sign to the Ski Area is very small on Highway 149 and can be easily missed.



Photo Courtesy Pintrest.com

### 3. PROVIDE TRAILS AND TRAIL CONNECTIONS

#### Be Creative

In sensitive areas along trails (such as wet or boggy areas), use boardwalks and overpasses. Obstacles that allow hikers to climb up and over provide for interesting and challenging trail opportunities. Although these features can be expensive to build, they often add visual interest to trails while protecting resources.

#### Making Use of Old Roadbeds

Old road beds usually provide plenty of clearance and room for increased speed, these roads are typically good for OHV or motorcycle trail riding opportunities. This does not mean that old roads are only good for OHV and motorcycle use, as many other recreation opportunities can take advantage of gentler grades that roads provide.

#### Multi-Season Trails

Summer season trails can serve as great trails for x-country skiing and snowshoeing in the winter provided they are designed with multi-season use in mind. This can be true of old road beds that may be used for OHV use in the summer and snowmobiles in the winter. It can be difficult to mix uses such as x-country skiing and snowmobiling given the differing needs for snow grooming.



Photo Courtesy Allyson Stovey Harms/Pinterest.com

#### Partners and Funding

Having partners can be challenging, however, partners can bring funds, expertise, and people who are willing to commit time and energy to make a trail project a success. In addition, including partners promote ownership, better sustainability (both economic and ecological), and responsible use. Partnering fosters long term community benefits and promotes entrepreneurial opportunities. Partners may include:

- Trails Work-group
- Lake Fork Valley Conservancy
- Chamber of Commerce
- Planning Commission
- Bureau of Land Management
- US Forest Service
- Army Corps of Engineers
- Trout Unlimited
- Trails for Lake City
- Residents of Lake City and Hinsdale County
- Private Corporations
- Hinsdale County Businesses



Photo Courtesy greenmountainbikers.com

#### Providing Trail Connections

Trail connections are an important feature of well designed trails and provide a great experience. Loop trails are more satisfying to the user as it allows a continual new experience, rather than backtracking

### 3. PROVIDE TRAILS AND TRAIL CONNECTIONS

from a destination.

The Trails Master Plan for Hinsdale County and The Town of Lake City identifies a need for a connecting trail between Lake City and San Cristobal for over a decade. This project was a grass-roots development and partnered with Lake City, Hinsdale County, Lake City Chapter of Trout Unlimited, Hinsdale Chamber of Commerce, Planning Commissions, BLM, ACE, and CDOT. This plan proposed a “Lake to Lake Trail” that would run from the northern end of Lake City to the Lake San Cristobal outflow. Construction on this trail began in 2002 and over 1,500 ft. of accessible trail was constructed. However, due to easement issues, no further construction has been completed. There are also missing segments of trails, lack of a safe highway crossing, and open mine adits, that are causing issues with the completion of this trail. There are portions that are used by local residents because they know where to find the trails, however, the trail is not officially constructed at this time. There are other opportunities for connecting trails, known as the “Henson Creek Trail” and the “Ponderosa Trail” that have ability to augment the “Lake-to-Lake Trail”. In the surveys conducted in town and around Lake City, one of the top requests of survey respondents was to finish construction on the “Lake to Lake Trail” to Lake San Cristobal.



Photo Courtesy Kelly Ortiz

The Henson Creek Trail shown here at Memorial Park is a connector to the Lake to Lake Trail. The new easement through the private property being acquired by the Lake Fork Valley Conservancy will continue this trail on to the Water Dog Trail.

There are other trails that currently being pursued as possible connector trails. The “Waterdog Trail” that is located north and east of town has the potential to connect to the “Henson Creek Trail” via obtaining an easement or purchase of private property along the Creek north of Lake City. This is currently in progress and will help provide future loops on public lands. Other trails that have the potential for greater connectivity are as follows:

- Hog’s Back Trail
- Slumgullion Earth-flow
- Crystal Lake Trail Connection
- Tract C Access
- Highway 149 Hike/Bike Trail<sup>36</sup>
- Pete’s Lake/Swamp



Photo Courtesy Kelly Ortiz

Pete’s Lake has the potential for connections around the Lake by obtaining easements through private property on the north side of the lake. This smaller trail also has the potential for larger connections to the Lake to Lake trail.

Land acquisitions, easements, and working with Public Land agencies will be critical to making these loop trails a success. Completing these trails would provide visitors and residents a safe way to travel between Lake San Cristobal and Lake City (avoiding Highway 149 and dangerous travel conditions to hikers and bikers as they cross the highway). These connecting trails have the potential to provide year round use for snowshoeing and x-country skiing as well as motorized uses such as OHV’s and snowmobiling.

36 Hinsdale Trails Workgroup. Trails Master Plan For Hinsdale County and Town of Lake City. October 2003.



### 3. PROVIDE TRAILS AND TRAIL CONNECTIONS

#### PROVIDE TRAILS AND TRAIL CONNECTIONS CHECKLIST

- Assemble several teams that includes a team of trail designers, mapping specialists, outdoor recreation specialists, landscape architects, engineers, community advocates/stakeholders, and marketing professionals to begin trail planning
- Compile appropriate maps. Compile maps that include:
  - Existing trails, developed areas, roads, proximity to facilities, park boundaries, user created trails, and opportunities for connectivity of trails
  - Public and private boundaries
  - Sensitive, threatened, and endangered species habitat
  - Streams and wetlands
  - Steep Slopes
  - Historical/cultural resources
  - Special management areas
  - Sensitive soils
  - Other conditions that would affect trail construction
- Highlight all sensitive areas, problem areas, user created and redundant trails, or trails that have maintenance problems or unacceptable impacts
- Identify scenic, recreational and cultural features within your area that you want to draw visitors to, such as water resources, ridge-lines, summits, vistas, historic structures, geologic features, etc
- Describe use patterns and demand by identifying which trails are designated for which uses, and what types of use you want to manage for. Identify what types of trail uses currently exist and any un-met demands
- Identify the main parking, access points, and existing level of accessibility



### 3. PROVIDE TRAILS AND TRAIL CONNECTIONS

#### PROVIDE TRAILS AND TRAIL CONNECTIONS CHECKLIST

- Identify recreational experiences Hinsdale County and Lake City want to provide. Create a list of trails that provide each of the different recreation experiences such as hiking or biking and a range of distances and challenges for user groups
- Designate trail use and level of accessibility, proposed grades, and trail conceptual plans
- Ground truth trails and trail concepts, layout trails (either existing improvements or prospective new trails) with proposed grades and GPS locations. Work with the appropriate disciplines and volunteers to refine trail alignment based upon the experience. Include the volunteers with specialist review to provide education and ownership
- Build trails in phases with the use of contractors. Volunteers can follow through with finishing touches and maintenance. Monitor and evaluate trail classification, use, and changes to ensure it meets the original intent of the project
- Provide directional and interpretive signing for trails
- Market your trails on websites, travel magazines, brochures, etc. to encourage visitor use and showcase trail achievements

### 3. PROVIDE TRAILS AND TRAIL CONNECTIONS

#### Cost Estimating for trail development

Cost estimates will help with the planning, budgeting, and implementation of trails and trail features. Although budgeting can only be completed on a case by case basis because of the varied terrain, these costs reflect only a typical situation.

#### Trail Planning, Design, Engineering Services:

These costs typically cost roughly 20-25% of the total project cost. The key items that are contained in these cost are:

- Inventory, condition and natural resource assessment with evaluation of terrain and existing trails
- Concept plan
- Corridor and alignment
- Public input
- Alternatives
- Final Autocad drawings and specifications

Trail Implementation would include items such as:

- Site preparation
- Trail surfacing
- Curbs or edging
- Drainage
- Fences
- Retaining structures
- Planting or re-vegetation
- Project management

- Level of design for class of use and accessibility
- Uses

Although trail construction project costs cannot be determined until a site specific location is determined, the following is a list of determining factors:

- Terrain
- Slope
- Soils
- Drainage
- Potential blasting through rock features
- Number of switchbacks and potential retaining walls
- Boardwalks
- Steps
- Bridges
- Sensitive environmental terrain
- Methods of construction (wilderness vs. general forested lands where mechanized equipment can be used)
- Location of trail construction (does the contractor need to travel long distances for supplies or is it next to amenities)

Many trail projects include volunteers to keep costs lower. Volunteers can be very highly skilled and dedicated. These volunteers can be useful from the design through the implementation stages.



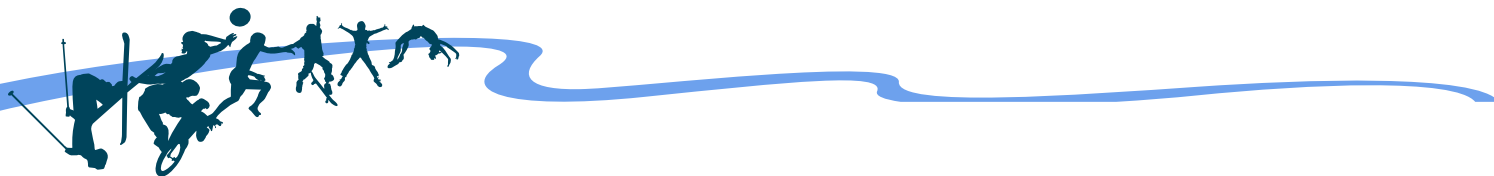
Photo Courtesy americantrails.org



Photo Courtesy Kelly Ortiz

The trail construction estimates are broken into several categories based upon the:

- Recreation setting



### 3. PROVIDE TRAILS AND TRAIL CONNECTIONS

#### Non-motorized Trails

Non-motorized Trails are designed as lower impact trails. They can have many surfaces, but their design is for foot use (and typically mountain bike, road bikes, scooters, and equestrian). These costs are estimates and can be influenced by terrain, armoring needs, and remoteness:

Trail Type	Unit	Cost	Notes
Trails with Natural Surfacing (non-accessible)	Linear ft.	\$1 per linear ft. w/finished grade	Based upon 5' width
Trails with Natural Surfacing-such as aggregate surface, crusher fines with bentonite (accessible)	Linear ft.	\$5 per linear ft. w/finished grade	Based upon 5' width
Trails with Asphalt Millings (accessible & multi-use)	Linear ft.	\$5 per linear ft.	Based upon 5' width
Concrete or Asphalt Trails (accessible & multi-use)	Linear ft.	\$25 per linear ft.	Based upon 5' width
BMX/Mountain Bike Course (varied terrain)	Sq. ft.	\$5 per sq ft	Based upon 5' width

Based upon CDOT 2015 cost estimates

Trail Ammenities	Unit	Cost	Notes
Re-vegetation/seeding/re-seeding	Sq. ft.	.12 per sq. ft.	Including seeding and straw mulch
Retaining walls (rock, concrete, block)	Face ft.	\$10 per face ft.	
Pedestrian bridge		\$50,000-\$25,000	Pre-fabricated
Curbs or edging	Linear ft.	\$5 per linear ft.	4" X 8" deep installed
Drainage: Cut Waterbar Drain pipe	Linear ft. Linear ft.	\$5 per linear ft. \$10 per linear ft.	Installed

Based upon CDOT 2015 cost estimates



### 3. PROVIDE TRAILS AND TRAIL CONNECTIONS

There are many types of trails that can be constructed based upon the type of use. The least expensive trails are typically those with only a finished grade and only earthwork similar to more primitive trails on public lands. There are many surface types to chose from. Trails and natural surfacing such as crusher fines or aggregate can be accessible and multi-purpose and asphalt and concrete can be long lasting.

#### GRAVEL

##### Pros

- Considered natural Looking
- Good for flat areas
- Softer on joints
- Cheaper installation costs

##### Cons

- High maintenance costs
- Difficult to maintain-consistent surface for ADA
- Damage cause by gravel erosion
- Can be soft or wet during inclement weather
- Gravel moves off trail
- Difficult to ride bikes on steep slopes and loose gravel
- Difficult to remove silt deposits after it rains<sup>37</sup>



Photo Courtesy blueridgemuse.com

#### ASPHALT

##### Pros

- Best initial surface (smooth, no cracks)
- Slightly cheaper than concrete in initial cost
- Does not wash on steep slopes
- Cleaner surface during inclement weather
- 

##### Cons

- Edges crack with vegetation
- Needs to be built wider than finished size of the trail
- Constant repair of cracks
- Needs overlay every 8-10 years
- Little structural strength with soil issues underneath
- Requires initial excavation
- Impervious surface<sup>38</sup>

<sup>37</sup> [http://www.gocolumbiamo.com/ParksandRec/Trails/documents/trails\\_concrete\\_vs\\_gravel.pdf](http://www.gocolumbiamo.com/ParksandRec/Trails/documents/trails_concrete_vs_gravel.pdf) Saitta, Steve. Snyder, Mike. Choosing The Right Trail Surface: Columbia Parks and Recreation

<sup>38</sup> [http://www.gocolumbiamo.com/ParksandRec/Trails/documents/trails\\_concrete\\_vs\\_gravel.pdf](http://www.gocolumbiamo.com/ParksandRec/Trails/documents/trails_concrete_vs_gravel.pdf)

### 3. PROVIDE TRAILS AND TRAIL CONNECTIONS



Photo Courtesy supersealing.com.au

#### CONCRETE Pros

- Best ADA surface long term
- Best longevity-lasting 20+ years
- Best consistent surface (no washing out or breaking up)
- Does not wash on steep slopes
- Steel reinforcement keeps it from becoming a tripping hazard
- Cleaner surface during inclement weather
- Does not require a gravel base so impact is less on the environment
- Less gravel runoff into streams and wetlands when it rains

#### Cons

- More expensive (initial installation)
- Harder on joints
- Less natural looking
- Impervious surface<sup>39</sup>



Photo Courtesy dynamicprecast.com

39 [http://www.gocolumbiamo.com/ParksandRec/Trails/documents/trails\\_concrete\\_vs\\_gravel.pdf](http://www.gocolumbiamo.com/ParksandRec/Trails/documents/trails_concrete_vs_gravel.pdf) Saitta, Steve. Snyder, Mike. Choosing The Right Trail Surface: Columbia Parks and Recreation

### 3. PROVIDE TRAILS AND TRAIL CONNECTIONS

#### Motorized Trails

Motorized trails use design principals similar to non-motorized, multi-use trails. However, these trails usually have to be designed for tougher, prolonged use, and many times additional armoring is needed. These costs are also influenced by terrain and remoteness:

##### **Motorcycle Singletrack:** \$20,000+ per mile

Estimates assumes up to a 36 inch width, often built by machine with sections built by hand. Tread ruggedness can vary dramatically and challenging sections may require anchors, barriers, and signing to keep users on the intended trail.<sup>40</sup>



Photo Courtesy rideplanet-usa.com



Photo Courtesy falcetti.photoshelter.com

##### **ATV Trail:** \$15,000+ per mile

Estimates assumes 5-6 foot wide width, often built by machine with minimal hand-finish work.

#### Mountain Bike Terrain

Mountain bike terrain parks consist of steep technical descents, high inclines, free-riding, down-hilling, dirt jumping, aerial maneuvers, constructed jumps, ramps, rocks, and logs. Trails are rugged, unfinished and utilize natural elements as much as possible. Flow trails tend to flow like a roller coaster, with twists, turns, grade dips, park style jumps, and use gravity to glide downhill. Downhill trails tend to be steep, narrow, and located through wooded and rocky terrain. All of these trails can vary from beginner to expert riding terrain. Mountain bike terrain parks are typically located in a centralized area much like conventional parks, however flow trails and downhill trails are typically located in natural environments with less constructed features than terrain parks. Many times ski areas utilize trails for downhill mountain biking during the summer months using ski lifts help transport bikers to the top of slopes.

40 SLVGO Plan Cost Estimates

### 3. PROVIDE TRAILS AND TRAIL CONNECTIONS

Trail Type	Unit	Cost
Single-track	Per Mile	\$15,000-\$25,000
Flow Trail	Per Mile	\$25,000-\$40,000
Flow Trail with Features	Per Mile	\$35,000-\$70,000
Downhill Trail	Per Mile	\$20,000-\$40,000
Downhill Trail with Features	Per Mile	\$25,000-\$70,000

Based upon SLVGO 2014 cost estimates

\*Costs reflect items such as the use of equipment, tools, design time, mapping signage, armoring along creek crossings, building retaining walls, bridges, and additional features to protect sensitive areas and minimize erosion.



Photo Courtesy oldglorymtb.com

Mountain bike terrain park in Mammoth California



Photo Courtesy flowmountainbike.com

Example of a flow mountain bike trail



Photo Courtesy mountainpulse.com

Downhill mountain bike trail in the Teton Mountains, Wyoming



Photo Courtesy downhillmountainbike.org  
Downhill mountain bike trail in Flagstaff, Arizona



Photo Courtesy downhillmountainbike.org  
Ladder structure

### 3. PROVIDE TRAILS AND TRAIL CONNECTIONS



Photo Courtesy bicyclecoalition.org



Photo Courtesy rideeastonhill.co.uk

Pump tracks work in both urban and natural environments with proper planning.

Trail Type	Small	Medium	Large
Pump Track Parks	6000 Sq. Ft. \$12,000-\$20,000	10,000 Sq. Ft. \$20,000-\$40,000	16,000 Sq. Ft. \$30,000-\$60,000
Skill Level/Technical Features	15,000 Sq. Ft. or 1,500 LF \$20,000-\$40,000	30,000 Sq. Ft. or 3,000 LF \$25,000-\$50,000	50,000 Sq. Ft. or 5,000 LF \$30,000-\$60,000
Dirt Jumps	1/2 acre \$40,000-\$60,000	1 acre \$80,000-\$120,000	2 acre \$175,000-\$200,000

Based upon SLVGO 2014 cost estimates

### Nordic Trails

Nordic Trails are typically on terrain that is relatively flat with some small dips and climbs. These can be located in higher and lower elevations with good snow coverage and grooming either by snow cat or snowmobile sleds. They include a wider track for two or more tracks for skate skiing (gliding) or backcountry trails which are typically narrower. This can also include snowshoeing trails.

Nordic Trail Grooming	Unit	Cost	Notes
Snow Cat Based Grooming	Linear Mile	\$5,000-\$10,000	
Snowmobile Based Grooming	Linear Mile	\$500-\$1,000	

Based upon Wolf Creek Ski Area 2014 cost estimates

### 3. PROVIDE TRAILS AND TRAIL CONNECTIONS

#### Fat Tire Bike Terrain

This new sport already has a large participant base in Colorado. This sport combines mountain bikes with groomed snow trails. These trails can have varied terrain, but needs a groomed trail or road with packed snow. This trail can be shared with snowshoers and snowmobilers, however, if the snow is soft, cross country skiers cannot use the same trails. Skis can cause grooves in the base which makes for uneven tracks for fat tire bikes. The trails can have twists, turns, and gentle grade dips, with gentle uphill and downhill slopes. Special grooming equipment (such as a tow weight) is needed to groom these trails connected to a work snowmobile that can carry heavy weights. The cost of the grooming equipment can cost \$1500.00-\$2500.00 and the cost of an upgraded snowmobile costs can run \$12,000.00.



Photo Courtesy Tyler Albers USDA



Photo Courtesy Tyler Albers USDA



Photo Courtesy Tyler Albers USDA

The trail groomed width is approximately 36" with 1' wings on either side. The heavy sled will compact the snow so it becomes a hard surface. These trails can be groomed over existing hiking trails or in open areas that do not currently have formally constructed trails. Loop trails of varying lengths are most desirable.



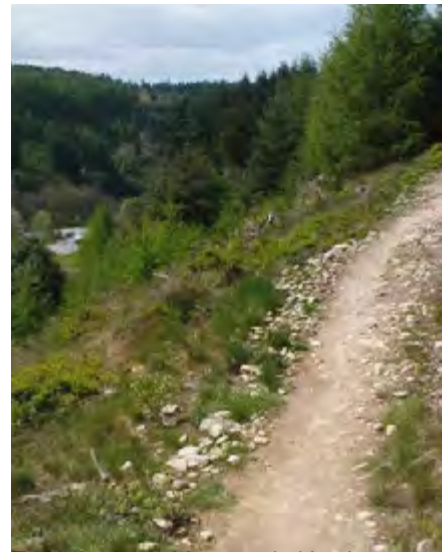
## Trailhead Development

Trailhead development typically includes parking and other site amenities involved with this recreation activity. These can range from primitive to fully developed sites with amenities such as picnic tables, fire rings, toilets, and designated paved parking.



Photo Courtesy Glacier National Park -Logan Pass

Trailheads and trails can be developed such as this boardwalk that leads from the paved parking lot.



Trails such as this are primitive in nature and would most likely be found in back-country areas with minor developments.



Photo Courtesy RedCliffDesertReserve.com

Parking lots at the Chuckwalla Trailhead with minor developments are more inexpensive to build, but require on going maintenance.



Photo Courtesy Cloudhiking.com

Paved parking lots with amenities can cost up to \$200,000. to install, but require less maintenance.

Trailhead Parking, Signs, Amenities	Unit	Cost	Notes
Parking Area with Gravel Surface	20 Cars	\$25-50,000	Based upon 18' long by 9' wide (total 180' wide)
Kiosk & Trail Information Sign (maps, trail etiquette, information)	1 Panel	\$6,000	3' x 3' Panel
Trail Markers	Each	\$100	2' x 2' Post
Entrance Sign	Each	\$2,500	
Interpretive Sign Panel:			
Graphic Layout	Each	\$2,000	Based upon 2' x 3' Panel
Fabrication	Each	\$ 500	
Sign Base and Installation	Each	\$1,500	
Campsite	Each	\$4,000	Clearing and Grubbing 10' x 10' Area
Campsite Amenities:			
Picnic Table	Each	\$ 3,500	
Fire Ring	Each	\$ 500	
Wheel Stops	Each	\$ 1,000	
CXT Toilet	Each	\$26,000	

## Good Trail Design

Visitors using trails can have a number of needs based upon the type of activity, however, there are many items that all trail user groups will find appealing about trail design. Most visitors cannot express all the items that make a trail enjoyable, other than the scenic values associated with them. However, subtle design features such as proper trail location and developing the appropriate level of trail construction for the recreation setting can provide recreationists with a better trail experience.



Painting Courtesy Kelly Ortiz

Trail users like undulating or changing environments that offer variety of scenery from enclosed forests or canopies to open meadows and water features.



Painting Courtesy Kelly Ortiz

Use opportunities in trail design to frame vistas, waterfeatures, or scenic views.



Painting Courtesy Kelly Ortiz

When placing seating areas, locate them with structures or vegetation behind the seat for sense of security.





Painting Courtesy Kelly Ortiz

When views from the trail are not suitable, use vegetative screening to provide a barrier for a better experience.

Additionally sustainable design of trails links conservation with recreation. They must be developed and maintained in ways that avoid negative impacts to the ecological resources. Well designed trails should achieve the following objectives:

- **Connect positive aspects of the trail and avoid negative locations:** A sustainable trail will lead users to desirable destinations such as water features, historical sites, vistas, interesting landforms or facilities while avoiding wet areas, steep slopes, critical habitats, and other culturally or environmentally sensitive locations. Managing the views as the trail progresses enhances the trail's recreational value. Well designed trails will have a sequence of visual and physical features that are pleasing to the trail user. Define which viewsheds are important along the trail and then manage the vegetation to capitalize on these locations.
- **Keep water off the trail:** Erosion is the number one problem for sustainable trails. It damages trails by washing away the trail or surface, causes expensive repairs and diminishes user experiences.
- **Follow natural contours:** Trails that follow contours more easily shed water, provide a more natural appearing trail, and provides a more pleasant experience for trail users. Typically the trail should be outsloped to allow water to runoff the trail. Provide grade reversals as the trail follows the contours. This is similar to an up and down pattern along the sideslope to prevent water from flowing down the trails and reduce erosion. Most trails should have these every 50'. Additionally, the average grade of the trail should stay at 10%. For strenuous trails this can be as high as 15-25% depending upon the difficulty level. Accessible trails should never reach a grade greater than 6%.
- **Keep users on the trail:** When users leave the trail, they make user created trails. This causes loss of vegetation, erosion, environmental damage and increased maintenance costs. Trail systems must meet users needs and expectations. When they don't, users abandon the trail and create their own causing less desirable, unsustainable trails.

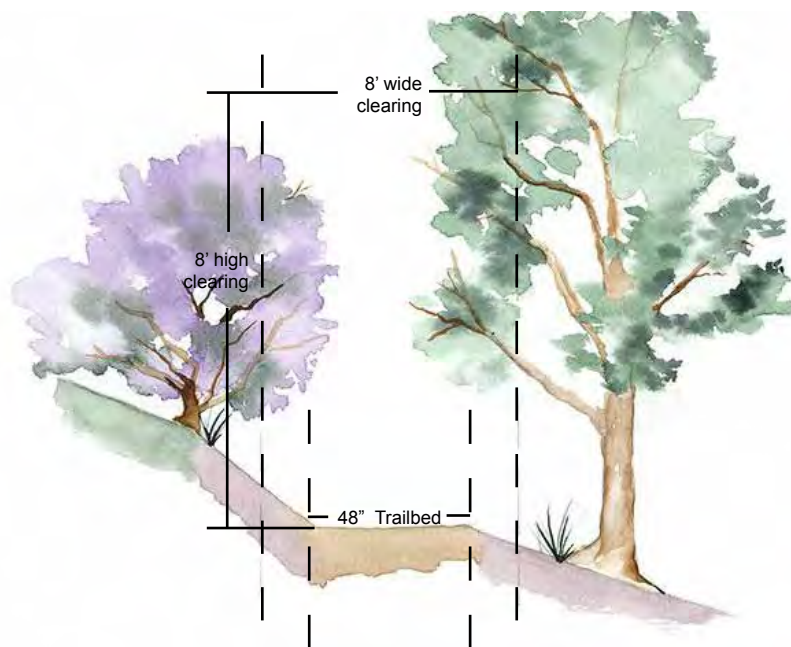
■ **Take advantage of landscape features:** Every trail should have a clear beginning and ending with proper signage. Structures such as bridges, large trees, and boulders can create a sense of “entrance” to the trail. Use landscape anchors such as rock features or water to tie one part of the trail to the next. This ties the trail to the landscape and provides a sense of flow and purpose. These features can also provide borders or edges along the trail encouraging rich and diverse ecological habitats that allows the viewer to experience different ecosystems.

## Trail Clearing Limits

Trails clearing limits are typically determined based upon the type of use for the trail. These clearing limits can vary, however, the following guidelines are a good “rule of thumb”.

### *Hiking and Equestrian Trails*

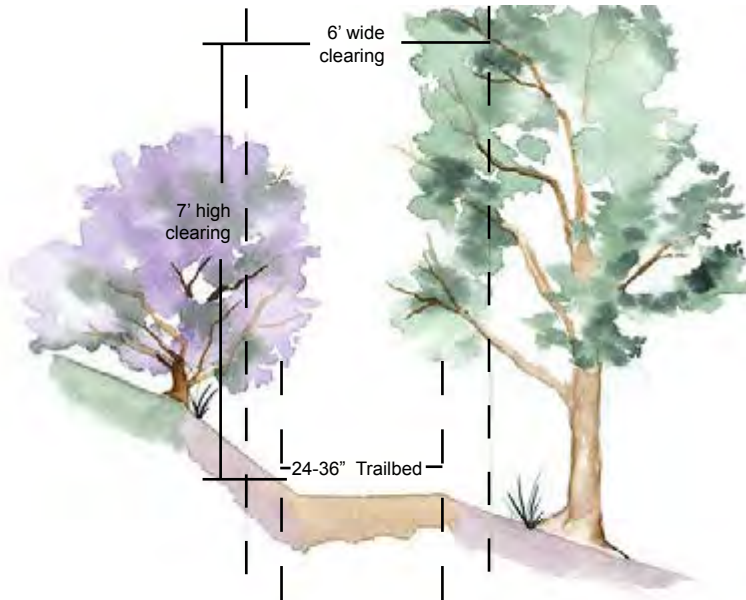
Hiking and equestrian shared trails are free of most obstacles, however the trail tread may have some irregularities. Landings provide resting areas and the ability to let other users pass. The width is 4’-10’ and bare soil or gravel is acceptable. The cross slopes should be 2% for proper drainage, with a minimum sight distance of 50’ and avoiding sharp turns in the trail.



Painting Courtesy Kelly Ortiz

### *Hiking and Mountain Biking Trails*

Hiking and mountain biking trails are narrower and the trail tread may have some irregularities. These trails require balance and fitness but landings are provided for resting and the ability to let other users pass. The width is 4'-10' and bare soil or gravel is acceptable. The cross slopes should be 2% for proper drainage, with a minimum sight distance of 40'. More high challenge hiking trails are 24" and moderate challenge are 36" wide.



Painting Courtesy Kelly Ortiz



Photo Courtesy Scottcountiowa.com

## CASE STUDIES: GREAT TRAIL SYSTEMS

### Anchorage, Alaska-Tony Knowles Urban and Coastal Trail System

This trail system stretches throughout the City of Anchorage and along the coast tying together neighborhoods, downtown, and other parks (such as Kincaid Park), and trails (such as Chester Creek Trail and Campbell Creek Trail). The trail system is designed for walking, running, bicycle, rollerblades, biking, and accessible wheelchairs. It was designed as an alternative transportation system to access downtown, parks and neighborhoods, landmark destinations, and scenic views around the city. The trails convert to cross country ski paths in the winter and service festivals, and special events (such as the winter fur rondo, outhouse races, running of the reindeer-a version of pamplona's running of the bulls, as well as other events).



Photos Courtesy [trails Anchorage.com](http://trails Anchorage.com)



## CASE STUDIES: GREAT TRAIL SYSTEMS

### Vancouver, Washington-Waterfront Renaissance Trail

This 5 mile trail system provides accessible and interpretive trails that connect downtown Vancouver and its restaurants, cultural and historical attractions, natural land bridges, shipyards, plazas, parks, and the Columbia River waterfront.



Photos Courtesy Renaissance Trail/Vancouver Washington

### Fruita, Colorado-Gateway Canyons

This trail system provides connecting trails along rivers, streams and red rock canyons. Hiking tours provide visitors the opportunity to learn more about the area and maps allow visitors to hike on self guided tours. Mountain bike trails offer loops with everything from easy riding to technical trails.



Photos Courtesy Gateway Canyons/Fruita Colorado



## CASE STUDIES: GREAT TRAIL SYSTEMS

### Ontonagon County, Michigan-Bill Nicholls Multi-use Trail

This trail covers an entire county in the upper peninsula of Michigan. Remote and scenic, the motorized trails connect to other trails both motorized and non-motorized. This trail is used year-round and offer opportunities to participate in biking, hiking, and OHV riding as well as cross country skiing, snowshoeing, and snowmobiling in the winter. Trails are planned to reduce user conflict and provide mixed use where possible. The trail runs through communities, as well as remote areas for a unique recreation experience. The networks of trails provide diverse trail riding opportunities and accomodations along the way (a combination of yurts, huts, and cabins located along the trail) provide visitors a place to stay while on their trail excursion.



Photos Courtesy Bill Nichols Trail



Photos Courtesy Big Buck Cabin

## 4. GUIDES FOR GOOD DESIGN

When evaluating outdoor recreation opportunities, the scenic quality of surrounding Hinsdale County and the architectural features of Lake City gives this area its uniqueness. It is important to provide high quality outdoor experiences and balance development, without compromising the integrity of the surrounding scenery and natural resources that makes this area so unique and special.

This may require the adoption of architectural and visual standards for development and activities, height restrictions or locations or particular activities as to not compromise these qualities. This can include adopting these same standards for Lake City and downtown parks as well. The following are some considerations for historic areas as well as park development:

- Choose a style that will be repeated over and over throughout your developments
- Maintain a color pallet that compliments your historical, local, or regional colors established
- Maintain the architectural style that is established in your community
- Adopt signage and structural elements that compliment the architectural style
- Do not mix and match different types of paving, architectural elements from one park or one area to the next
- Use a consistent pallet or style for plantings, planters, and benches

### Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS)

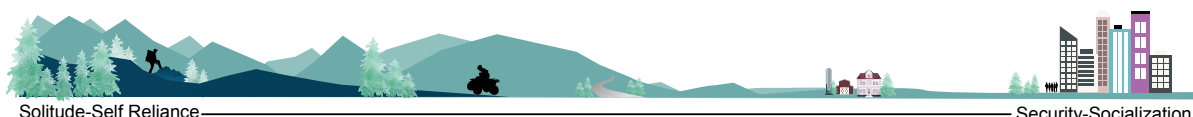
The Recreation Opportunity Spectrum is used by federal agency land managers to determine the appropriate level of development for different settings. It identifies the setting for particular activities. This setting is defined by its physical attributes such as topography, vegetation, and visitor numbers. It can help determine the quality and character of the recreational experience.

### Scenery Management System (SMS)

The Scenery Management System compliments the ROS by providing direction on how much the landscape should be altered from it's natural appearing condition. If an activity or trail is located in an urban environment, then the landscape elements are more manipulated and modified but still compliment the surrounding environment. If the activity or trail is located in a natural appearing landscape, then visitors will not expect to see heavily altered landscapes, so any development should blend into the existing landscape. This system helps communities plan the level of deviation from the natural appearing landscape based upon the setting where they are developing facilities.

- Very High Objective = No development on the landscape.
- High Objective = Slight development or deviations may occur on the landscape, but should remain subordinate to the landscape.
- Moderate Objective = Moderate development or deviations may occur on the landscape as long as they blend into the landscape and borrow from the surrounding colors, textures, form or architectural style.
- Low Objective = Heavy development or deviations may occur on the landscape, however, they should be planned to complement the existing landscape or recreation activity and borrow from surrounding colors, textures, forms, or architectural styles.

# 4. GUIDES FOR GOOD DESIGN



Solitude-Self Reliance

Security-Socialization

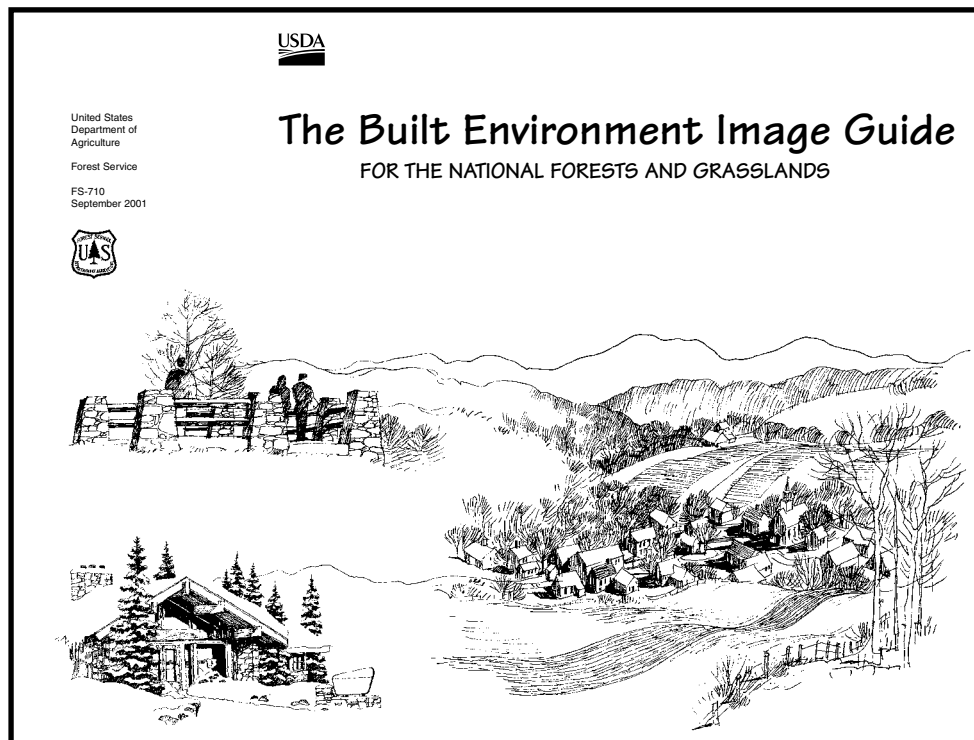
ROS Class	Primitive Class	Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized	Semi-Primitive Motorized	Roaded Natural	Rural	Urban
Setting/ Scenery Objective	The landscape is natural appearing with little evidence other users. No management controls are present.  Very High Scenery Objective	The landscape is natural appearing with some evidence other users. Management controls are present but subtle.  High Scenery Objective	The landscape is natural appearing with some evidence other users. Management controls are present and less subtle.  High to Moderate Scenery Objective	The landscape is slightly altered with evidence of other users. Management controls are present on the landscape.  Moderate Objective	The landscape is modified with noticeable management controls, however, they should still blend with the landscape. Includes facilities designed for many people.  Moderate to Low Objective	The landscape is heavily modified. Management controls dominate the landscape. Vegetation is often manicured.  Low Objective
Experience/ Description	Visitors experience a high degree of isolation, independence, and self-reliance. Opportunities for challenge and risk are high.	Visitors experience a moderate degree of isolation, independence, and self-reliance. Opportunities for challenge and risk are present.	Visitors experience a degree of isolation, but encounter others. Challenge and self-reliance are not important.	Encounters with other visitors are common. Access is convenient. Physical setting is less important than the activities provided.	Encounters with other visitors are common. Access is convenient. Physical setting is less important than the activities provided.	Large numbers of users are present and is expected. Social interactions are important. Observing the natural elements is important.



## 4. GUIDES FOR GOOD DESIGN

### Built Environment Image Guide (BEIG)

Following the principles in the Built Environment Image Guide (BEIG) for the National Forests and Grasslands can be helpful in guiding communities toward the proper architectural context. The principles help to identify your community's character and then encourage adopting style and design features to compliment this character that are consistent with the architectural, natural, and historical features of that character. Following these guidelines can ensure that buildings are complimentary to the community's character or natural environment using sustainable materials. Additionally, the use of aesthetic design principles will better reflect the local culture and history and will stand the test of time.





## CASE STUDIES: GOOD DESIGN AT WORK

### Using Natural Features As Design Guides

This cell phone tower is made to mimic the natural features of the landscape and hide human made features. Based upon the ROS and SMS guidelines, many utilitarian tower structures are not be desirable within natural environments. However, if these structures are necessary, it is possible through the use of good design to mitigate or disguise these features. Placing them in locations that are inconspicuous to your visitors is a good way to start, however, if human made features are built in a location that is highly evident, there are ways to use natural appearing elements to hide them.



These cell phone towers are made to mimic the natural features of the landscape and hide human made features. These cell phone towers are built to resemble trees.

### Using Architectural Styles As Guides



This building is disguised using colors found in the rock.



This building contains a fast food restaurant. The building was designed to mimic local historical architecture.

## 5. INTERPRETATION AND EDUCATION FOR THE OUTDOORS

### Interpretive Signing at Trailheads

Interpretation is an educational activity that aims to reveal meanings about our cultural and natural resources. It can happen through various types of media including talks, guided tours, and exhibits. Interpretation enhances our understanding, appreciation, and protection of resources. The main reason people are visiting recreational sites is to have fun and participate in a particular activity. Interpretive features can augment this experience by making learning fun and enjoyable. Interpretation provides the visitor with a way to learn about animals, the environment, and history of the area they are visiting. Learning through interpretation allows the visitor to pick and choose those learning opportunities that they find interesting or fun. The aim of interpretation is not to make visitors an expert in the subjects being presented, rather, providing opportunities to have fun learning about the subject or topic at hand.

### Principles of Interpretive Learning

Interpretive planning requires that you understand your visitors and how people learn. People tend to learn better when:

- They are actively involved in the learning process
- They are using as many senses as appropriate
- Learn that which is most valuable to them
- They discover for themselves and it generates excitement to learn more
- Learning requires activity on the part of the learner
- They are engaged in friendly competition
- They know the usefulness of the knowledge being acquired
- They are involved in hands on experience

In general, visitors remember about:

- 10 percent of what they hear
- 30 percent of what they read
- 50 percent of what they see
- 90 percent of what they do<sup>41</sup>

When planning or designing interpretive exhibit panels, you should consider including items such as text,

graphics and suggestions to the viewers to:

- “Look for the....”
- “See if you can find....”
- “Can you hear...”

Interpretive features can augment a visitors experience and can increase a visitors understanding of their environment and activities they are participating in. Interpretive features help convey a fuller appreciation and understanding of a site, natural resource or cultural or historical resource.

Talks and guided tours can provide tremendous information to visitors as they can interact with the interpreter finding out more information during a program, asking more elaborate questions, and having the ability to understand a subject even further. Although this type of interpretation can be most informative, it is often expensive and requires a tour or formal program that visitors must engage in.

Living history actors or storytelling can be just as effective, especially when they are conducted on site or as part of a tour.

Written media is nonpersonal but has advantages over other media as it can be read at leisure and at the readers own pace. This is typically interpretive signs or brochures, but can also include websites. These interpretive features can fill a need and be especially helpful when guided tours are not available to a particular area.

41 Beck, Larry and Cable, Ted. Interpretation For the 21st Century-Fifteen Guiding Principles for Interpreting Nature and Culture.

## 5. INTERPRETATION AND EDUCATION FOR THE OUTDOORS



Graphic Completed By Kelly Ortiz

Signs showing length and elevation gain of trail can be helpful for visitors planning a hike at the trailhead.

### Environmental Education Opportunities

The goal of environmental education is teaching individuals and communities about the environment and its associated challenges and problems. This will inspire solutions to different issues and motivate people to help solve these problems.

There are opportunities for education as our natural world goes through dynamic processes (some of which have not been witnessed in our current history—such as large fires, bug infestations, and changing climate conditions). Communities have the opportunities to respond to and provide education on to deepen connections to their local environments and communities, thus ensuring that visitors have a deeper respect, return to these locations, and become future ambassadors for your communities and the surrounding natural resources.

Environmental Education has been addressed on public lands in the past, however, this is not the

case any longer. Many public lands agencies do not have the resources to provide this service and it is now covered by volunteers and specific user groups aimed at educating the public on smaller scale through projects or activities with varying consistency and frequency.

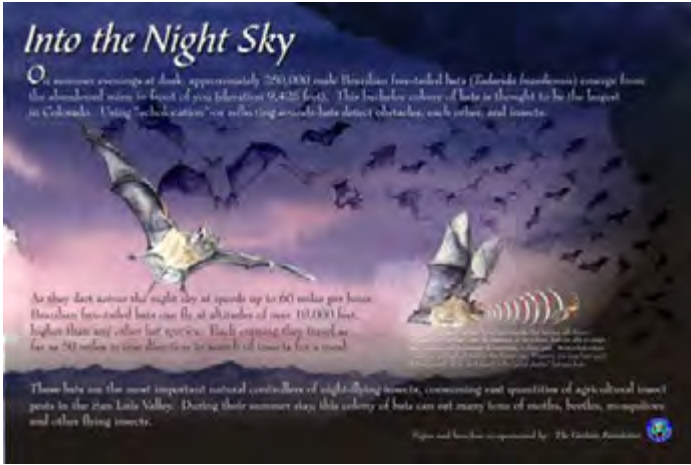
There will be a future need to continue these efforts as part of an overall healthy outdoor education plan. There are many opportunities for experiential education while implementing many of the projects and programs outlined for Lake City and Hinsdale County from planting in parks, to river restoration, and improvement projects. The key is to involve constituents as the recreation programs develop. Not only will participants in these projects be learning new things, they will have integrated learning with other people through active real-world experiences that have real meaning and purpose. Additionally, those in the environmental education programs may be able to solve immediate issues with creative solutions, helping to make your project a success.



Photo Courtesy Kelly Ortiz

Interpretation of natural resources should take place with hands on tools for enhanced learning.

## 5. INTERPRETATION AND EDUCATION FOR THE OUTDOORS



Art and Graphic Design Completed By Kelly Ortiz

Signs of interpreting local wildlife can augment the recreation visit.



Art and Graphic Design Completed By Kelly Ortiz



Photo Courtesy Kelly Ortiz

Interpreting cultural or historical resources are best when completed at the site.

## 5. INTERPRETATION AND EDUCATION FOR THE OUTDOORS

Lake San Cristobal sits at 9,003 feet in elevation and is the second largest natural lake in Colorado. A relatively new lake formed only 700 years ago during the large Slumgullion Earthflow, it is 2.1 miles long and 90 feet deep. Recently, with the cooperation of the Lake Fork Valley Conservancy, the 160 acres at the south end of the Lake San Cristobal has a conservation easement, deed restrictions, and work has been completed to



The south end of Lake San Cristobal now has a conservation easement to maintain the character of the lake and surrounding landscape.



Photo Courtesy panoramio.com

The far end of the peninsula in the middle of Lake San Cristobal now has a conservation easement to maintain the character of the lake.

prevent the spread of noxious weeds. This is now held by Colorado Open Lands. The geological forces that formed this lake make the existing road around Lake San Cristobal an excellent opportunity for education and interpretation. There are opportunities to develop trails around the Lake and connect them to the Henson Creek and Lake Fork River Recreation Corridor.

**Hike or bike:** The public river trail system begins up Henson Creek Canyon and follows Henson Creek and the Lake Fork through Town (see map).

**Interpret and Learn:** Explore Lake City's rich cultural and natural history along our interpretive river trail (see map).

**Fish:** Lake City's rivers offer prime habitat for trout and a haven for anglers.

**Boat:** Raft or kayak Class I to III waters of lower Henson Creek and the Lake Fork.

**Ice Climb:** Lake City's Ice Park offers world class winter fun.

Newly constructed terrace and facilities at Lake Fork Memorial Park in Lake City, Colorado

Acknowledgements - River corridor improvements have been generally supported by the following entities: Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Colorado Water Conservation Board, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Bureau of Land Management, Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District, Town of Lake City, Hinsdale County, Hinsdale County Historical Society, Lake Fork Community Foundation, Pioneer Jubilee Women's Club, and local businesses and individuals.

HELP SUPPORT ONGOING RIVER ENHANCEMENT WORK ON THE LAKE FORK!

Lake Fork Valley Conservancy  
For more information, please visit our website at: [www.LFVC.org](http://www.LFVC.org)

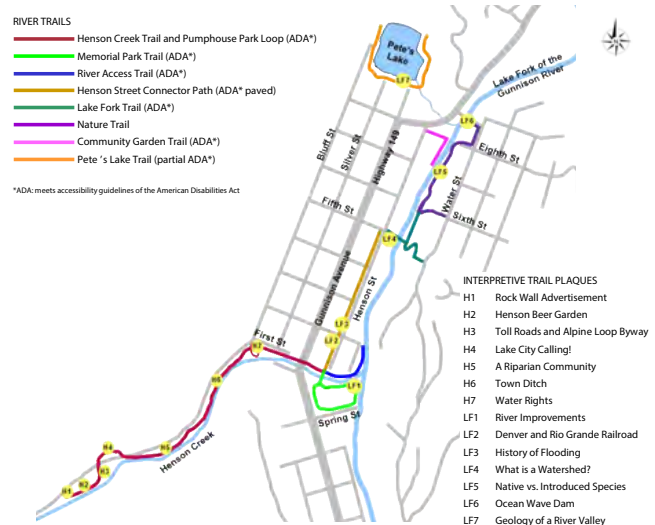
### Lake City River Recreation Corridor



#### Explore the natural world without leaving Town!

- Walking and Biking Paths
- Interpretive River Trail
- Fishing
- Rafting and Kayaking
- Ice Climbing

In beautiful Lake City, Colorado!



Graphics Provided Courtesy Camille Richards and The Lake City River Recreation Corridor

Graphics Provided Courtesy Camille Richards and The Lake City River Recreation Corridor