

5.3 DEFINITIONS AND VOCABULARY

In order to fully understand the range of trails that have been developed, and should be developed, throughout the community, a vocabulary needs to be established for the Durango trails system that accurately defines and describes each trail type. The following vocabulary describes the diversity of existing and planned trails.

5.3.1 FOOTPATHS AND BACKCOUNTRY TRAILS (ALSO KNOWN AS NATURAL SURFACE TRAILS)

This designation applies to trails that are natural, soft surface trails designed to accommodate hikers, mountain bikers, equestrians (where permitted), and other non-motorized users. The corridor, or land area that is host to the trail, will remain primarily in a natural state, and may contain areas that limit the extent of trail facility development. Trails are typically dirt up to four feet wide. These trails access the wildland-urban interface lands around Durango including Overend Mountain Park, Dalla Mountain Park, Animas Mountain, Grandview Ridge, Horse Gulch and other BLM and National Forest lands where a more natural character is desired. They are generally remote from the urbanized areas of the trails system and may include limited amenities such as signage, benches, and in some instance, picnic tables.



5.3.2 UNPAVED MULTI-USE TRAIL

This designation also applies to trail corridors within wildland-urban interface lands where the adjacent natural areas, rural landscapes or historic sites dictate a more formal trail yet still provide a natural facility development objective. Historically, Durango has not developed this type of trail. However, as the population ages and the community expands, there may be a need for such trails in the future to serve natural interpretive areas, scenic vistas, rail trails, and other corridors of interest. These unpaved trails could be surfaced with gravel or natural surface (up to 12 feet wide) for use by bicyclists, walkers, joggers, and equestrians (where permitted). When possible, these trails should be designed to applicable accessibility standards allowing for the widest variety of users. Trail head facilities and other amenities such as benches, interpretive signage, picnic tables, and restrooms could be developed as needed, and where appropriate.



5.3.3 PAVED MULTI-USE TRAILS

This designation applies to trails where high use is anticipated and when the trails are expected to be used as transportation routes, such as the Animas River Trail and other trails that will establish Durango’s primary hard-surface trail system; A wide variety of user groups such as bicyclists; walkers and joggers; roller-bladers and roller-skiers; and physically challenged individuals use multi-use trails. The City’s design standards for such a trail can vary, but typically the trail will be built of concrete and 10 feet wide. The width of the trail can expand to 12 feet or even 14 feet depending on the level of anticipated use and the areas in which it passes through. As with the Animas River Trail, trail head facilities and other amenities such as lights, benches, signage and restroom facilities may be developed as needed and where appropriate.



5.3.4 ROADSIDE TRAILS AND SIDEWALKS

This designation applies to trails in urban areas where an off-road option is not possible, or corridors which function as connections between off-road trails and major origins and destinations. On-road trails would consist of sidewalks for pedestrian use and multipurpose roadside trails for wheeled and non-wheeled travel. Pedestrian-scale lighting, street trees, benches and other amenities could be developed to encourage sidewalk use. For all sidepath trails, the parallel roadway must have very few driveway cuts. Also, trail designers need to evaluate driveway stacking and intersection design when establishing sidepaths.



5.3.5 BIKE ROUTES AND BIKE LANES

This designation applies to corridors in urban areas where off-the-road options are not possible, or corridors which function as connections between off-road trails and major origins and destinations. These are on-road routes including local streets, collector streets, and arterial streets suitable for bicycle use. They are used for bicycle transportation and may link regional and local trails and trail segments together. On-street routes may have defined bike lanes or “bike route” designation. Note that design requirements for on-street bicycle usage will vary depending on traffic speed and volumes, grades, parking and other factors. The City of Durango establishes five foot wide bike lanes on all arterial streets and has an established and signed bike route system within City limits. In 2010 the City will complete a multi-modal master plan that will clearly articulate the need for proposed and revised alignments for bike routes and bike lanes.

