

5.8 FUNDING TRAILS DEVELOPMENT

The City has been successful in establishing dedicated local funding sources as well as applying for grants to develop the City's trail system, having received nearly \$2.4 million in grant commitments since 2001. Effectively funding the development of future trails should be considered one of the most important aspects of the City's Trails Program.

The City's land use development requirements have been an effective tool for developing the Animas River Trail, with new development accommodating and participating financially in the construction of new trail sections planned within their development. Volunteer support from the community is another critical component of the successful development and maintenance of the natural surface trails system. Even with strong partnerships and developer commitments, the City's funding sources are insufficient to keep pace with the demand for a timely expansion of the community's trail system. The City must continue its efforts to leverage funding sources if it hopes to develop its trail system in a timely manner.

The following provides a summary of existing City funding sources and a brief summary of other potential funding sources.

5.8.1 CITY OF DURANGO FUNDING

The 2001 Trails Master Plan recommended full utilization of available funding sources for trail development. Since adoption of the 2001 Plan, the City has expanded its local funding sources:

5.8.1.1 DEDICATED SALES TAX FUNDING

Two separate sales tax measures have been approved by the citizens of Durango that can be used in developing the City's trail system. They include:

1) Recreation Complex/Trails Fund: In 1999, City residents approved a one-half of one percent sales and use tax (one-half penny of every dollar spent) to support construction of the Durango Community Recreation Center and completion of the Animas River Trail. The resolution enacting the approved ballot measure, in part, reads "after construction (of the Community Recreation Center) has been completed, any tax revenues generated in excess of amounts required to make annual payments on the debt may be used for the operation and maintenance of the Community Recreation Center and for the development and construction of the Animas River Trail, including adjacent greenway areas." This tax sunsets in 2019.

2) Open Space, Parks and Trails Fund: In 2005 City residents approved a second ballot measure to provide one-quarter penny of every dollar spent to be used to "finance the preservation, acquisition, and maintenance of natural lands including but not limited to, land to preserve water quality in rivers and streams, wildlife habitat, land for hiking and biking, and the creation and maintenance of parks and trails..." This tax sunsets in 2026.

Prior to the sunset of the Recreation Complex/Trails Fund and the Open Space, Parks and Trails Fund, the City should ask City voters to permanently continue this dedicated funding source.

5.8.2 OTHER PUBLIC SOURCES

Other State and Federal sources provide viable funding in support of trail development projects including:

- Federal Enhancement Grants administered by the Colorado Department of Transportation
- Great Outdoors Colorado – Trail Grants
- Colorado State Parks — State Trails Program Grants
- Safe Routes to School Program

5.9 DESIGN STANDARDS

Durango residents favor trails that are developed in a way that blend harmoniously with the native landscapes and surrounding environment. Design standards for the City’s multi-use paved trail system, in particular, have evolved significantly since the adoption of the 2001 Durango Trails Master Plan. Today’s standards are reflective of that interest. Below is a brief overview of existing design standards used by the City as well as new standards that should be applied to the trail types outlined earlier in this Plan.

5.9.1 TRAIL TYPES

5.9.1.1 FOOTPATHS AND BACKCOUNTRY TRAILS (NATURAL SURFACE TRAILS)

Location: rural, wilderness

Width: single track to 4 foot wide

Surface: native soil, reinforced as needed

Lighting: none

Railings: Typically none, but as needed to provide safe travel

Amenities: directional signage

Footpaths and Backcountry Trails are built to meet standards used in developing and maintaining natural surface trails on U.S. Forest Service and BLM managed property. This includes the USDA Trail Construction and Maintenance Notebook, 2007, and International Mountain Bike Association, Trail Solutions 2004.

5.9.1.2 MULTI-USE UNPAVED TRAILS

Location: suburban, rural, wilderness

Width: minimum 4 foot to 12 foot

Surface: gravel or rock screenings

Lighting: none

Railings: where needed to provide safe travel

Amenities: rest stops with bench seating, trash receptacles, mile markers, directional and safety signage

5.9.1.3 MULTI-USE PAVED TRAILS

The City has developed extensive design standards and construction specifications for the development of the Animas River Trail and other hard surface multi-use trails. Below is a general summary of standards associated with this trail type.

Location: urban, suburban, rural

Width: minimum 10 foot up to 14 foot

Surface: concrete, grade is 5% preferred, 8% maximum, 12% for short runs

Lighting: pedestrian scale in urban and suburban areas, regular interval separation near downtown; point-to-point way-finding as trails move away from urban core

Railings: 42" to 54", use only where necessary to meet safety and accessibility standards

Amenities: parallel soft surface footpath where conditions permit, rest stops with bench seating, trash receptacles, mile markers, directional and safety signage, urban art, restrooms with potable water in established parks

All multi-use paved trails are built to meet **American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO)** guidelines and Federal accessibility standards where applicable

5.9.1.4 ROADSIDE TRAILS AND SIDEWALKS

Location: urban and suburban

Width: minimum 5 feet, preferred 6 feet, optimal 10 feet, grade is 5% preferred, 8% maximum, sidewalks to adhere to accessibility standards with curb ramps at intersections

Surface: concrete preferred

Lighting: pedestrian scale lighting preferred, street lighting acceptable, lumens should meet national safety standards

Railings: comply with accessibility standards

Amenities: directional and safety signage, rest stops and bench seating, sheltered bus stops, landscape trees where possible

5.9.1.5 BIKE ROUTES AND BIKE LANES

Location: urban, suburban and rural

Width: bike lanes minimum 5 foot, preferred 6 foot (gutter pan excluded)

Surface: same as roadway, or extended concrete gutter pan of 5' minimum

Lighting: street lighting is acceptable

Railings: 42" to 54" rails where needed

Amenities: safety and directional signage, bike racks at destinations

5.10 MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

The City of Durango has a comprehensive management program for its trail system. This program includes a variety of activities based on the type of trail. All hard surface trails in the City are maintained by the City of Durango Parks and Recreation Department Parks Maintenance Division. The Division also coordinates trailhead repair and maintenance, and weed and fire mitigation within City open space where much of the natural surface trail system is located. The natural surface trails within the City are maintained primarily by Trails 2000 volunteers and others in coordination with City staff.

The typical functional activities for trail maintenance are listed below. While not intended as an operations and maintenance plan, the overview should provide a general understanding of key activities that must be considered with trail maintenance. Note that in addition to the activities outlined below, each category also includes: regular inspection; quality control; accident/crime monitoring; patrol; security; restroom facility needs; pest/invasive species management and user feedback.

5.10.1 MAINTENANCE PRACTICES

5.10.1.1 NATURAL SURFACE TRAILS

- Routine inspection and repair of erosion, dishing and other deterioration; cut back vegetation as needed to keep trail corridors open
- Trailhead/trail signage installation and repair
- Elimination of social trails
- Inspection and repair of bridges and other drainage crossings

5.10.1.2 HARD SURFACE TRAILS

- Snow removal and sweeping
- Trailhead/trail signage installation and repair
- Trailside mowing
- Maintenance of trailside facilities including benches, lights, and rest facilities
- Trail surface maintenance
- Litter and trash removal
- Fencing/Railing repair
- User Safety/Risk Management (including law enforcement and patrol)

A full assessment of maintenance practices undertaken on City hard surface trails is included in the Parks Maintenance Management Plan, an appendix to the overall Parks, Open Space, Trails, and Recreation Master Plan.

5.10.1.3 ON-ROAD BICYCLE FACILITIES

On-road bicycle facilities are maintained by the City Public Works Department and monitored by the City Multi-Modal Coordinator. Activities include:

- Street surface upkeep and repair
- Street sweeping and snow plowing
- Repaving and pavement overlays
- Signage, striping and lighting
- Education and enforcement
- Detours/Disruptions