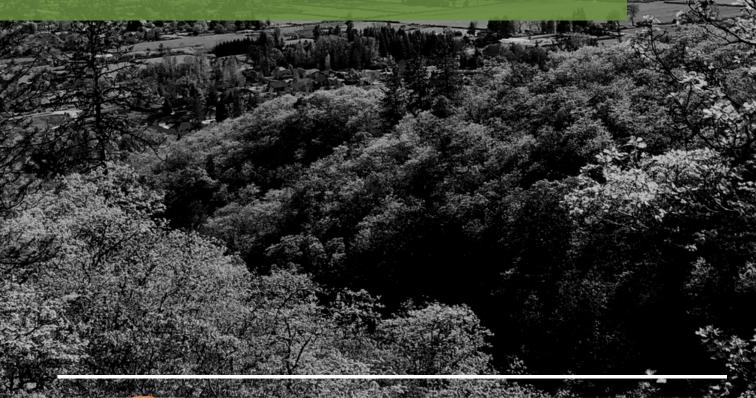


CONCEPTUAL PLAN





in partnership with

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technical assistance by





VISION

A 20+ mile non-motorized trail system for hikers and mountain bikers that is purpose-built, designed to be fun to hike and ride, enjoyed by area residents and serves to draw visitors the area and increase tourism expenditures.

GOALS

Create a quality non-motorized trail system that:

Functions as a trail park for locals to exercise and enjoy the outdoors.

Develops partnerships for management & maintenance.



Two hikers walk along one of the existing trails on Dollar Mountain

Serves as a tourism & economic development opportunity.

Reduces current unwanted activities.

PURPOSE

The Dollar Mountain Trail System Conceptual Plan is intended to illustrate a vision for the trails and related trail infrastructure on the City of Grants Pass, Josephine County and Bureau of Land Management in the Dollar Mountain/Northwest Hills area. This document is neither meant to be a master plan nor a strategic plan. It is not intended to detail construction or engineering documents. This concept plan does show where existing trails and parking are within the project area and how proposed trails and infrastructure can create a regional trail park that all can enjoy. It is hoped that this plan will help the City acquire public and private funding which will be essential in the development of the Dollar Mountain Trail System.



Mountain biker at Valley of the Rogue Trail System. Credit: bermstyle.com



Walker with dog on the existing Dollar Mountain Trail.



View from Dollar Mountain.

PLANNING PROCESS

In the Fall of 2019, The City of Grants Pass applied for and received a technical assistance grant from the National Park Service's Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (NPS-RTCA) program to help the City work with partners and stakeholders to develop a trail system concept plan for City owned lands and any adjacent lands including those of Josephine County, Bureau of Land Management and willing private landowners.

NPS worked with the City of Grants
Pass for two years to form a planning
team comprised of landowners,
government entities, regional trail and
tourism entities, and area residents.

This planning team met regularly and collaborated by analyzing data, discussing needs and issues and making recommendations to the development of this plan.



A group gathers to hear a talk at the top of Dollar Mountain.

The first step was to inventory the lands at the planning site. Volunteers collected data on the location of existing trails and the suitability for inclusion into the trail system. In addition, the City launched an online community-based survey to better understand the wished of the general public. The survey was also made available in hard copy for those not wanting to take it online. In all, there were 437 people who took the survey and provided valuable input into the development of the recommendations in this plan.

There was also an adjacent landowner survey that was online and available in hard copy. The planning team mailed a letter to surrounding landowners explaining the project, how to take the survey, why their input was important and who to contact if they wanted more information. Thirty three adjacent landowners to the survey and their feedback helped to shape the recommendations in this plan.

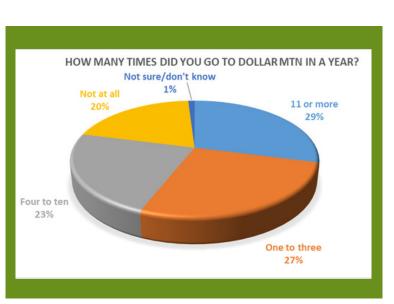
After the trail inventory, general public and adjacent landowner surveys were completed, the planning team identified issues, needs and opportunities and over the course of many months of worked together towards consensus on the recommendations you see in this plan.

PUBLIC INPUT

Public input prior to development of this plan involved a community-based survey for anyone who wanted to respond and a targeted adjacent landowner survey. Neither survey is scientific because we allowed anyone and everyone to provide input. Results reflect the respondents who provided input.

COMMUNITY INPUT





The community-based survey was available to anyone who wanted to take it online through SurveyMonkey. Hard copies of the survey were made available for those who were unable to or wished to fill out a paper copy. The survey yielded 437 responses. The following highlights from the survey are from respondents who were from the City of Grants Pass only:

Residents are already going to Dollar Mountain. 79% of respondents went there at least once in the past year. Only 20% of respondents said they hadn't been to Dollar Mountain. 52% said that in a typical year, they go four or more times to Dollar Mountain.

The Majority of people listed their top preference for Dollar Mountain was to develop hiking & mountain biking trails (78% of respondents).

Residents overwhelming responded they wanted more soft surfaced trails (79%) & increased/better parking (67%).

Viewpoints was the top amenity (excluding trails and parking) to develop for respondents from Grants Pass(39%).

ADJACENT LANDOWNER INPUT

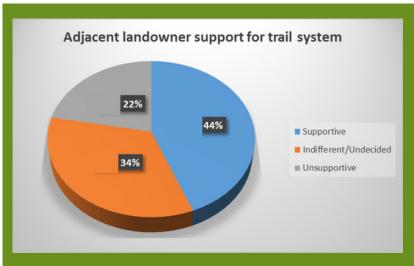
A letter was mailed to residents adjacent to the project that explained the project and provided a simple link for them to take the survey. Landowners who did not want to or were unable to take the survey online were provided with a paper copy. Thirty-three landowners responded to the survey. Here are selected results from the respondents:

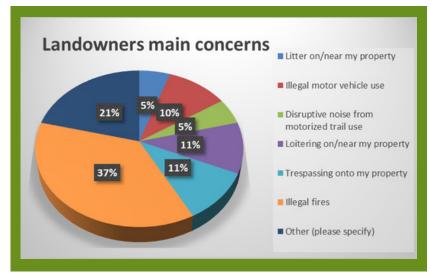
Adjacent landowners are already using Dollar Mtn to hike & mountain bike. Only 3% said they never go to Dollar Mtn compared to 21% who say they go there almost daily.

Hiking, dog walking & mtn biking were top uses of Dollar Mtn for adjacent landowners.

Top concerns were fire danger (41%),trespass (16%), noise from illegal motorized use (10%) and loitering & unsanctioned camping (10%).

Adjacent landowners overall were supportive (44%) of non-motorized trail development @ Dollar Mtn. 34% were indifferent and 22% unsupportive.





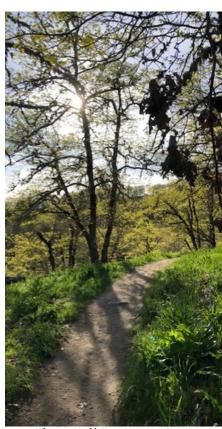
MANAGEMENT & MAINTENANCE

The City of Grants Pass will be responsible for the overall management of the trail system and the related trail infrastructure to support the trails (parking, signs, amenities, etc.). The City will work with Rogue Valley Mountain Bike Association (RVMBA) and other interested parties to enter into agreements to help with the maintenance of the trail system. The City will work emergency responders and adjacent landowners to ensure that trail users are safely recreating and minimizing conflict with adjacent landowners.

MAINTENANCE OF THE TRAIL SYSTEM

The City will be ultimately responsible for maintaining the trails that are part of the trail system but will work with trail organizations such as Rogue Valley Mountain Bike Association (RVMBA) to enter into maintenance agreements to reduce the costs to the City. The annual brushing and light tread maintenance can be done by volunteers and larger reconstruction of washout or eroded sections of trail can often be done by well trained volunteers or if complex enough, done by a professional contractor.

Trails that are built properly (outsloped, regular grade reversals and sustainable grades) do not need the level of maintenance of older, less sustainably designed trails. This is another reason to have the trails built by a licensed trail contractor who is knowledgeable in sustainably-built, fun to use trail design.



A trail on Dollar Mountain curves around a bend.

WORKING WITH NEIGHBORS

The City should continue to outreach with area neighbors. The adjacent landowner survey resulting in many people signing up for regular email updates and numerous neighbors expressed interest in being a part of a neighborhood or friends group. A group like this could help with monitoring both the trails but especially the parking and access areas and be used as a forum for adjacent landowners to voice their opinions on opportunities and concerns for the trail system. Adjacent landowners can essentially serve as the frontline for law enforcement by calling in suspicious or illegal activity.



A group descends the Dollar mountain trail.

ELECTRIC MOUNTAIN BIKES (E-BIKES)

e-mountain bikes are electric-motor-equipped bicycles that only go forward if you pedal them. Officially, they are categorized as Class 1 e-bikes, which means they have no throttle and a top-assisted speed of 20 miles per hour. Class 2 and Class 3 e-bikes have throttles and/or different top-assist speeds and will not be allowed on the trail system.

All of the trails open to mountain bikes will also be open to electronic-assisted class 1 bikes (e-bikes). The planning team discussed this issue and decided that allowing e-bikes would increase usage for local residents and visitors.

An example of a class 1 e-bike.



MOTORIZED USE

Trails and roads that are part of this trail system will be non-motorized except for administrative use and not open to dirt bikes and ATVs. The maintenance costs of motorized trail precludes is prohibitive compared to the low survey interest. In addition, after consulting with a regional motorized trail association, it was determined that the project area simply is not big enough to be worth opening it up to motorized use. It should be noted that there are numerous areas in the region on public lands where motorized users can legally ride.

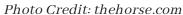


A dirt bike rider drives a motorcycle along a trail.

EQUESTRIAN USE

The trails will not be open to equestrian use. The cost and area for equestrian trailheads is prohibitive compared to the low interest from survey respondents. In addition, the construction and maintenance costs to allow horse traffic on these trails will be prohibitive.

Given the number of nearby opportunities for equestrians on USFS and BLM lands, there is not a demand/need for this trail system to be open to equestrian use.





A rider on horseback moves along a wooded trail.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

The provision of emergency response services for the trail system is complex and challenging. The heart of this complexity is specific to jurisdictional authority and responsibility which is different depending on the nature of the emergency incident involved. For example, most of the trail system lays outside City limits and is not subject to the jurisdictional authority of Grants Pass Fire Rescue or Grants Pass Police. The exception are those areas such as the Crescent Drive trail parking and access point which lays within City limits. Most of the trail system lays within the County which is the jurisdiction of Josephine County Sheriff for law enforcement and search and rescue services, the Oregon Department of Forestry for wildland fire protection, and by contract American Medical Response for medical services. The trail system does not lay within a fire district and is serviced by private structural fire service providers on a fee for service basis or optional subscription service for additional emergency response.

Private fire service provider Rural Metro Fire Department has opted to provide service to the trail system area as part of the agencies designated service area. Rural Metro Fire Department is a cosigner on the Rogue Valley Two County Mutual Aid Agreement, which includes Oregon Department of Forestry and Grants Pass Fire Rescue. Under this agreement all three agencies will respond in mutual support for wildfire ignitions and work collaboratively to support wildfire prevention activities such as fuels reduction projects, trail system access and wildfire preplanning.



Rural Metro Fire Department responding to an emergency call.

Oregon Department of Forestry has the only jurisdictional authority for fire related activity enforcement, fire cause determination and cost recovery. Grants Pass Fire Rescue and Rural Metro Fire Department work in partnership with American Medical Response to provide initial rescue and medical response to the area of the trail system. Grants Pass Fire Rescue response is mutual assistance in nature, subject to closest station location and is done without obligation to do so or requirement of jurisdictional authority. Trail users need to be aware that they may be subject to paying the costs of any fire, rescue, or emergency medical transport services they receive or have caused to occur through negligence.

Grants Pass Fire Rescue, Rural Metro Fire Department, Oregon Department of Forestry, and American Medical Response will work closely with the trail system development team to provide the necessary technical support to identify potential helipad location(s), wayfinding system for trail users and emergency responders, and determine trail construction features to facilitate emergency access. In addition, the providers will monitor cellular and radio signal propagation maps to determine mitigation strategies for areas that have inadequate reception for responders.

PUBLIC SAFETY

The Grants Pass Police Department will work closely with the trail system development team to provide support in identifying potential public safety concerns and solutions related to law enforcement. It is likely the most common concerns from the public will be related to OHV use of the trail system, camping, and firearms use, but could also include thefts, assaults, and any number of additional crimes. Law enforcement would also be the initial responders for most citizen injuries, lost subjects, and steep terrain rescues. The trail system is to be constructed on property that is within the jurisdiction of the Josephine County Sheriff's Office, the Bureau of Land Management, and the Grants Pass Police Department.



A police officer with mountain bike on a trail.

Currently the Grants Pass Police
Department does not have the
funding to staff the Dollar Mountain
trail system for law enforcement
services, nor is there existing MOUs
between the agencies for
enforcement, city council resolution
to allow Grants Pass Police to take
enforcement action, or city
ordinance addressing the various
unique law enforcement situations
that will be encountered. This trail
system will require the response of
at least two law enforcement
officers at any given time.

In addition to legal authority and staffing needs, whichever agency provides law enforcement services, as well as those providing fire/rescue and EMT services, will also have additional equipment needs to access the remote area of the trail system. These needs may include OHVs, such as quads and motorcycles, towing vehicles with trailers to bring OHVs to the trail heads, protective equipment and helmets, appropriate OHV and rescue training, multi-frequency public safety radios, rescue equipment, first aid supplies, fire suppression tools, trail cameras, and GPS. Monitored video surveillance cameras should be installed at trail heads, parking areas and other access points to deter and enforce illegal activities. To provide access for public safety OHVs, the trail system should be crafted in such a way as to allow rapid response by officers, fire personnel, and EMTs. The Grants Pass Police Department will offer technical assistance to the trail system development team as the above listed needs are further defined. However, to provide a safe atmosphere where citizens feel safe to use the trails, these public safety needs and concerns should be considered a top priority for the trail system development team and all entities involved with the project.

SERVICES & AMENITIES

The following services and amenities are recommended for the trail system:

Restrooms - a pit vault toilet will be installed at Heiglen Trailhead. Crescent will be monitored and if need be, port-o-potties will be placed at the Crescent Trailhead.

Garbage Cans – trash receptacles will be installed at both parking areas.

Water - consider installing a hand pump including a water fountain at Heiglen Trailhead.

FIRE **MANAGEMENT**

The City partnered with Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) to reduce fuel loads on City-owned lands. ODF has helped the City acquire grant funds to hire Greyback Forestry to thin, pile and burn brush, tree limbs and smaller trees (ladder fuels) on their lands. More fuel load reduction is planned for City and Josephine County lands as well as the BLM lands in the project area. Regular monitoring and fuel load prescriptions should be developed to ensure that fire danger is reduced on these lands. In addition, no fires of any kind will be permissible on the lands of the trail system.

Photo Credit:



Fawn Lillies on Dollar Mountain



Burning a brush pile with a drip torch to reduce fire danger.

TRAIL DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION

TRAIL CONTRACTOR

This trail system was envisioned to be constructed by a licensed trail contractor who is proficient with building the newer style of flowy singletrack that when built properly reduces maintenance costs and is fun to hike, run and ride. The trail contractor will most likely build the trail with a machine (mini-excavator or similar). Machine built trail tends to have less maintenance issues because the tread has been fully scraped to mineral soil and the outside third of the tread is less likely to erode or "blow-out" due to poor construction technique. Trail contractors tend to be competitive (price-wise) with hand crews. The trail contractor should be well vetted and also be paid to flag the trail to ensure that it is built properly and fun to use.

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers can be utilized along with a trail contractor to reduce costs of construction. This can best be done in two of the phases of construction: brushing and finishing the trail.

The City and partners should discuss this with a trail contractor prior and if amenable, the trail contractor could come in and flag the location of the trail. Vetted volunteers and certified sawyers can then go in and brush the flagline so the trail contractor can bring her or his trail machine in to build. Once constructed, volunteers can come in behind the trail contractor to hand finish the trail. Hand finishing involves removing roots and uneven surfaces in the tread and can also involve narrowing the tread by dragging in debris and duff (leaves and rotting vegetation) to create a trail that looks like it has been there for years.

TRAILHEADS, PARKING AREAS & ACCESS POINTS

CRESCENT

This is the only formalized parking area that currently exists for the trail system. The existing Dollar Mountain Trail leaves from here. This parking area is on Bureau of Land Management, who has provided an agreement for the City to manage and maintain the parking area. Development plans are well under way to increase parking capacity from 5 vehicles to approximately 11 vehicles. There are no amenities other than a trash receptacle planned here.

HIEGLEN

The end of Heiglen Loop Road is currently gated to prevent motorized access. This area has relatively flat ground that could provide parking for more than 35 vehicles. Once developed, Heiglen will serve as the main trailhead for the trail system. Visitors will be directed to park and access trails at Heiglen through signage and any informational materials. A restroom, garbage can, surveillance camera and lighting are recommended here. It should be noted that Heiglen could make a good helipad landing for emergency situations and fire suppression.

COMMUNITY ACCESS POINTS

From the results of the community and adjacent landowner surveys, it is clear that residents living close to the trail system want to use and have access to the trails closest to them. For this reason, it is important to "develop" community access points. These access points will not have be a trailhead or have parking but instead will only have a sign and will be located on public rights-of-way or on willing landowners' parcels to allow the local community to access the trail system from their homes.



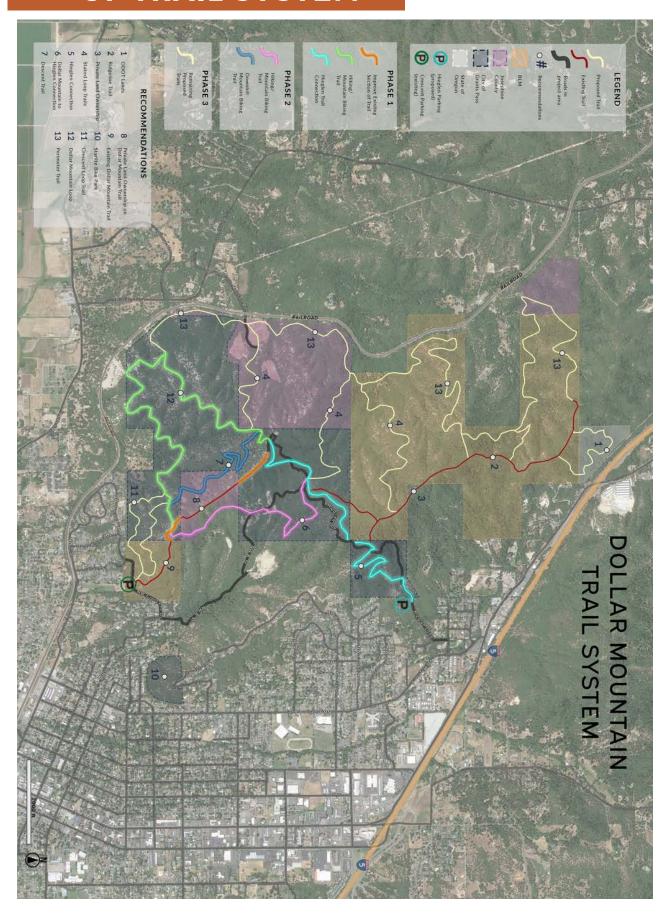
EXISITING TRAILS

Prior to City ownership, the lands that comprise the trail system have been used by trail users for decades. Much of that use has been off-road motorcycle use. Because there was no formalized trail system or trail planning done, the social trails that evolved are haphazard and unsustainable. Many are no more than goat paths and were created by a few motorcycle users riding the same track a few times. These social trails are a web over the landscape and have led to erosion and in some places deep incisions into the slopes. Local volunteers inventoried most of these trails and found the vast majority to be unusable for the planned trail system.

Only the formalized Dollar Mountain Trail and the ridgeline trail that starts to the north of the cell towers (top of Dollar Mountain Trail) and runs north through BLM lands can be incorporated into the trail system. This existing ridgeline trail will need several sections to be reconstructed or rerouted in places that are too steep and unsustainable. The rest of the trails should be closed as needed by dragging brush across the tread and blocking entrance. Eventually over time as the motorized use diminishes and more purpose built trail is constructed, these social paths will decline considerably.



CONCEPTUAL MAP OF TRAIL SYSTEM



TOTAL MILEAGE OF TRAIL SYSTEM

The existing roads, the existing Dollar Mountain Trail and the aforementioned ridgeline trail will be incorporated into the trail system. When this trail system is fully completed, it will be 25-30 miles of trail open to hikers and bikers.

TRAIL DIFFICULTY

The trails will be built to provide for opportunities for all skill levels of hikers and mountain bikers. The majority of trails will be geared towards a moderate skill level. To view the specifications for the various skill level of trails go to https://www.imba.com/sites/default/files/content/resources/201810/IMBATrailDifficultRatingSystem.jpg

Trail designers are encouraged to use natural features to provide extra skill challenges (roots, rocks and terrain) that can be easily avoided by trail users. These features will help to make the trails more fun for advanced rides and allow for trail users to develop their skills. The planning team decided on the approximate break-up of skill level trails for the system:

Easy (green) = approximately 20-25% of trails in the system

Moderate (blue) = approximately 40-45% of trails in the system

Difficult (black) = approximately 20-25% of trails in the system

Expert (double black) = approximately 5-10% of trails in the system

SHARED- USE CROSS COUNTRY SINGLETRACK TRAILS

Approximately 60-80% of the trail system will be open to both hiking and mountain biking. These trails will be two-way directional trails that are open to mountain bikes and pedestrians. They will be built at lower grades 3-6% to allow for easier climbing by mountain bikers, many of whom will climb up these trails to descend the downhill-only mountain bike trails. These trails should be built with modern trail knowledge including outsloping the tread at about 3% and having grade reversals ever thirty to sixty feet. This will help to shed water and reduce maintenance. There should be at least one lower grade two-way directional trail from each parking area (Crescent and Heiglen).

EXISTING DOLLAR MOUNTAIN TRAIL

For the most part, the existing Dollar Mountain Trail is good the way it is. However, there are a few sections of the trail that should be rerouted where grades are excessively steep and erosion is taking place. In addition, there is an opportunity to develop an overlook near the top of the trail which can serve as a spot to rest or be the end of an out and back hike. This trail is currently open to hikers and bikers and is a two-way trail. It should remain as such until the planned mountain bike only descent trail is developed that will parallel the Dollar Mountain Trail. Once that is developed, the Dollar Mountain Trail should become an uphill trail for mountain bikes but remain a two-way trail for hikers and trail runners. This will serve to reduce conflicts as the trail system becomes more popular.



Lillies on the existing Dollar Mountain Trail

DESCENT TRAILS

As mentioned above, a mountain bike only descent trail should be constructed that parallels the existing Dollar Mountain Trail. Approximately 4-6 miles of the trail system should be one-way descent only mountain bike trails (two to three trails in total). These descent trails are downhill-only directional trails for mountain bikers only.

PERIMETER TRAIL

Develop an easy to moderate/intermediate trail open to both bikers and hikers that runs the perimeter of the public lands in the planning area (BLM, State, County, City and potentially willing private landowners). This trail will be a shared-use trail.

BEGINNER/ ACCESSIBLE INTERPRETIVE LOOP TRAIL

The planning team recommended a loop trail that could be used by limited mobility walkers (Accessible) and young mountain bikers (scoot bikes) as well as provide a short (mile or less) loop with interpretive opportunities. Interpretive themes could include history of the Dollar Mountain area, mining in area, flora and fauna that can be found, indigenous peoples of the area and early European settlement.

TRAIL ON STATE LAND

It is recommended for the City to work with Oregon Department of Transportation to obtain permission to develop a loop that spurs of the perimeter trail in the state lands in the NE corner of the project area. This trail should be two-way directional and open to hikers and bikers.

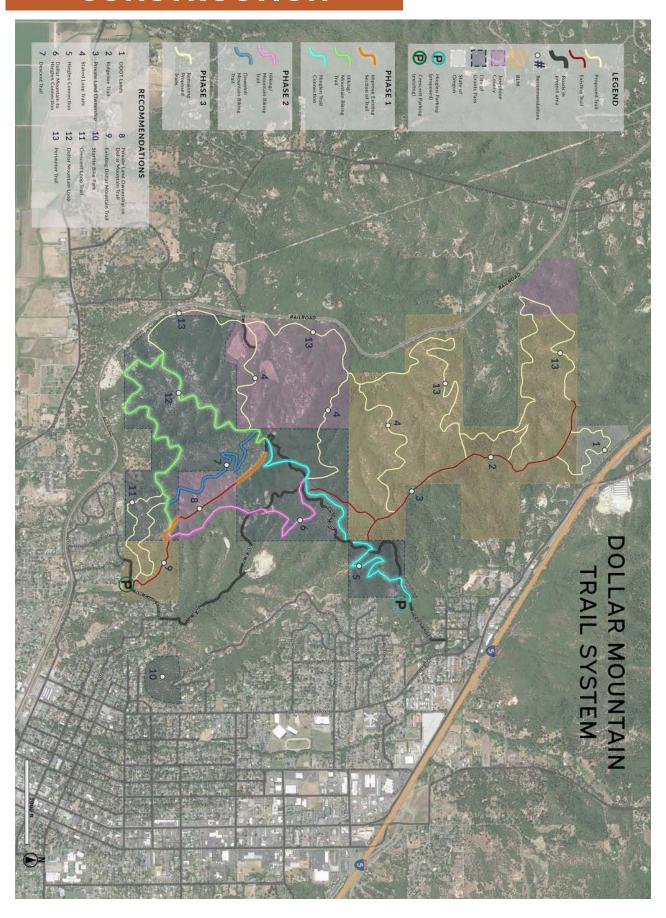
BIKE SKILLS PARK AT STARLITE (AKA MTN BIKE HILL)

There is an existing socially-created bike park just off of Starlite Boulevard. In the City's Parks Master Plan (2010), it is referred to as Mountain Bike Hill and is listed as a special use park. This informal bike park is popular with younger mountain bikers and BMX riders. It is situated on City of Grants Pass owned land and the planning team is recommending that the City work with community volunteers to improve and expand this bike park.

PRIVATE LANDS

There is one section of the existing Dollar Mountain Trail and one section of the existing ridgeline trail on BLM lands that crosses through private property. The City should work with these private landowners to obtain easements or agreements for the trail. If the landowner is unwilling, the trail segment in question should be rerouted onto public lands.

PHASES OF CONSTRUCTION



PHASES OF TRAIL CONSTRUCTION

To make the trail system's development less daunting and more manageable, the trail planning team divided the work into three phases. Each phase builds on the next and takes advantage of the existing trails and infrastructure. Once a phase is completed, the trail system is immediately improved and useable by the public. Excitement for the next phase is likely to build exponentially and should help with fundraising and support for the trail system. By phasing the project, it also gives adjacent landowners time to adjust to the new developments and for the City to makes any needed changes to help with any unforeseen issues that might occur.

PHASE 1 CITY OF GRANTS PASS LAND

Phase I has actions that are entirely on City of Grants Pass lands. These actions can be implemented as soon as there is funding available. Phase I will focus on improving and constructing trails close to the Crescent parking area and making a connection to Heiglen Loop Road. Phase I actions include:

Improving the existing Dollar Mountain Trail

The steep sections of this trail need to be rerouted to make the trail sustainable, reduce maintenance costs and make it more fun to use. In addition, a viewing area should be developed near the top of Dollar Mountain Trail.

Total trail reroutes are estimated at 1 mile with a rough cost of \$25k.

Creating the Dollar Mountain Loop

Constructing a new two-way directional cross country singletrack that comes off the bottom of Dollar Mountain Trail and goes to the top of Dollar Mountain Trail. Once completed, this trail will create a 4 mile lollipop loop combined when combined with the Dollar Mountain Trail. The length of this trail will be approximately 2.5 miles and is estimated to cost \$62.5k.

Heiglen Loop Connection

The final action in Phase 1 is to build a trail from the end (gated) of Heiglen Loop Road and connect it to the Dollar Mountain Trail. This will create another access point and allow residents on this side of Grants Pass to tap into the trail system. This will be a two-way directional singletrack.

Trail construction is estimated at 1.75 miles and a cost of \$43.75k.

PHASE 2 SOUTHERN FOCUS

Phase 2 actions concentrate efforts on creating more loops and connections in the south portion of the project. This phase continues to increase connections and loops for the Crescent and Heiglen access points. Phase 2 actions include:

Crescent to Heiglen Connector

This proposed trail will provide a connection between Heiglen and Crescent without having to go to the Dollar Mountain. It will also serve as part of the perimeter trail. A good portion of this trail goes through private lands and will require easements or access agreements. The trail also goes through Jospehine County land so an agreement with the county will need to be in place prior to fundraising and construction. This action will be a two-way directional cross-country singletrack.

Approximate length of construction is 1.25 miles with a rough cost of \$31.25k.

Dollar Mountain Descent

This will be the first downhill mountain bike-only trail in the system. Once completed, this trail will create another loop with either the existing Dollar Mountain Trail or the section of

the Dollar Mountain Loop constructed in Phase 1. After this descent trail is constructed, the existing Dollar Mountain Trail should become an uphill-only trail for mountain bikes but remain a two-way trail for hikers.

The length of this trail will be approximately 1.75 miles and is estimated to cost \$43.75k.

PHASE 3 COMPLETING THE SYSTEM

Phase 3 focuses trail construction efforts on Jospehine County and BLM lands. Agreements will need to be in place and environmental compliance (National Environmental Protection Act – NEPA) for the BLM lands will need to be completed prior to construction. There is also an additional loop on Oregon Department of Transportation lands that will need to have an agreement in place prior to development. The trails constructed in this phase will be a mix of two-way directional singletrack and descent mountain bike-only trails. In addition to the new trail constructed, there will be some reroutes needed for the existing ridgeline trail as there are some excessively steep and eroded sections. And agreement with the private landowner for the portion of the ridgeline trail will also need to be obtained.

Total trail reroutes for the existing ridgeline trail are estimated at a ½ mile and should cost of \$12.5k.

Total new construction of all of the trails in Phase 3 is estimated at 9 miles and likely to cost around \$225k.



Young hiker enjoying the view on the existing Dollar Mountain Trail. Photo credit: Ptarmigan Ptrails, LLC