

LAS ANIMAS COUNTY OUTDOOR RECREATION & ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY



August 21, 2023





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INTRODUCTION

PROJECT BACKGROUND

In 2019, Fishers Peak State Park was established by the State of Colorado as the 42nd State Park. This 19,200-acre property is located within Las Animas County and immediately adjacent to the City of Trinidad. The establishment of this park has the potential to drastically elevate the prominence of Southern Colorado as a recreational destination and to draw significant tourism and economic opportunity to the region. In preparation for this potential shift, it was important that the County and the City study the recreational infrastructure needed to support the park, the best organizational structures to provide services to residents and visitors to the region, and the strategies for future economic diversification.

The purchase of Fishers Peak Property has the potential of changing Las Animas County’s and Trinidad’s economy. Las Animas County does not have a developed recreation economy in part because there is a limited amount of public land available on which to develop public recreation uses and opportunities. The purchase of 19,200-acre Fishers Peak and the plan to make it available for public use has people excited about the potential positive effect Fishers Peak State Park will have in developing recreation resources. The Las Animas County Outdoor Recreation and Economic Impact study provides ways to partner with public entities. As one example the local school districts and Trinidad State College, to develop educational opportunities. The educational potential is likely to attract more residents and visitors. The study provides thoughtful needed guidance to the County and City in preparation for the opening of the new State Park. The study also serves to enhance the livability of the region by providing the public with well-planned recreational assets and serve as an education source on wildlife and ecology that will highlight the importance of conservation of nature.

A partnership was formed to guide the Las Animas County Outdoor Recreation and Economic Impact Study including Las Animas County, the City of Trinidad, the Trust for Public Land and the Nature Conservancy. These project partners became the project leadership team (PLT) that lead the planning process and the development of the final plan.



Bosque Del Oso State Wildlife Area

PROJECT GOALS

“The goal of this project is to create an impact study and recreation plan to guide the County and City by giving them a better understanding of community and infrastructure impacts, needs and opportunities associated with Fishers Peak State Park.”

- From the 10/1/20 Las Animas County Grant Application

The project partners elaborated on the initial DOLA grant goal by providing more detailed objectives as part of meeting the DOLA grant goal.

HIGH LEVEL OBJECTIVES:

- Gather as many community interests and perspectives as possible
- Develop shared community vision for outdoor recreation in Las Animas County
- Evaluate feasibility and economic benefit of priority projects
- Build regional partnerships to support implementation and management of shared priority projects

SPECIFIC PROCESS OBJECTIVES:

- Inspire participation from a diverse range of interests, backgrounds, ages, and abilities.
- Celebrate what makes the outdoors in Las Animas County unique, like Fishers Peak State Park, Trinidad Lake State Park, the Purgatoire River, and many other beautiful places.
- Identify potential projects and programs to enhance outdoor recreation opportunities, trails, parks, and visitor infrastructure across the County.
- Study the economic benefits and fiscal impact of recreation strategies.
- Help community members prioritize and drive future recreation projects and programs that benefit the local economy.
- Lay out a realistic action plan that informs budgeting, grants and fundraising.
- Build capacity among partners, businesses, organizations and community members so we achieve our common vision together.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Las Animas County in partnership with the City of Trinidad sought funding from the Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) to complete a recreational management plan to study and prepare for the impacts of Fishers Peak State Park located wholly within Las Animas County and immediately adjacent to the City of Trinidad. This project included stakeholder facilitation, public outreach, data collection, data analysis and consolidation of strategies needed to address impacts and opportunities based on this new recreation asset. The plan included the study of infrastructure and access needs to connect the City to the State Park and to connect the park to the other existing regional recreation assets, economic development strategies and opportunities potentially created by the establishment of the State Park. The partners crafted a Memorandum of Understanding that was executed once DOLA funds were secured, partners include, Las Animas County, the City of Trinidad, the Trust for Public Land and the Nature Conservancy. This plan is owned by Las Animas County and the City of Trinidad and it will be carried out in conjunction with the ongoing Fishers Peak State Park development efforts being conducted currently. However, its primary purpose will be to benefit the local governments in better understanding the community needs, impacts and opportunities associated with the new State Park.

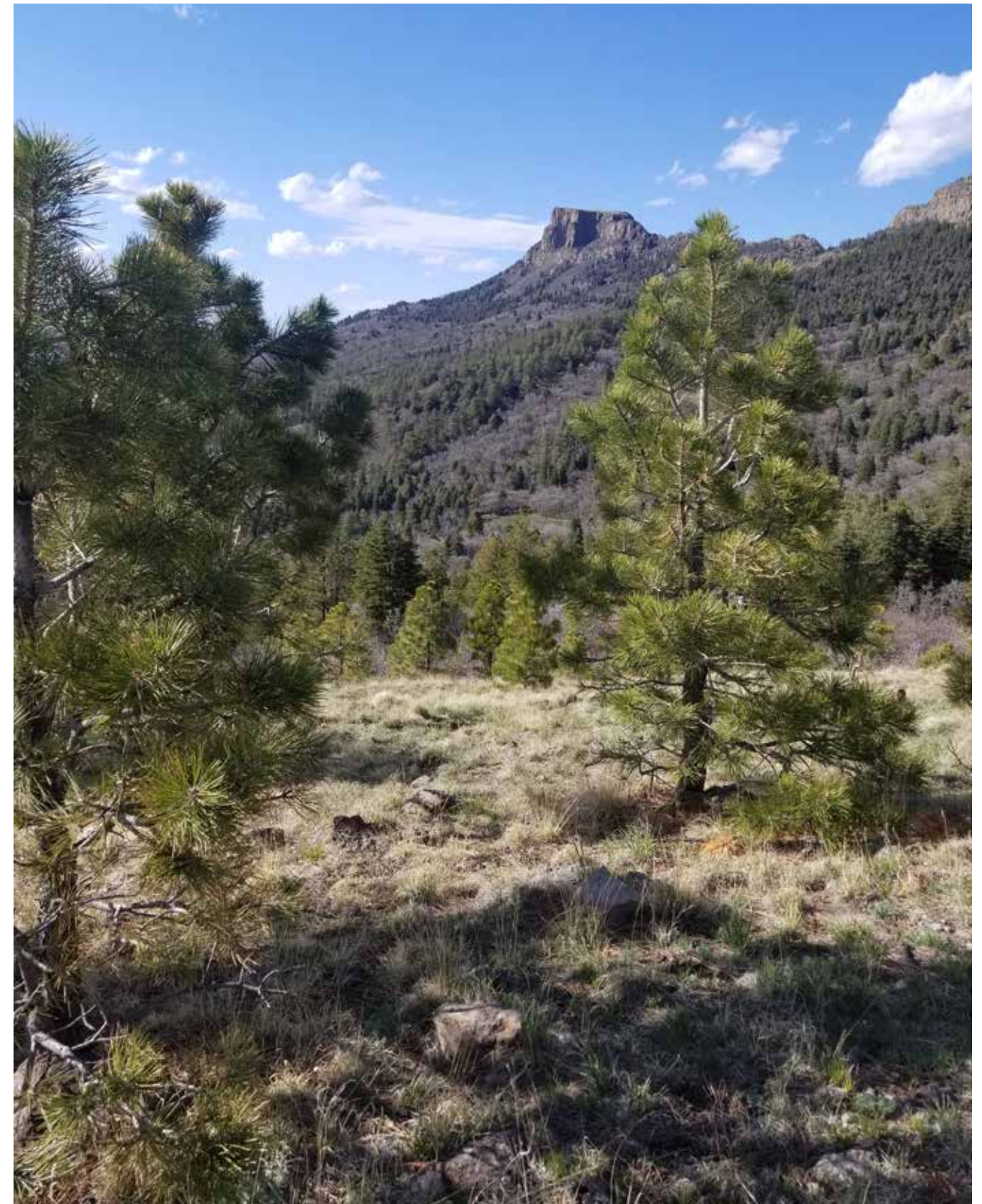
The study was conducted over an 18-month period starting in spring of 2022. The Project Leadership Team (PLT), made up of the project partners, provided guidance on the study process. The PLT asked community stakeholders in a series of different outreach opportunities to identify recreational needs, desires and concerns. The PLT also requested that key community stakeholders weigh in on the study process itself. So, a Process Advisory Committee (PAC) was created.

The initial stakeholder outreach resulted in a list of themes. The PLT working with the consultant team organized the themes into eleven outdoor recreation strategies to be included in the study as recommendations. Simultaneously with the initial stakeholder outreach effort the consultant team collected county wide existing conditions information to use when determining the opportunities and feasibility of the eleven outdoor recreation strategies.

Once the eleven outdoor recreation strategies were identified, an economic impact analysis was conducted to understand the positive economic impacts of implementing the eleven strategies. Specifically, the economic impact analysis estimated additional visitation, sales tax revenue and potential revenues from a property tax increase to support the development of the outdoor recreation strategies. The economic benefits and eleven strategies were presented to the public and community stakeholders for review and input.

Out of the eleven strategies a group of early action projects were identified. These early action projects included management and maintenance projects that were identified as priority projects, “Must do projects”. Additionally, a group of early action projects like a trail connection to Fishers Peak State Park from the City of Trinidad were identified as early win projects with willing partnerships that exist to help implement the projects. The study goes further to identify potential projects and funding for all eleven strategies.

The study was concluded with a joint presentation to the Las Animas County Commissioners and City of Trinidad City Council late summer of 2023. Elected officials’ comments were incorporated into this study.



Fishers Peak

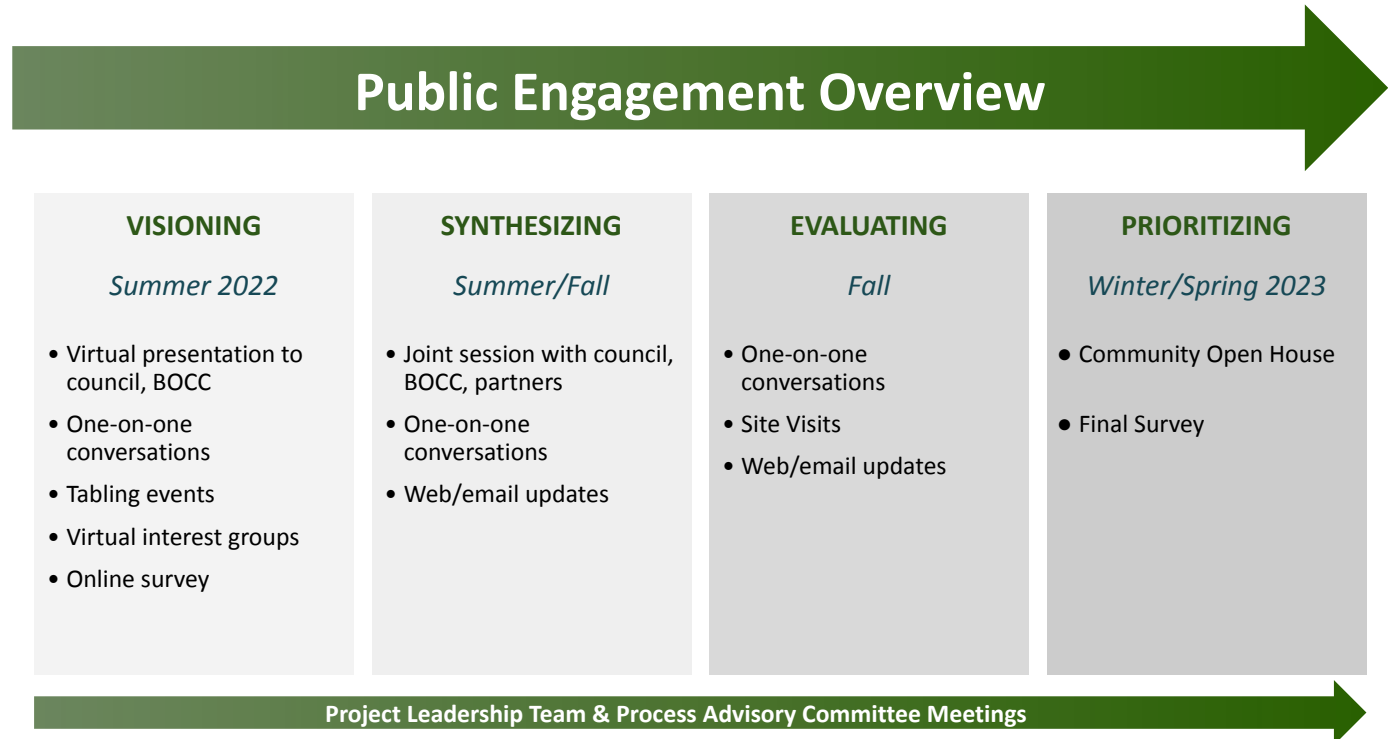


STAKEHOLDER & PUBLIC PROCESS

OVERVIEW OF ENGAGEMENT

Each step in the study was informed by extensive stakeholder and community engagement. Key stakeholders provided regular input and guidance through the Project Leadership Team meetings and Process Advisory Committee meetings (membership listed in **Appendix C.1 and C.2**). The project team hosted a contact list of over 300 contacts interested in the study, compiled from participants during the Fishers Peak Master Plan process as well as individuals who showed interest in learning more during each of the public touchpoints. The email list recipients received information on how to join tabling opportunities, surveys, interest group discussions, and the community open house. The project team also hosted an informational website at: <https://lasanimascounty.colorado.gov/recstudy>

The community played an especially important role during the Visioning Phase of the plan development, providing key insights and themes that were refined into the final study Strategies. The stakeholders and community then provided key insights and reflections on the refined Strategies during the final prioritization phase. The graphic below indicates the process and timeline of the engagement for the study.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

Community input was collected throughout the course of the project and categorized into themes to guide the development of the Strategies outlined in this plan. An overview of the major takeaways from the community include:

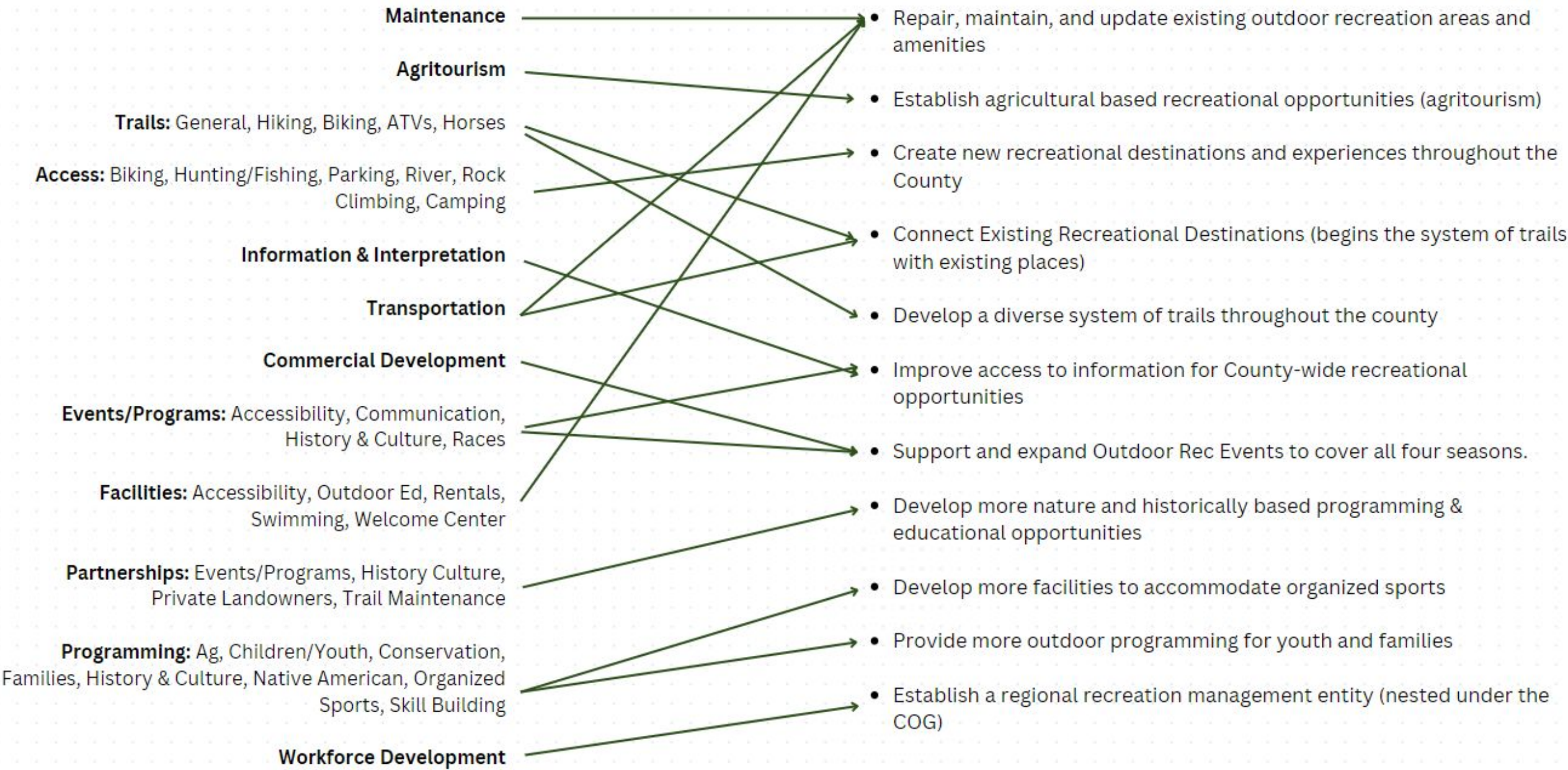
- Ensuring the preservation of the history and character of Las Animas County while developing the outdoor recreation economy
- Providing more opportunities for youth and families to get outdoors and recreate safely
- Maintaining and repairing existing outdoor recreation areas
- Improving information and messaging around existing recreation opportunities.
- Creating economic benefits and quality of life improvements for the local community balanced with attracting tourists and visitors

Systematic data theming from the Visioning Phase of the project highlighted these key themes:

Public Engagement Themes

| | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Access: Biking, Hunting/Fishing, Parking, River, Rock Climbing, Camping• Agritourism• Commercial Development• Events/Programs: Accessibility, Communication, History & Culture, Races• Facilities: Accessibility, Outdoor Ed, Rentals, Swimming, Welcome Center• Information/Interpretation | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintenance• Partnerships: Events/Programs, History Culture, Private Landowners, Trail Maintenance• Programming: Ag, Children/Youth, Conservation, Families, History & Culture, Native American, Organized Sports, Skill Building• Trails: General, Hiking, Biking, ATVs, Horses• Transportation• Workforce Development |
|--|--|

Themes → Strategies



PROJECT LEADERSHIP TEAM (PLT)

The PLT was composed of project partners (listed in Appendix C.1) from Las Animas County, the City of Trinidad, and the Trust for Public Land. The PLT met biweekly at the start of the project, and monthly thereafter to discuss both process and substance advancements, providing insight on overarching goals for implementation and funding. The PLT reaffirmed the project goals throughout the project including:

- Gathering as many community interests and perspectives as possible, representing a diverse range of interests, backgrounds, ages, and abilities
- Developing a shared community vision for outdoor recreation in Las Animas County that celebrates the unique landscapes and histories of the region
- Evaluating feasibility and economic benefit of priority projects, helping community members prioritize and drive future recreation projects and programs that benefit the local economy.
- Building capacity among partners, businesses, organizations and community members to achieve common visions of priority projects through partnership

The PLT also played a key role in refining the elements of the final report, including the Economic Impact analysis and the Strategies.



April 11, 2022 Public meeting

PROCESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC)

The PAC was composed of community leaders (listed in Appendix C.2) from across the County, nearby towns, businesses, and community groups. The PAC met five times over the course of the study (May 2022, June 2022, September 2022, January 2023, March 2023) to provide input on the process, such as marketing, engagement strategies, and events. This group also provided guidance and support throughout the creation and refinement of the final report elements, including the Economic Impact analysis and the Strategies.



April 11, 2022 Public meeting

TABLING EVENTS

Based on PLT and PAC input, the project team attended community events in Las Animas County including: the Fishers Peak Public Meeting (April 11, 2022), Santa Fe Trail Days (June 17-18, 2022), and the Las Animas County Fair (July 29, 2022). At these events, the team engaged a range of community members including youth and families, disability advocates, as well as members of Native and/or Latin communities. Community members provided verbal and written input.



June 17-18 2022 Santa Fe Trail Days

KEY TAKEAWAYS

FISHERS PEAK PUBLIC MEETING

Final public information session held for the Fishers Peak State Park Master Plan with over 125 attendees. The Las Animas County Recreation and Economic Impact Study team hosted a booth about the project.

Interest and enthusiasm around continuing the conversation about connecting Fishers Peak to the broader community, both physically through a trail system but also in terms of marketing and economic development strategy.

Curiosity as to how else the County and the City of Trinidad could support next steps to improve other outdoor recreation opportunities, knowing the phasing of Fishers Peak State Park could take some time.

SANTA FE TRAIL DAYS

The project team received a high level of engagement during the Santa Fe Trail Days event, many individuals and families sharing their thoughts and perspectives on outdoor recreation in Las Animas County.

Two large maps, one of the Trinidad Area and one of the County as a whole, were displayed at the table. People used sticky notes to indicate where areas they enjoy outdoor recreation and other areas with potential to be improved or explored for the outdoor recreation opportunities.

A focus on family-friendly events and opportunities and interpretation to tell the story of Las Animas County. Stakeholders tied interests around healthy communities, connectivity, and recreation together as ways to impact the next generation in Las Animas County.

LAS ANIMAS COUNTY FAIR

The project team heard from many community members that they did not recreate outdoors often, mainly due to a lack of time or the fact that many farmers and ranchers work outside most days. However, both youth and adults expressed an interest in areas for OHV access as well as local running and cycling races (3K-5K) that would support local fundraisers or businesses.

Community members who spoke with the project team also expressed a desire to preserve the unique character and history of Las Animas County. They were supportive of moderate economic development surrounding outdoor recreation, but hope that this development will support the quality of life and character of the region rather than overshadow it.

VIRTUAL INTEREST GROUPS

During the Visioning Phase of the study, the project team hosted seven topic-based interest groups from July-Aug 2022 (see below for full list of topics). The topics were developed based on community feedback during the tabling events and input from the PLT and PAC. Through these virtual interest groups, the project team engaged 50 total participants, a committed group of community leaders, educators, and business owners. These participants included representatives from the agriculture community, local state parks, private landowners, and local nonprofit organizations like ABC Disabilities and the Youth Club of Trinidad.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Community Trails, Trailheads, and Facilities

- Participants discussed challenges related to safety and maintenance at existing trails, trailheads, and facilities.
- Participants cited Trinidad Lake State Park as an example of a safe and well maintained recreation area.

Outdoor Recreation Events and Programs

- This discussion highlighted ideas for how to capitalize on and expand opportunities already present in Las Animas County, for example, hiking, running, and cycling- especially the increasingly popular gravel bike races.
- These events should showcase and support the local community and local businesses, increasing local quality of life as well as providing a fun opportunity for visitors from out of town.

Agricultural and Historic Recreation

- Participants shared how unique and important the western history and agricultural heritage of Las Animas County is to the community.
- Rather than losing these unique characteristics as outdoor recreation grows, the community hopes it can preserve, support, and showcase these unique qualities through outdoor recreation opportunities in Las Animas County.

Outdoor Opportunities for Children, Youth, and Families

- Participants highlighted an interest in creating opportunities and/or centers encouraging families and children to develop skills and explore the outdoors (i.e. organized sports, summer camps, or outdoor career training).
- Transportation, access, and knowledge were identified as key barriers.
- Many ideas were shared for how these opportunities could gain traction in the area, mainly surrounding partnerships with Trinidad State College, local businesses, and local community members.

Accessibility in the Outdoors

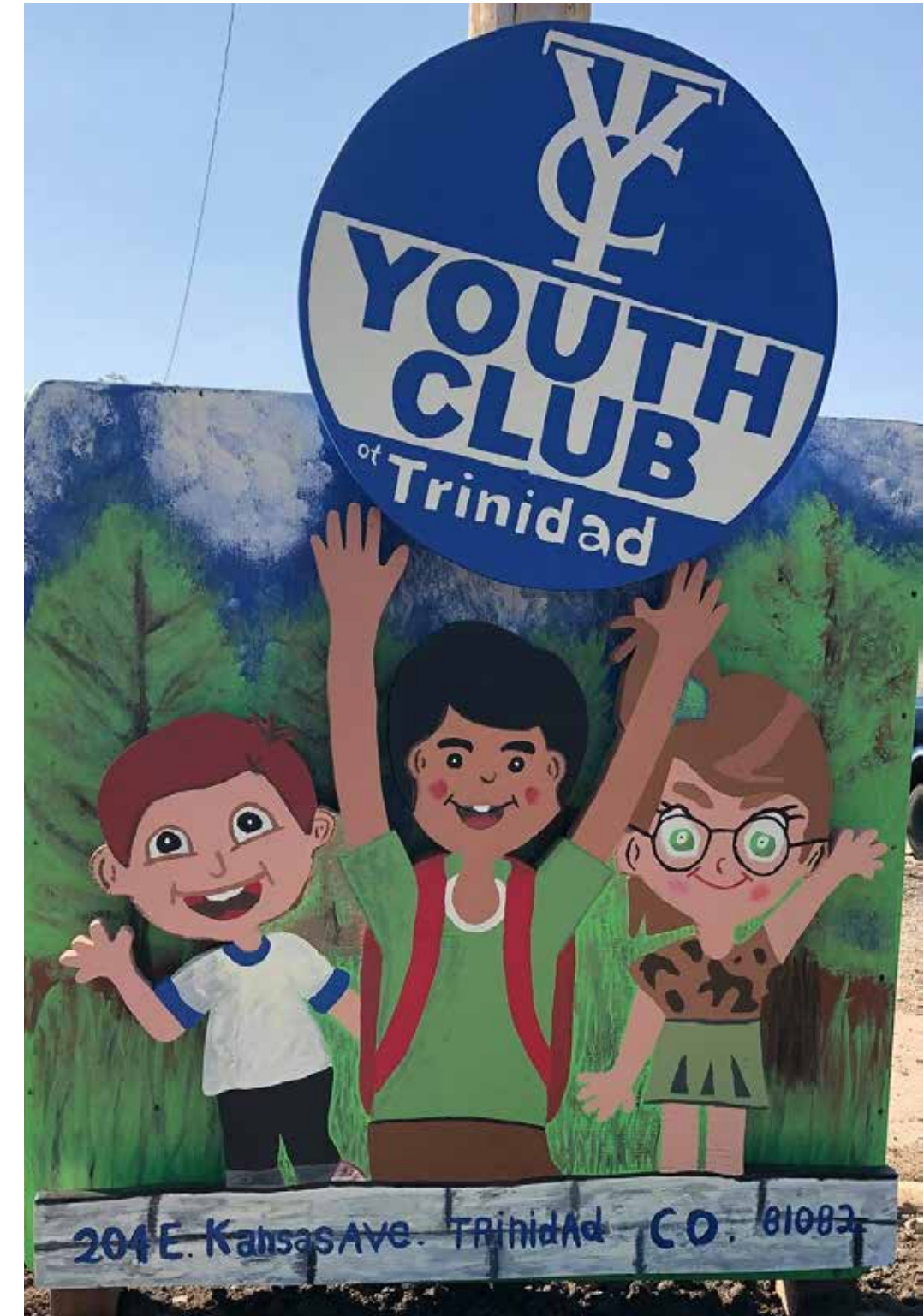
- Participants noted that there are not many outdoor recreation opportunities or facilities in Las Animas County that accommodate the needs of individuals with disabilities.
- Participants shared examples of places and activities that they do enjoy, such as safe sensory areas like the sensory wall at the Trinidad Library.
- Basic handicap accessible facilities are important to include, especially wheelchair accessible parking spots and restrooms.

East County

- This discussion highlighted access to land as a challenge for outdoor recreation in Eastern Las Animas County-most land is privately owned.
- The group discussed strategies for partnering with private landowners to develop permit systems that would provide opportunities for access while also providing private landowners with a source of revenue and control over how many visitors can access their land.

West County

- This group discussed a plethora of ideas for expanding outdoor recreation in Western Las Animas County including areas for connecting existing trails as well as locations for new trail systems.
- Participants indicated a goal to have 10 miles of trails around the town of Trinidad.
- This conversation highlighted the importance of maintenance and coordination with local CPW and USFS staff.



Trinidad Youth Club

ONLINE SURVEYS

There were two Online Public Surveys created and disseminated during the Visioning and Prioritization phases of the study.

- The first survey consisted of 18 Questions, was open for two months during the Visioning Phase (July - August 2022), and received 151 responses. See Appendix C.3 for full list of Survey Questions and Responses as well as Slides for full analysis of Survey #1.
- The second survey consisted of four Questions, was open for one month during the Prioritization Phase (March 2023) of the project, and received 60 total responses. See Appendix C.4 for a full list of Survey Questions and Responses for Survey #2. **Disclaimer:** the second survey was marketed through multiple channels including the cumulative project email list, Project Leadership Team members, the Community Open House, and by community members who attended the open house. Respondents not present at the community open house might not have the full context of descriptions of the Strategies and Early Projects. Even still, community input on the Strategies (Q2) and Early Action Projects (Q3) as understood by name still provided value to the project team and *local leadership*.



SUMMARY OF KEY TAKEAWAYS

Survey #1

- Of those who responded, 23% were from outside of Las Animas County. Of those who were from Las Animas County, 91% live in Trinidad.
- Top Outdoor Activities included Hiking/walking, Observing nature/wildlife, scenic driving, and dog walking.
- 27% of respondents rated their experience of outdoor activities in the county as okay or needing improvement.
- 53% rate the condition of community parks, trails, and facilities (not including state parks and wildlife areas) as needing improvement.
- When asked to imagine Las Animas County in 10 years:
 - 46% of respondents chose, “Las Animas County has developed a thriving recreation economy with high-quality recreational amenities, increased tourism, and increased cost of living for residents.”
 - Another 40 % of respondents chose, “Some increase in tourism and supporting recreational amenities has helped grow the local economy.”
 - Only 14% of respondents chose, “It looks and feels very much like it does today, with some outdoor recreation, some tourism, and little economic development.”
- The project team received 128 responses to the open-ended question (Q12) of the Online survey. As part of the analysis process, these comments were reviewed and coded to identify key themes to guide the team in establishing next steps. The project team appreciates the engagement and community perspectives but understands that many respondents were sharing their thoughts in confidence to the project team. In order to respect the respondents, the project team will not be sharing all answers to this question publicly. Instead, we have selected a handful of representative quotes from the responses, which can be found in Appendix C.4.

Survey #2

- 33.33% of respondents indicated that stakeholder engagement was either Good or Excellent throughout this project. 45% of respondents had not participated in the engagement process to date.
- Of the 11 Strategies, respondents indicated the top three most important, from their understanding, were: *Take Care of What You Have*; *Provide More Outdoor Programming for Youth and Families*; and *Support and Expand Outdoor Recreation Events to Cover All Four Seasons*.
- Respondents indicated they were most excited about these Early Action Projects: *Riverwalk Enhancement*; *Santa Fe Trail Connection to Fishers Peak State Park*; *Reservoir Hill/Southside Park Enhancements*; *the Trinidad Welcome Center*; and the *Wormhole Trail System Expansion*.
- The project team understood these preferences as representative of desires heard throughout the project from the local community. These Strategies and Early Action Projects reflect opportunities the local community would like to see in the short term, improving the quality of life for them and their families.
- Other Strategies and Early Action Projects, like development of a Regional Management Entity are necessary to achieve these projects and ensure long-term sustainability of the growth of outdoor recreation in Las Animas County.

COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSE

To wrap up the engagement portion of the study, a Community Open House was hosted during the prioritizing phase on May 10, 2023 from 6-8pm at the Trinidad High School Student Center. Many interested and involved community members attended, the total number of participants was approximately 45 individuals. The project team presented an overview of the study and then encouraged participants to explore the boards around the room and talk with the project team about their questions and concerns. The project team received input from the attendees through these one-on-one interactions. See the *Community Open House presentation in Appendix C.6*.

SUMMARY OF KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Many community members expressed interest in and excitement about key early projects including the regional management entity.
- Discrete project ideas were shared in relation to the Strategies and Early Action Projects presented. For example, a trail was suggested to connect the High School track to the park across the street and many individuals discussed aspects of a marketing plan including expanding on mapping efforts taken on by local community members.
- Participants expressed a desire for this study to underline the direct connection between increased outdoor recreation and support for local businesses.
- There was a similar sentiment around representing the role of hunting and fishing within the economic impact of outdoor recreation in Las Animas County. The project team understood this desire as this is not only an economic factor, but a large part of the culture and history of the area.
- A few participants indicated an interest to ensure action and accountability in local governments in relation to the different strategies. Participants shared examples of the local community taking action to make positive change but requiring more support from local government to support and augment these efforts.
- Lastly, many participants thanked the project team for this study and were eager to see the full, finalized report.



May 10, 2023 Community Open House



EXISTING CONDITIONS

LAS ANIMAS COUNTY BACKGROUND

The largest in Colorado, Las Animas County encompasses 4,775 square miles (over 300,000 acres) extending for 114 miles along the Colorado – New Mexico border. From the crest of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains and the Spanish Peaks in the west to the Purgatoire River canyonlands in the east, the county encompasses a variety of landscape settings and life zones. Elevations range from 13,400 feet (Mariquita Peak) to 4,400 feet (Picket Wire Canyons). The mountainous areas to the west are dominated by Subalpine and Montane forests, rolling hills, canyons, and mesas consist of ponderosa pine and pinyon-juniper forests, while the eastern plains are dominated by vast, open prairie.

The total population of the county in 2021 was 14,318, with 8,335 people residing in the City of Trinidad. Smaller towns and communities include Aguilar, Branson, Cokedale, Hoehne, Kim, Starkville, and Weston.



Summer Colors

LAND OWNERSHIP

Las Animas County consists primarily of privately-owned land, which has historically limited opportunities for the development of outdoor recreation. Public lands within the county include the following:

- **Piñon Canyon Military Reservation, Department of Defense**
Large area (236,000 acres) used by for military training and maneuvers.
- **Comanche National Grassland, USDA Forest Service**
Scattered tracts of prairie in the eastern portion of the county.
- **San Isabel National Forest, USDA Forest Service**
Multi-use public forest lands in the western portion of the county near Cucharas Pass and the Spanish Peaks.
- **Bureau of Land Management**
Scattered parcels in the hills west of Trinidad and on the eastern plains.
- **State Trust Lands, Colorado State Land Board**
Several large tracts and multiple scattered parcels, primarily leased for agricultural purposes.
- **State Wildlife Areas, Colorado Parks and Wildlife**
CPW manages six properties focused on wildlife habitat and hunting opportunities; these include Lake Dorothy (4,500 acres), James M. John (8,200 acres), Spanish Peaks (6,450 acres), Bosque del Oso (30,000 acres), North Lake (840 acres), and Apishapa (7,935 acres).
- **State Parks, Colorado Parks and Wildlife**
CPW manages two state parks near Trinidad, Trinidad Lake State Park (2,700 acres) and the newly established Fishers Peak State Park (19,200 acres).
- **Local Public Lands**
The City of Trinidad owns public land around North Lake and Monument Lake in the western portion of the county, and multiple parcels within Trinidad supporting local parks and trails

NATURAL RESOURCE OVERVIEW

Las Animas County holds a wide diversity of natural ecosystems, stemming from its dramatic geological features and elevational gradient. Major landforms and ecological zones in Las Animas County are broadly described as follows, from west to east:

- **High Alpine**
Alpine tundra, low shrubs, and talus slopes; and subalpine mixed conifer forests found along the crest of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains and around the Spanish Peaks.
- **Foothills Woodlands**
Rolling hills and canyons extending from the high mountains to the plains interface; consisting of ponderosa pine forests at higher elevations transitioning to mixed pine, pinyon juniper, and oak shrublands at lower elevations.
- **Borderland Mesas**
Series of dramatic volcanic mesas extending along the southern edge of the county from, including Fishers Peak Mesa, Raton Mesa, Mesa de Maya, and Black Mesa; consisting of a diverse mix of life zones including pinyon-juniper woodlands, ponderosa and white pine mixed forests, and montane grasslands.
- **Shortgrass Prairie**
Expansive, open grasslands consisting of both native and introduce grass species and low shrublands, extending from the foothills interface to the eastern edge of the county.
- **Purgatoire Canyonlands**
Network of remote stream and river canyons consisting of exposed sandstone bedrock, juniper shrublands, shortgrass prairie, and desert vegetation.

These diverse landforms and ecosystems provide habitat for many species of wildlife. Key habitat elements are described in the next page.

ECOLOGICAL RESOURCES OF SIGNIFICANCE

While the diverse forests, canyons, and prairies support wildlife and ecological functions throughout the county, a few resources are particularly important.

- **CNHP Potential Conservation Areas**
The Colorado Natural Heritage Program (CNHP) has identified over 25 Potential Conservation Areas that contain species or groupings of species that are significant to biological diversity. Some are large and general, while others are specific to local areas.
- **Threatened and Endangered Species Habitat**
Las Animas County contains known habitat for two federally-listed species: the endangered New Mexico meadow jumping mouse found in select small streams near Fishers Peak Mesa, and the threatened Canada lynx which may be found (potential habitat) in the high elevation forests in the western mountains.
- **Sensitive Big-Game Habitats**
Particular habitat areas are important for the survival of big game species, including elk production (calving) habitat in the southwest foothills and on Fishers Peak Mesa, bighorn sheep winter concentration areas in the eastern canyons, elk and mule deer winter ranges in the southwest foothills, and pronghorn habitat in the open prairie.
- **Other Sensitive Habitats**
The county contains several specific habitat types that are sensitive or otherwise important to the ecology of the region. These include riparian and wetland habitats, which are a critical resource for most wildlife species, prairie dog colonies, which are important for many other plains species, nest locations for raptors, and rare plant areas.

These and other sensitive ecological resources are evident at both regional and local settings, and should be carefully considered in planning for future recreational use and infrastructure, to ensure that the county maintains a balance between outdoor access and natural resource conservation for the long term.

EXISTING RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

TRAIL-BASED RECREATION

Opportunities for non-motorized trail-based recreation – hiking, mountain biking, and equestrian use – are found in clusters throughout the county. Key sites include:

- **Fishers Peak State Park**
The park currently offers about 12 miles of trails, with more planned in the coming years.
- **Trinidad Lake State Park**
Contains about 10 miles of trails on both sides of the lake.
- **San Isabel National Forest**
About 20 miles of trails are available to access the North Fork Purgatoire and Spanish Peaks areas of the forest.
- **Comanche National Grassland**
With access from the north, an 8-mile trail provides access to the Picket Wire Canyonlands area.
- **Wormhole Trails**
This local trail system on the north side of Trinidad currently offers about 5 miles of trails.

In addition, the extensive and scenic county roads in and around the Trinidad area have become a renowned destination for long-distance gravel biking.

CAMPING

Developed or designated campgrounds are currently available at Trinidad Lake State Park, San Isabel National Forest, Bosque Del Oso, Spanish Peaks, and Lake Dorothy State Wildlife Areas, while privately-run camping is available at Monument Lake and other sites throughout the county.

HUNTING AND FISHING

Hunting and fishing are popular forms of recreation in the county. The six SWAs allow for hunters and anglers to utilize public lands, while nine state trust parcels are enrolled in the State Trust Lands Public Access Program, which are “open to hunting and fishing only, and where specifically authorized, wildlife viewing” (CPW 2021). Piñon Canyon Military Reservation also allows hunting access on the property when military training is out of session.

MOTORIZED RECREATION

Motorcycle touring is available throughout the county’s extensive gravel roads, while off-road motorized use is available on a limited basis on some trails and primitive roads within the San Isabel National Forest.

HISTORIC SITES

The rich history of the region is evident throughout the county, with some of the key destinations including the Ludlow Memorial, Cokedale site, and the Trinidad History Museum.

OTHER RECREATION

Other existing recreation sites and opportunities include:

- **Disc Golf:** Twisted Cedars and Southside Park courses
- **Boating:** Trinidad Lake, Monument Lake, and North Lake
- **Fishing:** Purgatoire River and many smaller streams



Ludlow Memorial

EXISTING PLANS

A number of existing plans and studies provided background information for the Las Animas County Outdoor Recreation and Economic Impact Study. With the goal of this study to be a better understanding of the community and infrastructure impacts, needs and opportunities associated with Fishers Peak State Park, understanding the future development plans for Fishers Peak State Park were foundational to this study effort. The THK Consultant Team was the master planning team for Fishers Peak State Park and was also the Consultant Team for the Las Animas County Outdoor Recreation and Economic Impact Study, so the Consultant Team brought the foundational knowledge needed for the study. Additionally, community and regional plans were reviewed to understand the current goals and plans for recreational infrastructure in Las Animas County.

THE FOLLOWING STUDIES AND REPORTS WERE REVIEWED:

- **Fishers Peak State Park Master Plan, October 2022 – Colorado Parks and Wildlife**

The master plan provided the vision for the development of the new 42nd State Park to occur over the next 10 plus years, including development priorities and management goals.

- **Economic Analysis of Fishers Peak State Park, September 202 – The Trust for Public Land**

The report provides a perspective about the potential impact Fishers Peak State Park could have on the surrounding community. The report is divided into three sections. The first describes the current Trinidad economy, including general economic conditions and quantifying the recreation economy. The second section summarizes the recreational and tourism use that is expected for Fishers Peak State Park. The third and final section describes the case studies that highlight the impact that other similar sites have had on their surrounding communities.

- **Fishers Peak State Park: Evaluating a New Natural Amenity in Southern Colorado, December 2021 – Regional Economic Development Institute, Colorado State University**

The report outlines the current situation regarding Fishers Peak State Park, its potential economic impacts and effects on the region and how those impacts can be maximized.

- **Trinidad Comprehensive Plan, February 2017 – City of Trinidad**

The Comprehensive Plan includes a Recreation, Tourism and Cultural Resource Plan. With the plan is a map that includes existing and proposed recreational infrastructure, including trail corridors, recreation facilities and community gathering places.

- **Trinidad Trails and Greenways Master Plan, March 2015 – City of Trinidad**

The Master Plan not only creates an overall vision and goals for the larger trail networks, but it also creates a data-based tool that the City of Trinidad can use for a number of pre-implementation steps.

- Prioritize trail projects based on recreational amenities provided
- Prioritize trail projects based on number of parcel owners that would have to be involved in negotiations
- View data on individual trail projects such as trail length, amenities provided, and parcels required for implementation (including parcel owner information)

- **Trinidad Traffic Study and Plan, June 2022 – City of Trinidad**

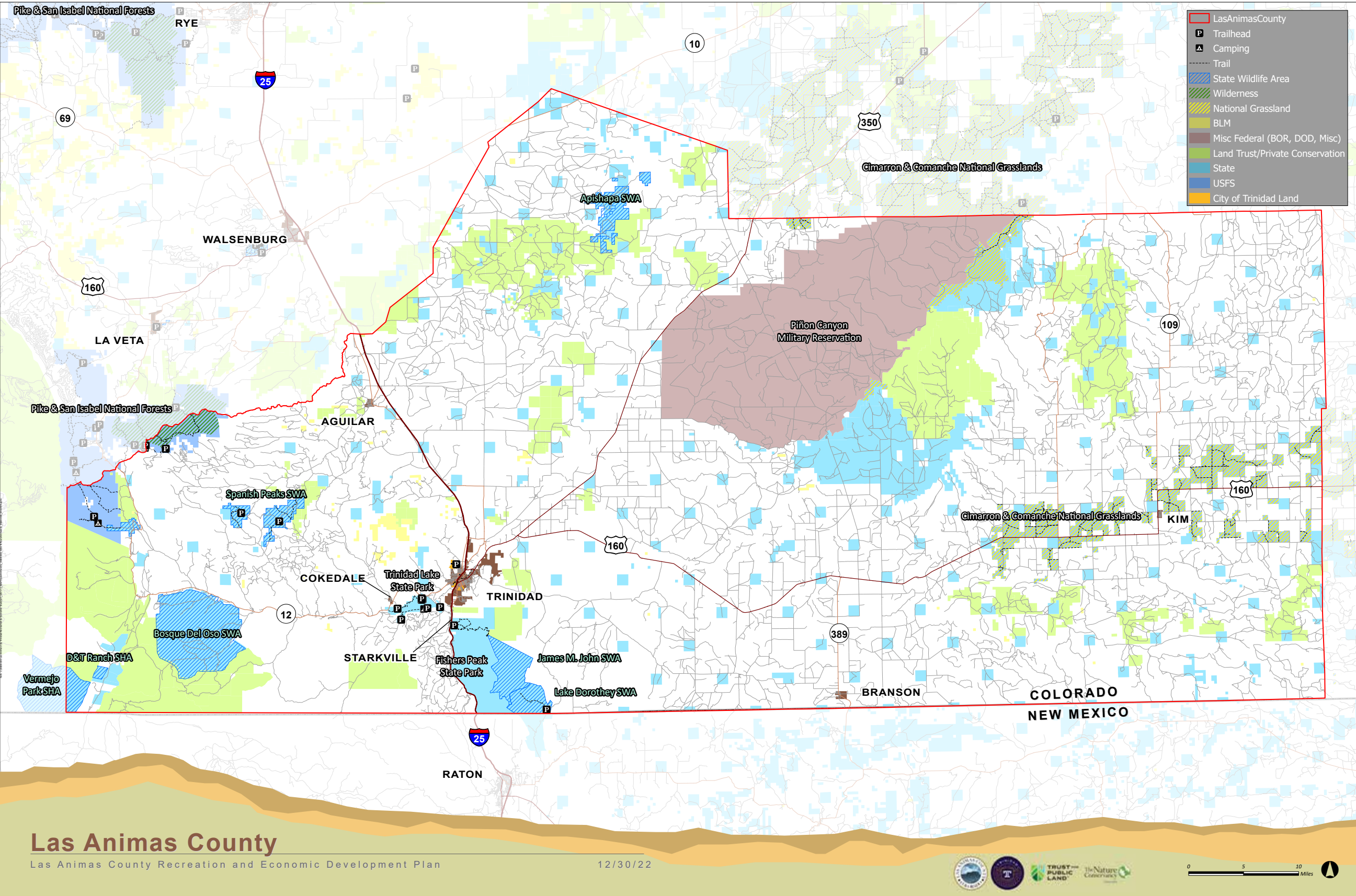
To address existing and future transportation and mobility needs, the City of Trinidad, in collaboration with the Colorado Department of Transportation, completed the Trinidad Traffic Study and Plan. This study focused on Interstate 25 exits and access through the City, east-west connectivity and Downtown traffic circulation.

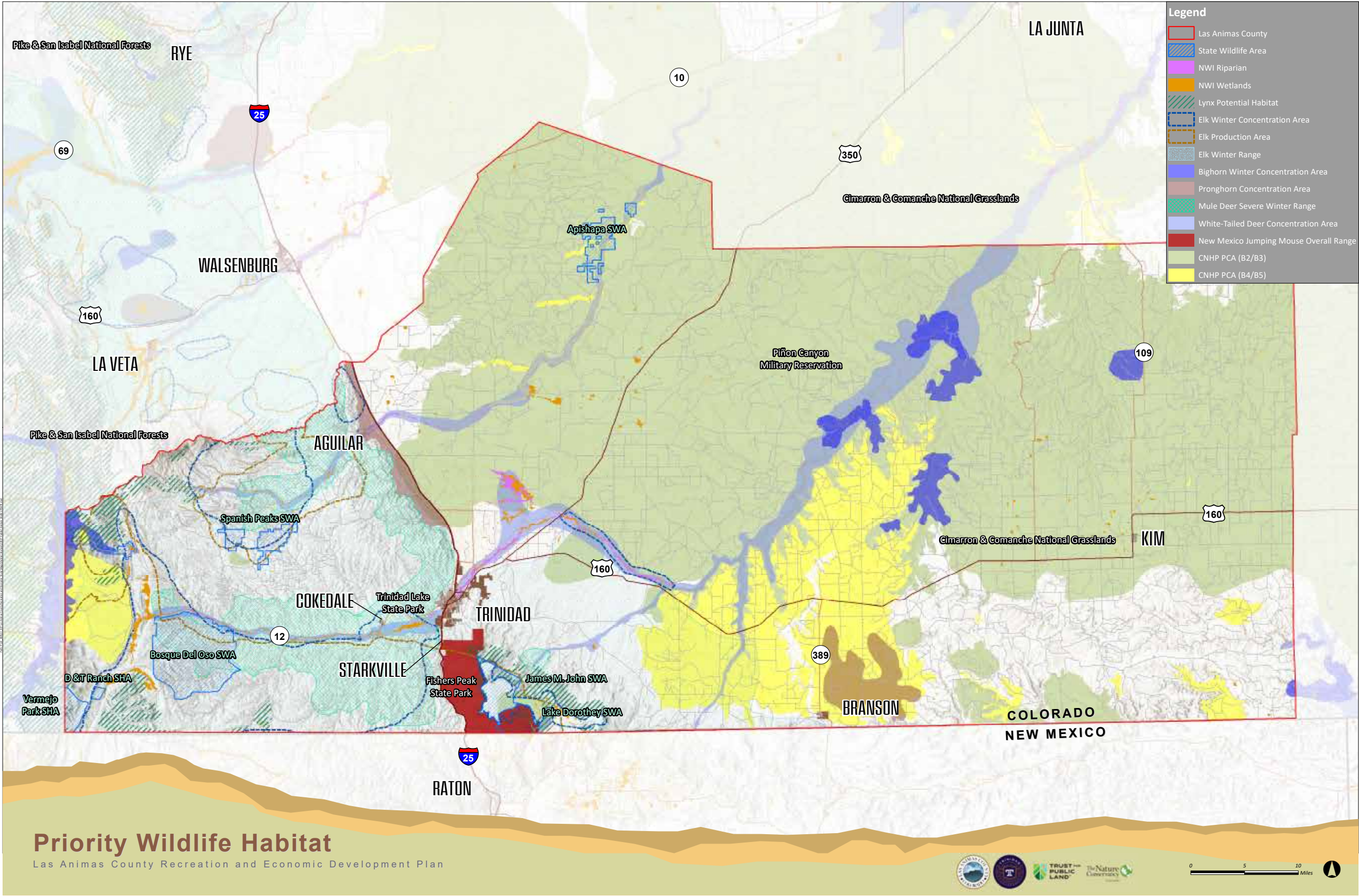
- **Las Animas County Fairgrounds Report, 2020 – University of Colorado Denver, University Technical Assistance**

This master planning study identified facility improvements that would attract more usage by making the fairgrounds more accessible for year-round uses. Recommendations included renovation of structures and the addition of recreation facilities and features.



Coke Ovens Near Cokedale





A person wearing a blue jacket and a backpack is seen from the back, looking out over a vast, grassy field. In the distance, a herd of deer is grazing. The field is covered in tall, dry grass and some green shrubs. The background shows a rolling hill under a clear blue sky.

4

OUTDOOR RECREATION STRATEGIES

STRATEGIES OVERVIEWS

This section of the report describes in detail the eleven outdoor recreation strategies developed from the themes that were identified by stakeholders. The “what to do” table that follows identifies all eleven recommended strategies, the key objective needed to achieve each strategy, related projects that support each strategy and potential partners that could help implement the strategies.

The related projects are organized into categories. While all strategies and related projects are important, there are two projects that have been identified as “required projects” because they are the recommended first steps. Once initiated these two “required projects” will be key in managing and implementing all other strategies and related projects successfully.

The remaining three “early action” projects are listed because they could be early success stories. These three “early action” projects either have momentum to fund the project through partnerships or the project only needs minor funding and resources with willing partners. The remaining two categories of projects include recreational programming development or programmatic projects and physical development or capital improvement projects.

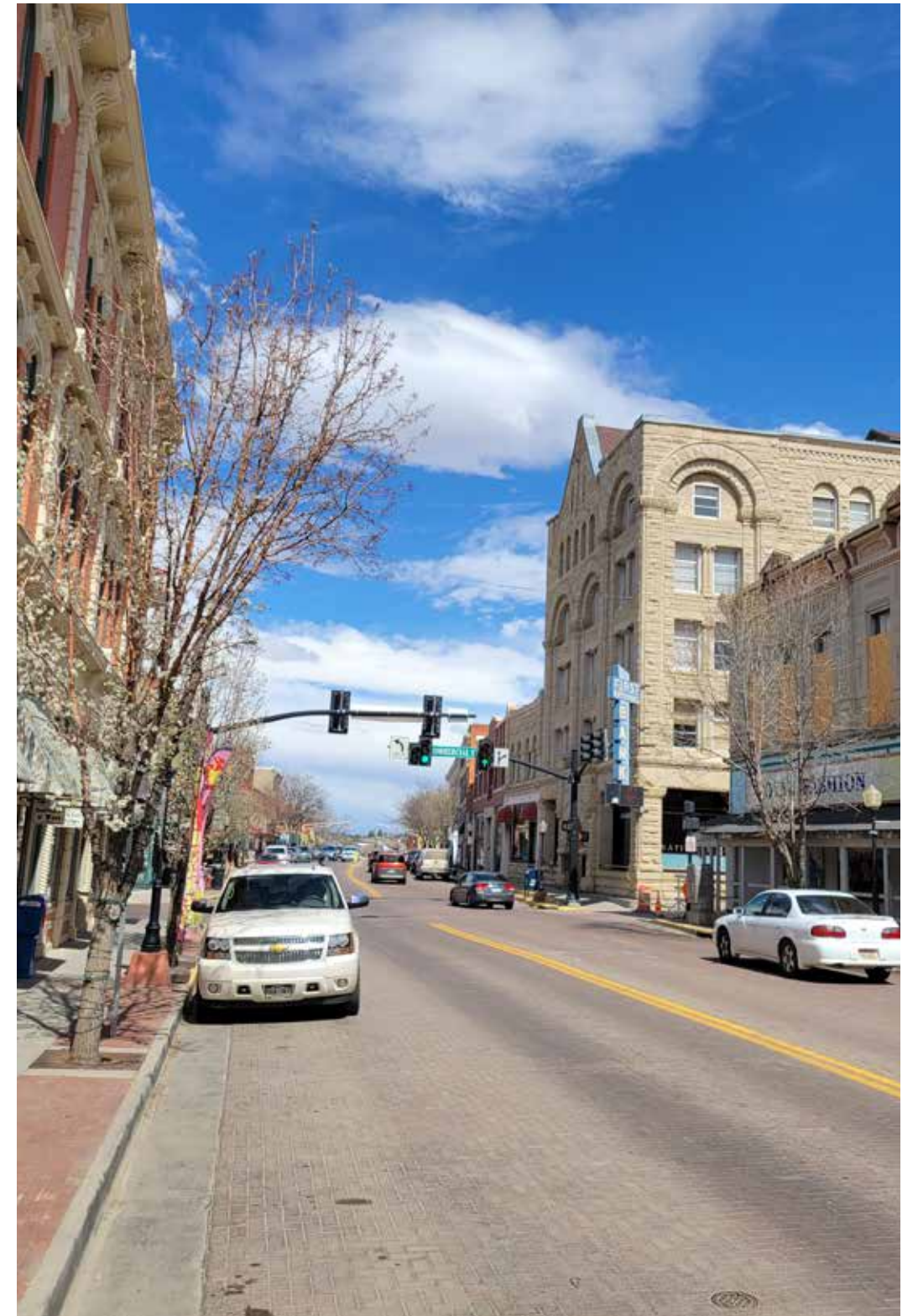
Two maps are also provided to show outdoor recreation opportunities in Las Animas County. The first map is the Trinidad Area Connectivity opportunities map. Making connections between the City of Trinidad, the two State Parks, the riverwalk and other recreational destinations in and around Trinidad, builds a critical mass of outdoor recreational opportunities. Interconnected recreational destinations will encourage longer stays for tourists and improve the quality of access to the outdoor recreational opportunities for residence. The second map is the Las Animas County Recreation opportunities map that shows outdoor recreation opportunities throughout the County. It can be seen on this map that the vast majority of the land ownership in Las Animas County is private. Creating outdoor recreational opportunities throughout the entire County will require partnerships with private property owners and land managers through willing acquisition, easements, leases or permits.

An overview of the economic impact analysis is also provided in this section of the report to help quantify the expected increase in tourist visitation and expenditures in the County if the proposed strategies are implemented. It is important to understand that for Las Animas County to become more of a regional outdoor recreation destination, all of the recommended strategies will need to be implemented to some level. The two State Parks and the City of Trinidad are the major recreational opportunities in the County. So, leveraging what is happening at the State Parks and in the City of Trinidad is the greatest opportunity for economic growth. Improving access and connectivity to the two State Parks and Trinidad while supplementing with additional outdoor recreational opportunities throughout the County, will be key to the success of creating a regional outdoor recreation destination in southern Colorado. Many of the additional opportunities may draw smaller numbers of participants, so it will require taking advantage of numerous opportunities to create a menu of activities that a visitor could participate in when visiting the County. This menu of activities will help lead to longer stays by visitors. The complete Las Animas County Outdoor Recreation and Economic Impact Analysis is included in Appendix B.

Following the economics overview, are one-page descriptions for each of the recommended eleven outdoor recreation strategies. Each strategy includes an objective statement and a list of potential projects and partners. These eleven one-page strategy recommendations were presented to the public at the May 10, 2023, open house. The PLT and PAC prior to the open house reviewed and provided comments on the one-page strategy recommendations. All comments have been incorporated.

Maintenance and management considerations for each of the eleven strategies is provided in a table following the strategy recommendations.

More Detailed Information about each strategy is provided in Appendix A, the working strategy sheets. The working strategy sheets include a more detailed description of potential projects, potential partnerships, maintenance and management considerations, accessibility, inclusivity, potential economic benefits and current community support. Also included was a preliminary ranking of the eleven strategies based on community desires and goals identified as part of the stakeholder and public process.



Downtown Trinidad

WHAT TO DO:

HOW THIS IS ACHIEVED:

PROJECTS TO CONSIDER:

PARTNERS:

| | |
|--|--|
| Establish A Regional Management Entity | Develop the local and regional administrative structure to manage and maintain existing and expanding outdoor recreation infrastructure. |
| Take Care Of What You Have | Improve safety and tourism appeal by repairing maintaining, and updating existing outdoor recreation areas and amenities. |
| Develop Educational Programs, Media And Facilities Opportunities | Increase educational programs that celebrate Las Animas County. |
| Connect Existing Recreational Destinations | Connect multi-modal access to existing outdoor recreational features for a more complete recreational experience. |
| Enhance Visitor Information, Signs And Way-findings | Improve access to information about County-wide recreational opportunities. |
| Provide More Outdoor Programming For Youth And Families | Develop outdoor recreation programming partnerships. |
| Support And Expand Outdoor Recreational Events To Cover All Four Seasons | Generate ideas for Outdoor Recreation events throughout the entire year. |
| Create New Recreational Destinations And Experiences Throughout The County | Develop new and diverse recreation destinations. |
| Develop A Diverse System Of Trails Throughout The County | Build new trail systems that extend the existing system and expand the diversity of experiences. |
| Establish Agricultural Based Recreational Opportunities (Agritourism) | Focus on the agricultural community in developing an outdoor recreation economy (Agritourism). |
| Develop More Facilities To Accommodate Organized Sports | Commit resources to develop sports facilities and programs. |

EARLY ACTION PROJECTS

- * Establish a regional partnership to coordinate outdoor recreation, land stewardship and habitat conservation efforts.
- * Develop an asset management plan to prioritize and address the most pressing needs across all publicly owned outdoor recreation facilities.
- Work with CPW to grow the number of interpretive, volunteer and service-learning programs through out the community.
- Create a regional outdoor recreational website.
- Create multi-modal access to Fisher-Peak State Park from Trinidad along Santa Fe.

EXAMPLE PROGRAMMATIC PROJECTS

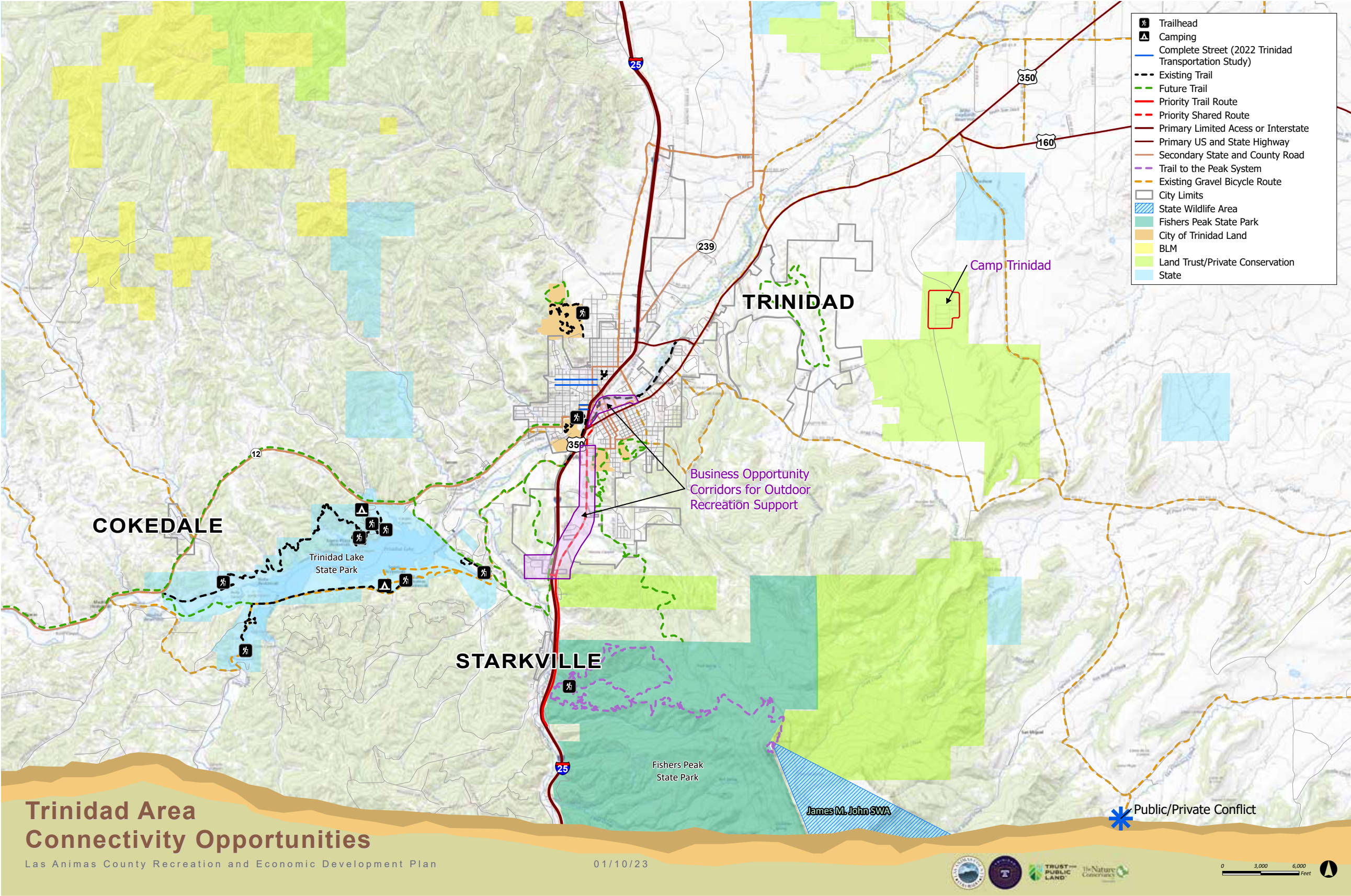
- Encourage small recreational outfitters to develop retail rentals and guided outdoor trips.
- Promote year round running, bicycling, and walking events.

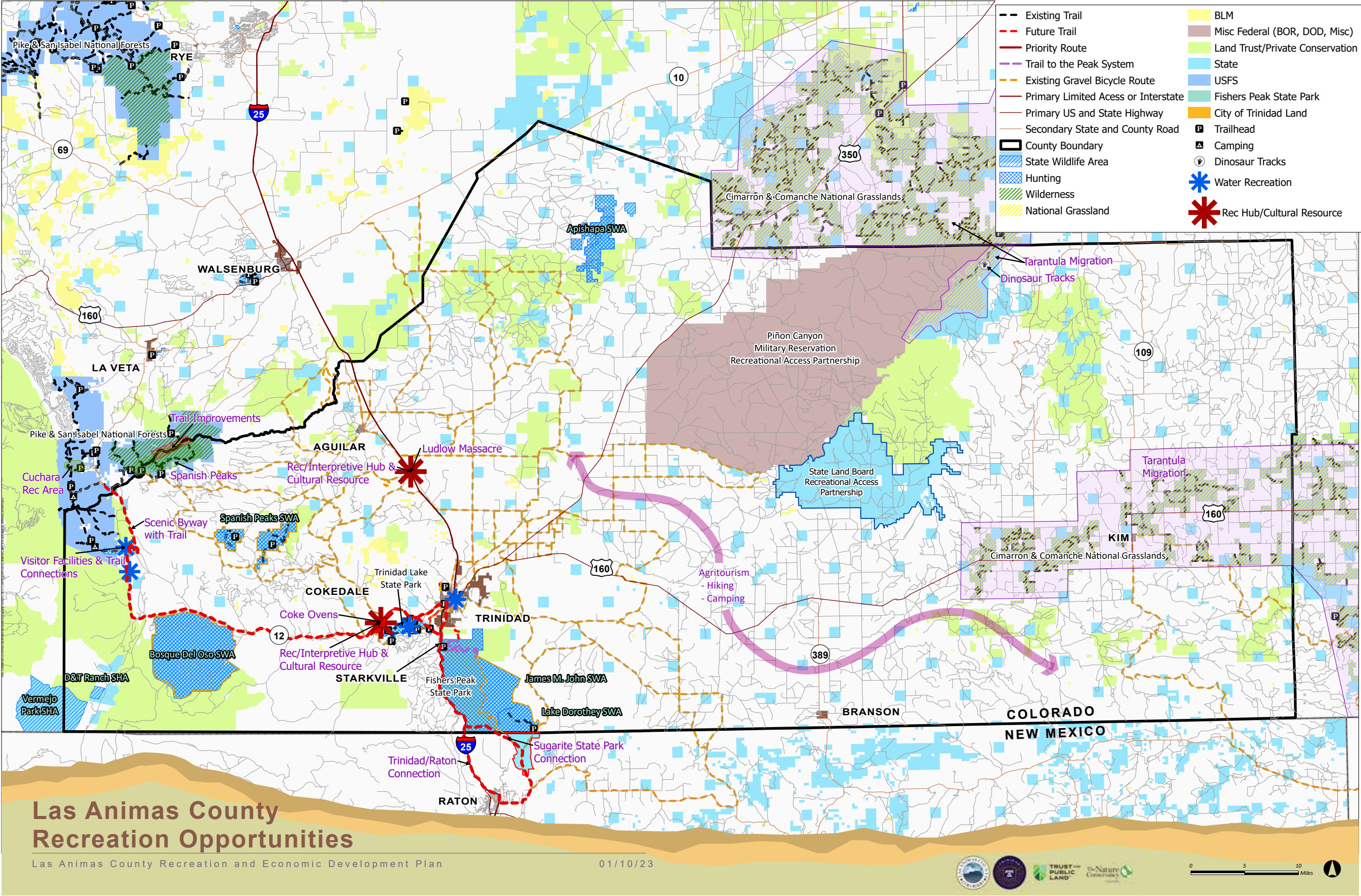
EXAMPLE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

- Riverwalk enhancements.
- Develop additional disk golf courses.
- Create a regional trail map for the county and Trinidad area (paper and web-based).
- Initiate partnerships between private landowners and tourism to provide camping, hiking or cycling permits for access to private property.
- Start youth and adult organized sports programs.
- Wormhole trail system expansion

- Las Animas County
- City of Trinidad
- CPW
- South Central COG
- Trinidad State College
- Business Partners
- Volunteers
- DOLA
- GOCO
- CDOT
- Adjacent Counties
- Private Land Managers
- Chambers of Commerce
- Conservation Organizations
- Farm and Ranch Operators

* Required Early Action





ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS OVERVIEW

The purpose of the Las Animas County Outdoor Recreation and Economic Impact Study is to determine the most viable path forward toward creating and funding a regional recreation management entity, to develop strategies and recommendations for maintaining and improving existing recreation facilities, as well as enhancing and expanding additional recreational infrastructure, opportunities, and programs. This could potentially include creating improved connectivity between existing recreation assets, particularly the State Parks, building new trails and paths, enhancing visitor information, signage, marketing, and branding, establishing a new visitor center, improving and upgrading maintenance practices and staffing for existing publicly owned outdoor recreation facilities.

The following table lists the various parks, museums, attractions, activities, and annual events in Trinidad and Las Animas County, which will comprise the main sources for visitation to the county. The State Parks are the crown jewels for tourism in Las Animas County and should be the anchors for any market strategies and infrastructure development moving forward.

LAS ANIMAS COUNTY VISITOR/TOURIST ATTRACTIONS

State Parks

- Fishers Peak State Park
- Trinidad Lake State Park

Golf

- Trinidad Golf Course - 9 Holes
- Twisted Cedars Disc Golf Course

City Parks

- Trinidad Skate Park - 14,000 square feet
- Southside Baseball Park - 4 Fields
- Central Park - Baseball, Soccer, Fishing, Walking
- City Park
- Kit Carson Park

Museums

- Trinidad History Museum
- A.R. Mitchell Museum of Western Art
- Louden-Henritze Archaeology Museum
- Coal Miners Memorial Museum
- Art Cartopia Museum

Events

- Santa Fe Trail Days - 2nd weekend June
- R.I.P. Games - at Skate Park, August
- ARToberfest - October
- Southern Colorado Repertory Theatre - 3 plays each summer

City Hiking/Walking

- Wormhole Trail - 2.3 mile loop hike
- Boulevard Loop Trail - .5 mile multi-use trail following Purgatoire River
- Purgatoire Riverwalk

Cokedale Historic District

Old coal mining camp and ovens - 7 miles west of Trinidad

Misc. -

Jeep Tours, Hunting, Fishing, Ghost Towns

Source: City of Trinidad, Visit Trinidad & THK Associates, Inc.

Based on these visitor attractions and events, the inventories of overnight lodging and camping facilities in the county, and the available data on annual visitation to the State Parks, THK has estimated the current visitor base in Las Animas County and projected those visitors moving forward based on improvements to infrastructure, marketing and management of the county’s recreational assets. It is understood that there is a great deal of overlap, for example, of visitors staying in a hotel and also visiting a state park, which could allow for double counting of visitor days.

According to Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) a little over 200,000 people currently visit Trinidad Lake State Park annually. Fishers Peak State Park has just recently opened to the public with limited trails, activities, and infrastructure currently in place. Today there are approximately 1,000 acres open and 11+ miles of trails. As additional trails, roads, picnic areas, camping and the like are added, and Fishers Peak garners more attention and stature, visits will ramp up substantially. Multiple trailheads and parking areas, multiple campgrounds with 100+ campsites, and an 80+ mile trail system will be the benchmark. A CSU study, measuring the impacts of Fishers Peak on the city and county, estimates visitation will reach approximately 175,000 annually, which THK considers to be conservative. The study also estimates that 20% of visitors will be from within a 2 to 3-hour drive time, and 80% will be non-local (outside the 2 to 3-hour drive time. The study also gives a range of daily expenditures per visitor from \$30 at the low end to \$85, which is the number concluded by The Trust for Public Land, as well as using a 1.4 multiplier. Using just the Fishers Peak estimated visitation of 175,000, and spending of \$75 per day (THK estimates the daily spending to be at the higher end of the \$30-\$85 range), 80% being non-locals (140,000 visitors) and using the 1.4 multiplier (additional dollars created on top of the direct spending by tourists), this equates to an impact of \$14.7 million annually. Of course, many people will come and visit both State Parks, thus the approximately 450,000-475,000 total gross visitation amounts, once Fishers Peak is fully developed, is actually a lower net number as a tourist who visits both State Parks could potentially be double counted. And other tourists will come stay in the County, or visit just for the day, to hike, hunt, attend an event or visit other attractions aside from the state parks. THK has calculated the number of hotel and RV visitors, based on occupancy rates and people per room or RV. Given each of these categories and variables THK has estimated the current annual visitation to Las Animas County to be 274,434 people in 2023, growing to over 476,000 in 2042. This is expected to increase quickly as Fishers Peak is built out, marketed and gaining greater state-wide and regional recognition over time, along with other County facilities and opportunities being improved and implemented. The following table details this projected visitation.



Mustang Pavilion Kim, CO.



| Total Estimated Visitation to Las Animas County, 2023-2042 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Category | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | 2028 | 2029 | 2030 | 2031 | 2032 | 2033 | 2034 | 2035 | 2036 | 2037 | 2038 | 2039 | 2040 | 2041 | 2042 |
| Fishers Peak State Park | 52,000 | 75,000 | 100,000 | 120,000 | 140,000 | 150,000 | 180,000 | 200,000 | 206,000 | 212,180 | 218,545 | 225,102 | 231,855 | 238,810 | 245,975 | 253,354 | 260,955 | 268,783 | 276,847 | 285,152 |
| Trinidad Lake State Park | 201,198 | 204,215 | 207,279 | 210,388 | 213,544 | 216,747 | 219,999 | 223,299 | 226,648 | 230,048 | 233,498 | 237,001 | 240,556 | 244,164 | 247,827 | 251,544 | 255,317 | 259,147 | 263,034 | 266,980 |
| Estimated Non-State Park Visits | 25,120 | 27,922 | 30,728 | 33,539 | 35,354 | 37,675 | 40,000 | 42,330 | 43,255 | 44,223 | 45,204 | 46,210 | 47,241 | 48,297 | 49,380 | 50,490 | 51,627 | 52,793 | 53,988 | 55,213 |
| Hotels Visitors | 213,525 | 217,795 | 222,751 | 228,564 | 231,126 | 235,749 | 240,454 | 245,273 | 250,179 | 255,182 | 260,285 | 265,491 | 270,801 | 276,217 | 281,742 | 287,377 | 293,124 | 298,987 | 304,966 | 311,065 |
| RV Park Visitors | 88,228 | 89,973 | 91,772 | 93,507 | 95,480 | 97,389 | 99,337 | 101,324 | 103,350 | 105,417 | 107,525 | 109,675 | 111,869 | 114,107 | 116,389 | 118,717 | 121,091 | 123,513 | 125,983 | 128,503 |
| Estimated Day Visitors | 12,560 | 13,961 | 15,364 | 16,519 | 17,677 | 18,857 | 20,000 | 21,155 | 21,632 | 22,111 | 22,602 | 23,105 | 23,621 | 24,149 | 24,690 | 25,245 | 25,814 | 26,397 | 26,994 | 27,607 |
| Gross Total Visitors/1 | 288,878 | 321,098 | 355,371 | 379,347 | 406,575 | 433,259 | 459,998 | 486,799 | 497,545 | 508,562 | 519,850 | 531,418 | 543,272 | 555,421 | 567,872 | 580,633 | 593,713 | 607,120 | 620,863 | 634,952 |
| % of Gross Visitation | 5.0% | 10.3% | 15.0% | 20.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% |
| Total Net Visitation | 274,434 | 288,989 | 300,365 | 303,957 | 304,932 | 324,945 | 344,999 | 365,095 | 373,159 | 381,421 | 389,888 | 398,564 | 407,454 | 416,566 | 425,904 | 435,475 | 445,285 | 455,340 | 465,647 | 476,214 |
| 1/Net visitation is the sum of the state park visitors, non-state park visitors and daily visitors, adjusted for people who visit both state parks on their visit | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Source: THK Associates, Inc. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

The following table takes the overall estimated visitation to Las Animas County and determines the resulting sales tax revenues generated from these visitors. Based on data from the Recreational Vehicle Industry Association (RVIA), industry lodging reports and THK’s previous experience in tourist markets, the estimated length of stay for visitors is 2.75 days. Thus, in 2023 the estimated 274,434 visitors will result in 754,693 visitor days. THK has then estimated daily visitor spending to be \$75. As previously noted, various research estimates show this figure to be between \$30 to \$85 day per visitor. This would include spending on lodging, food, gifts, etc. Based on these estimates, total visitor spending is projected to be almost \$56.6 million in 2023. Currently total retail sales in Las Animas County are approximately \$295 million, based on the sales tax revenues generated from the County’s 1.5% sales tax rate. This equates to nearly 19% of retail sales in the County coming from visitors.

This visitor spending will generate approximately \$849,000 in sales tax revenue to the County in 2023 to just over \$2 million by 2042. To generate funding for a recreational management entity in Las Animas County to market, manage and implement facility improvements and strategies THK has estimated that an additional .25% tax is needed, with public support, to the existing 1.5% sales tax, to be earmarked for this enterprise. This added tax would generate on average around \$225,000 annually or just over \$4.7 million over twenty years (per .25% increase). This would support approximately \$2.13 million in debt for capital improvements, marketing, and maintenance of recreation facilities in Las Animas County. The current City of Trinidad budget for parks and recreation is approximately \$600,000 including the existing staff. This budget could be merged and incorporated into any newly formed recreation entity.

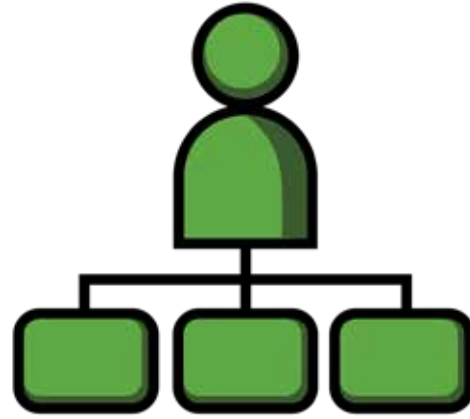
| Total Estimated Sales Tax Revenue from Visitation to Las Animas County, 2023-2042 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Category | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | 2028 | 2029 | 2030 | 2031 | 2032 | 2033 | 2034 | 2035 | 2036 | 2037 | 2038 | 2039 | 2040 | 2041 | 2042 |
| Total Net Visitation | 274,434 | 288,989 | 300,365 | 303,957 | 304,932 | 324,945 | 344,999 | 365,095 | 373,159 | 381,421 | 389,888 | 398,564 | 407,454 | 416,566 | 425,904 | 435,475 | 445,285 | 455,340 | 465,647 | 476,214 |
| Total Visitor Days | 754,693 | 799,053 | 836,518 | 852,600 | 851,433 | 904,467 | 988,422 | 1,053,299 | 1,084,027 | 1,115,658 | 1,148,220 | 1,181,741 | 1,216,251 | 1,251,780 | 1,288,359 | 1,326,020 | 1,364,797 | 1,404,724 | 1,445,835 | 1,488,168 |
| Daily Visitor Expenditure | \$75.00 | \$75.80 | \$76.86 | \$77.50 | \$78.35 | \$79.22 | \$80.09 | \$80.97 | \$81.86 | \$82.75 | \$83.67 | \$84.59 | \$85.52 | \$86.46 | \$87.41 | \$88.37 | \$89.35 | \$90.33 | \$91.32 | \$92.33 |
| Total Visitor Expenditures | \$66,601,914 | \$60,588,215 | \$64,126,634 | \$66,078,505 | \$67,497,422 | \$73,233,310 | \$75,160,840 | \$85,294,691 | \$88,798,177 | \$92,332,088 | \$96,072,220 | \$99,964,618 | \$104,015,578 | \$108,231,661 | \$112,619,705 | \$117,186,836 | \$121,940,480 | \$126,888,377 | \$132,038,594 | \$137,395,538 |
| Total County Sales Tax Revenue | \$849,030 | \$908,823 | \$961,900 | \$991,178 | \$1,012,461 | \$1,098,500 | \$1,187,413 | \$1,275,270 | \$1,331,075 | \$1,384,981 | \$1,441,083 | \$1,499,469 | \$1,560,234 | \$1,623,475 | \$1,689,236 | \$1,757,803 | \$1,829,107 | \$1,903,326 | \$1,980,579 | \$2,061,993 |
| Potential Additional Parks & Rec (.25%) Tax Revenue | \$141,525 | \$151,471 | \$160,317 | \$165,296 | \$168,744 | \$183,083 | \$197,302 | \$213,212 | \$221,845 | \$230,830 | \$240,181 | \$249,912 | \$260,039 | \$270,579 | \$281,549 | \$292,957 | \$304,851 | \$317,221 | \$330,095 | \$343,499 |
| Total 20-Year Additional Parks & Rec Tax Revenue | \$4,724,999 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Present Value at 5.5% | \$134,128 | \$136,089 | \$136,528 | \$133,349 | \$129,111 | \$132,780 | \$136,045 | \$138,528 | \$137,018 | \$135,135 | \$133,279 | \$131,448 | \$129,645 | \$127,867 | \$126,115 | \$124,388 | \$122,686 | \$121,008 | \$119,355 | \$117,725 |
| Total Present Value | \$2,602,526 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Supportable Debt at a 1.2 Coverage | \$2,168,855 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Insurance Costs @ 2% | \$43,377 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Net Proceeds | \$2,125,478 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Source: THK Associates, Inc. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

POTENTIAL
ECONOMIC BENEFITS

IMPLEMENTING THE PROPOSED
OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL STRATEGIES
WILL CONTRIBUTE TO THE FOLLOWING:

- * Total county visitation estimated to increase from 274,000 in 2023 to 635,000 in 2042.
- * Fishers Peak State Park will have the greatest increase in visitation with 50,000 in 2023 and 285,000 in 2042.
- * Non state park visits are expected to double by 2042.
- * Visitor spending is estimated at approximately \$849,000 in sales-tax revenue in 2023 to just over \$2 Million by 2040.

| | Improved Quality of Life | Increased Visitorship | Longer Multi-day Trips | Support Local Business | New Jobs in Outdoor Recreation | Year-Round Economic Income | Increased Recreational Destinations | Support Agricultural Communities | Foundation to Leverage Funding | Range of Experiences Appeal to All Ages |
|--|--------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| Establish a Regional Management Entity | | | | | | | | | | |
| Take Care of What You Have | | | | | | | | | | |
| Develop Educational Programs, Media And Facilities Opportunities | | | | | | | | | | |
| Connect Existing Recreational Destination | | | | | | | | | | |
| Enhance Visitor Information, Signs And Wayfinding | | | | | | | | | | |
| Provide More Outdoor Programming For Youth And Families | | | | | | | | | | |
| Support And Expand Outdoor Recreational Events To Cover All Four Seasons | | | | | | | | | | |
| Create New Recreational Destinations And Experiences Throughout The County | | | | | | | | | | |
| Develop A Diverse System Of Trails Throughout The County | | | | | | | | | | |
| Establish Agricultural Based Recreational Opportunities (Agritourism) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Develop More Facilities To Accommodate Organized Sports | | | | | | | | | | |



Develop the local and regional administrative structure to manage and maintain existing and expanding outdoor recreation infrastructure, programs and workforce development

- Continue to seek state and federal grants and partnerships to support outdoor recreation infrastructure and management
- Create and fund (via grants or other funds) a regional, professional trails crew to perform ongoing maintenance and upgrades to trails in the region
- Establish a regional partnership (via CPW, DOLA, or other) to continue regional collaboration and project development for outdoor recreation, habitat conservation, and economic development
- Support the establishment and growth of local businesses focused on outdoor recreation (e.g., retail, outfitters, rentals, and guide services); small business “incubator” or startup grants

POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS

- Trinidad and other municipalities
- Las Animas and Huerfano Counties
- South Central Council of Governments
- Raton Basin Regional Economic Development District
- Colfax County, NM
- PAC Members
- CPW, DNR, CDOT, DOLA
- GOCO
- Trust for Public Land, The Nature Conservancy, El Pomar Foundation
- Special District Association of Colorado
- Trinidad State College
- Corporate/Business partners
- Colorado Outdoor Recreation Industry Office (OREC)

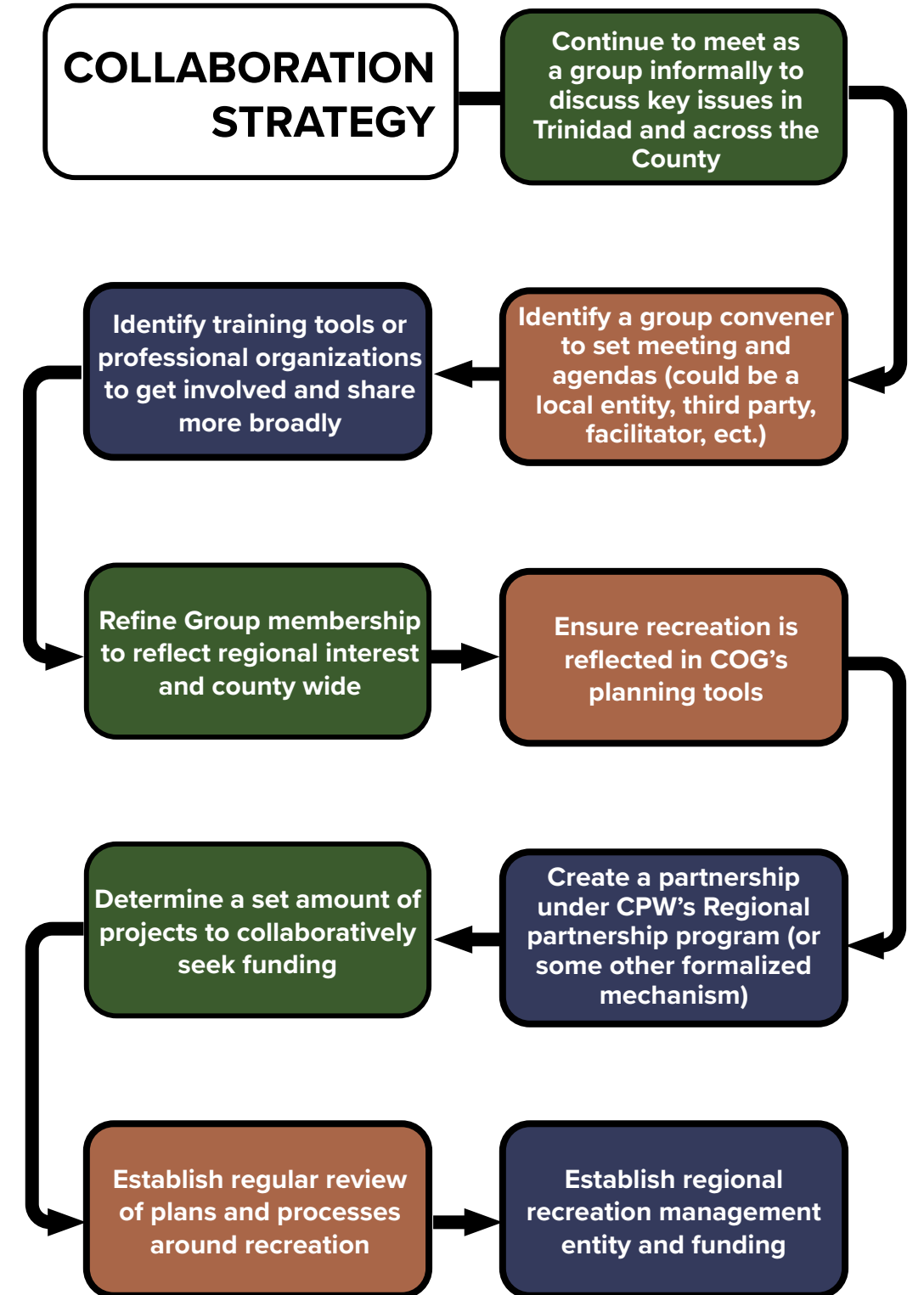
COUNTY WIDE APPROACHES

- Establish a regional partnership to coordinate outdoor recreation, land stewardship and habitat conservation efforts
- Establish and fund an entity to own and manage land and infrastructure for the purposes of public outdoor recreation
- Provide the foundation for outdoor recreation and land management careers in Las Animas County

POTENTIAL PROJECTS

- Establish and fund a local or regional entity to develop, own, and manage land and infrastructure for outdoor recreation and habitat conservation. Potential models include:
 - Improve and enhance the capacity of existing local governments (e.g., Trinidad and Las Animas County)
 - Create a local (city or county) open space program to manage land, infrastructure, and programs
 - Create a new local or regional entity (e.g., special district)
- Establish a local or regional funding source to support park, trail, and outdoor recreation infrastructure, programming and management. Potential models include dedicated budget allocations, open space sales tax, lodging tax, real estate transfer tax, development fees, etc.

COLLABORATION STRATEGY





Improve safety, enjoyment, and tourism appeal by repairing, maintaining and updating existing outdoor recreation areas and amenities.

POTENTIAL PROJECTS

- Conduct a condition assessment of publicly owned outdoor recreation facilities to determine extent of maintenance needs
- Develop an asset management plan to prioritize and address the most pressing needs
- Update existing park and trail amenities (including benches, shade structures, parking lots, trash enclosures, ect.) to meet Federally accessibility standards and to improve visitor experience and safety.
- Consider creative staffing models to add capacity (AmeriCorps Vista, college internships, partnering with Career and Technical Education programs in high schools, ect.)
- Establish a formal volunteer program to recognize and leverage community stewardship.

POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS

- Las Animas County
- City of Trinidad
- Volunteers
- Regional Recreation Management Entity
- Colorado Parks and Wildlife



The City of Trinidad is looking at a project to update and improve the Simpson's Rest Area as a potential early action project



Increase and enhance educational programs, media & facilities that celebrate Las Animas County's natural and cultural history.

POTENTIAL PROJECTS

- Work with Colorado Parks and Wildlife to grow the number of interpretive, volunteer, service learning programs out in the community (in addition to those offered within state park boundaries)
- In partnership with the Native community and willing private landowners, co-create opportunities for members of the public to appreciate and experience indigenous history and culture (Foraging, Star Stories, Women in the Wild)
- Improve and maintain accessible parking, pullouts, and picnic areas throughout the county to support structured/educational programs and self-guided interpretive opportunities for all abilities
- Install and maintain interpretive facilities in meaningful locations that bring to life stories of the county's history and culture (e.g., educational exhibits, signs, interactive outdoor installations, public art, nature discovery areas).
- Operate a scenic train route for the public to enjoy wildlife, views, cultural history, etc.
- Support print and web-based media and apps that provide orientation and interpretation along Scenic Byways
- Winter history series through local history museums
- Seasonal wildlife tours/viewing areas
- Courses for backcountry camping/skiing/adventuring

- Explore partnership opportunities with farmers and ranchers to share stories of the county's past and present agricultural values and practices (e.g., educational programming could be part of "agri-tainment center", landowners and other partners could offer educational opportunities at spots along bike races and motorcycle touring routes)

POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS

- State Parks
- Trinidad State University
- Fishers Peak Outfitters
- Local and regional museums
- Farmers, ranchers, long-time county residents
- Trinidad Youth Club
- ABC Disability
- Colorado Association of Environmental Education
- National Association of Interpretation



Educational Signage at Fishers Peak State Park



Guided nature hike Fishers Peak State Park



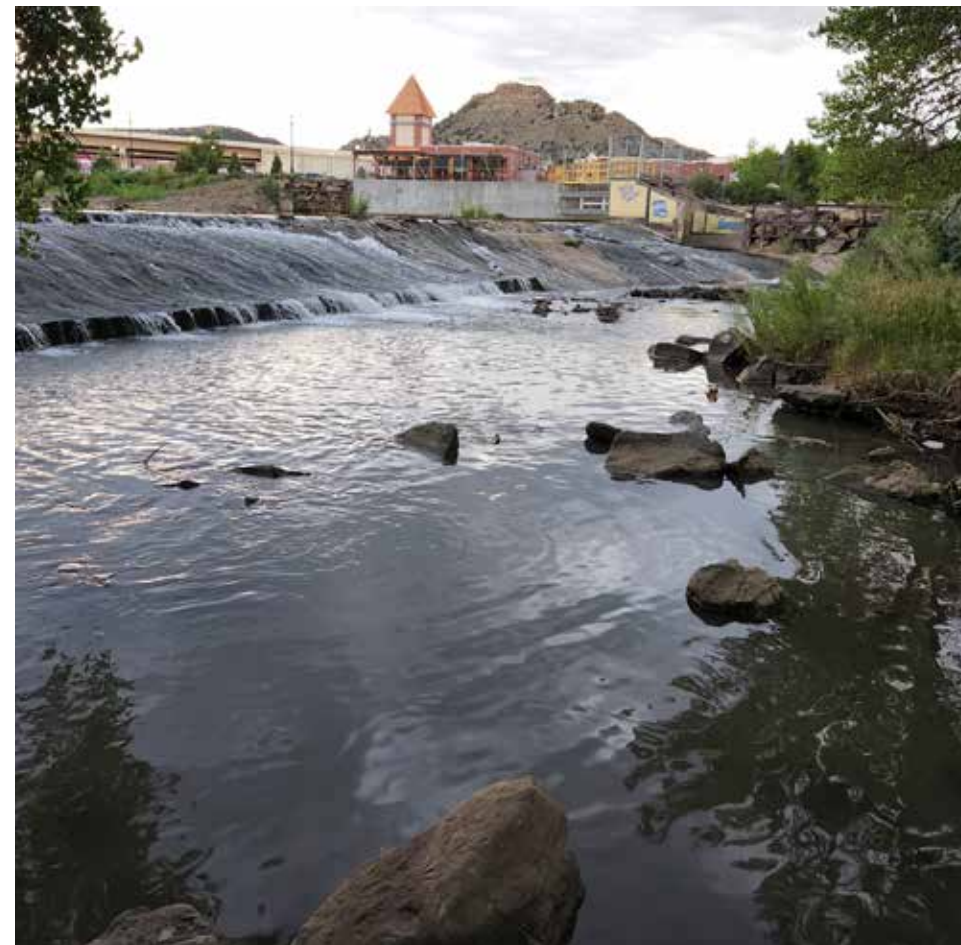
Connect multi-modal access to existing outdoor recreational features to encourage a more complete recreational experience for both residents and visitors. Create a system

POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS

- Las Animas County
- New Mexico State Parks
- CPW
- GOCO
- Trinidad
- DOLA
- CDOT
- Private Sector Transportation Company
- Volunteer groups



Fishers Peak State Park



Purgatorie River Walk



Lake Trinidad State Park

COUNTY-WIDE APPROACHES

- Complete a major trail connection to Fishers Peak State Park from Trinidad
- Complete a secondary neighborhood connection from Trinidad to Fishers Peak State Park
- Provide connectivity to County Road 85.5 as part of an identified scenic driving route and gravel bike route
- Connect Purgatorie River Trail to other key destinations like the two State Parks and Downtown Trinidad and Trinidad State Colleges
- Connect the Old Sopris River Trail to Lake Trinidad from Trinidad
- Complete a trail connection between the two State Parks by way of exits eleven.
- Connect a trail between Sugarite Canyon State Park in New Mexico from Fishers Peak State Park
- Connect a trail to Raton, NM over Raton Pass, along Raton Creek from Trinidad
- Provide connections from Trinidad to the Highway of Legends Scenic Byway
- Provide some form of public transportation in Trinidad to connect to recreational destinations



Improve access to the information about County-wide recreational opportunities. Work to promote outdoor information in Las Animas County. This information must be very accessible to residents and visitors. Use all forms of media and ways to disseminate information to the public.

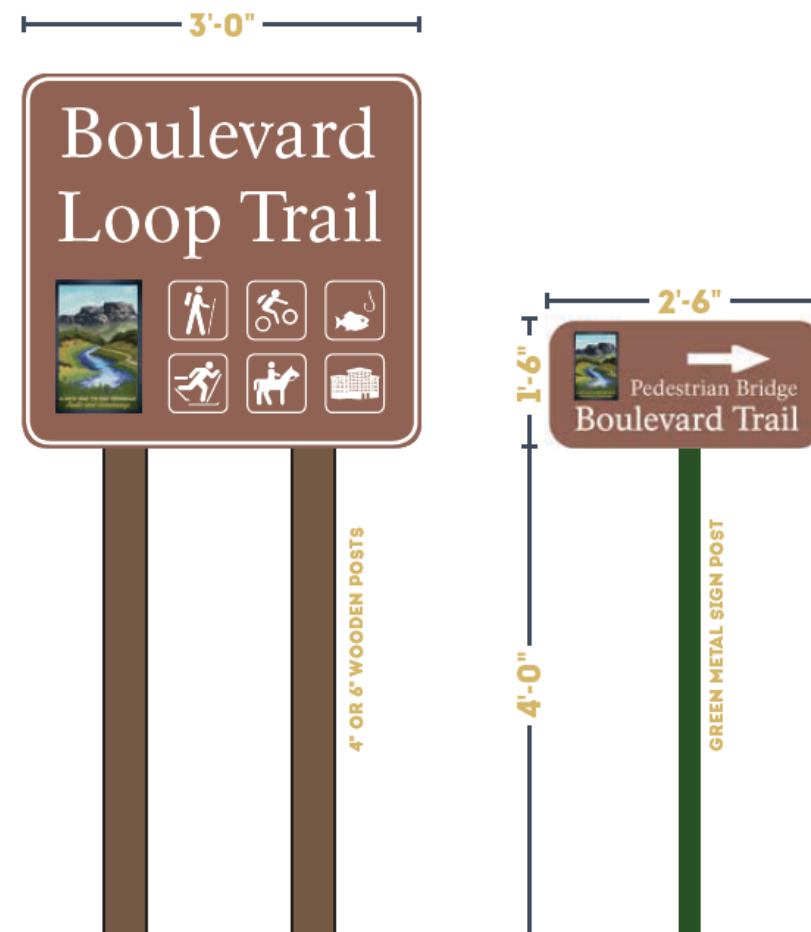
COUNTY WIDE APPROACHES

- Create a Regional Outdoor Recreational Website
- Develop a Center/Informational Hub
- Develop accurate and readily accessible maps
- Prepare a recreation specific guide: Hiking mountain biking, scenic driving (create County Scenic Driving Routes), bird watching, geology, ect.
- Advertise statewide
- Develop a recreational brand for the county (Identifiable logo/or tagline)
- Develop a county wide recreational identification and information signage program
- Develop a Self Guided historic tour routes with interpretation of significant sites throughout the County
- City and County partner to develop an outdoor recreation opportunities website for the Las Animas County Region(Link ti CPW website describing the State Parks)
- Build off gravel grinding guides

- Develop a social media account for the region to highlight recreational destinations and experiences
- Create a branded “Outdoor Recreation Guide” for the County and Trinidad area to help visitors plan trips and easily find destinations

POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS

- Las Animas County
- Municipalities in Las Animas County
- Raton, NM
- Private sector outdoor recreational businesses
- Chambers of Commerce
- Hospitality business



Standard Trail signage as proposed in the March 23, 2015 Trinidad Trails and Greenway Master Plan



Logo for Trinidad Trails and Greenway developed as part of the March 23, 2015 Trinidad Trails and Greenway Master Plan



Develop outdoor recreation programming partnerships between property owners and program organizers. Connecting youth and families with nature is the objective.

POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS

- Municipalities
- Las Animas County
- CPW
- Trinidad State College
- Purgatory Watershed Partnership
- Volunteer instructors, leaders and experts
- Welcome center



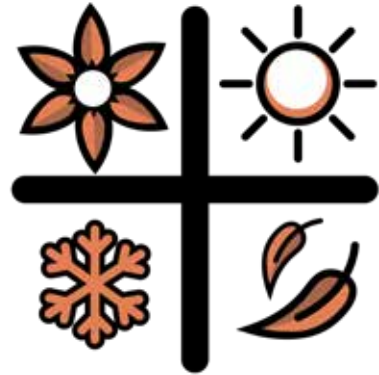
Agritourism (Texas Farm Bureau)



Photo from Earth Mountain Farms

POTENTIAL PROJECTS

- Outdoor Recreation Education Center
- Interactive activity around water (learning to swim)
- Summer Camps
- Encourage small recreational outfitters to develop retail, rentals and guided outdoor trips
- Create programs and facilities that take advantage of local opportunities that will interest local community members as well as regional visitors including:
 - Mountain bike skills
 - Equestrian skills
 - Climbing skills
 - Artistic skills
 - Mountaineering skills
 - Historic tours
 - Nature educational workshops and tours
- Develop outdoor educational programming between property owners, school districts and the college
- Offer volunteer opportunities for families and paid/internship opportunities for teens to foster career development, interest in this field, and love of the outdoors, commitment to stewardship



This Strategy aims to generate ideas for Outdoor Recreation Events throughout the entire year, not only the Spring/Summer seasons. There are many opportunities for year-round attractions in Las Animas County, which would create a more consistent source of economic growth and development county-wide.

POTENTIAL PROJECTS

- Seasonal/Unique Festivals
 - Tarantula Fest
 - Cholla Blossom Fest
 - Winter/Seasonal Festival like the Ice Sculpture festival in Breckenridge
- Events promoting winter activities like snowshoeing or XC Skiing
- Year-round Races & Groups that support local businesses like restaurants, breweries, farms, and ranches
 - Farm-to-table dinners
 - Brewery/Restaurant Crawl, races that start and end at different local businesses
 - Poker Ride
 - Races to highlight different scenic routes or new trails
 - Combined events like
- Winter history series through local history museums
- Seasonal wildlife tours/viewing areas
- Courses for backcountry camping/skiing/adventuring

POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS

- Las Animas County
- Municipalities in Las Animas County
- Raton, NM
- Private sector outdoor recreational businesses
- Chambers of Commerce

OUTDOOR RECREATION STRATEGIES



Artocade/Art Car Parade, Trinidad



Disk Golf Tournament



Identify and develop new and diverse recreation destinations to expand the variety of recreation options, settings, and seasonality for residents and visitors

COUNTY WIDE APPROACHES

- Establish discrete and unique recreation “hubs” throughout the county, with their own character and experiences
- Provide desirable destinations and experiences for all seasons
- Identify opportunities to develop new recreation sites on private land, through willing acquisition, easement, lease, or permit
- Provide diverse recreation opportunities for visitors to facilitate diverse multi-day visits
- Develop additional disk golf courses

POTENTIAL PROJECTS LOCATION SPECIFIC PARTS

- Expand options for water-based recreation, including boating, kayaking and paddle boarding on larger lakes and the Purgatorie River
- Establish Short (3-5 mile) and rewarding trail loops in the west county to facilitate beginner/family summer hiking
- Establish Short to moderate trails and trail loops to explore the Purgatorie canyon lands in the east county
- Identify 2-3 sites for rock climbing that provides interesting and diverse climbing experiences.
- Develop 2-3 additional sites for mountain bike oriented trails providing a diversity of terrain, challenge and difficulty.

- Maintain and improve routes for gravel biking
- Expand and improve fishing access and in-stream habitat along the Purgatorie River and major streams in the west county area
- Facilitate the development of private adventure-based sites and destination (e.g., ziplines) in suitable locations.
- Develop and expand the number and diversity of camping opportunities throughout the county

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

- All public land manager
- Private conservation organizations - TPL, TNC, land trusts
- Private land owners - Esp. those interested in recreational partnerships
- Neighboring communities - Raton, Chuchara
- Recreation advocacy groups - Trinidad Trails, IMBA, Access Fund, CMC, Backcountry Horsemen, COHVC



Explore partnerships with public land managers and private landowners to access the Arroyos and Canyons of Central Las Animas County



View West to Fishers Peak Mesa from County Road 85.5 part of a gravel bicycle loop east of Trinidad



Build new trail systems that extend the existing system and expand the diversity of experiences- ATVs allowed/not allowed dogs allowed/not allowed, multi-modal vs. only hiking or only horseback riding.

EAST COUNTY

- Establish trail-based access and experiences within the Purgatorie River canyonlands
- Establish trail-based access and experiences within the Pinon Canyon Maneuver Site (PCMS)
- Consider and implement permit/fee-based access programs for sensitive or unique areas
- Work with willing landowners to establish permitted recreational access to unique areas
- Prioritize motorized recreation access, routes, and destinations

WEST COUNTY

- Designate and improve sustainable hiking route to the summits of East and West Spanish Peaks
- Establish and designate sustainable trail route to summit of Mount Maxwell
- Develop new trail(s) to complete a loop trail system that integrated the Wildcat, Coal Creek, and North Fork Trails
- Complete trail loops within/around Spanish Peaks Wilderness
- Explore opportunities to develop public trails systems on multi-use private lands under lease agreement (i.e., oil and gas operators)
- Work with willing landowners to establish permitted recreational access to unique landscapes and features on private land

POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS

- Land Managers: City of Trinidad, Las Animas County, CPW, State Land Board, New Mexico State Parks, San Isabel National Forest, The Nature Conservancy, private owners.
- Funding Partners: CPW, GOCO, DOLA, El Pomar Foundation, others
- Community Partners: Trinidad Trails, The Trust for Public Land, The Nature Conservancy, citizens and business owners
- Trail User: Trinidad Trails, International Mountain Bicycling Association, Back Country Horsemen of Colorado, Colorado Mountain Club, Colorado Off Highway Vehicle Coalition
- Private Landowners: Ranchers and other large, private land managers where fee-based public recreation access may be feasible and mutually beneficial



Mountain Bike/Adventure Trip



Backpacking/multi-day trip



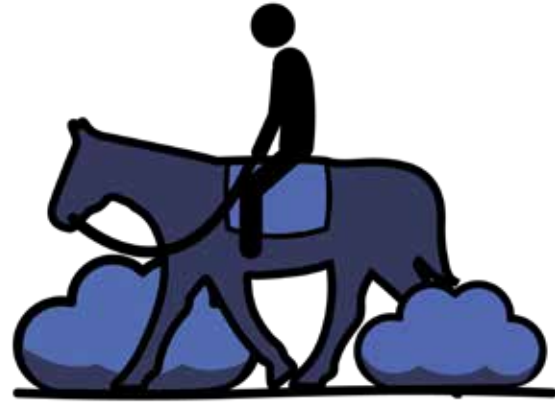
Hiking/day trip or shorter

COUNTY WIDE APPROACHES

- Provide a variety of trail-based access and experiences
- Establish discrete and unique trail “hubs” throughout the County; discrete and functional trail systems with their own character and draw
- Trail hubs may include: Trinidad area, Purgatorie canyonlands, Spanish Peaks, North Fork
- Create a trail map for the County and Trinidad Area (paper and web-based)

TRINIDAD AREA

- Expansion of Wormhole trail system
- Extension/improvement to Purgatorie River Trail in downtown Trinidad
- New in-town trail system in south Trinidad- Reservoir Hill and South side Park
- Trail system in Cougar Canyon area
- Trail loop around Lake Trinidad State Park
- Raton Pass trail connection (along I-25/Raton Creek)
- Sugarite Canyon - Fishers Peak SP regional connection
- Maintain recreational access along CR85.5 (San Francisco Pass)



This strategy is focused on bringing the agricultural community to the forefront of community partnership developing the outdoor recreation economy in Las Animas County. There is so much potential for farmers and ranchers to gain economic support from visitors while celebrating and maintaining the unique and important character of Las Animas County. Diverse Opportunities to engage the farming and ranching community will not only provide economic benefits but will also support increased understanding and appreciation for the traditions, hard working people, and beautiful landscapes required to grow food here in Colorado.

- Camping, hiking, or cycling permits
 - Early action project potential to show folks the possibility/ benefits - start small with discrete event like a Race, and a ranch could provide campground space. Event could drive the initiation of these partnerships between Private Landowners and tourism.
- Agricultural Learning Center (Agritainment Center): a place for experiential learning and exposure to plants and animals as well as programs about the history of agriculture in Las Animas County
- More events at the Las Animas County fairgrounds and the Kim Mustang Pavilion like rodeos or discrete competitions like barrel racing, roping, or stock dog trials.

POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS

- Willing Private Landowners
- State Land Board
- 4 H program / Schools
- Earth Mountain Education Farm
- Kim Mustang Pavilion
- Las Animas County Fairgrounds coordinator
- Running / Cycling races: Rad Dirt Race
- Local Museum / Agricultural Historians
- Farm and Ranch Operators



Photo from Earth Mountain Farms



Photo from USDA ERS Agritourism

POTENTIAL PROJECTS

- Farm and Ranch stays- Working Guest Ranches
 - Guided trail rides: could focus on history, bird watching, wild-life viewing, or just scenic experiences
 - Immersive events like seasonal cattle drives or roundups (could be a discrete community event or regular program at a single ranch)
 - Farm-to-table Dinners (could be a discrete community event or regular program at a single ranch)



Organized sports will require a resource commitment to develop facilities and then manage the sports programs. The programs will be for the local community as well as the region as tournaments and events are planned and hosted.

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

- Municipalities
- Las Animas County
- DOLA
- Grant entities
- A newly created Recreational District
- Chamber of Commerce
- Local Business
- Race and event promoters



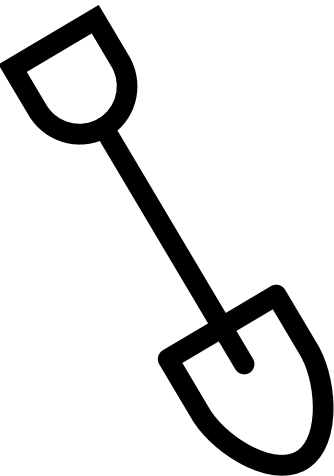
Example of a Soccer Complex



Example of Softball and Baseball complex for community and tournament use. City of Evans, Riverside Park

POTENTIAL PROJECTS

- Repair, upgrade and continue to maintain existing athletic fields
- Build new softball, baseball, soccer, and/or tennis
- Start youth and adult organized sports programs
- Organize different competitive outdoor recreation clubs or teams including:
 - Mountain Bike
 - Road Bike
 - Disk Golf
 - Equestrian
 - Archery
 - Shooting
 - ETC.
- Host running events
- Host bicycling events
- Host team sports events
- Create youth and adult sports league



MAINTENANCE AND
MANAGEMENT
CONSIDERATIONS

| | Requires a commitment to fund maintenance & management | Requires land acquisition, easement or access permit | Local funding match and maintenance leverage additional funding | Requires a management entity | Volunteer opportunity | Requires ownership commitment needed to | Requires a collaborative to promote & maintain | Requires organizers, instructors, leaders & advertise | Work with State Park managers to direct volunteer efforts | Requires transportation for youth | Requires full time staff to manage & maintain | Improve agricultural exhibit space | Must consider accessibility for all |
|--|--|--|---|------------------------------|-----------------------|---|--|---|---|-----------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Establish a Regional Management Entity | ● | | ● | | ● | | ● | | ● | | ● | | ● |
| Take Care of What You Have | ● | | ● | ● | | | | | | | | ● | ● |
| Develop Educational Programs, Media And Facilities Opportunities | | | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | | ● |
| Connect Existing Recreational Destination | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | | | | | | ● | ● |
| Enhance Visitor Information, Signs And Wayfinding | ● | | ● | | ● | ● | | | | | | | ● |
| Provide More Outdoor Programming For Youth And Families | ● | | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Support And Expand Outdoor Recreational Events To Cover All Four Seasons | | | ● | ● | ● | | ● | | | ● | ● | | ● |
| Create New Recreational Destinations And Experiences Throughout The County | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● | | | | | | ● |
| Develop A Diverse System Of Trails Throughout The County | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | | | | | ● | ● |
| Establish Agricultural Based Recreational Opportunities (Agritourism) | ● | ● | ● | ● | | | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● |
| Develop More Facilities To Accommodate Organized Sports | ● | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | | ● | | | ● | ● |



IMPLEMENTATION

POTENTIAL EARLY ACTION PROJECTS

MANAGEMENT/COORDINATION/MARKETING

- Establish framework/group/funding to keep the conversation going
- Explore enhanced coordination with SCOOG
- Tourism website, map, social media + branding update

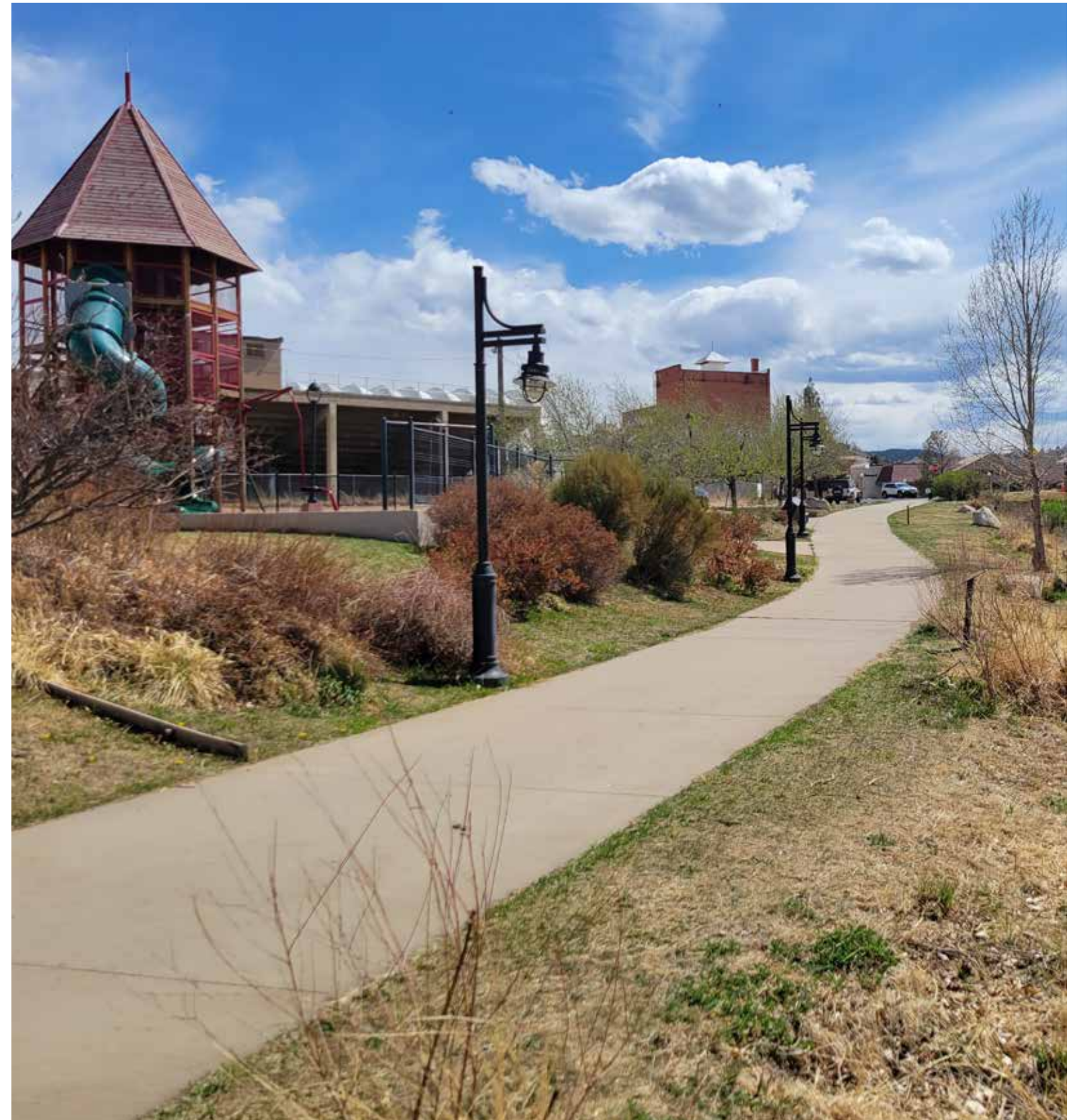
LEVERAGING EXISTING PROGRAMMING AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- Existing Facilities - Asset assessment and maintenance strategy, Example: Simpsons Rest
- Outdoor Programming - “Southern Colorado Outdoor Institute”
- Community based programming via CPW
- Enhanced outreach/coordination with private camping providers

NEW/EXPANDED RECREATION INFRASTRUCTURE

- Wormhole trail system expansion
- Riverwalk enhancement
- FPSP Connectivity (Santa Fe Trail)
- Reservoir Hill/Southside Park - City park and trail development (existing disk golf)

Following is a more complete description of Key Early Action Projects that includes process steps, partnership recommendations, potential funding recommendations and in some projects the cost to implement.



Riverwalk, Trinidad CO

SANTA FE TRAIL

DESCRIPTION:

There is an immediate need to connect Trinidad to Fishers Peak State Park with multi-modal access. This initial access will require signing and striping of an existing street – Santa Fe Trail - and the addition of a 10’ wide trail. This initial project is being called the interim project because ultimately, the segment of roadway being signed and stripped will get further improvements in the future with an entire reconstruction of the street.

Santa Fe Trail parallels I-25 and creates a local connection from Downtown Trinidad to Exit 11 and Fishers Peak State Park. The existing condition of the road is generally a two-lane local road with varying widths of paved shoulders and grass ditches.

Several areas along Santa Fe Trail have already been improved including:

- From Main Street south to W. Adams Street where curb, gutter and sidewalk have been added to both sides of the road.
- In front of 1617 Santa Fe Trail (Fishers Peak Vet Clinic) where curb and gutter and sidewalk have been added to the west side of the road.
- In front of 10381 Santa Fe Trail (Legacy at Trinidad Nursing Home) and at the intersection of Legacy in where curb and gutter and sidewalk have been added to the west side of the road.
- At Exit 11 round-a-bouts where curb, gutter, sidewalk and ten foot wide trail have been added at the intersection.

The right-of-way (ROW) for Santa Fe Trail varies and, in some instances, the existing roadway encroaches onto private property.

To create a safe multi-modal way between downtown and Fisher Peak State Park two phases of projects are being recommended, an interim and a final condition. The interim condition is described here including a construction cost estimate. Once again the final condition will be implemented as part of the larger Santa Fe Trail reconstruction planned for north of Exit eleven.

Additionally, there are several considerations that need to be accounted for with either the interim or final conditions.

These considerations include, but are not limited to:

- Existing pavement width
- Existing ROW width
- Potential land acquisition for additional ROW
- Utility locations
- Drainage
- Controlled Access / Access points to private property
- Tie-in to existing improvements



Existing Pedestrian Improvements at Exit 11



Existing Conditions

COMPLETE TRAIL (TRINIDAD TO FISHERS PEAK STATE PARK)



NORTH SEGMENT MAP



SOUTH SEGMENT MAP



RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS - NORTH SECTION INTERIM CONDITION:

On the north segment, in the interim condition the roadway location and existing conditions remain the same, but signing and pavement markings are added to the road to create a safer condition for bicycles.

SIGNING

It is recommended that the interim condition consist of “Bicycles May Use Full Lane” sign as Santa Fe Trail is a roadway where no bicycle lanes or adjacent shoulder are usable by bicyclists and where the travel lanes are too narrow for bicyclists and motor vehicles to operate side by side.

This signage is preferred over a “Share the Road” sign as studies suggest the interpretation of share the road varies widely and does not improve the safety of the bicycle rider or the vehicles.

Signs are typically 30” x 30” square and mounted with the edge of the sign a minimum of 2’ off of the pavement. The sign spacing should be determined by engineering judgment based on prevailing speed of bicycle and other traffic, block length, distances from adjacent intersections, and other considerations.

Source: MUTCD Section 9B.06

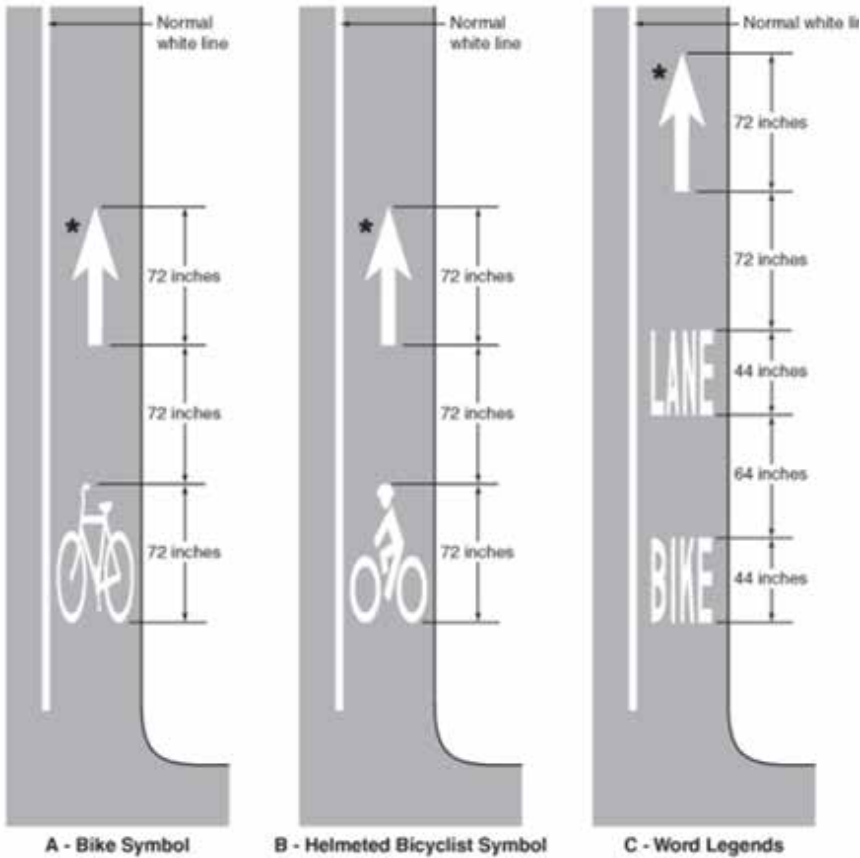


PAVEMENT MARKINGS

Pavement markings designate a portion of the roadway for preferred use by bicycles. Where pavement width allows a separate bike lane should be considered. “Bicycle lane” word, symbol and/or arrow markings should be placed at the beginning of the lane and at periodic intervals.

Where pavement width does not allow, shared lane markings are optional when used in combination with the “Bicycles May Use Full Lane” sign. Shared lane markings should be placed in a way that assist bicyclists with lateral positioning, alert road users that bicycles are likely to occupy the lane, encourage safe passing and reduce wrong-way bicycling. The shared lane marking should not be placed on roadways that have a speed limit above 35 mph.

Bike lanes should not be used through round-a-bouts.



RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS - SOUTH SECTION INTERIM CONDITION:

On the south segment, a 10’ wide, 6” thick concrete multi-use path with curb and gutter should be constructed adjacent to the existing roadway. This condition will not be improved further in future phases. It must be constructed with the interim condition to create the complete multi-modal connection desired.

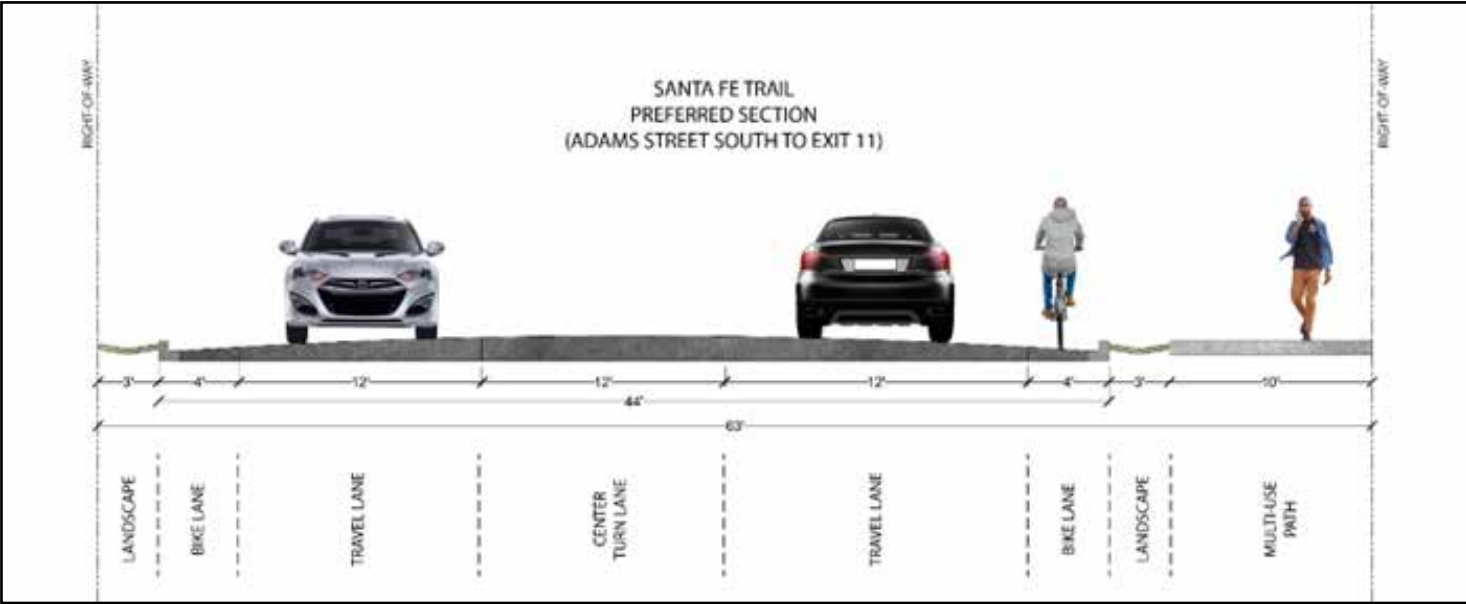


South Segment Section

RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS - NORTH SECTION INTERIM CONDITION:

The final condition will only affect the north segment.

On the north segment, the final condition would reconstruct the existing road to include 12’ travel lanes, a 10’ wide, 6” thick concrete multi-use path and 4’ on-street bike lanes in both directions in addition to a landscape v-ditch for drainage purposes. Curb and gutter has not been envisioned.



This final condition should tie into completed improvements between Adams Street and Main Street to the north and to the completed improvements at the round-a-bouts at Exit 11.

IMPLEMENTATION

In order to implement either the interim or final design the leading agency must secure funding for design and construction purposes. Funding is likely to come from several sources and may include local, state and federal funding sources. The following are potential funding sources from federal, state, and local sources to support design development, construction and in some cases the long-term operations and maintenance of the recommended improvements.

FUNDING SOURCES FOR THE INTERIM CONDITION:

- **MPS Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program:** The RTCA Program is a National Park Service (NPS) program providing technical assistance to state and local agencies, tribes, nonprofit organizations and citizen groups via direct NPS staff involvement to establish and restore greenways, rivers, trails, watersheds and open space. The RTCA program provides only for planning assistance.
- **GOCO Colorado Connect Initiative:** The Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) Colorado Connect Initiative is a five-year strategy aimed at increasing access to outdoor experiences through the construction of non-motorized trails of local, regional and statewide significance. This program aims to increase access to the outdoors in Colorado communities by filling trail gaps, building new trails and providing better walkable and bikeable access for youth and families.
- **CPW Non-Motorized Trails Grant Program:** Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) funds projects that include new trail or trailhead construction, maintenance, re-route or reconstruction of existing trails; trail and trailhead system planning; building and enhancing support organizations or acquiring land easements.
- **The Bar NI Ranch Community Service Fund:** The Bar NI Ranch Community Service foundation provides support to local communities and organizations located in the Purgatoire Valley and entertains proposals that address environment/conservation, education, youth development and civic/public benefits.
- **Boettcher Foundation:** The Boettcher Foundations invests in developing new ideas that can drive Colorado forward. They prioritize capital building or community infrastructure projects the a “lens of rural depth”.
- **El Pomar Foundation:** El Pomar accepts applications from 501(c)(3) organizations in areas of arts and culture, civic and community initiatives, education, health and human services. Emphasis is assisting those most affected by economic conditions.
- **Gates Family Foundation:** The Gates Family Foundation prioritize projects in rural communities that face greater challenges in accessing funds. Funding is available for projects including building purchase, construction, expansion, renovation and/or land acquisition and strategic prioritization of K-12 public education, natural resources and community development.
- **Doppelet Family Trail Development Fund:** The fund supports organizations and local governments that are implementing projects to build and improve multi-use trails. The program must advance trail development, help establish corridor connections or improve current conditions on the trail. Trails must serve or plan to serve multiple user types.



Existing Conditions North Segment



Existing Conditions North Segment

FUNDING SOURCES FOR THE FINAL CONDITION:

- FHWA Highway Safety Improvement Program:** Eligible projects include traffic control for pedestrians and bicyclists, and roadway projects that separate vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclist.
- FHWA Carbon Reduction Program:** Eligible for projects or strategies that reduce carbon emissions.
- FHWA Safe Streets and Roads for All:** Exclusively for local governments to support their efforts to advance “vision zero” plans and other complete street improvements to reduce crashes and fatalities, especially for cyclists and pedestrians.
- FHWA Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program:** For projects that restore community connection by removing, retrofitting, or mitigating highways that create barriers.
- FHWA Recreational Trails Program:** Provides funds to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both non-motorized and motorized recreational trail users.
- FHWA Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP):** Provides funding for bicycle, pedestrian, historic, scenic and environmental mitigation transportation projects.
- Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP):** Funds are available for project that improve transportation facilities that provide access to federal lands with an emphasis on high-use recreation sites and economic generators.
- Land and Water Conservation Fund Program:** Program to create parks and open spaces, protect wilderness, wetlands and refuges; preserve wildlife habitat and enhance recreational opportunities.
- Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership:** Grants to acquire and/or develop public lands or outdoor recreation purposes that are located in or are directly accessible to neighborhoods or communities that have an economically disadvantage population and are undeserved in terms of parks and recreation resources.
- Community Development Block Grant Program:** Eligible uses of funds include acquisition, design and engineering, construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation or installation of public improvements or public facilities.
- EP Recreation Economy for Rural Communities:** A planning assistance program to help communities develop strategies and an action plan to revitalize their downtowns through outdoor recreation.
- Conservation Trust Fund:** These funds are distributed to local governments based on population for acquiring and maintaining parks, open space and recreation facilities.
- The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Acres for America Grant Program:** The program works to conserve fish and wildlife habitat, protect public lands, provide outdoor recreation and sure the future of local economies that depend on outdoor recreation, forestry or ranching.

| Conceptual Cost Opinion Santa Fe Trail Improvements | | | | |
|---|-------|----------|-----------------|--------------|
| Prepared by THK Associates, Inc. | | | 2023 dollars | |
| 3/15/2023 | UNITS | QUANTITY | UNIT COST | TOTAL COST |
| SANTA FE TRAIL - North Section Interim Condition, South Section Final Condition | | | | |
| Design | LS | 1 | \$ 50,000 | \$ 50,000 |
| Mobilization (assume 3%) | LS | 1 | \$ 36,887 | \$ 36,887 |
| Bicycle Signage with pole | EA | 6 | \$ 350 | \$ 2,100 |
| Pavement Marking | EA | 6 | \$ 1,000 | \$ 6,000 |
| 10' Multi Use Trail (6" depth) Exit 11 to Park | SF | 84240 | \$ 10 | \$ 842,400 |
| Curb and Gutter | LF | 8424 | \$ 45 | \$ 379,080 |
| | | | SUBTOTAL | \$ 1,316,467 |
| | | | 30% Contingency | \$ 394,940 |
| INTERIM SANTA FE TRAIL SUBTOTAL | | | | \$ 1,711,408 |
| SANTA FE TRAIL - North Section Final Condition | | | | |
| Design | LS | 1 | \$ 300,000 | \$ 300,000 |
| ROW Acquisition - Santa Fe Trail | SF | 90940 | \$ 20 | \$ 1,818,800 |
| Mobilization (assume 3%) | LS | 1 | \$ 92,938 | \$ 92,938 |
| Curb Ramp | EA | 24 | \$ 2,500 | \$ 60,000 |
| Curb and Gutter | LF | 21634 | \$ 45 | \$ 973,530 |
| 10' Multi Use Trail (6" depth) North of Exit 11 | SF | 124950 | \$ 10 | \$ 1,249,500 |
| Landscape Revegetation | SF | 64902 | \$ 0.22 | \$ 14,278 |
| Asphalt Paving | Ton | 5305 | \$ 100 | \$ 530,523 |
| Demo Asphalt Paving | CY | 6009 | \$ 32 | \$ 192,302 |
| Bicycle Signage with pole | EA | 6 | \$ 250 | \$ 1,500 |
| Striping for bike lane | LF | 10817 | \$ 7 | \$ 70,311 |
| Pavement Marking | EA | 6 | \$ 1,000 | \$ 6,000 |
| | | | SUBTOTAL | \$ 5,309,683 |
| | | | 30% Contingency | \$ 1,592,905 |
| FINAL SANTA FE TRAIL SUBTOTAL | | | | \$ 6,902,588 |

OUTDOOR RECREATION WEBSITE

DESCRIPTION:

While the City of Trinidad and Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) all have websites that provide information about recreational opportunities within their jurisdictional areas, there is not a dedicated website for outdoor recreational opportunities throughout Las Animas County. There is a need to create a more all-inclusive outdoor recreation opportunities website that includes information about recreation throughout the County including both public and private land opportunities. The website should be supported by the proposed Regional Management Entity that is discussed as an early action strategy in Section 4 ‘Outdoor Recreation Strategies’. The website needs to be a regional activity guide. For example, it could be tagged “Recreation in the Fishers Peak Region”.

If an even larger regional outdoor recreation partnership were formed with Huerfano County and Walsenburg the new website should become a guide for both Counties. With recreational opportunities in both County’s being featured the website could start to promote longer recreational stays, up to a week, in the region. Getting visitors to stay longer in the region increases the economic benefits to local communities.

There is a need to distribute more complete outdoor recreational opportunities information to residents, businesses, visitors and tourists so they can quickly find information, events and things to do when planning to visit Las Animas County. The development and regular maintenance of a website that caters to the development of recreational opportunities throughout the County will be an important early action project.



Fisher Peak Website Landing Page



Southside Park In Trinidad

WEBSITE DESIGN:

Website design should include design that meets the following general criteria:

- **Easy to Navigate** – web pages should be obvious and self-explanatory
- **Avoid Clutter** – encourage visitors to quickly and easily get to the “next step” by removing barriers
- **Focus User’s Attention** – design in a way that focuses the users attention on the most important information
- **Function** – Let the user clearly see what functions or options are available
- **Simplicity** – Use a simple design with a visible language
- **Organization** – consistent structure
- **Economize** – limit cues and visual elements
- **Communicate** – use text, images, format, etc. as methods to communicate successfully
- **User Experience** – Test the website early and often to produce the most useful results.

WEBSITE MAINTENANCE:

Designing and implementing a website is an important first step, but more important is the management and long-term maintenance of the website. A website that is always current and functions for the users will serve Las Animas County well now and in the future. Maintenance hours are dependent on the amount of information to be distributed/updated and so for the purposes of this document an average per month cost has been used.

Website Maintenance Cost \$500 per month (\$6,000 per year)

WEBSITE EXPENSES

- **Website Design Cost: \$10,000***
- ***Costs assume that content and images are available and require minimal development/editing by the website designer.**
- **Domain Cost: up to \$200 per year**
- **Website Hosting: up to \$300 per year**
- **Website Maintenance Cost \$500 per month (\$6,000 per year)**



Fishers Peak & Fishers Mesa

SCCOGS & CPW PARTNERSHIPS

DESCRIPTION:

An overarching strategy recommendation from this study is to “*Establish a regional recreation management entity – Develop the local and regional administrative structure to manage and maintain existing and expanding outdoor recreation infrastructure, programs, and workforce development.*”

The long-term realization of this strategy can take many forms and will likely evolve over time. The first critical steps, however, are simple: establish a framework and a forum to maintain the momentum and continue the conversations that have been started with this study.

This collaborative process will be the foundation for long-term success, and begins with two key early actions:

1. Enhance coordination with the South Central Council of Governments (SCCOG)
2. Obtain designation and funding as a Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) Outdoor Regional Partnership



Rural Las Animas County

SCCOG Coordination

The SCCOG is an existing community organization serving Las Animas and Huerfano Counties. The purpose of the SCCOG is to “identify needs, develop responses, implement solutions, eliminate duplication, and promote efficient and accountable use of public resources to improve the quality of life” (<https://sccog.colorado.gov/>). The SCCOG is an existing, regional entity that has the support and participation of local units of government, and provides a mechanism to support the coordination of outdoor recreation and economic development projects of regional interest and benefit.

CPW Outdoor Regional Partnership

The Outdoor Regional Partnership program is an effort by CPW and Great Outdoors Colorado to support regional collaborative efforts to ensure that Colorado’s land, water, and wildlife thrive while also providing for equitable and quality outdoor recreation experiences (<https://cpw.state.co.us/aboutus/Pages/Regional-Partnerships-Initiative.aspx>). CPW is currently accepting applications in the spring and fall of each year.

Initial steps include:

- **Define the Region** – The CPW RPI is looking to fund partnerships that are broad enough to cover multiple counties for statewide efficiency and collaboration, while it is also important to develop a logical boundary that encompasses a region with common resources, culture, issues, priorities, and/or working relationships. Our recommendation is to define a region that includes both Las Animas and Huerfano Counties, to capitalize on shared interests and relationships around the Spanish Peaks region.
- **Regional Partner Engagement** – Coordinate with Huerfano County and other local governments, interests, and partners who have not been engaged in this study to discuss the benefits of regional collaboration. The SCCOG is an existing forum to facilitate these conversations.
- **Identify a Fiscal Sponsor** – A successful partnership will require a specific entity or organization to receive grant funds, coordinate expenditures, and ensure that the grant requirements are met. Our recommendation is for the South Central Council of Governments (SCCOG) to serve as the fiscal sponsor, since it is already working across Las Animas and Huerfano Counties.
- **CPW Outreach** – Establish regular contact with CPW’s Regional Partnership Program Manager to develop and refine a strategy that is compatible with the needs of the program and the local communities, and results in tangible outcomes for both.
- **Partnership Work Plan** – Identify the overall objectives of the partnership, how it is structured, participation, and expected outcomes. Overall objectives may include continued inter-agency coordination, community engagement, and the development of outdoor recreation-oriented projects and initiatives.
- **Partnership Management Strategy** – Identify how the partnership will be managed and facilitated. For example, some existing partnerships have dedicated staff while others are managed by a experienced consultant. In many cases, this is how the grant funding is utilized.

WORMHOLE

DESCRIPTION:

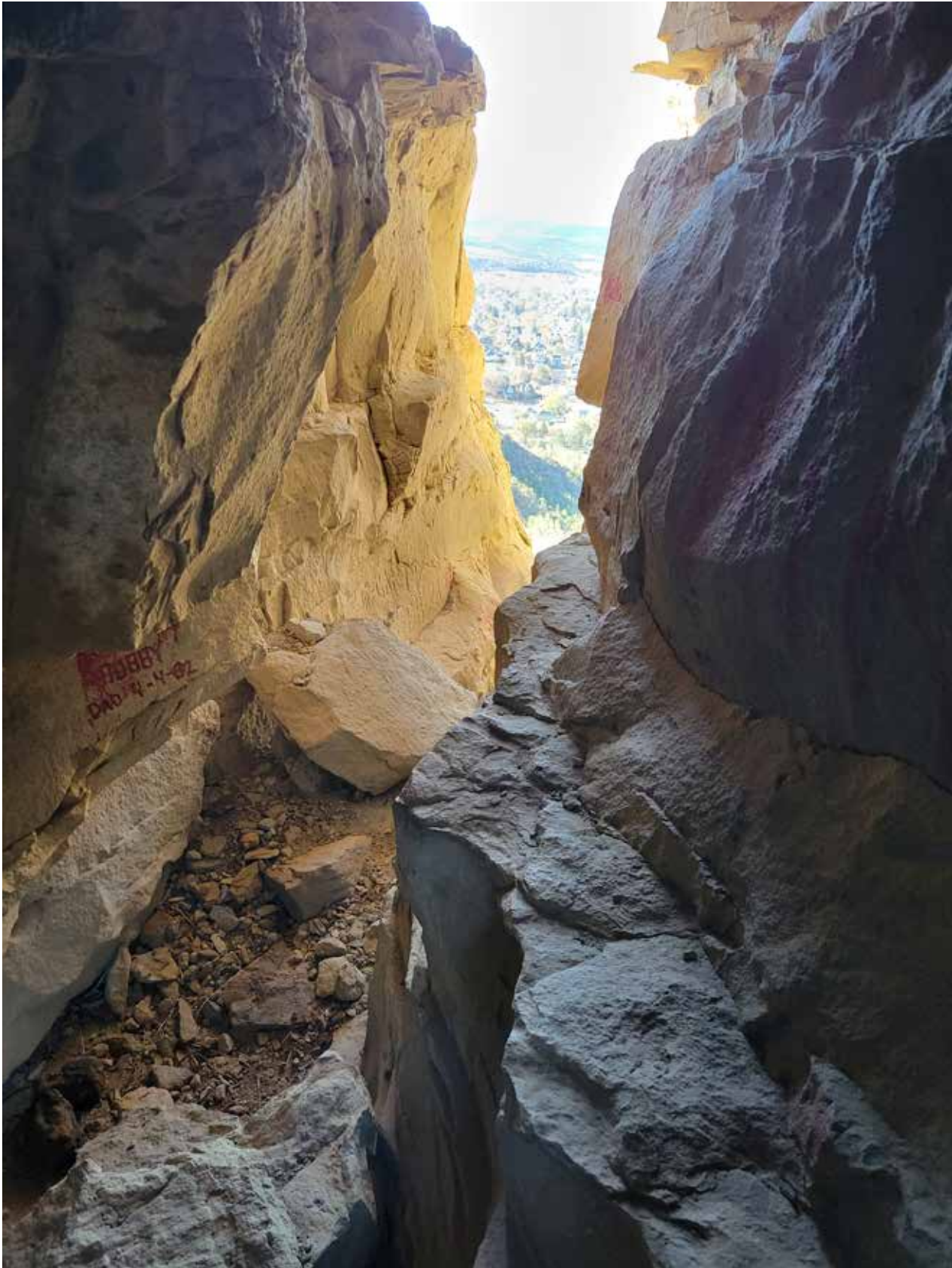
The Wormhole Trail system is a locally conceived and volunteer-built trail system, with access to the desert mesa north of downtown Trinidad. The Wormhole Trail system was first proposed in 2015, with the initial trail construction beginning in 2016. Currently, the trail system hosts about 5 miles of single-track trail on about 250 acres of city-owned land. From a small trailhead north of the Masonic Cemetery, the current trail system includes two lower meadow loops and a steep climb to access the mesa. The upper trails skirt the rim of the mesa, offering rock outcrops and dramatic views.

The Wormhole Trail system is appreciated as a local, grassroots amenity with the following unique characteristics:

- **Historical Significance** – The mesa overlooking downtown Trinidad has been a local landmark for generations, and the area contains numerous sites and artifacts.
- **Environmental Values** – The area is an accessible example of desert scrub habitat that is used by a variety of wildlife, and is known to contain several unique species of cactus.
- **Reclamation** – Adjacent to the city landfill, the lower reaches of the trail system have been used for informal and illegal dumping for decades. Establishment of this trail system has been an opportunity to remove trash and reclaim the area for beneficial community use.
- **Proximity** – The trail system is in close proximity to Trinidad neighborhoods, providing nearby multi-use trail access to the community.

In contrast to the growing Fishers Peak State Park trail system, the Wormhole trails are generally narrower and more rugged, providing visitors an intimate interaction with the desert landscape. While the Wormhole system is not intended or suited to be a high-profile destination for the masses, it provides a unique and distinctive opportunity for locals and visitors seeking a variety of trail settings and experiences. With its lower elevation and southern exposure, the Wormhole system also offers a shoulder-season trail option when the Fishers Peak trails are constrained by snow and mud.

Through the efforts of the Trinidad Trails Alliance, local community members have completed the lower Mahogany Trail loop and multiple trailhead improvements within the past year. Future desired plans include a beginner loop, an outer rim loop, an additional connection to the mesa top, connectivity to the iconic Simpson's Rest to the south, and additional trailhead improvements.



Interesting Rock Formations

EARLY-ACTION PRIORITIES

Through grassroots efforts and coordination, Trinidad Trails Alliance, the City of Trinidad, and dedicated community members are making steady progress towards the continued build-out and improvement of the Wormhole trail system. With additional resources, the community could leverage this energy and make a lasting impact on the trail system and its community benefits. Specific initiatives could include:

- **Strategic Plan** – A strategic planning process for the trail system could be useful in identifying specific projects, priorities, partners, and funding. This effort would not want to stifle existing efforts, but instead encourage them with a longer-term vision, defined priorities, and maps.
- **Resource Evaluations** – Field evaluations and research related to biological, paleontological, and cultural resources in the Wormhole trail system is necessary to ensure the preservation of sensitive areas, but also to better understand and interpret the natural and cultural history of the area.
- **Trail Construction** – While initial trails have been built by volunteers using hand tools, some of the future desired trail connections are in more difficult terrain that may require the assistance of trail contractors and/or motorized equipment; additional resources would facilitate these efforts.
- **Trailhead Improvements** – Continued trailhead improvements will make for a welcoming and comfortable environment for both residents and visitors. While keeping with its rustic character, additional amenities such as an entry sign, shade structure, informational kiosk, and restrooms may be necessary over time.
- **Signage and Wayfinding** – While the existing hand-made trail signs define the character of the trail system, more extensive and consistent signs, complemented with a trailhead kiosk, would help define the visitor experience, particularly for beginners.
- **Youth Involvement** – Better coordination and program development could help establish the Wormhole trail system as a “home base” for youth-oriented stewardship efforts, including high school and youth-corps efforts that can also serve as local workforce development for outdoor stewardship careers.



Wormhole Trail Sign

SOUTHERN COLORADO OUTDOOR INSTITUTE

Although in its infancy, the Southern Colorado Outdoor Institute is an association of local stakeholders working together to provide outdoor recreation education and programming opportunities to the public. Programs will be offered through the Trinidad State College’s continuing education program and will be directed to a primarily adult demographic. Youth interested in outdoor recreation programs will be referred to Institute partners already providing youth programming i.e. Trinidad Youth Club, Earth Farms, etc.



RIVERWALK IMPROVEMENT

The City of Trinidad has received several different grants that have allowed the city to start lighting the length of the riverwalk with decorative, night sky compliant street like lamps. Currently the lighting project begins at the Cedar Street at the Water Works building, future site of the Trinidad Center for Outdoor Recreation, and then extends past the dog park on Linden Ave.

The goal is to continue the lighting project east along the trail to the Kit Carson Cut off. The City has also received funds for vegetation clearing along the trail. This clearing will allow for the removal of a lot of invasive species, clear out dead and down vegetation and in general clear and clean the area along the riverwalk.

The city previously contracted with the Greenway Foundation to provide a comprehensive river development vision to foster economic and recreation opportunities and provide more public



LAS ANIMAS COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS

The Las Animas County Fairgrounds in Trinidad has multiple underutilized facilities, but with a little vision, we can imagine a facility that operates year-round, providing spaces and places for a myriad of activities. From baseball diamonds and soccer fields to conference rooms and catering kitchens. The idea is to create a place with multiple levels of users - from athletes and picnic goers to folks watching a movie and attending a lecture all at the same time!





FUNDING

EARLY-ACTION PRIORITIES

Identifying and securing future funding are essential to implementing the strategies identified in this study. The following list is divided into 2 categories, public funding sources and private funding sources. The list provides a current assessment of potentially eligible existing and anticipated funding sources, reflective of recently passed legislation. This list is not all inclusive but identifies the more significant and noteworthy funding opportunities. Continued assessment of the viability of the funding source and eligibility requirements will need to be verified and coordinated with the lead agency.

In addition to the public funding sources, there are a number of existing private funding opportunities for community-based education, conservation and capital projects relating to trails and

PUBLIC FUNDING SOURCES

FHWA HIGHWAY SAFETY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Allocated to states based on federal apportioned formula for safety-related projects on the federal-aid highway system. Eligible projects include highway-railroad grade separations, traffic control for pedestrians and bicyclists, and roadway projects that separate vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists. Funds are administered by the states.

FHWA SAFE STREETS AND ROADS FOR ALL

A new discretionary competitive grant program that provides funding directly to and exclusively for local governments to support their efforts to advance “vision zero” plans and other complete street improvements to reduce crashes and fatalities, especially for cyclists and pedestrians.

FHWA NATIONAL EV PROGRAM

Allocated to states based on apportioned federal formula for deploying EV charging infrastructure. Includes a 10% set aside for grants eligible for states and local governments.

FHWA RECONNECTING COMMUNITIES PILOT PROGRAM

Discretionary program for projects that restore community connections by removing, retrofitting, or mitigating highways that create barriers. Planning grants need to be less than \$2M and construction grants greater than \$5M.

FHWA RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM

The Recreational Trails Program provides funds from the FHWA to states to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both non-motorized and motorized recreational trail uses.

FHWA SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS PROGRAM

Allocated to states based on apportioned federal formula for improving safety for pedestrians and bicyclists for the journey to school. Colorado established The Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program to distribute federal and state funding to eligible projects that improve safety for pedestrians and bicyclists in school areas and encourage children in K-8 to safely bicycle and walk to and from school. Eligible activities include 1) safe school routes for children to walk and bike to and from school; 2) facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists to travel to and from school; and 3) education. Funds are awarded through a statewide competitive process.

FHWA TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM (TAP)

A 10% set aside competitive program within the STBG Program for states to distribute funding to eligible applicants. The TAP provides funding for bicycle, pedestrian, historic, scenic, and environmental mitigation transportation projects.

Eligible activities include:

1. Facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists
2. Turnouts, overlooks and viewing areas, and preservation of historic transportation facilities



Backcountry Trail Construction

3. Some environmental mitigation activities; and
4. The recreational trails program. The main sources of revenue are: federal highway funding (80%), local matching funds (20%), and additional local funds above the matching requirement.

NPS RIVERS, TRAILS, & CONSERVATION ASSIST. PROGRAM

The RTCA Program is a National Park Service (NPS) program providing technical assistance to state and local agencies, tribes, nonprofit organizations, and citizen groups via direct NPS staff involvement to establish and restore greenways, rivers, trails, watersheds and open space. The RTCA program provides only for planning assistance - there is no implementation funding available. Projects are prioritized for assistance based on criteria including conserving significant community resources, fostering cooperation between agencies, serving a large number of users, encouraging public involvement in planning and implementation, and focusing on lasting accomplishments. This program may benefit trail development in the region indirectly through technical assistance, particularly for community organizations, but should not be considered a future capital funding source.

FEDERAL LANDS ACCESS PROGRAM (FLAP)

Administered by the National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Forest Service, FLAP funds improve transportation facilities that provide access to federal lands. These funds supplement state and local resources for public roads, transit systems, and other transportation facilities, with an emphasis on high-use recreation

sites and economic generators. Administered by the state, funds are allocated based on the area’s road mileage, number of bridges, land area, and visitation. Projects are selected by a Programming Decision Committee established in each state.

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND (LWCF) PROGRAM

The LWCF was enacted to create parks and open spaces; protect wilderness, wetlands, and refuges; preserve wildlife habitat; and enhance recreational opportunities. The program consists of two funding components: 1) a federal program that funds the purchase of land and water areas for conservation and recreation purposes and 2) a state managed matching grant program that provides funds to states for planning, developing, and acquiring land and water areas for state and local parks and recreation facilities. The Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission allocates the annual Colorado state set aside apportionment to trail projects that come before the State Recreational Trails Committee as trail grant applications.

OUTDOOR RECREATION LEGACY PARTNERSHIP (ORLP)

Established by Congress in 2014 and administered through the National Park Service, ORLP Program is funded through the LWCF State and Local Assistance Program. The purpose of the program is to provide grants to acquire and/or develop public lands for outdoor recreation purposes that are located in or are directly accessible to neighborhoods or communities that have an economically disadvantaged population and are underserved in terms of parks and recreation resources. The program provides grants consistent with the purposes of the LWCF, but with the further specific goals of funding projects that are 1) located within or serve jurisdictions of 50,000 people or more and designated as “Urbanized Areas” by the Census Bureau from the 2010 Census, or 2) located in or are directly accessible to neighborhoods or communities that are underserved in terms of parks and recreation resources and where there are significant populations of people who are economically disadvantaged. Community Develop.

BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM (CDBG)

The Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) administers the CDBG program for non-entitlement municipalities and counties to carry out community development activities. Eligible uses of funds include acquisition, design and engineering, construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation or installation of public improvements or public facilities. Examples of successful projects include improving sewer and water systems, enhancing commercial streetscape, and

developing community centers, food banks, shelters, health clinics etc. The funds must be used for activities that either benefit low- and moderate-income persons or prevent or eliminate slums or blight. Entities eligible to apply for grants are limited to units of local governments, including counties, though these entities may apply on behalf of non-profits. The Colorado DOLA administers the competitive grant process.

EPA RECREATION ECONOMY FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES

The Environmental Protection Agency’s Recreation Economy for Rural Communities program is a planning assistance program to help communities develop strategies and an action plan to revitalize their downtowns through outdoor recreation. Outdoor recreation activities have become increasingly popular across the United States and tend to aid with the conservation of natural lands and forests. This program enables communities to strategically invest in outdoor recreational opportunities that create jobs, foster environmentally friendly community development, revitalize downtowns, and offer new opportunities for people to connect with the natural world.

GOCO COLORADO CONNECT INITIATIVE

The Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) Colorado Connect Initiative is a five-year strategy aimed at increasing access to outdoor experiences through the construction of non-motorized trails of local, regional, and statewide significance. This program aims to increase access to the outdoors in Colorado communities by filling trail gaps, building new trails, and providing better walkable and bikeable access for youth and families. Applicants may request up to \$2 million for trail construction projects. Eligible grantees include municipalities, counties, and Title 32 special park and recreation districts that receive Conservation Trust Fund monies from the Department of Local Affairs. Projects must be primarily for trail construction; however, land acquisitions may be considered with staff approval. There is no requirement for surface type. Projects that present an exciting opportunity to leverage partnerships and outside funding, connect important trail segments, and are shovel-ready may score more competitively.

THE RURAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (RTAP)

RTAP helps rural communities create economic development strategies by providing free technical assistance and consulting services. Previously known as Colorado Blueprint 2.0, RTAP was created after conversations with thousands of people in

communities across the state. Despite its name change, the program’s goal is still the same: to create and retain jobs in rural areas of the state. Communities can apply for any of the seven of the program’s initiatives, including: certified small business community; community placemaking; coworking 101; Colorado rural academy for tourism studio 201; creativity lab of Colorado; film festival; and grow your outdoor recreation industry. Eligible communities must be able to describe how their region is rural or distressed and show that the project will have an exceptional or transformative impact on the community with a clear measure of success. Funds are administered by the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade.

CPW NON-MOTORIZED TRAILS GRANT PROGRAMS

Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) funds several types of trail grants including large recreational trail grants, small recreational trail grants, trail planning, and trail support grants. This program is a partnership among Colorado Parks and Wildlife; Great Outdoors Colorado; the Colorado Lottery; the federal Recreational Trails Program; and the Land and Water Conservation Fund. To be eligible for the Non-Motorized Trails Grant, projects must include new trail or trailhead construction; maintenance, re-route, or reconstruction of existing trails; enhancements or upgrades to existing trailheads; trail and trailhead system planning; building and enhancing support organizations; or acquiring land or easements. Projects are required to have at least a 30% match, and all properties on which the funded projects take place must be under control of the grantee.

CONSERVATION TRUST FUND (CTF)

Colorado’s Department of Local Affairs distributes Conservation Trust Funding to local governments, including counties, cities, towns, and Title 32 special districts that provide park and recreation services in their plans. These funds are the portion of Colorado Lottery proceeds constitutionally mandated to be distributed directly to local governments, based on population, for acquiring and maintaining parks, open space, and recreational facilities. CTF funds are distributed on a quarterly basis and can be used for numerous conservation and recreational uses, including developing parks and open space and preserving floodplains, greenbelts, and scenic areas for any scientific, historic, scenic, or recreational use.

PRIVATE FUNDING SOURCES

THE BAR NI RANCH COMMUNITY SERVICE FUND

Bar NI Community Service Foundation is a private foundation formed in 2004 to provide support to local communities and organizations located in the Purgatoire Valley in southern Colorado. Twice per year the organization entertains proposals that address the environment/conservation, education, youth development and civic/public benefits. Funds are programmed by Cabot-Willington, LLC (the Bar NI Ranch).

BOETTCHER FOUNDATION

The Boettcher Foundation champions excellence and invests in high potential organizations that are developing new ideas that can drive Colorado forward. They support organizations and initiatives that strive to innovate, impact, and improve the quality of life for Coloradans. They prioritize capital building or community infrastructure projects for Colorado through “a lens of rural depth.” Letters of Inquiry can be submitted any time of the year. Funds are programmed by the Boettcher Foundation.

EL POMAR FOUNDATION

A private general-purpose foundation, El Pomar accepts applications from 501(c)(3) organizations serving the state of Colorado in the areas of arts and culture, civic and community initiatives, education, health, and human services. Emphasis is assisting those most affected by economic conditions. Capital support requests must be less than \$100,000. Funds are programmed by the El Pomar Foundation.

GATES FAMILY FOUNDATION

The Gates Family Foundation invests in capital projects across Colorado that include building purchase, construction, expansion, renovation, and/or land acquisition. They prioritize projects in rural communities that face greater challenges in accessing funds for capital projects and support projects that reinforce the foundation’s strategic priorities of K-12 public education, natural resources, and community development. Funds are programmed by the Gates Family Foundation.

DOPPELT FAMILY TRAIL DEVELOPMENT FUND

Launched in 2015 by the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC), the Doppelt Family Trail Development Fund supports organizations and local governments that are implementing projects to build and improve multi-use trails. RTC awards approximately \$85,000 per year to several qualifying projects through a competitive process. While applications for projects on rail-trails and rails-with-trails will be given preference, rail-trail designation is not a requirement. However, the trail must serve or plan to serve multiple user types, such as bicycling, walking, and hiking, and be considered a trail, greenway, multi-use trail, or shared use path. In addition, the program must advance trail development, help establish corridor connections, or improve current conditions on the trail. Grant applications are accepted annually in January. Funds are programmed by the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy.

ACTIVATING PLACES AND SPACES TOGETHER

This funding opportunity, administered by the Colorado Health Foundation, supports locally defined, place specific efforts to get people outdoors and actively engaged in their neighborhoods. The goal of the funding opportunity is to help activate existing infrastructure in public places that contributes to a community’s overall health through residential usage and positive experiences. Grant funds support the costs associated with project planning and implementation, and provides technical assistance for community engagement, communications, and marketing for up to one year. Eligible projects must reflect the Foundation’s cornerstones of serving low-income Colorado residents who have historically had less power or privilege and creating health equity. Funds are programmed by the Colorado Health Foundation.

THE NATIONAL FISH AND WILDLIFE FOUNDATION ACRES FOR AMERICA GRANT PROGRAM

The Acres for America Grant Program is a joint public-private partnership between the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and Walmart. This program works to conserve fish and wildlife habitat, protect public lands, provide access to outdoor recreation,

and ensure the future of local economies that depend on outdoor recreation, forestry, or ranching. Eligible grantees include non-profit 501(c)(3) organizations, state government agencies, local governments, municipal governments, Indian tribes, and education institutions. Funds are programmed by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

PEOPLE FOR BIKES COMMUNITY GRANT

The *PeopleForBikes* Community Grant Program supports bicycle infrastructure projects and targeted advocacy initiatives that make it easier and safer for people of all ages and abilities to ride. This program accepts grant applications from non-profit organizations that focus on bicycling, active transportation, or community development; city or county agencies or departments; and state or federal agencies working locally. Requests must support a specific project or program (i.e., grant funds cannot be used for general operating costs), such as bike paths, lanes, trails, and bridges. *PeopleForBikes* funds up to \$10,000 for engineering and design work, construction costs including materials, labor, and equipment rental, and reasonable volunteer support costs. This program does not require a specific percentage match, but does look at leverage and funding partnerships very carefully. Funds are programmed by *PeopleForBikes*.

CULTIVATING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES (CHC) GRANT PROGRAM

The CHC grant program is geared specifically towards nonprofit organizations that work with underserved, low-income, and minority populations in the contiguous United States. CHC seeks to catalyze measurable improvements in community health outcomes by funding projects that address the social determinants of health and participants’ physical, mental, and social well-being. Eligible projects must work to accomplish the program’s goals which include improving the walkability, bikeability, and use of public spaces in a community. Funds are programmed by AETNA.



APPENDIX

A) WORKING STRATEGY SHEETS

Establish a Regional Recreation Management Entity

Develop the local and regional administrative structure to manage and maintain existing and expanding outdoor recreation infrastructure, programs, and workforce development

Potential Projects

Broad Strategies

- Establish a regional partnership to coordinate outdoor recreation, land stewardship, and habitat conservation efforts
- Establish and fund an entity to own and manage land and infrastructure for the purposes of public outdoor recreation
- Provide the foundation for outdoor recreation and land management careers in Las Animas County

Potential Projects

- Establish and fund a local or regional entity to develop, own, and manage land and infrastructure for outdoor recreation and habitat conservation. Potential models include:
 - Improve and enhance the capacity of existing local governments (e.g., Trinidad and Las Animas County)
 - Create a local (city or county) open space program to manage land, infrastructure, and programs
 - Create a new local or regional entity (e.g., special district)
- Establish a local or regional funding source to support park, trail, and outdoor recreation infrastructure, programming and management. Potential models include dedicated budget allocations, open space sales tax, lodging tax, real estate transfer tax, development fees, etc.
- Continue to seek state and federal grants and partnerships to support outdoor recreation infrastructure and management
- Create and fund (via grants or other funds) a regional, professional trails crew to perform ongoing maintenance and upgrades to trails in the region
- Establish a regional partnership (via CPW, DOLA, or other) to continue regional collaboration and project development for outdoor recreation, habitat conservation, and economic development
- Support the establishment and growth of local businesses focused on outdoor recreation (e.g., retail, outfitters, rentals, and guide services); small business “incubator” or startup grants
- Support professional and workforce development in outdoor careers through TSC and other partners

Potential Partnerships

- Trinidad and other municipalities
- Las Animas and Huerfano Counties
- South Central Council of Governments
- Raton Basin Regional Economic Development District
- Colfax County, NM
- PAC Members
- CPW, DNR, CDOT, DOLA
- GOCO
- Trust for Public Land, The Nature Conservancy, El Pomar Foundation
- Special District Association of Colorado
- Trinidad State College
- Corporate/Business partners
- Colorado Outdoor Recreation Industry Office (OREC)

Maintenance and Management Considerations

Need to develop the local physical and human infrastructure to support outdoor recreation. This includes funding, equipment, workforce development, and programs.

Any new (and existing) outdoor recreation infrastructure requires a commitment and funding for management and maintenance. EDA State Outdoor Recreation Grant; may require creating a new hired position

Local programs, funding, and commitments are important to continue to leverage additional funding and partnerships.

Surveys and public input indicate that existing infrastructure in the region are currently below desirable standards. Any plans to increase outdoor recreation capacity and infrastructure must include a corresponding strategy for management and maintenance.

Several long-term recreation strategies may include land acquisition, easements, or access permits with willing landowners; any such transactions require an entity with the capacity to hold those interests and manage recreation programs and infrastructure.

Community and organizational volunteers are a key component of trail management and maintenance, but do not replace the need for dedicated resources

Accessibility and Inclusivity

Include accessibility and inclusivity in all programs, partnerships, and decision-making entities

Create pathways for career development in outdoor recreation for locals

Apply for the Colorado Outdoor Recreation Equity Grant to fund projects specific to inclusivity and accessibility

Potential Economic Benefits

- Improved quality of life for existing and new residents
- Provides opportunities for job creation
- Streamlines funding to recreation-focused projects (less competition for funds to go to other county needs)
- Allows for additional recreation amenities and higher quality experiences, which is important to support outside visitation
- Provides a foundation to leverage external grants for projects
- Opportunities for local businesses to expand offerings and clientele

Ranking & Community Support

Establishing a regional recreation management entity would allow for workforce to come from within the county. The need for more jobs in the county is great.

Many members of the community are interested in being involved and helping in any way possible. Buy-in for maintenance and management will be supported by the community.

Community support for a new revenue source is uncertain, but may be a challenge.

Ranking Priority

A dedicated outdoor recreation champion and management entity is needed to shepard the outdoor recreation strategies and facilitate regional partnerships

Take Care of What We Have

Improve safety, enjoyment, and tourism appeal by repairing, maintaining and updating existing outdoor recreation areas and amenities.

Potential Projects

- Conduct a condition assessment of all publicly owned outdoor recreation facilities to determine the full extent of maintenance needs
- Develop an asset management plan to prioritize and address the most pressing needs across all publicly owned outdoor recreation facilities.
- Update existing park and trail amenities (including benches, shade structures, parking lots, trash enclosures, etc) to meet Federal accessibility standards for outdoor developed areas, and to improve visitor experience and safety (e.g. drinking fountains to reduce heat risk)
- Consider creative staffing models to add capacity (AmeriCorps Vista, college internships, partnering with Career and Technical Education programs in high schools, etc)
- Establish a formal volunteer program to recognize and leverage community stewardship of parks and outdoor recreation facilities

Potential Partnerships

- Las Animas County
- City of Trinidad
- Volunteers
- Regional Recreation Management Entity
- Colorado Parks and Wildlife

Maintenance and Management Considerations

Funding for ongoing maintenance must be secured before additional investments in recreational facilities are made. Grants and outside funding for these purposes are difficult to secure. Therefore, the city and county should strongly consider pursuing

Surveys and public input indicate that existing infrastructure in the region are currently below desirable standards.

Need to develop the local physical and human infrastructure to support outdoor recreation. This includes funding, equipment, workforce development, and programs.

Community and organizational volunteers are a key component of trail management and maintenance, but do not replace the need for dedicated resources.

Accessibility and Inclusivity

- As facilities are repaired and upgraded they should also be improved to meet current federal accessibility standards
- Well maintained facilities are safer and more inviting for all users

Potential Economic Benefits

- Improving quality of life for residents results in better experiences for visitors and increased demand for tourism

Ranking & Community Support

- “Taking care of what we have” was a major theme emphasized by the community in the survey, at the tabling events and in the Interest Group meetings

Ranking Priority

Before you build more to manage and maintain you must commit resources and energy to take care of what you have. You have to show you care before they will come

Develop Educational Programs, Media and Facilities Opportunities:
Increase and enhance educational programs, media & facilities that celebrate Las Animas County’s natural and cultural history.

Potential Projects

- Work with Colorado Parks and Wildlife to grow the number of interpretive, volunteer, and service-learning programs out in the community (in addition to those offered within state park boundaries).
- In partnership with the Native community and willing private landowners, co-create opportunities for members of the public to appreciate and experience indigenous history and culture (Foraging, Star Stories, Women in the Wild)
- Improve and maintain accessible parking, pullouts, and picnic areas throughout the county to support structured/educational programs and self-guided interpretive opportunities for all abilities
- Install and maintain interpretive facilities in meaningful locations that bring to life stories of the county’s history and culture (e.g., educational exhibits, signs, interactive outdoor installations, public art, nature discovery areas).
- Operate a scenic train route for the public to enjoy wildlife, views, cultural history, etc
- Support print and web-based media and apps that provide orientation and interpretation along Scenic Byways
- Explore partnership opportunities with farmers and ranchers to share stories of the county’s past and present agricultural values and practices (e.g., educational programming could be part of “agri-tainment center”, landowners and other partners could offer educational opportunities at spots along bike races and motorcycle touring routes)
- Winter history series through local history museums
- Seasonal wildlife tours/viewing areas
- Courses for backcountry camping/skiing/adventuring

Potential Partnerships

- State Parks
- Trinidad State University
- Pamela Good Wind
- Fishers Peak Outfitters
- Local and regional museums
- Farmers, ranchers, long-time county residents
- Trinidad Youth Club
- ABC Disability
- [Colorado Association of Environmental Education](#)
- [National Association of Interpretation](#)

Maintenance and Management Considerations

- Cyclic facility maintenance needs must be programmed into initial budget estimates along with up-front capital costs, in order to fully consider the relative advantages and disadvantages of facility improvements or additions.

Accessibility and Inclusivity

- Engage with Native community respectfully regarding their historical and present-day connections with the land
- Incorporate stories and perspectives from people of color and other marginalized identities.
- Involve key partners and stakeholders in co-designing improvements
- Incorporate sensory-rich environments
- Address visual accessibility in sign design/installation

Potential Economic Benefits

- Offering a full-range of experiences appeals to a broad spectrum of ages, visitor profiles, and interests
- Opportunities like these are unlikely to drive tourism directly, but they would give families and visitors other things to do during their stay, making recreational tourism more appealing
- If volunteer driven, no job gains. However, pride of place and pride of ownership (fostered by volunteer programs) has indirect effects on quality of life, job retention, etc. Volunteers also leverage tremendous financial benefits for government agencies.
- If additional funding supporting additional capacity for CPW staff, job gains would be seen

Ranking & Community Support

The community depressed the need for outdoor recreation and education programming for youth, families and seniors throughout the county

PROJECT CRITERIA



| Criterion | Project Goal | Rating | Rationale |
|--------------------------------|---|--------|--|
| Recreation Capacity | Help prepare the region for future visitor recreation demand | 6 | Expands the number, diversity and capacity of recreational opportunities |
| Recreation Compatibility | Leverage existing recreational assets such as the state parks | 7 | Compliments existing State Parks and other outdoor recreational facilities |
| Partnership Potential | Inspire landowner, land manager and special interest partnerships to develop and/or manage the new recreational asset | 7 | Strong interest expressed by some landowners and the community to partner |
| Job Opportunity | Create new job opportunities | 5 | Some opportunity to create new program management and teaching positions |
| Diverse Participation | Inspire participation from a diverse range of backgrounds, ages and abilities | 7 | Opportunity to provide programming for all age groups and abilities |
| Quality of Life | Provide an increased quality of life benefit to the region | 5 | Increases quality of life for residents and visitors |
| Natural Resource Compatibility | Provide quality recreational experiences without diminishing the quality of the region’s natural resources | 7 | Can be sited to minimize impacts |

| | | | |
|----------------------|---|---|---|
| Recreation Access | Provide improved opportunity to access quality outdoor recreation | 7 | Inherently improves this criterion |
| Community Support | Create broad community support | 5 | Community support for programming |
| Culture and Heritage | Honor and celebrate the regions unique culture and heritage | 7 | Great opportunity for interpretation, education and tourism |

Connect Existing Recreational Destinations

Construct multi-model access to existing outdoor recreational features to encourage a more complete recreational experience for both residents and visitors. Create a system.

Potential Projects

County Wide Approaches

- Take advantage of existing recreational destinations by providing connections between those destinations to complete a system that becomes more of a recreational destination experience

Location Specific Projects

- Complete a major trail connection to Fishers Peak State Park from Trinidad
- Complete a secondary neighborhood connection from Trinidad to Fishers Peak State Park
- Provide connectivity to County Road 86.5 as part of an identified scenic driving route and gravel bike route
- Connect Purgatoire River Trail to other key destinations like the two State Parks and Downtown Trinidad and Trinidad State College
- Connect the Old Sopris Trail to Lake Trinidad from Trinidad
- Complete a trail connection between the two State Parks by way of Exit 11
- Connect a trail between Sugarite Canyon State Park in New Mexico from Fishers Peak State Park
- Connect a trail to Raton, NM over Raton Pass, along Raton Creek from Trinidad
- Provide connections from Trinidad to the Highway of Legends Scenic Byway
- Provide some form of public transportation in Trinidad to connect to recreational destinations

Potential Partnerships

- CPW
- New Mexico State Parks
- Las Animas County
- GOCO
- Trinidad
- DOLA
- CDOT
- Private Sector Transportation Company
- Volunteer groups

Maintenance and Management Considerations

- The connections will require ownership and responsibility for maintenance.
- Requires a volunteer ranger program

Accessibility and Inclusivity

- System improvements constructed using Accessibility Standards
- Vehicles meeting ADA Standards
- Bilingual messaging and signage

Potential Economic Benefits

- Improves quality of life
- Provides a more complete recreational destination multi-day experience
- Provides an opportunity to create for profit shuttle systems for trail users
- Provides a diversity of recreational opportunities that can be accessed from hotel and camping accommodations
- Provides easier access to food and drink in town
 - Supports local restaurants and breweries

Ranking & Community Support

- Numerous Interest Group participants identified the need to provide trails connecting the two State Parks, the City of Trinidad and locations in New Mexico.

PROJECT CRITERIA



| Criterion | Project Goal | Rating | Rationale |
|--------------------------|---|--------|---|
| Recreation Capacity | Help prepare the region for future visitor recreation demand | 7 | Providing a more complete recreational destination multi-day experience |
| Recreation Compatibility | Leverage existing recreational assets such as the state parks | 7 | This strategy is intended to maximize this opportunity |
| Partnership Potential | Inspire landowner, land manager and special interest partnerships to develop and/or manage the new recreational asset | 7 | Many opportunities for city, county and state government partnerships |
| Job Opportunity | Create new job opportunities | 4 | New jobs associated with maintenance and management |
| Diverse Participation | Inspire participation from a diverse range of backgrounds, ages and abilities | 6 | Expand the range of trail offerings |

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|--|---|---|
| Quality of Life | Provide an increased quality of life benefit to the region | 7 | Expands quality of life for residents and visitors |
| Natural Resource Compatibility | Provide quality recreational experiences without diminishing the quality of the region’s natural resources | 6 | Consistent with land conservation, but trails inherently have localized impacts |
| Recreation Access | Provide improved opportunity to access quality outdoor recreation | 7 | Inherently expands recreation access |
| Community Support | Create broad community support | 7 | Very high community support for trail connections |
| Culture and Heritage | Honor and celebrate the regions unique culture and heritage | 4 | Not inherently connected o heritage, but opportunities exist |

ENHANCE VISITOR INFORMATION, SIGNS, AND WAYFINDING: Improve access to information about County-wide recreational opportunities. Work to promote outdoor recreation in Las Animas County. This information must be very accessible to residents and visitors. Use all forms of media and ways to disseminate information to the public.

Potential Projects

County Wide Approaches

- Create a Regional Outdoor Recreation Website
- Welcome Center/Information Hub
- Develop accurate and readily accessible Maps
- Recreation specific guides: hiking, mountain biking, scenic driving (create County Scenic Driving Routes), bird watching, geology, etc.
- Advertise statewide
- Develop a recreational brand for the county (Identifiable logo and/or tagline)
- Develop a county wide recreational identification and information signage program
- Self guided historic tour routes with interpretation of significant sites throughout the County
- City and County partner to develop an outdoor recreation opportunities website for the Las Animas County region (Link to CPW website describing the State Parks)
- Building off gravel grinding guide
- Develop a social media account for the region to highlight recreational destinations and experiences
- Create a branded “Outdoor Recreation Guide” for the County and Trinidad area to help visitors plan trips and easily find destinations

Potential Partnerships

- Las Animas County
- Municipalities in Las Animas County
- Raton, NM
- Private sector outdoor recreation business
- Chambers of Commerce
- Hospitality business

Maintenance and Management Considerations

- Establish an outdoor recreational collaborative with the intention of partnering to promote outdoor recreation in Las Animas County
- Partners of the collaborative will need to contribute to a yearly advertising and promotion budget. Budget would include a welcome center, publications, traditional advertising, social media and attending statewide outdoor recreational events to promote outdoor recreation in Las Animas County

Accessibility and Inclusivity

- Physical improvements constructed using Accessibility Standards
- Tours both, self guided and guided can be developed to accommodate people with accessibility issues
- in addition to bilingual messaging outdoor recreation opportunities, information can target underserved communities (Meet them where they live)

Potential Economic Benefits

- Increased visitorship
- Visitors plan longer multi-day trips
- Supports local business
- Creates the opportunity for new jobs in the outdoor recreation business
- Improves the quality of life

Ranking & Community Support

- Participants in the survey, in the interest groups and at tabling events expressed the need to better provide information about outdoor recreational opportunities within Las Animas County.

PROJECT CRITERIA



| Criterion | Project Goal | Rating | Rationale |
|--------------------------------|---|--------|---|
| Recreation Capacity | Help prepare the region for future visitor recreation demand | 7 | Maximizes visibility and knowledge about recreational opportunities |
| Recreation Compatibility | Leverage existing recreational assets such as the state parks | 7 | This strategy is intended to maximize this opportunity |
| Partnership Potential | Inspire landowner, land manager and special interest partnerships to develop and/or manage the new recreational asset | 7 | Many opportunities for the City, County, State, businesses and special interests to partner |
| Job Opportunity | Create new job opportunities | 4 | Some opportunity to create new jobs |
| Diverse Participation | Inspire participation from a diverse range of backgrounds, ages and abilities | 5 | Opportunity to provide guidance for all age groups and abilities |
| Quality of Life | Provide an increased quality of life benefit to the region | 6 | Increases quality of life for residents and visitors |
| Natural Resource Compatibility | Provide quality recreational experiences without diminishing the quality of the region's natural resources | 7 | No direct impact to natural resources |
| Recreation Access | Provide improved opportunity to access quality outdoor recreation | 7 | Directs recreationalists to outdoor recreation opportunities |
| Community Support | Create broad community support | 7 | High community support |

| | | | |
|----------------------|---|---|--|
| Culture and Heritage | Honor and celebrate the regions unique culture and heritage | 4 | Opportunities exist to include cultural and heritage information |
|----------------------|---|---|--|

Provide More Outdoor Programming for Youth and Families

Develop outdoor recreation programming partnerships between property owners and program organizers. Connecting youth and families with nature is the objective.

Potential Projects

County Wide Approaches

- Outdoor Recreation Education Center
- Interactive activity around water (learning to swim)
- Summer Camps
- Encourage small recreational outfitters to develop retail, rentals and guided outdoor trips
- Create programs and facilities that take advantage of local opportunities that will interest local community members as well as regional visitors including:
 - mountain bike skills
 - equestrian skills
 - climbing skills
 - artistic skills
 - mountaineering skills
 - historic tours
 - nature educational workshops and tours
- Develop outdoor educational programming between property owners, school districts and the college
- Offer volunteer opportunities for families and paid/internship opportunities for teens to foster career development, interest in this field, and love of the outdoors, commitment to stewardship

Potential Partnerships

- Pat Walsh & the Trinidad Youth Club
- Pamela Good Wind
- Municipalities
- Las Animas County
- CPW
- Trinidad State College
- Purgatory Watershed Partnership
- Volunteer instructors, leaders and experts
- Welcome center

Maintenance and Management Considerations

- Organizers, instructors, leaders and experts are needed to lead the programs
- A lot of programs require a base of operation
- Active promotion is required in order to establish successful programming
- Transportation is needed for youth programming

Accessibility and Inclusivity

- Develop programming that specifically addresses the need for accessibility and inclusion of underserved communities

Potential Economic Benefits

- Improves quality of life
- Increased visitorship
- Supports local business
- Creates new opportunity for new jobs in outdoor recreation

Ranking & Community Support

- Numerous interest groups participants felt that there was very little existing outdoor programming in Las Animas County for youth and families. There was a strong desire to establish partnership with school districts and the college to provide outdoor programming opportunities

PROJECT CRITERIA



| Criterion | Project Goal | Rating | Rationale |
|--------------------------------|---|--------|--|
| Recreation Capacity | Help prepare the region for future visitor recreation demand | 5 | For youth and families it expands diversity and capacity of recreational opportunities |
| Recreation Compatibility | Leverage existing recreational assets such as the state parks | 7 | Compliments existing State Parks and oher outdoor recreation facilities |
| Partnership Potential | Inspire landowner, land manager and special interest partnerships to develop and/or manage the new recreational asset | 7 | Opportunities exist to partner with learning institutions |
| Job Opportunity | Create new job opportunities | 5 | Some opportunity to create new program management and teaching positions |
| Diverse Participation | Inspire participation from a diverse range of backgrounds, ages and abilities | 6 | Opportunity to provide programming for youth and families |
| Quality of Life | Provide an increased quality of life benefit to the region | 5 | Increase quality of life for residents and visitors |
| Natural Resource Compatibility | Provide quality recreational experiences without diminishing the quality of the region’s natural resources | 7 | Can be sited to minimize impacts |
| Recreation Access | Provide improved opportunity to access quality outdoor recreation | 7 | Inherently improves this criterion |

| | | | |
|----------------------|---|---|--|
| Community Support | Create broad community support | 5 | Community support for programming |
| Culture and Heritage | Honor and celebrate the regions unique culture and heritage | 6 | For youth and families provides an opportunity for interpretation, education and tourism |

Support and Expand Outdoor Rec Events to Cover all Four Seasons

This Strategy aims to generate ideas for Outdoor Recreation Events throughout the entire year, not only the Spring/Summer seasons. There are many opportunities for year-round attractions in Las Animas County, which would create a more consistent source of economic growth and development countywide.

Potential Projects

- Seasonal/Unique Festivals
 - Tarantula Fest
 - Cholla Blossom Fest
 - Winter/Seasonal Festival like the Ice Sculpture festival in Breckenridge
- Events promoting winter activities like snowshoeing or XC Skiing
- Year-round Races & Groups that support local businesses like restaurants, breweries, farms, and ranches
 - Farm-to-table dinners
 - Brewery/Restaurant Crawl, races that start and end at different local businesses
 - Poker Run or Ride
 - Races to highlight different scenic routes or new trails
- Winter history series through local history museums
- Seasonal wildlife tours/viewing areas
- Courses for backcountry camping/skiing/adventuring

Potential Partnerships

- Trinidad Chamber of Commerce
- Towns like La Junta (Tarantulas) who have unique natural features or attractions
- Local restaurants, breweries, farms, & ranches
- Local Outfitters/Fishers Peak Outfitters
- Colorado Mountain Club (for creating courses and programs around learning outdoor skills during all seasons)
- Race organizers: for cycling or running race series.

Maintenance and Management Considerations

There will need to be a schedule of events that is created and maintained where everyone throughout the County can post events, find them, and get more information.

There will also need to be a management entity for the events themselves. This may be community driven, sponsored by local businesses, or by local governments.

Both the communications and management responsibilities could be overseen by the regional management entity (suggested as another key strategy). Collective community support will also be valuable, as organizers, sponsors, and volunteers.

Accessibility and Inclusivity

Ensure that the yearly schedule of events is diverse and inclusive, catering to as wide a variety of community members and folks from out of town as possible.

Striking a balance between races and events that are shorter distances/less expensive to get involved with vs. longer/more difficult races that attract folks from out of town, potentially more expensive to increase revenue from these larger/more difficult events.

Consider, in addition to Facebook and community websites, having some sort of quarterly newsletter or flier to spread information regularly and equitably throughout the community.

Potential Economic Benefits

Creating more regular outdoor events and attractions will generate more regular and dependable economic income throughout the year, supporting local communities and businesses year round rather than just during warmer months. Regular/consistent events and easily accessible information will also draw more interest to Las Animas County, in general., as folks hear more about what’s going on in the county, they are bound to look ahead and find a time they could visit! Year-round events also provide the opportunity to capitalize on unique aspects of the County, drawing a following of unique outdoor enthusiasts such as entomologists for the Tarantula migration or cactus lovers for the Cholla Blossom Fest.

Ranking

Through all community engagement opportunities, there

PROJECT GOALS



| Criterion | Detail | Rating | Rationale |
|--------------------------|---|--------|---|
| Recreation Capacity | Help prepare the region for future visitor recreation demand | 6 | Provides event specific expansion of |
| | | | recreational opportunities and experiences |
| Recreation Compatibility | Leverage existing recreational assets such as the state parks | 7 | Can use existing recreational facility infrastructure |
| Partnership Potential | Inspire landowner, land manager and special interest partnerships to develop and/or manage the new recreational asset | 6 | Creates opportunities to partner for time specific events |
| Job Opportunity | Create new job opportunities | 4 | Only on an event by event basis |

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|---|---|
| | | | recreational opportunities and experiences |
| Recreation Compatibility | Leverage existing recreational assets such as the state parks | 7 | Can use existing recreational facility infrastructure |
| Partnership Potential | Inspire landowner, land manager and special interest partnerships to develop and/or manage the new recreational asset | 6 | Creates opportunities to partner for time specific events |
| Job Opportunity | Create new job opportunities | 4 | Only on an event by event basis |
| Diverse Participation | Inspire participation from a diverse range of backgrounds, ages and abilities | 7 | Many opportunities to diversify outdoor recreation experiences |
| Quality of Life | Provide an increased quality of life benefit to the region | 6 | Increase the quality of outdoor recreation for residents and visitors |
| Natural Resource Compatibility | Provide quality recreational experiences without diminishing the quality of the region's natural resources | 6 | Can be sited to minimize impacts but will have some localized impacts |
| Recreation Access | Provide improved opportunity to access quality outdoor recreation | 5 | Inherently improves this criterion |
| Community Support | Create broad community support | 6 | Varied support but initial interest is closer to towns |
| Culture and Heritage | Honor and celebrate the regions unique culture and heritage | 7 | Compatible with heritage varies by events |

Create New Recreational Destinations and Experiences Throughout the County

Identify and develop new and diverse recreation destinations to expand the variety of recreation options, settings, and seasonality for residents and visitors

Potential Projects

County Wide Approaches

- Establish discrete and unique recreation “hubs” throughout the county, with their own character, experiences, and draw
- Provide desirable destinations and experiences for all seasons
- Identify opportunities to develop new recreation sites on private land (through willing acquisition, easement, lease, or permit) with favorable topography and/or adjacent to public land
- Provide diverse recreation opportunities for visitors to facilitate diverse multi-day visits to the region
- Develop additional disk golf courses

Potential Projects Location Specific Projects

- Expand options for water-based recreation, including boating, kayaking and paddleboarding on larger lakes and the Purgatorie River
- Establish short (3-5 mile) and rewarding trail loops in the west county to facilitate beginner/family summer hiking
- Establish short to moderate trails and loops to explore the Purgatorie canyonlands in the east county
- Identify 2-3 sites for rock climbing that provide interesting and diverse climbing experiences
- Develop 2-3 additional sites for mountain-bike oriented trails providing for a diversity of terrain, challenge/difficulty, and seasonality
- Maintain and improve routes for gravel biking through road maintenance, signage, and partnerships
- Identify, develop, and communicate suitable routes and experiences for ATV access and overland tours on public lands and county roads
- Expand and improve fishing access and in-stream habitat along the Purgatorie River and major streams in the west county
- Facilitate the development of private adventure-based sites and destinations (e.g., ziplines) in suitable locations within the county
- Develop and expand the number and diversity of camping opportunities throughout the county, incorporating different landscapes, terrain, and seasonality

Potential Partnerships

All public land managers

Private conservation organizations - TPL, TNC, land trusts

Private landowners - Esp. those interested in recreational partnerships

Neighboring communities - Raton, Cuchara

Recreation advocacy groups - Trinidad Trails, IMBA, Access Fund, CMC, Backcountry Horsemen, COHVC

Maintenance and Management Considerations

Any new recreation amenities will require a strategy and investment for ongoing management and maintenance

Trails - Regional trails crew? Agency commitments? Volunteer projects

Sites - Local or state government commitments. City of Trinidad, Las Animas County, CPW

Seasonality - management and maintenance needs may vary throughout the year depending on the resource

Accessibility and Inclusivity

- Plan for and develop accessible trail experiences at major hubs and destinations
- Work with community partners to implement access programs for novice, diverse, and challenged communities
- Plan and develop infrastructure (trailheads, restrooms, etc.) to facilitate diverse and inclusive access

Potential Economic Benefits

- Improved quality of life for existing and new residents
- More destinations will allow tourists to extend trips - additional days and/or additional areas - leading to more spending in the county.
- Residents and visitors from outside the county will showcase these recreational destinations and experiences on their own social media platforms which will encourage more visitation.
- Providing recreational destinations near or around existing local businesses and restaurants will encourage visitors to spend more time (and more \$\$\$) in the county.

Ranking & Community Support

The community is in favor of “more” recreational destinations and experiences. They already enjoy the existing amenities and would like to expand these offerings to include more residents.

Many locals already know of special or unique places in the county that they like to visit, or visited in the past. While many of these areas are on private land and do not allow public access, there does not appear to be a strong resistance to sharing knowledge of these special places with the visiting public.

It was mentioned in a public meeting that residents don’t always feel comfortable pointing visitors to the existing recreational destinations due to lack of signage, accessibility, and/or for safety reasons. Improving the existing hubs and creating new destinations will provide a better experience for both residents and visitors alike.

PROJECT CRITERIA



| Criterion | Project Goal | Rating | Rationale |
|--------------------------|---|--------|---|
| Recreation Capacity | Help prepare the region for future visitor recreation demand | 7 | Expand the number, diversity, and capacity of recreational destinations and experiences |
| Recreation Compatibility | Leverage existing recreational assets such as the state parks | 6 | Compliments existing SP's, but are inherently separate |
| Partnership Potential | Inspire landowner, land manager and special interest partnerships to develop and/or manage the new recreational asset | 6 | Many sites are an opportunity for private land partnerships (and revenue), and inherently require partnerships to succeed |
| Job Opportunity | Create new job opportunities | 4 | New destinations may create some new jobs and revenue, but not significant |
| Diverse Participation | Inspire participation from a diverse range of backgrounds, ages and abilities | 5 | Opportunities to diversify experiences, but trends toward trail-based recreation |
| Quality of Life | Provide an increased quality of life benefit to the region | 7 | Substantially increases the quality of outdoor rec for existing residents, and the draw for new residents |

| | | | |
|------------------|------------------------------|---|-----|
| Natural Resource | Provide quality recreational | 6 | New |
|------------------|------------------------------|---|-----|

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| | | | impacts, but will have some localized impacts |
| Recreation Access | Provide improved opportunity to access quality outdoor recreation | 7 | Inherently improves this criterion |
| Community Support | Create broad community support | 6 | Well supported, but initial interest is closer to towns |
| Culture and Heritage | Honor and celebrate the regions unique culture and heritage | 5 | Compatibility with heritage and storytelling varies by project and site |

Develop a Diverse System of Trails Throughout the County

Build new trail systems that extend the existing system and expand the diversity of experiences- ATVs allowed/not allowed, dogs allowed/not allowed, multi-modal vs. only hiking or only horseback riding.

Potential Projects

County Wide Approaches

- Provide a variety of trail-based access and experiences
- Establish discrete and unique trail “hubs” throughout the county; discrete and functional trail systems with their own character and draw
- Trail hubs may include: Trinidad area, Purgatorie canyonlands, Spanish Peaks, North Fork
- Establish, communicate, and maintain recreational routes for ATV use, where appropriate
- Create a trail map for the County and Trinidad area (paper and web-based)

Trinidad Area

- Expansion of Wormhole trail system
- Extension/improvements to Purgatoire River Trail in downtown Trinidad
- New in-town trail system in south Trinidad - Reservoir Hill and Southside Park
- Trail system in Cougar Canyon area
- Trail loop around Lake Trinidad State Park
- Raton Pass trail connection (along I-25/Raton Creek)
- Sugarite Canyon - Fishers Peak SP regional connection
- Maintain recreational access along CR85.5 (San Francisco Pass)

East County

- Establish trail-based access and experiences within the Puratorie River canyonlands
- Establish trail-based access and experiences within the Pinon Canyon Maneuver Site (PCMS)
- Consider and implement permit/fee-based access programs for sensitive or unique areas
- Work with willing landowners to establish permitted recreational access to unique landscapes and features on private land
- Prioritize motorized recreation access, routes, and destinations

West County

- Designate and improve sustainable hiking route to the summits of East and West Spanish Peaks
- Establish and designate sustainable trail route to summit of Mount Maxwell
- Develop new trail(s) to complete a loop trail system that integrates the Wildcat, Coal Creek, and North Fork Trails
- Complete trail loops within/around Spanish Peaks Wilderness

- Explore opportunities to develop public trail systems on multi-use private lands under lease agreements (i.e., oil and gas operators)
- Work with willing landowners to establish permitted recreational access to unique landscapes and features on private land

Potential Partnerships

Land Managers: City of Trinidad, Las Animas County, CPW, State Land Board, New Mexico State Parks, San Isabel National Forest, The Nature Conservancy, private owners

Funding Partners: CPW, GOCO, DOLA, El Pomar Foundation, others

Community Partners: Trinidad Trails, The Trust for Public Land, The Nature Conservancy, citizens and business owners

Trail User Organizations: Trinidad Trails, International Mountain Bicycling Association, Back Country Horsemen of Colorado, Colorado Mountain Club, Colorado Off Highway Vehicle Coalition

Private landowners: Ranchers and other large, private land managers where fee-based public recreation access may be feasible and mutually beneficial

Maintenance and Management Considerations

Perform maintenance updates to most of the existing trails in the county

Establish and fund a regional trails crew to perform ongoing maintenance on existing and new trails across the county

State Parks - Work with park managers to identify and direct volunteer and partner-driven trail projects

State Land Board - Work with SLB to identify and develop trail access projects that are compatible with stewardship, lease, and revenue requirements. Provides an opportunity to pilot innovative access programs for private land.

Pinon Canyon - Work with the US Army to develop opportunities and protocols for public access that is compatible with military operations and resource management requirements.

San Isabel National Forest - Work with USFS to identify project feasibility, NEPA requirements, and implementation steps. Typically requires external funding for

clearances and construction; may require maintenance and management commitments.

Accessibility and Inclusivity

- Plan for and develop accessible trail experiences at major hubs and destinations
- Work with community partners to implement access programs for novice, diverse, and challenged communities
- Plan and develop infrastructure (trailheads, restrooms, etc.) to facilitate diverse and inclusive access

Potential Economic Benefits

- Improved quality of life for existing and new residents
- A more robust and diverse trail system allows the region to be a destination for visitors seeking trail-based recreation
- Supports longer (multi-day) visits and visitation across different areas
- A larger trail system allows for a greater number of residents and visitors to access spaces for recreation. Tourism would increase and residents would have more opportunities to cultivate a healthy lifestyle.

Ranking & Community Support

Trail system support is high in the Trinidad area. It may be difficult to accomplish outside of the populated areas in the county - partnerships will be key.

PROJECT CRITERIA



| Criterion | Project Goal | Rating | Rationale |
|--------------------------------|---|--------|---|
| Recreation Capacity | Help prepare the region for future visitor recreation demand | 7 | Increase the number and diversity of trail experiences |
| Recreation Compatibility | Leverage existing recreational assets such as the state parks | 7 | Existing parks are a starting point for trails and connections; expand from there |
| Partnership Potential | Inspire landowner, land manager and special interest partnerships to develop and/or manage the new recreational asset | 6 | Many trails will require landowner partnerships; opportunity and challenge |
| Job Opportunity | Create new job opportunities | 3 | Few direct jobs associated with managing trails |
| Diverse Participation | Inspire participation from a diverse range of backgrounds, ages and abilities | 4 | Expand the range of trail offerings |
| Quality of Life | Provide an increased quality of life benefit to the region | 7 | Expands quality of life for existing and future residents |
| Natural Resource Compatibility | Provide quality recreational experiences without diminishing the quality of the region’s natural resources | 6 | Consistent with land conservation, but trails inherently have localized impacts |
| Recreation Access | Provide improved opportunity to access quality outdoor recreation | 7 | Inherently expands recreation access |

| | | | |
|----------------------|---|---|---|
| Community Support | Create broad community support | 7 | High community support for trails |
| Culture and Heritage | Honor and celebrate the regions unique culture and heritage | 4 | Not inherently connected to heritage, but opportunities exist |



Establish Agricultural Based Recreational Opportunities (Agritourism)

This strategy is focused on bringing the agricultural community to the forefront of community partners in developing the outdoor recreation economy in Las Animas County. There is so much potential for farmers and ranchers to gain economic support from visitors while celebrating and maintaining the unique and important character of Las Animas County. Diverse opportunities to engage the farming and ranching community will not only provide economic benefits but will also support increased understanding and appreciation for the traditions, hard working people, and beautiful landscapes required to grow our food here in Colorado.

Potential Projects

- Farm and Ranch stays- Working Guest Ranches
 - Guided trail rides: could focus on history, bird watching, wildlife viewing, or just scenic experiences
 - Immersive events like seasonal cattle drives or roundups (could be a discrete community event or regular program at a single ranch)
 - Farm-to-table Dinners (could be a discrete community event or regular program at a single ranch)
- Camping, hiking, or cycling permits
 - Early action project potential to show folks the possibility/benefits- start small with discrete event like a Race, and a ranch could provide campground space. Event could drive the initiation of these partnerships between Private Landowners and tourism.
- Agricultural Learning Center (Agritainment Center): a place for experiential learning and exposure to plants and animals as well as programs about the history of agriculture in Las Animas County
- More events at the Las Animas County fairgrounds and the Kim Mustang Pavilion like rodeos or discrete competitions like barrel racing, roping, or stock dog trials.

Potential Partnerships

- Willing Private Landowners:
 - Christine Loudon, near Branson (303-898-5929)
 - Sammie Molinero- contact at NRCS
 - Commissioner Tony Hass
- State Land Board
- 4 H program / Schools
- Earth Mountain Education Farm
- Kim Mustang Pavilion
- Las Animas County Fairgrounds coordinators
- Running/Cycling races: Rad Dirt Race
- Local Museums/Agricultural Historians
- Farm and Ranch Operators

Maintenance and Management Considerations

Provide Information Hub (potentially related to Outdoor Rec Management Group) to provide interested private landowners with resources and information about the details of creating a tourism program- details about different options, legalities, advertising, etc.

For Agritainment Center: ensure responsible parties maintain the facility and care for the animals, maintain programming, maintain schedule and communications.

Maintenance and improvements at the Fairgrounds and Kim Mustang Pavilion- things like rusty panels.

Accessibility and Inclusivity

Ensure all new projects make a concerted effort to create inclusive and accessible spaces: adequate accessible parking, ramps, seating, and restroom facilities.

Potential Economic Benefits

Many of the agricultural areas in Eastern Las Animas County are under economic stress. Now more than ever, it is difficult to make a decent living farming and ranching. Areas like Branson experience struggles like food insecurity, despite being surrounded by agricultural areas. Although increased outdoor recreation opportunities may not solve all issues related to the current state of our food system, it can bring more economic stimulation to these areas of the county.

Moreover, what we have heard from the community time and time again is their desire to develop the outdoor recreation economy without losing the character and history that make Las Animas County so special. Farming and ranching are a central part of the history and current culture of this area and should be elevated and celebrated through the development of an outdoor recreation economy.

The potential projects listed to the left identify opportunities to create economic benefits for individual farms and ranches, through developing ranch specific programs, as well as whole communities, by hosting community wide events like rodeos or creating spaces like a local Agricultural Learning Center.

Ranking

Through our Ag interest group and tabling events, there was a real interest and energy behind increasing tourism opportunities that celebrate the agricultural heritage and culture of LAC.

PROJECT GOALS



| Criterion | Project Goal | Rating | Rationale |
|--------------------------------|---|--------|---|
| Recreation Capacity | Help prepare the region for future visitor recreation demand | 5 | Expands the number, diversity and capacity of recreational destinations and experiences |
| Recreation Compatibility | Leverage existing recreational assets such as the state parks | 4 | Could compliment existing State Parks but are inherently different |
| Partnership Potential | Inspire landowner, land manager and special interest partnerships to develop and/or manage the new recreational asset | 4 | Will require partnerships with ranchers and farmers |
| Job Opportunity | Create new job opportunities | 4 | Probably mostly supplement existing jobs |
| Diverse Participation | Inspire participation from a diverse range of backgrounds, ages and abilities | 5 | Opportunities to diversify experiences but is focused on agrotourism |
| Quality of Life | Provide an increased quality of life benefit to the region | 7 | Supports local industry and makes it more available to be understood and appreciated |
| Natural Resource Compatibility | Provide quality recreational experiences without diminishing the quality of the region’s natural resources | 7 | Provides capacity for stewardship and long term land/resources conservation |
| Recreation Access | Provide improved opportunity to access quality outdoor recreation | 5 | Improved capacity for quality outdoor recreation |

| | | | |
|----------------------|---|---|--|
| Community Support | Create broad community support | 5 | Rural community support |
| Culture and Heritage | Honor and celebrate the regions unique culture and heritage | 7 | Honors and celebrates culture and heritage |

Develop More Facilities to Accommodate Organized Sports

Organized sports will require a resource commitment to develop facilities and then manage the sports programs. The programs will be for the local community as well as the region as tournaments and events are planned and hosted.

Potential Projects

County Wide Approaches

- Repair, upgrade and continue to maintain existing athletic fields
- Build new softball, baseball, soccer and/or tennis court complexes
- Start youth and adult organized sports programs
- Organize different competitive outdoor recreation clubs or teams including:
 - mountain bike
 - road bike
 - disk golf
 - equestrian
 - archery
 - shooting
 - etc.
- Host running events
- Host bicycling events
- Host team sports events
- Create youth and adult sports leagues

Potential Partnerships

- Municipalities
- Las Animas County
- DOLA
- Granting entities
- A newly created Recreation District
- Chamber of Commerce
- Local Businesses
- Race and event promoters

Maintenance and Management Considerations

- Would require commitment of a full time staff to manage and maintain facilities
- Create a recreation district to manage and maintain facilities and programs

Accessibility and Inclusivity

- All new facilities can be designed to be accessible
- Organized sports can attract members of the underserved community if participant fees are kept affordable

Potential Economic Benefits

- Improves quality of life
- Attract regional tournaments and events
- Supports local business
- Creates the opportunity for new jobs in outdoor recreation

Ranking & Community Support

- At tabling events and during interest group meetings participants expressed a concern about the current maintenance levels in parks and on sports fields. Many community members felt the need for more organized sports was important.

PROJECT CRITERIA



| Criterion | Project Goal | Rating | Rationale |
|--------------------------------|---|--------|---|
| Recreation Capacity | Help prepare the region for future visitor recreation demand | 4 | Could allow for additional outdoor athletics opportunities in the form of sporting events |
| Recreation Compatibility | Leverage existing recreational assets such as the state parks | 2 | Could take advantage of existing athletic fields in the community |
| Partnership Potential | Inspire landowner, land manager and special interest partnerships to develop and/or manage the new recreational asset | 3 | Public/private opportunities to start sports leagues |
| Job Opportunity | Create new job opportunities | 6 | Opportunity for the creation of management and maintenance jobs |
| Diverse Participation | Inspire participation from a diverse range of backgrounds, ages and abilities | 7 | could accommodate all age groups and abilities |
| Quality of Life | Provide an increased quality of life benefit to the region | 7 | Increase quality of life for residents and visitors for tournaments |
| Natural Resource Compatibility | Provide quality recreational experiences without diminishing the quality of the region's natural resources | 1 | Requires a completely built environment |
| Recreation Access | Provide improved opportunity to access quality outdoor recreation | 6 | Would significantly increase access to outdoor athletic opportunities |

| | | | |
|----------------------|---|---|--|
| Community Support | Create broad community support | 6 | Some community support |
| Culture and Heritage | Honor and celebrate the regions unique culture and heritage | 1 | Little opportunity to embrace culture and heritage |

B) LAS ANIMAS COUNTY OUTDOOR RECREATION AND ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS

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Project Objectives and Summary of Findings

The following table lists the various parks, museums, attractions, activities, and annual events in Trinidad and Las Animas County, which will comprise the main sources for visitation to the county. The State Parks are the crown jewels for tourism in Las Animas County and should be the anchors for any market strategies and infrastructure development moving forward.

State Parks

Golf

City Parks

- ## Museums

- ## Events

- ### City Hiking/Walking

- ## Cokedale Historic District

Misc. -

Source: City of Trinidad, Visit Trinidad & THK Associates, Inc.

According to Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) a little over 200,000 people currently visit Trinidad Lake State Park annually. Fishers Peak State Park has just recently opened to the public with limited trails, activities, and infrastructure currently in place. Today there are approximately 1,000 acres open and 11+ miles of trails. As additional trails, roads, picnic areas, camping and the like are added, and Fishers Peak garners more attention and stature, visits will ramp up substantially. Multiple trailheads and parking areas, multiple campgrounds with 100+ campsites, and an 80+ mile trail system will be the benchmark. A CSU study, measuring the impacts of Fishers Peak on the city and county, estimates visitation will reach approximately 175,000 annually, which THK considers to be conservative. The study also estimates that 20% of visitors will be from within a 2 to 3-hour drive time, and 80% will be non-local (outside the 2 to 3-hour drive time. The study also gives a range of daily expenditures per visitor from \$30 at the low end to \$85, which is the number concluded by The Trust for Public Land, as well as using a 1.4 multiplier. Using just the Fishers Peak estimated visitation of 175,000, and spending of \$75 per day (THK estimates the daily spending to be at the higher end of the \$30-\$85 range), 80% being non-locals (140,000 visitors) and using the 1.4 multiplier (additional dollars created on top of the direct spending by tourists), this equates to an impact of \$14.7 million annually. Of course, many people will come and visit both State Parks, thus the approximately 450,000-475,000 total gross visitation amounts, once Fishers Peak is fully developed, is actually a lower net number as a tourist who visits both State Parks could potentially be double counted. And other tourists will come stay in the County, or visit just for the day, to hike, hunt, attend an event or visit other attractions aside from the state parks. THK has calculated the number of hotel and RV visitors, based on occupancy rates and people per room or RV. Given each of these categories and variables THK has estimated the current annual visitation to Las Animas County to be 274,434 people in 2023, growing to over 476,000 in 2042. This is expected to increase quickly as Fishers Peak is built out and marketed and gains greater state-wide and regional recognition over time, and other County facilities and opportunities are improved and implemented. The following table details this projected visitation.



| Total Estimated Visitation to Las Animas County, 2023-2042 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Category | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | 2028 | 2029 | 2030 | 2031 | 2032 | 2033 | 2034 | 2035 | 2036 | 2037 | 2038 | 2039 | 2040 | 2041 | 2042 |
| Fishers Peak State Park | 52,000 | 75,000 | 100,000 | 120,000 | 140,000 | 160,000 | 180,000 | 200,000 | 205,000 | 212,180 | 218,545 | 225,102 | 231,855 | 238,810 | 245,955 | 253,354 | 260,955 | 268,793 | 276,847 | 285,152 |
| Trinidad Lake State Park | 201,198 | 204,215 | 207,279 | 210,388 | 213,544 | 216,747 | 219,999 | 223,299 | 226,648 | 230,048 | 233,498 | 237,000 | 240,555 | 244,164 | 247,827 | 251,544 | 255,317 | 259,147 | 263,034 | 266,980 |
| Estimated Non-State Park Visits | 25,120 | 27,922 | 30,728 | 33,059 | 35,354 | 37,675 | 40,000 | 42,380 | 43,255 | 44,225 | 45,204 | 46,200 | 47,241 | 48,297 | 49,380 | 50,490 | 51,627 | 52,793 | 53,988 | 55,213 |
| Hotels Visitors | 213,525 | 217,795 | 222,151 | 226,594 | 231,126 | 235,749 | 240,464 | 245,275 | 250,179 | 255,182 | 260,286 | 265,491 | 270,801 | 276,217 | 281,742 | 287,377 | 293,124 | 298,987 | 304,966 | 311,066 |
| RV Park Visitors | 88,208 | 89,973 | 91,772 | 93,607 | 95,480 | 97,389 | 99,337 | 101,324 | 103,350 | 105,417 | 107,525 | 109,676 | 111,869 | 114,107 | 116,389 | 118,717 | 121,091 | 123,513 | 125,983 | 128,503 |
| Estimated Day Visitors | 12,500 | 13,951 | 15,364 | 16,519 | 17,677 | 18,837 | 20,000 | 21,155 | 21,630 | 22,111 | 22,602 | 23,105 | 23,621 | 24,149 | 24,690 | 25,245 | 25,814 | 26,397 | 26,994 | 27,607 |
| Gross Total Visitors/1 | 288,308 | 321,098 | 353,371 | 379,347 | 406,576 | 433,239 | 459,398 | 485,793 | 497,545 | 508,552 | 519,850 | 531,408 | 543,272 | 555,421 | 567,872 | 580,633 | 593,713 | 607,120 | 620,863 | 634,952 |
| % of Gross Visitation | 5.0% | 10.0% | 15.0% | 20.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% |
| Total Net Visitation | 274,454 | 288,989 | 300,365 | 303,957 | 304,932 | 324,945 | 344,999 | 365,085 | 373,159 | 381,421 | 389,888 | 398,554 | 407,454 | 416,565 | 425,904 | 435,475 | 445,285 | 455,340 | 465,647 | 476,214 |
| 1/Net visitation is the sum of the state park visitors, non-state park visitors and daily visitors, adjusted for people who visit both state parks on their visit | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Source: THK Associates, Inc. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

The following table takes the overall estimated visitation to Las Animas County and determines the resulting sales tax revenues generated from these visitors. Based on data from the Recreational Vehicle Industry Association (RVIA), industry lodging reports and THK’s previous experience in tourist markets, the estimated length of stay for visitors is 2.75 days. Thus, in 2023 the estimated 274,434 visitors will result in 754,693 visitor days. THK has then estimated daily visitor spending to be \$75. As previously noted, various research estimates show this figure to be between \$30 to \$85 day per visitor. This would include spending on lodging, food, gifts, etc. Based on these estimates, total visitor spending is projected to be almost \$56.6 million in 2023. Currently total retail sales in Las Animas County are approximately \$295 million, based on the sales tax revenues generated from the County’s 1.5% sales tax rate. This equates to nearly 19% of retail sales in the County coming from visitors.

This visitor spending will generate approximately \$849,000 in sales tax revenue to the County in 2023 to just over \$2 million by 2042. To generate funding for a recreational management entity in Las Animas County to market, manage and implement facility improvements and strategies THK has estimated that an additional .25% tax is needed, with public support, to the existing 1.5% sales tax, to be earmarked for this enterprise. This added tax would generate on average around \$225,000 annually or just over \$4.7 million over twenty years (per .25% increase). This would support approximately \$2.13 million in debt for capital improvements, marketing, and maintenance of recreation facilities in Las Animas County. The current City of Trinidad budget for parks and recreation is approximately \$600,000 including the existing staff. This budget could be merged and incorporated into any newly formed recreation entity.

| Total Estimated Sales Tax Revenue from Visitation to Los Animas County, 2023-2042 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Category | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | 2028 | 2029 | 2030 | 2031 | 2032 | 2033 | 2034 | 2035 | 2036 | 2037 | 2038 | 2039 | 2040 | 2041 | 2042 |
| Total Net Visitation | 274,454 | 288,989 | 300,365 | 303,957 | 304,932 | 324,945 | 344,999 | 365,095 | 373,159 | 381,421 | 389,888 | 398,564 | 407,454 | 416,566 | 425,904 | 435,475 | 445,285 | 455,340 | 465,647 | 476,214 |
| Total Visitor Days | 754,693 | 759,053 | 836,538 | 852,600 | 852,433 | 904,467 | 988,422 | 1,053,299 | 1,084,027 | 1,115,658 | 1,148,220 | 1,181,741 | 1,216,251 | 1,251,780 | 1,288,359 | 1,326,020 | 1,364,797 | 1,404,724 | 1,445,835 | 1,488,168 |
| Daily Visitor Expenditure | \$75.00 | \$75.88 | \$76.86 | \$77.50 | \$78.35 | \$79.22 | \$80.09 | \$80.97 | \$81.86 | \$82.75 | \$83.67 | \$84.59 | \$85.52 | \$86.46 | \$87.41 | \$88.37 | \$89.35 | \$90.33 | \$91.32 | \$92.33 |
| Total Visitor Expenditures | \$56,601,904 | \$60,588,215 | \$64,126,604 | \$66,078,505 | \$67,487,422 | \$73,238,310 | \$79,160,840 | \$85,284,691 | \$88,738,177 | \$92,382,088 | \$96,072,220 | \$99,964,618 | \$104,025,508 | \$108,231,661 | \$112,619,705 | \$117,186,836 | \$121,940,480 | \$126,888,377 | \$132,038,594 | \$137,395,538 |
| Total County Sales Tax Revenue | \$849,030 | \$908,823 | \$961,900 | \$991,179 | \$1,012,461 | \$1,098,500 | \$1,187,413 | \$1,279,270 | \$1,331,073 | \$1,384,981 | \$1,441,083 | \$1,499,469 | \$1,560,234 | \$1,623,475 | \$1,689,296 | \$1,757,803 | \$1,829,107 | \$1,903,326 | \$1,980,579 | \$2,060,993 |
| Potential Additional Parks & Rec (.25%) Tax Revenue | \$241,525 | \$151,471 | \$180,317 | \$155,196 | \$158,744 | \$183,083 | \$197,302 | \$213,212 | \$221,845 | \$230,830 | \$240,181 | \$249,912 | \$260,030 | \$270,579 | \$281,540 | \$292,957 | \$304,851 | \$317,221 | \$330,096 | \$343,499 |
| Total 20-Year Additional Parks & Rec Tax Revenue | \$4,724,999 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Present Value at 5.5% | \$134,128 | \$136,080 | \$136,528 | \$136,349 | \$129,111 | \$132,780 | \$136,045 | \$138,328 | \$137,018 | \$135,135 | \$135,279 | \$131,448 | \$129,645 | \$127,867 | \$126,115 | \$124,388 | \$122,686 | \$121,008 | \$119,355 | \$117,705 |
| Total Present Value | \$2,602,526 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Supportable Debt at a 1.2 Coverage | \$2,168,855 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Insurance Costs @ 2% | \$43,377 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Net Proceeds | \$2,125,478 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Source: THK Associates, Inc. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

I.Introduction

The purpose of the Las Animas County Outdoor Recreation and Economic Impact study is to determine the best and most efficient way to create and fund a regional recreation management entity in order to develop strategies and recommendations for implementing, maintaining and improving existing recreation facilities, as well as expanding additional recreational infrastructure, opportunities and programs. This could potentially include creating improved connectivity between existing recreation assets, such as building new trails and paths, enhancing visitor information, signage, marketing and branding, establishing a new visitor center, improving and upgrading maintenance practices and staffing for existing publicly owned outdoor recreation facilities.

To accomplish the above-mentioned objectives, THK has undertaken the following research:

- Prepared an economic base and visitation analysis and summary of the Las Animas County market area to establish existing and projected jobs, population, and households in the County as well as inventoried existing recreational assets and facilities and estimate current and projected visitation levels in the county. Projections are made from the demand for additional households, retail spending and overnight lodging that establishes a baseline from which new recreational entities, strategies and enhancements can be measured.
- Interviewed key persons related to the economic and recreational development in the area and researched recent studies and publications related to the recreational opportunities and assets in Las Animas County.
- Researched and outlined the market and assessed values and tax revenues for existing residential and commercial property in Las Animas County, as well as projected sales tax revenues based on improvements and enhancements to the recreational assets in the County.
- Researched structurally and locationally comparable Park and Recreation Districts and Departments in the region to understand their budgets, funding, resources, programs and services for comparison to a similar potential recreation management structure or entity in Las Animas County. Made estimates and projections for potential additional visitation and the subsequent economic impacts and retail sales that are created through additions, enhancements and improvements to the overall Las Animas County outdoor recreation enterprise and calculated supportable debt for funding capital improvements and other new practices regarding outdoor recreation in Las Animas County, based on a potential ad valorem tax increase. Also calculated the potential revenues from implementing an increased lodging tax , based on the increased visitation that could be realized and earmarked for recreational practices.

II. Las Animas County Area Description

Las Animas County is located in south-central Colorado, along the Colorado/New Mexico border. The county, and its county seat, the City of Trinidad, are located along, and accessed by, Interstate 25. Interstate 25 is the major north-south thoroughfare through New Mexico, Colorado and into northern Wyoming. The county has a total area of 4,773 square miles, which makes it the largest county by area in Colorado.

Approximately 17,000 vehicles travel daily along Interstate 25 through Trinidad. The County is approximately 200 miles, or a three-hour drive south of Denver. Santa Fe and Albuquerque are about 150-200 miles southwest of Las Animas County respectively, also along Interstate 25. The well populated cities of Pueblo and Colorado Springs also lie on Interstate 25 approximately 75 and 125 miles north of Trinidad. U.S. Highways 160 and 350 extend east from Trinidad to Rocky Ford, La Junta and into eastern Las Animas County and onward into Kansas. State Highway 12 heads west from Trinidad, becoming the southern stretch of the beautiful Scenic Highway of the Legends, which heads north over Cuchara Pass, then northeast through the small, charming mountain towns of Cuchara and La Veta, all located in the stunning Spanish Peaks National Wilderness Area.

Las Animas County and the surrounding region are a somewhat remote, lesser-known portion of the overall economic engine of the Colorado tourism industry. There is untapped potential in the area for increased tourism and visitation and the addition of Fishers Peak State Park, particularly once fully developed, should add to and create a synergy of Las Animas County area attractions that if cross-marketed and connected will engage travelers and visitors to make the region a stop-over, rather than drive-by destination. In addition to the State Parks, Las Animas County and Trinidad are home to numerous municipal parks, a nine-hole golf course, an array of museums, hiking and biking trails and a host of annual events. It is also the home of Trinidad State College, a 17-acre campus founded in 1925 that had an estimated enrollment of 1,100 students in 2022.

Regional area maps and outdoor recreation facility photos are shown on the following pages.

FIGURE 1 - LAS ANIMAS COUNTY REGIONAL LOCATION

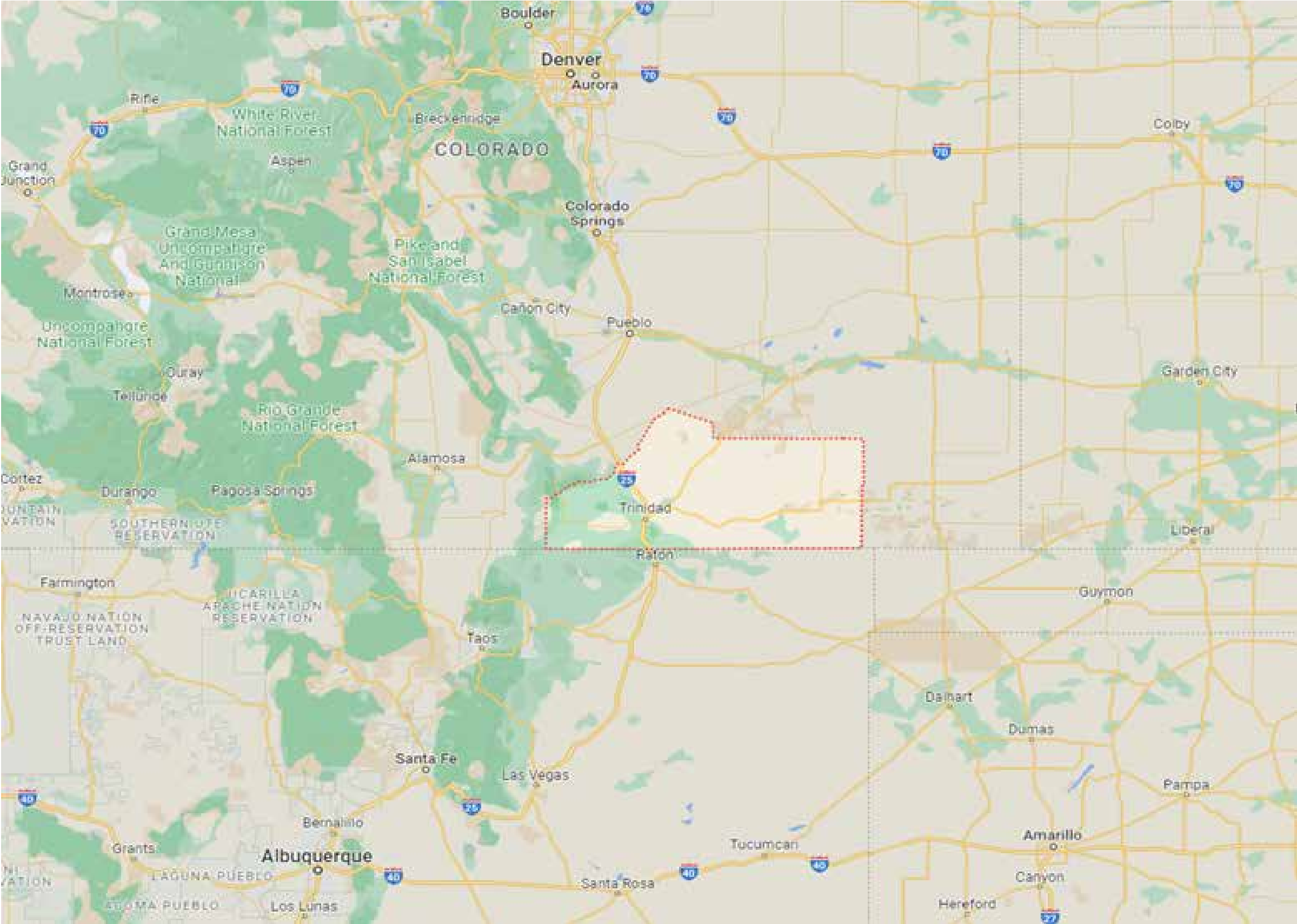
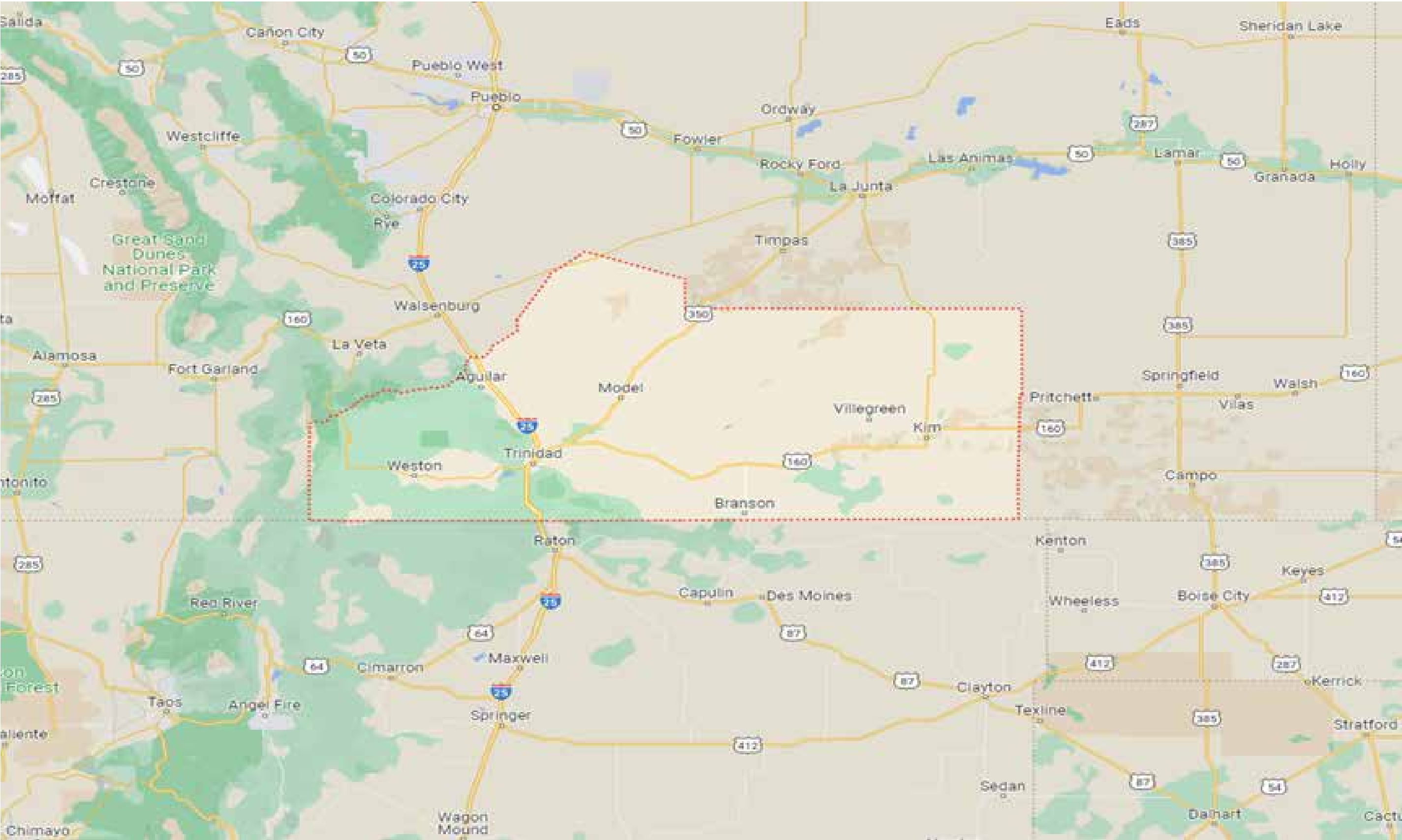


FIGURE 2 - SITE VICINITY



Subject Photos



Fishers Peak State Park



Fishers Peak State Park



Trinidad Skate Park



Southside Park



Trinidad Golf Course



Trinidad Golf Course



Main Street Downtown Trinidad



Main Street Downtown Trinidad



Central Park



Central Park



Trinidad Lake State Park



Trinidad Lake State Park



Wormhole Trail



Twisted Cedars Disc Golf Course

III. Las Animas County Economic And Visitation Analysis

A) Historical Employment Growth Trends

Employment trends are prime indicators of the economic growth of Las Animas County. Increases in employment generate growth for most sectors of the local economy and dictate the rate at which it will expand. This section looks at the County’s various employment figures by industry and projects their course over the next decade.

Table III-1 shows historical employment growth for the Las Animas County market area. Since 1980, the Las Animas County market area has added an annual average of just 51 jobs. In 2009 and 2010, the Las Animas County area experienced a shrinking jobs market because of the Great Recession and lost 648 jobs in 2009 and 364 in 2010. Since 2012, the job market has struggled to rebound, losing over 600 jobs between 2013 and 2016. Since then the economy has performed reasonably well, aside from the Covid impacted year of 2020.

| Table III-1: Las Animas County Employment Trends, 1980-2022 | | | |
|---|------------------|---------------|---------|
| Year | Total Employment | Annual Change | |
| | | Numerical | Percent |
| 1980 | 6,206 | -- | -- |
| 1981 | 6,024 | -182 | -2.9% |
| 1982 | 5,602 | -422 | -7.0% |
| 1983 | 5,447 | -155 | -2.8% |
| 1984 | 5,381 | -66 | -1.2% |
| 1985 | 5,014 | -367 | -6.8% |
| 1986 | 4,965 | -49 | -1.0% |
| 1987 | 5,012 | 47 | 0.9% |
| 1988 | 5,533 | 521 | 10.4% |
| 1989 | 5,661 | 128 | 2.3% |
| 1990 | 5,655 | -6 | -0.1% |
| 1991 | 5,669 | 14 | 0.2% |
| 1992 | 5,600 | -69 | -1.2% |
| 1993 | 5,831 | 231 | 4.1% |
| 1994 | 6,394 | 563 | 9.7% |
| 1995 | 6,607 | 213 | 3.3% |
| 1996 | 6,702 | 95 | 1.4% |
| 1997 | 7,100 | 398 | 5.9% |
| 1998 | 7,398 | 298 | 4.2% |
| 1999 | 7,404 | 6 | 0.1% |
| 2000 | 7,664 | 260 | 3.5% |
| 2001 | 8,475 | 811 | 10.6% |
| 2002 | 8,709 | 234 | 2.8% |
| 2003 | 8,755 | 46 | 0.5% |
| 2004 | 8,848 | 93 | 1.1% |
| 2005 | 8,964 | 116 | 1.3% |
| 2006 | 9,216 | 252 | 2.8% |
| 2007 | 9,651 | 435 | 4.7% |
| 2008 | 9,799 | 148 | 1.5% |
| 2009 | 9,151 | -648 | -6.6% |
| 2010 | 8,787 | -364 | -4.0% |
| 2011 | 8,747 | -40 | -0.5% |
| 2012 | 8,758 | 11 | 0.1% |
| 2013 | 8,516 | -242 | -2.8% |
| 2014 | 8,461 | -55 | -0.6% |
| 2015 | 8,263 | -198 | -2.3% |
| 2016 | 8,137 | -126 | -1.5% |
| 2017 | 8,413 | 276 | 3.4% |
| 2018 | 8,465 | 52 | 0.6% |
| 2019 | 8,547 | 82 | 1.0% |
| 2020 | 8,177 | -370 | -4.3% |
| 2021 | 8,302 | 126 | 1.5% |
| 2022 | 8,357 | 55 | 0.7% |
| Annual Change | | | |
| 1980-2022 | | 51 | 0.7% |
| 2012-2022 | | -40 | -0.5% |
| 2017-2022 | | -11 | -0.1% |
| 2019-2022 | | -63 | -0.7% |

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, and THK Associates, Inc.

Table III-2: Las Animas County Employment by Industry, 1970-2022

| Industry | 1970 | 1980 | 1985 | 1990 | 1995 | 2000 |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Total Non-Farm (By Place of Work) | 747 | 898 | 909 | 974 | 1,251 | 1,465 |
| Agricultural Services, Forestry, & Fisheries | 7 | 32 | 56 | 61 | 93 | 85 |
| Mining, Oil & Gas | 477 | 690 | 103 | 240 | 188 | 102 |
| Construction | 185 | 274 | 218 | 117 | 309 | 553 |
| Manufacturing | 120 | 147 | 84 | 97 | 177 | 166 |
| Transportation & Utilities | 271 | 368 | 326 | 364 | 426 | 396 |
| Wholesale Trade | 86 | 141 | 154 | 144 | 157 | 167 |
| Retail Trade | 937 | 1,020 | 812 | 1,032 | 1,203 | 1,388 |
| Finance, Insurance, Real Estate | 206 | 283 | 270 | 264 | 324 | 538 |
| Services | 1,062 | 1,361 | 1,103 | 1,228 | 1,498 | 1,822 |
| Government | 1,238 | 1,277 | 1,267 | 1,458 | 1,623 | 1,828 |
| Farm | 628 | 613 | 621 | 650 | 609 | 619 |
| Total Employment | 5,217 | 6,206 | 5,014 | 5,655 | 6,607 | 7,664 |

| Industry | Sector | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Average Annual Change | | |
|--|-----------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----------------------|-----|-----|
| | Code | 2005 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 10 | 5 | 3 |
| Total Non-Farm (By Place of Work) | | 8,417 | 8,160 | 8,105 | 8,111 | 7,863 | 7,797 | 7,593 | 7,455 | 7,692 | 7,762 | 7,847 | 7,505 | 7,619 | 7,674 | -44 | -4 | -58 |
| Forestry, fishing, and related activities | 11 | 113 | 109 | 108 | 99 | 103 | 114 | 103 | 97 | 105 | 105 | 109 | 105 | 107 | 108 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Mining | 21 | 144 | 287 | 407 | 564 | 525 | 480 | 391 | 316 | 300 | 292 | 280 | 256 | 249 | 255 | -31 | -9 | -14 |
| Utilities | 22 | 16 | 28 | 25 | 25 | 25 | 25 | 26 | 18 | 19 | 18 | 18 | 17 | 16 | 16 | -1 | -1 | -1 |
| Construction | 23 | 634 | 556 | 541 | 510 | 430 | 398 | 394 | 379 | 343 | 371 | 364 | 336 | 329 | 335 | -18 | -2 | -14 |
| Manufacturing | 31-33 | 159 | 169 | 144 | 135 | 115 | 104 | 90 | 107 | 103 | 123 | 138 | 136 | 141 | 140 | 1 | 7 | 6 |
| Wholesale trade | 42 | 182 | 124 | 128 | 126 | 133 | 158 | 144 | 131 | 136 | 147 | 148 | 142 | 144 | 143 | 2 | 1 | -1 |
| Retail Trade | 44-45 | 893 | 791 | 798 | 785 | 796 | 769 | 774 | 824 | 856 | 896 | 984 | 970 | 1,014 | 1,025 | 24 | 34 | 39 |
| Transportation and warehousing | 48-49 | 314 | 277 | 281 | 292 | 276 | 244 | 225 | 196 | 182 | 172 | 174 | 157 | 151 | 152 | -14 | -6 | -7 |
| Information | 51 | 58 | 57 | 58 | 49 | 41 | 39 | 40 | 50 | 43 | 48 | 44 | 41 | 41 | 41 | -1 | 0 | -2 |
| Finance and insurance | 52 | 227 | 308 | 299 | 308 | 284 | 286 | 252 | 221 | 255 | 259 | 251 | 239 | 240 | 244 | -6 | -2 | -6 |
| Real estate and rental and leasing | 53 | 217 | 319 | 301 | 274 | 258 | 254 | 263 | 246 | 278 | 273 | 284 | 276 | 284 | 282 | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| Professional and technical services | 54 | 202 | 262 | 267 | 218 | 221 | 234 | 229 | 195 | 221 | 209 | 219 | 209 | 212 | 210 | -1 | -2 | 1 |
| Management of companies and enterprises | 55 | 637 | 570 | 583 | 596 | 602 | 606 | 602 | 604 | 614 | 652 | 656 | 633 | 648 | 645 | 5 | 6 | -1 |
| Administrative and waste services | 56 | 185 | 191 | 191 | 244 | 236 | 220 | 214 | 218 | 282 | 264 | 258 | 253 | 263 | 277 | 3 | -1 | 0 |
| Educational services | 61 | 60 | 96 | 89 | 87 | 98 | 102 | 118 | 107 | 107 | 102 | 111 | 107 | 110 | 114 | 3 | 1 | 3 |
| Health care and social assistance | 62 | 588 | 614 | 710 | 736 | 726 | 788 | 836 | 841 | 980 | 953 | 948 | 934 | 976 | 979 | 24 | 0 | 8 |
| Arts, entertainment, and recreation | 71 | 81 | 136 | 130 | 109 | 104 | 119 | 110 | 112 | 110 | 106 | 111 | 105 | 105 | 104 | 0 | -1 | 0 |
| Accommodation and food services | 2000-2010 | 652 | 578 | 595 | 647 | 630 | 591 | 587 | 614 | 648 | 670 | 681 | 660 | 679 | 680 | 3 | 6 | 3 |
| Other services, except public administration | 81 | 593 | 548 | 552 | 523 | 538 | 559 | 556 | 535 | 529 | 526 | 518 | 486 | 484 | 495 | -3 | -7 | -14 |
| Government and government enterprises | 90 | 1,883 | 2,140 | 1,898 | 1,784 | 1,722 | 1,707 | 1,639 | 1,644 | 1,581 | 1,576 | 1,551 | 1,444 | 1,425 | 1,428 | -36 | -31 | -50 |
| Farm employment | -- | 637 | 627 | 642 | 647 | 653 | 664 | 670 | 682 | 721 | 703 | 700 | 671 | 683 | 683 | 4 | -8 | -7 |
| Total Employment | | 8,475 | 8,787 | 8,747 | 8,758 | 8,516 | 8,461 | 8,263 | 8,137 | 8,413 | 8,465 | 8,547 | 8,177 | 8,302 | 8,357 | -40 | -11 | -54 |

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis and THK Associates, Inc.

B) Projected Employment Growth

In Table III-3, THK Associates has projected job growth for the Las Animas County market area, which is expected to add approximately 78 jobs annually on average from 2023 to 2042. Industry sectors that are expected to experience the greatest growth by number of jobs over the next twenty years are Government and Accommodation and Food Services.

| Table III-3: Las Animas County Employment Projections, 2023-2042 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-----------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----------------------|
| Industry | Annual Rate of Change | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | 2028 | 2029 | 2030 | 2031 | 2032 | 2033 | 2034 | 2035 | 2036 | 2037 | 2038 | 2039 | 2040 | 2041 | 2042 | Average Annual Change |
| Total Non Farm (By Place of Work) | 0.9% | 7,674 | 7,743 | 7,813 | 7,883 | 7,955 | 8,027 | 8,100 | 8,174 | 8,249 | 8,325 | 8,401 | 8,479 | 8,558 | 8,637 | 8,718 | 8,799 | 8,881 | 8,965 | 9,049 | 9,135 | 9,221 | 73 |
| Forestry, fishing, and related activities | 0.7% | 108 | 109 | 110 | 110 | 111 | 112 | 113 | 113 | 114 | 115 | 116 | 117 | 117 | 118 | 119 | 120 | 121 | 122 | 123 | 123 | 124 | 1 |
| Mining | 1.7% | 255 | 259 | 264 | 268 | 273 | 277 | 282 | 287 | 292 | 297 | 302 | 307 | 312 | 318 | 323 | 328 | 334 | 340 | 346 | 351 | 357 | 5 |
| Utilities | 0.8% | 16 | 16 | 16 | 17 | 17 | 17 | 17 | 17 | 17 | 17 | 18 | 18 | 18 | 18 | 18 | 18 | 18 | 19 | 19 | 19 | 19 | 0 |
| Construction | 1.0% | 335 | 338 | 342 | 345 | 349 | 353 | 356 | 360 | 364 | 367 | 371 | 375 | 379 | 383 | 387 | 391 | 395 | 399 | 403 | 407 | 411 | 4 |
| Manufacturing | 2.8% | 140 | 144 | 148 | 152 | 157 | 161 | 165 | 170 | 175 | 180 | 185 | 190 | 195 | 200 | 206 | 212 | 218 | 224 | 230 | 236 | 243 | 4 |
| Wholesale trade | 1.2% | 143 | 145 | 146 | 148 | 150 | 152 | 154 | 155 | 157 | 159 | 161 | 163 | 165 | 167 | 169 | 171 | 173 | 175 | 177 | 179 | 181 | 2 |
| Retail Trade | 0.7% | 1,025 | 1,032 | 1,040 | 1,047 | 1,054 | 1,062 | 1,069 | 1,077 | 1,084 | 1,092 | 1,100 | 1,108 | 1,115 | 1,123 | 1,131 | 1,139 | 1,147 | 1,155 | 1,164 | 1,172 | 1,180 | 7 |
| Transportation and warehousing | 2.3% | 152 | 155 | 159 | 163 | 166 | 170 | 174 | 178 | 182 | 186 | 190 | 195 | 199 | 203 | 208 | 213 | 218 | 223 | 228 | 233 | 238 | 4 |
| Information | 1.0% | 41 | 41 | 41 | 42 | 42 | 43 | 43 | 43 | 44 | 44 | 45 | 45 | 46 | 46 | 47 | 47 | 47 | 48 | 48 | 49 | 49 | 0 |
| Finance and insurance | 0.5% | 244 | 245 | 247 | 248 | 249 | 251 | 252 | 253 | 255 | 256 | 257 | 259 | 260 | 262 | 263 | 264 | 266 | 267 | 269 | 270 | 272 | 1 |
| Real estate and rental and leasing | 1.3% | 282 | 285 | 289 | 293 | 296 | 300 | 304 | 308 | 312 | 316 | 320 | 324 | 328 | 333 | 337 | 341 | 346 | 350 | 355 | 359 | 364 | 4 |
| Professional and technical services | 0.1% | 210 | 211 | 211 | 211 | 212 | 212 | 212 | 212 | 213 | 213 | 213 | 214 | 214 | 214 | 214 | 215 | 215 | 215 | 215 | 216 | 216 | 0 |
| Management of companies and enterprises | 1.1% | 645 | 652 | 659 | 666 | 673 | 680 | 687 | 694 | 702 | 709 | 717 | 724 | 732 | 740 | 747 | 755 | 763 | 771 | 779 | 788 | 796 | 7 |
| Administrative and waste services | 0.8% | 277 | 279 | 281 | 283 | 286 | 288 | 290 | 292 | 294 | 297 | 299 | 301 | 304 | 306 | 308 | 311 | 313 | 316 | 318 | 320 | 323 | 2 |
| Educational services | 2.1% | 114 | 116 | 119 | 121 | 124 | 127 | 129 | 132 | 135 | 137 | 140 | 143 | 146 | 149 | 153 | 156 | 159 | 162 | 166 | 169 | 173 | 3 |
| Health care and social assistance | 0.5% | 979 | 984 | 989 | 995 | 1,000 | 1,005 | 1,010 | 1,016 | 1,021 | 1,026 | 1,032 | 1,037 | 1,043 | 1,048 | 1,054 | 1,059 | 1,065 | 1,071 | 1,076 | 1,082 | 1,088 | 5 |
| Arts, entertainment, and recreation | 0.3% | 104 | 105 | 105 | 105 | 106 | 106 | 106 | 107 | 107 | 107 | 108 | 108 | 108 | 109 | 109 | 109 | 110 | 110 | 110 | 111 | 111 | 0 |
| Accommodation and food services | 1.3% | 680 | 689 | 698 | 707 | 717 | 726 | 736 | 746 | 756 | 766 | 776 | 786 | 797 | 807 | 818 | 829 | 840 | 851 | 862 | 874 | 885 | 10 |
| Other services, except public administration | 0.5% | 495 | 497 | 500 | 502 | 505 | 507 | 510 | 513 | 515 | 518 | 520 | 523 | 525 | 528 | 531 | 533 | 536 | 539 | 541 | 544 | 547 | 3 |
| Government and government enterprises | 0.7% | 1,438 | 1,438 | 1,448 | 1,458 | 1,469 | 1,479 | 1,490 | 1,500 | 1,511 | 1,521 | 1,532 | 1,543 | 1,554 | 1,565 | 1,576 | 1,587 | 1,598 | 1,609 | 1,621 | 1,632 | 1,644 | 10 |
| Farm employment | 0.0% | 683 | 683 | 683 | 684 | 684 | 684 | 684 | 684 | 684 | 685 | 685 | 685 | 685 | 685 | 686 | 686 | 686 | 686 | 686 | 687 | 687 | 0 |
| Total employment | 0.8% | 8,357 | 8,426 | 8,496 | 8,567 | 8,638 | 8,711 | 8,784 | 8,858 | 8,934 | 9,009 | 9,086 | 9,164 | 9,243 | 9,323 | 9,403 | 9,485 | 9,567 | 9,651 | 9,736 | 9,821 | 9,908 | |
| Job growth/(losses) | | | 69 | 70 | 71 | 72 | 72 | 73 | 74 | 75 | 76 | 77 | 78 | 79 | 80 | 81 | 82 | 83 | 84 | 85 | 86 | 87 | 78 |
| Job growth rate | 2.2% | 0.8% | 0.8% | 0.8% | 0.8% | 0.8% | 0.8% | 0.8% | 0.8% | 0.8% | 0.9% | 0.9% | 0.9% | 0.9% | 0.9% | 0.9% | 0.9% | 0.9% | 0.9% | 0.9% | 0.9% | 0.9% | 0.9% |
| Source: BEA, BLS, and THK Associates, Inc. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

C) Residential Construction Trends

Table III-4 shows the number of single-family permits and multi-family permits issued annually for Las Animas County since 1980. The numbers of each permit type are further detailed as a percentage of the total number of permits issued in the market area. Since 1980, Las Animas County has issued an average of 49 total residential permits each year. Single-family permits have accounted for 92.8% of total permits issued over the last 42 years. Since the great recession downturn beginning in 2008 permits issued in Las Animas County fell to new lows before recovering somewhat in 2018. Permits issued the past five years have averaged 38 annually. Single-family permits issued in Las Animas County have continued to dominate the market as just one multi-family project has been developed since the turn of the century.

"Table III-4: Residential Building Permits Issued by Type and Tenure in the Las Animas County Market Area, 1980-2021"

| Year | Single Family Units | Percent of Total | Multi-Family Units | Percent of Total | Total |
|------|---------------------|------------------|--------------------|------------------|-------|
| 1980 | 53 | 89.8% | 6 | 10.2% | 59 |
| 1981 | 53 | 93.0% | 4 | 7.0% | 57 |
| 1982 | 42 | 36.8% | 72 | 63.2% | 114 |
| 1983 | 33 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 33 |
| 1984 | 26 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 26 |
| 1985 | 32 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 32 |
| 1986 | 23 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 23 |
| 1987 | 28 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 28 |
| 1988 | 24 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 24 |
| 1989 | 23 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 23 |
| 1990 | 46 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 46 |
| 1991 | 57 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 57 |
| 1992 | 43 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 43 |
| 1993 | 45 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 45 |
| 1994 | 58 | 90.6% | 6 | 9.4% | 64 |
| 1995 | 84 | 77.8% | 24 | 22.2% | 108 |
| 1996 | 73 | 88.0% | 10 | 12.0% | 83 |
| 1997 | 85 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 85 |
| 1998 | 87 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 87 |
| 1999 | 89 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 89 |
| 2000 | 83 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 83 |
| 2001 | 78 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 78 |
| 2002 | 107 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 107 |
| 2003 | 74 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 74 |
| 2004 | 46 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 46 |
| 2005 | 56 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 56 |
| 2006 | 50 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 50 |
| 2007 | 63 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 63 |
| 2008 | 33 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 33 |
| 2009 | 18 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 18 |
| 2010 | 20 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 20 |
| 2011 | 22 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 22 |
| 2012 | 35 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 35 |
| 2013 | 37 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 37 |
| 2014 | 5 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 5 |
| 2015 | 3 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 3 |
| 2016 | 4 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 4 |
| 2017 | 17 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 17 |
| 2018 | 40 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 40 |
| 2019 | 32 | 55.2% | 26 | 44.8% | 58 |
| 2020 | 34 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 34 |
| 2021 | 41 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 41 |

*There is no available data for 2022

| | | | | | |
|------------------------------|----|-------|---|-------|----|
| 42-Year Average 1980-2021 | 45 | 92.8% | 4 | 7.2% | 49 |
| 10-Year Average 2012-2021 | 25 | 90.5% | 3 | 9.5% | 27 |
| 5-Year Average 2017-2021 | 33 | 86.3% | 5 | 13.7% | 38 |
| 3-Year Average 2019-2021 | 36 | 80.5% | 9 | 19.5% | 44 |

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, C-40 Reports and THK Associates, Inc.,

D) Historical and Projected Population and Household Growth Trends

Population and household growth drive the demand for new residential and commercial real estate development and are engines for additional tourist and visitor activity. Projecting these market segments will aid in economic impacts in later sections of the report. As shown in Table III-5, Las Animas County has increased in population and households since 1990.

Since 1990, the annual average population growth has been 51, growing from 13,763 people to 15,433, while households have been increasing annually by 30, to 6,462, over the same period. Since 2000, the annual average population growth has increased by 10 while households have increased by 13 annually.

Table III-6 shows the projected population and household in Las Animas County and the City of Trinidad. Las Animas County is expected to add an annual average from 2023-2033 of 62 people and 33 new households. The County will grow to just over 16,000 people by 2033. The City of Trinidad is projected to have 8,534 people in 3,559 households in 2033.

| Table III-5: Population and Household Trends in the Las Animas County and City of Trinidad, 1990-2023 | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|----------------|-------|-----------|-------|-----------|-------|
| | | | | | | Annual Average | | | | | |
| | | | | | | 1990-2023 | | 2000-2023 | | 2010-2023 | |
| Las Animas County | 1990 | 2000 | 2010 | 2020 | 2023 | Numerical | % | Numerical | % | Numerical | % |
| Population | 13,763 | 15,207 | 15,507 | 15,340 | 15,433 | 51 | 0.3% | 10 | 0.1% | -6 | 0.0% |
| Households | 5,475 | 6,173 | 6,384 | 6,402 | 6,462 | 30 | 0.5% | 13 | 0.2% | 6 | 0.1% |
| City of Trinidad | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Population | 8,580 | 9,078 | 9,096 | 8,329 | 8,365 | -7 | -0.1% | -31 | -0.4% | -56 | -0.6% |
| Households | 3,460 | 3,701 | 3,743 | 3,442 | 3,471 | 0 | 0.0% | -10 | -0.3% | -21 | -0.6% |
| | | | | 2,492 | 2,491 | | | | | | |
| City of Trinidad as a Percent of Las Animas County | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Population | 62.3% | 59.7% | 58.7% | 54.3% | 54.2% | -12.9% | | -315.5% | | 987.8% | |
| Households | 63.2% | 60.0% | 58.6% | 53.8% | 53.7% | 1.1% | | -79.6% | | -349.0% | |
| Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census and THK Associates, Inc. | | | | | | | | | | | |

| Table III-6: Population and Household Trends in the Las Animas County and City of Trinidad, 2023-2033 | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-------|-------|-------|--|--|----------------|------|-----------|------|
| | | | | | | Annual Average | | | |
| | | | | | | 2023-2028 | | 2023-2033 | |
| | | | | | | Numerical | % | Numerical | % |
| Las Animas County | | | | | | | | | |
| Population | 2023 | 2028 | 2033 | | | 62 | 0.4% | 63 | 0.4% |
| Households | 6,462 | 6,625 | 6,792 | | | 33 | 0.5% | 33 | 0.5% |
| City of Trinidad | | | | | | | | | |
| Population | 8,365 | 8,449 | 8,534 | | | 17 | 0.2% | 17 | 0.2% |
| Households | 3,471 | 3,515 | 3,559 | | | 9 | 0.2% | 9 | 0.2% |
| City of Trinidad as a Percent of Las Animas County | | | | | | | | | |
| Population | 54.2% | 53.7% | 53.1% | | | 27.0% | | 26.9% | |
| Households | 53.7% | 53.0% | 52.4% | | | 26.7% | | 26.6% | |
| Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Sitewise, & THK Associates, Inc. | | | | | | | | | |

E) Residential Demand

Table III-7 demonstrates the Las Animas County residential demand by tenure and unit type. This household increase will give rise to a demand for the construction of 36 new housing units annually after accounting for vacancies and demolition activity. THK has assumed that 70% of these potential units will be ownership units and 30% will go into the rental market. Thus, an average of 23 single-family detached units will be demanded annually. Demand for attached single-family (townhome/condominium) housing will average 2 units annually. The remaining 30% of new residential demand will go towards rental housing, which will average 11 units annually from 2023 to 2042.

| Table III-7: Las Animas County Market Projected Residential Demand, 2023-2042 | | | | | | | | |
|---|------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|----------------|------|
| | | | | 95.0% | 70.0% | 50.0% | 10.0% | 5.0% |
| Year | Households | Annual Household Growth | Total Housing Unit Demand* | Ownership Units | | | Rental Housing | |
| | | | | Total Ownership Units | Detached Single Family | Attached Single Family | | |
| 2023 | 6,462 | 32 | 34 | 24 | 22 | 2 | 10 | |
| 2024 | 6,494 | 32 | 34 | 24 | 22 | 2 | 10 | |
| 2025 | 6,526 | 32 | 34 | 24 | 22 | 2 | 10 | |
| 2026 | 6,559 | 33 | 35 | 25 | 23 | 2 | 10 | |
| 2027 | 6,592 | 33 | 35 | 25 | 23 | 2 | 10 | |
| 2028 | 6,625 | 33 | 35 | 25 | 23 | 2 | 10 | |
| 2029 | 6,658 | 33 | 35 | 25 | 23 | 2 | 10 | |
| 2030 | 6,691 | 33 | 35 | 25 | 23 | 2 | 10 | |
| 2031 | 6,724 | 33 | 35 | 25 | 23 | 2 | 10 | |
| 2032 | 6,758 | 34 | 36 | 25 | 23 | 2 | 11 | |
| 2033 | 6,792 | 34 | 36 | 25 | 23 | 2 | 11 | |
| 2034 | 6,826 | 34 | 36 | 25 | 23 | 2 | 11 | |
| 2035 | 6,860 | 34 | 36 | 25 | 23 | 2 | 11 | |
| 2036 | 6,894 | 34 | 36 | 25 | 23 | 2 | 11 | |
| 2037 | 6,928 | 34 | 36 | 25 | 23 | 2 | 11 | |
| 2038 | 6,963 | 35 | 37 | 26 | 23 | 3 | 11 | |
| 2039 | 6,998 | 35 | 37 | 26 | 23 | 3 | 11 | |
| 2040 | 7,033 | 35 | 37 | 26 | 23 | 3 | 11 | |
| 2041 | 7,068 | 35 | 37 | 26 | 23 | 3 | 11 | |
| 2042 | 7,103 | 35 | 37 | 26 | 23 | 3 | 11 | |
| Average Annual Demand 2023-2042 | | | | | | | | |
| 6,778 | | | 36 | 25 | 23 | 2 | 11 | |
| % of Total | | | 100.0% | 70.4% | 64.1% | 6.3% | 29.6% | |
| Total Demand 2023-2042 | | | 713 | 502 | 457 | 45 | 211 | |

* Assumes 95% Occupancy in 2023 Remains Constant

F) Las Animas County Retail Overview

As illustrated in Table III-8, Las Animas County contains just over 1.0 million sq. ft. of retail, of which 1.0% is vacant. The City of Trinidad contains approximately 990,000 retail sq. ft., of which approximately 10,823 sq. ft. or 1.1% is vacant. The average lease rate per sq. ft. in Las Animas County is \$10.73 for a triple net lease.

The retail market trends for Las Animas County, as well as just the City of Trinidad from 2012 to 2022 are displayed below and on the following pages.

Table III-8: Retail Trends For Las Animas County and the City of Trinidad, 2022

| Markets | Existing Inventory | | Vacancy | | | | | |
|--|--------------------|-----------|----------|----------|----------------|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| | # of Buildings | Total RBA | Total SF | Vacant % | Net Absorption | Deliveries (Bldgs) | Under Construction SF | Quoted Rates |
| Las Animas County | 126 | 1,039,714 | 10,823 | 1.0% | 36,226 | - | - | \$10.73 |
| City of Trinidad | 113 | 990,165 | 10,823 | 1.1% | 34,146 | - | - | \$10.73 |
| City of Trinidad as a % of Las Animas County | 89.7% | 95.2% | 100.0% | 105.0% | 94.3% | | | 100.0% |

Source: CoStar and THK Associates, Inc.

Table III-9: Las Animas County Retail Trends, 2012-2022

| Year | Inventory Bldgs | Inventory SF | Vacant SF Total | Vacant Percent % Total | Net Absorption SF Total | Gross Absorption SF Total | Deliveries Bldgs | Deliveries SF | Under Construction Bldgs | Under Construction SF | NNN Rent Overall |
|---------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|------------------|---------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| 2022 | 126 | 1,039,714 | 10,823 | 1.0% | 36,226 | 51,960 | - | - | - | - | \$10.73 |
| 2020 | 126 | 1,039,714 | 47,049 | 4.5% | 20,421 | 52,900 | - | - | - | - | \$8.00 |
| 2019 | 126 | 1,039,714 | 67,470 | 6.5% | (16,686) | 56,938 | - | - | - | - | \$18.76 |
| 2018 | 125 | 1,035,043 | 50,784 | 4.9% | 6,397 | 23,418 | - | - | - | - | \$15.00 |
| 2017 | 125 | 1,035,043 | 57,181 | 5.5% | (42,159) | 14,749 | 1 | 3,000 | - | - | \$19.20 |
| 2016 | 124 | 1,032,043 | 6,600 | 0.6% | (5,422) | 8,500 | - | - | 1 | 3,000 | \$42.67 |
| 2015 | 124 | 1,032,043 | 9,800 | 0.9% | 3,200 | 10,625 | - | - | - | - | \$6.78 |
| 2014 | 124 | 1,032,043 | 29,164 | 2.8% | 19,364 | 29,164 | - | - | - | - | \$9.00 |
| 2013 | 124 | 1,032,043 | 12,160 | 1.2% | (17,004) | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 2012 | 124 | 1,032,043 | 2,160 | 0.2% | (10,000) | - | - | - | - | - | \$9.00 |
| Average | 125 | 1,034,944 | 29,319 | 2.8% | -566 | 31,032 | 1.0 | 3,000 | 1.0 | 3,000 | \$15.46 |

Source: THK Associates Inc., CoStar

Table III-10: City of Trinidad Retail Market Trends, 2012-2022

| Year | Inventory Bldgs | Inventory SF | Vacant SF Total | Vacant Percent % Total | Net Absorption SF Total | Gross Absorption SF Total | Deliveries Bldgs | Deliveries SF | Under Construction Bldgs | Under Construction SF | NNN Rent Overall |
|---------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|------------------|---------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| 2022 | 113 | 990,165 | 10,823 | 1.1% | 34,146 | 49,880 | - | - | - | - | \$10.73 |
| 2021 | 113 | 990,165 | 44,969 | 4.5% | 9,905 | 40,304 | - | - | - | - | \$8.00 |
| 2020 | 113 | 990,165 | 54,874 | 5.5% | (4,090) | 56,938 | - | - | - | - | \$18.76 |
| 2019 | 113 | 990,165 | 50,784 | 5.1% | 6,397 | 23,418 | - | - | - | - | \$15.00 |
| 2018 | 113 | 990,165 | 57,181 | 5.8% | (47,581) | 9,327 | 1 | 3,000 | - | - | \$19.20 |
| 2017 | 112 | 987,165 | 6,600 | 0.7% | - | 8,500 | - | - | 1 | 3,000 | \$42.67 |
| 2016 | 112 | 987,165 | 6,600 | 0.7% | 3,200 | 10,625 | - | - | - | - | \$6.78 |
| 2015 | 112 | 987,165 | 9,800 | 1.0% | 16,799 | 26,599 | - | - | - | - | \$9.00 |
| 2014 | 112 | 987,165 | 26,599 | 2.7% | (14,439) | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 2013 | 112 | 987,165 | 12,160 | 1.2% | (10,000) | - | - | - | - | - | \$9.00 |
| 2012 | 112 | 987,165 | 2,160 | 0.2% | 900 | 900 | - | - | - | - | \$9.00 |
| Average | 112 | 988,529 | 25,686 | 2.6% | -476 | 25,166 | 1.0 | 3,000 | 1.0 | 3,000 | \$14.81 |

Source: THK Associates Inc., CoStar

G) Retail Potentials in Las Animas County

Las Animas County is positioned for additional commercial retail development due to the site’s location and direct proximity to Interstate 25, which has a daily traffic volume of around 17,000, and from the potential new tourists and residents visiting and residing in the County. Table III-11 details the projected retail demand schedule for Las Animas County. Almost 82,000 additional square feet could be developed by 2042.

| Table III-11: Las Animas County Retail Demand, 2023 - 2042 | | | | |
|--|-----------|-----------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| Markets | Total RBA | 2022 Population | Retail SqFt per Person | 2022 Households |
| Las Animas County | 1,039,714 | 15,433 | 67.4 | 6,462 |

| Year | PTA Population | Retail SqFt per Person | Total Retail Demand (SqFt) | Annual New Retail Demand (SqFt) |
|---------------------------|----------------|------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 2023 | 15,433 | 67 | 1,040,184 | |
| 2024 | 15,495 | 67 | 1,044,363 | 4,179 |
| 2025 | 15,557 | 67 | 1,048,542 | 4,179 |
| 2026 | 15,619 | 67 | 1,052,721 | 4,179 |
| 2027 | 15,681 | 67 | 1,056,899 | 4,179 |
| 2028 | 15,744 | 67 | 1,061,146 | 4,246 |
| 2029 | 15,807 | 67 | 1,065,392 | 4,246 |
| 2030 | 15,870 | 67 | 1,069,638 | 4,246 |
| 2031 | 15,933 | 67 | 1,073,884 | 4,246 |
| 2032 | 15,997 | 67 | 1,078,198 | 4,314 |
| 2033 | 16,061 | 67 | 1,082,511 | 4,314 |
| 2034 | 16,125 | 67 | 1,086,825 | 4,314 |
| 2035 | 16,190 | 67 | 1,091,206 | 4,381 |
| 2036 | 16,255 | 67 | 1,095,587 | 4,381 |
| 2037 | 16,320 | 67 | 1,099,968 | 4,381 |
| 2038 | 16,385 | 67 | 1,104,349 | 4,381 |
| 2039 | 16,451 | 67 | 1,108,797 | 4,448 |
| 2040 | 16,517 | 67 | 1,113,246 | 4,448 |
| 2041 | 16,583 | 67 | 1,117,694 | 4,448 |
| 2042 | 16,649 | 67 | 1,122,143 | 4,448 |
| Annual Average New Demand | | | | |
| 2023-2042 | 16,034 | 67 | 1,080,665 | 4,314 |
| Total Demand | | | | |
| 2023-2042 | 16,649 | 67 | 1,122,143 | 81,958 |

Source: CoStar and THK Associates, Inc.

H) Hotel Occupancy Rates and Hotel Inventory for Las Animas County

Currently, the average occupancy rate and the average daily rate for Las Animas County is 65% and \$94 respectively. In the summer months the occupancy rises to well over 70%. There are 750 lodging units in the County in 2023 in 16 separate establishments, for an average of 47 units per hotel. This includes the new under construction 96-room Hilton Garden Inn, located on the north edge of the Purgatoire River just a few minutes from Main Street. The majority of lodging establishments are in Trinidad.

Table III-11 shows the hotel inventory for Las Animas County.

| Table III-11: Las Animas County Inventory of Hotels | | | | |
|---|-------------------------|----------|------------|-------|
| Name | Address | City | Year Built | Rooms |
| 1 Tarabino Bed & Breakfast Inn | 310 E 2nd St | Trinidad | 1908 | 5 |
| 2 Days Inn & SuitesTrinidad | 900 W Adams St | Trinidad | 1955 | 57 |
| 3 Trinidad Downtown Motel | 516 E Main St | Trinidad | 1952 | 16 |
| 4 Travelodge Trinidad | 702 W Main St | Trinidad | 1965 | 64 |
| 5 Holiday Inn Express & Suites Trinidad | 3130 Santa Fe Trl | Trinidad | 2007 | 86 |
| 6 Tower 64 Motel & RV Park | 10301 Santa Fe Trail Dr | Trinidad | 1955 | 26 |
| 7 Quality Inn Trinidad | 3125 Toupal Dr | Trinidad | 1980 | 113 |
| 8 Super8 Trinidad | 1924 Freedom Rd | Trinidad | 1991 | 42 |
| 9 Frontier Motel | 815 E Goddard Ave | Trinidad | 1952 | 18 |
| 10 Trails End Motel | 616 E Main St | Trinidad | 1950 | 20 |
| 11 Cawthon Motel | 1701 Santa Fe Trl | Trinidad | 1970 | 24 |
| 12 Budget Host Trinidad | 9800 Santa Fe Trl | Trinidad | 1982 | 37 |
| 13 Monument Lake Resort | 4789 State Highway 12 | Weston | 1937 | 33 |
| 14 La Quinta Inns & Suites Trinidad | 2833 Toupal Dr | Trinidad | 2007 | 100 |
| 15 Stonewall Lodge & RV Park | 6673 Highway 12 | Weston | 1970 | 13 |
| 16 Hilton Garden Inn (Under Construction) | N. Commercial St. | Trinidad | 2023 | 96 |
| Average | | | 1969 | 47 |
| Total | | | | 750 |

Source: CoStar and THK Associates, Inc.

I) Hotel Demand in the Las Animas County Market Area

As shown in Table III-12, there is an estimated demand for no additional hotel rooms in Las Animas County area in 2023. Table III-12 correlates growth in demand for hotel rooms in the Las Animas County area based on employment. Currently there are an estimated 0.088 hotel rooms in the Las Animas County area for every employee. Over the next 20 years, there will be an estimated total demand for 319 additional hotel rooms in the Las Animas County area, based on the growth in the County, and a stabilized occupancy rate of 65%.

| Table III-12: Projected Hotel Demand in Las Animas County, 2023 - 2042 | | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|----------------|----------------------------|
| Year | Projected PTA Employment | Hotel Rooms per Employee | Total PTA Hotel Room Demand | Annual New Demand | Pent-up Demand | Cumulative New Room Demand |
| 2023 | 8,478 | 0.088 | 750 | | 0 | 0 |
| 2024 | 8,600 | 0.089 | 765 | 15 | | 15 |
| 2025 | 8,727 | 0.089 | 780 | 15 | | 30 |
| 2026 | 8,855 | 0.090 | 795 | 15 | | 45 |
| 2027 | 8,984 | 0.090 | 811 | 16 | | 61 |
| 2028 | 9,113 | 0.091 | 827 | 16 | | 77 |
| 2029 | 9,242 | 0.091 | 842 | 15 | | 92 |
| 2030 | 9,372 | 0.092 | 859 | 17 | | 109 |
| 2031 | 9,503 | 0.092 | 875 | 16 | | 125 |
| 2032 | 9,633 | 0.093 | 891 | 16 | | 141 |
| 2033 | 9,765 | 0.093 | 908 | 17 | | 158 |
| 2034 | 9,897 | 0.093 | 925 | 17 | | 175 |
| 2035 | 10,029 | 0.094 | 942 | 17 | | 192 |
| 2036 | 10,161 | 0.094 | 959 | 17 | | 209 |
| 2037 | 10,294 | 0.095 | 977 | 18 | | 227 |
| 2038 | 10,427 | 0.095 | 994 | 17 | | 244 |
| 2039 | 10,590 | 0.096 | 1,015 | 21 | | 265 |
| 2040 | 10,723 | 0.096 | 1,033 | 18 | | 283 |
| 2041 | 10,857 | 0.097 | 1,051 | 18 | | 301 |
| 2042 | 10,991 | 0.097 | 1,069 | 18 | | 319 |
| 2023 - 2042 | | | | | | |
| Average | 9,712 | 0.093 | 903 | 17 | | |
| Total | | | 1,069 | 319 | | 319 |

Source: THK Associates, Inc.

J) Overview of Las Animas County State Park and Other Visitor-Related Facilities

State parks and reservoirs are among the most popular places for Americans to go on vacation. This is no different along the Front Range where there are a number of state parks and reservoirs, including Trinidad Lake, that host several million visitors in total annually. Table II-1 provides an overview of the nine reservoir-oriented state parks along the Front Range from roughly the Wyoming state line near Sterling to the Trinidad area close to the New Mexico border. The nine parks have an average of 138 RV spaces, 344 boat slips and host an average of 791,667 visitors. These figures are somewhat skewed by the magnitude of the facilities and visitors to Lake Pueblo, as well as metro Denver parks at Cherry Creek and Chatfield. The five more rural parks, Jackson Lake, North Sterling, John Martin, Lathrop and Trinidad Lake average roughly 100 RV spaces and 165,000 visitors annually. The 200,000 visitors to Trinidad Lake are above this average.

Trinidad Lake State Park sits approximately 3 miles west of downtown Trinidad. Trinidad Lake State Park offers a variety of recreational opportunities and spectacular views of the surrounding mesas and mountains. The park is home to an abundance of wildlife, including fish, birds of prey, coyotes, roadrunners, elk and deer. The lake itself provides for numerous water recreation experiences, such as paddling, sailing, water skiing and excellent fishing. The park also features an archery range, more than 12 miles of hiking, biking and equestrian trails, picnic areas, seasonal hunting opportunities and unusual geologic formations. The Carpios Ridge Campground, offering 73 RV sites, is open year-round. According to Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW), visitors to Trinidad Lake spend nearly \$9.0 million annually in local communities. This equates to close to \$50 per visitor.

Fishers Peak State Park, just a few minutes’ drive southeast of Trinidad, has just recently opened at Colorado’s newest state park. Fishers Peak itself rises to 9,300 feet, dramatically rising over 3,000 feet above Trinidad. Trail and infrastructure development in the park are in the early stages, with just a single parking lot and trailhead currently, not far from Exit 11 just off the Interstate.

According to CPW The Fishers Peak property was purchased in February 2019 through a collaboration between the City of Trinidad, The Nature Conservancy, the Trust for Public Land, Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) and Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW). In April 2020, CPW acquired the property. Approximately 1,000 acres of the 19,200-acre property are currently open for public use. There is currently 11+ miles of trails open, with 17+ miles expected by the end of 2023.

The trail system is expected to expand to around 80 miles over time, including a trail to the summit, which should be a significant draw to visitors in the area. There is no water recreation here, with the main activities being hiking, nature watching and picnicking, with over 100 campsites projected to be available in the future. Hunting opportunities will also be available by a random draw. Projections of annual visitation to the park have it growing to around 160,000 to 170,000. Given current annual visitation of over 200,000 at Trinidad Lake THK feels this estimate is low. The extremely short distance between the two parks, and the vastly different State Park experience they provide, should result in a visit to both parks by many, and likely a longer stay in the area.

| Table III-13: Summary of the Reservoir-Oriented State Parks in the Colorado Area Environs | | | | | | | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|------------|--------|---------------|------------|----------|-----------|-----------------|--|
| | Site Name | City | Acres | Surface Acres | Boat Slips | RV Sites | Campsites | Annual Visitors | Activities & Amenities |
| 1 | Jackson Lake State Park | Orchard | 3,100 | 2,500 | - | 154 | 97 | 210,000 | Marina/Boating, Swimming, Fishing, Small Game & Waterfowl Hunting |
| 2 | North Sterling State Park | Sterling | 5,025 | 2,895 | 35 | 97 | 44 | 150,000 | Archery, Biking, Birding, Marina/Boating, Small Game & Waterfowl Hunting |
| 3 | Boyd Lake State Park | Loveland | 2,082 | 1,700 | 110 | 148 | - | 580,000 | Marina/Boat Ramp, Snack Bar, Biking, Fishing, Hiking, Waterfowl Hunting |
| 4 | Cherry Creek State Park | Aurora | 4,227 | 880 | 150 | 103 | 30 | 1,550,000 | Biking, Birding, Boating/Fishing, Hiking, Swimming, Water Skiing |
| 5 | Chatfield State Park | Littleton | 5,381 | 1,479 | 325 | 197 | - | 1,725,000 | Biking, Birding, Boating/Fishing, Hiking, Swimming, Water Skiing |
| 6 | Lake Pueblo State Park | Pueblo | 14,598 | 5,399 | 1,100 | 281 | 119 | 2,450,000 | Biking, Birding, Boating/Fishing, Hiking, Hunting, Swimming, Water Skiing |
| 7 | John Martin Reservoir State Park | Hasty | 12,286 | 11,658 | - | 109 | 104 | 155,000 | Birding, Boating/Fishing, Hiking, Swimming |
| 8 | Lathrop State Park | Walsenburg | 1,594 | 320 | - | 82 | 21 | 105,000 | Golf, Mini-Golf/Biking, Birding, Boating/Fishing, Hiking, Swimming, Water Skiing |
| 9 | Trinidad Lake State Park | Trinidad | 2,960 | 850 | - | 73 | - | 200,000 | Archery, Biking, Fishing, Birding, Boating, Small Game & Waterfowl Hunting |
| Average | | | 5,695 | 3,076 | 344 | 138 | 69 | 791,667 | |
| Total | | | | | 1,720 | 1,244 | 415 | 7,125,000 | |

Source: Colorado Parks & Wildlife & THK Associates

K) RV/Campground Inventory in Las Animas County

RV parks are not in abundance throughout the Las Animas County market area. There are 6 RV campground sites that are in the County environs, mostly equipped with 30/50 Amp spaces that include water, electric, and sewer hookups. One of the RV/Campgrounds, Carpios Ridge, is located in Trinidad Lake State Park, and is a nice facility. The average daily rate for the spaces is estimated to be \$41 and the average park is estimated to have 39 RV spaces. There are 232 RV sites in the County.

| Table III-14: RV Parks in Las Animas County | | | | |
|---|--|----------------|-------------------------|-----------|
| Number | Address | RV # of Spaces | RV Space Cost per night | Occupancy |
| 1 | Budget Host RV Park 9800 Santa Fe Trail Trinidad, CO 81082 | 29 | \$48 | 91% |
| 2 | Cawthon Park Motel and RV Park 1701 Santa Fe Trail Trinidad, CO 81082 | 36 | \$35 | 90% |
| 3 | Carpios Ridge - Trinidad Lake Trinidad Lake State Park Rd Trinidad, CO 81082 | 63 | \$40 | 45% |
| 4 | Tower 64 Motel & RV Park 10301 Santa Fe Trail Dr. Trinidad, CO 81082 | 28 | \$40 | 88% |
| 5 | Monument Lake Resort 4789 Highway 12 Weston, CO | 60 | \$40 | 35% |
| 6 | Stonewall Lodge & RV Park 6673 Highway 12 Weston, CO | 16 | \$40 | 40% |
| Average | | 39 | \$41 | 64.8% |
| Total | | 232 | | |

Source: THK Associates, Inc.

L) Visitor/Tourist Attractions and Estimated Visitation to Las Animas

The following table lists the various parks, museums, attractions, activities and annual events in Las Animas County, which will comprise the main sources for visitation to the county. As previously discussed, the State Parks are the crown jewels for tourism in Las Animas County and should be the anchors for any market strategies and infrastructure development moving forward.

| Table III-15: Las Animas County Visitor/Tourist Attractions | |
|---|--|
| State Parks Fishers Peak State Park Trinidad Lake State Park | |
| Golf Trinidad Golf Course - 9 Holes Twisted Cedars Disc Golf Course | |
| City Parks Trinidad Skate Park - 14,000 square feet Southside Baseball Park - 4 Fields Central Park - Baseball, Soccer, Fishing, Walking City Park Cimino Park Kit Carson Park | |
| Museums Trinidad History Museum A.R. Mitchell Museum of Western Art Louden-Henritze Archeology Museum Coal Miners Memorial Museum Art Cartopia Museum | |
| Events Santa Fe Trail Days - 2nd weekend June R.I.P. Games - at Skate Park, August Trinidaddio BluesFest - at Central Park, Last weekend August ARToberfest - October Southern Colorado Repertory Theatre - 3 plays each summer | |
| City Hiking/Walking Wormhole Trail - 2.3 mile loop hike Boulevard Loop Trail - .5 mile multi-use trail following Purgatoire River Purgatoire Riverwalk | |
| Cokedale Historic District Old coal mining camp and ovens - 7 miles west of Trinidad | |
| Misc. - Jeep Tours, Hunting, Fishing, Ghost Towns | |
| Source: City of Trinidad, Visit Trinidad & THK Associates, Inc. | |

Hunting Impacts

There are also several thousand annual visitors to the Trinidad area for big game and other hunting. There are 11 Game Management Units in Las Animas County. Within those 11 Units there are an annual average of approximately 3,300 Elk and Deer permits issued. This number can vary somewhat depending on herd sizes and overall game population. While there is bear, mountain lion, antelope and bird hunting, the majority of the activity is related to Deer and Elk. An interview with one local outfitter (who chose to remain anonymous) revealed that many of the hunters stay in the local hotels or on camps on private land. The hunters will frequent local restaurants, convenience stores and other services. These expenditures are already accounted for in lodging tax receipts and sales tax receipts. The outfitter stated that there is little promotion to the hunters that occurs in other communities and more could be done for hunters while they are in the area. The outfitter is well aware of the State Parks. As activity increases at Fishers Peak State Park, it will likely have little impact on increased hunting. The outfitter did state that many of the hunters enjoy the area while hunting and sometimes return for a different vacation activity such as the Trinidad Lake State Park or “leaf watching” in the fall. While important to the community, increased visitors to the region from hunting are likely to be nominal and have minor impacts on increased revenues.

Disc Golf

Another attraction in Las Animas County is the Twisted Cedars Disc Golf facility. Disc golf is an expanding recreational activity and is relatively easy and inexpensive to accomplish. Disc golf is a very attractive activity for individuals due to the minimal start-up cost to purchase a disc which is approximately \$15.00 and 90% of Disc golf courses are free to play. The installation and upkeep of a Disc golf course is minimal in terms of both effort and cost. The typical course is located on 35 to 40 acres at a cost of \$25,000 to \$30,000, exclusive of land. Twisted Cedars is a 27-hole premier Disc golf facility that opened in 2020. The operator of the Twisted Cedars facility reported that the site area is approximately 40-acres in size, has 27-holes/pin placements, has eight events per year and offers camping for visitors. Greens fees are \$10 per day and there is a \$20 cart fee (only one cart). The operator stated that Disc golfers enjoy communities that have multiple courses for tournaments or weekend outings, allowing for cross over play and more events and tournaments.

Hipcamp Impacts

A recent trend in agricultural and ranching communities is an activity known as “hipcamping”. This is when private landowners will allow persons or groups to camp on their land as another form of agritourism. The landowner benefits from additional income while the campers enjoy typically a more rural and less crowded setting than a traditional campground. The potential number of interested landowners and the specific amount of campers or revenues is difficult to ascertain. Nonetheless, campers in the area are likely to frequent restaurants and other retail services while staying in the area. Again, this is

an activity that could be better promoted and made more visible, which in turn could attract additional visitors to the area and increased revenues. The overall impact is believed to be relatively minor but should be made a part of future promotional activities and educational awareness.

Conclusion

While Disc golf is an up-and-coming activity and people will travel to play the sport, especially with multiple courses in an area, additional Disc golf facilities in Las Animas County would add visitors that could stay longer in the area and make additional expenditures, the additional number of visitors from Disc golf itself would not be significant in the overall visitation projections. Based on these visitor attractions and events, the inventories of overnight lodging and camping facilities in the county, and the available data on annual visitation to the State Parks, THK has estimated the current visitor base in Las Animas County and projected those visitors moving forward based on improvements to infrastructure, marketing and management of the county’s recreational assets. It is understood that there is a great deal of overlap, for example, of visitors staying in a hotel and also visiting a state park, which could allow for double counting of visitor days. According to Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) a little over 200,000 people visit Trinidad Lake State Park annually. Fishers Peak State Park has just recently opened to the public with limited trails, activities, and infrastructure currently in place. Today there are approximately 1,000 acres open and 11+ miles of trails. As additional trails, roads, picnic areas, camping and the like are added, and Fishers Peak garners more attention and stature, visits will ramp up substantially. Multiple trailheads

and parking areas, multiple campgrounds with 100+ campsites, and an 80+ mile trail system will be the benchmark. A CSU study, measuring the impacts of Fishers Peak on the city and county, estimates visitation will reach approximately 175,000 annually, which may be conservative. The study also estimates that 20% of visitors will be from within a 2 to 3-hour drive time, and 80% will be non-local (outside the 2 to 3-hour drive time. The study also gives a range of daily expenditures per visitor from \$30 at the low end to \$85, which is the number concluded by The Trust for Public Land, as well as 1.4 multiplier. Using just the Fishers Peak estimated visitation of 175,000, and spending of \$75 per day (THK estimates the daily spending to be at the higher end of the \$30-\$85 range), 80% being non-locals (140,000 visitors) and using a 1.4 multiplier (additional dollars created on top of the direct spending by tourists), this equates to an impact of \$14.7 million annually. Of course, many people will come and visit both State Parks, thus the approximately 450,000-475,000 total gross visitation amounts, once Fishers Peak is fully developed, is actually a lower net number as a tourist who visits both State Parks would be double counted. And other tourists will come stay in the County, or visit just for the day, to hike, hunt, attend an event or visit other attractions aside from the state parks. THK has calculated the number of hotel and RV visitors, based on occupancy rates and people per room or RV. Given each of these categories and variables THK has estimated the current annual visitation to Las Animas County to be 274,434 people in 2023, growing to over 476,000 in 2042. This is expected to increase quickly as Fishers Peak is built out and marketed and gains greater state-wide and regional recognition over time, and other county facilities and opportunities are improved and implemented. The following table details this projected visitation.

| Table III-16: Total Estimated Visitation to Las Animas County, 2023-2042 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Category | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | 2028 | 2029 | 2030 | 2031 | 2032 | 2033 | 2034 | 2035 | 2036 | 2037 | 2038 | 2039 | 2040 | 2041 | 2042 |
| Fishers Peak State Park | 50,000 | 75,000 | 100,000 | 120,000 | 140,000 | 160,000 | 180,000 | 200,000 | 206,000 | 212,180 | 218,545 | 225,102 | 231,855 | 238,810 | 245,975 | 253,354 | 260,955 | 268,783 | 276,847 | 285,152 |
| Trinidad Lake State Park | 201,198 | 204,216 | 207,279 | 210,388 | 213,544 | 216,747 | 219,999 | 223,299 | 226,648 | 230,048 | 233,498 | 237,001 | 240,556 | 244,164 | 247,827 | 251,544 | 255,317 | 259,147 | 263,034 | 266,980 |
| Estimated Non- State Park Visits | 25,120 | 27,922 | 30,728 | 33,039 | 35,354 | 37,675 | 40,000 | 42,330 | 43,265 | 44,223 | 45,204 | 46,210 | 47,241 | 48,297 | 49,380 | 50,490 | 51,627 | 52,793 | 53,988 | 55,213 |
| Hotels Visitors | 213,525 | 217,796 | 222,151 | 226,594 | 231,126 | 235,749 | 240,464 | 245,273 | 250,179 | 255,182 | 260,286 | 265,491 | 270,801 | 276,217 | 281,742 | 287,377 | 293,124 | 298,987 | 304,966 | 311,066 |
| RV Park Visitors | 88,208 | 89,973 | 91,772 | 93,607 | 95,480 | 97,389 | 99,337 | 101,324 | 103,350 | 105,417 | 107,525 | 109,676 | 111,869 | 114,107 | 116,389 | 118,717 | 121,091 | 123,513 | 125,983 | 128,503 |
| Estimated Day Visitors | 12,560 | 13,961 | 15,364 | 16,519 | 17,677 | 18,837 | 20,000 | 21,165 | 21,632 | 22,111 | 22,602 | 23,105 | 23,621 | 24,149 | 24,690 | 25,245 | 25,814 | 26,397 | 26,994 | 27,607 |
| Gross Total Visitors/1 | 288,878 | 321,098 | 353,371 | 379,947 | 406,576 | 433,259 | 459,998 | 486,793 | 497,545 | 508,562 | 519,850 | 531,418 | 543,272 | 555,421 | 567,872 | 580,633 | 593,713 | 607,120 | 620,863 | 634,952 |
| % of Cross Visitation | 5.0% | 10.0% | 15.0% | 20.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% |
| Total Net Visitation | 274,434 | 288,989 | 300,365 | 303,957 | 304,932 | 324,945 | 344,999 | 365,095 | 373,159 | 381,421 | 389,888 | 398,564 | 407,454 | 416,566 | 425,904 | 435,475 | 445,285 | 455,340 | 465,647 | 476,214 |
| 1/Net visitation is the sum of the state park visitors, non-state park visitors and daily visitors, adjusted for people who visit both state parks on their visit | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Source: THK Associates, Inc. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

M) Sales Tax Revenues from Visitation to Las Animas County

The following table takes the overall estimated visitation to Las Animas County and determines the resulting sales tax revenues generated from these visitors. Based on data from the Recreational Vehicle Industry Association (RVIA), industry lodging reports and THK’s previous experience in tourist markets, the estimated length of stay for visitors is 2.75 days. Thus, in 2023 the estimated 274,434 visitors will result in 754,693 visitor days. THK has then estimated daily visitor spending to be \$75. As previously noted, various research estimates show this figure to be between \$30 to \$85 day per visitor. This would include spending on lodging, food, gifts, etc. Based on these estimates, total visitor spending is projected to be almost \$56.6 million in 2023. Currently total retail sales in Las Animas County are approximately \$295 million, based on the sales tax revenues generated from the County’s 1.5% sales tax rate. This equates to nearly 19% of retail sales in the County coming from visitors.

This visitor spending will generate approximately \$849,000 in sales tax revenue to the County in 2023 to just over \$2 million by 2042. To generate funding for a recreational management entity in Las Animas County to market, manage and implement facility improvements and strategies THK has estimated that an additional .25% tax is needed, with public support, to the existing 1.5% sales tax, to be earmarked for this enterprise. This added tax would generate on average around \$225,000 annually or just over \$4.7 million over twenty years (per .25% increase). This would support approximately \$2.13 million in debt for capital improvements, marketing, and maintenance of recreation facilities in Las Animas County. The current City of Trinidad budget for parks and recreation is approximately \$600,000 including the existing staff. This budget could be merged and incorporated into any newly formed recreation entity.

An additional sales tax increase should also be considered for staffing and administrative costs.

| Table III-17: Total Estimated Sales Tax Revenue from Visitation to Las Animas County, 2023-2042 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Category | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | 2028 | 2029 | 2030 | 2031 | 2032 | 2033 | 2034 | 2035 | 2036 | 2037 | 2038 | 2039 | 2040 | 2041 | 2042 |
| Total Net Visitation | 274,434 | 288,989 | 300,365 | 303,957 | 304,932 | 324,945 | 344,999 | 365,095 | 373,159 | 381,421 | 389,888 | 398,564 | 407,454 | 416,566 | 425,904 | 435,475 | 445,285 | 455,340 | 465,647 | 476,214 |
| Total Visitor Days | 754,693 | 799,053 | 836,518 | 852,600 | 861,433 | 924,467 | 988,422 | 1,053,299 | 1,084,027 | 1,115,658 | 1,148,220 | 1,181,741 | 1,216,251 | 1,251,780 | 1,288,359 | 1,326,020 | 1,364,797 | 1,404,724 | 1,445,835 | 1,488,168 |
| Daily Visitor Expenditure | \$75.00 | \$75.83 | \$76.66 | \$77.50 | \$78.35 | \$79.22 | \$80.09 | \$80.97 | \$81.86 | \$82.76 | \$83.67 | \$84.59 | \$85.52 | \$86.46 | \$87.41 | \$88.37 | \$89.35 | \$90.33 | \$91.32 | \$92.33 |
| Total Visitor Expenditures | \$56,601,974 | \$60,588,215 | \$64,126,674 | \$66,078,505 | \$67,497,422 | \$73,233,310 | \$79,160,840 | \$85,284,691 | \$88,738,177 | \$92,332,088 | \$96,072,220 | \$99,964,618 | \$104,015,578 | \$108,231,661 | \$112,619,705 | \$117,186,836 | \$121,940,480 | \$126,888,377 | \$132,038,594 | \$137,399,538 |
| Total County Sales Tax Revenue | \$849,030 | \$908,823 | \$961,900 | \$991,178 | \$1,012,461 | \$1,098,500 | \$1,187,413 | \$1,279,270 | \$1,331,073 | \$1,384,981 | \$1,441,083 | \$1,499,469 | \$1,560,234 | \$1,623,475 | \$1,689,296 | \$1,757,803 | \$1,829,107 | \$1,903,326 | \$1,980,579 | \$2,060,993 |
| Potential Additional Parks & Rec (.25%) Tax Revenue | \$141,505 | \$151,471 | \$160,317 | \$165,196 | \$168,744 | \$183,083 | \$197,902 | \$213,212 | \$221,845 | \$230,830 | \$240,181 | \$249,912 | \$260,039 | \$270,579 | \$281,549 | \$292,967 | \$304,851 | \$317,221 | \$330,096 | \$343,499 |
| Total 20-Year Additional Parks & Rec Tax Revenue | \$4,724,999 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Present Value at 5.5% | \$134,128 | \$136,089 | \$136,528 | \$133,349 | \$129,111 | \$132,780 | \$136,045 | \$138,928 | \$137,018 | \$135,135 | \$133,278 | \$131,448 | \$129,645 | \$127,867 | \$126,115 | \$124,388 | \$122,686 | \$121,008 | \$119,355 | \$117,726 |
| Total Present Value | \$2,602,626 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Supportable Debt at a 1.2 Coverage | \$2,168,855 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Issuance Costs @ 2% | \$43,377 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Net Proceeds | \$2,125,478 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Source: THK Associates, Inc. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

N) Potential Revenues from an Ad Valorem Property Tax Increase in Las Animas

The following table illustrates the potential revenues that could be derived from introducing an additional mill levy to the Las Animas County property tax base intended to fund and sustain a recreational management entity in the County.

The total assessed value of property in Las Animas County is currently \$362,437,310. Based on recent annual increases in the total valuation THK projects this to increase to approximately \$528 million by 2042. With a mill levy of 9.357 this generates almost \$3.5 million in property tax revenue in 2023. A voter-approved mill levy for a recreation district of 2.5 mills would generate \$923,309 in 2023. A total of over \$22 million could be generated over twenty years. This calculation provides an indication what these revenues could be using a mill levy for securing funding.

This could be a difficult sell to the constituents, as many may feel this tax would not benefit them, but the numbers indicate that it would deliver significantly greater revenue to any new recreation entity than from an added sales tax.

| Table III-18: Las Animas County Gross Taxable Assessed Valuation and Property Tax Revenues | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|-----------|----------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| Year | Total Assessed Valuation | Mill Levy | Property Tax Revenue | Potential Parks & Rec Mill Levy | Potential Parks & Rec Property Tax Revenue |
| 2017 | \$329,691,910 | 9.357 | \$3,084,927 | | |
| 2018 | \$343,256,500 | 9.357 | \$3,211,851 | | |
| 2019 | \$349,118,840 | 9.357 | \$3,266,705 | | |
| 2020 | \$357,450,680 | 9.357 | \$3,344,666 | | |
| 2021 | \$351,470,280 | 9.357 | \$3,288,707 | | |
| 2022 | \$362,437,310 | 9.357 | \$3,391,326 | | |
| Projected | | | | | |
| 2023 | \$369,323,619 | 9.357 | \$3,455,761 | 2.5 | \$923,309 |
| 2024 | \$376,340,768 | 9.357 | \$3,521,421 | 2.5 | \$940,852 |
| 2025 | \$383,491,242 | 9.357 | \$3,588,328 | 2.5 | \$958,728 |
| 2026 | \$390,777,576 | 9.357 | \$3,656,506 | 2.5 | \$976,944 |
| 2027 | \$398,202,350 | 9.357 | \$3,725,979 | 2.5 | \$995,506 |
| 2028 | \$405,768,194 | 9.357 | \$3,796,773 | 2.5 | \$1,014,420 |
| 2029 | \$413,477,790 | 9.357 | \$3,868,912 | 2.5 | \$1,033,694 |
| 2030 | \$421,333,868 | 9.357 | \$3,942,421 | 2.5 | \$1,053,335 |
| 2031 | \$429,339,212 | 9.357 | \$4,017,327 | 2.5 | \$1,073,348 |
| 2032 | \$437,496,657 | 9.357 | \$4,093,656 | 2.5 | \$1,093,742 |
| 2033 | \$445,809,093 | 9.357 | \$4,171,436 | 2.5 | \$1,114,523 |
| 2034 | \$454,279,466 | 9.357 | \$4,250,693 | 2.5 | \$1,135,699 |
| 2035 | \$462,910,776 | 9.357 | \$4,331,456 | 2.5 | \$1,157,277 |
| 2036 | \$471,706,080 | 9.357 | \$4,413,754 | 2.5 | \$1,179,265 |
| 2037 | \$480,668,496 | 9.357 | \$4,497,615 | 2.5 | \$1,201,671 |
| 2038 | \$489,801,197 | 9.357 | \$4,583,070 | 2.5 | \$1,224,503 |
| 2039 | \$499,107,420 | 9.357 | \$4,670,148 | 2.5 | \$1,247,769 |
| 2040 | \$508,590,461 | 9.357 | \$4,758,881 | 2.5 | \$1,271,476 |
| 2041 | \$518,253,680 | 9.357 | \$4,849,300 | 2.5 | \$1,295,634 |
| 2042 | \$528,100,500 | 9.357 | \$4,941,436 | 2.5 | \$1,320,251 |
| Total | | | | | \$22,211,946 |
| Source: Las Animas County and THK Associates, Inc. | | | | | |

IV.Comparable Park & Recreation Districts and Departments

Canon City and Alamosa Parks and Recreation Operations

In assessing potential funding entities and sources that could be utilized or enacted in order to create revenues for improving the existing recreational facilities and assets in Las Animas County, and for implementing strategies and programs for enhancing these opportunities THK Associates, Inc. has researched comparable recreation districts and departments in Canon City and Alamosa. These areas are locationally and demographically comparable to Las Animas County and provide good examples of budgets and funding sources as well as existing assets and facilities.

Canon City

Canon City is approximately 100 miles north of Trinidad and 20 miles west of Pueblo in south-central Colorado. It is the county seat of Fremont County and home to approximately 17,000 people. The main draw and attraction in Canon City and Fremont County is the Royal Gorge Bridge and Park. The bridge, constructed in 1929, is suspended 956 feet above the Arkansas River. The surrounding 360-acre park features amusement rides, dining, and lodging. Approximately 400,000 people visit the park annually.

Serving the community since 1965, the Canon City Area Recreation & Park District has had a mission is to provide a range of accessible recreation and park programs, services and facilities for participants of every age, ability level, background and financial status. The district is funded by a mill levy of 3.514 mills, on an assessed value of \$276 million. This generates revenues of close to \$1.0 million annually to the general fund for mostly administrative and park expenditures. There are also capital projects, pool and program activity funds funded mostly by grants, transfers, and program fees. The total budget is estimated at \$2.5 million in 2022. The programs and facilities serviced by these funds include:

- The Arkansas Riverwalk
- Municipal Parks
- Event Pavilion
- Pool Complex Youth & Adult Leagues & Programs
- Sports Camps
- Special Events

The capital improvement fund expenditures currently include park, trail and riverwalk improvements and restorations. In 2022 the district received ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funds from Fremont County to make major improvements to Rouse Park, the city’s main park, including upgrading stadium lighting and making multiple field improvements.

Alamosa

Alamosa County and the City of Alamosa lie approximately 75 miles northwest of Trinidad and Las Animas County, in the heart of the San Luis Valley. The population of the county is nearly 17,000 people, while close to 10,000 people reside in the City of Alamosa, very close to the same as Las Animas County and the City of Trinidad respectively. The major attraction in the county is the Great Sand Dunes National Park and Reserve, located in the northeast corner of the county. In 2021 just over 600,000 people visited the park, more than double the total in 2015 and before. Alamosa is also home to Adams State University with an enrollment of close to 3,700 students.

In terms of funding for recreation, at the county level there are two funding sources for the promotion of tourism and visitation to the area. For the Tourism and Development Fund an Alamosa County Lodging Tax of 1.9% is applied to overnight lodging services for any rooms and accommodations occupied for less than 30 consecutive days. The monies are used to promote tourism in the county. The fund had almost \$250,000 in 2021 and was budgeted for \$390,000 in 2022.

The Alamosa County Events and Facilities Local Marketing District was approved by voters in 2003 and oversees the collection and disbursement of a 4% cultural and tourism tax on hotel/motels rooms sold in the county. Resources are used to operate and maintain the Colorado Welcome Center, support the Alamosa Museum, and promote Alamosa County via social, print, radio, and other media. The estimated budget in 2021 was close to \$475,000, with the budget for 2022 proposed for \$690,000.

The City of Alamosa has a Community Recreation Fund that is part of the City’s budget and is its own department, Alamosa Parks and Recreation Department. Their motto is “creating community through people, parks, and programs”. This Fund provides for the many recreational activities offered by the City of Alamosa. The programs offered through the Alamosa Family Recreation Center and the Ice Rink/Multipurpose Facility are funded by a sales tax and user fees. In addition to these revenue sources, the General Fund contributes towards the operation of the Alamosa Public Library and debt expenditures. Approximately 55% of the revenue of the recreation fund is derived through taxes. Budgeted expenses for 2022 are approximately \$3.2 million. The programs and facilities serviced by these funds include:

- 18-Hole Cattails Golf Course
- Ice/Roller Rink
- Skatepark
- Disc Golf
- Youth & Adult Leagues & Programs
- Trail System
- Special Events
- Dog Parks
- Inner Tubing

Potential Las Animas County Lodging Tax Revenues

By comparison to Alamosa County, the expenditures by the City of Trinidad for parks and recreation use was projected for \$494,000 in 2021 and budgeted for \$603,000 in 2022. The City also has a 3% lodging tax, which yields approximately \$350,000 in revenue annually. These revenues are budgeted for the City’s Tourism Fund, which is used for the Visitor Welcome Center, the downtown Trolley and on general tourism promotion and marketing.

Las Animas County currently does not have a lodging tax, and almost all lodging units in the county are within the City. Based on the \$350,000 in lodging tax revenue and the 3% lodging tax rate, total gross lodging revenues are currently approximately \$11.5 million annually in Trinidad/ Las Animas County. In contrast, the total 5.9% lodging tax in Alamosa County (the 1.9% Tourism and Development Fund tax and 4.0% Local Marketing District tax) yielded an estimated \$700,000 in revenues to Alamosa County in 2021. This equates to total annual lodging revenues of approximately \$11.7 million in Alamosa County. There are 11 lodging facilities with 652 total rooms in the County. This would equal close to \$18,000 of revenue per room.

The overall lodging market is very similar to Las Animas County, which has 15 lodging units comprising 654 total rooms (not including the under-construction 96-room Hilton Garden Inn). This also yields almost \$18,000 in revenue per room. Based on these figures were Las Animas County to implement a county lodging tax (through voter approval), for instance, each additional 1% in lodging tax to be earmarked for recreation needs would currently generate approximately \$120,000 in annual revenue in 2023, and grow substantially over time as hotel visits increase. This additional lodging tax is another potential source for funding a regional recreational management entity and recreational improvements in Las Animas County.

C) STAKEHOLDER AND PUBLIC PROCESS SUPPORTING MATERIALS

Project Leadership Team (PLT) Members

| | | |
|------------------|-----------------------|---|
| Phil Dorenkamp | Las Animas County | County Administrator |
| Kristee Coberly | Las Animas County | Finance/Budget Director |
| Jared Chatterley | City of Trinidad | Director, Office of Outdoor Recreation |
| Steve Ruger | City of Trinidad | City Manager |
| Wade Shelton | Trust for Public Land | Senior Project Manager |
| Chandi Aldena | Trust for Public Land | Project Manager & Community Schoolyards Initiative Lead |
| Jake Houston | Trust for Public Land | Community Trails Director |

Online Survey #1

Community Open House Survey #2

Summary of Visioning Presentation

Community Open House Presentation #4

Process Advisory Committee (PAC) Members

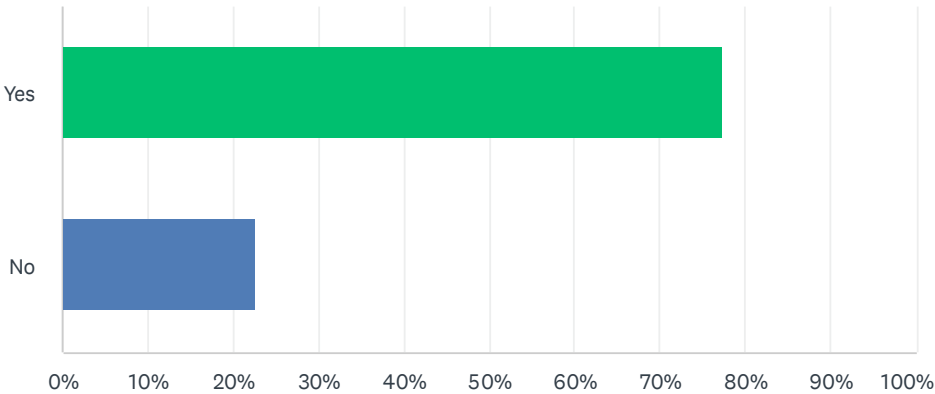
| | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| PLT | Phil Dorenkamp / Kristee Coberly | Las Animas County |
| PLT | Steve Ruger / Jared Chatterly | City of Trinidad |
| PLT | Chandi Aldena / Jake Houston | Trust for Public Land |
| PLT | Matt Morehead | The Nature Conservancy |
| Towns | Kathy Kumm | Cokedale |
| Towns | Christine Loudon | Branson |
| Towns | Scott Berry, Jolene Greene | Raton NM |
| Higher Education | Rhonda Epper / Linda Perry | Trinidad State College |
| Local Business | Amanda Korth / Amy Navarette | Trinidad/Las Animas Chamber of Commerce |
| Local Business/DEI | Yolanda | Las Animas Hispanic Chamber of Commerce |
| Land Owners | Julie Knudson | Purgatory Watershed Partnership |
| Water | Steve Kastner | Purgatoire River Water Conservancy District |
| Parks | Crystal Dreiling | CPW |
| SCOOG | Jennifer Oliver | SCCOG |
| Older Adults | Carol | Senior Citizens Center Inc |
| Younger/Schools | Elsie Goines | Las Animas County School District |
| Towns | Rose Holman / Mayor Charles Glaze | Starkville |
| Towns | Bud Broce | Kim |
| Towns | Tyra Avila | Aguilar |
| Trinidad Tourism Board | Cy Michaels | Trinidad |
| Trinidad Tourism Board | Camilla Campbell | Trinidad |
| Trinidad Tourism Board | Tom Cress | Trinidad |
| Trinidad Tourism Board | Kris Miller | Trinidad |
| Trinidad Tourism Board | Dawn Richardson | Trinidad |

ONLINE SURVEY #1

Las Animas County Outdoor Rec and Economic Impact Study

Q1 Do you live in Las Animas County?

Answered: 151 Skipped: 0

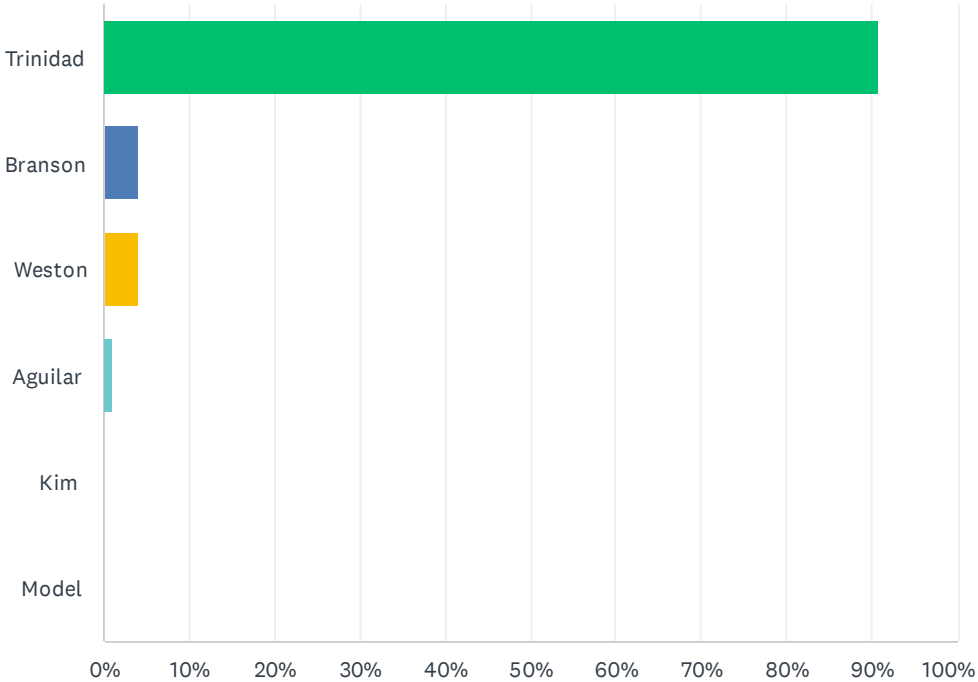


| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES | |
|----------------|-----------|-----|
| Yes | 77.48% | 117 |
| No | 22.52% | 34 |
| TOTAL | | 151 |

Las Animas County Outdoor Rec and Economic Impact Study

Q2 Where?

Answered: 98 Skipped: 53



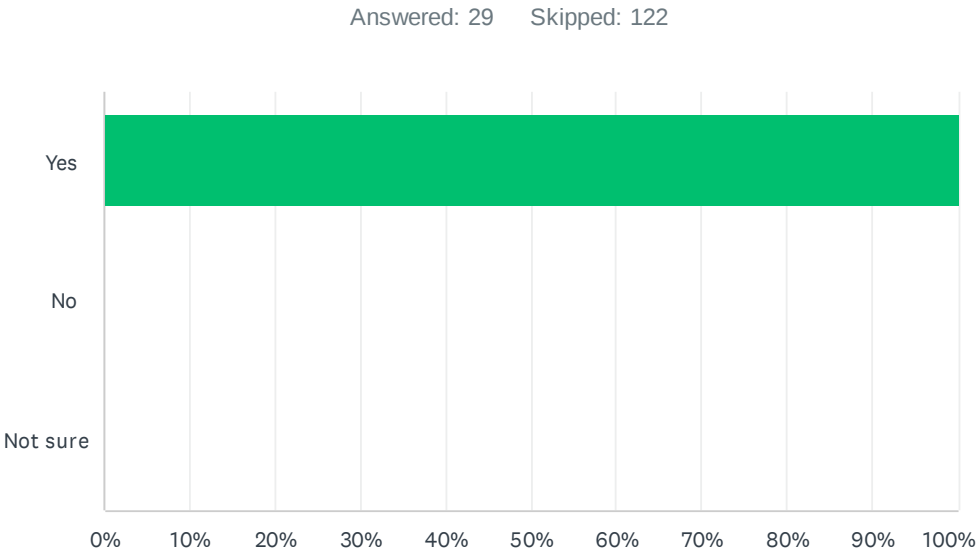
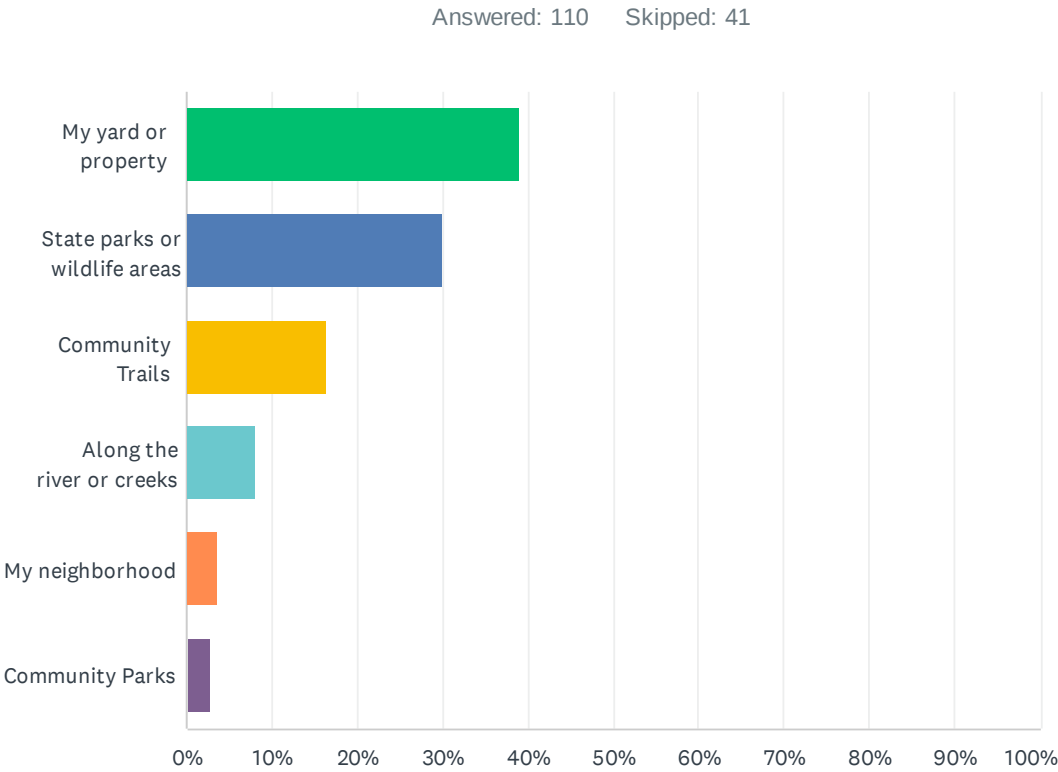
| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES | |
|----------------|-----------|----|
| Trinidad | 90.82% | 89 |
| Branson | 4.08% | 4 |
| Weston | 4.08% | 4 |
| Aguilar | 1.02% | 1 |
| Kim | 0.00% | 0 |
| Model | 0.00% | 0 |
| TOTAL | | 98 |

Las Animas County Outdoor Rec and Economic Impact Study

Las Animas County Outdoor Rec and Economic Impact Study

Q3 Where do you like to spend your free time outside in Las Animas County?

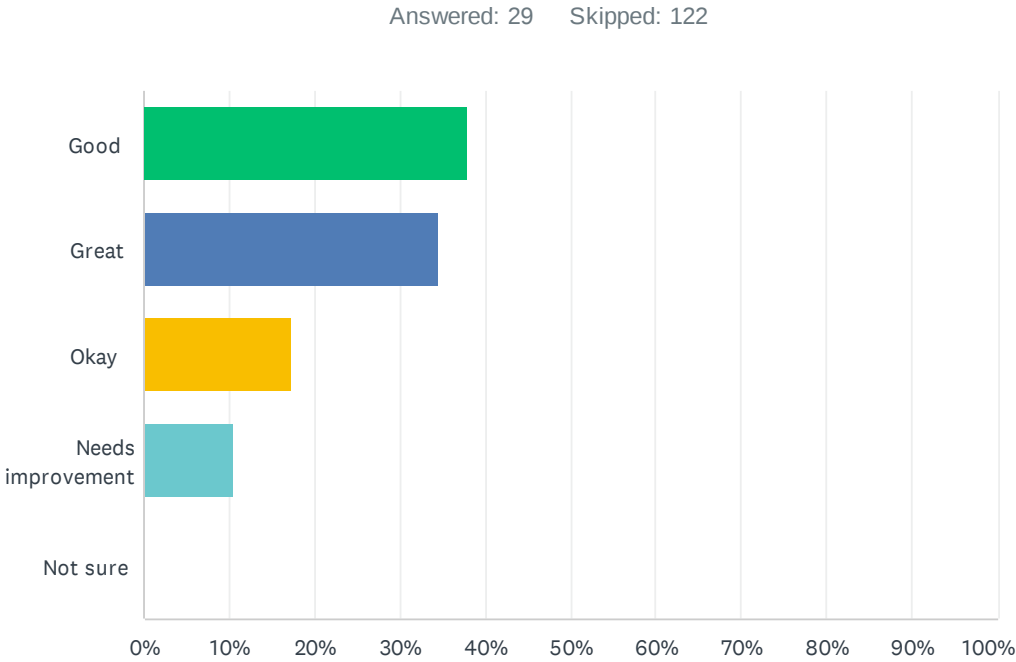
Q4 Have you ever visited Las Animas County and taken part in outdoor activities?



| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES | |
|----------------|-----------|----|
| Yes | 100.00% | 29 |
| No | 0.00% | 0 |
| Not sure | 0.00% | 0 |
| TOTAL | | 29 |

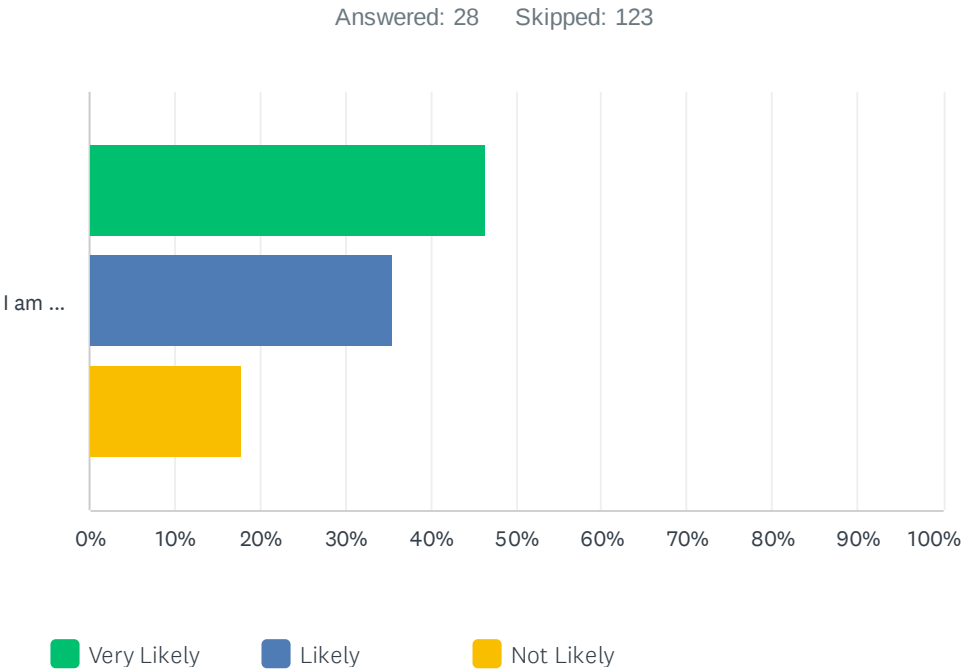
| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES | |
|-------------------------------|-----------|-----|
| My yard or property | 39.09% | 43 |
| State parks or wildlife areas | 30.00% | 33 |
| Community Trails | 16.36% | 18 |
| Along the river or creeks | 8.18% | 9 |
| My neighborhood | 3.64% | 4 |
| Community Parks | 2.73% | 3 |
| TOTAL | | 110 |

Q5 How was your experience?



| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES | |
|-------------------|-----------|----|
| Good | 37.93% | 11 |
| Great | 34.48% | 10 |
| Okay | 17.24% | 5 |
| Needs improvement | 10.34% | 3 |
| Not sure | 0.00% | 0 |
| TOTAL | | 29 |

Q6 How likely are you to recommend visiting Las Animas County to friends or family to take part in outdoor activities?

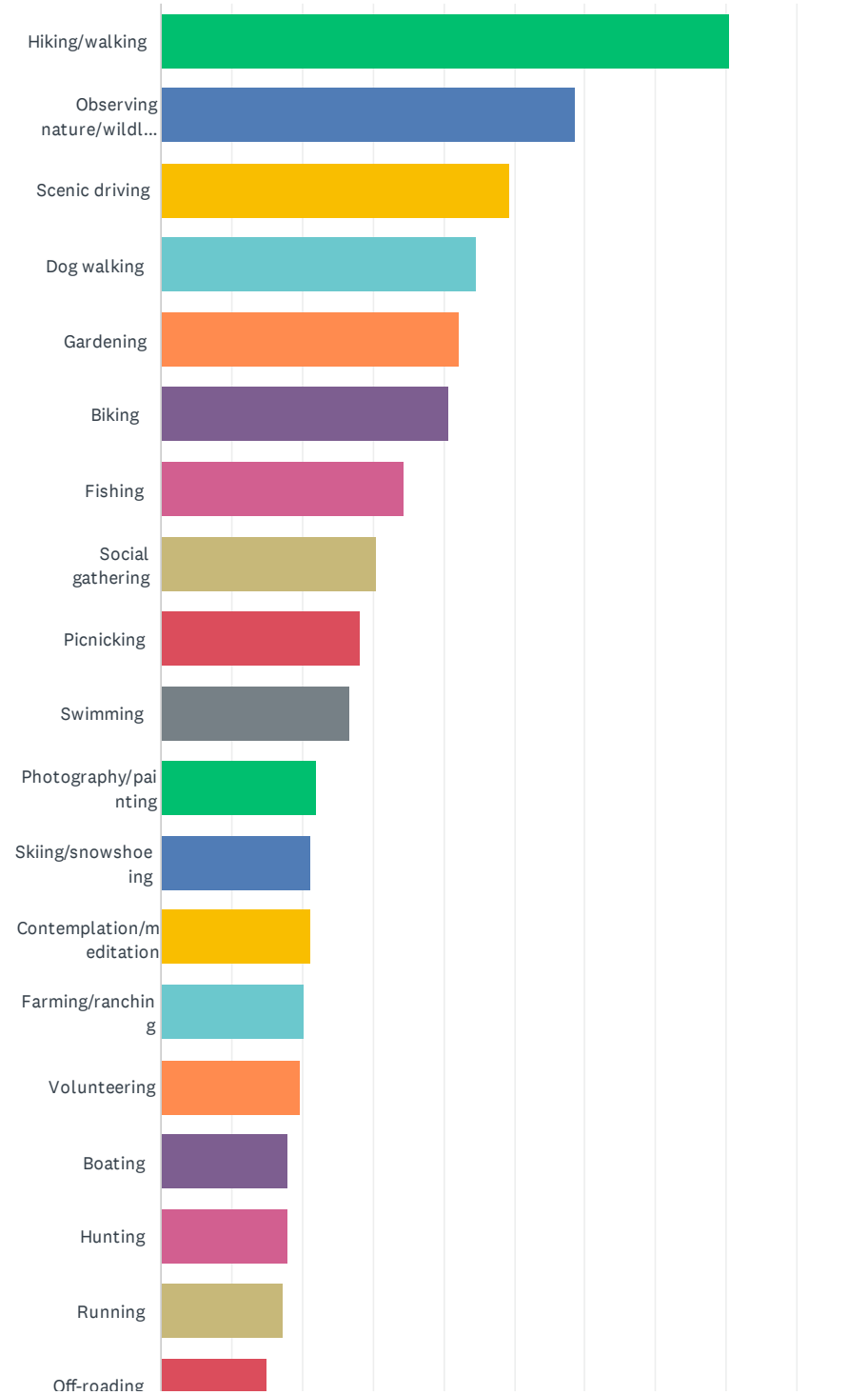


| | VERY LIKELY | LIKELY | NOT LIKELY | TOTAL | WEIGHTED AVERAGE |
|----------|--------------|--------------|-------------|-------|------------------|
| I am ... | 46.43% 13 | 35.71% 10 | 17.86% 5 | 28 | 1.71 |

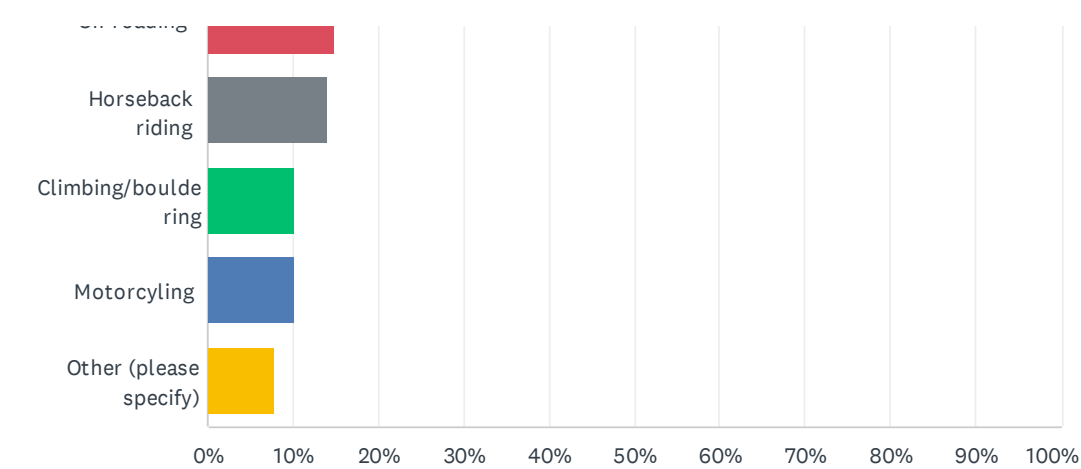
Las Animas County Outdoor Rec and Economic Impact Study

Q7 What are your favorite outdoor activities

Answered: 128 Skipped: 23



Las Animas County Outdoor Rec and Economic Impact Study

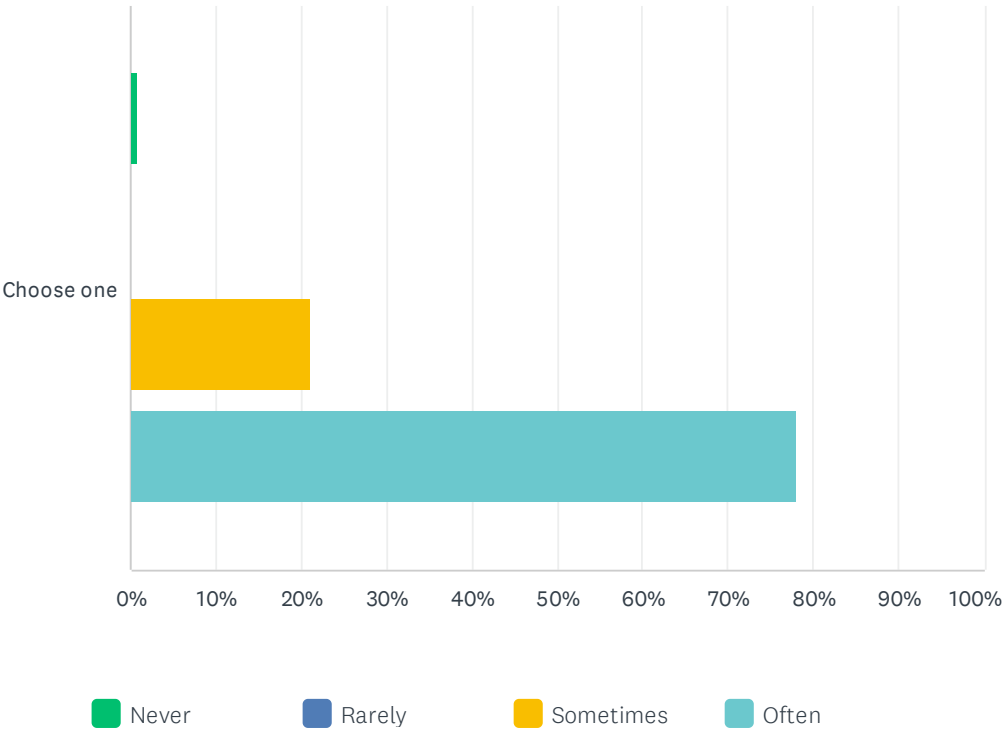


Las Animas County Outdoor Rec and Economic Impact Study

| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES | |
|---------------------------|-----------|-----|
| Hiking/walking | 80.47% | 103 |
| Observing nature/wildlife | 58.59% | 75 |
| Scenic driving | 49.22% | 63 |
| Dog walking | 44.53% | 57 |
| Gardening | 42.19% | 54 |
| Biking | 40.63% | 52 |
| Fishing | 34.38% | 44 |
| Social gathering | 30.47% | 39 |
| Picnicking | 28.13% | 36 |
| Swimming | 26.56% | 34 |
| Photography/painting | 21.88% | 28 |
| Skiing/snowshoeing | 21.09% | 27 |
| Contemplation/meditation | 21.09% | 27 |
| Farming/ranching | 20.31% | 26 |
| Volunteering | 19.53% | 25 |
| Boating | 17.97% | 23 |
| Hunting | 17.97% | 23 |
| Running | 17.19% | 22 |
| Off-roading | 14.84% | 19 |
| Horseback riding | 14.06% | 18 |
| Climbing/bouldering | 10.16% | 13 |
| Motorcycling | 10.16% | 13 |
| Other (please specify) | 7.81% | 10 |
| Total Respondents: 128 | | |

Q8 How often do you spend your free time outside?

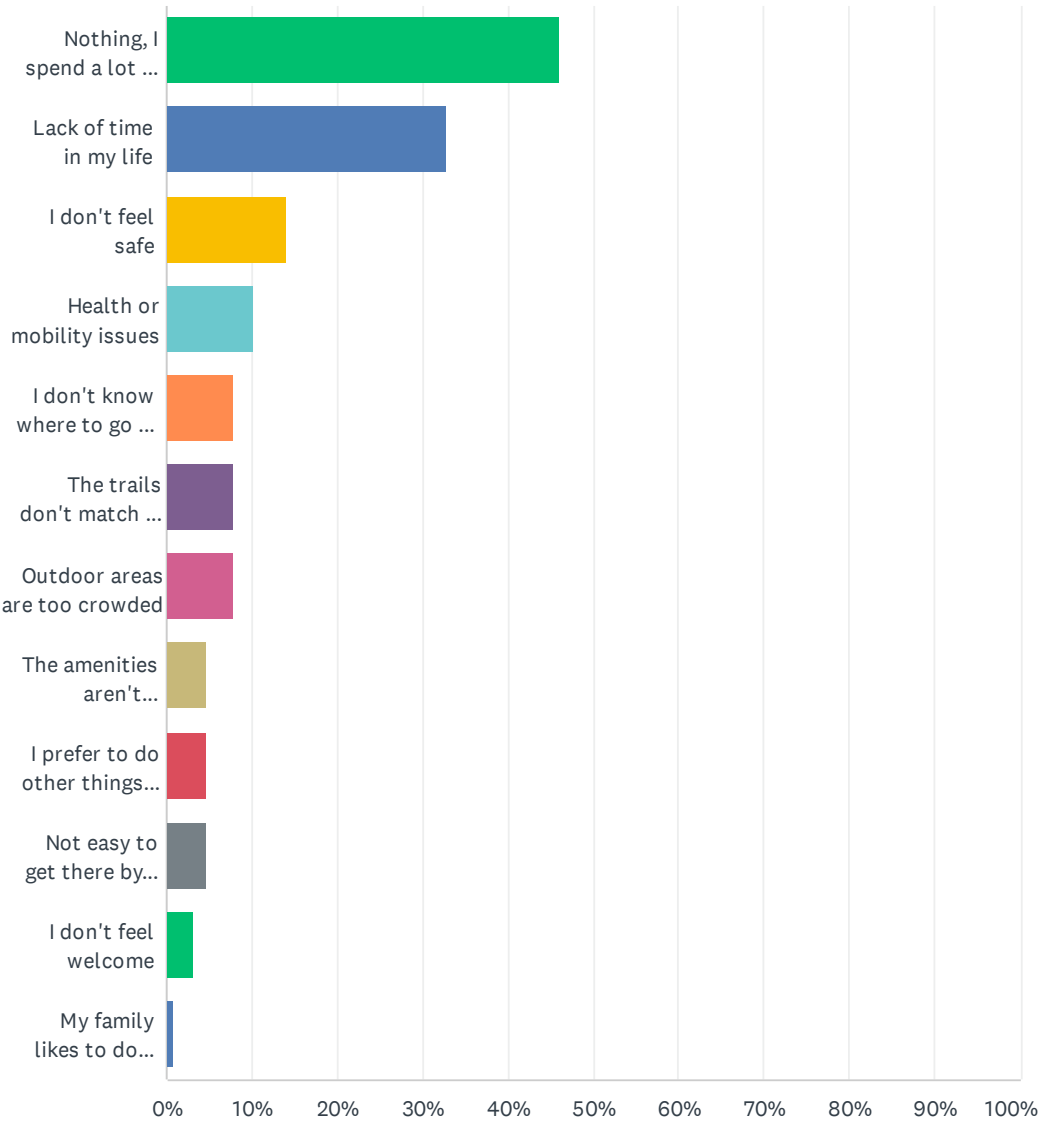
Answered: 128 Skipped: 23



| | NEVER | RARELY | SOMETIMES | OFTEN | TOTAL | WEIGHTED AVERAGE |
|------------|-------|--------|-----------|--------|-------|------------------|
| Choose one | 0.78% | 0.00% | 21.09% | 78.13% | 128 | 3.77 |
| | 1 | 0 | 27 | 100 | | |

Q9 What keeps you from spending more of your free time outside?

Answered: 128 Skipped: 23



Las Animas County Outdoor Rec and Economic Impact Study

Q10 Please rate the condition of community parks, trails and facilities (not including state parks and wildlife areas).

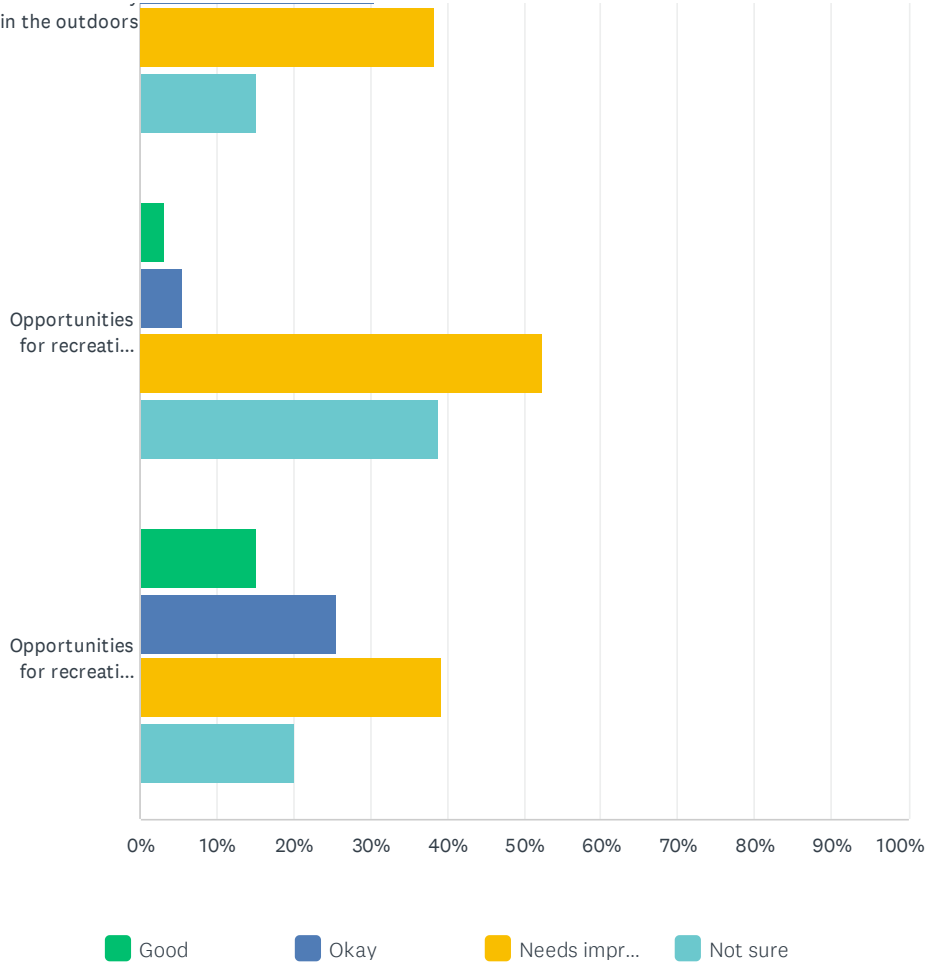
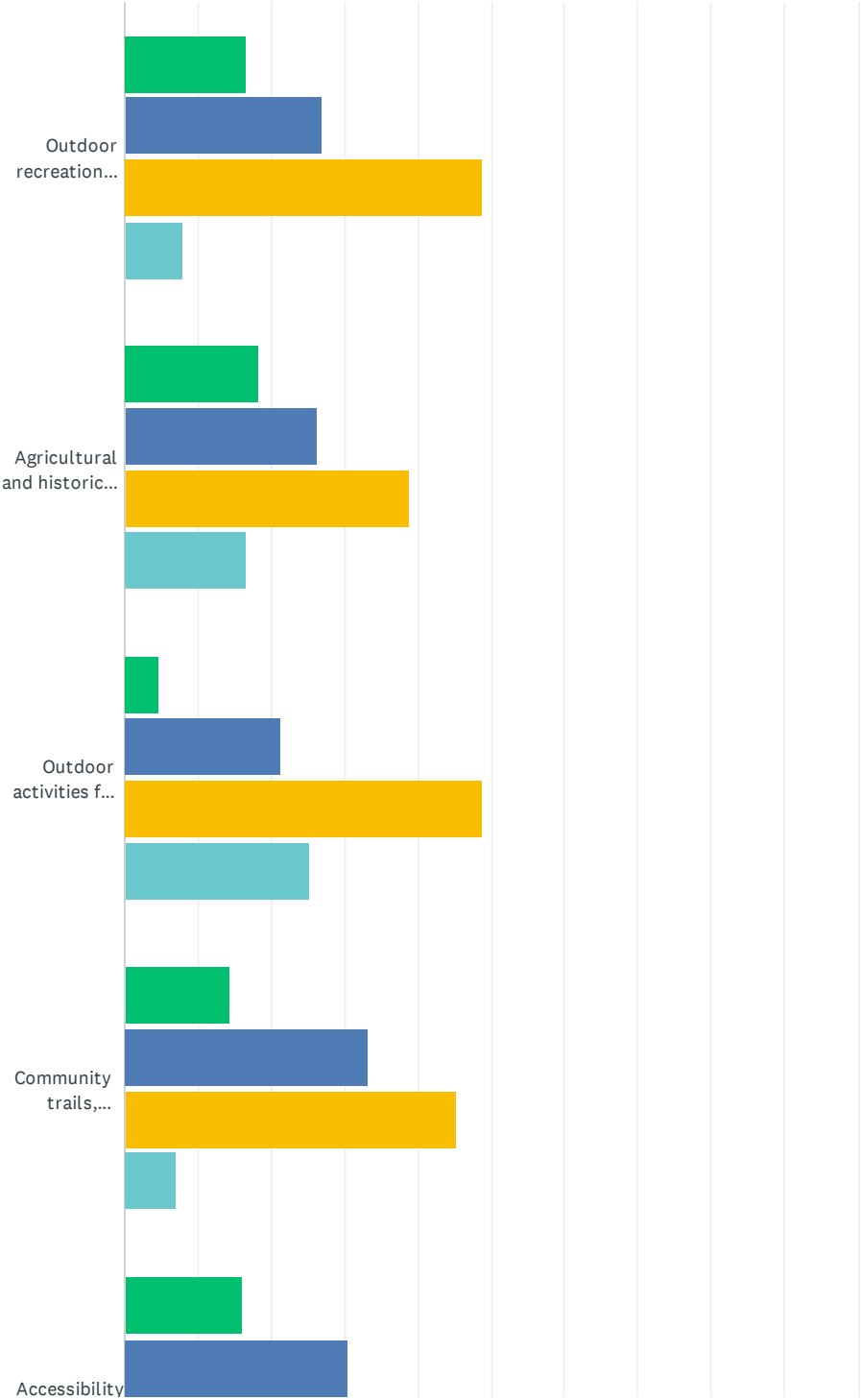
A horizontal bar chart with a white background and light gray vertical grid lines at 10% intervals. The x-axis is labeled from 0% to 100% at the bottom. The y-axis has four categories: 'They are better off with the EU' (green bar, ~9%), 'They are better off without the EU' (blue bar, ~31%), 'They are not sure' (yellow bar, ~52%), and 'Don't know' (teal bar, ~7%).

| Response | Percentage |
|------------------------------------|------------|
| They are better off with the EU | 9% |
| They are better off without the EU | 31% |
| They are not sure | 52% |
| Don't know | 7% |

| | GOOD | OKAY | NEEDS IMPROVEMENT | NOT SURE | TOTAL | WEIGHTED AVERAGE |
|--------------|-------|--------|-------------------|----------|-------|------------------|
| They are ... | 9.45% | 30.71% | 52.76% | 7.09% | | |
| | 12 | 39 | 67 | 9 | 127 | 1.96 |

Q11 Please rate your experience or perceptions of the following outdoor recreation opportunities in Las Animas County:

Answered: 128 Skipped: 23



| | GOOD | OKAY | NEEDS IMPROVEMENT | NOT SURE | TOTAL | WEIGHTED AVERAGE |
|---|--------------|--------------|-------------------|--------------|-------|------------------|
| Outdoor recreation events and programs | 16.54% 21 | 26.77% 34 | 48.82% 62 | 7.87% 10 | 127 | 2.48 |
| Agricultural and historic tourism | 18.25% 23 | 26.19% 33 | 38.89% 49 | 16.67% 21 | 126 | 2.54 |
| Outdoor activities for Children, Youth, and Families | 4.72% 6 | 21.26% 27 | 48.82% 62 | 25.20% 32 | 127 | 2.94 |
| Community trails, trailheads, and facilities | 14.29% 18 | 33.33% 42 | 45.24% 57 | 7.14% 9 | 126 | 2.45 |
| Accessibility in the outdoors | 16.00% 20 | 30.40% 38 | 38.40% 48 | 15.20% 19 | 125 | 2.53 |
| Opportunities for recreation in East County (East of Trinidad) | 3.17% 4 | 5.56% 7 | 52.38% 66 | 38.89% 49 | 126 | 3.27 |
| Opportunities for recreation in West County (Trinidad and West of I-25) | 15.20% 19 | 25.60% 32 | 39.20% 49 | 20.00% 25 | 125 | 2.64 |

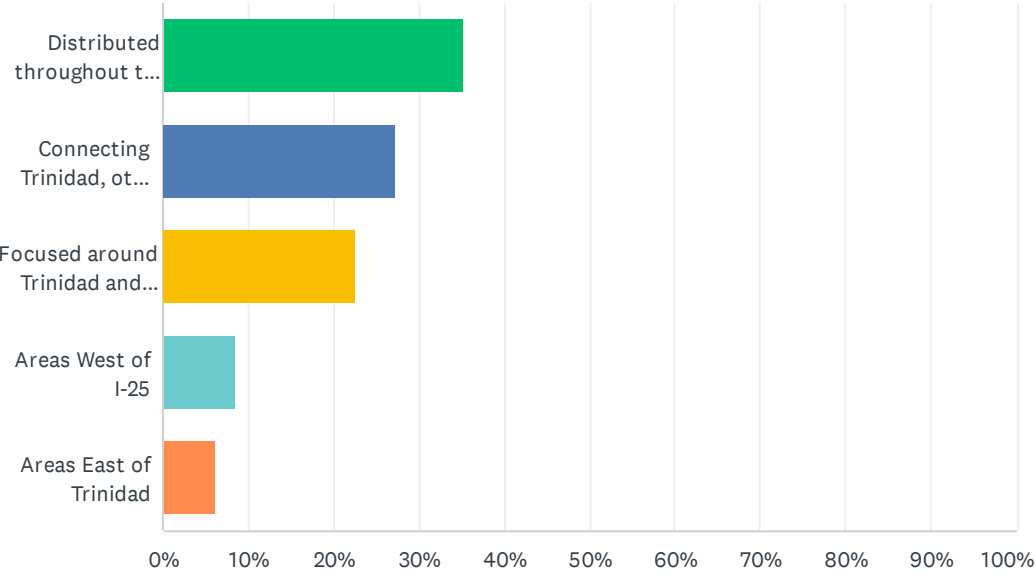
Q12 What improvements to outdoor recreation opportunities would you like to see in Las Animas County? Why?

Answered: 128 Skipped: 23

Las Animas County Outdoor Rec and Economic Impact Study

Q13 Where would you most like to see improvements to outdoor recreation amenities?

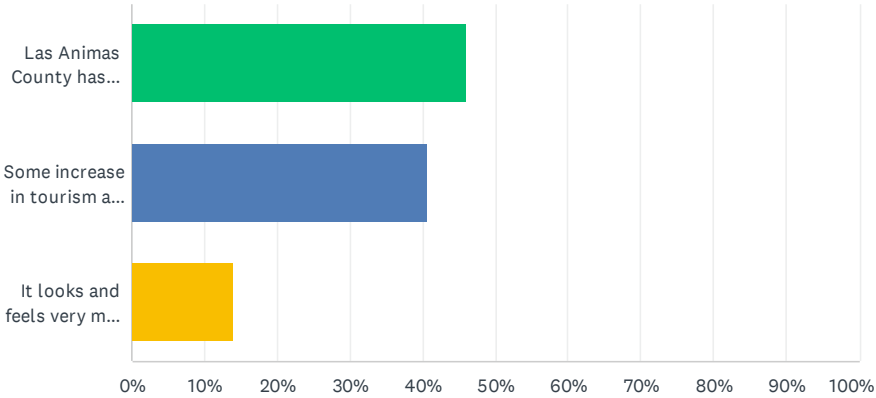
Answered: 128 Skipped: 23



| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES | |
|--|-----------|-----|
| Distributed throughout the County | 35.16% | 45 |
| Connecting Trinidad, other towns, and destinations | 27.34% | 35 |
| Focused around Trinidad and other towns | 22.66% | 29 |
| Areas West of I-25 | 8.59% | 11 |
| Areas East of Trinidad | 6.25% | 8 |
| TOTAL | | 128 |

Q14 Imagine Las Animas County in 10 years. Which of the following statements describe what you would like to see?

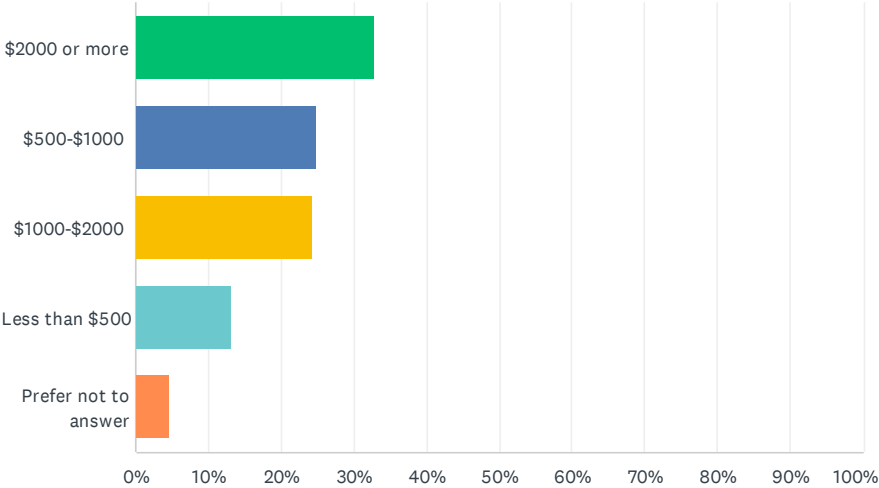
Answered: 128 Skipped: 23



| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES | |
|--|-----------|----|
| Las Animas County has developed a thriving recreation economy with high-quality recreational amenities, increased tourism, and increased cost of living for residents. | 46.09% | 59 |
| Some increase in tourism and supporting recreational amenities has helped grow the local economy. | 40.63% | 52 |
| It looks and feels very much like it does today, with some outdoor recreation, some tourism, and little economic development. | 14.06% | 18 |
| Total Respondents: 128 | | |

Q15 How much do you spend annually on outdoor recreation activities (including equipment, travel, food, lodging, etc.)?

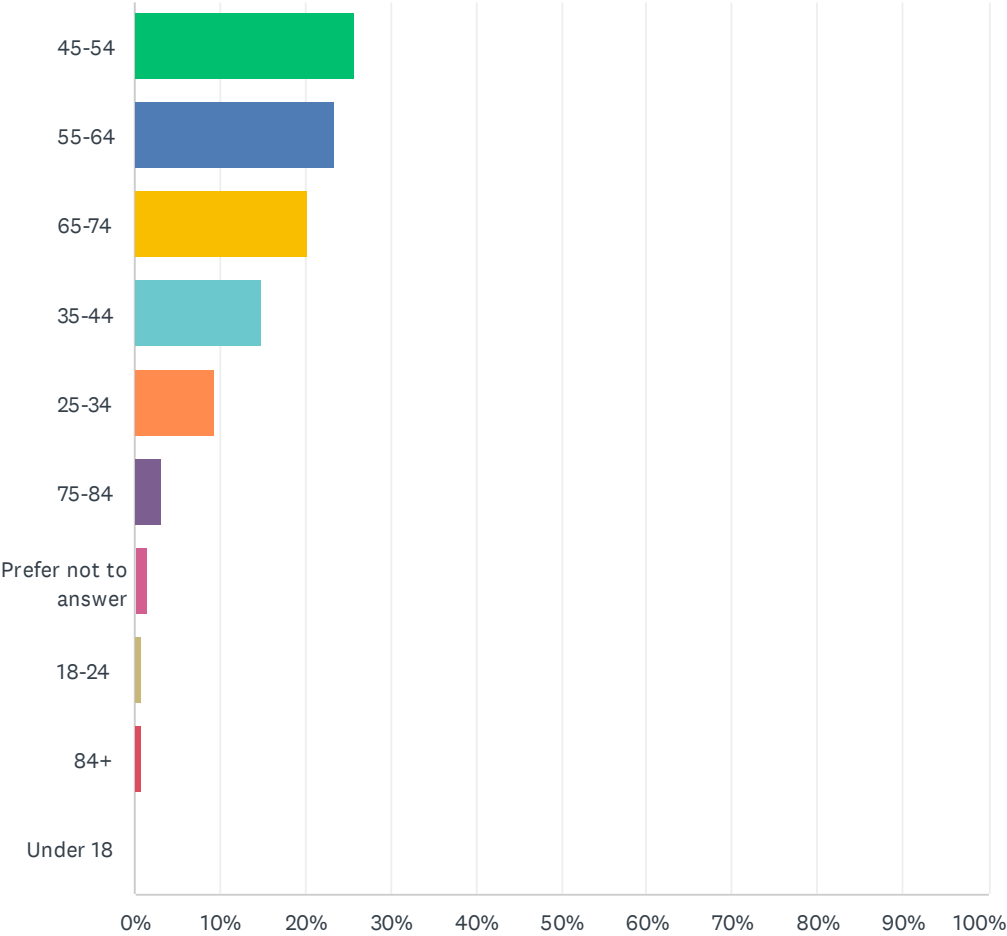
Answered: 128 Skipped: 23



| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES | |
|----------------------|-----------|-----|
| \$2000 or more | 32.81% | 42 |
| \$500-\$1000 | 25.00% | 32 |
| \$1000-\$2000 | 24.22% | 31 |
| Less than \$500 | 13.28% | 17 |
| Prefer not to answer | 4.69% | 6 |
| TOTAL | | 128 |

Q16 How old are you?

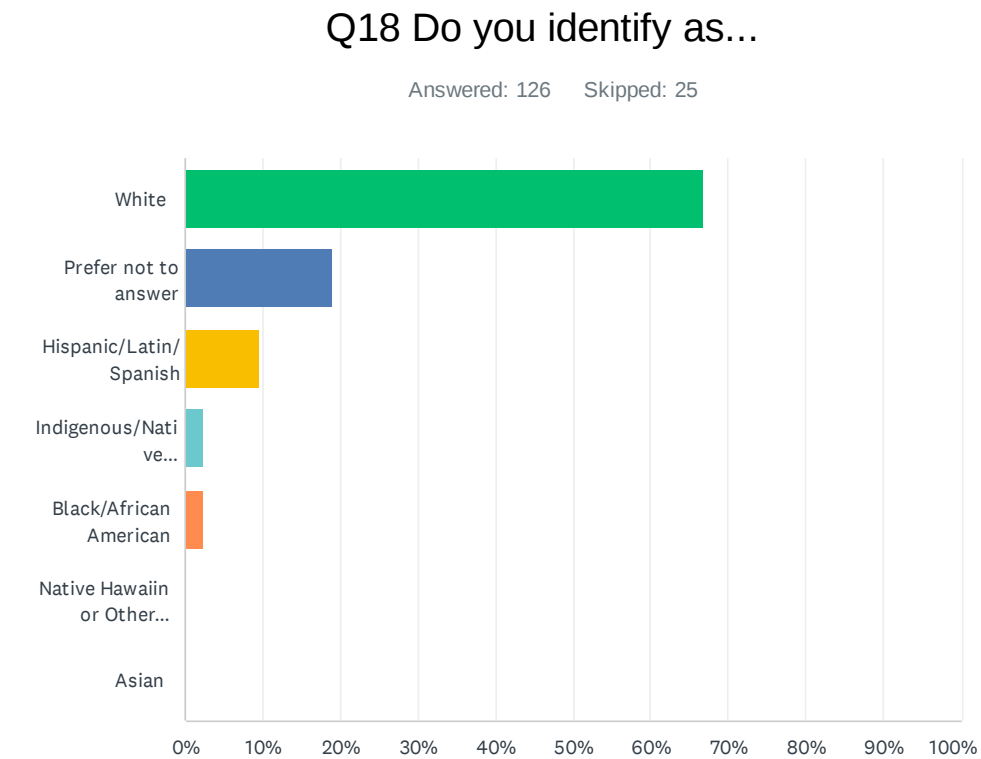
Answered: 128 Skipped: 23



Las Animas County Outdoor Rec and Economic Impact Study

| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES | |
|----------------------|-----------|-----|
| 45-54 | 25.78% | 33 |
| 55-64 | 23.44% | 30 |
| 65-74 | 20.31% | 26 |
| 35-44 | 14.84% | 19 |
| 25-34 | 9.38% | 12 |
| 75-84 | 3.13% | 4 |
| Prefer not to answer | 1.56% | 2 |
| 18-24 | 0.78% | 1 |
| 84+ | 0.78% | 1 |
| Under 18 | 0.00% | 0 |
| TOTAL | | 128 |

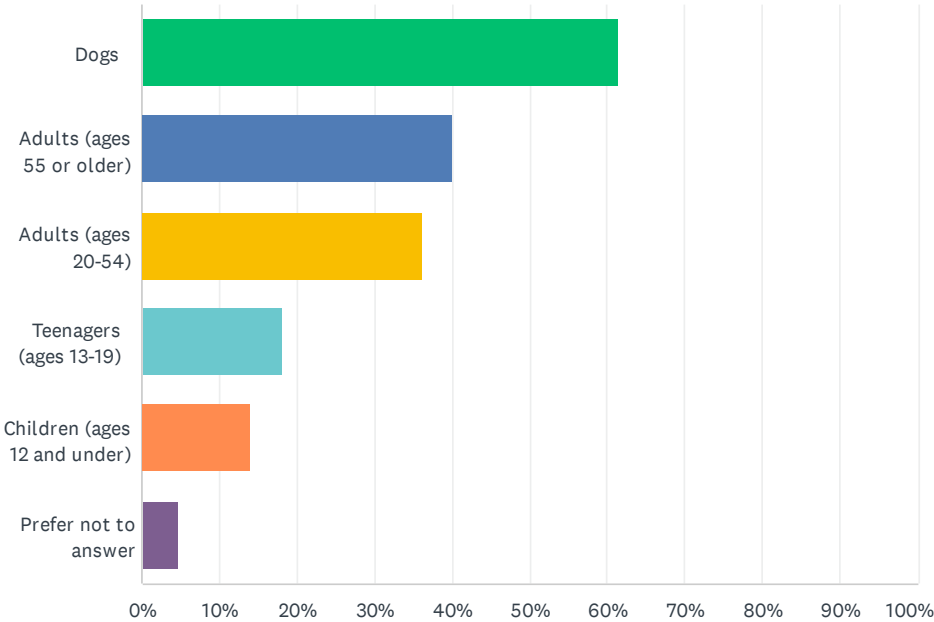
Las Animas County Outdoor Rec and Economic Impact Study



| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES | |
|---|-----------|-----|
| White | 66.67% | 84 |
| Prefer not to answer | 19.05% | 24 |
| Hispanic/Latin/Spanish | 9.52% | 12 |
| Indigenous/Native American/Alaska Native | 2.38% | 3 |
| Black/African American | 2.38% | 3 |
| Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander | 0.00% | 0 |
| Asian | 0.00% | 0 |
| TOTAL | | 126 |

Q17 Do any of the following live in your household? (including yourself)

Answered: 127 Skipped: 24



| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES | |
|------------------------------|-----------|----|
| Dogs | 61.42% | 78 |
| Adults (ages 55 or older) | 40.16% | 51 |
| Adults (ages 20-54) | 36.22% | 46 |
| Teenagers (ages 13-19) | 18.11% | 23 |
| Children (ages 12 and under) | 14.17% | 18 |
| Prefer not to answer | 4.72% | 6 |
| Total Respondents: 127 | | |

SURVEY DETAIL

In response to survey question 12: What improvements to outdoor recreation opportunities

Would you like to see in Las Animas County? Why?

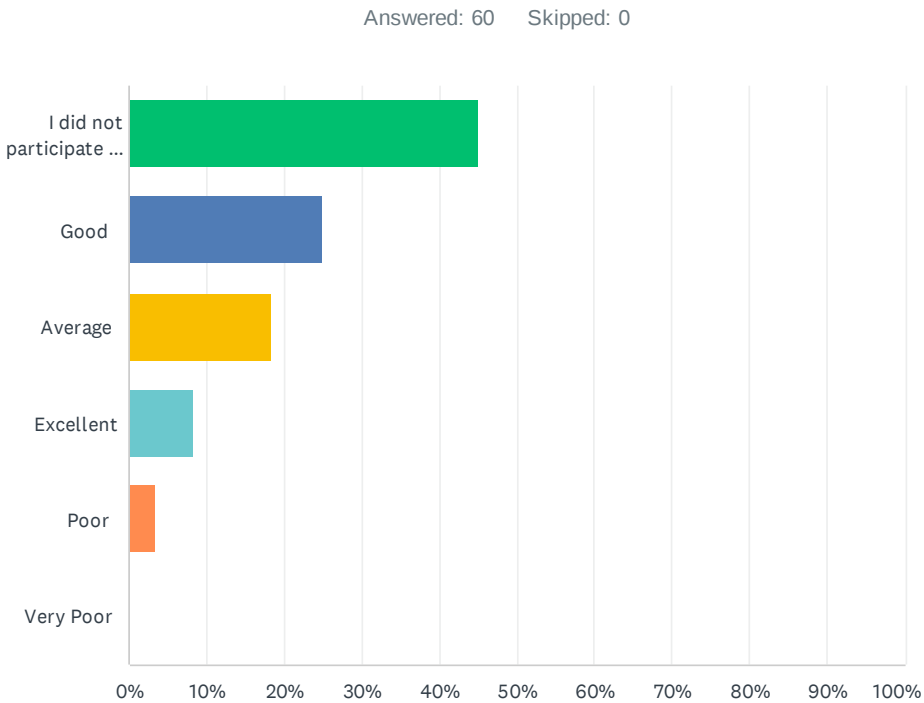
- “Improved/more trails and trail connections as well as maps and guides so you know what areas of the county are accessible to the public. I would also appreciate access to important historical and geological sites that would be fun to access and learn something. I like the mining signs along some of the roads outside of Aguilar that explain what happened in the area.”
- “Easy to find trailhead, map of trails, parking lot, trash cans, dog friendly, water fountain for people and dogs, shaded trails, better marked trails, sign on roads with arrows to outdoor activities.”
- “More family friendly options with shade and easy parking.”
- “More signage and formal tourism hubs directing recreationists to safe amenities. Improved trails and facilities that help make them welcoming. Family-friendly activities would be very helpful.”
- “I would like to see the trails in and around town become more walkable, bikeable, and connected. It should be easy and safe to walk or bike anywhere in town, and also to the state parks.”
- “Better signage, more bear proof trash cans on trails.” “Safer trails for observing wildlife like songbirds.”
- “Regional connections between parks and trails. Rangers on local trails like Boulevard or Wormhole (could be volunteers). Better education and opportunities to experience outdoor rec for younger folks so they can appreciate our natural spaces and resources. More Multi-Use Paths like the riverwalk in Trinidad, which needs some love.”
- “Bike lanes in town and more bike racks.”
- “Homeless in Trinidad is a huge issue and affects the area and safety of doing things outside, especially family oriented. The county desperately needs a homeless support center and a way for them to be active partners in keeping the outdoors clean and safe for everyone.”

- “Better use of the County Fairgrounds. It’s not being used to its full potential.”
- “More public access to lands, build out of trail network (goal of min. 10 miles of trail for a town the size of Trinidad), optimizing town of Trinidad for bikes, continued work on Riverwalk to diversify rec options/population served, highlight local history and acknowledge farm/ranch/Santa Fe trail legacy at rec sites (commemorative signage, benches, QR codes with historical info.”
- “Where to find a list of outdoor recreations and how to get there.”
- “Trails! Why doesn’t Las Animas have places to hike, camp and backcountry camp? It’s just as beautiful and has similar places to go- and huge swaths of public land with one or no trails on it. There are literally only two trails in Trinidad and you can easily complete them in one day. It gets boring going to the same place every day.”
- “There isn’t much info on what is east of Trinidad. I would like to see a few more recreational things to do.”
- “A greater variety of opportunities that 1) are well-planned to protect natural resources, 2) benefit private landowners that provide and/or are adjacent to recreation areas.”
- “Trail maps, organized events, more promotion Colorado-wide about our great views, outdoor rec.”

ONLINE SURVEY #2

Las Animas County Outdoor Recreation & Economic Impact Study - Final Public Review and Comments

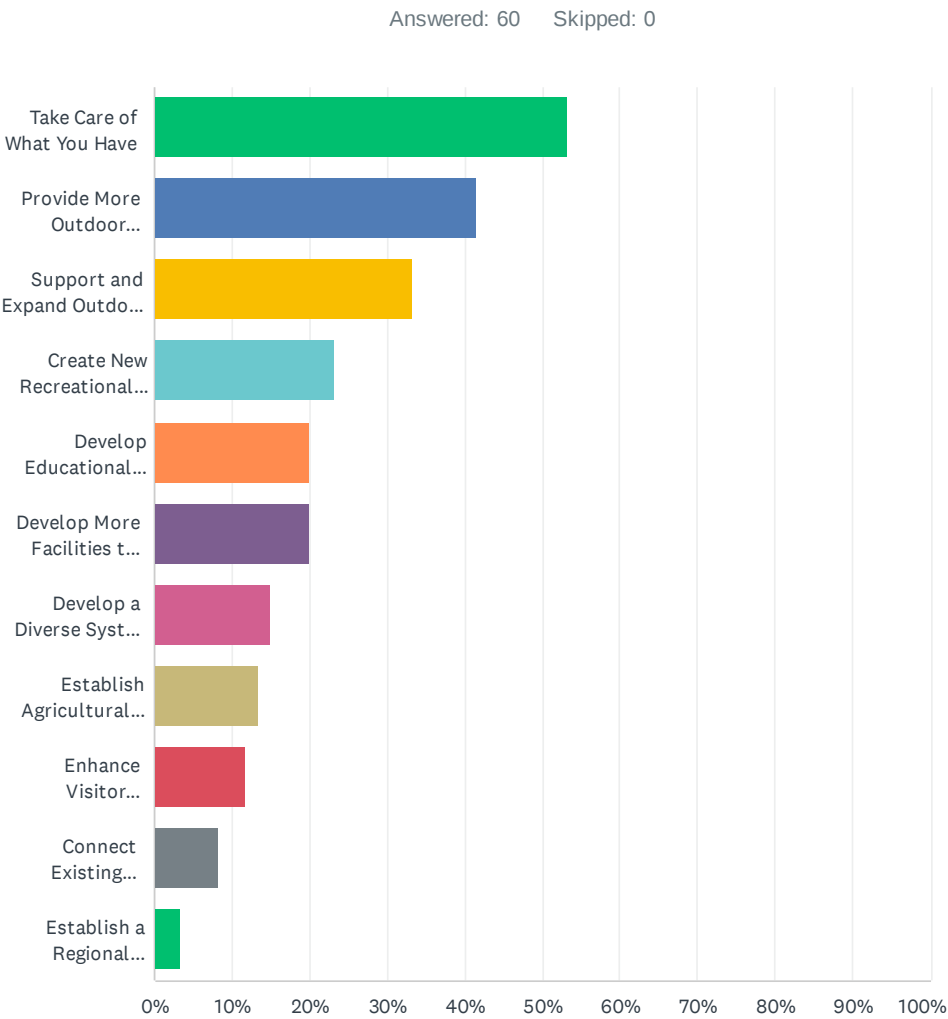
Q1 Many of you were involved in the planning process for the Las Animas County Outdoor Recreation & Economic Impact Study through virtual interest groups, tabling events, surveys, and other discussions. Based on your experience, how would you rate the outreach and engagement for this study?



| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES | |
|---|-----------|----|
| I did not participate in the engagement process | 45.00% | 27 |
| Good | 25.00% | 15 |
| Average | 18.33% | 11 |
| Excellent | 8.33% | 5 |
| Poor | 3.33% | 2 |
| Very Poor | 0.00% | 0 |
| TOTAL | | 60 |

Las Animas County Outdoor Recreation & Economic Impact Study - Final Public Review and Comments

Q2 The following Strategies were created based on community engagement to guide the development of outdoor recreation in Las Animas County. Which of the 11 Strategies are most important to you? (Select up to three responses)



Las Animas County Outdoor Recreation & Economic Impact Study - Final Public Review and Comments

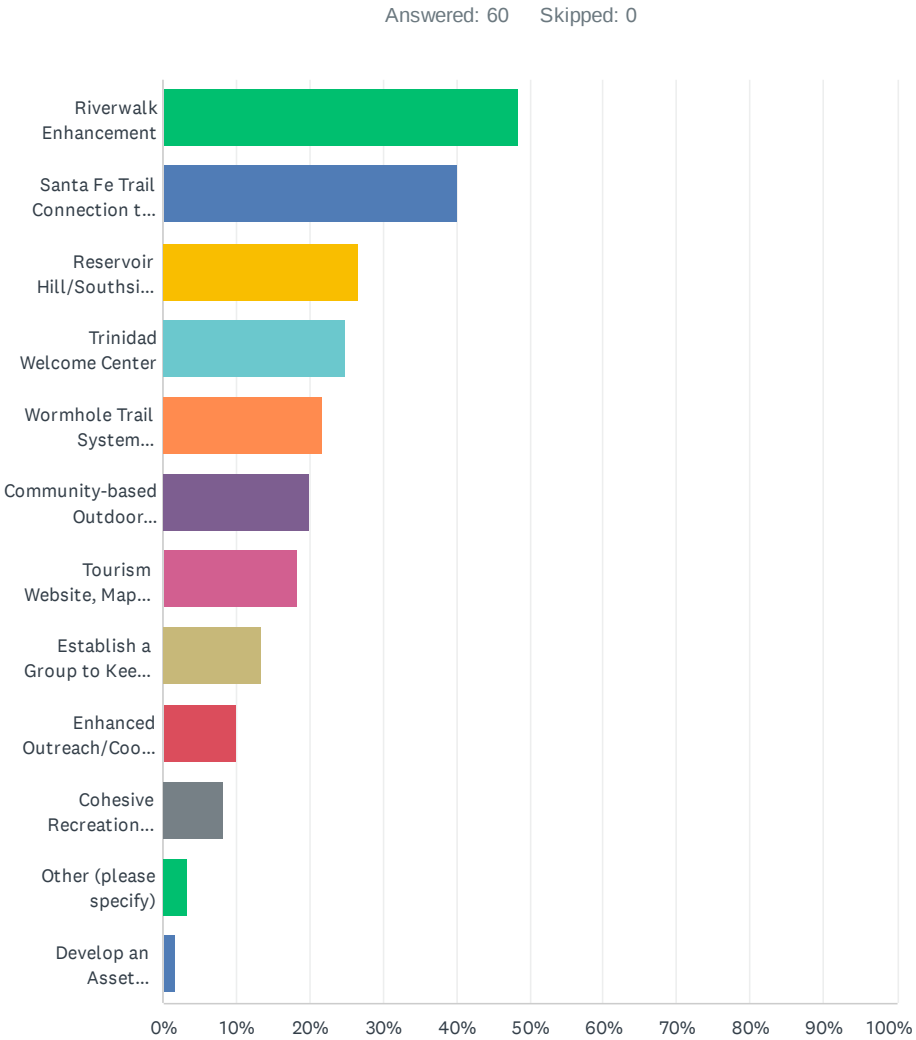
| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES | |
|--|-----------|----|
| Take Care of What You Have | 53.33% | 32 |
| Provide More Outdoor Programming for Youth and Families | 41.67% | 25 |
| Support and Expand Outdoor Recreation Events to Cover All Four Seasons | 33.33% | 20 |
| Create New Recreational Destinations and Experiences Throughout the County | 23.33% | 14 |
| Develop Educational Programs, Media, and Facilities Opportunities | 20.00% | 12 |
| Develop More Facilities to Accommodate Organized Sports | 20.00% | 12 |
| Develop a Diverse System of Trails Throughout the County | 15.00% | 9 |
| Establish Agricultural Based Recreational Opportunities | 13.33% | 8 |
| Enhance Visitor Information, Signs, and Wayfinding | 11.67% | 7 |
| Connect Existing Recreational Destinations | 8.33% | 5 |
| Establish a Regional Management Entity | 3.33% | 2 |
| Total Respondents: 60 | | |

Las Animas County Outdoor Recreation & Economic Impact Study - Final Public Review and Comments

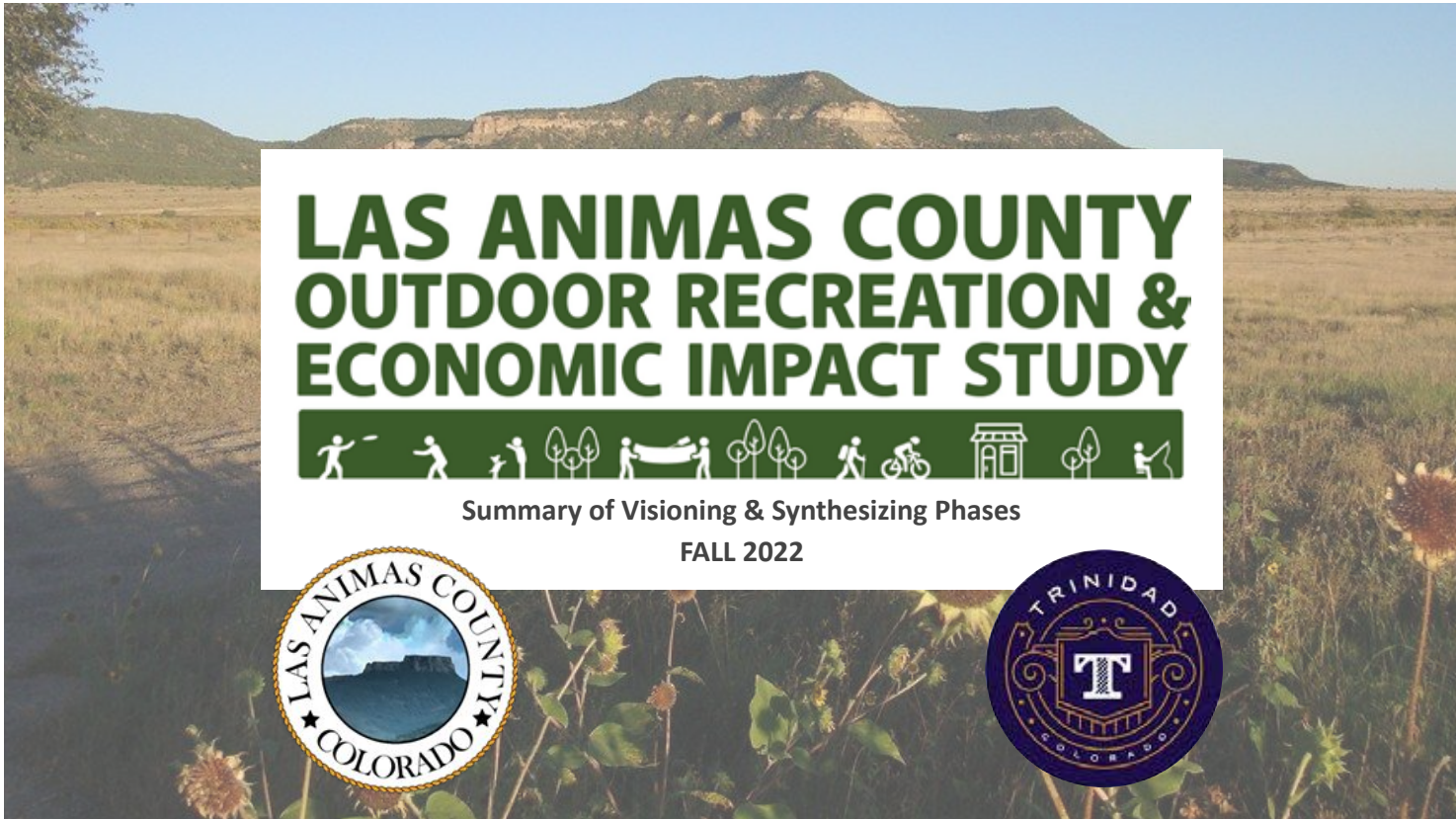
| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES | |
|--|-----------|----|
| Riverwalk Enhancement | 48.33% | 29 |
| Santa Fe Trail Connection to Fishers Peak State Park | 40.00% | 24 |
| Reservoir Hill/Southside Park Enhancements | 26.67% | 16 |
| Trinidad Welcome Center | 25.00% | 15 |
| Wormhole Trail System Expansion | 21.67% | 13 |
| Community-based Outdoor Programming, i.e. Southern Colorado Outdoor Initiative | 20.00% | 12 |
| Tourism Website, Map, Social Media,+ Branding Update | 18.33% | 11 |
| Establish a Group to Keep the Project Moving Forward | 13.33% | 8 |
| Enhanced Outreach/Coordination with Private Camping Providers | 10.00% | 6 |
| Cohesive Recreation Signage and Wayfinding throughout the County | 8.33% | 5 |
| Other (please specify) | 3.33% | 2 |
| Develop an Asset Assessment and Maintenance Strategy for Existing Facilities | 1.67% | 1 |
| Total Respondents: 60 | | |

Las Animas County Outdoor Recreation & Economic Impact Study - Final Public Review and Comments

Q3 Which of the Early Action Projects outlined in the Study are you most excited about? (Select up to three responses)



SUMMARY OF VISIONING PRESENTATION



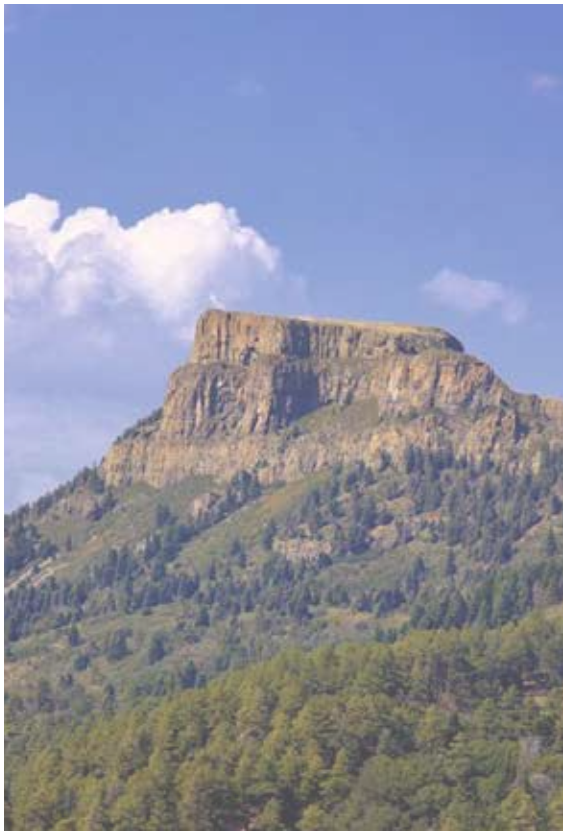
- // 1 Public Engagement to Date
- // 2 Findings: Tabling Events and Interest Groups
- // 3 Findings: Online Survey
- // 4 Findings: Overall Themes
- // 5 Next Steps



Planning Process

| VISIONING <i>Summer</i> | SYNTHESIZING <i>Summer/Fall</i> | EVALUATING <i>Fall</i> | PRIORITIZING <i>Winter/Spring</i> |
|--|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Establish community goals for an outdoor recreation economy in Las Animas County✓ Generating all possible recreational strategies | <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Qualitative analysis✓ Initial screening to ensure ideas meet goals<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Narrow down list of potential recreational strategies | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quantitative analysis, focused on top tier strategies• Studying economic impacts• Assessing physical feasibility | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Final Community Priorities• Implementation Funding |

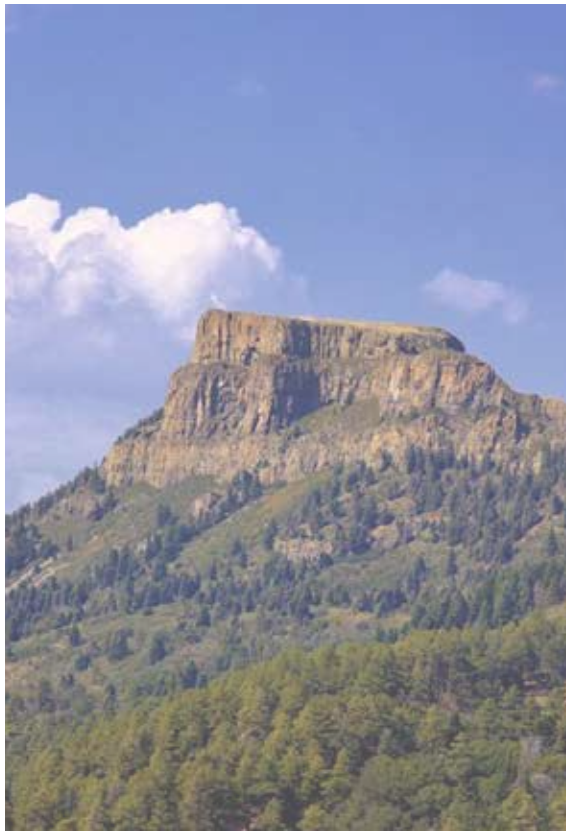
Process Advisory Committee



Tabling Events

- *Fishers Peak*
- *Santa Fe Trail Days*
- *Las Animas County Fair*

Engaged a diverse range of community members, including youth and families, disability advocates, as well as members of the Native and/or Latin communities



Interest Groups

- *7 Topic-based Interest Groups*
- *50 total participants (including repeats)*

Engaged a committed group of community leaders, educators, and business owners who attended more than one session, as well as group specific attendance from the Ag community, local state parks, private landowners, and local organizations like ABC Disabilities and the Youth Club of Trinidad.



Online Survey

- *18 Questions/10 minutes to complete*
- *Open for two months*
- *151 respondents*

Distributed during the Las Animas County Fair, through the website, by the PLT and PAC members to their local organizations, and by email blasts to our running contact list.



Findings: Tabling Events & Interest Groups

Tabling Events

Key Takeaways

- Excited to share all the unique and beautiful landscapes and locations in LAC
 - So many people would hang out showing us their favorite hunting, camping, or hiking spots, places they felt were so stunning & relatively undiscovered
- Many folks identified that they don't want to lose history and character of the community: Western, Ag, Mining, but to celebrate and highlight that through increased outdoor recreation activities.
- Many people mentioned concerns around Maintenance of existing trails & facilities, Safety, and Activities for children, youth, and families.

Interest Groups

Key Takeaways

So much excitement and engagement, gratitude for the time and process of this study

- Collaborative events & programs i.e. races
- Youth and family programs and activities
- Intro/beginner trails
- Trail connectivity
- Maintenance of trails/facilities
- Accessible parking, viewing areas and bathrooms
- Sensory gardens
- Welcome Center/Information Hub
- Agri-tainment learning center
- Farm and ranch stays
- Museum partnerships
- Experiential outdoor education and programs
- Educational signage
- & much, much more...



Findings: Online Survey

Online Survey

Who responded

- 23% live outside Las Animas County
- Of county residents who responded, 91% live in Trinidad
- 57% estimate spending \$1000 or more each year on outdoor activities
- Bell-curve distribution of ages, weighted towards those over 45
- 32% have children 19 or younger living at home
- 62% have dogs



Online Survey

Who responded

| | Survey Respondents | County Residents | Statewide Residents |
|---|--------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| Hispanic/Latin/Spanish | 9.5% | 40.7% | 22.3% |
| Indigenous/Native American/Alaska Native | 2.4% | 3.9% | 1.7% |
| Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander | 0.0% | 0.1% | 0.2% |
| Black/African American | 2.4% | 2.3% | 4.7% |
| Asian | 0.0% | 1.6% | 3.6% |
| White | 66.7% | 53.2% | 67.0% |
| Prefer not to answer | 19.1% | n/a | n/a |

Online Survey

Top Ten Outdoor Activities

| Activity | % |
|---------------------------|------|
| Hiking/walking | 80.5 |
| Observing nature/wildlife | 58.6 |
| Scenic driving | 49.2 |
| Dog walking | 44.5 |
| Gardening | 42.2 |
| Biking | 40.6 |
| Fishing | 34.4 |
| Social gathering | 30.5 |
| Picnicking | 28.1 |
| Swimming | 26.6 |

Online Survey

Time Outside

- 39% of respondents spend their free time outside in the county in their yard or property, more than the 30% who do so at state parks or wildlife areas
- 78% report spending their free time outside often; 21% sometimes
- 14% of respondents don't spend more free time outside because they don't feel safe, followed by 10% who cite health or mobility issues

Online Survey

Perceptions

- 27% rate their experience of outdoor activities in the county as okay or needing improvement
- 53% rate the condition of community parks, trails, and facilities (not including state parks and wildlife areas) as needing improvement

Online Survey

Experience or perceptions of specific recreation opportunities in the county

| | GOOD | OKAY | NEEDS IMPROVEMENT | NOT SURE |
|---|--------------|--------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Outdoor recreation events and programs | 16.54% 21 | 26.77% 34 | 48.82% 62 | 7.87% 10 |
| Agricultural and historic tourism | 18.25% 23 | 26.19% 33 | 38.89% 49 | 16.67% 21 |
| Outdoor activities for Children, Youth, and Families | 4.72% 6 | 21.26% 27 | 48.82% 62 | 25.20% 32 |
| Community trails, trailheads, and facilities | 14.29% 18 | 33.33% 42 | 45.24% 57 | 7.14% 9 |
| Accessibility in the outdoors | 16.00% 20 | 30.40% 38 | 38.40% 48 | 15.20% 19 |
| Opportunities for recreation in East County (East of Trinidad) | 3.17% 4 | 5.56% 7 | 52.38% 66 | 38.89% 49 |
| Opportunities for recreation in West County (Trinidad and West of I-25) | 15.20% 19 | 25.60% 32 | 39.20% 49 | 20.00% 25 |

Online Survey

Where would you most like to see improvements to outdoor recreation amenities?

| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES | |
|--|-----------|-----|
| Distributed throughout the County | 35.16% | 45 |
| Focused around Trinidad and other towns | 22.66% | 29 |
| Connecting Trinidad, other towns, and destinations | 27.34% | 35 |
| Areas East of Trinidad | 6.25% | 8 |
| Areas West of I-25 | 8.59% | 11 |
| TOTAL | | 128 |

Online Survey

Imagine Las Animas County in 10 years. Which of the following statements describe what you would like to see?

| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES | |
|--|-----------|----|
| It looks and feels very much like it does today, with some outdoor recreation, some tourism, and little economic development. | 14.06% | 18 |
| Some increase in tourism and supporting recreational amenities has helped grow the local economy. | 40.63% | 52 |
| Las Animas County has developed a thriving recreation economy with high-quality recreational amenities, increased tourism, and increased cost of living for residents. | 46.09% | 59 |
| Total Respondents: 128 | | |

Online Survey

What improvements to outdoor rec would you like to see in LAC and why?

128 long answer responses. Repeated ideas included:

- Improved trails and trail connections: 10 miles for Trinidad, work on Riverwalk
- Diverse use / multi-use trails: ATV and 4x4 access
- Maps and guides to highlight existing trails and areas- for safety and to know which areas are publicly accessible
- Better signage for safety and educational signs along trails and roadways to draw attention to important historic and geological sites. (example - mining signs outside of Aguilar)
- Recreational opportunities for kids, folks with disabilities, and the elderly (inclusivity)
- Cleaner and Safer facilities, environmental awareness = MAINTENANCE
- Family oriented camping spots
- Experiential programs- astronomy, archeology, history, encourage youth to explore county
- Embrace History and Character: Agriculture, Old West, Mining



Analysis

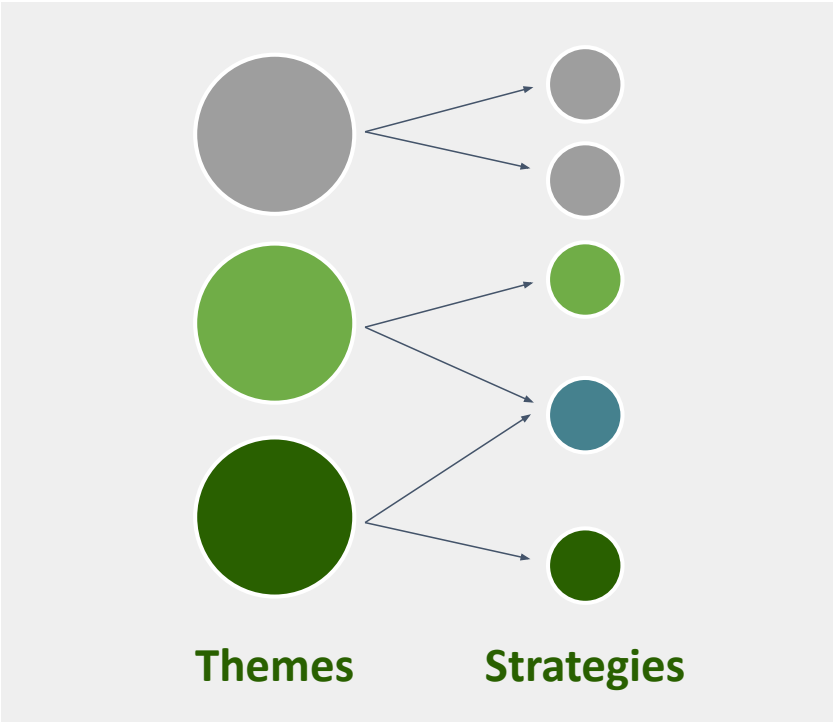


Public Engagement Themes

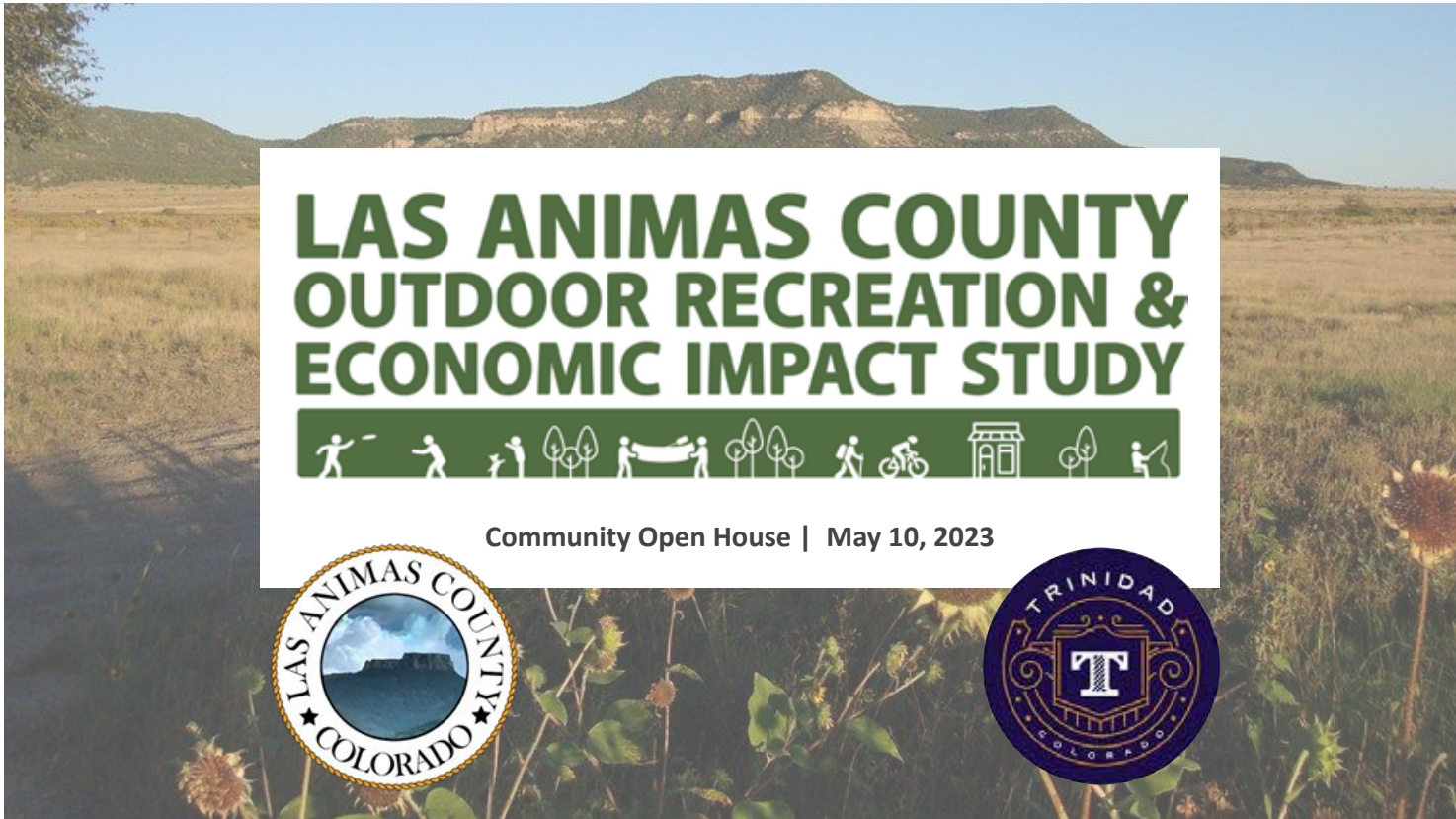
- **Access:** Biking, hunting/fishing, parking, river, rock climbing, camping
- **Agritourism:** Celebrating what makes Las Animas County unique, supporting farmers and ranchers through other revenue streams
- **Business incubation:** Supporting outdoor recreation retailers, attracting/fostering new outdoor recreation industry partners
- **Events/Programs:** Accessibility, communication, history & culture, races
- **Facilities:** Accessibility, outdoor ed, organized sports, rentals, swimming, welcome center
- **Information/Interpretation:** Print and online guides, signs, visitor orientation
- **Maintenance:** Needed repairs, safety concerns
- **Partnerships:** Events/programs, history culture, private landowners, volunteering
- **Programming:** Ag, children/youth, conservation, families, history & culture, native american, organized sports, skill building
- **Trails:** General, hiking, biking, atvs, horses
- **Transportation:** Parking, connectivity
- **Workforce Development:** Career development, partnering with Trinidad State College



Developing
Community-driven
Strategies



COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSE PRESENTATION #4

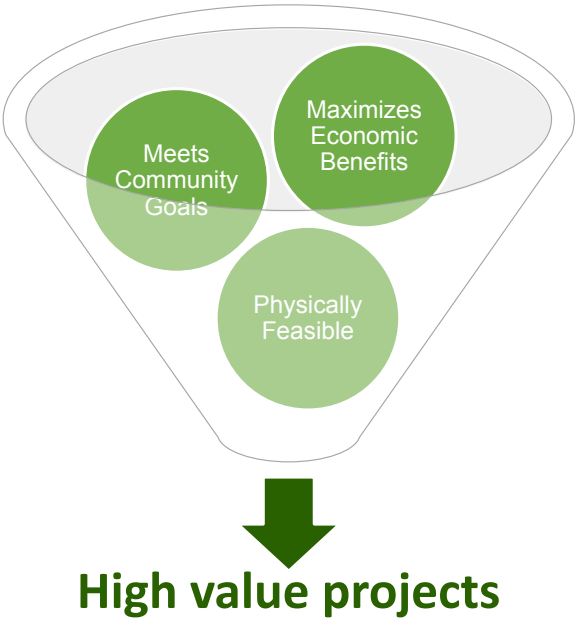


- // 1 Purpose & Goals
- // 2 Process
- // 3 Community Input
- // 4 Key Strategies + Economic & Maintenance Considerations
- // 5 Early Action Projects



Purpose & Goals

- ❖ To provide Las Animas County and the City of Trinidad with guidance around community and infrastructure impacts, needs, and opportunities related to outdoor recreation and the opening of Fishers Peak State Park.



Planning Process

Public Engagement Overview

| VISIONING | SYNTHESIZING | EVALUATING | PRIORITIZING |
|--|---|--|---|
| Summer 2022 | Summer/Fall | Fall | Winter/Spring 2023 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Establish community goals for an outdoor recreation economy in Las Animas CountyGenerating all possible recreational strategies | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Qualitative analysisInitial screening to ensure ideas meet goalsNarrow down list of potential recreational strategies | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Quantitative analysis, focused on top tier strategiesStudying economic impactsAssessing physical feasibility | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Final Community PrioritiesImplementation funding |

| VISIONING | SYNTHESIZING | EVALUATING | PRIORITIZING |
|---|---|--|---|
| Summer 2022 | Summer/Fall | Fall | Winter/Spring 2023 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Virtual presentation to council, BOCCOne-on-one conversationsTabling eventsVirtual interest groupsOnline survey | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Joint session with council, BOCC, partnersOne-on-one conversationsWeb/email updates | <ul style="list-style-type: none">One-on-one conversationsSite VisitsWeb/email updates | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Community Open HouseFinal Survey |

Project Leadership Team & Process Advisory Committee Meetings

Engagement Overview

- PLT & PAC regular meetings with 25 community leaders, city and county staff, and regional representatives
- Tabling Events Fishers Peak Community Meeting, Santa Fe Trail Days, Las Animas County Fair. Engagement with approximately 150 attendees
- Virtual Interest Groups 50 total participants
- Online Survey 151 Responses
- Community Meeting + Final Survey all of you here!

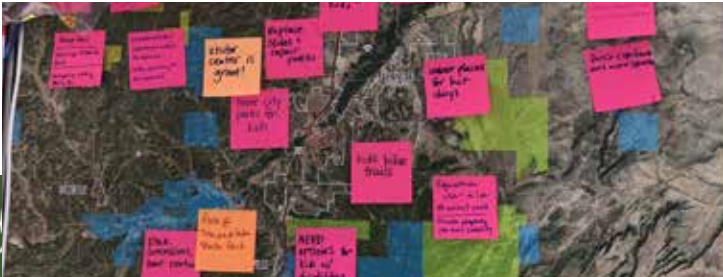


Analysis

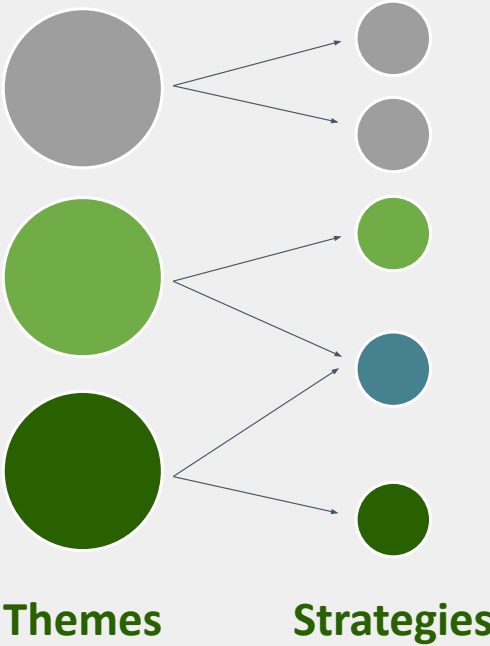


Visioning Phase Themes

- **Access:** Biking, Hunting/Fishing, Parking, River, Rock Climbing, Camping
- **Agritourism**
- **Commercial Development**
- **Events/Programs:** Accessibility, Communication, History & Culture, Races
- **Facilities:** Accessibility, Outdoor Ed, Rentals, Swimming, Welcome Center
- **Information/Interpretation**
- **Maintenance**
- **Transportation**
- **Workforce Development**
- **Partnerships:** Events/Programs, History Culture, Private Landowners, Trail Maintenance
- **Programming:** Ag, Children/Youth, Conservation, Families, History & Culture, Native American, Organized Sports, Skill Building
- **Trails:** General, Hiking, Biking, ATVs, Horses

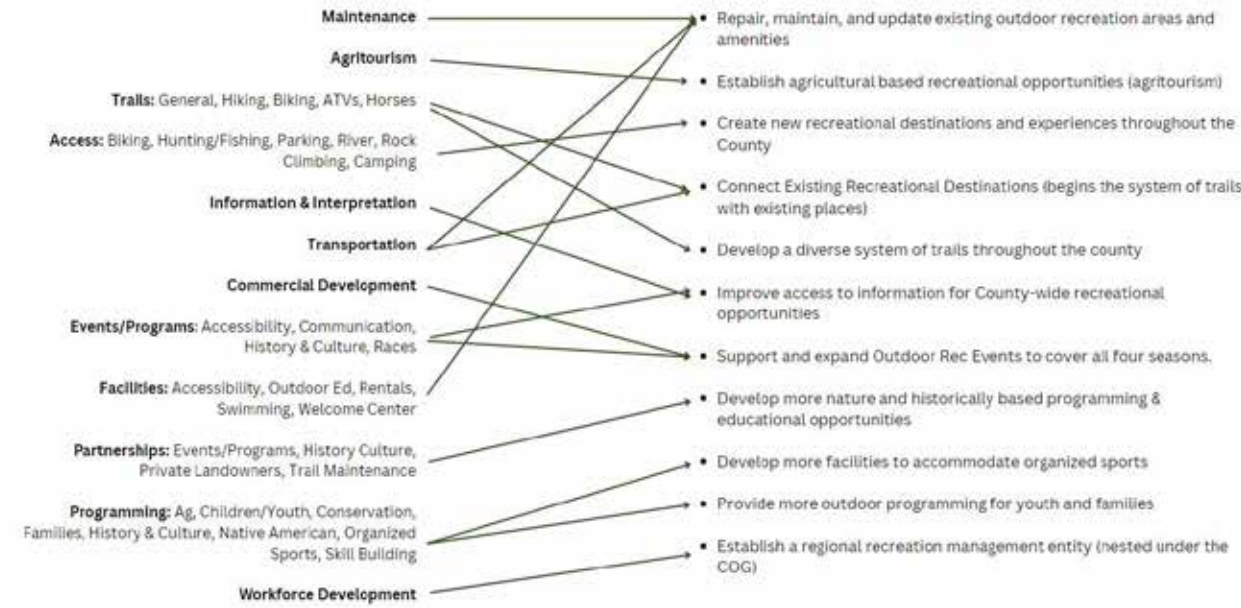


Developing Community-driven Strategies



Themes

Strategies



| OUTDOOR RECREATION STRATEGIES | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| WHAT TO DO: | HOW THIS IS ACHIEVED: | PROJECTS TO CONSIDER: | PARTNERS: |
| Establish A Regional Management Entity | Develop the local and regional administrative structure to manage and maintain existing and expanding outdoor recreation infrastructure. | EARLY ACTION PROJECTS <ul style="list-style-type: none">Establish a regional partnership to coordinate outdoor recreation, land stewardship and habitat conservation efforts.Develop an asset management plan to prioritize and address the most pressing needs across all publicly owned outdoor recreation facilities.Work with CPW to grow the number of interpretive, volunteer and service-learning programs through out the community.Create a regional outdoor recreational website.Create multi-modal access to Fisher Peak State Park from Trinidad along Santa Fe. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Las Animas CountyCity of TrinidadCPWSouth Central COGTrinidad State CollegeBusiness PartnersVolunteersDOLAGOCOCDOTAdjacent CountiesPrivate Land ManagersChambers of CommerceConservation OrganizationsFarm and Ranch Operators |
| Take Care Of What You Have | Improve safety and tourism appeal by repairing maintaining, and updating existing outdoor recreation areas and amenities. | EXAMPLE PROGRAMATIC PROJECTS <ul style="list-style-type: none">Encourage small recreational outfitters to develop retail rentals and guided outdoor trips.Host a year round running, bicycling, and walking events. | |
| Develop Educational Programs, Media And Facilities Opportunities | Increase educational programs that celebrate Las Animas County. | EXAMPLE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS <ul style="list-style-type: none">Blowwalk enhancements.Develop additional disk golf courses.Create a regional trail map for the county and Trinidad area (paper and web based).Initiate partnerships between private landowners and tourism to provide camping, hiking or cycling permits for access to private property.Start youth and adult organized sports programs. | |
| Connect Existing Recreational Destinations | Connect multi-modal access to existing outdoor recreational features for a more complete recreational experience. | | |
| Enhance Visitor Information, Signs And Way Findings | Improve access to information about County-wide recreational opportunities. | | |
| Provide More Outdoor Programming For Youth And Families | Develop outdoor recreation programming partnerships. | | |
| Support And Expand Outdoor Recreational Events To Cover All Four Seasons | Generate ideas for Outdoor Recreation events throughout the entire year. | | |
| Create New Recreational Destinations And Experiences Throughout The County | Develop new and diverse recreation destinations. | | |
| Develop A Diverse System Of Trails Throughout The County | Build new trail systems that extend the existing system and expand the diversity of experiences. | | |
| Establish Agricultural Based Recreational Opportunities (Agritourism) | Focus on the agricultural community in developing an outdoor recreation economy (Agritourism). | | |
| Develop More Facilities To Accommodate Organized Sports | Commit resources to develop sports facilities and programs. | | |

1

LAS ANIMAS COUNTY
OUTDOOR RECREATION &
ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY
PREPARED BY: [Logo]

OUTDOOR RECREATION STRATEGIES



Improve safety, enjoyment, and tourism appeal by repairing, maintaining and updating existing outdoor recreation areas and amenities.

POTENTIAL PROJECTS

- Conduct a condition assessment of publicly owned outdoor recreation facilities to determine extent of maintenance needs
- Develop an asset management plan to prioritize and address the most pressing needs
- Update existing park and trail amenities including benches, shade structures, parking lots, trash enclosures, etc.) to meet Federally accessibility standards and to improve visitor experience and safety
- Consider creative staffing models to add capacity (AmeriCorps Vista, college interns, partnering with Career and Technical Education programs in high schools, etc)
- Establish a formal volunteer program to recognize and leverage community stewardship.

POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS

- Las Animas County
- City of Trinidad
- Volunteers
- Regional Recreation Management Entity
- Colorado Parks and Wildlife



As an early action project the City of Trinidad is looking at a project to update and improve the Simpson's Reef Area

Take Care Of What You Have

5

LAS ANIMAS COUNTY
OUTDOOR RECREATION &
ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY
PREPARED BY: [Logo]

OUTDOOR RECREATION STRATEGIES



Build new trail systems that extend the existing system and expand the diversity of experiences-ATVs allowed/not allowed dogs allowed/not allowed, multi-modal vs. only hiking or only horseback riding.

COUNTY WIDE APPROACHES

- Provide a variety of trail-based access and experiences
- Establish discrete and unique trail "hubs" throughout the County; discrete and functional trail systems with their own character and draw
- Trail hubs may include: Trinidad area, Purgatoire canyons, Spanish Peaks, North Fork
- Create a trail map for the County and Trinidad Area (paper and web-based)

TRINIDAD AREA

- Expansion of Washhole trail system
- extension/improvement to Purgatoire River Trail in downtown Trinidad
- New in-town trail system in south Trinidad-Reservoir Hill and South side Park
- Trail system in Cougar Canyon area
- Trail loop around Lake Trinidad State Park
- Return Pass trail connection (along I-25/Rezon Creek)
- Sugarite Canyon - Fishers Peak SP regional connection
- Maintain recreational access along CR85.5 (San Francisco Pass)

EAST COUNTY

- Establish trail-based access and experiences within the Purgatoire River canyonslands
- Establish trail-based access and experiences within the Poudre Canyon Narrows Site (PCMS)
- Consider and implement permit/fee-based access programs for sensitive or unique areas
- Work with willing landowners to establish permitted recreational access to unique areas
- Prioritize motorized recreation access, routes, and destinations

WEST COUNTY

- Designate and improve sustainable hiking route to the summits of East and West Spanish Peaks
- Establish and designate sustainable trail route to summit of Mount Maxwell
- Develop new trail(s) to complete a loop trail system that integrated the Wildcat, Cool Creek, and North Fork Trails
- Complete trail loops within/around Spanish Peaks Wilderness
- Explore opportunities to develop public trails systems on multi-use private lands under lease agreement (i.e. oil and gas operators)
- Work with willing landowners to establish permitted recreational access to unique landscapes and features on private land

POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS

- Land Managers: City of Trinidad, Las Animas County, CPW, State Land Board, New Mexico State Parks, San Isabel National Forest, The Nature Conservancy, private owners
- Funding Partners: CPW, GOCO, DOLA, El Pinar Foundation, others
- Community Partners: Trinidad Trails, The Trust for Public Land, The Nature Conservancy, citizens and business owners
- Trail Users: Trinidad Trails, International Mountain Bicycling Association, Back Country Horsemen of Colorado, Colorado Mountain Club, Colorado Off Highway Vehicle Coalition
- Private Landowners: Ranchers and other large, private land managers where fee-based public recreation access may be feasible and mutually beneficial



Mountain Bike/Adventure Trip



Backpacking/hike day trip



Hiking/day trip or shorter

12 Develop A Diverse System Of Trails Throughout The County

LAS ANIMAS COUNTY
OUTDOOR RECREATION &
ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY
PREPARED BY: [Logo]

OUTDOOR RECREATION STRATEGIES



POTENTIAL
ECONOMIC BENEFITS

IMPLEMENTING THE PROPOSED
OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL STRATEGIES
WILL CONTRIBUTE TO THE FOLLOWING:

- * Total county visitation estimated to increase from 274,000 in 2023 to 635,000 in 2042.
- * Fishers Peak State Park will have the greatest increase in visitation with 50,000 in 2023 and 285,000 in 2042.
- * Non state park visits are expected to double by 2042.
- * Visitor spending is estimated at approximately \$849,000 in sales-tax revenue in 2023 to just over \$2 Million by 2040.

| | Establish a Regional Management Entity | Take Care of What You Have | Develop Educational Programs, Media And Facilities Opportunities | Connect Existing Recreational Destination | Enhance Visitor Information, Signs And Wayfinding | Provide More Outdoor Programming For Youth And Families | Support And Expand Outdoor Recreational Events To Cover All Four Seasons | Create New Recreational Destinations And Experiences Throughout The County | Develop A Diverse System Of Trails Throughout The County | Establish Agricultural Based Recreational Opportunities (Agritourism) | Develop More Facilities To Accommodate Organized Sports |
|--|--|----------------------------|--|---|---|---|--|--|--|---|---|
| Establish a Regional Management Entity | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Take Care of What You Have | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Develop Educational Programs, Media And Facilities Opportunities | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Connect Existing Recreational Destination | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Enhance Visitor Information, Signs And Wayfinding | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Provide More Outdoor Programming For Youth And Families | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Support And Expand Outdoor Recreational Events To Cover All Four Seasons | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Create New Recreational Destinations And Experiences Throughout The County | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Develop A Diverse System Of Trails Throughout The County | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Establish Agricultural Based Recreational Opportunities (Agritourism) | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Develop More Facilities To Accommodate Organized Sports | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |

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LAS ANIMAS COUNTY
OUTDOOR RECREATION &
ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY
PREPARED BY: [Logo]

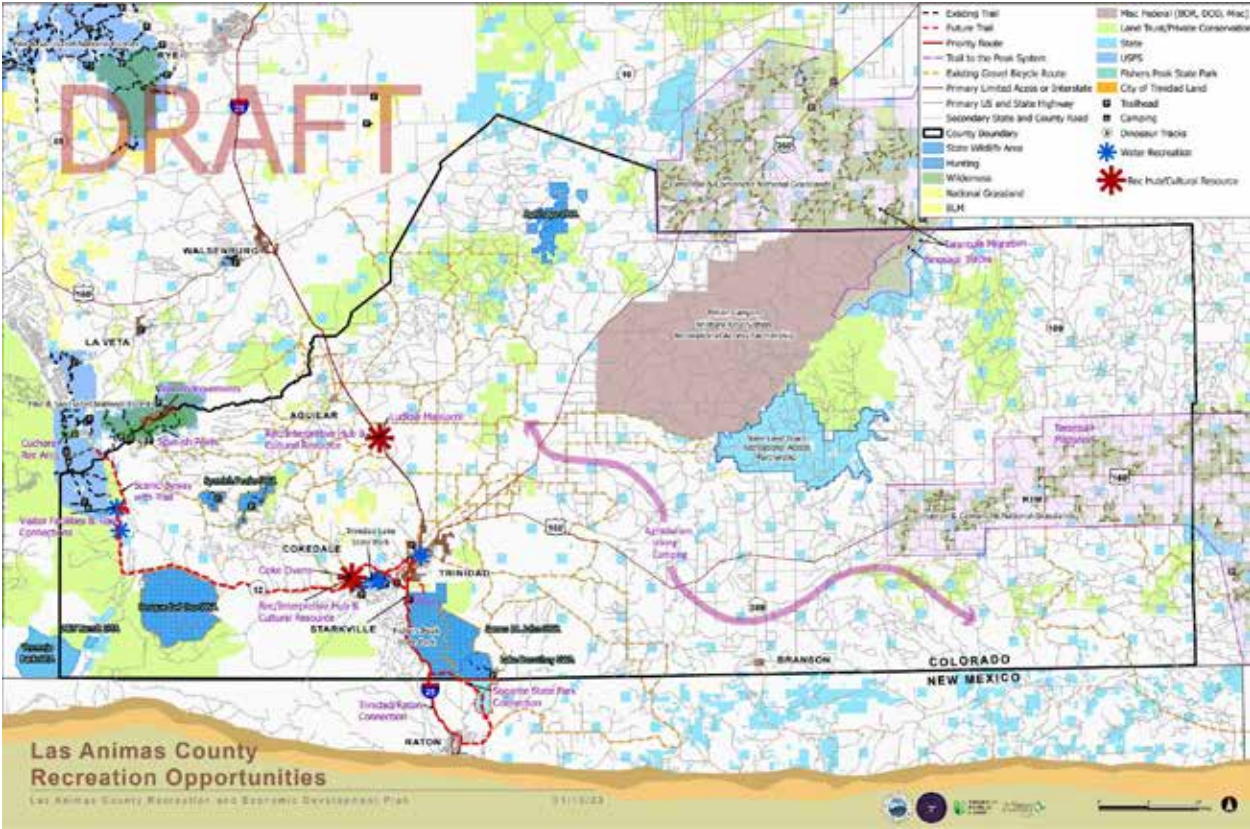
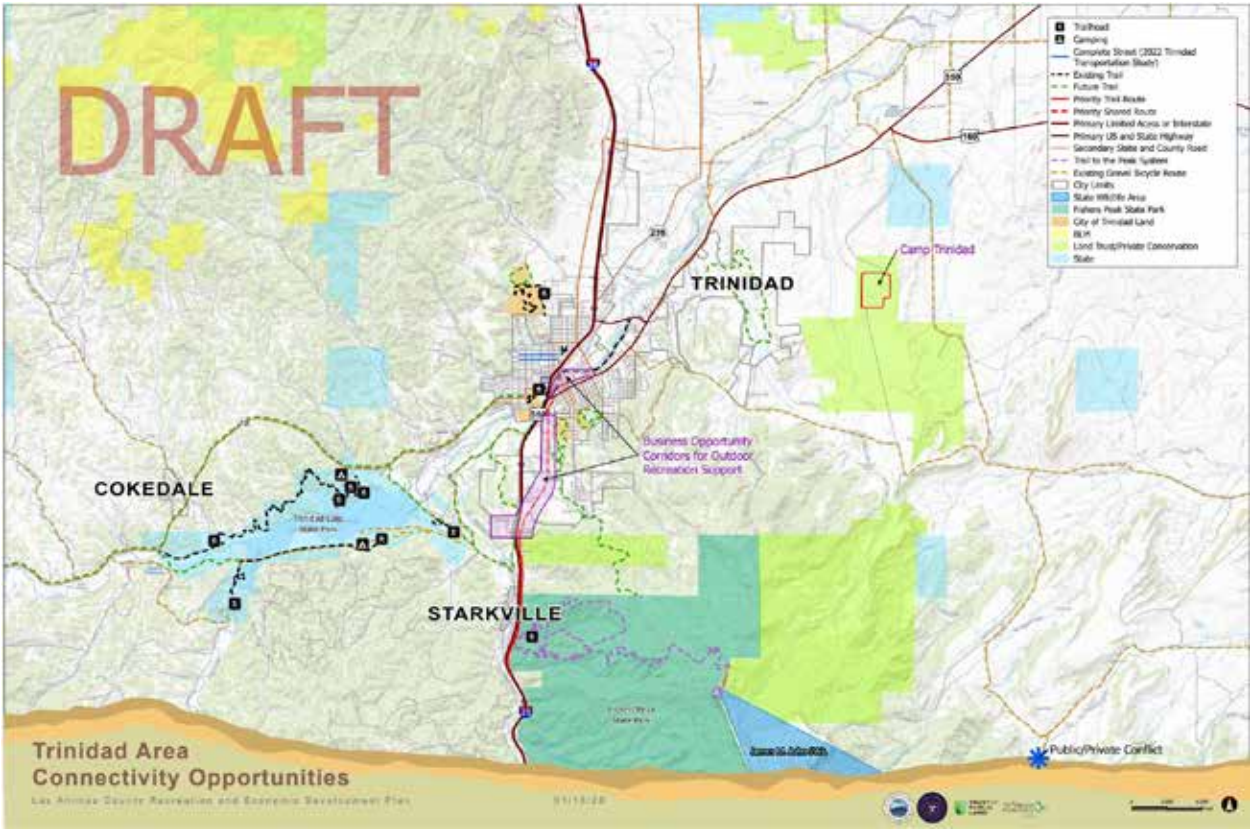
OUTDOOR RECREATION STRATEGIES



MAINTENANCE AND
MANAGEMENT
CONSIDERATIONS

| | Establish a Regional Management Entity | Take Care of What You Have | Develop Educational Programs, Media And Facilities Opportunities | Connect Existing Recreational Destination | Enhance Visitor Information, Signs And Wayfinding | Provide More Outdoor Programming For Youth And Families | Support And Expand Outdoor Recreational Events To Cover All Four Seasons | Create New Recreational Destinations And Experiences Throughout The County | Develop A Diverse System Of Trails Throughout The County | Establish Agricultural Based Recreational Opportunities (Agritourism) | Develop More Facilities To Accommodate Organized Sports |
|--|--|----------------------------|--|---|---|---|--|--|--|---|---|
| Establish a Regional Management Entity | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Take Care of What You Have | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Develop Educational Programs, Media And Facilities Opportunities | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Connect Existing Recreational Destination | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Enhance Visitor Information, Signs And Wayfinding | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Provide More Outdoor Programming For Youth And Families | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Support And Expand Outdoor Recreational Events To Cover All Four Seasons | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Create New Recreational Destinations And Experiences Throughout The County | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Develop A Diverse System Of Trails Throughout The County | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Establish Agricultural Based Recreational Opportunities (Agritourism) | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Develop More Facilities To Accommodate Organized Sports | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |

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Early Action Projects

Coordination and Programmatic

- Establish framework to keep this conversation going
 - Explore enhanced coordination with SCCOG
 - CPW Outdoor Regional Partnership status
- Tourism website, map, social media + branding update

Leveraging Existing Programming and Infrastructure

- Improve Existing facilities –
 - Example: Simpson’s Rest
 - Asset assessment and maintenance strategy
- Support outdoor programming –
 - Southern Colorado Outdoor Institute
 - Community based programming via CPW
- Enhance coordination with private camping providers

New/Expanded Recreation Infrastructure

- Wormhole trail system expansion
- Riverwalk enhancement
- FPSP Connectivity (Santa Fe Trail)
- Reservoir Hill/Southside Park – City park and trail development (existing disc golf)

Additional Ideas

- Trinidad welcome center – information and materials
- Cohesive recreation signage and wayfinding strategy County-wide
- Ballfields and/or camping at the County Fairgrounds

Thank You!

Scan here to take
our final Survey:



