

LAS ANIMAS COUNTY OUTDOOR RECREATION & ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY



Community Open House | May 10, 2023



A scenic landscape featuring a gravel road leading through green trees towards a prominent flat-topped mountain under a clear blue sky. The road is in the foreground, leading the eye into the scene. The trees are lush and green, framing the road. In the background, a large, flat-topped mountain rises against a clear blue sky. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and natural.

Welcome!

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Purpose & Goals

// 2

Process

// 3

Community Input

// 4

Key Strategies + Economic & Maintenance Considerations

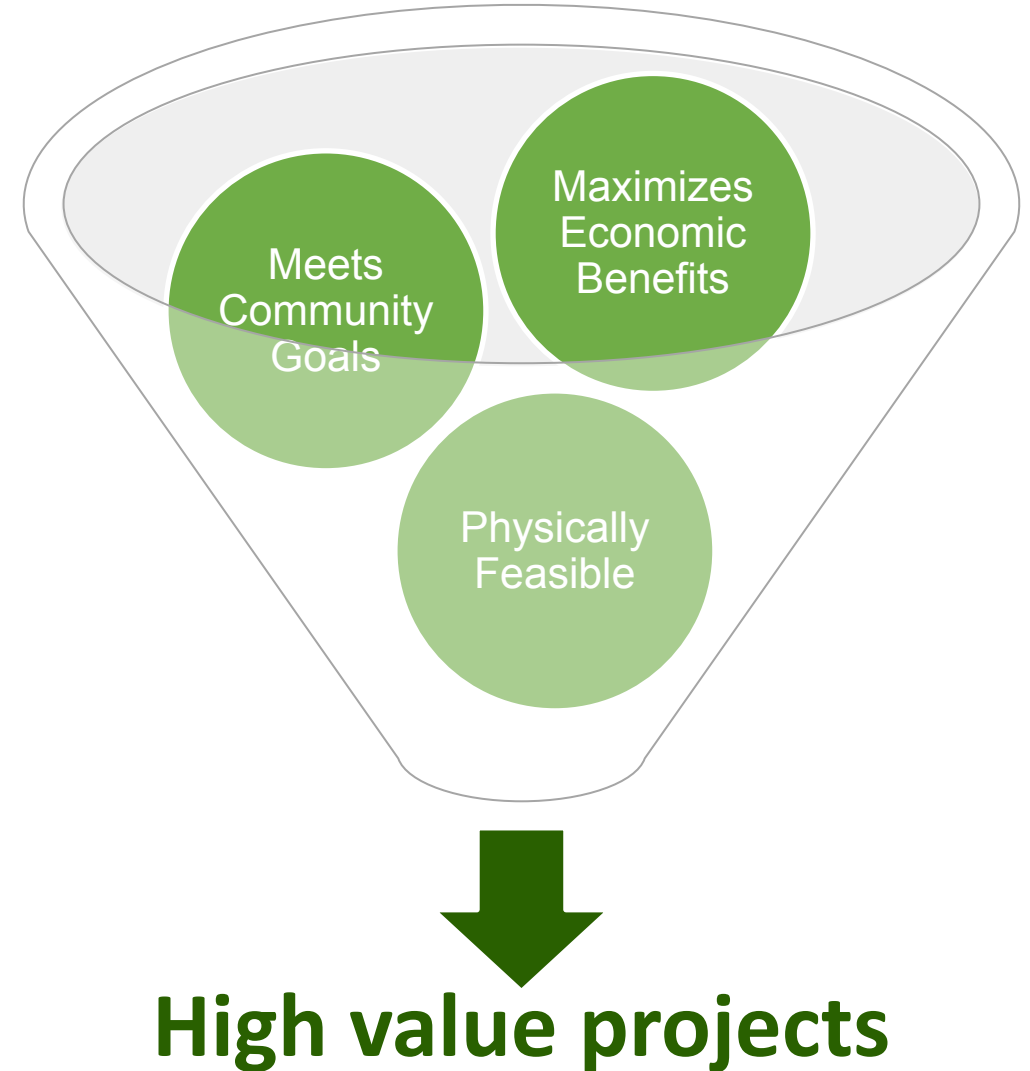
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Early Action Projects



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

VISIONING

Summer 2022

- Establish community goals for an outdoor recreation economy in Las Animas County
- Generating all possible recreational strategies

SYNTHESIZING

Summer/Fall

- Qualitative analysis
- Initial screening to ensure ideas meet goals
- Narrow down list of potential recreational strategies

EVALUATING

Fall

- Quantitative analysis, focused on top tier strategies
- Studying economic impacts
- Assessing physical feasibility

PRIORITIZING

Winter/Spring 2023

- Final Community Priorities
- Implementation funding

Public Engagement Overview

VISIONING

Summer 2022

- Virtual presentation to council, BOCC
- One-on-one conversations
- Tabling events
- Virtual interest groups
- Online survey

SYNTHESIZING

Summer/Fall

- Joint session with council, BOCC, partners
- One-on-one conversations
- Web/email updates

EVALUATING

Fall

- One-on-one conversations
- Site Visits
- Web/email updates

PRIORITIZING

Winter/Spring 2023

- Community Open House
- Final 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



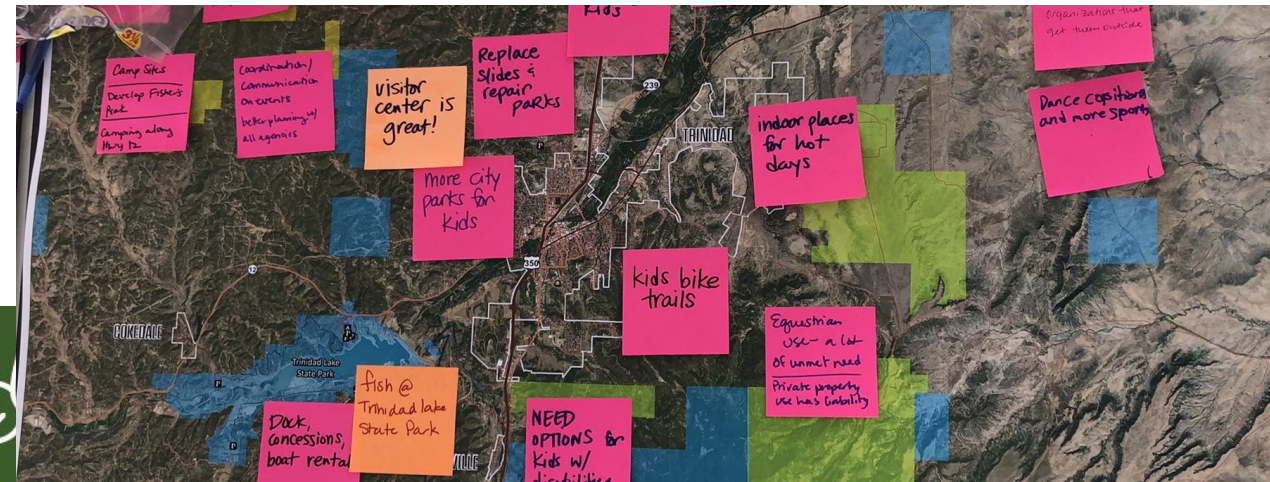
**Individual
Comments**

Themes

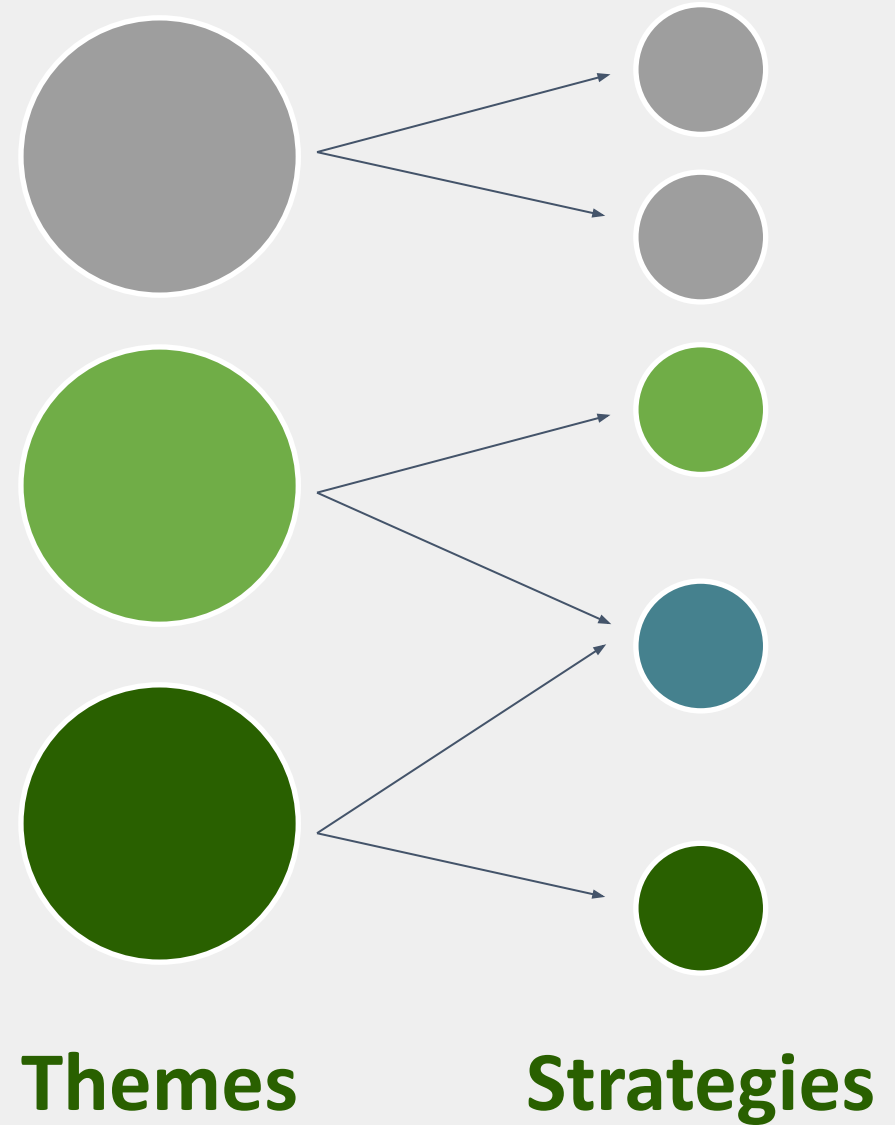


Visioning Phase Themes

- **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



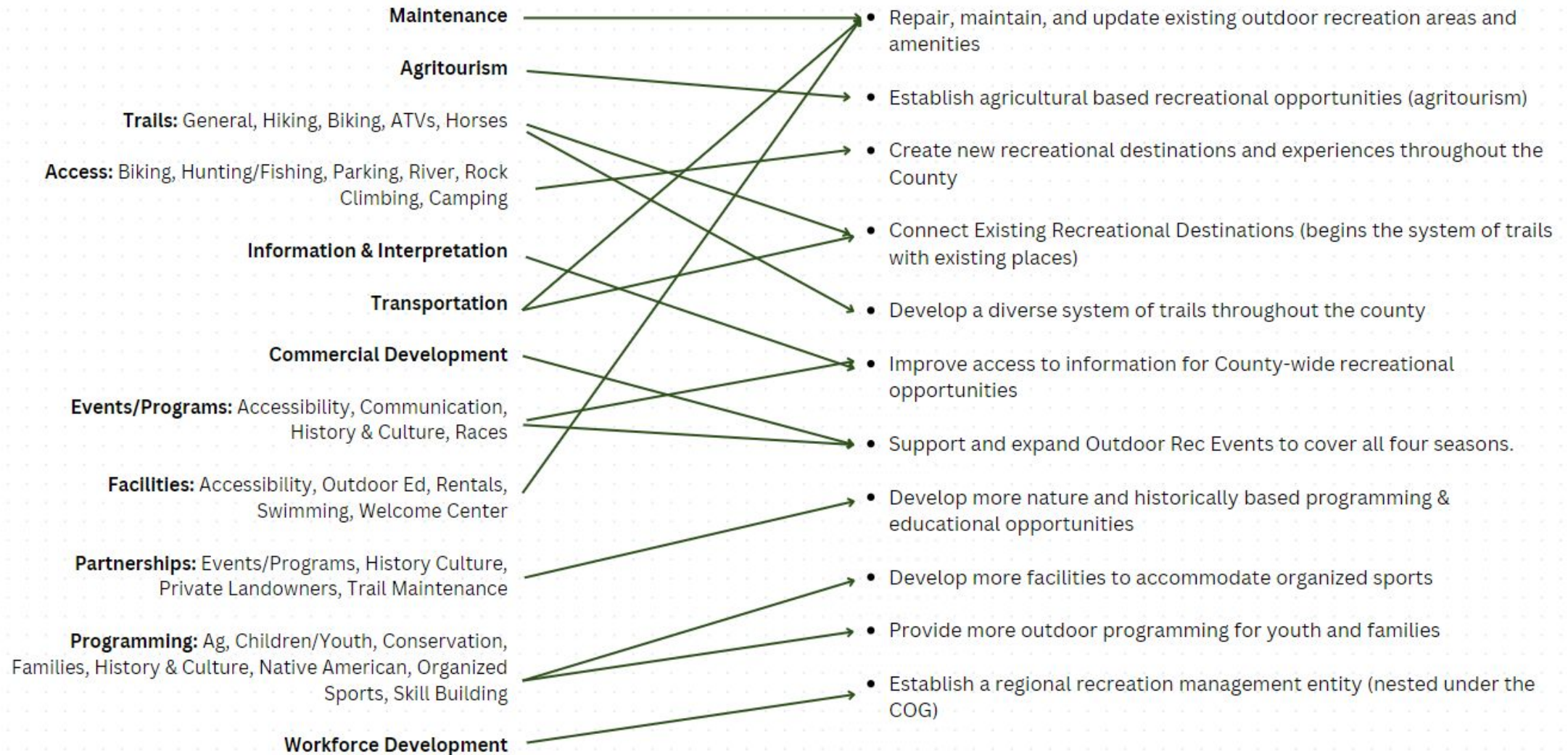
Developing Community-driven Strategies



Themes



Strategies



WHAT TO DO:

Establish A Regional Management Entity

Take Care Of What You Have

Develop Educational Programs, Media And Facilities Opportunities

Connect Existing Recreational Destinations

Enhance Visitor Information, Signs And Way-findings

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

HOW THIS IS ACHIEVED:

Develop the local and regional administrative structure to manage and maintain existing and expanding outdoor recreation infrastructure.

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

Increase educational programs that celebrate Las Animas County.

Connect multi-modal access to existing outdoor recreational features for a more complete recreational experience.

Improve access to information about County-wide recreational opportunities.

Develop outdoor recreation programming partnerships.

Generate ideas for Outdoor Recreation events throughout the entire year.

Develop new and diverse recreation destinations.

Build new trail systems that extend the existing system and expand the diversity of experiences.

Focus on the agricultural community in developing an outdoor recreation economy (Agritourism).

Commit resources to develop sports facilities and programs.

PROJECTS TO CONSIDER:

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 PROGRAMATIC 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.

* Required Early Action

PARTNERS:

- 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





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



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

Take Care Of What You Have





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, 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)

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: Ranchwers 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

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Develop A Diverse System Of Trails Throughout The County



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 Visitation	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	●	●		●	●			●		●





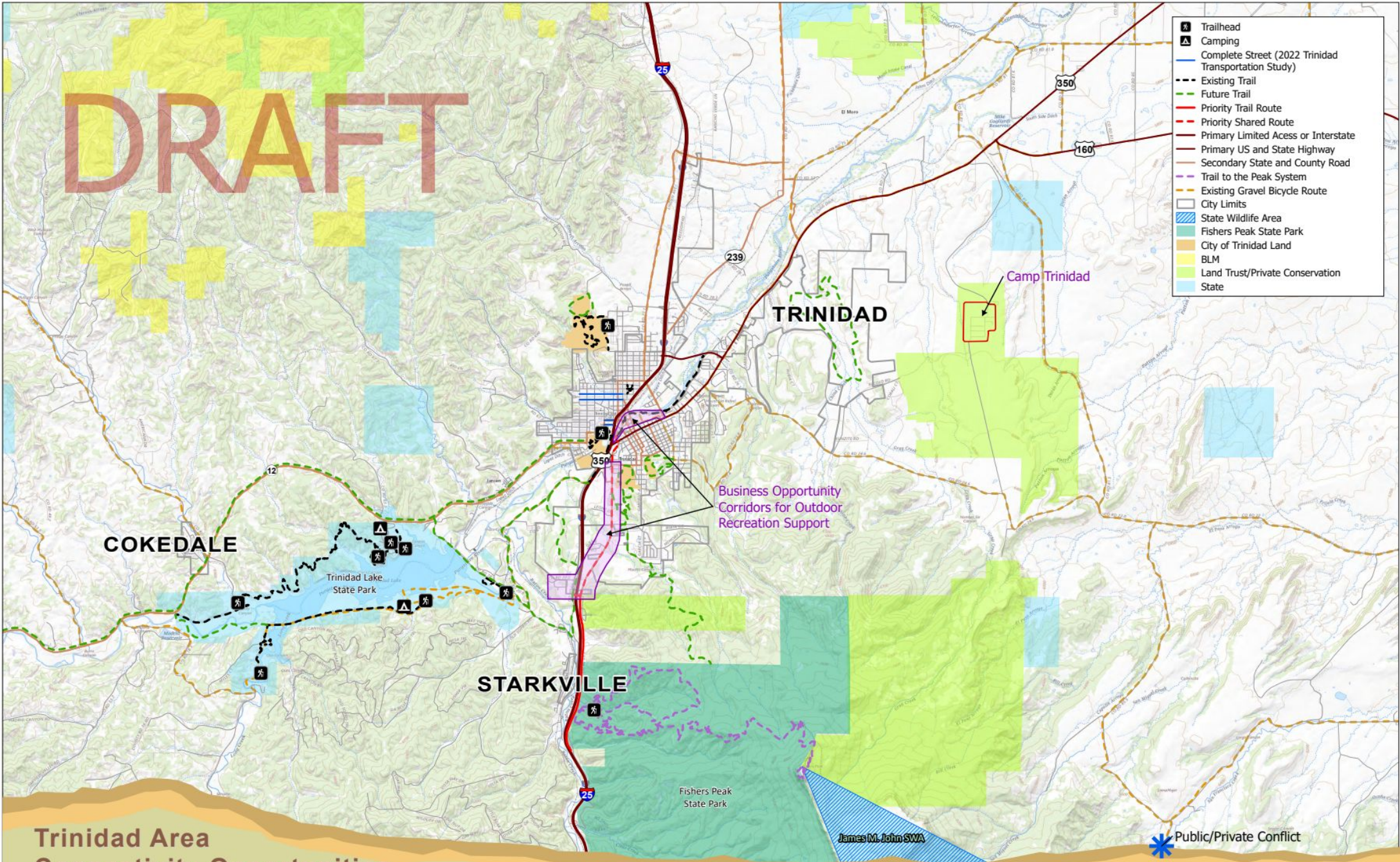
MAINTENANCE AND MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

	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 a collaborative to promote & advertise	Requires ownership to maintain	Requires organization, instructors, leaders & experts	Work with State Park managers to promote & advertise	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				●		●		●				●	●
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Develop More Facilities To Accommodate Organized Sports	●			●		●		●		●			●



DRAFT

- Trailhead
- Camping
- Complete Street (2022 Trinidad Transportation Study)
- Existing Trail
- Future Trail
- Priority Trail Route
- Priority Shared Route
- Primary Limited Access or Interstate
- Primary US and State Highway
- Secondary State and County Road
- Trail to the Peak System
- Existing Gravel Bicycle Route
- City Limits
- State Wildlife Area
- Fishers Peak State Park
- City of Trinidad Land
- BLM
- Land Trust/Private Conservation
- State



Trinidad Area Connectivity Opportunities

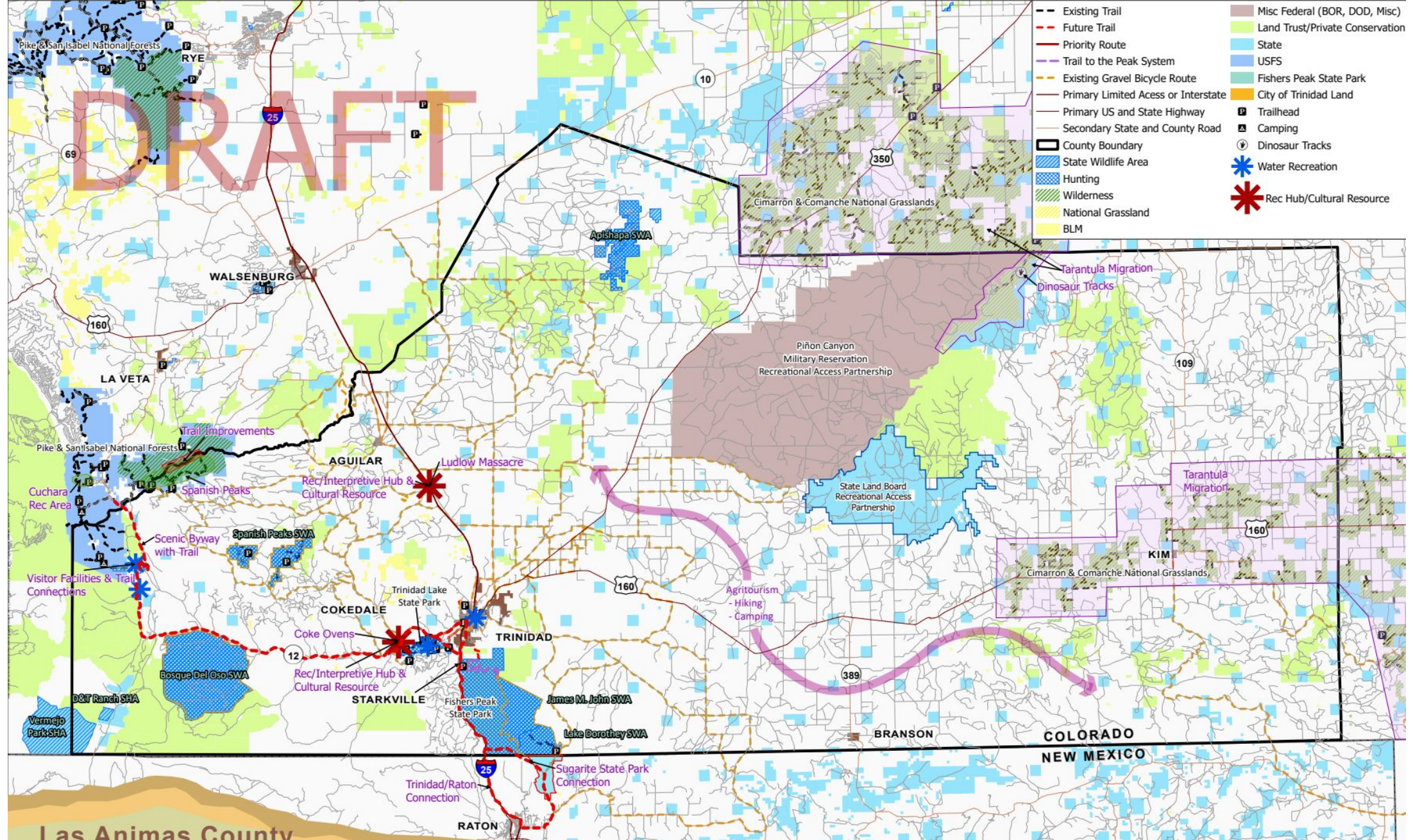
Las Animas County Recreation and Economic Development Plan

01/10/23



DRAFT

- Existing Trail
- Future Trail
- Priority Route
- Trail to the Peak System
- Existing Gravel Bicycle Route
- Primary Limited Access or Interstate
- Primary US and State Highway
- Secondary State and County Road
- County Boundary
- State Wildlife Area
- Hunting
- Wilderness
- National Grassland
- BLM
- Misc Federal (BOR, DOD, Misc)
- Land Trust/Private Conservation
- State
- USFS
- Fishers Peak State Park
- City of Trinidad Land
- Trailhead
- Camping
- Dinosaur Tracks
- Water Recreation
- Rec Hub/Cultural Resource



Las Animas County Recreation Opportunities

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:**

