



DEPARTMENT of PUBLIC SERVICES
TRAILS & NATURAL LANDS DIVISION

Memorandum

TO: Planning Commission
CC: Kristin Riker, Lisa Shaffer, Nick Norris
FROM: Lewis Kogan, Trails & Natural Lands Division Director
DATE: January 3, 2019
RE: SLC Foothills Trail System Plan DRAFT

The purpose of this memo is to present the draft *Salt Lake City Foothills Trail System Plan* to the Planning Commission at a briefing on January 9, 2019.

REQUEST:

The Trails & Natural Lands Division respectfully requests that the Planning Commission review the draft Salt Lake City Foothills Trail System Plan, in preparation for adoption.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Salt Lake City Foothills Trail System Plan, December 2018 Draft.

BACKGROUND & KEY ELEMENTS OF THE PLAN:

The Salt Lake City Foothills Trail System Plan will create the first comprehensive recreational trails plan for the undeveloped open space lands in the Wasatch foothills at the north and east edge of Salt Lake City. The plan is a network-focused approach, with recommendations on trail construction, decommissioning, management, signage, and access on lands owned and managed by several jurisdictional entities including most notably Salt Lake City and the US Forest Service. The key goal of the plan is to create a seamless, high-quality sustainable trail system, with emphasis on environmental compatibility, accessibility, safety, user-enjoyment, and physical stability.

The plan provides specific recommendations for the alignment and management of new trails, the incorporation of existing trails into the formal trail system, and the decommissioning of unsustainable social trails, for an overall formal trail system of over 100 trail miles. The plan also provides guidance on specific trailhead improvements and trail system signage, and provides best-practices for sustainable trail construction. The plan also provides cost estimates for trail construction and maintenance, including a suggested phasing for implementation of recommended improvements over a ten-year timeline.

The plan will be used primarily by the City's Trails & Natural Lands Division to provide guidance in funding and implementing trail system improvements, in managing and maintaining foothill lands and trails, and in directing collaborating with other foothill land managers. The plan area intentionally does not extend into the City Creek protected watershed area or the Red Butte Creek Research Natural Area; other planning documents and agency guidelines provide direction for management of these unique protected areas.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PLANS:

Development of a comprehensive recreational trails plan for the city's foothill open spaces was a specific recommendation of the 1992 Salt Lake City Open Space Plan. Protecting the natural environment while providing access and opportunities to recreate and enjoy nature was also a goal of Plan Salt Lake (2015), and that goal is substantially addressed through the development of this Foothills Trail System Plan. Additionally, Plan development included a review of relevant community master plans, including the 2017 East Bench Master Plan, 1987 Avenues Master Plan, 2001 Capitol Hill Master Plan, and 1999 Beck Street Reclamation Framework and Foothill Area Plan; the Foothills Trail System Plan recommendations are consistent with the recommendations of these master plans, where applicable.

Additional planning documents related to the City Creek Watershed, the University of Utah, the Wasatch Cache National Forest, and other relevant jurisdictions were also consulted for compatibility in drafting this plan. *A complete list is included in Chapter Two beginning on page 12 of the Foothills Trail System Plan draft.*

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT THROUGHOUT THE PLAN:

A summary of the public process is the focus of Chapter Three beginning on page 34 of the Foothills Trail System Plan draft.

Throughout the planning process, the public has had the opportunity to shape the direction of the plan. Public engagement included a year-long pre-plan online survey (nearly 1,500 responses), components of the citywide *Parks, Trails & Natural Lands Needs Assessment Survey* (768 responses, statistically validated), trail user "intercept surveys" (50 responses), a week-long "deep dive" workshop with representatives from 37 stakeholder groups, presentations to relevant community councils and SLC citizen advisory boards, an online map (3,130 responses), direct emails (over 50 received) and two public open houses that were noticed with postcards to all residents within 1/2-mile of any trail or access point (approximately 300 total open house participants).

Drafts of the plan and related documents have been available for review and comment continuously since December 2017 on an online project page (www.slc.gov/parks/TrailsPlan), and information about opportunities for plan review and engagement have been posted widely in businesses around town, at many foothill trail access points, at approximately 35 events, and through published news stories, including coverage on KSL, KUER, and the University of Utah online newsletter. Availability of plan materials for review and comment was also advertised to

- An email list of people who had previously requested communications on the plan throughout the public process, currently at 1,875 people.
- Community councils via email.
- City Council Members for inclusion in their newsletters.
- Through social media (Facebook).

Accounting for all forms of input collected, well over 5,000 public comments were received and considered in the plan development process.

A final briefing to the Parks, Natural Lands, Urban Forestry & Trails Advisory Board is scheduled for January 20, 2019.

CITY DEPARTMENT/DIVISION REVIEW:

A detailed internal review of the Foothills Trail System Plan draft was conducted in fall 2018 by staff from SLC Parks & Public Lands, SLC Public Utilities (Watershed Division), SLC Transportation Division, and SLC Planning Division. That review concluded in early December 2018. Trails & Natural Lands Division staff have addressed the most substantive comments with updates to the draft plan document; however, a large number of additional changes were requested by the internal review team and are still in process. These include, generally:

- Typo, grammar and syntax, and naming convention corrections.
- Revision of narrative text to correct awkward or unclear phrasing.
- Additions to narrative text to add details or clarification where warranted.
- Revisions to tables, diagrams, and page layouts to improve clarity of information presented.
- Finalization of appendices, including addition of appendices for best-practices documentation.

MASTER PLAN APPROVAL PROCESS

The Planning Commission is a recommending body for all new master plans and master plan amendments. The Planning Commission can choose to forward the *Salt Lake City Foothills Trail System Plan* to the City Council with a recommendation to adopt the plan, adopt the plan with specific changes, or to not adopt the plan.

Once a recommendation is made by the Planning Commission on the Draft Plan, it will be forwarded to the City Council for its consideration and decision. The Council can adopt the plan as recommended, make modifications to the plan, or not adopt the plan.