

TOWN OF MARBLE CONCEPT TRAILS PLAN REPORT

Prepared For: Marble Town Council

Prepared By: Roaring Fork Mountain Bike Association
& Singletrack Trails

Date: March 1st, 2022





PROJECT INTRODUCTION & GOAL

The Roaring Fork Mountain Bike Association (RFMBA), with professional planning services provided by Singletrack Trails (STI), is pleased to submit this Marble Trails Plan for the Town of Marble's consideration, review, and approval.

The Marble Concept Trails Plan consists of 2 to 3 miles of singletrack sidewalks and public alley trails, 0.5 miles of natural trail along the river, and 0.7 miles of skills park trails connecting the Marble Charter School (MCS) and other key destinations within the Town of Marble's boundaries. The intention is for these trails to be an incredible asset to the community of Marble with an overall project goal of providing safe, off-street options to connect key Town destinations, such as the MCS, Marble's Children's Park, Beaver Lake, and the Marble Millsite Park.

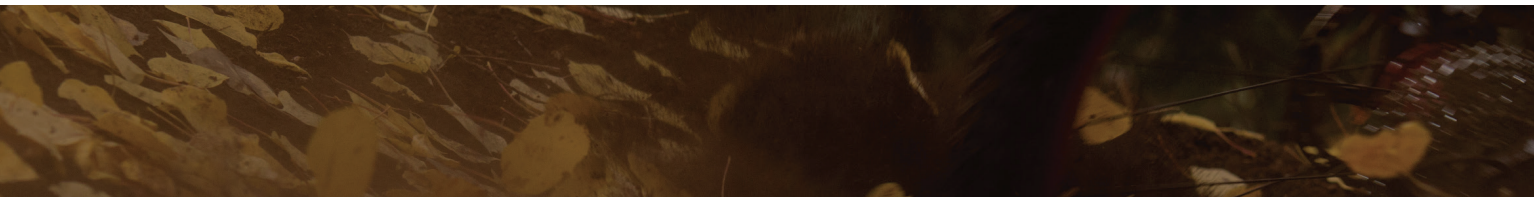
It is not expected that the addition of these trails will create a "draw" and increase the level of visitation to Marble, rather these trails are anticipated to serve the community by offering citizens and visitors alike a non-motorized option to safely explore the Town and its Parks.

The east and south side routes (generally described as all trails east of W 1st St) would serve locals, MCS students, visitors, and connect east towards Beaver Lake and south towards the Crystal River. For example, this system would allow people having lunch at Slow Groovin BBQ to visit Beaver Lake or attend activities and visit historic sites at Millsite Park, arriving on foot or by bike.

The west side routes (west of W 1st St) would focus on serving the MCS students and locals with optional bike-optimized features where possible. These trails would serve those wanting to grab lunch or go for a longer walk.

While RFMBA's mission is to create and sustain the best possible mountain bike trails and experiences in the Roaring Fork region, a majority of the trails in this broad area are open to multiple uses, leading RFMBA to work for the benefit of hikers, runners, dog walkers, bike riders, and other user types in the course of their work.





PROJECT DESCRIPTION

There are four types of trails that are included in the overall vision of this plan: singletrack sidewalks, public alley trails, a nature trail, and a skills trail (Attachment A: Project Maps).

Singletrack Sidewalks are natural surface trails, with minimal construction, that parallel roads and provide bikers and hikers with an off-street option to recreate. These trails will be designed for walkers and beginner level riders but would be a fun addition for anybody. Where feasible, features such as easy rollers would add interest to the trail and help visually identify the amenity as a constructed trail. Markers would be provided along the trail, like breadcrumbs leading the way, to discourage deviating from the designated trail, and to help users follow the route where it may be indistinct from adjacent dirt road surfaces. These visual markers are envisioned as pieces of scrap marble that are embedded in the ground such that they can be walked over or rolled over on a bike.

Public Alley Trails: Locals have highlighted the opportunity to build some of these in town trails along town property originally designed as alleyways between lots. This would allow the trails to be away from the roads and create a more sheltered and natural experience for the users. While some of these corridors will present a challenge, combining them with the Singletrack Sidewalks will provide a diverse and enjoyable trail experience throughout the town. These public alley trails also present the opportunity for winter nordic trail experiences, with or without grooming.

The Nature Trails will be a minimally developed trail that generally parallels the river, and offers a chance to explore the natural and cultural beauty of the community. Trail alignments within or near Millsite Park will be carefully coordinated to both highlight historic resources while avoiding new or additional impacts to these resources. Existing trails within Millsite Park will be evaluated and formalized as part of this trail plan, limiting the extent of new trail construction in this area.

Skills Trails provide an opportunity for kids to build bike handling skills and confidence. These trails will include beginner features to challenge kids such as dirt rollers, banked turns, bunny hops, and skinnies (log balance beams). Where located within Millsite Park, these trails will be aligned to fit within forested areas, retaining the beauty of the existing trees.



Above: Huck Finn Skills Park in Leadville and Valmont Bike Park in Boulder



All of the proposed trails will be located in either public park areas, or public right-of-ways, and will not require the acquisition of private property. During a site visit, conducted by the consultant team in 2021, it was possible to identify which side of the road the trail made the most sense to parallel; Prior to construction of each trail segment, survey tools will be used to ensure that improvements only take place on the public right-of-ways.

PROJECT FUNDING

RFMBA is dedicated to creating and sustaining the best possible mountain bike trail system in the Roaring Fork Valley and beyond, from New Castle to Aspen and from McClure Pass to Hagerman Pass - we want to provide better living for all communities through trails. More information about RFMBA can be found at our website <https://www.rfmba.org>. RFMBA is a nonprofit organization that can help fund projects with membership dues, business partnerships, family foundations, and generous donations. Often, to fully fund a project, matching dollars are needed from the partnering agency of a municipality. However, due to the generosity of a family foundation, no matching funds are needed for this project and RFMBA is able to cover the costs of the study and construction.

RFMBA has teamed with Singletrack Trails (STI) to lead the planning, design and, if approved, construction of this trails plan. STI, based in Grand Junction, believes that a good trail experience engages the user, providing a fun and soul satisfying connection with the outdoors; and quality trail experiences make for more vibrant communities that value recreation and understand the health benefits of playing outside, providing an increase in quality of life and health. With this philosophy we have built over 1,000 miles of trail, including skills parks, across the country.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

It is common to hear an adult exclaim “I feel like a kid again” when riding a bike. Riding a bike is fun and kids like to have fun. However, getting youth on bikes goes far beyond having fun and the benefits have been well documented. For youth specifically, mountain biking has been shown to help fight depression, build confidence, increase self-esteem, and improve their social support networks. Setting itself apart from other sports, mountain biking also helps children develop skills associated with decision making, risk, and safety. As more schools add biking to the curriculum, more communities such as Eagle, Vail, and Golden, Colorado have implemented the idea of singletrack sidewalks to provide safe connections. The City of Louisville, CO adopted a “Fun Routes Program” in their 2020 Transportation Master Plan that utilizes singletrack sidewalks to encourage kids to ride their bikes to school and other community destinations.



Above: Singletrack Sidewalks in Eagle & Golden

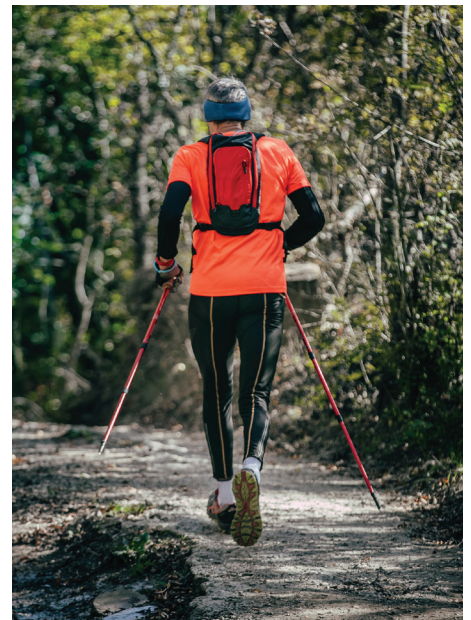


Conversations with Marble Charter School representatives confirm the school has intended to add bike programming within the school curriculum for a while. Currently MCS students are using nearby private property with an existing 0.5 mile trail for outdoor education, physical education programs, cross country skiing and science and natural history classes. Currently the kids are bussed to the location; this proposal would allow them to bike and walk on public trails even closer to the school's campus. Pending the approval of this Plan, grant funding is anticipated that will allow MCS to grow a bike-centric program starting in 2022.



PROJECT OPPORTUNITIES

- Get people out of cars and on bikes/walking
- Off street amenity for locals and kids
- Activate and utilize historic Town Right-of-Ways
- Helps increase awareness of and possible increase in programming for the Town's parks
- Capitalize on unique funding opportunity to create a valued Town amenity



PROJECT CONSTRAINTS

- Snow plowing impacts (design will need to account for snow accumulation and plowing operations, we don't want operators to accidentally damage amenities). Many trails may lie fallow, under snow pack, throughout the winter, unless snow is packed in by foot, nordic ski or bike traffic after each storm.
- Need to clearly identify right-of-way and utilities in next design phases, prior to construction. Often dirt parking areas along the roadside make it challenging to determine where public ROW transitions to private land.
- In some cases residents' use and materials have spilled across property lines onto the publicly owned "alleyways" between private property lots. This is a concern for where the trails might be built, in addition citizens may see this as an infringement on land they have historically used.
- Respecting existing historical uses at the Millsite Park
- Seasonal drainage issues will need to be addressed at some locations
- Western portion of the proposed trail system will require review and approval by Gunnison County (as it is beyond the Town's western boundary).

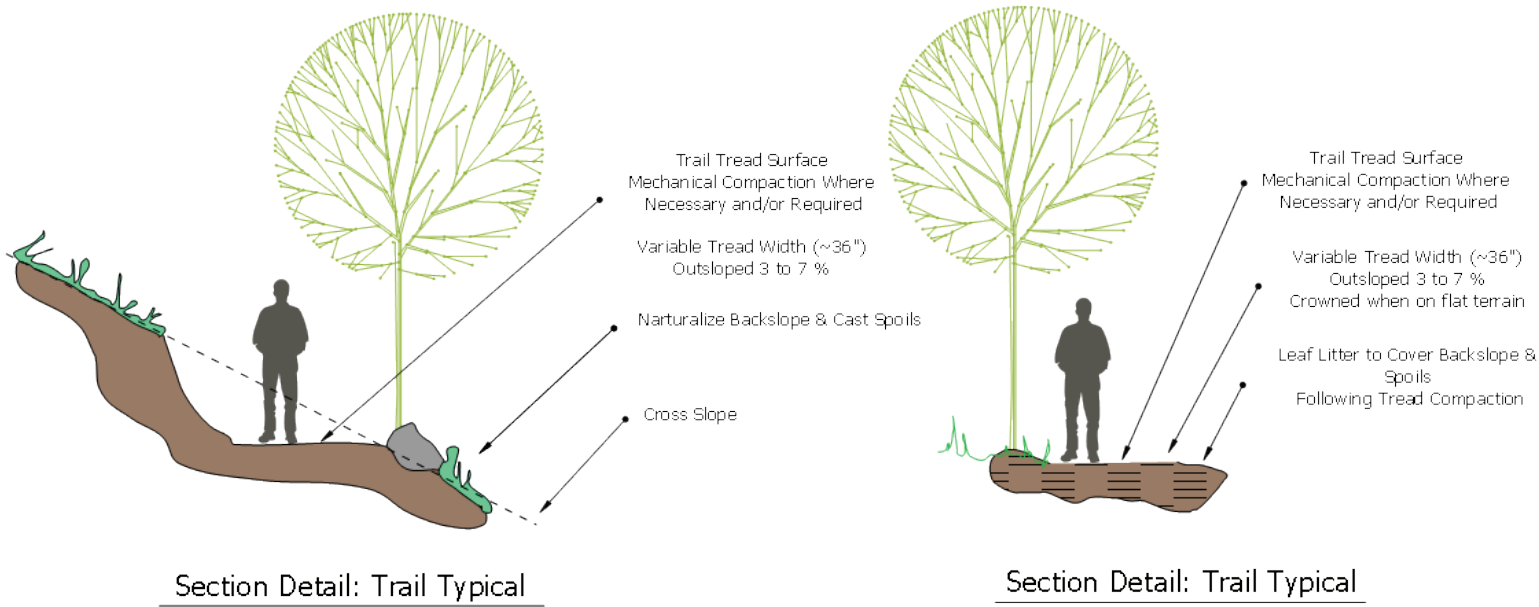


PROJECT SPECIFICATIONS

Overall, the singletrack sidewalks and public alley trails would fit with Marble’s aesthetic and would be raw, with minimal development and use of scrap marble as the embedded breadcrumbs where needed. These trails would utilize platted right-of-way that are along the Town’s roadways, and within undeveloped zones. Nature trails would afford the highest quality experience due to the proximity to the river, natural vegetation, and mountain views. The skills trails will be more developed and be optimized for bikes.

Trail Specifications:

Many of the singletrack trail sidewalks are not in locations where traditional sustainable trail construction practices can be utilized. The terrain is flat, and each trail segment will need a field-developed solution (such as the ‘lift & tilt’ method) to shed water, minimize erosion, and reduce maintenance needs over time. All trails will be soft surface trails between 24-48” wide; on average the trail will be 36” wide.



Above: Trail typical diagrams with specifications for building on hillside and flat terrain



Sign and Wayfinding Plan:

Some trail segments will be delineated using “breadcrumbs.” Rather than having a hard trail edge, trails, especially those adjacent to dirt roads, may have a raw edge that is indistinct from the roadway. However, with this type of trail construction, trail delineation can be challenging. Thus, breadcrumbs are buried at regular intervals to help users visualize the trail. We are proposing to use scrap pieces of marble, embedded into the ground, as breadcrumbs. The scrap marble may be placed such that it is easy to walk or ride a bike right over it, or it may be slightly off center, at the edge of the trail. These features would be both located and embedded such that they do not interfere with winter snowplowing operations.



Above: Conceptual image of singletrack sidewalk with rolling tread and lined by marble breadcrumbs



In addition, a sign plan will be developed that includes the use of kiosks and wayfinding signs. Kiosks will be installed at key destinations and will have a map of the entire trail network along with Town approved messages and suggestions. Wayfinding signs will be used along the trail at decision points such as intersections or bridges.

For short sections of existing roads it might be appropriate or advisable to provide markings to delineate the route and to communicate to drivers to ‘share the road’.

A detailed sign and wayfinding plan will be developed in concert with eas phase of construction. Signage designs will aim for clear communication while both matching and improving upon the existing character of other Town signage.

On the north end of East Second Street the trail system may connect with the Carbonate Creek Trail managed by the White River National Forest (WRNF). This is an opportunity to work with the WRNF to improve the access point with a kiosk and wayfinding signs.

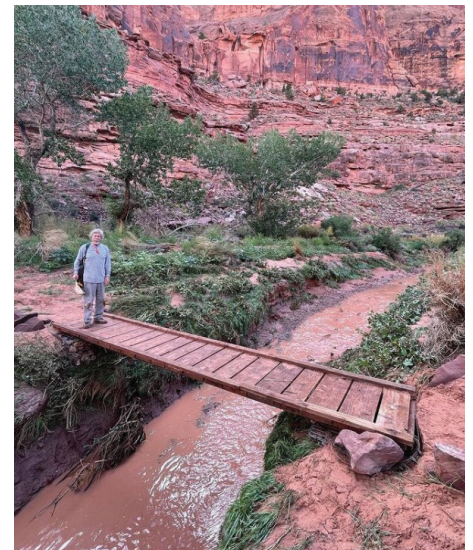


Above: Examples of trail marker and kiosk options for wayfinding and signage



Bridge Specification:

Several breakaway boardwalks/bridges will be used to cross the creek on the east side of town. These wood construction bridges are designed to break away and wash to the side during flood events but are tethered to the ground with cables and are easily replaced once the water subsides. Many agencies are using this creative idea where a smaller water crossing is necessary and there is the chance of a flood event overwhelming the smaller bridges. This strategy is preferable to the investment in a larger traditional engineered bridge.



 **moabtrailmix** Oh no not again! Wednesday night Kane Creek flooded and the Amasa Back Connector bridge washed off its foundations for the second time this year. Once again it swung out of the way of the flood debris and up onto the bank of the creek. Within an hour we had pulled off the three decking panels, moved the frame back into place and put the decking back on. We're pretty excited with how well this design is working and holding up! We hope you get to ride it this weekend and help pack in the trail while it's still wet!



Above: Conceptual drawing of a breakaway bridge/boardwalk on Carbonate Creek in Marble

Right: The breakaway bridge at use in Kane Creek canyon in Moab



INTENDED PROJECT TIMELINE

Present to Parks Commission: Early February 2022

Present to Town of Marble's Town Council: March 2022

Collect public feedback on Concept Trails Plan: March - April 2022

Finalize Proposal for Town Council's consideration: May - June 2022

Construction: Summer/Fall 2022

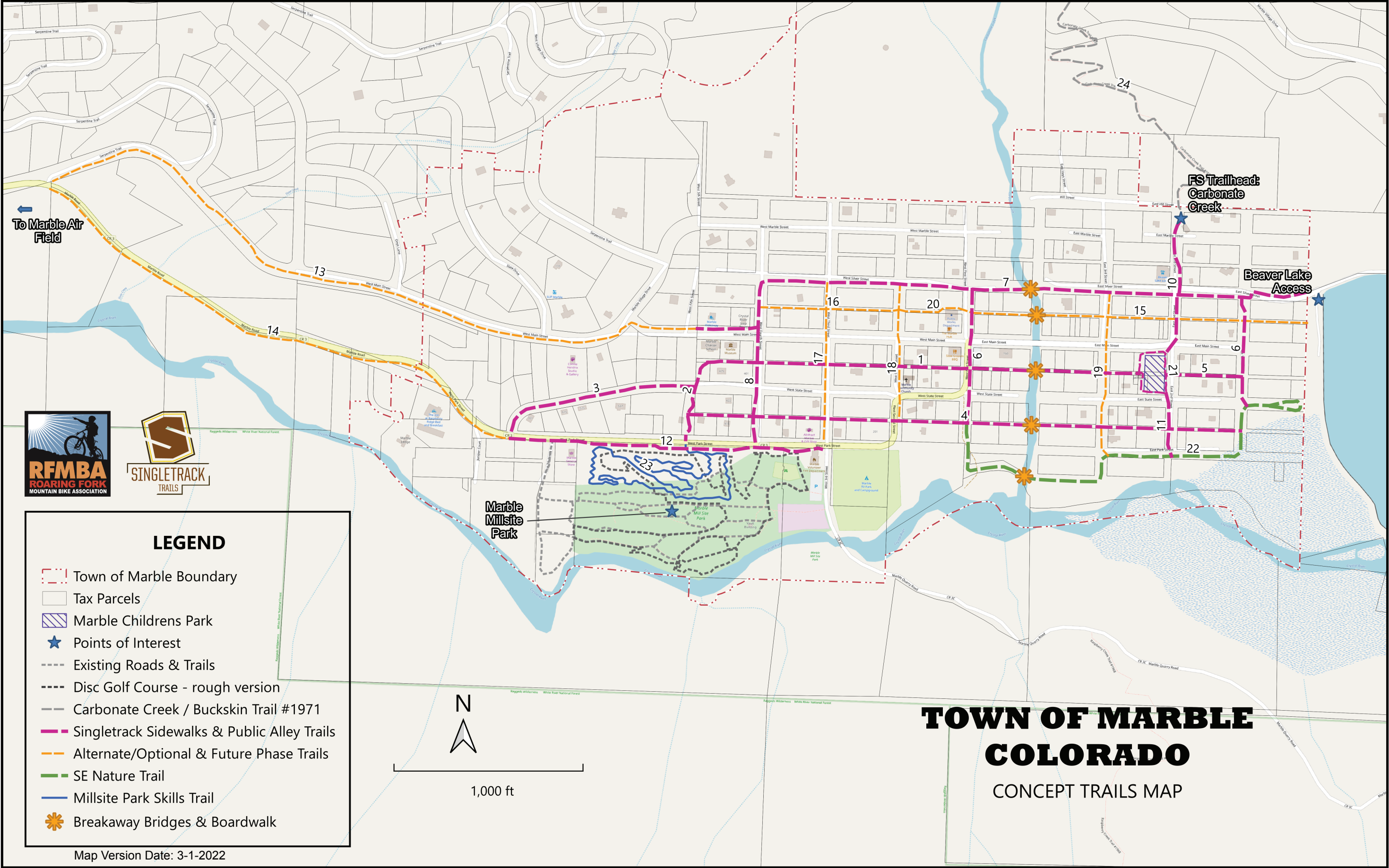
LOOKING AHEAD

- Submit Plan to Gunnison County for review and approval of the right-of-way / singletrack sidewalk style trails proposed for the far west portion of the trails plan.
- Partner with Colorado Parks and Wildlife on Beaver Lake State Wildlife Area. Identify possible partnerships to help CPW manage the site and make minor improvements (e.g., grade parking lot, organize parking, signage and collection system for park fee).
- Site visits prior to construction – review alignment designs for the skills trails, nature trails, and representative samples of the singletrack sidewalks.





Attachment A: Trail Map



LEGEND

- Town of Marble Boundary
- Tax Parcels
- Marble Childrens Park
- Points of Interest
- Existing Roads & Trails
- Disc Golf Course - rough version
- Carbonate Creek / Buckskin Trail #1971
- Singletrack Sidewalks & Public Alley Trails
- Alternate/Optional & Future Phase Trails
- SE Nature Trail
- Millsite Park Skills Trail
- Breakaway Bridges & Boardwalk

Map Version Date: 3-1-2022

TOWN OF MARBLE
COLORADO
CONCEPT TRAILS MAP

Trail Details

Trail #	Name	description	Length (ft)
1	Alley Trail 1	0.43 miles -Marble Charter School to Children's Park -structures existing in this public right of way present a challenge.	2283
2	Trail	0.1 miles, or 450 ft. -Marble Charter School to W.Park St. / Millsite Park -utilizes MCS parcel + GUNNISON WATERSHED SCHOOL DIST RE1J parcel	450
3	Right of Way Trail	0.2 miles Wider right-of-way, not a developed road	1063
4	Alley Trail 2	0.55 miles -structures existing in this public right of way present a challenge.	2924
5	Alley Path 4	0.1 miles -Children's Park to the east. -structures existing in this public right-of-way present a challenge.	403
6	N-S connector Trail	0.1 miles	581
7	N SS concept trail	0.34 miles -Singletrack sidewalk -needs ground truthing more than most concepts on west side. -avoids following alleyway due to obvious existing structures that would impede a trail. -ends at town boundary on west end.	3489
8	N-S SS 1	0.11 miles North-South Singletrack Sidewalk Concept -determine if W or E side of the road works better, or a combination	602
9	N-S SS 4	0.13 miles North-South Singletrack Sidewalk Concept -determine if W or E side of the road works better, or a combination	709
10	N-S SS 6	0.14 miles North-South Singletrack Sidewalk Concept -determine if W or E side of the road works better, or a combination	739
11	N-S SS 7	0.1 miles North-South Singletrack Sidewalk Concept -determine if W or E side of the road works better, or a combination	335
12	Millsite Park Northside SS	0.31 miles Coordinate with future development of parking along north edge of the park. -coordinate with disc golf course to the south. -could provide formalized access to existing/future trails within the park. -if topography, etc. dictate, this could be a 'share the road' style trail (as may be needed further to the west)	1656

Trail #	Name	description	Length (ft)
13	N Gunnison County concept trail	0.72 miles -concept trail, mostly parallels south side of the roadway. -May need to coincide with the dirt road in some locations, especially at the seasonal creek flow zone. -public right-of-way is wider than it seems when on the ground, so opportunity exists.	3792
14	S Gunnison County concept trail	0.54 miles -many challenges exist to this concept, right-of-way width beyond edge of existing road needs to be researched. -many driveways to cross, and topography to deal with. -may need to "share the road" (painted sharrows, signage) where trail is not realistic given private land/structures/driveways & width of right-of-way.	2866
15	Alley Trail 3	0.33 miles -W. Marble St. (near corner of W. First & W. Main) to Beaver Lake SWA parking lot. May require CPW cooperation to connect, but is intended to provide non-motorized access to the lake.	1773
16	Trail option	0.17 miles review on the ground to see if this, or version to the north, make more sense.	878
17	N-S SS 2	0.16 miles North-South Singletrack Sidewalk Concept -determine if W or E side of the road works better, or a combination	828
18	N-S SS 3	0.11 miles North-South Singletrack Sidewalk Concept -determine if W or E side of the road works better, or a combination	592
19	N-S SS 5	0.17 miles North-South Singletrack Sidewalk Concept -determine if W or E side of the road works better, or a combination	879
20	Alley Path Option needs study	0.1 miles E end of this alley has a large building blocking path. Parcels appear to be owned by Gunnison County, building may be Road and Bridge Dept., research to see if a path to the north of the building is possible.	397

Trail #	Name	description	Length (ft)
22	SE Nature Trail	0.48 -Stays south and east of existing private parcels/structures, but not all the way to the river. Alignment options exist in nearby right-of-ways, need to ground truth. -far east / SE portions are in wetlands, assume some boardwalk construction needed if approvals granted. -lollipop layout at far east end is envisioned as a good viewpoint with a bench. (Cannot enter Beaver Lake SWA without CPW cooperation.)	2550
23	Millsite Park Skills Trail	0.70 miles (3,717 ft) -sketch concept intended to work with existing disc golf course and trails, crossing them infrequently. -alignment needs full ground truth and professional design to take into account existing constraints and opportunities. Could be longer or shorter, short connectors could allow for internal loops. -skills features could include rollers, berms, small jumps, obstacles, and small wood/steel features designed to challenge and build skills for younger riders. - North entrance to the continuous loop trail is across the street from a proposed trail to the Marble Charter School. -alternate access points from existing disc golf and other trails. -signage indicates bike optimized nature of trail and preferred or required direction if appropriate.	3655
24	Carbonate Creek / Buckskin Trail #1971	-existing trail, research FS status for lower portions, -assess for potential improvements within town's boundary. -Improve lower access to this system 'destination' with trails, signs, maps.	0
21	Children's Park Perimeter	These parcels are recently acquired by AVL T, held for public use. A concept plan indicates likely development of a baseball field, stands, landscaping, and parking as soon as summer 2022. Original vision was for a perimeter skills trail, but we should encourage some type of perimeter paths be included to avoid social trails across the field. These paths should be crowned to allow use during wet weather as this is very flat site and ponding is possible.	686

Trail #	Name	description
25	Disc Golf Course - rough version	1.2 miles -based on snowshoe hike with Mike Yellico, course builder & user, on 2-16-22. -holes have had alleys cleared and branches limbed in some locations. -M.Y. described that a walking path has formed along the course (after mowing and foot traffic), and it is already, or can be used, as a multi-use trail for hikers and bike riders. -Need to review further after snow melts. Assessment may indicate that the trails that have been walked into place can be improved to be more sustainable over coming years (drainage structures, re-alignments), or could become more bike-optimized in some locations to become more friendly and fun for some bike users. -New signage can emphasize multi-use intent of the trail, and etiquette for hikers, golfers, and riders to get along. Confusing layout, especially with southern loops could become more legible by formalizing some but not all existing trail segments. -M.Y. was supportive of the idea of new bike skills trails fitting in between 'holes', crossing over holes as needed, or even running parallel to holes.



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TRAILS

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