DURANGO MESA AREA PLAN
DURANGO, CO

Adopted August 2018
Updated February 2024
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**STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS**

Following the 2018 City of Durango Area Plan being adopted August 2018 unanimously by city council, critical steps have taken place in order to start the first phases of unlocking Durango Mesa Park for our community’s use. The area plan has been updated to show the progress that has been made highlighting the critical steps taken since completion of the 2018 area plan. All updated information is highlighted with a yellow background on the following pages.

Highlighted Items from 2018-2024
1. Durango Mesa Park Foundation (DMPF) was established in 2019, and all property was transferred to the Foundation from Ewing Park, LLC. The Foundation is a 501(c)3 and with a governing board and staff.
2. DMPF, City and County coordinated efforts and completed a traffic impact study and a CDOT access permit in 2021.
3. DMPF, City and County had several meetings to determine whether the Durango Mesa Park property would remain under County land use jurisdiction and developed under a County planned unit development process or be annexed by the City and developed under a City land use process. In 2022 annexation was the determined path forward. Annexation of the property will be complete early 2024 and will have specific Design Guidelines & Standards for the rural park.
4. Bike Park master planning and visioning started in 2021, leading to the decision to start the Demonstration Trail project. The project was important to show the community first steps were being taken with a project that was not attached to any required infrastructure. This project was completed in September 2023.
5. The 2018 area plan contemplated the development of a multi event center by the County on property within Durango Mesa Park. In September 2023, the County advised DMPF that it would not be moving forward with its project. However, some of the references to the multi-event center in the 2018 Area Plan have been retained for historical purposes.

The area plan is an important driving document for the overall Durango Mesa Park project and will be updated again as this project moves forward.

Durango Mesa Park is mostly private property, with some of the property owned by the City, at the time of this update.
From the Katz family:

“We are delighted to continue working with the City of Durango and our friends and neighbors to make this plan into a reality. We believe this project will support the needs and aspirations of our citizens, children, visitors and future generations to come.”
**1.1 Purpose of the Plan**

The purpose of the Durango Mesa Area Plan (herein ‘Area Plan’ and/or ‘Plan’) is to provide a guide for the management, planning and development of Durango Mesa, formerly known as Ewing Mesa. The plan was adopted in August 2018. The plan is being updated to incorporate the changes that have been identified as the plan begins to get implemented. Amending the plan now is also important as the property is in the process of being annexed into the City of Durango and the plan serves as the guiding document for development of Durango Mesa. The 2017 Comprehensive Plan reflects the new owners’ vision for the majority of the property on Ewing Mesa and their desire to dedicate land for performing arts and cultural facilities, the potential for the future County Fairgrounds, recreation uses and conservation areas instead of the urban development envisioned in the 2007 Comprehensive Plan. The change in vision for this property also required the Ewing Mesa Area Plan to be updated. As an Area Plan, this is a City adopted plan that relates to the Comprehensive Plan and shares the City’s goals, policies and objectives as appropriate. The Durango Mesa Area Plan also relates to other adopted plans by the City including the Transportation Master Plan, the Parks, Open Space, Trails and Recreation Master Plan (POST’R), the Multimodal Master Plan, Utilities Master Plan, and the Sustainability Master Plan.

**1.2 Structure of the Plan**

The Durango Mesa Area Plan is structured into five main sections, supporting maps and displays, and appendices. Following is a list of the main sections that together make up the Plan:

1. Introduction, Background and Vision
2. Existing Conditions and Plan Framework
3. The Plan Objectives and Policies
4. Durango Mesa Conceptual Master Plan and Program Elements
5. Implementation and Phasing Strategy
6. Appendix

The Area Plan is available on the City’s website. Maps included in the Plan are available for download as PDFs files. The Plan is subject to future amendments based on future circumstances and the actual pace of implementation of the recommended plan uses.

**1.3 Funding of Plan by the LOR Foundation**

The 2018 planning effort was funded by a grant from the LOR Foundation. The LOR Foundation is a nonprofit dedicated to enhancing livability and quality of life in the Intermountain West. The Area Plan is a partnership between the City of Durango and the Durango Mesa Foundation, with the goal to help support LOR Foundation mission via the protection of a significant portion of the Mesa and enhancement of the quality of life of the population.

**1.4 Background**

Durango Mesa (previously known as Ewing Mesa and encompassing 1,930 acres) is primarily owned by a single entity, Durango Mesa Park Foundation created by the Katz family to develop the mesa. Two other landowners have smaller properties on the western edge and slopes of the Mesa.

The area encompassed in this Plan update includes additional open space land to the northeast that was not part of the original plan. The area to the northeast is very steep and is not intended to be developed. This plan update includes this area because of trail connections and open space stewardship responsibilities.

Historically, the property was owned by Porter Fuel Company. The property was purchased by William D. Ewing, who owned it for a number of years. The land had a long-term mining lease on the property, where areas were mined for coal and gravel, these areas have since been reclaimed and revegetated. Portions of the Mesa were cultivated for bean and hay fields, more recently there have been horse and cattle grazing on the property. The mountainous and rugged hillsides of the Mesa have a series of existing fee-simple trail corridors held by the City of Durango that cut through the property, but by and large, the land has been relatively isolated despite its close proximity to downtown Durango.

In approximately 1990 Oakridge Energy (Pautsky) purchased the property. The owners of Oakridge Energy had plans to develop the coal and gravel reserves on Ewing Mesa but also wanted to create a golf course community on the property. The Area Plan adopted in 2004 included the golf course but also had approximately 2000 residential units, a business
park, a resort, and large areas designated as mixed use. As the property passed through the Pautsky family, the interest in developing the property into a golf course with an urban density community declined. In 2008 the property owner created a 54 large lot residential subdivision called Oakridge at Durango. All of the lots were in excess of 35 acres, exempting the subdivision from a formal review through La Plata County. Fortunately, the owners did not sell off the individual lots, keeping the property in one ownership.

The Katz family purchased the property in 2015 and formed Ewing Park LLC. The Katz family is a long time City of Durango family and local business owners. Marc Katz and his brother are the founders and owners of Mercury Payment Systems, now Wordplay, Inc. The Katz family have been significantly involved with the economic growth of the City of Durango and surrounding areas for the past 40 years via the success of the business. The family acquired the Durango Mesa property with a general vision for the property that is the genesis of this Plan, as described in greater detail herein. The Ewing Park LLC transferred ownership of the property to Durango Mesa Park Foundation in 2019 to move the Durango Mesa Park project forward.

1.5 Vision for the Mesa

This Area Plan has been developed to meet the vision of the majority land owner, the Katz family and to support an intended future dedication of land to the City of Durango and potentially La Plata County for public use of the greater community and its guests. The Katz family big idea and stated desire is to preserve a majority of the Mesa land for open space and enjoyment for multiple recreational uses, as well as establish a special mix of uses on appropriate areas of the Mesa that will support the future economy, vitality, health and prosperity of the Durango community and its surrounding environment. Central to the idea is a large scale special events festival venue and grounds with on-site camping anchored by an Arts and Culture Park with a Community Event Barn and smaller events venue on the northern end of the Mesa. Additional major uses the Katz family supports that are complimentary to the special events venues is a Mountain Sports Recreation facility with world class cycling, mountain climbing, running, athletic and team sports training and tournament facilities and potentially a new County Fairgrounds with a Multi-Event Center. In addition to new special events, arts and cultural spaces, the Katz family are interested in land uses that promote the community’s legacy and notoriety in the world of outdoor sports particularly cycling, running, and climbing. This Plan expresses the Katz family vision for the land in a manner that has been vetted by the community and stakeholders, to serve as the basis of negotiations for the transfer of the land, and to guide an incremental path for the phased implementation of the contemplated program of improvements.

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**Exhibit 1 - The Planning Process (2018)**

*This outline was created as part of the original 2018 Area Plan and remains the foundation of the work done since. This document captures the 2018 work and the work done since that time that culminated in a decision in 2021 to move this project towards annexation. Regular meetings took place between HDR, City, and for awhile County-staff and department heads. The City of Durango allocated staff time to allow for focus on this project.*

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**Chart from 2018 Area Plan**

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**Summary of Community Engagement**

Meeting #1 - Kick-off, Analysis of Existing Conditions, Site Visit, Meet with Property Owners & Agencies (3.14.2018)
Meeting #2 - Review of Resource Maps with Staff (4.02.2018)
Meeting #3 - Public Engagement Meeting # 1/ Introduce Web Based Survey (4.05.2018)
Meeting #4 - Staff Meeting - Concept Plan Alternatives Review (4.25.2018)
Meeting #5 - Public Engagement Meeting # 2 / Staff Progress Meeting (6.26.2018)
Meeting #6 - Staff Progress Meeting - Draft of Final Report (5.16.2018)
Meeting #7 - Planning Commission Public Hearing (5.28.2018 - 4th Monday of month)
Meeting #8 - City Council Meeting (6.19.2018 - 3rd Tuesday of month)
1.6 Planning Process
The process to develop the Durango Mesa Area Plan was completed in early summer of 2018. The effort is closely related to other long-range plans that have been undertaken by the City, La Plata County, and stakeholders. This update is following extensive work underway to make development of the mesa a reality. With new information on access, utilities, uses, annexation and design the need to update the plan became apparent.

a. Relationship to the City of Durango Comprehensive Plan: The Durango Mesa Area Plan is an element of the City Comprehensive Plan. The Area Plan outlines how the mesa should be developed and sets the stage for creating a world class park developed for special events, potential fairgrounds, sports and athletic facilities. The Future Land Use Map supports the area plans vision as does the Comprehensive Plan goals, policies, and objectives which are discussed in greater detail in Section 3.

b. Relationship to the City of Durango Parks, Open Space, Trails and Recreation Master Plan (POSTR): The process used to update the POSTR Master Plan in 2020 provided vital information used in the development of the Durango Mesa Area Plan. Key findings, especially statistically valid survey data indicated specific recreation program needs and perceived facility deficiencies. The program and mix of recreational proposed in the Area Plan is in response to the outcomes of the POSTR process. The program is discussed in greater detail in the Conceptual Master Plan and potential program elements in Section 4 of this plan.

c. La Plata County Multi-Event Center Master Plan: in 2017 La Plata County conducted an extensive planning effort to relocate the existing Fairgrounds facility to the top of the Mesa in conjunction with the development of a new Multi-Event Center. That effort involved a significant public process which resulted in a preferred option with the County Fairgrounds and Multi-Event Center located in the center part of the flat land of the Mesa. Recent events have put the County’s plans on hold and the area once reserved for the fairgrounds is now labeled Future Use Area. Documentation of this section is in the Appendix of this document.

d. Community Involvement: The planning process, including public meetings, for the Durango Mesa Annexation set the stage for the Area Plan update.

Summary of public outreach from 2021-2024
- Public meetings and hearings on the Durango Mesa Area Plan when developed in 2018.
- Presentations to City Council have occurred on a regular basis.
- Durango Mesa Park Foundation has presented to Joint Advisory Board meetings since 2019.
- Meetings with the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board.
- The Foundation included stakeholder input with visioning work for the Demonstration Trail project and Bike Park Master planning in November 2021 and January 2023.
- Public Engagement Open House on March 13, 2023, with 105 attendees.
- The Foundation has made presentations to multiple business organizations and service clubs, etc. over the years.
- DMPF presented to City Council, Parks & Rec advisory boards since 2018-2022 and included tours of DMP including a city staff and council tour July 2023.
- City Council and Planning Commission Annexation Hearings: The Planning Commission reviewed and recommended approval of the annexation of Durango Mesa on July 24, 2023. The City Council approved the annexation on September 5, 2023.
Exhibit 2 - Vision Framework Plan - UPDATED IN 2024

Section 1 - Introduction: Background and Vision

*This area was formally designated as ‘Relocated County Fairgrounds’ in the 2018 Area Plan
Exhibit 3 - Mountain Views and Ridgeline
Section 2 - Existing Conditions & Plan Framework

This section of the plan discusses the context of the site and outlines how the plan was developed.

2.1 Context Map and Relationship to Adjacent Lands
The Durango Mesa is comprised of 1,930 acres and 3 property owners. It sits in close proximity above and to the southeast of historic downtown of the City of Durango. Approximately 300 vertical feet separate the flat portions of the Mesa from the historic downtown, with steep slopes between the two. The property is bordered by the Horse Gulch Open Space to the north and northeast, by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Grandview Ridge Open Space to the south and southeast. Immediately to the west and below the Mesa is the Animas River and valley that includes the U.S. Highways 160/550 and Highway 3 corridors as well as the commercial areas of South Durango.

2.2 Existing Land Use
Durango Mesa is primarily undeveloped. Gravel and coal mining were prominent land uses. Coal mining and gravel mining operations have ceased and the areas of extraction have been reclaimed. Three occupied residential units exist in the plan area on the western edge of the Mesa. Gravel parking areas and restroom facilities have been installed on the DMPF parcel to support small to medium sized events, primarily the Meltdown on the Mesa Bluegrass festival. Historic multi-use trails have existed on the property for over 3 decades originally as fee-simple corridors owned by the County. The fee simple corridors were transferred from the County to the City of Durango required to complete annexation.

2.3 Environmental Factors – Topography and Slope, Aspect, and Elevation
Mapping and analysis of key environmental factors including topography, slope, aspect and elevation for the entire Mesa property was undertaken early in the planning process. Mapping for each of these factors was prepared using the County and City GIS systems. These maps have been used throughout the planning effort in evaluating the suitability of the land to accommodate and receive recommended land uses and associated program elements.

a. Topography and Slope: A detailed slope analysis map (Exhibit 6) was prepared that classifies the topography of the Mesa into slope categories in 5% increments, ranging from flat land to steep slopes exceeding 20%. The slope map has been a key tool in establishing the land use categories for the Mesa property. Lands with similar slope gradients have been aggregated and recommended for different types of uses. Slope categories compromising 15% slopes or below located generally on the western third of the property have been assigned parks and recreation land uses and is where the majority of program development is recommended. These include the special events venue, a cultural park, potentially the fairgrounds and multi-event center, cycling park, and athletics and sports field complex. Slope categories of 15% or greater slopes, generally the remainder of the property, have been assigned primarily to the transition and backcountry open space categories.
Exhibit 5* - Solar Aspect Map

Exhibit 6* - Slope Analysis Map

*See appendix for large full-size exhibits

Section 2 - Existing Conditions & Plan Framework
b. **Solar aspect:** A detailed solar aspect map (Exhibit 5) was prepared that indicates the orientation of land toward the sun and informs to what extent land is exposed to direct solar access. Given the two general landforms of the Mesa—the flat western portions of the property and the rugged steep hillsides, the solar aspect of the property varies across the property as the landform changes. The flat areas are predominantly west and southwest facing. The solar aspect of the hillside areas of the Mesa varies depending on the location and orientation of the major drainages, as indicated by the map. Notably, the meadow landform of the Mesa (that connects to Horse Gulch) faces northwest in contrast to the flat areas facing west and southwest. As program elements are developed upon the Mesa, solar aspect will be an important consideration relative to passive solar energy, microclimate, and outdoor recreation. The provision of shade will be critical for human comfort and where program uses are developed in open areas where no shade currently exists.

c. **Elevation:** Elevation of the property was analyzed in comparison to adjacent lands and changes of elevation within the property (Exhibit 7). The flat areas of the Mesa are generally around an elevation above sea level of 6900’ and approximately 300’ above adjacent lands in downtown and 400’ above the Animas River valley at an elevation of 6500’. The back country open space land that is part of the Mesa rises to elevations ranging in the 7500’ to 7700’, with the highest point within the property close to 7800’ at the far northeast end of the site. The difference in elevation of the property from downtown and the river and highway corridor pose a challenge to vehicular access but also create unique opportunities that give the Mesa a landscape character all its own, especially in the context of surrounding adjacent lands. The difference in elevation also makes the use of trail access between the downtown and the Mesa convenient and appealing, as trails that climb up the slopes and connect into the Mesa shorten the horizontal distance required to access the Mesa and adjacent private properties as compared to access roads.

### 2.4 Landscape Character & Views

The landscape character of the Mesa varies depending upon topography and elevation as well as presence of or absence of vegetation. The visual quality of the Mesa, its grand expansive views in all directions is extraordinary and repeatedly has been highlighted as one of the greatest assets of the properties and is inherent in the vision for the uses recommended by the Plan.

In general, the flat land of the Mesa is covered with grasses and forbs and is devoid of any woody plant material. Consequently, since there are no major obstructions in the form of vegetation or land form and the flat areas are so expansive, there are majestic views in all directions (360-degree cone of vision) from most spots upon the flat areas of the Mesa. The views northwest from the Mesa are the prime views given the overlap of the nearby and distant landforms such as Smelter Mountain and the La Plata Mountains. These provide a strong and clear orientation to the Mesa as well as a distinct sense of place of being immersed in a rugged mountain environment with dense forest, rocky slopes and snow-capped peaks. The Area Plan attempts to leverage and preserve this strong connection to the landscape, most especially with the proposed location of the special events venue and cultural park on the north mesa, oriented deliberately to capture and frame the primary views to the northwest.

Most of the remaining land of the Mesa are mountainous hillsides covered with pinyon pines, juniper, scrub oak, and great basin sagebrush as key species. Mixed in with the vegetation are occasional rock outcroppings that become more pronounced as the site rises to the northeast into the incised drainages and small canyons between Horse Gulch and Grandview Ridge. Depending on locations within the hillsides that compromise the back country open space, views are based on orientation. Within the drainages the views become confined and reduced by landform and vegetation. The landscape character in these areas is less expansive and focuses inward upon the site. The experience in these locations is much more secluded and less affected by the surrounding landscape.
SITE PHOTOS

SECTION 2 - EXISTING CONDITIONS & PLAN FRAMEWORK
2.5 Access and Trails

a. **Access**: The existing primary access to the Mesa is Ewing Mesa Road, a paved private road that extends from the Highway 3 intersection up into the project. The road is referred to as Durango Mesa Road in this Area Plan as it is intended to be renamed as such via the appropriate processes in the future. The road is in fair condition with two full travel lanes and gravel shoulders. There is a section of this road at the north switchback that exceeds both City and County standards for grade. The road extends approximately 1.5 miles into the flat portions of the Mesa. The road turns into a dirt road and continues into the southern section of flat land upon the Mesa.

b. **Trails**: Multi-use trails associated with the City’s Horse Gulch and BLM’s Grandview Ridge open spaces currently exist and are routed through areas of the Durango Mesa property. These trails are enabled on the Mesa through a series of existing fee-simple trail corridors held by City of Durango. These trails were incorporated into the plan as are future trails contemplated and recommended in relationship to the existing trails network. In 2023, the Demonstration Trail Project was started and completed. These trails have easements dedicated to the City of Durango.

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**Exhibit 8**: 2024 Existing Trails Map

*See appendix for large full-size exhibits*
View from North Mesa toward Horse Gulch Open Space

Interface of flat areas of the Mesa with hillsides

View to the west across the North Mesa with Smelter Mountain in the middle ground

Ewing Mesa Road – road section connecting Highway 3 to the top of the Mesa
Section 3 - Plan Objectives and Policies

3.1 Land Use

The Durango Mesa is spatially close to downtown Durango although it is physically separated by steep slopes. The Mesa’s geographic location and proximity to existing urban development provides a wonderful opportunity for the proposed recreational and cultural uses. The two smaller private parcels located on the Mesa are currently used for rural residential and natural resource extraction that would normally not be compatible with urban development however, their location allows for the existing uses to continue.

Property owners of the two smaller parcels requested that their land use category not be changed from the Rural Land Use designation of the existing Area Plan. This plan recommends leaving the Land Use category of both parcels as Rural.

Annexation and Development Standards

The Durango Mesa Area Plan anticipated the annexation of the property into the City of Durango to provide City services and support the future infrastructure improvements. The annexation process started in 2022 and was completed in 2023. The Design Guidelines and Standards for this unique property were developed as part of the annexation process. Site specific development review will occur for each phase of development. It is understood that this is a unique property and that development will be phased over many years. Seasonal and temporary uses will not have to be developed to the same standard as permanent uses. The plan also advances creating new development standards to address the types of uses proposed for Durango Mesa that do not need to meet the urban standards currently in the Land Use and Development Code.

Proposed Uses

The Future Land Use Map and mix of uses is shown in Exhibit 12. A description of the land use categories is contained in Exhibit 11.

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<tr>
<td>Parks and Recreation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conservation and Open Space</td>
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This map and table will guide future development decisions as described in the policies of the City’s Comprehensive Plan and this Area Plan.

Exhibit 9 - Land Use Categories

Goals (from Comprehensive Plan):

- Preserve, conserve and sustainably use natural resources so that future generations may enjoy the benefits of Durango’s natural environment.
- Protect sensitive floodplains, hillsides, woodlands, wetlands and wildlife habitat from inappropriate development.
Exhibit 10 - Annexation Base Map - Updated in 2024

1" = 750'
Objective 3.1: Provide a mix of land uses that provide for exceptional recreational and cultural experiences, along with natural open space and natural resource uses.

Policy 3.1.1: Use Exhibit 10 to categorize future land uses. Land uses are listed as examples and should not be considered all-inclusive. Intensities establish the maximum gross density for each residential land use category. Residential densities are expressed in dwelling units (“DUs”) per gross acre of a project, including streets and other dedication areas within the parcel. Each category may permit land uses and intensities from more than one zoning district.

Policy 3.1.2: Exhibit 1 is the Future Land Use Map. The Future Land Use Map is intended to be used in conjunction with the goals, objectives and policies of this Plan to guide zoning and development decisions.

Policy 3.1.3: Ensure that: The type and intensity of land uses will be consistent with the Future Land Use Plan. Site specific review is needed to ensure proposals are consistent with adopted development regulations, including but not limited to regulations addressing natural hazards; environmental protection; neighborhood compatibility/stability; design; and concurrency.

Policy 3.1.4: Encourage the development of a cultural events facility on the Mesa.

Policy 3.1.5: Development shall not occur on the steep slopes of the Mesa that descend to State Highway 3, U.S. Highways 160/550 or the river. Exceptions may be allowed for roads, trails and utilities.

Policy 3.1.6: The Conceptual Plan (Exhibit 2) should be considered as one potential vision for the Mesa. Specific land uses may change over time with the overall theme of public recreational and cultural land uses in the areas designated.

Policy 3.1.7: Although no commercial land uses are proposed in the Durango Mesa Area Plan, it is expected that some commercial uses will be developed supporting the recreation and cultural uses. These uses will be limited in scope serving the needs of visitors, employees and residents of the Mesa.

Policy 3.1.8: Require buffers, vegetation, water treatment, dust control, noise control and other measures as deemed necessary to protect the physical and social environment where mineral extraction will be carried out.

Policy 3.1.9: Require a large buffer around the existing gravel mine; do not allow any additional residential development to be constructed within 1,000 feet of the mine until the gravel extraction has ended and the mine reclaimed.

Policy 3.1.10: Limit development in areas adjacent to designated mineral resource areas to those uses that will not be impacted by significant noise, dust, traffic or visual impact of mining operations.

Policy 3.1.11: Require revegetation of land used for mineral production to either restored state similar to its original condition or an improved state appropriate for use after mineral extraction has been completed.

3.2 Sustainability

The concept of sustainability is central to the community vision of Durango. In 2015, the City adopted the Municipal Sustainability Action Plan for Internal Operations. This plan was expanded and updated in 2022 with the adoption of a community-wide Sustainability Plan. Furthermore, the City’s Strategic Plan and Comprehensive Plan both identify sustainability as a key consideration for community planning and development. The community relies on natural systems to function and thrive, as it is part of the larger environment. There must be a level of quality and consistency in the physical manifestation of the Durango Mesa Area Plan that provides for excellence in the aesthetic realm. Each of these spheres of sustainability reinforce the others, and by striving for the greatest results possible in each, the sum will be greater than its parts. For the Durango Mesa Area, utilizing sustainable practices and strategies in a way to help the development fit better with the land, uphold a legacy of long-term planning and reach the forefront of the market for new built products.

Objective 3.2: Promote development that contributes to a financially and economically sound community while incorporating best practices of: sustainable design, site selection, energy efficiency, stormwater handling and aesthetic harmony.
Policy 3.2.1: Incorporate best management practices (BMP's) in the areas of: energy efficiency, renewable energy incorporation, waste management, water conservation, stormwater, locally sourced materials, air quality, multi-modal transportation, and greenhouse gas emissions reduction for all future development on the Mesa. Environmental impacts and climate impacts should be considered throughout design with preference given to options with the lowest impact reasonably possible.

Policy 3.2.2: Portions of the Durango Mesa have been significantly altered through mining and/or agriculture and are lacking in tree cover and shading. When designing new landscape or activity areas, consideration should be given to planting trees early in the process. Landscape material with low water and/or water-wise requirements and that are not preferable to wildlife should be given preference. Vegetation selection should give preference to drought tolerant varieties and varieties which require minimal or no irrigation after the initial establishment period.

Policy 3.2.3: Landscape design guidelines for the overall Mesa should be developed to ensure all development has an attractive, coordinated landscape design that is consistent with the environment.

Policy 3.2.4: All lighting should adhere to the best practices of the Dark Skies initiative to protect the ability of others to view the beauty of the night sky. Lighting should be entirely LED or comparably efficient technology. All lighting should be installed with photosensor, timer, and occupancy controls in order to reduce lighting hours as much as possible to conserve energy.

Policy 3.2.5: Whenever possible, use on-site resources such as gravel to minimize construction impacts.

Policy 3.2.6: Irrigation from on-site wells, the Animas River or City water supply should be used to promote shade tree growth and wind protection within existing meadow areas and to provide fire breaks from the more fire-prone backcountry areas. The use of treated water for irrigation should be minimized as much as possible in favor of untreated “raw” water in order to reduce strain on the City’s water treatment capacity.

Policy 3.2.7: Buildings and surfaces should employ stormwater management that promotes groundwater recharge and minimizes or eliminates any discharge directly into the Animas River.

Policy 3.2.8: Roadway, parking, sidewalk and trail design should employ best practices to encourage alternatives to using single-occupancy vehicles to access Durango Mesa as much as possible. A minimal amount of asphalt and concrete is encouraged in the design.

Policy 3.2.9: All parking areas should incorporate electric vehicle charging infrastructure that aligns with best practices for such infrastructure related to the intended uses of Durango Mesa. These installation may go above and beyond what is required by state or local code. Infrastructure should be installed in a way that minimizes the need for future trenching for electrical lines.

Policy 3.2.9: Buildings and structures should incorporate solar energy generation, micro-wind generation, geothermal heating/cooling, and/or other renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies.

Policy 3.2.10: All trash receptacles must be metal and wildlife-resistant. Recycling collection should be considered and encouraged alongside trash receptacles in prominent/higher use spaces. When Recycling is provided, there should be at minimum, a container for mixed single-stream (paper, metal, plastic) and a separate container for glass. Recycling containers should be clearly labeled and specify “No Food or Liquids”.

Policy 3.2.11: Wildlife corridors should be considered for overall site planning and development.

Policy 3.2.12: The current and future increasing risk of wildfire should be considered for overall site planning and development.

3.3 Arts and Culture

Historic Resources
The Durango area has provided a desirable human habitat since prehistoric times. Visitors from around the globe who come to view cliff dwellings in Mesa Verde and other regional attractions discover the historic charm of Main Avenue and surrounding neighborhoods in Durango. Historic and prehistoric sites are relatively common in the Durango area. These links with the recent and distant past are a valued part of the community fabric and should be preserved for future generations. Although much of the Durango Mesa area has been disturbed in recent years by mining and agriculture, it is possible that historic resources are still present.

Objective 3.3a: Identify, preserve and protect significant scenic, cultural, historical and archaeological sites in this area for the benefit of existing and future generations.

Policy 3.3.1: All development and land disturbance should meet all requirements of the Durango Land Use and Development Code and/or be coordinated with and meet the standards outlined by the Colorado Office of Archaeology.

Arts and Culture
The City’s Comprehensive Plan has an Arts, Cultural and Creative Economy Element that emphasizes the importance of arts and culture throughout the City.

Objective 3.3b: The Durango Mesa is designated as a key location for Arts, Culture and activities that promote the Creative Economy.

Policy 3.3.2: Support development of cultural facilities on the Mesa which address community needs.
Policy 3.3.3: Support development of an outdoor music and events venue on the Mesa to accommodate 5,000 to 20,000 people.

Policy 3.3.4: Provide support if La Plata County ever decides to relocate the existing fairgrounds to the Mesa.

Policy 3.3.5: Incorporate public art throughout the Mesa.

Policy 3.3.6: Consider installing public art at the entrance at State Highway 3 and in the Durango Mesa Road future roundabouts.

Policy 3.3.7: Formalize public art opportunities in conjunction with the City trail system for commissioning artwork that celebrates and educates about meaningful cultural, natural and historical sites and enhances user experiences.

Policy 3.3.8: Consider placing public art in any future transit hub on the Mesa.

3.4 Transportation

Durango Mesa’s topography and proximity to the City presents a unique set of challenges and opportunities for its proposed urban development. The Mesa’s proposed uses depend largely on transportation and utility improvements. It is anticipated that most of the development on the Mesa will be government funded for public purposes, and so the coordination of these improvements will ultimately determine the ways in which the public accesses the Mesa and will impact the chronology of the phased development.
**Roadways and Roundabouts on the Mesa**

The goal for Durango Mesa Park is to create a park experience that facilitates a sense of place and helps people to enjoy the beauty of the park and its vistas. To do this, the context of the roadways in the park will be to calm traffic and to provide a rural driving experience that you might expect in a national park.

For the roadways we will use the natural terrain to create a road experience where the road is curvilinear and follows the natural undulations of the terrain. The paved roads will have 6-foot paved shoulders for cyclists who use the roadways. Approaches to roundabouts will be marked with sharrows entering the roundabout if a 6-foot shoulder cannot be provided. For paved roadways where a six-foot shoulder cannot be accommodated, sharrow markings will be provided to inform motorists of the potential presence of bicyclists. With the rural nature of the roadway, curb and gutter is not intended for the roads, the shoulders and ditches will blend into the natural terrain. Profile grades for Ewing Mesa Road have been discussed with City Staff. The city agreed that the profile grade of Ewing Mesa Road from SH 3 to the Mesa Top will not feasibly meet city profile grade standards. The city did agree to allow this section of Ewing Mesa Road to be built with up to a maximum profile grade of eight percent, as agreed upon with the park standards specified for Durango Mesa Park. All other public roadways within the park will meet city standards for profile grade to the maximum extent possible.

Intersections along Ewing Mesa Road, within the park, will be designed as compact roundabouts to help slow traffic along the main roadway. The compact roundabouts will be designed to accommodate semi-trucks and fire apparatus vehicles. Pedestrian activity will be diverted away from the intersections and roadways to avoid vehicle pedestrian conflicts.
HDR has completed the concept phase for the roadway and is working up intersection concepts. Design is ongoing with 30% design schedule for late February 2024, 90% in Late May 2024 and NTP from CDOT in late June 2024.
Secondary Access/Emergency Egress:
Previous transportation plans have proposed secondary and/or emergency only connections at various locations on the Mesa. A full secondary egress (open both directions at all times) becomes problematic due to the steepness of the terrain and the limited capacity of existing intersections at either US 160/550 (Dominguez Drive) or State Highway 3. The City requires additional access when development exceeds 200 ADT. Emergency egresses are typically gated and can be steeper with tighter turns provided than the standard road sections as long as the road meets the fire code. Thus, emergency egress roads are considerably less expensive to construct than a full access road and are required as part of an evacuation plan. There are several locations where an emergency egress could potentially be constructed with minimal impact to adjacent properties or hillsides. The City may require a full secondary access. The potential alignments that have been previously discussed include:

- Three Springs Connector across BLM land connecting to Wilson Gulch Road
- An access off the south end of the Mesa connecting the frontage road to US 160/550 at Dominguez Dr.

Any future access would need full evaluation and approval by the City and other applicable agencies.

Durango Mesa Park Foundation worked closely with the neighboring property owner and the City to complete the emergency egress road design in 2023. Construction of the emergency egress road will occur in 2024 and needs to be finished prior to beginning construction of the main road up to the mesa top. The emergency access road will be gated.

Overall Transportation Priorities:

Objective 3.4: Provide safe, appropriate and convenient access to Durango Mesa while prioritizing pedestrian, bicycle, transit, ride shares and all other transportation options except single occupancy vehicles.

Policy 3.4.1: Link the timing of development on Durango Mesa to provision of an adequate transportation system.

Policy 3.4.2: Allow for limited uses to continue and expand on the Mesa prior to needing transportation improvements as coordinated with CDOT and Durango Fire Protection District (DFPD).

Policy 3.4.3: Provide emergency egress when warranted by the level of development and activities on the Mesa.

Policy 3.4.4: Require a second paved access on to the Mesa when a traffic study determines it is warranted.
Policy 3.4.5: Require dedication of right-of-way or offers of dedication for future accesses at the time of annexation.

Policy 3.4.6: Require intersection improvements to the State Highway 3 intersection when levels of service drop below acceptable CDOT and/or City standards. It is anticipated the final intersection at SH 3 will be a fully signalized intersection with appropriate auxiliary lanes. The intersection will be implemented in phases per the provisions outlined in the approved CDOT access permit. Intersections within the park will likely be designed as roundabouts to facilitate traffic calming in the natural park setting.

Policy 3.4.7: Facilitate development by looping roads and providing alternative points of access wherever practical.

Policy 3.4.8: Provide for safe and convenient internal access.

Policy 3.4.9: Employ traffic calming techniques on mesa roads as defined in the Durango Mesa Park Design Guidelines.

Policy 3.4.10: Recognize and provide for the future Grandview connection road through offers of right-of-way dedications and maintaining setbacks of permanent structures.

Policy 3.4.11: Ensure all facilities and amenities meet applicable Federal ADA standards and include universal accessibility requirements specific to each use.

3.5 Multimodal Transportation Policies

Objective 3.5: Provide realistic opportunities to use various modes of transportation onto and throughout the mesa.

Policy 3.5.1: Develop a multimodal trail system that is safe, convenient and pleasant.

Policy 3.5.2: Provide convenient locations for public transit and private ride-share options.

Policy 3.5.3: Prioritize pedestrian and bicycle access to Durango Mesa.

Policy 3.5.4: Consider and prioritize all forms of public transit.

Policy 3.5.5: Incorporate public transportation in the development plans and include both internal connections, as well as connections off the Mesa.

Policy 3.5.6: Develop a trail system within the Mesa that connects activity centers utilizing trails, sidewalks and bike lanes.

Policy 3.5.7: Allow for aerial tramways or similar alternative modes of transportation such as cable cars.

3.6 Parking Policies

Many of the proposed uses on the Mesa will generate high, but infrequent, parking demand. It is critical to phase in parking only as needed. The Conceptual Plan identifies a series of parking areas for the various uses and venues. With the increased use of taxi services and driverless vehicles, more people will likely opt to shuttle to an event versus parking a vehicle. The City should monitor these trends and provide parking and transit services as the demand warrants and avoid constructing large parking lots until justified. Transit stops with shade and weather protection can be placed near the future activity centers to promote and encourage ride sharing. Also, consideration should be given to providing primitive, summer use only, overflow parking areas that can be used for larger special events.

Objective 3.6: Provide attractive, safe and adequate parking facilities that limit unnecessary land disturbance.

Policy 3.6.1: Utilize shared parking wherever appropriate to reduce the amount of required off-street parking.

Policy 3.6.2: Allow the development of parking lots to be phased, so the ultimate design can coincide with actual use.

Policy 3.6.3: Allow temporary unimproved parking lots to be used for major festivals and events.

Policy 3.6.4: Allow the use of gravel parking lots for seasonal uses, overflow parking and potential horse trailer parking. If use is weekly, surfacing shall be paved. If use is monthly, surface shall be reinforced. If use is less frequent, gravel can be allowed.

Policy 3.6.5: Create gravel parking lot standards addressing design, construction and maintenance.

3.7 Parks, Open Space Trails and Recreation

The overall vision of the Durango Mesa Plan is to create a place dedicated to the performing arts, cultural facilities, a potential Fairgrounds facility, recreation uses and open space areas. The Plan allows for an expansion of the existing trail system, and will meet many of the City’s parks and recreation needs well into the future.

Chapter 4 of this Plan includes a Conceptual Master Plan with recommended program elements. The Conceptual Plan has been developed with significant input from the landowners, City, specific interest groups and general public. The intent of the Conceptual Plan is to show possible layouts, program elements and features, although it is important to recognize that priorities could change in the future and flexibility with locations and program elements should be maintained.
Objective 3.7a: The intent of the Durango Mesa Area Plan is to provide a world class location for parks, open space, trails, recreation and cultural activities.

Policy 3.7.1: Prioritize parks, open space, trails and other developed recreation and cultural uses that will meet the needs of locales, but also promote Durango as a destination for these types of uses.

Policy 3.7.2: Develop a bicycle park that address a variety of bicycle related uses as determined appropriate by the City and users.

Policy 3.7.3: Meet a variety of recreation needs as identified and prioritized by the City and the public in the active recreation area shown on the Conceptual Plan.

Policy 3.7.4: The Conceptual Development Plan for the Mesa can and likely will be modified as recreation needs and priorities change in the community.

Trails
The recreation and sports history of Durango is tied closely to trails of all types and Durango Mesa is identified as a central hub of all types of trails for the City. Trails will run the gamut from wide, paved, multi-use trails to use-specific single tracks and seasonal trails. Trail development of the demonstration trails was completed in October, 2023 as the first phase of use of the Mesa.

Objective 3.7b: The Durango Mesa will provide for a diversity of trails and trail activities that enriches, complements and expands the existing trail opportunities in the Community.

Policy 3.7.5: Develop hard surface trails in accordance with City standards and accessibility guidelines.

Policy 3.7.6: Provide trail connections linking the Mesa to surrounding developed areas.

Policy 3.7.7: Continue to provide trail connections linking the Mesa to surrounding public lands.

Policy 3.7.8: Design the promenade to prioritize access between uses, provide for multiple users and act as a fire break and emergency access wherever possible.

Policy 3.7.9: Develop use-specific trails on the Mesa in appropriate locations. The development of the specific use trails should be a high priority on the Mesa.

Open Space
A significant portion of the Durango Mesa includes steep slopes, critical wildlife habitat, and unique landforms. Much of the terrain is difficult to access except on foot, horseback, or mountain bike and has been prioritized for preservation and uses consistent with the POSTR Plan.

Objective 3.7c: Prioritize open space, wildlife and low density trails uses in designated areas.

Policy 3.7.10: Preserve draws and gulches.

Policy 3.7.11: Preserve the undeveloped viewshed from the Horse Gulch southern meadow into the property.

Policy 3.7.12: Prohibit development on the steep slopes of the Mesa that descend to State Highway 3, U.S. Highways 160/550 or to the Animas River. Exceptions may be allowed for roads, trails and utilities.

Policy 3.7.13: Open space areas shall be maintained in their natural state where possible. Improvements for wildlife, wildfire, forest management and trails will be prioritized.

Policy 3.7.14: Resource inventories should be performed to inform decisions regarding trail development in the backcountry open space area.

Policy 3.7.15: Develop Stewardship Management Plan for Backcountry Open Space consistent with POSTR Plan.
3.8 Utilities and Infrastructure

Water
Historically, the land and previous operations were served by a series of commercial groundwater wells. Some have been abandoned but there are two active wells near the concert venue area and within the planned mountain bike park area. The later well is currently being used for mountain bike trail construction and maintenance of the trails. There appears to be a third well casing still intact that could be potentially re-permitted and used for limited water supply. The water from the wells would be used for limited irrigation, bike park maintenance activities, and fire suppression purposes. This would be accomplished by establishing a water storage tank in the upper elevations of the bike park. The tanks with well water could be drained on regular intervals into ponds to prevent algae growth in the tanks. The tanks would also be drained seasonally to ponds for winter shut down. The ponds could be used to support water activities, irrigation, and supplemental water for fire suppression. In discussions with the Durango Fire Protection District, they will require a water supply for fire suppression purposes as human activity increases in the area. Durango Mesa Park will provide the necessary water storage required per the International Fire Code (IFC) requirements as buildings and facilities are developed in the park. Additionally, in the phase two roadway improvements, Durango Mesa Park and the City will jointly fund (funding agreement in process) the infrastructure to install an 18-inch portable waterline from the Horse Gulch area up to the mesa top where Ewing Mesa Road completes its climb up from State Highway 3. The waterline will provide water to a hydrant to provide an additional source of water for fire suppression. In future phases of park development, the 18-inch waterline will be extended through the park along the roadway until it reaches the BLM land boundary just south of the bike park. As additional buildings and facilities are developed a potable water storage tank can be added to supplement water storage for fire suppression and for potable water needs in the buildings. This will be determined according to the IFC requirements. The installation of the 18-inch waterline is consistent with the City’s 2021 Water System Master Plan.

Policy 3.8.1: Water infrastructure should be phased as appropriate with the level of development.

Sewer
There are two composting-type toilet facilities on site that can be used on an interim basis and a third pit toilet is planned for demonstration trail users. Portable restrooms can to be used for the occasional special events such as concerts, sporting events, or other gatherings. As more frequent and regular activities occur, the extension of a public sewer main will be required. Generally, the park can be served by a gravity sewer system that ties into the South Durango Sanitation District facilities near Dominguez Drive, as determined in 2023. If a future fairgrounds facility is built there may be a need for a sewer lift station for that facility.

Policy 3.8.2: Sewer service should be phased as appropriate with the level of development.

Stormwater Management
The Durango Mesa Area Plan area is adjacent to and includes several short stretches of the Animas River. Given this close connection, it is critical to ensure that stormwater is managed in a manner to protect this valuable resource and comply with all federal, state and local regulations.

Objective 3.8: Incorporate best management practices to protect water quality and prevent harm to downstream properties.

Policy 3.8.3: Limit the amount of stormwater generated by utilizing alternatives to impervious surfaces for parking lots where appropriate.

Policy 3.8.4: Stormwater should be managed to infiltrate the ground as efficiently as possible.

Policy 3.8.5: Maintain natural channels and routes for runoff to help maintain the character of the landscape, ensure the integrity of the river and support wildlife.

Other Utilities
There is an inactive 15 kV three phase service at the south end of the park that could be re-energized, and an existing single-phase service on the Mesa. Likely the 15 kV service will be re-energized to serve most uses in the park. If a fairgrounds facility is ultimately developed a larger investment in a substation and transmission line through the park will be required. There is excellent solar exposure that could be utilized on rooftops or small panels to generate power for minor uses such as non-potable wells, lighting for restrooms, or minor buildings. Three phase power would need to be extended up the Mesa with the development of a fairgrounds, Multi-Event Center, pump stations, or large demand buildings or structures. In 2015, an electrical line was reestablished to the venue site at the second gate.

Policy 3.8.6: Electrical service should be phased as appropriate with the level of development.
Telecom and natural gas lines are along Highway 3 and can be extended up as necessary in the future. There are also wireless internet providers that may be available to the Mesa in the future to reduce costs of trenching.

**DMPF will trench and move 15kV Line to bike park area in 2024.**

**Policy 3.8.6:** Future utility and telecom infrastructure extensions should be underground

**Policy 3.8.7:** Structures should be designed to be as energy efficient as possible and consideration should be given to using solar energy.

### 3.9 Services

**Police**

Law enforcement services for the property is provided the City of Durango.

**Fire**

The Durango Fire Protection District (DFPD) provides fire protection and emergency response services to the Mesa. The DFPD could utilize an existing primitive road/trail connection to Horse Gulch Road for search and rescue operations. Also, as more remote trails develop and activity increases DFPD encourages the siting of a helipad location for emergencies.

**Policy 3.9.1:** Design the site with structural and wildland fire suppression in mind.

**Policy 3.9.2:** Incorporate fire breaks between the more developed portions of the property and the natural open space. Firebreaks should be 2 ½ times the height of the surrounding vegetation and could be incorporated into access road and trails.

**Policy 3.9.3:** Design the promenade trail to be used as a fire break.

**Policy 3.9.4:** Work with DFPD to develop an emergency action plan.

### 3.10 Relationship to Adjoining properties

The western portion of the property is adjacent to developed urban uses near downtown Durango. For the most part, this portion of the property is well buffered by steep hillsides and the Animas River. The remainder of the property is public land in a mix of City and BLM ownership. The public lands are managed for recreation (trail) use, natural resource extraction uses and wildlife use.

**Policy 3.10.1:** The Durango Mesa has some of the most outstanding views in the area. Planned development will wish to take advantage of these views and site development in a manner that allows visitors and park users to appreciate the beauty of the surrounding area. Structures should be carefully sited to prevent ridgelining, and still ensure excellent views of the area for users.

**Policy 3.10.2:** Many portions of the property, especially the eastern portion, will remain in a generally natural state, except for trails. All development should be considerate of wildlife and designed in such a way to minimize impact on and damage by wildlife. Wildlife crossings, wildlife resistant trash containers, and landscaping that is less palatable to wildlife should all be included in designs. Fencing should be carefully used to exclude wildlife where necessary and be minimized or wildlife friendly where wildlife will not need to be excluded.

**Policy 3.10.3:** Coordinate the planning and construction of trails linking Durango Mesa to Grandview Ridge with the City of Durango, the Bureau of Land Management, La Plata County, and Durango Trails.
Section 4 - Mesa Conceptual Master Plan and Recommended Program Elements

4.1 Introduction and Program Summary

The Conceptual Master Plan for the Durango Mesa Park property described in this section proposes a layout of the program of desired elements consistent with the Katz family vision and the recommended land use plan for Durango Mesa. The Conceptual Master Plan is the result of feedback and input of various groups and agencies including the Katz family, City staff, La Plata County, Durango Trails, private property owners, and the general public. With the input from the Katz family and City staff originating from the Comprehensive Plan and Parks, Open Space, Trails and Recreation Master Plan process, a list of amenities and program uses are proposed on the Mesa in the most appropriate manner feasible. The result is a Conceptual Master Plan that balances the direction and desires of the different groups into one cohesive Conceptual Master Plan, and most importantly, that aligns with the Katz family vision for the property.

The Program for Durango Mesa consists of five main elements and associated uses consistent with the Katz family and the City’s vision:

1. Cultural / Special Events Complex – North Mesa
2. Active Recreation & Mountain Sports Complex – South Mesa
3. Bike Park
4. Hub
5. Demonstration Trails
6. Transitional Area and Meadow
7. Back Country Open Space

These major uses and program elements were researched in greater detail and precedent facilities were investigated as case studies. The planning process has included analysis of the Mesa land to accommodate the requirements of each major program element. The optimum locations for each type of land use were determined and are shown to scale at the relative size and preferred location as they are envisioned on Mesa. In this way, the Conceptual Master Plan recommends the preferred arrangement of program elements in relationship to the land and to each other. The Conceptual Master Plan is intended as a road map to help guide the placement and organization of major cultural and recreational program elements upon the Mesa in a manner where they relate to other land uses and the land to create a synergy and special sense of place unique to the Mesa landscape setting.

It is recognized the Conceptual Master Plan is preliminary in nature and it is anticipated it will change and evolve as the actual land transfer and development takes place into the future. The major program elements incorporated into the Conceptual Master Plan are described in more detail, area by area in the sub-sections that follow.

4.2 North Mesa – Special Events Venue and Arts and Culture Complex (+/- 160 Acres)

The North Mesa area has been planned to receive the Special Events Venue and Festival Grounds and associated supporting elements including parking and on-site temporary festival camping areas. Given the abundance of flat ground, amazing views and proximity to downtown Durango, this site is the most suitable for the proposed special events uses. This is also consistent with the Katz family vision for the North Mesa and is a top priority for the Katz family consideration in dedicating the land to the City. The list of recommended uses for the North Mesa includes the following program elements, listed below and referenced on the Conceptual Master Plan graphic (Exhibit 15 on page 27):

a. Special Events Venue (large scale): It is anticipated that in time, a permanent outdoor amphitheater will be developed on the Mesa to support large scale signature special events and music festivals in the City of Durango. An amphitheater facility that is scalable and accommodates a capacity ranging from approximately 5,000 to 20,000 people during special events has been studied as part of the process and is recommended in the Plan. The exact size, location and capacity of the venue will be tested and evaluated over time as the Durango community attracts different types of large scale special events and festivals. However, capacity of area roads and infrastructure as well as area service providers will be major determinants in whether a facility of this size is to be developed. There is no comparable
*This area was formally designated as 'Relocated County Fairgrounds' in the 2018 Area Plan

Exhibit 12 - Conceptual Layout, Updated in 2024

Section 4 - Mesa Conceptual Master Plan and Recommended Program Elements
size or type of events facility in the City of Durango and surrounding region, and it has been identified by the Durango Mesa Park Foundation, City, and stakeholders as a major priority for the Mesa. This type of facility will greatly expand the community’s ability to attract a variety of premiere large-scale music and cultural events and to hold multi-day gatherings that include on site camping.

It is envisioned this facility will evolve organically into the future as the North Mesa hosts a variety of events and organizers have the benefit of practical lessons learned that can be applied to the planning, design and development of a permanent facility. The future facility is envisioned to have a covered non-enclosed stage and seating pavilion, a large outdoor lawn, and a dedicated back-of-house service access with loading dock(s) and associated operations and storage areas. The planning process tested various locations and layouts on the North Mesa to determine the most desirable location for the future stage and supporting amenities. These site studies included as primary considerations views off-site, solar aspect, audience and artist orientation, parking locations and supply, sequence of pedestrian arrival, entry, egress, on-site camping, and back-of-house access. The approximate location of the preferred site for a future amphitheater location is at the far northern end of the Mesa, leaving ample space for lawn seating, festival grounds with opportunity for smaller support stages, on-site camping, and overflow parking areas. A back-of-house dedicated access for service and operations is recommended from Durango Mesa Road to the rear of the future amphitheater and to separate this type of traffic from other users accessing the Mesa.

The facility should be designed with multiple types of events in mind; that it be scalable in size and layout; and that it be able to support multiple stages and venues to provide the greatest amount of flexibility to host different types and formats of special events that may not lend themselves to more traditional facilities.

b. Special Events Venue (smaller scale): In addition to the large scale special events venue the Area Plan recommends incorporating a smaller scale outdoor venue to support small to mid-size community-oriented events that have a few number of participants with a maximum capacity in the range of 800 to 1,000 persons. The smaller events venue is intended to be much more intimate and ‘right-sized’ to support community-oriented events such as family gatherings, weddings, memorials, non-profit events, and other types of celebrations, meetings and happenings. Space for these types of events has been identified as lacking within the City of Durango, and so this facility would help address a current need. The facility would take advantage of the recommended location adjacent to the Cultural Park and the large-scale community venue. It would also take advantage of the proposed trail connections to Horse Gulch and downtown Durango as well as the amazing mountain views that exist atop the Mesa.

c. Temporary Events and Festival Camping Area: The goal to host multi-day festivals with on-site camping accommodations is at the heart of the Katz family vision for the site. Temporary camping areas are recommended in the Conceptual Master Plan in proximity to the events venues, as well as more removed to provide a diversity of camping experiences. Other more permanent camping accommodations are recommended elsewhere on the Mesa including full hook-up RV sites at the County Multi-Event Center as well as a future year-round City Campground with designated RV camping and walk in tent sites in the transitional area of the Mesa, centrally located to all the Mesa uses. It is anticipated that these new camping resources would be utilized during large festivals, sporting events, fairgrounds events and will expand Durango’s ability to provide a diversity of camping experiences that currently are not possible due to lack of existing campground and camping areas within the City boundaries. A camping management program will need to be created for coordination of the temporary and permanently designated camping areas and to address all aspects of this use upon the Mesa. Maintenance and upkeep will need to be factored in annual operations budgets. The 2023 bike park master plan has plans to support initial events and has a camping area to support future events in the short term.

d. Parking and Overflow Parking: As addressed in Section 3 of the Area Plan, it is acknowledged vehicular parking and parking lots will be necessary program elements on the Mesa. The Conceptual Master Plan shows an ample and adequate amount of parking to support uses across the Mesa, in close proximity to each major facility as well as more remote overflow parking where it is anticipated to be needed. It is proposed that parking lots will be developed incrementally and along with the uses they are supporting. Parking lot paving and landscape is recommended to use dispersed storm water and run off management techniques that slow down and intercept run off and allow it to infiltrate into landscape areas and into the ground. Opportunities to utilize other transportation methods, including public transit, should be continuously evaluated to minimize the development of large single-purpose parking lots that are costly and detract from the landscape character of the Mesa.
e. **Community Barn:** The lack of adequate community meeting space in Durango that can be rented out or reserved for various events and gatherings is well documented. The community has expressed the desire for additional meeting space. In response, a Community Barn is a multi-use program element identified in the La Plata County Multi-Event Center Master Plan document as an approximately 8,000 square foot structure to address the need for additional community meeting space close to downtown. The Area Plan for the Mesa supports the Community Barn and recommends that it be constructed in combination with other elements that promote community use, such as: arts and cultural park and gardens, small scale events venue, educational space, and similar uses. This building could function as an early infrastructure support element for events occurring across the Mesa. It is recommended that this be one of the first permanent structures to be constructed on the Mesa to serve as a visual landmark and as an anchor to attract community uses and introduce the experience of the Mesa.

f. **Cultural Park and Gardens:** A key idea proposed in the Conceptual Master Plan for Durango Mesa is developing a Cultural Park and Gardens that will support cultural events and uses upon the Mesa. The focus of this facility would be to promote education, art, music, horticulture use and other elements upon the Mesa and appeal to artistic and intellectual pursuits. The proposed location of the Cultural Park and Gardens is adjacent to the large scale special events venue on the North Mesa to serve as both an amenity area to complement the special events uses and to establish a landscape buffer between the special events area and other uses on the Mesa. The Cultural Park includes the Community Barn and small-scale events venue that will serve as outdoor gathering and interactive space. The idea of an indigenous botanical garden serving as the backdrop for tranquil walking paths and potential sculptural gardens is envisioned. The facility is envisioned as complimentary to the special events venue and to create a permanent anchor on the North Mesa, that takes advantage of the location near the Special Events Venue, along the multi-use promenade and connected to the Horse Gulch meadow and open space via the gap in between the hillsides landform immediately to the north. This gap can serve as a community portal from the Horse Gulch open space areas to the uses on the Mesa.

g. **Pond and Water Storage:** A pond is recommended as an organizing and aesthetic element adjacent to the Community Barn and Cultural Park and Gardens. A natural centerpiece and amenity to the site, the pond will also serve as a water storage element that can be used for landscape irrigation and wildfire suppression. The pond will need to be closely evaluated as part of the broader water system for the Mesa and developed at the appropriate time in the process.

h. **Playground:** A destination playground is suggested at the periphery of the festival grounds closer to the Cultural Park and Gardens to cater to families and children uses of the Mesa. The playground would serve as a draw to the Mesa during times when no special events are
taking place and provide the community a new place to visit and enjoy near downtown. The playground is envisioned as a mix of artistic natural play elements and traditional playground elements with a strong environmental education component integrated into the play areas.

i. **Future Use / Transit Stop & Arrival Plaza:** A parcel of land near the arrival to the Mesa is suggested to be reserved for possible future mix of uses including a transit center, an arrival plaza, an information and reception center, and supporting commercial. Located on the flat area north of Durango Mesa Road as it crests the climb from Highway 3, this parcel will be energized by constant influx of people during large events and to a lesser degree during day to day operations of the Mesa. It is anticipated that supporting elements listed may become necessary in the future and as the intensity and variety of land uses are developed on the Mesa. Commercial uses may include food and beverage establishments and light retail, for the convenience of users of the Mesa and to preclude additional vehicle trips from the Mesa to downtown for common goods. This area will also serve as the entry portal for a large number of festival attendees, so an arrival plaza is suggested to further shape the user experience, orient visitors and increase the appeal of the overall set of facilities and uses contemplated on the Mesa.

j. **Arts and Culture Facility / Outdoor Education:** The opportunity to accommodate one or more of the elements suggested in the City’s Arts and Culture Element of the Comprehensive Plan is recommended in the Conceptual Master Plan. An arts facility is recommended to be considered as a possible use in the Cultural Park area to further bolster the sense of community by allowing the arts to be integrated with other uses. It is acknowledged that the Comprehensive Plan noted the preference of an Arts and Cultural Facility to be in downtown Durango, but the opportunity for some tie to the Mesa is represented in the Plan, and as a way of reinforcing connections between downtown and future uses on the Mesa.

2024 Update: The Cultural and Special Events Facilities remain a key focus point for the future opportunities for expanded regional events that will be held on the mesa. Post 2020-2022 large scale event management and other venues in the region have allowed time to consider a phased approach to these significant venues. Currently, the existing venue area will be used with temporary improvements with infrastructure to hold small to medium sized events. Once road infrastructure is improved, it can support larger and more events. This will allow the size and frequency of the events to be tested and decisions made on next steps of investment. This will allow for DMPF and the City to determine management necessary for regular event scheduling. Discussions and further research into Town of Telluride revenue mechanism that was developed to allow for operations and Maintenance of the town park venue should continue as it is a successful model for hosting large scale events and revenue capture.

The bike park / base area master plan will incorporate the first small venue stage allowing for small scale events to be held in close proximity to an activated area with additional parking and event camping. This design allows for cultural and recreational uses to exist simultaneously and attracts more user groups to the park. The goal is for completion by end of 2025. Items a-j above will continue to be planned for construction as budgets allow.
Exhibit 13 - NORTH MESA AREA: SPECIAL EVENTS AND CULTURAL PARK—UPDATED IN 2024

SECTION 4 - MESA CONCEPTUAL MASTER PLAN AND RECOMMENDED PROGRAM ELEMENTS
4.3 Center Mesa - La Plata County Multi-Event Center (+/- 200 Acres)

Discussions on annexation began in 2021 and continued in 2022 and 2023, simultaneously road and utilities design work were undertaken to update infrastructure cost estimates. A meeting between DMPF and the Board of County Commissioners was held on July 18, 2023, to provide updated infrastructure cost numbers and determine if the County was going to still be a partner in the development of Durango Mesa and move the Fairgrounds to the property that had been selected on the mesa. Following the meeting the Foundation requested the County decide by the end of 2023 on if they would still be a partner in the development of Durango Mesa. The County Commissioners met in September and informed the Foundation that with other priorities the County would not be able to move forward with moving the Fairgrounds to Durango Mesa Park.
4.4 South Mesa – Active Recreation & Mountain Sports Complex (+/-150 Acres)
The South Mesa has been planned to receive the Mountain Sports and Trails Complex, Cycling Events and Training facilities and a large-scale Off-Leash Dog Park. This area offers a good mix of flat land ideal for the development of traditional athletic and team sports fields as well as a complex for training a variety of cycling disciplines. Likewise, the area also includes a variety of landforms with rolling topography and slopes of different gradients that benefit some of the proposed bike park uses that require gravity and landforms as part of the courses and trail loops. The list of recommended uses for the South Mesa area of the Plan includes the follow program elements, listed below and referenced on the Conceptual Master Plan graphic on the following page.

a. Sports Fields Complex: As a result of information obtained during the City’s Parks, Open Space, Trails and Recreation (POSTR) Master Plan process, a full size 400-meter athletic track and field complex, and twelve full size sports fields (regulation soccer fields have been used for sizing) are shown on the Conceptual Master Plan. While regulation soccer fields were used to indicate rough idea of sizing and potential number of fields, it is anticipated that some of this area will be used as multiuse fields for a variety of outdoor activities, as well as the potential to support up to three baseball/softball fields. The fields are laid out contiguously on the flattest area of the property to create a sports complex adequate to support large team sports events and tournaments in one central location within the City limits. One of the fields occurs within the center of the track and field venue as is tradition for field events. The sporting fields are recommended as synthetic turf to reduce water consumption for irrigation and labor, fuel and equipment costs for routine maintenance and operations. Some natural turf fields may be considered based on water availability, community preference and overall project costs. The existing well and estimated production should be evaluated as a possible raw/nonpotable irrigation water source. A storage pond could be used to provide additional storage and irrigation capacity. Field lighting and lighting at facilities shall be provided to support night games and evening use in the shoulder seasons. Supporting facilities that are recommended in association with the Sports Fields Complex include an arrival and reception plaza, concessions, bathroom and storage complex, covered picnic pavilions, playgrounds, maintenance facility with storage space for equipment and materials, and surrounding network of sidewalks, paths and trails. Parking for the sporting fields is suggested with both a permanent paved lot and an overflow lot. There is a placeholder for a future transit stop.

b. Covered BMX and hard surface pump track facility: A BMX track exists at Cundiff Park within the City limits, and while it is of good quality for community programs, it is considered too small in scale to support regional, state and national racing events and higher levels of use into the future. The BMX community along with the City of Durango Parks and Recreation Department have been working towards adding to and improving the current facility. These planned improvements include water and electrical infrastructure, program space, shade, jump lines, pump tracks and flow trails. It is acknowledged that the existing BMX facility and Cundiff Park has size limitations for the large State Qualifier events that are slated to take place in the future. It is these limitations along with the new opportunity of possibly moving the facility up on to the Mesa that has resulted in the BMX facility being shown as a recommended use on the Conceptual Master Plan.

The BMX track and other cycling related uses can be part of the first phase of implementation of City recreational uses upon the Mesa, especially since growing the BMX facilities has been a priority for the City. In doing so, the

All proposed lighting will need to comply with the City of Durango's Lighting Standards
vision and hope is the BMX track will serve as an anchor and hub of activity that helps activate and generate community activity on the Mesa catering to local development programs and athletes of the sport. Eventually a covering for the track is planned to allow for maximum use and flexibility to train and hold events, in inclement weather and hot months of summer. Detailed requirements for a USA BMX sanctioned facility were provided by the City of Durango Parks and Recreation Department and spatial requirements were considered in the site selection and conceptual plan for the bike park requested by this particular user group.

c. Cycling and Trails Park and Training Facility: Working in conjunction with Durango Trails and the broader cycling community, the Plan proposes to develop a world class cycling and trails training facility on the Mesa. Referencing notable projects in United States including the Valmont Bicycle Park in Boulder, Colorado and internationally the Stromlo Forest Park, in Canberra, Australia, the Conceptual Master Plan recommends a large area of roughly 65 acres to be developed incrementally as a cycling training facility catering to a variety of cycling disciplines (Refer to the following page for more information on Stromlo Forest Park). The recommended site includes expansive flat areas, medium gradients and steeper gradients. The mix of site gradients and fall in elevation will provide maximum flexibility to develop Bike Park elements of all sorts. Bike Park elements may include: strider park (ages 1-5), progressive beginner trails, skills area, session zones, BMX course, slopestyle area, dual slalom track, downhill trails, progressive dirt jumps, pump tracks (paved, small, median and large) drop zones flow trails, cyclocross features, short track, cross country and paved criterium course. The Katz family has expressed great support and interest in the idea of a Cycling Park and training facility as is recommended by the Plan. In particular the family supports the general location for a central hub on the Mesa that incorporates a diversity of cycling activities and enriches the regional cycling community and Durango’s cycling tradition. The vision includes building upon Durango’s legacy and notoriety in the mountain and road cycling world, due to the history of the sport here, the several professional cycling athletes who are locals, and a legendary road race in the Iron Horse Bicycle Classic. Likewise, the vision builds upon Fort Lewis College legacy in collegiate cycling and hopes to explore future partnerships with the College for the Cycling Park serving as a recruiting and training venue for their collegiate cycling programs. It is envisioned the cycling training facility will become a destination facility emblematic of the bike-oriented culture and life-style of Durango and reinforce its brand and role in the cycling world. The community will have a cycling facility to develop and train their youth and continue to excel in competitive cycling events.
**Bicycle and Equestrian Park Precedent**

**Stromlo Forest Park - Canberra, Australia**

From the Stromlo website: “Officially opened in 2007, Stromlo Forest Park is a world-class, multi-use recreational sporting facility available to both recreational and professional users.

Stromlo Forest Park boasts a purpose built event pavilion, a 1.2km road criterium cycling circuit, a 2.5km grass cross country running track, a network of equestrian trails and over 40km of mountain bike trails suitable for riders of all abilities.

Stromlo Forest Park also has various trails suitable for runners and walkers keen on exploring the Canberra countryside.

Only ten minutes drive from the center of Canberra, Stromlo Forest Park is open to the public at most times.”
There is strong interest in the development of cycling and trails facilities during the first phases of implementation of City recreational uses on the Mesa, and as soon as practically possible. A major part of the reason is that the development of these facilities can be accomplished for significantly lower cost and less complexity than other major big-ticket items. Therefore, trail development and the Bike Park development are recommended in the earlier phases of implementation within this Plan. Careful coordination will be necessary between Durango Trails and the City’s Parks and Recreation Department in the development of new trails, including specific use trails that are recommended in the Plan, and that will include specific biking only, hiking/running only, and potential horseback riding only trails (with third party involvement) in designated areas of the Mesa open space. New trails will need to be added to the overall City trail network and maintained accordingly.

2024 Update: After the 2018 Area Plan was complete, considerable effort was made to work on first phases of the project. From 2019-2020, Durango Mesa Park Foundation (DMPF) researched national bike park examples of successes and failures to draw from others experiences. 2021 Durango Mesa Park Foundation hired Progressive Trail Design (PTD) group for Discovery, Consultation, Inventory & Assessment. PTD held a week long research and interview process with local stakeholders including City staff, City advisory boards, Durango Trails, Fort Lewis College, Durango Devo, Durango BMX and others. The assessment included reviewing the previous 2018 area plan work and the 2019/20 phase 1 work completed by Zehran & Associates.

The conclusion from this process was to show the community progress with Durango Mesa Park detached from required infrastructure to the road, in the form of the Demonstration Trail project (detail shown in J & K below) connecting the beloved Horse Gulch trail system to Durango Mesa Park property. Preparation for this work continued into 2022 with work starting in 2023.

In 2022 PTD with USABMX started the master planning for the bike park with a week long design charrette including DMPF, City staff and critical local stakeholders. The bike park master plan will be completed by end of year 2023. With the stakeholder involvement and the bike park construction slated as the first park improvement it is important that the bike park be designed as a vibrant gathering place where individuals of all backgrounds and abilities can come together to enjoy the cultural and recreational Durango landscape. The bike park with base area functioning as a community gathering location with a focus on curating enjoyable experiences, promoting inclusivity and preserving our heritage— the bike park is not just a place to ride; it’s a place to connect, have fun, and leave a lasting legacy for future generations.

The Bike Park Master Plan includes: Dog Park, Disc Golf course, flexible event space and stage, adaptive sports skills area, event camping and features include lower, middle and upper bike park sections with a construction-phased approach as funding becomes available. Bike features include: strider park (ages 1-5), progressive beginner trails, skills area, session zones, BMX course, slopestyle area, dual slalom track, downhill trails, progressive dirt jumps, pump tracks (paved, small, median and large) drop zones flow trails, cyclocross features, short track, cross country and paved criterium course. Initial construction on the bike park will start in 2024 with the required infrastructure with a goal to open roads and initial bike park amenities in late 2025. Future bike park features include a covered BMX track for year round training and ability to hold national events. This space or another structure ideally would hold shared space for Durango Devo club house and FLC cycling space. These two organizations are working together to provide detailed specifications that will be mutually beneficial for the organization’s future.
d. **Criterium Course:** Modeled directly after the criterium course in Stromlo, the course is designed as mostly flat and roughly .75 miles long. Care should be taken in locating this element when detailed design ensues as it will be a major organizing element to which other elements will have to respond. The idea for the criterium course is that it is a multi-use element to be used for training across all seasons, and for a variety of sports including nordic skiing, fat biking, and running, in addition to road cycling. It is also intended as an events venue for these sports across the seasons and additive to the other programs recommended on the Mesa. The width of the paved asphalt Criterium course should be no less than 20’ and built to City specifications. Periphery trails should be explored for soft surface running and cross-country skiing.

**2024 Update:** The criterium course is a beneficial addition to the bike park plan in phase 1.

e. **Climbing and Fitness Fieldhouse:** A 200x300’ Fieldhouse is shown on the Conceptual Master Plan. It is suggested that this building would house a combination of climbing facilities as well as indoor training / fitness center. It is anticipated that City of Durango Parks and Recreation Department site offices could be in this building as well.

**2024 Update:** with extensive discussions with Durango Fire Protection District regarding 2018 International Fire Code, the conceptual fieldhouse would be in a later phase with City water to allow for sprinklers in the building. Future building locations, dimensions, and orientations will be designed to work with other proposed amenity locations.

f. **Parking / Overflow Parking:** As mentioned previously in the Plan, parking will be necessary on the Mesa and the Conceptual Master Plan shows an adequate amount of parking. But it should be stressed again that parking lots should only be developed along with the uses they are supporting and the opportunities to utilize other transportation methods should be continuously evaluated.

**2024 Update:** work incorporated into updated plan.

g. **Transit Stops & Arrival Plaza:** Two transit stops are recommended, one at the Cycling Complex and one at the Sports Field Complex. At both stops, it is recommended that an arrival plaza be designed to receive and orient the user and to create a positive image and experience.

**2024 Update:** work incorporated into updated plan.

h. **Cross-Country Running Trails:** A series of running trails with multiple distance options and loops will take advantage of the artificial turf field edges as well as existing multi-use trails. The goal for these trails is to be able to host high level cross country running competitions. Further study and analysis will be required. Additionally, some opportunity to make and groom snow for cross country skiing and fat tire biking is desired, likely utilizing some of the running trail infrastructure.

**2024 Update:** Discussions with Durango High School coaches took place to start and hold an annual regional event starting as early as 2024.

i. **Off-Leash Dog Park:** A large 5-7 acre dog park with turf is recommended with separate small and big breed zones. A separate agility course is also recommended. Shade and seating elements are recommended in each of the zones. The dog park location has been picked for its proximity to multiple other Mesa use areas. This location will benefit those traveling to the Mesa for special events with their K9 companions as they will be able to walk to the Dog Park from most of the Mesa areas. The dog park is intended for off-leash play. Elsewhere throughout the Mesa, leashing will be required to protect other park users, the environment and human health.

**2024 Update:** The dog park is incorporated into updated plan with first phase of bike park.
CONCEPT OVERVIEW:

1. Dog Park
2. Adaptive Sports Skills Park
3. Paved Loop
   a. UCI Compliant Multi-Discipline Start/Finishes
   b. Fitness Loop
   c. Criterium Loop
   d. Emergency Access
4. Competition Pumptrack + Beginner Track
5. Lower & Overflow Flexible Event Space
6. BMX Race Facility
   a. Race Track
   b. Office Spaces
   c. Bathrooms
7. Creek Zone
   a. Trails Course
   b. Progressive Skills Course
   c. Low Speed Start/Finish
   d. Nature Playground
8. Flexible Event Space with Stage
9. Lower Bike Park Session Zone
10. Lower Bike Park Drop Zone
11. Lower Bike Park Uphill Zone
12. Championship Disc Golf Course
13. Vista View Point
14. Dual Slalom
15. Expert Upper Downhill Zone
16. Weekend Downhill Trails & Race Results Connector
17. Service/Service Road Access
18. Upper Bike Park Hub
19. Highest Point - Intermediate + Expert Downhill
20. Criterium Connect Existing Trail
21. Camping
22. Carbon Junction Existing Trail

Exhibit 15 - South Mesa Area: Bike Park - Added in 2024

Section 4 - Mesa Conceptual Master Plan and Recommended Program Elements
4.6 Transition Area and Meadow (+/- 460 Acres; this also includes buffer/transition areas between the Mesa and Highway 3)

The Transition Area and Meadow provides an area of more passive use and a buffer between the main active use areas and the Back Country Open Space area. The active use areas of the front part of the Mesa will in large part be separated from the Transition Area and Meadow by the multi-use Promenade feature proposed. The Promenade will serve many purposes, providing the main pedestrian connection throughout the three active use areas from the Events Venue on the North all the way to the Sports Complex on the South. The Promenade will also function as a firebreak. The recommended uses for this area are listed below:

a. **Promenade:** mixed-use pathway system is suggested to serve as the major pedestrian spine to connect the land uses on the North Mesa Area to the end of the South Mesa Area. This Promenade will act as a linear corridor and unifying element for the active use areas of the Mesa. The Promenade should be designed to allow for safe use by pedestrians (walkers and runners), bikers and possibly equestrians; this will require a wide path, likely with multiple surfaces and potentially a barrier or fence element to separate uses. It is also recommended that the Promenade be designed to act as a fire break to the more natural landscape of the Transition Zone.

b. **City Campground:** The City Campground has been located to preserve the treasured views of the open meadow area near the Horse Gulch open space as well as to be close to the active use areas on the front Mesa areas. The camping sites are recommended to be pay per use and will likely have electrical and water hook ups, but not sewer. Small camper units and tent camping are envisioned for the City Campground.

c. **Frisbee Golf:** A +/- 6,000 linear foot Frisbee Golf course is shown in the Transition zone. Multiple tee boxes and pin locations to accommodate an 18-hole course are recommended to create multiple course options as well as an appropriate level of challenge for a variety of skill levels. Course designers should consult with the appropriate governing organization for guidance. Care should be taken to not conflict with other uses (mainly trails) upon detailed layout of the course.

2024 Update: disc golf course is incorporated into first phase of bike park. City of Durango and local Disc Golf organization has discussed plans to design and construct course for opening with road improvements.

d. **Additional multi-use and/or specific use trails:** A beginner loop extension is suggested to loop the meadow and tie back into existing Horse Gulch trails, this trail will help fill the void of beginner trails in the Horse Gulch Open Space. A Mesa “portal” trail segment is suggested to link the Horse Gulch trails and downtown Durango directly into the Event Venue, snaking through the two knob like hills that flank the North Mesa Area. From a user experience standpoint, this connection will be a signature moment in of the arrival sequence. Additional connector trails are suggested on the Conceptual Master Plan serving to connect to the City Campground and the Cycling Complex and Sports Field Complex. All trail alignments are conceptual and should be studied further on site.

e. **ADA accessible path and overlook:** A paved accessible path to overlook area is suggested to occur on the knob adjacent to the Events venue. This location close to the Event Venue and the Community Barn will provide the most exposure to potential users.
4.7 Back Country Open Space (+/- 875 Acres)
The Back Country Open Space Area is the largest land area and will be the most passive use area on the Mesa. There are several existing legally designated multi-use trails in this area that allow public use. The recommended use for this area is for new specific use trails and open space, and as a result, the character of this area will remain largely unchanged.

The desire for new specific use trails has been expressed by Durango Trails, Equestrian groups and hikers / runners alike as part of the planning process. In response, a large area of roughly 400 acres in the Back Country Open Space Area is suggested to be designated to build new specific use trails. The intention of designating an area for new trails is to eliminate specific use group conflict. The 400 acre area for specific trail development is a suggestion based on site topography and adjacency to the potential Multi-Event Center and Bike Park, as well as the opportunity to link to and connect to the Bureau of Land Management Grandview Ridge open space. Further site study may reveal a different area or areas that may better accommodate the new trails and/or may reveal areas within the 400 acre area that possess unique attributes that should be left undisturbed. The planning process will need careful coordination and overlap between the City Parks and Recreation Department, La Plata County, Durango Trails, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, and the Bureau of Land Management to ensure all preservation values are recognized in the process. The following will need to be examined and agreed upon:

a. **Preservation / Habitat Areas:** Areas with extreme slopes, unique landforms, endangered species, critical wildlife habitat, archeologic potential and critical buffer areas should be considered for preservation and / or use restrictions (seasonal or permanent).

b. **Multi-Use Trails:** The existing multi-use trails will remain, and it is recommended that maintenance, improvements and realignments be allowed to occur to keep and/or bring trails up to current standards. Additional connector trails may also be allowed so long as they are studied and can be justified.

c. **Mountain Biking:** A very strong desire for new specific use and directional mountain bike trails has been expressed by Durango Trails and the mountain bike community. New trails should be planned thoughtfully and carefully to take advantage of natural terrain features and to not intersect excessively with other multi-use trails. As mentioned previously, an area of approximately 400 Acres has been identified graphically on the Conceptual Master Plan for new specific use trails. The intention is to keep the new specific use trails within that area while allowing multi-use trails through the remainder of the back country open space. In accordance with City standards, the Parks and Recreation Department will work with the community, user groups and Durango Trails on the development of the trail system on the Mesa. The goal will be to develop the least impactful trail system in expanding the existing network.
e. **Hiking and Trail Running:** Just like mountain bikers and equestrian trail users, hikers and runners desire a trail experience free of conflict, therefore it is recommended that new specific use hiking/running trails be built in the Back Country Open Space area. Again, the hiking/running community should be engaged early in the process to better understand the goals and desires for new trails.

f. **Environmental Education & Research:** The Back Country Open Space area presents an amazing opportunity for Environmental Education and Research. Environmental Education and Research programs should be encouraged to use the Back Country Open Space area as an outdoor classroom for the community at large, young and old alike. There are likely many undiscovered resources on the Mesa whether they be archaeological or natural, these programs can help in the discovery and documentation of these resources.
4.8 Demonstration Trails. 2022, Progressive Trail Designs (PTD) performed a Discovery, Consultation, Inventory & Assessment. This process showed considerable potential on the northern boundary of Durango Mesa Park and City of Durango Horse Gulch meadow property. PTD proposed 6-7 miles of demonstration trails with downhill and flow trails that the community could use while infrastructure construction started. The project includes a new multi-use dual direction trail from the Horse Gulch trailhead to help alleviate user group pressure on Horse Gulch road and connectivity to Telegraph trail, creating new looped trails. Also, the project introduced 3 directional downhill and progressive flow trails as an example of what is expected in the bike park. The demonstration trail project will be accessible to class 1 ebikes and the green flow trail is designed for adaptive cycles.

Coordination to complete the project included stakeholders DMPF, PTD, HDR, City Parks & Rec staff, Durango Trails, AJ Construction and Adaptive Sports Association.

Before the project started archeological, waterway crossing and environmental assessments were completed for trail alignments. Construction of the trails started April 2023 and completed September 2023. Future improvements will include permanent signage, Horse Gulch trailhead upgrade, and future connection to Animas River Trail. Additionally, before the trail project opened survey work was completed for City easements applied to the new trails. An important addition to this project was the improvement to an existing 4x4 road now known as the service road running from Durango Mesa Park property to Horse Gulch meadow. Discussions with DFPD and City of Durango Police department allowed for an improved road and turnaround for emergency vehicles to access this area for quicker response times. The service road was completed in September 2023.
Exhibit 16 - North Mesa Area: Demonstration Trails - Added in 2024

Section 4 - Mesa Conceptual Master Plan and Recommended Program Elements
4.9 Meadow Hub  To showcase the demonstration trail project the central trail hub was an important feature to create a destination and congregation area for user groups. The hub’s design allows connection for Telegraph Connector, Meadow Beginner and Intermediate Flow trails and Mesa Connector. The Hub will feature hardscaped seating and viewing areas with shade structures and a kiosk showcasing updated information about the future improvements on Durango Mesa Park. Construction started fall of 2023 and will be completed in 2023 (weather permitting). Future connectivity trails from the Hub to the future Durango Mesa Park bike park will be completed in 2025. With the beginner flow trail designed for adaptive cycles, a small parking area will allow adaptive riders access to the trails.
From the Katz family:

“We are excited by the area plan. It has taken our rough vision for a regional park on the Mesa and has really refined it. It has defined a phased path that will allow the Mesa to be developed over time as funds and needs require. It really fits our desire to leave a lasting gift to the town we love.”
Section 5 - Implementation and Phasing Strategy

5.1 Introduction
The Durango Mesa Area Plan is an ambitious plan given the size and scale of the proposed uses on the Mesa and the associated cost for the supporting facilities and infrastructure that are required to fulfill the Plan. There are challenges to the development of the recommended uses and program elements on the Mesa. It is a large undeveloped tract of land with elevation difference from the rest of the City and isolated between two large tracts of open space. The property has limitations in access, infrastructure, utilities and services to support the level of use and activity that is planned on the Mesa. The upfront costs to plan, design, and implement are enormous and a phasing approach must be employed.

5.2 Incremental Phasing Approach
This section of the Plan describes an approach to implement the Area Plan incrementally over a sequence of phases that are integrated with and build upon each other. This phasing approach uses the Conceptual Master Plan described in detail in Section 4 of the Plan as the basis of each of the recommended phases. Cost estimates have been generated for major ‘big ticket’ items that must be addressed for the complete program of use and program elements to be developed on the Mesa. A key concept applied in the phasing approach is using daily vehicle trips associated with proposed uses and events as thresholds to organize the improvements in each phase. Once the maximum threshold of daily trips for each phase is projected to be exceeded, this triggers the implementation of the next successive phase of improvements. In this manner, the Plan will be implemented incrementally so that improvements are developed at a pace commensurate with the actual level of use of the facilities and programs that are developed on the Mesa. The goal of this approach is to spread out costs across phases, and to allow an initial use and development of facilities on the Mesa without requiring an enormous, unattainable or unrealistic level of upfront investment.

Each phase is summarized in a narrative that addresses the diagram and respective costs for each phase. The logic and rationale for grouping certain improvements together in discrete phases is explained so decision makers understand the present-day consideration taken into account in the development of the plan, and in case they are still valid, or conversely, need to be addressed differently.

5.3 Durango Mesa Park Foundation Vision / Land Dedication Process
The Area Plan recognizes that the implementation of the Plan is dependent on the successful transfer of the land from the Durango Mesa Park Foundation to the City of Durango. The implementation of the recommended uses of the Plan in the general locations described will be key items in the negotiation and agreement for the transfer of land between the Durango Mesa Park Foundation and the City. The transfer of land is likely to be conditioned by the performance of the City and its partners in implementing and executing the Plan at a pace that is agreed upon and that supports the Katz family vision. These are important details that will need to be mutually established between the Katz family and the City as part of the land ownership transfer and the associated mechanisms that will guide the development of the land. The Owners would like to be assured the Plan will be implemented in the general manner laid out in the Area Plan and in a reasonable amount of time that will meet present day community needs and desires.

It is possible the phasing sequence described in this Plan may need to be altered due to the circumstances related to the timing of the transfer of the land. Certain program elements may be implemented sooner than others based on funding opportunities or changes in priority based on level of interest and demand on behalf of the community. The recommended phasing sequence that is included may need to be amended in the future, as the transfer of land and actual implementation and uses of the plan take place. It is critical to evaluate the recommended impact of implemented program elements against the recommended Master Plan and for land use relationships to remain compatible and work together as originally envisioned.
Exhibit 19 - **Phase 1 and Phase 2 Elements—Updated in 2024**

**Section 5 - Implementation and Phasing Strategy**

- Demonstration Trails (Completed in 2023)
- Service Road (Completed in 2023)
- Grading of Future Bike Park (2024-2025)
- Meadow Hub (2024)
- Peak Hub (2024)
- Event Camping (2024)
- Connector Trail (2024)
- Proposed Service Road (2024)
- Relocation of Interior Gate (2025)
- Parking, Bike Park, Base Area & Community Gathering Area (2024-2025)
Exhibit 20 - Complete Circulation Network - Updated in 2024
Section 5 - Implementation and Phasing Strategy
5.4 Phases of Implementation

Since completion of the 2018 Area Plan, several phasing items were completed in 2019-2023. The multiple phases originally stated in the area plan are consolidated as future phases and connected to future funding. The following are the Phases of Implementation that are recommended in the Durango Mesa Area Plan:

- Phase 1 (Completed. 2015-2023)
- Phase 2 (2024-2025)
- Future Phases of Implementation

These Phases have been established based on level of anticipated use in each phase, and as previously described, with maximum daily vehicle trips as triggers for additional improvements recommended in the next successive phase of implementation. The following describes the items recommended in each phase, and what is intended in each phase strategically to assist other future phases of implementation:

**Phase 1:** Completed. 2015-2023: Durango Mesa Park, using the existing infrastructure with minimal investment of upgrade or new infrastructure. This phase is recommended as an interim phase that will allow use of the property while the planning and land transfer between the Katz family (DMPF founded in 2019) and the City is worked out.

1. Use of the existing Durango Mesa Road in its current state, that has been confirmed acceptable by CDOT up to a maximum of 1,800 daily vehicle trips annually, without upgrades to the road or intersection with Highway 3.
2. In 2017, enhanced use of the existing temporary venue area included: improving venue pad (formerly a gravel pit construction trailer pad), reconnecting electric utility, improving 3 parking lots (capacity of 280 vehicles), usable space for portable toilets and trash. Improvements allowed for the following events:
   - Meltdown on the Mesa events (5 years).
   - Colorado High School mountain biking state championships (2018, 2019, 2021- hosting over 3000 athletes, parents and visitors), the mountain bike state championship course was built in coordination with DMPF and Durango Trails, and sets the tone for future cycling uses as recommended.
   - Additional events held: Iron Horse Bicycle Classic, Durango Derby, Single Speed Mountain Bike World Championships, Cyclocross events and several weddings.
3. In 2020, DMPF, City and County completed the required Traffic Impact Study, in order to obtain the CDOT access permit which was completed and extended to June 2024.
4. In 2021, DMPF and the City of Durango completed the conveyance of roughly 245 acres completing the City’s goal of protecting the Horse Gulch Meadow in exchange for initial road infrastructure funding from the City.
5. In 2021, discussions started to annex the 1930 acres, regular meetings continued through 2023 and annexation will be complete at the start of 2024. Determination of the land ownership transfer process and stewardship planning will be put into place in subsequent phases of implementation.
6. From 2021-2022, discussions with Durango Mesa Park Foundation (DMPF), HDR(local consulting office), City of Durango and La Plata County were initiated for annexing the 1,930 acres. Regularly scheduled meetings with City and County departments commenced in 2022. In 2022, La Plata County staff determined they were unable to work at the pace DMPF and City of Durango were setting, County staff stopped attending meetings.
7. In 2023 DMPF, City of Durango and Progressive Trail Designs, in coordination with local trail building efforts by AJ Construction and Durango Trails, completed the demonstration trail project in fall of 2023. It is the first community amenity of 7 miles of trails on DMP and City property. DMPF reestablished an existing well near the conceptual bike park base area location for the next phase of construction in 2023.
8. In July 2023 DMPF, HDR held a meeting with La Plata County staff and Multi Event Center Committee to share updated infrastructure costs. September 2023 La Plata County Manager announced the County will not move forward with relocating the County Fairgrounds to Durango Mesa Park. After this announcement DMPF and City of Durango are focusing on the phased infrastructure and amenities with current budgeted funds.

**Phase 2 Implementation (2024-2025):** Improvements in 2024 are focused on infrastructure and amenities.

1. **Infrastructure priorities include:**
   - Emergency Egress road improvement (scheduled for start 2024),
   - Hwy 3 access design phased signalization (scheduled to start mid 2024),
   - Main road design (started 2023) improved construction (scheduled to start mid 2024), after emergency access is complete.
   - Water line connection (near Horse Gulch Medical) coordinated with main road construction to extend first phase of water line to top of mesa following road alignment and mesa top with pressurized water line.
   - Electrical boxes reestablished from phase 3 boxes on south mesa, trenched to bike park area.
   - Relocation of interior gate for improved for access to Hub (adaptive cycle parking)

2. **Programming priorities include:**
   - Meadow hub connection trail to peak hub plus 2-3 upper flow trails near Crites Connect.
   - Improved road from 2nd gate to bike park parking area (initially gravel or pulverized recycled asphalt) and bike parking lot.
   - Bike park and base area (first phase) features: pump track, Strider park, BMX track, progressive flow area, jump and skills area, multi use trail for bike/run races, dual slalom.
   - Dog park with parking, Disc Golf Course.
   - Flexible event space with stage.
   - Restored landscaping: Plant tree seedlings in groupings to be irrigated with well water in strategic locations to begin defining major use and program areas and creating the framework of areas recommended in the Area Plan.
   - Consideration of planning multi-modal connections.

An off-leash dog park is envisioned in Phase 2 Implementation (2024-2025)

The goal is for infrastructure and amenities construction to run simultaneously and to open the first stage of the park late 2025.

From 2024-2025, Improvements will be a private public partnership agreement with DMPF and City of Durango similar to the agreement for the demonstration trail project and annexation in 2023. Additional funding sources and grants will be researched as the project continues.
Future Phases of Implementation: Additional phases contemplates the addition of significant permanent new facilities upon the Mesa that require utilities and services that do not currently exist. The level of investment will be much greater and it is likely that financial partnerships will be necessary to share the costs of development and implementation in these phases.

Future Phase items include:

- Development of the Community Barn, Community Events Venue, Restrooms, Destination Playground, and Mesa Overlook to serve as an anchor to the North Mesa and begin the creation of the Cultural Park upon the Mesa.
- Development of new road access to the Community Barn.
- Infrastructure improvements to support the Community Barn and future uses, assumed to include water, sewer and electrical services that enter the property from the adjacent Bonds property or up Durango Mesa Road.
- Permanent restrooms and parking lot for the BMX track, Dog Park and Bike Park.
- First phase of gardens established with picnic and passive seating areas in the vicinity of the Community Barn to create a desirable and comfortable setting for community-oriented events.
- First phase of the City Campground in the Transition and Meadow Area.
- Continued development of additional trails in the Bike Park Back Country Open Space, both multi-use and specific use to the extent that resources are available, and the timing and mechanics of the land transfer process allows.
- Conduct and test hosting large scale music festivals and similar events, 1 to 2 events per year that test the operation of the proposed location of the amphitheater stage, on-site camping, parking, and overflow parking areas.
- Continue the program of strategic tree and landscape implementation and landscape permanent improvements accordingly to maintain a visual quality of the Mesa.
- Additional Highway 3 intersection and Durango Mesa Road improvements, including a traditional 3-way intersection with acceleration or deceleration lanes, or with a roundabout. Cost estimates for both are included in the plan for reference to guide budgeting processes required in advance.
- Extension of Durango Mesa Road to the South Mesa in coordination with initial development of the athletic and sports fields’ complex.
- Develop the initial infrastructure that will be required for a permanent amphitheater and festival grounds on the North Mesa, including the dedicated back of house service access route, power and water to the venue site, gravel parking and temporary camping areas.
- Additional phases and extensions of the pedestrian Promenade, from the ‘core segment’ to the amphitheater on the North Mesa and the Sports Park on the South Mesa.
- Development of the Athletic and Sports fields complex on the South Mesa including up to 50% of the fields, playground, reception plaza, weather and picnic shelters, lighting, and associated parking areas.
- Additional loops and segments of the cross country running trail in coordination with the development of the athletics and sports fields. Running trails may be seeded at this time once permanent routes are established.
- Continued development of additional trails in the Bike Park and Back Country Open Space, both multi-use and specific use to the extent that resources are available.
- Development of an arts and cultural and education facilities at the Cultural Park hopefully with community partners and organizations.
- Additional investment in the creation of gardens at the Cultural Park, with picnic and passive seating areas in the vicinity of the Community Barn to create a desirable and comfortable setting for community-oriented events. Extend the Cultural Park garden improvements and connect with the amphitheater and festival venue.
- Completion of the City Campground in the Transition and Meadow area of the property to support events where camping on-site is part of the program. Amphitheater and Festival Venue infrastructure including the covered stage and seating pavilion, lawn grading and seeding, and acoustical and lighting sound and power systems.
- Completion of the athletic and sports field complex on the South Mesa with the remaining fields, additional lighting, paths, sidewalks and associated infrastructure.
- Multi-use Field House and Climbing Complex, with City Parks and Recreation Department on-site operations offices and storage facility integrated.
- Transit system for the Mesa, including shuttle stops, shelters, drop off and pick up points at each major node of use and activity upon the Mesa. This can include bike share and car-pool programs that may be developed concurrently.

Section 5 - Implementation and Phasing Strategy
Completion of the pedestrian and multi-use Promenade with the extension to Phase 2 of the sports fields complex, and terminus at the Carbon Junction trail.

Completion of implementation of a year-round Transit System serving the Mesa, including development of a transit center on the Mesa. The program might include a combination of bike share, electrical and or gas fueled vehicle fleet of buses and shuttles, driverless vehicles, light rail or similar linear fixed guideway transportation system.

Evaluate aerial transit connection to downtown, via a tram, cable car, funicular, gondola or similar aerial suspended transit system that could navigate the elevation difference and take advantage of relative proximity of the Mesa to downtown. Aerial transit connection to Three Springs residential area of the City to the south, via a tram, cable car, funicular, gondola or similar aerial suspended transit system. The cost of such systems needs to be evaluated closely against the costs of developing new secondary roadway connections. An aerial transit connection may be less costly and impactful than development of a new roadway given the rugged character of the land and the elevation of the Mesa above downtown and the river corridor.

Secondary access road connection to Durango Mesa, from Three Springs or from the Highway 3 corridor to the South Mesa, including the intersections and infrastructure required (bridges, culverts, and walls) required to accomplish this type of new connection.

5.5 Conceptual Master Plan Cost Analyses
Cost estimates of major Area Plan items were investigated and prepared as part of the planning process to update the Area Plan. These estimates were prepared by Russell Planning and Engineering with the best available data and present-day cost and feasibility assumptions based on local knowledge experience and familiarity with local construction and engineering industries. The estimates were prepared for only the major infrastructure and utility items that will be critical and necessary to develop the uses and improvements as recommended in this area plan. Ultimately, detailed cost estimates will be necessary for each Phase of implementation and based on the elements that will be included in the phase when it is ready for development. The cost estimates provided in this Area Plan are to inform high level capital budgeting for long term improvements and to help prioritize improvements.

Present Day Assumptions: present day assumptions that are included in the plan address materials, costs, standards, and conventions of the local construction and development industries. These assumptions will fluctuate depending on economic trends and will need to be re-visited at the time of budgeting for capital improvements.

Preliminary Cost Estimate of Infrastructure and Utilities: cost estimates for the following infrastructure and utilities are included in the Area Plan (reference appendix): List of improvements.

Cost Estimate by Program Element: cost estimates for discrete program items are included based on an allowance assignment based on overall costs of comparable facilities or assumed unit costs for program items where this information is available from recent experience.
Funding Strategies: The City intends on applying a variety of funding strategies in the long term and phased development of Durango Mesa. These strategies may overlap in the case of some program elements or be stand alone. There are instances where the implementation of program elements may be funded by a third party using lease agreements with the property owner. Funding strategies discussed and that are anticipated to apply to the Area Plan include:

- Use of the dedicated City sales taxes for Parks and Recreation capital projects
- Grant Applications – GOCO Legacy Project and Energy Impact Funds
- Naming and Sponsorship Program
- Corporate Partnerships Programs
- Community Based Fundraising & Donation
- Community Partnerships – La Plata County, City of Durango, CDOT, Fort Lewis College, Durango Trails, Durango BMX, etc.
- Voter approved financial mechanisms.

5.6 City of Durango Standard Capital Project Process Overview
The goals and priorities of the Parks, Open Space, Trails and Recreation Master Plan are evaluated annually during the development of the annual Parks and Recreation Department operating and capital improvement plan budget. The annual budget includes proposed expenditures and anticipated revenues for the upcoming fiscal year for operations of the Parks and Recreation Department as well as the projected five year capital improvement plan. The capital projects are reviewed annually and adjusted according to available funds, community priorities and opportunities. The Parks and Recreation Department budget is prepared by Department staff and reviewed and approved by the City Manager and City Council. The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, Natural Lands Preservation Advisory Board, and Multi-Modal Advisory Board review and recommend to the Durango City Council capital improvement project expenditures associated with the dedicated sales tax.

In addition to the General Fund, the City of Durango currently has two dedicated sales and use tax funding sources for parks and recreation purposes, a dedicated portion of which may be used to fund the elements of this conceptual plan: (1) 2015 Half Cent Tax for construction, operations or maintenance of recreation facilities, parks, trails, pedestrian and bicycle improvements, maintenance facilities used by the Parks and Recreation Department, and the urban forest. The 2015 Half Cent Tax generates approximately $4 million annually and will sunset in 2039; (2) 2005 Quarter Cent Tax for open space preservation and stewardship and the development and maintenance of parks and trails. The 2005 Quarter Cent Tax generates approximately $2 million annually and will sunset in 2026.

Each year, the Parks and Recreation Department, including Natural Lands and the Multi-Modal Division in the Transportation Services Department, prepare a list of potential capital improvements for consideration and ranking. A five-year Strategic Plan is prepared and presented to the Financial Advisory Board where public comments are encouraged. The strategic goals are reviewed and approved annually by the Financial Advisory Board. The adopted Strategic Plan is the foundation for the preparation of the annual Capital Improvement Project Budget for the expenditure of the dedicated sales tax funds and is approved and adopted annually by the Durango City Council.
# Appendix Items:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Section 1.6: La Plata County Multi-Event Center Master Plan</td>
<td>57</td>
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<tr>
<td>Section 1.6, e-i from the 2018 Area Plan: Public Engagement Summary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Durango Mesa Park 2024-25 Funding Analysis</td>
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<td>Slope Analysis Map</td>
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<td>Elevation and Existing Trails Map</td>
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<td>Amphitheater and Festival Venue Precedents</td>
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<td>South Mesa Area: Bike Park - Slope and Spacial Analysis Exhibit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bike Park Precedents</td>
<td>65</td>
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<tr>
<td>BMX and Bike Park Criteria</td>
<td>68</td>
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</table>
Section 1.6-D from the 2018 Area Plan.
This section has been removed from the 2024 Area Plan update and is included in this appendix for reference.

d. La Plata County Multi-Event Center Master Plan: in 2017 La Plata County conducted an extensive planning effort to relocate the existing Fairgrounds facility to the top of the Mesa in conjunction with the development of a new Multi-Event Center. That effort involved a significant public process which resulted in a preferred option with the County Fairgrounds and Multi-Event Center located in the center part of the flat land of the Mesa. The County Master Plan has been factored into the Area Plan for the Mesa. Points of connection and overlap between the plans are leveraged and recommended as appropriate at this level of detail. Perhaps most significant, the shift in Ewing Mesa Road (referred to as Durango Mesa Road in this Area Plan, pending a road name change in the future via the appropriate process)
Section 1.6, e-i from the 2018 Area Plan. These sections have been removed from the 2024 Area Plan update and are included in this appendix for reference.

e. Community Input Meetings: the planning process for the Durango Mesa Area Plan has involved two community engagement meetings. The meetings were publicly advertised and there was opportunity for residents to provide comments and input at any time in the process via the Parks and Recreation Department webpages and email address, in addition to the Community Development Department webpages. The community meetings consisted of a public presentation followed by a discussion, question and answer period. Attendees of the community meetings expressed general support for the plan, especially for specific use trails and recreational programs and facilities presented. The cost of infrastructure, timing of implementation, access, and level of use were discussed as primary community concerns as part of the process.

f. Stakeholder Input: special meetings with key stakeholders has been part of the planning process. Members of the consultant team met with representatives from Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), the Durango Fire Protection District (DFPD), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), La Plata County (County), and Durango Trails to discuss the direction of the plan, major goals and limitations, thresholds on existing capacity for access and use. Findings of these meetings are discussed in greater detail in the Plan.

g. Private Property Owners: members of the consultant team met with the two additional private property owners on the mesa, the Helmericks and the Hendricks. The Helmericks currently operate a small gravel pit on their property and plan on continuing the operation into the foreseeable future. The Hendricks currently use their property residentially and for horse grazing purposes and plan on continuing those uses also. Both property owners agreed that their current and future plans for their properties were most appropriate for the “rural” land use category.

The team also met with the adjacent neighbor and property owner, Gene Bonds to discuss potential infrastructure and emergency egress routes between adjoining parcels. The discussion indicated the neighbor is interested in working out a solution of mutual benefit as the process evolves. Consequently, the plan recommends a potential emergency egress route through the private property owned by the Bonds family.

h. Internal Meetings with City of Durango Staff: throughout the process the project team consisting of the consultant team, City staff and the Katz family representative met regularly to coordinate the effort. These sessions were used to direct the effort of the team, to review work products and provide critical feedback, and organize next steps in the process.

i. City Council and Planning Commission Input and Review: a Study Session with the City Council and the Planning Commission was held in May of 2018 to review the draft Conceptual Master Plan. The Planning Commission reviewed and recommended adoption of the Area Plan on July 30, 2018. The City Council reviewed and adopted the Plan on August 21, 2018.
Durango Mesa Park Foundation and City of Durango came to an agreement to share costs on 4 items in 2022-23 in order to start a phase of the project. The items were completed in 2023 or are slated for completion early 2024. Forecasted project funding for 2024-2025 infrastructure and feature construction is shown below. The next funding agreement between the Foundation and City will be completed in early 2024 with both parties understanding additional funds to complete the ambitious first phase will be required.

### Durango Mesa Park - Phase 2 (2024-2025)

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**Infrastructure & Roadways**

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<td>Reestablish 15kV electric</td>
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**Park Features**

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**Total for 2024-2025**

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**2025 and beyond anticipated expenses**

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**Park Features**

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**Total for 2025 and Beyond**

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**Total Cost for 2024 and 2025**

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Ewing Mesa Plan Area
Slope, 50' Contour

Legend
- Ewing Mesa LLC Limit
- 100 Foot Contour
- 50 Foot Contour
- Road Edge
- River - Stream
- Water Body
- Peripheral Parcel

Percent Slope
- 0 - 5
- 5+ - 10
- 10+ - 15
- 15+ - 20
- Greater than 20

Slope Analysis Map

APPENDIX
Elevation and Existing Trails Map - **Updated with new Demonstration Trails in 2024**
Amphitheater and Festival Venue Precedents

Gorge Amphitheater - Gorge, WA (+/- 27,500 capacity)

Red Rocks Amphitheater - Morrison, CO (+/- 10,000 capacity)

Shoreline Amphitheater - Mountain View, CA (+/- 22,500 capacity)

Telluride Bluegrass Festival - Telluride, CO (+/- 12,000 capacity)
**South Mesa Area: Bike Park - Slope and Spatial Analysis Exhibit**

**Legend**
- Ewing Mesa LLC Limit
- 100 Foot Contour
- 50 Foot Contour
- Road Edge
- River - Stream
- Water Body
- Peripheral Parcel

**Percent Slope**
- 0 - 5
- 5+ - 10
- 10+ - 15
- 15+ - 20
- Greater than 20

**Legend**
- Small pump track
- Large pump track
- Flow Trails
- Progressive dirt jumps
- Varied XC and skills area
- Slopestyle
- Bike Park Slope Analysis
- Water Body
- River - Stream
- Road Edge
- Varied XC and skills area
- Beginning XC loops
- 50 Foot Contour
- 100 Foot Contour
- Flow Trails
- Progression dirt jumps
- Varied XC and skills area
- Slopestyle
- Bike Park Slope Analysis
- Ewing Mesa LLC Limit
- 100 Foot Contour
- 50 Foot Contour
- Road Edge
- River - Stream
- Water Body
- Peripheral Parcel

**Percent Slope**
- 0 - 5
- 5+ - 10
- 10+ - 15
- 15+ - 20
- Greater than 20

**Durango Mesa Cycling Complex ~ 63 Acres**

**Legend**
- Small pump track
- Large pump track
- Flow Trails
- Progressive dirt jumps
- Varied XC and skills area
- Slopestyle
- Bike Park Slope Analysis
- Water Body
- River - Stream
- Road Edge
- Varied XC and skills area
- Beginning XC loops
- 50 Foot Contour
- 100 Foot Contour
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**Percent Slope**
- 0 - 5
- 5+ - 10
- 10+ - 15
- 15+ - 20
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**Legend**
- Small pump track
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- River - Stream
- Road Edge
- Varied XC and skills area
- Beginning XC loops
- 50 Foot Contour
- 100 Foot Contour
- Flow Trails
- Progression dirt jumps
- Varied XC and skills area
- Slopestyle
- Bike Park Slope Analysis
- Ewing Mesa LLC Limit
- 100 Foot Contour
- 50 Foot Contour
- Road Edge
- River - Stream
- Water Body
- Peripheral Parcel

**Percent Slope**
- 0 - 5
- 5+ - 10
- 10+ - 15
- 15+ - 20
- Greater than 20
BIKE PARK PRECEDENTS

RUBY HILL BIKE PARK
Denver, Colorado - USA
The Ruby Hill Bike Park is one of the largest municipal bike parks in North America. The park incorporates a 2+ mile long loop trail, pump tracks, flow trail zone, skill development zone, drop zone, 4 slopestyle lines and a dirt jump zone to round out the park. Alpine constructed all of the park features at Ruby and is installing technical engineered riding features throughout to facilitate an engaging riding experience.

Valmont Bike Park - Boulder, CO (+/- 40 Acres)

Frisco Bike Park - Frisco, CO (+/- 5 Acres)

Eagle Bike Park - Eagle, ID (+/- 60 Acres)
Bike Park Precedents

Stromlo Forest Park - Canberra, Australia
Cundiff Bike Park Concept Design - Durango, CO

Note: This was an older plan from the time of the initial 2018 Area Plan
BMX and Bike Park Criteria (Provided by Scott Chism, City of Durango Parks and Recreation Department in the 2018 Area Plan)

BMX facility design information from BMX of Durango (see LPC Multi Event Center Appendix A-102)

The desirable features of a new BMX facility at Ewing/Durango Mesa Area would include: (features of a track facility not only to support developing riders but also intended to host major race events, bringing visitors to Durango)

- Direct access to 400 amp power source(s) (short term need);
- Direct access to water for track maintenance (short term need);
- Registration office, secure and enclosed storage for equipment and materials (short term need);
- Approximate 1200’ BMX track length;
- Asphalt paved turns, as much stable or paved surface as possible;
- Restrooms;
- Parking for daily use of 100 users (local Friday night races during the summer typically generate at least 40-50 vehicles);
- Covered 400’x250’ (100,000SF) BMX track area;
- Covered area to contain: race track, concrete pump track, and bleachers;
- Close proximity parking for large events of 800 users; (numerous semi-truck & trailers would be present for a large race event);
- Close proximity access to RV parking; 25 to 50 spots would be beneficial during large single day and multi-day events;
- Concessions (includes freezer/cold storage);
- Two start ramps (8 meter + 5 meter heights);
- The BMX of Durango Board noted that a concession building similar to the one at Smith Fields would be ideal;
- Covered pavilion(s), picnic tables. Need a lot of shade for riders and spectators;
- Budget goal identified by BMX of Durango for a facility with identified desirable features is approximately $2.5 Million.

Bike Park design information from Shea at Flowride (bike park sub-consultant currently looking at options at Cundiff Park):

- Progressive Jump Lines;
- Jumps next to each other beginner/intermediate/expert. Progressive dirt jumps – higher concentrated, less disturbance between;
- Footprint 300 LF length with 75-100 LF between;
- Advanced Jump Line = 7-9% gradient, 300’ min length;
- Intermediate Jump Line = 5-7% gradient;
- Beginner Jump Line = 3-5% gradient;
- Max side slope 45 degrees;
- Have a good return trail to get back up to start points of each line;
- Drop Zones – ladder drops with 1’, 2’, 3’ height drops with a shared landing;
- Dual slalom – two racers at a time;
- Irrigation needed, sprinkler system or quick couplers;

Pump track design information as referenced in attached Schneider Park conceptual pump track and reiterated from Hogan at Purgatory Resorts (lead designer and planner of bike parks being developed for Purgatory Resorts)

- Pump track should be smooth surface (check out VeloSolutions - paved/concrete pump track); medium size (75 x 100). Surface can be dirt at a lower development cost;
- Ideally paved with concrete or asphalt;