



**HELENA OPEN LANDS MANAGEMENT
ADVISORY COMMITTEE
SUMMARY
March 8, 2022**



GENERAL MEMBERS

- Karen Reese, Chair
- Claudia Clifford
- ~~Grant Jackson~~
- Joel Peden
- Lindsay Gilstrap

CITY OF HELENA STAFF

- Brad Langsather, Open Lands Manager
- Kristi Ponozzo, Director, P & R, Open Lands
- Jennifer Schade, Recorder

CITY-COUNTY PARKS BOARD

- David McGuire

HELENA CITIZENS COUNCIL

- T.J. Lehmann

ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS

- Helena Tourism Alliance Representative
- Andrea Opitz

PPLT REPRESENTATIVE

- Nate Kopp

Meeting Date and Time: March 08, 2022 // 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm

MEETING RECORDING // TIME-STAMPED SUMMARY:

Date: Mar 8, 2022 05:23 PM Mountain Time (US and Canada)

Meeting Recording:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/rec/share/nrVoOOhGIBXEi5rMHbw1aABs12LIFq3wvq3stTqvEFl4oKgM-zS50JzQIKHU00Jf.r47ZtimM7o3YwPrZ>

Call to Order

+ TS 00:10:15

+ Chairperson, Karen Reese called the March 8, 2022 HOLMAC Meeting to order. A quorum was established.

Welcome/Introductions/Visitors:

Ken Eden; Amy Teegarden; John Tietz; Matt Culpo; Rachel; Tim Lawrence; Tyler Work

- **TS 00:10:30**
- Lindsey Gilstrap: Newly Appointed HOLMAC Member

Minutes Approval

- None.
- December Time-Stamped Minutes have been posted.

HOLMAC Action Items

- None.

New Business

- ✚ **TS 00:12:01 2022 Work Plan Update (*Exhibits Attached*)**

Public Comment

- ✚ **TS 00:40:20 (*comments attached*)**

Future Agenda Items

- ✚ April 12: Field Trip – Whyte Property

Adjournment

- ✚ **TS 01:06:45**

ADA NOTICE

The City of Helena is committed to providing access to persons with disabilities for its meetings, in compliance with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Montana Human Rights Act. The City will not exclude persons with disabilities from participation at its meetings or otherwise deny them the City's services, programs, or activities.

Persons with disabilities requiring accommodations to participate in the city's meetings, services, programs, or activities should contact Sharon Haugen, Community Development Director, as soon as possible to allow sufficient time to arrange for the requested accommodation, at any of the following: Phone: (406) 447- 8490; TTY Relay Service 1-800-253-4091 or 711 Email: citycommunitydevelopment@helenamt.gov, Mailing address & physical location: 316 North Park, Avenue, Room 445, Helena, MT 59623.

Comments from Public Present

Ken Eden

I have been a Helena resident for 47 years & a trail user for every one of those years. I have participated in many trail projects and land purchases; have raised funds to expedite land acquisition, including the 17ac Swaney parcel and the 70+ acre Whyte property. Here's are some general comments regarding our current methods for management of our parks and trails:

- I have many concerns about past and potentially future conflicts regarding Helena trails and Nature Parks
- The current and anticipated staffing shortages in the Parks department and in the City manager and City attorney positions create an obvious need to put the brakes on major changes to our Nature parks and trail system.
- This is especially so, given the community conflicts caused by the hugely controversial trail projects of the past 5 years.
- I believe a moratorium on new trail building for 2 or 3 years is clearly needed and a major effort put into a detailed inventory of our trails and open lands. Effective public input, actively solicited, is needed. HOLMAC is a good information conduit and advisory committee but currently has become an outsized decision maker.
- A much larger role for PPLT in planning and implementation of trail projects is desperately needed.
- Finally, if the city is serious about climate change it should refer to its resolution of 2010, detailing the need for Complete streets. It is not enough to encourage folks to take their bike on errands; it must be safe to do so. This is an issue which has not been acted upon despite the fine intentions of the Resolution to do so. On street lanes should be created; off street commuter bike trails prioritized where possible.

2022 HELENA OPEN LANDS MAINTENANCE PLAN

PRINCIPAL GOAL OF THE HELENA OPEN LANDS MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (HOLMAC) WORK PLAN: To outline land management activities scheduled for implementation in 2022. The recommended work plan will be updated each year to address land management needs that have emerged as a result of input from the citizens of Helena, HOLMAC, and/or city staff. In accordance with the goals and objectives defined within the Helena Open Lands Management Plan, land stewardship activities shall be designed and implemented in a manner that will preserve, restore, and enhance the natural character of Helena's open lands and provide accessible natural open lands.

TRAIL AND TRAILHEAD PATROLLING/MAINTENANCE/CONSTRUCTION (PARKS DEPARTMENT STAFF):

1. Systematically patrol approximately 12 miles of the open lands trail system on a weekly basis for the purpose of examining trail conditions, implementing trail surface and trailside vegetative maintenance, monitoring compliance with park ordinances, and providing trail users with assistance.
2. Service 18 open lands system trailheads, occurring on a 38 mile loop, 3 times per week.
3. Remove snow accumulation and sand ice occurring within 12 open lands system trailhead parking areas, and 2 segments of the Le Grande Cannon Trail, on an as needed basis.
4. Complete a comprehensive condition inspection of all designated trails occurring within the city of Helena Open Lands System (reference EXHIBIT A, B, C, D, and E) to provide an informational template for the purpose of structuring the Scope of Services in the annual Open Lands System Trail Maintenance Agreement.
5. Complete an inspection of all trailhead kiosk, animal control, regulatory and trail identification signage occurring within the open lands system (reference EXHIBITS A, B, C, D, E) and complete Trail Inspection Forms (EXHIBIT F). Inspections shall include identification of unsigned trails and/or trail junctions.
6. Draft, purchase and install trail identification and trailhead informational signs as determined by the annual trail sign inspection/inventory.
7. Map all new designated trail routes and deliver the shape files to the Lewis and Clark County GIS Department.
8. Map all non-designated (social) trails occurring with the City of Helena open lands system and present an associated trail closure plan to HOLMAC for discussion.
9. Complete the purchase, transport and installation of a double vaulted restroom facility, at the Old Shooting Range Trailhead, as outlined by the City's Agreement with the USDA, Forest Service Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest.

10. Pending funding obtainment, complete the following items at the Old Shooting Range Trailhead (OSR): install a concrete parking platform and decomposed granite trailhead amenity surfacing to improve accessibility to the OSR restroom facility, informational kiosk, picnic area, trash receptacle and pet waste station.
11. Pending funding obtainment, complete the following items at the Lime Kiln Trailhead: reconfigure the Lime Kiln (Winne Water Tanks Road) trailhead parking area to increase capacity, create adequate back-up/exit area, deter off-road activity, and create delineation between the trailhead parking area and the water tank access road.
12. Install 2 informational kiosks, one of which will be located adjacent to the DeFord Trail parking area and a second that will be placed at or near the West Le Grande Cannon Boulevard, eastside parking area. The new kiosks will be intended for the display of Helena's, South Hills trails system map, and any additional information deemed necessary.
13. Install a Trailhead Identification sign at the Beattie Street Trailhead.
14. Install four new benches within Mount Helena City Park with two benches being located at the Trailhead (Reeder's Village), one bench along the Ambrose Accessible Trail route, and one bench at the Ambrose Accessible Trail scenic overlook.
15. Contract the restriping and accessibility symbolization of the Mount Helena (Reeder's Village) and Dump Gulch Trailheads.
16. Complete construction of the final 300 feet of the Ambrose Accessible Trail to a scenic overlook location adjacent to the Quarry Trail.
17. Oversee the construction of approximately 3,000 feet of single track trail to be constructed by volunteers on a route parallel to the DeFord Trail that proceeds north from intersection DeFord Trail/Dry Gulch Road to an eventual intersection with the DeFord Trail immediately prior to said trails intersection with Davis Street.
18. Facilitate the distribution of the City of Helena's expectations regarding canine management items to be employed by dog owners utilizing the City's open lands system and coordinate messaging with City Animal Control Officers and agency partners.
19. Investigate, draft and submit trail construction, maintenance and planning grants as funding assistance opportunities become available.
20. Enroll Open Lands Division staff members in trail construction, maintenance and planning training as openings are announced.

FENCE CONSTRUCTION AND REMOVAL (PARKS DEPARTMENT STAFF):

1. Complete the installation of approximately 2,550 feet of post and rail fencing on the City Park property line along blocks 18, 20, 22, and 23 of Highland Park, Township 10 North, Range 4 West, Lewis and Clark County, MT.
2. Complete the installation of approximately 350 feet of post and rail fencing at the intersection of the DeFord Trail and Dry Gulch Road north of the Old Shooting Range Trailhead for the purpose of preventing illegal vehicular entry.
3. Complete the installation of approximately 600 feet of post and rail fencing adjacent to the DeFord Trail at that point north of the Archery Range entrance road where the trail lies adjacent to a severely eroded dirt bank, for the purpose of preventing bicycle traffic from entering the “bike jump” area.

FOREST MANAGEMENT (PARKS DEPARTMENT STAFF AND SELECTED CONTRACTORS):

1. Mount Helena North Face Fuels Reduction
 - Complete 65 acres of slash pile burning.
2. Mount. Ascension Forest Fuels Reduction Project:
 - Complete 55 acres of slash pile burning.
3. Participating Agreement (Capital 360)
 - Prepare and complete approximately 20 acres of forest fuel treatment and fire damaged tree removal work on the Nob Hill parcel.
 - Prepare and complete approximately 20 acres of forestry maintenance work located north of the Archery Range Trail.
 - Prepare and complete approximately 40.8 acres of forestry maintenance work within previously thinned areas occurring in Mount Helena City Park.
 - Prepare and complete approximately 10 acres of forest fuel treatment work within 2 treatment units located on the Daisy Hill portion of Mount Helena City Park.
 - Complete approximately 60 acres of slash pile burning within Mt Ascension Natural Park.
4. Forest Fuel Treatment Grants
 - Complete applications as funding assistance opportunities arise.
5. Forestry Visuals
 - Remove retention tree and boundary identification flagging from all forestry projects completed to date.
6. Forestry Education
 - Participate in community forestry outreach efforts as opportunities arise.

7. Firewood Distribution

- Harvest, forward, and process approximately 100 cords of firewood material for clients of the Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP).
- Assist in the organization of volunteers involved in the splitting and distribution of accumulated firewood material during the September 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023 timeframe.

RESTORATION ACTIVITIES (PARKS DEPARTMENT STAFF):

1. Pending funding obtainment, complete the following restoration work south of Le Grande Cannon Boulevard: close, obliterate, and seed 1.5 miles of unsustainable jeep trails located within Blocks 17-18 and 22-24, Highland Park, Section 26, Township 10 North, Range 4 West, Lewis and Clark County, Montana
2. Complete approximately 15 acres of hand raking and seeding within previously burned areas located north of the Powerline Trail within Mount Helena City Park.
3. Respond to trash dumping and abandoned transient camps as needed.

PROPERTY ACQUISITION/EXCHANGE (PARKS DEPARTMENT STAFF AND SELECTED CONTRACTORS):

1. Complete the required survey, appraisal, deed, and City Commission agenda preparation items required to facilitate two separate property donations to the City of Helena.
2. Respond to public donation/exchange requests as needed.

WEED MANAGEMENT (PARKS DEPARTMENT STAFF AND SELECTED CONTRACTORS):

1. Noxious Weed Treatment and Public Education
 - Coordinate volunteers interested participating in the City's open lands system weed control program throughout the summer.
 - Monitoring/mapping
 - Visit set locations and identify weed infestations for treatment.
 - Train volunteers on mapping and monitoring techniques.
2. Weed pulls
 - Schedule and participate in weed pulls on open lands.
 - Look to continue the Department of Agriculture Adopt-A-Trailhead program.
 - Look to increase events per year with the assistance of PPLT.
3. Herbicide
 - Contractually treat approximately 400 acres of concentrated weed infestations occurring within the City's open lands system at the following tentative locations: Graham Tract,

Lower McKelvey Trail Corridor and that area between Upper McKelvey Trail and the Mount Helena Communication Tower, Eagle Scout Trail, Archery Range and Archery Range Trail, Upper Entertainment Trail, Oakes Street Parcel, Comstock Hill Parcel, Red Letter Parcel, Mendocino Drive Parcel, Sleeping Giant Parcel, Mountain View Parcel, and North Benton Parcel.

- Implement a targeted spot treatment program with staff members focusing on remote locations and trail corridors.

4. Mowing

- Complete mowing operations as needed at the Reeder's Village Trailhead, the Oakes Street Parcel, the Donaldson Parcel, the Mendocino Parcel, and the Sleeping Giant Parcel.

TRAIL MAINTENANCE ITEMS (PRICKLY PEAR LAND TRUST):

1. Repair all natural earth and granite covered, designated trails located on City of Helena ownership as directed within the City of Helena's 2022 Trail Inspection Report and as depicted on EXHIBITS A, B, C, D, and E and listed within EXHIBIT A and maintain existing drain dips and/or install new drainage features where opportunities to intercept and divert continuous surface water runoff occur, replace decomposed granite as needed, and prune/remove vegetative growth within trail corridors (stems-branches-roots).
2. Respond to trail maintenance situations as directed by the City liaison.
3. Construct five trails located south of Le Grande Cannon Boulevard within Blocks 17-18 and 22-24, Highland Park, Section 26, Township 10 North, Range 4 West, Lewis and Clark County, MT., in accordance with the routes collaboratively designed and located by City staff and PPLT.

EXHIBIT A

City of Helena, Open Lands System Designated Trails	Length (linear feet)	Surface
Mt Helena - McKelvey	6,353.00	Native
Mt Helena - Daisy Hill	3,471.00	Native
Mt Helena - Bitterroot Way	933.00	Native
Mt Helena - Bitterroot Way - Daisy Hill Connector	600.00	Native
Mt Helena - Mike Cormier	3,121.00	Native
Mt Helena - Powerline	3,777.00	Native
Mt Helena - Powerline to Prospect Shafts Connector	1,044.00	Native
Mt Helena - Andy	3,143.00	Native
Mt Helena - Hanging Draw	2,902.00	Native
Mt Helena - Hanging Draw to Dump Out Connector	1,207.00	Native
Mt Helena - Dump Out	6,045.00	Native
Mt Helena - Reeders	3,055.00	Native
Mt Helena - Reeders Connector	1,542.00	Native
Mt Helena - Reeders Villiage	463.00	Native
Mt Helena - Reeders Villiage Alternate	1,147.00	Native
Mt Helena - Reeders Villiage Cut-Off	1,552.00	Native
Mt Helena - Reeders Villiage - Carriage Lane to South Harrison	475.00	Granite
Mt Helena - Reeders Alley	1,072.00	Granite
Mt Helena - Prospect Shaft	7,022.00	Native
Mt Helena - Hogback	2,436.00	Native
Mt Helena - Backside	2,693.00	Native
Mt Helena - West End	1,819.00	Native
Mt Helena - Diretissima	6,044.00	Native
Mt Helena - Old Chevy	2,631.00	Native
Mt Helena - Road To Mars	2,123.00	Native
Mt Helena - Ambrose	7,226.00	Native
Mt Helena - Ambrose to West Side Watertank - East	758.00	Native
Mt Helena - Ambrose to West Side Watertank - North	275.00	Native
Mt Helena - Ambrose to Prarie	684.00	Native
Mt Helena - Panhandle	1,000.00	Native
Mt Helena - Swaney	4,311.00	Native
Mt Helena - No Trail	2,800.00	Native
Mt Helena - 1906	8,096.00	Native
Mt Helena - Prairie Trail	7,889.00	Native
Mt Helena - Le Grande Cannon	4,816.00	Native
Mt Helena - Westridge Trail	2,022.00	Native
Mt Helena - Quarry	1,766.00	Native
MT Ascension - DeFord	7,242.00	Native
MT Ascension - Old Shooting Range	751.00	Native
MT Ascension - Upper Davis Bike Skills Course	2,156.00	Native
MT Ascension - Archery Range	6,287.00	Native
MT Ascension - Easy Rider	6,283.00	Native

EXHIBIT A City of Helena, Open Lands System Designated Trails	Length (linear feet)	Surface
MT Ascension - Easy Rider to Prickly Pear	1,242.00	Native
MT Ascension - 2006	7,342.00	Native
Eddy McClure Trail - West	4,925.00	Native
MT Ascension - Loop	4,699.00	Native
MT Ascension - Capital View	1,555.00	Native
MT Ascension - Catch-Up	1,759.00	Native
MT Ascension - Pay Dirt	1,388.00	Native
MT Ascension - Prickly Pear	4,566.00	Native
MT Ascension - Rocky Road	7,324.00	Native
MT Ascension - Meatloaf	2,720.00	Native
MT Ascension - Eagle Scout	2,877.00	Native
MT Ascension - Eagle Scout Connector	403.00	Native
MT Ascension - Pail Rider	1,130.00	Native
MT Ascension - Directional Trail East		Native
MT Ascension - Directional Trail West		Native
MT Ascension - Entertainment	10,717.00	Native
MT Ascension - Entertainment Connector	1,710.00	Native
MT Ascension - Entertainment Alternate	2,773.00	Native
Mt Ascension - Aftershock	6,015.00	Native
Other - Nob Hill	4,997.00	Native
Other - Saddle Drive (Disc Golf Course)	3,140.00	Granite
Other - Far East	3,480.00	Native
Other - Little Moab	2,994.00	Native
Other - Acropolis Crest	2,692.00	Native
Other - Bull Run Trail - California to Saddle	1,910.00	Native
Other - Gold Rush to California	267.00	Granite
Other - Virginia Dale Trail	482.00	Native

Exhibit B Mount Helena Trail System

- Open Land/Undeveloped
- Park
- Parcel Boundaries
- Trails



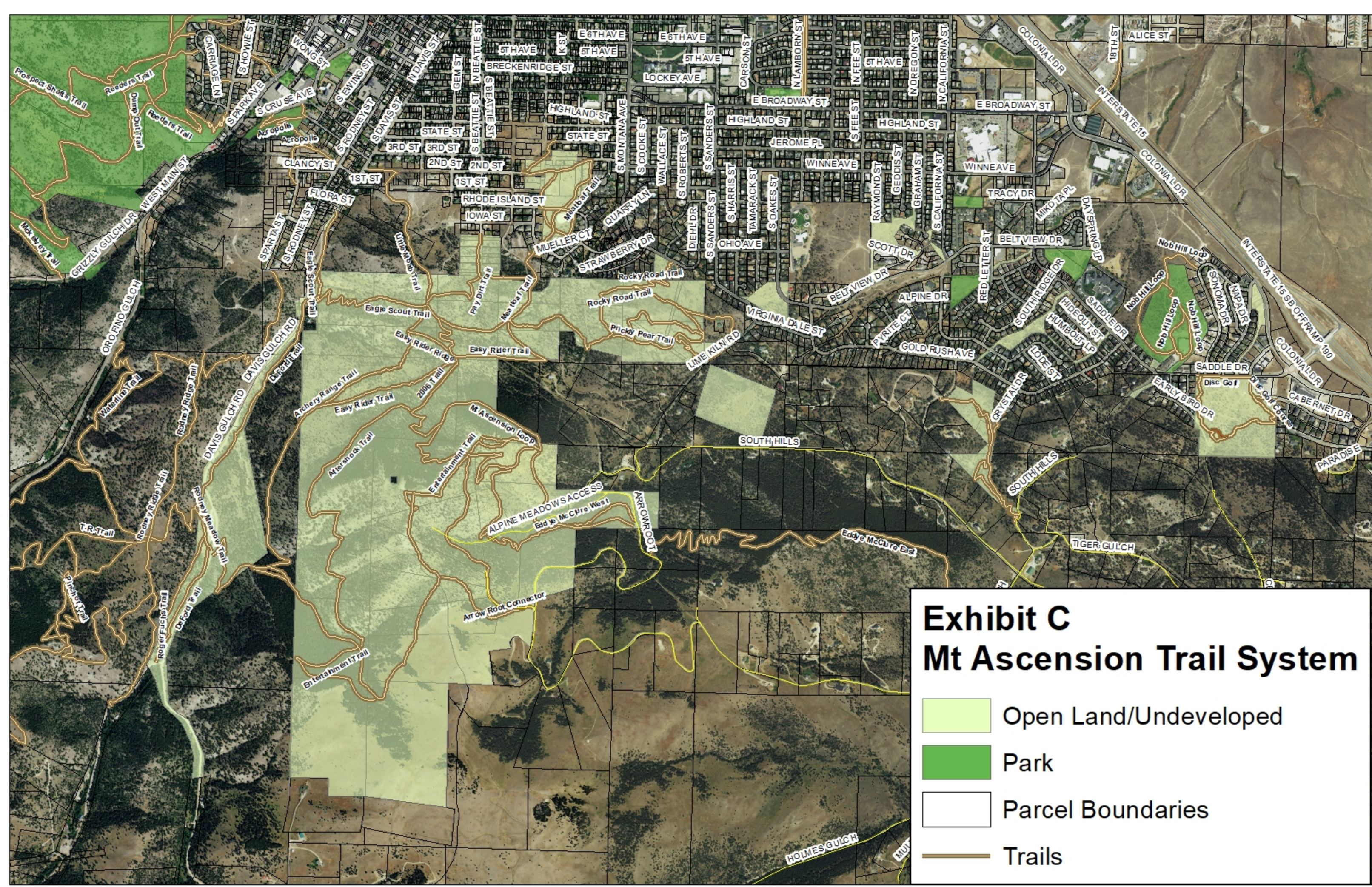







Exhibit C
Mt Ascension Trail System

- Open Land/Undeveloped
- Park
- Parcel Boundaries
- Trails



Exhibit D Surfaced Trails - Decomposed Granite (DG)

-  DG Trail
-  Open Land/Undeveloped
-  Park
-  Parcel Boundaries
-  Trails

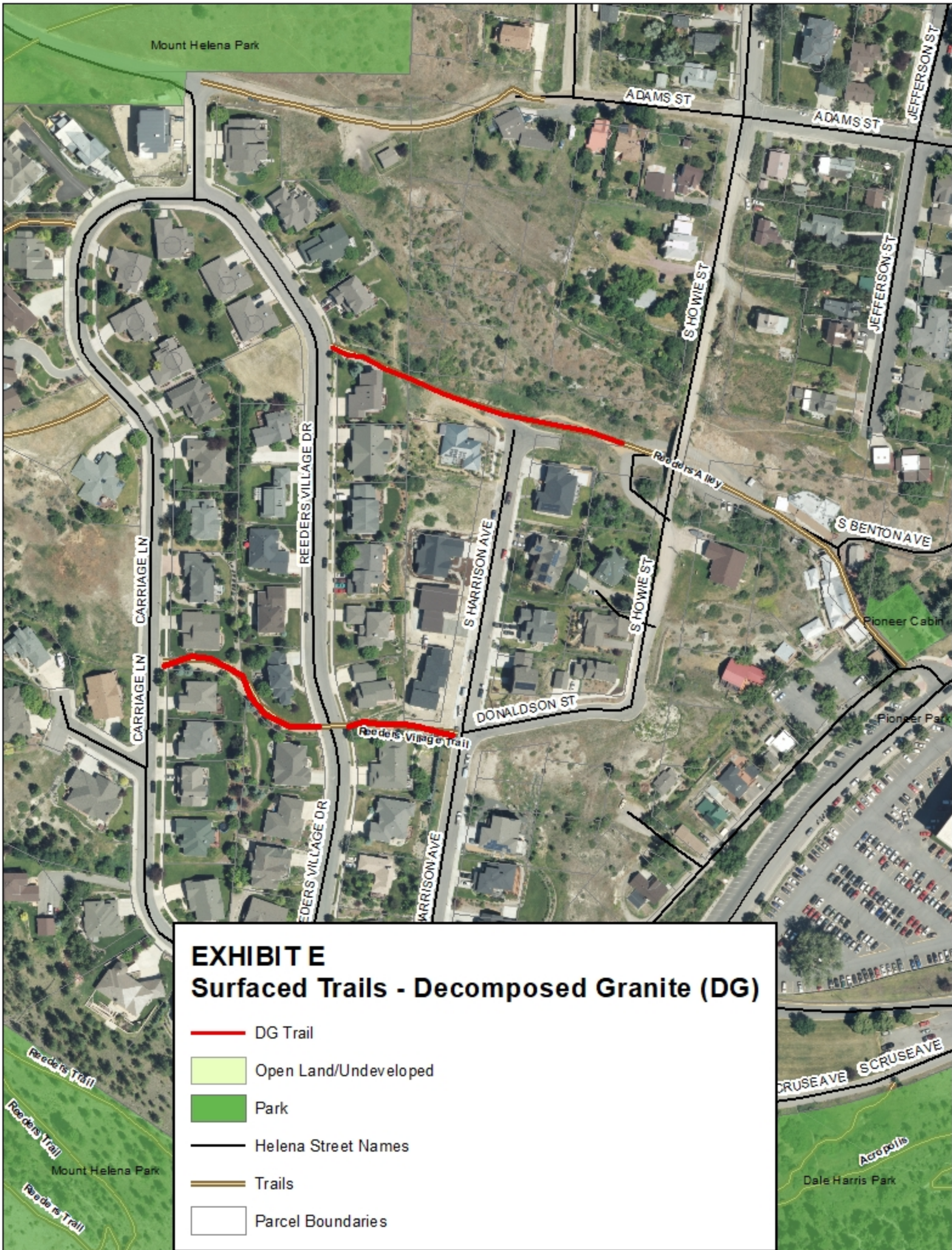


EXHIBIT E Surfaced Trails - Decomposed Granite (DG)

- DG Trail
- Open Land/Undeveloped
- Park
- Helena Street Names
- Trails
- Parcel Boundaries



EXHIBIT F
TRAIL INSPECTION FORM
CITY OF HELENA
PARKS, RECREATION, OPEN LANDS



1. TRAIL INFORMATION

- A. Inspection Date:
- B. Park Name:
- C. Trail Name:
- D. Section: From/To:

2. TRAIL INSPECTION AND BASIC MAINTENANCE WORK

Inspection and basic maintenance completed
 Inspection and basic maintenance needed
 Location(s) and description of work completed and/or needed:

3. TRAIL ISSUES: Problem #1	Is this a Safety Issue? Please Check One	Yes	No
------------------------------------	---	------------	-----------

- Tree(s) down on trail
- Leaner Tree(s)
- Branches hanging over trail
- Tread Washout
- Mudhole / Widening
- Drains filled in and/or missing
- Other
- Description and Location:

Action needed:

4. TRAIL ISSUES: Problem #2 **Is this a Safety Issue? Please Check One** **Yes** **No**

- Tree(s) down on trail
- Leaner Tree(s)
- Branches hanging over trail
- Tread Washout
- Mudhole / Widening
- Drains filled in and/or missing
- Other
- Description and Location:

Action needed:

5. TRAIL ISSUES: Problem #3 **Is this a Safety Issue? Please Check One** **Yes** **No**

- Tree(s) down on trail
- Leaner Tree(s)
- Branches hanging over trail
- Tread Washout
- Mudhole / Widening
- Drains filled in and/or missing
- Other
- Description and Location:

Action needed:

6. TRAIL ISSUES: Problem #4

Is this a Safety Issue? Please Check One

Yes

No

Tree(s) down on trail

Leaner Tree(s)

Branches hanging over trail

Tread Washout

Mudhole / Widening

Drains filled in and/or missing

Other

Description and Location:

Action needed:

7. TRAIL SIGNS

Post In

Signed

Sturdy

Clean

Problem:

Recommended Action/Supplies Needed:

Post In

Signed

Sturdy

Clean

Problem:

Recommended Action/Supplies Needed:

Post In
Sturdy
Problem:

Signed
Clean

Recommended Action/Supplies Needed:

Post In
Sturdy
Problem:

Signed
Clean

Recommended Action/Supplies Needed:

Post In
Sturdy
Problem:

Signed
Clean

Recommended Action/Supplies Needed:

Post In
Sturdy
Problem:

Signed
Clean

Recommended Action/Supplies Needed:

8. MAJOR WORK COMPLETED, GENERAL OBSERVATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS: