



**B A S I N**  
RECREATION

## Staff Report

**To: Summit County Council**

**From: Matt Wagoner, Trails and Open Space Manager; Brian Hanton, District Director; Ben Castro, District Board Chair**

**Date of Meeting: July 15, 2020**

## Background

Process meetings to date

- a. 'Future of Our Trails Forum'
- b. Working group partners (two meetings)
  1. Summit County
    1. Attorney's Office
    2. Public Works/Engineering
    3. Sheriff's Office
    4. Animal Control
  2. Park City Municipal Trails and Open Space Dept.
  3. Mountain Trails Foundation
  4. Basin Recreation
- c. Basin Rec + stakeholder meetings
  1. Sun Peak Homeowners Association
  2. Sun Peak HOA Trails Committee (three meetings)
  3. Park City Community Church
  4. Summit County Public Works
  5. Summit County Transportation
  6. Consulted two parking enforcement companies
  7. Inventoried potential parking capacity and property ownership in District
  8. Worked with Blaine Thomas to investigate a shared code enforcement officer (ongoing)
  9. Consulted Park City Parking Services Department for details on revenue and cost structure

## Analysis

**Potential solutions** – actions that can be taken to mitigate congestion and poor user etiquette.

These ideas were gathered from meetings with partners and presented to the public at the June 16 Future of Our Trails Forum.

Transportation – How do people get to trails while creating less traffic and parking congestion?

1. Enhanced transit

2. Overflow parking
  3. Active transportation connections
  4. Recreation shuttle
- d. Dispersal – How can users spread throughout the trail system to help reduce crowding?
1. Segregated use
  2. Directional use
  3. Time partitioning
  4. Public user data
- e. Behavior/Regulation – How can we share trails better and create positive trail experiences?
1. Courtesy campaign
  2. Trail ambassadors
  3. Code enforcement officer
  4. Paid permit parking

Following public feedback and the compiling of additional strategies, this set was evaluated based on potential to address three issues: parking congestion, trail congestion, and behavior/etiquette. They were also rated on their feasibility based on three barriers to implementation: Multi-agency collaboration, staff capacity increases, and capital costs.

**System-wide priorities – See Appendix A for full scoring of strategies.** These strategies have the best balance of cost vs. benefit from the perspective of Basin Recreation. To appropriately address the interwoven issues, strategies from each category should be implemented concurrently. Each trail access hub will have different challenges, but the full list of identified strategies will provide a toolkit for tailoring an approach to each one. While some solutions may not have scored highly overall because of implementation barriers, that does not mean that they should not be pursued. Several of the most difficult to implement strategies could potentially be very effective.

**Transportation:** Overflow parking – partnering with organizations to increase parking capacity without having to build new lots. This strategy can be implemented quickly at a lower cost because it uses existing infrastructure. Capital expenses are relatively low for additional signs, but the effort to build and maintain partnerships will take staff time. This may also require some cost sharing arrangement for maintenance of parking infrastructure.

**Dispersal:** Demand mapping and time partitioning – Providing better user demand information to the public so that they can make informed decisions about where to recreate and better utilize the whole system. This can be achieved with technologies that are becoming less expensive, but still requires some investment and operations cost. Time partitioning was also ranked highly as a dispersal strategy that does not require construction of additional trails. This should be considered carefully as limiting user types effectively reduces overall trail availability. Partitioning would also require enforcement presence and a public outreach campaign.

**Behavior/Regulation:** Courtesy campaign and trail ambassadors- While evaluated as separate strategies, these should really be considered two parts of the same effort. A marketing and messaging campaign to increase positive interactions and compliance with regulation would be delivered in many

ways, including through trail ambassadors. Costs can vary widely based on the sophistication of the effort, but would be relatively low cost compared to enforcement strategies. As a keystone to many other strategies, enforcement capacity should still be pursued.

## Case Study

While the strategies evaluated were imagined for the entire trail system, there are several areas where the issues of congestion and behavior are more pronounced. Rob's Trail and the associated parking area are a source of frequent input from the community and it is considered a good candidate for testing mitigation strategies.

**Near-term strategies – best balance of potential benefits with lower barriers to implementation. All are in progress to some degree and can be accomplished by Basin staff.**

**Overflow Parking** – a partnership arrangement already exists with Park City Community Church, but there could be better information and wayfinding to alternative trails and parking areas. At Rob's trailhead, utilization of the overflow area is dependent on the limitation and regulation of public right of way.

- Install sign to direct vehicles to Park City Community Church.
- Identity signage at the overflow parking area.
- Some enforcement presence to maintain parking within bounds of agreement.

**Demand Mapping** – Better information distribution for users to make informed decisions about where to recreate and better utilize the entire system. Needs to be implemented system wide to be effective.

- Permanent trail counter system (\$75,000 for system infrastructure, \$5,000 annually to operate).

**Courtesy Campaign** – Creating a presence at trailheads and identifying those high value contact points to educate the public.

- Staff and/or trail ambassador 'meet and greet' opportunities at Rob's.
- Additional etiquette signage and public messaging to address trailhead behavior, parking, dog regulations.
- Pamphlets and training opportunities at bike shops and outdoor retailers to educate visitors on trail etiquette.

**Secondary strategies – add value to or enable the primary strategies. Partnerships required.**

**Parking regulation** - Limit the amount of unregulated public right-of-way parking. Preserve some space for members of broader community to use trails, but with clear limitations.

- Retain the existing marked trailhead spots.
- Designate some limited shoulder areas for peak usage where it can be safely accommodated.

**Enforcement Officer** – Increase capacity through partnership with County to enforce regulations where Basin does not have jurisdiction.

- ensure presence at Rob's during peak usage to educate about trailhead behaviors.
- enforce limitations on parking through citations and towing if necessary.

**Active transportation connections** - from overflow parking areas to trails

- Wayfinding signage from PCCC parking lot to Colin's.
- PCCC to Colin's Trail multi-use path for a safe connection from parking to trail

[Long term strategies](#) – **higher effectiveness, but also more barriers to implementation**

**Recreation shuttle** – a value-added service to the entire community, but with significant costs. Could be scaled for peak time and for popular trails, but consistency and regularity will help with adoption.

## Appendix A: Strategy prioritization

	Potential to reduce trail congestion	Potential to reduce parking congestion	Potential to improve trail behavior	Multi-party collaboration	Increased staffing required	Increased capital cost/other expenditures	total
<b>Transportation</b>							
overflow parking	3	3	3	1	4	4	18
enhanced transit	2	4	2	2	5	2	17
recreation shuttle	2	5	2	1	4	1	15
active transportation	2	3	2	2	3	1	13
<b>Dispersal</b>							
demand mapping	4	3	2	5	3	2	19
time partitioning	5	3	2	4	1	4	19
segregated use	5	3	2	4	1	1	16
directional use	4	3	2	4	1	1	15
<b>Behavior/Regulation</b>							
courtesy campaign	2	2	5	4	2	4	19
trail ambassadors	2	2	5	4	2	4	19
enforcement officer	2	4	5	1	1	2	15
paid permit parking	4	4	1	1	2	2	14

**Transportation** strategies have the greatest potential to address the root cause of parking congestion, but require the most collaboration work. Capital costs would be high and there is potential that the ease of access would increase trail congestion and exacerbate user conflicts if implemented alone.

**Dispersal** or partitioning users preserves experiences of solitude and reduces congestion, but sidesteps etiquette by keeping people separate instead of asking them to improve their behavior. By reducing interactions there could also be an increase of other issues because passive surveillance and social pressure will be reduced.

**Behavior/Regulation** strategies interact with other strategies so are hard to evaluate independently. Some enforcement is necessary for partitioning strategies to work. Mostly education and outreach oriented, with paid parking as a last resort. Enforcement and regulation underpins many other strategies so some effort will need to be made in this area.

## **Appendix B: Permit Parking research**

In the fall of 2019, the Snyderville Basin Special Recreation District (“Basin Recreation” or the “District”) conducted a truth in taxation (“TNT”) process in order to increase the District’s property tax revenue. Included in that request to increase revenue was an enforcement line item. The enforcement line item resulted from repeated and persistent problems at the District’s parks and trailheads with failure of both residents and visitors to obey posted signs. Limitations on the District’s ability to enforce its posted rules result in complaints from patrons and neighbors.

A separate, but related, issue was raised during the TNT proceeding concerning the responsibility for District related costs. The Summit County Council heard from several community members that felt their tax bills were disproportionately impacted for community benefits that were, in fact, enjoyed by out-of-area visitors that did not pay taxes for such. The County Council asked that the District investigate ways in which it might address the concerns.

### **DISCUSSION:**

Since the conclusion of the proceeding, the District has done extensive due diligence.

#### Parking Enforcement Platforms

The District has met telephonically with two different parking enforcement companies. The first company, Passport, is the same company that provides parking meters and the phone application for Park City. A total price for mobile pay, permits, and the enforcement platform is \$20,728 annually. The second company, Parking Boss, provided an annual cost of \$9,552 for the relevant phone apps, the system, and parking.

In discussion with both companies, neither seemed to think that their offered parking solution fit the District’s need. The District has just under 100 parking stalls on property that it owns. Basin Recreation would propose that all residents be provided a parking pass as part of their annual tax payment, thus the District would only collect from visitors.

Following the telephone conversations and demos with the above companies, District Staff arranged two meetings. On January 14, 2020, Staff met with Caroline Rodriguez, Summit County’s Transportation Director, in hopes that we might be able to take advantage of economies of scale and share the cost of the parking systems. She did not have any parking lots that she recommended the County charge for parking. We also discussed the retrofitting of some buses to carry mountain bikes to address parking congestion.

On January 21, 2020, Staff met with Derrick Radke, Summit County Public Works, and Michael Kendall and Brandon Brady from Summit County's Engineering Department. We discussed additional signage and Derrick also expressed concern over Basin Recreation charging for parking and/or enforcing any parking restrictions in those areas that it does not own outright – i.e. County rights of way. However, Staff is concerned that if visitors are required to pay for parking in District lots, they will just park in the adjacent public right-of-way, thus causing strain on neighborhoods and more problems for the Public Works Department.

In June 2020, Basin staff had a conversation with Johnny Wasden from the Park City Parking Services Department to better understand their revenue and cost structure. Park City has around 1000 spaces of regulated parking compared with the 100 that Basin owns for trail access. To regulate these spaces, they have ten staff and a budget of 1.7 million. While they collect enough revenue to support their operation most of that is generated from paid parking on Main Street, which has very high occupancy rates. Little revenue comes from ticketing and most tickets are issued as warnings.

Johnny also mentioned a sensor technology that allows parking managers to detect when stalls are being utilized that could make enforcement more efficient. These were also mentioned by Caroline Rodriguez as a way to make parking demand visible in real time and potential trail users made aware when parking capacity was full. We contacted PNI Sensor Corporation to inquire about the feasibility of such a system for our trailheads. The PNI PlacePod technology seemed to be appropriate for the use described, and we were given an estimated cost of \$175 per sensor, which would be need on each parking stall. This does not include the cost of installation and integrating the sensors with a platform that would allow us to manage the data.

Through this research, Basin Staff has become more aware of the limitations of a comprehensive parking enforcement operation. Given the constraints of high enforcement costs and having direct jurisdiction over relatively few parking stalls, Staff has developed and prioritized other strategies to address parking congestion issues that are detailed elsewhere in this document.