

RECREATION & TRAILS



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RECREATION & TRAILS

9.1 Introduction

Recreation facilities and trails that provide access to the outdoors and active movement are crucial to the health and quality of life of a community. In the case of Eureka, not only do they promote healthy lifestyles and increased positive interactions between local citizens, but can provide significant economic development opportunities. While there currently exists multiple opportunities for motorized and non-motorized recreation in Eureka, there are many opportunities to improve trails, trailheads, access to open space, and other recreation opportunities. This chapter will examine these current conditions and put forth specific recommendations for improvements.

9.2 Community Input

The vision, goals, and strategies in this element were developed from feedback received from Eureka City leaders, residents, and business owners. This feedback supported the creation of an inventory of existing facilities, ideas for improvements, and potential partnerships to further develop recreation opportunities in Eureka. During two public meetings, maps of the city were laid out and citizens were given the opportunity to highlight areas and topics of concern, as well as point out improvements that could be made. Numerous stakeholder meetings, tours, and interviews were conducted to better understand the needs, challenges, and opportunities

in Eureka. These comments helped to direct the planning team in determining what key opportunities should be focused on in this section.

9.3 Vision

The community generally acknowledged that recreation activities were one of the greatest opportunities and quality of life indicators for Eureka. This includes factors such as proximity to mountainous terrain, close access to public lands, and an extensive network of existing dirt roads and trails. This provides a solid foundation for the City to develop future amenities and activities in close proximity to residents and visitors. Furthermore, there is need to better identify, organize, fund, maintain, and market these recreational opportunities. The community wants to increase the number of recreation opportunities, organize more community recreation events, improve maintenance efforts, and market these opportunities to attract outside investment. The goals and strategies in this section will seek to follow this vision.

9.4 Current Conditions

Eureka and the surrounding area have a natural setting that is ideal for recreation opportunities. The City is situated in the East Tintic Mountain Range and is surrounded by a network of trails and dirt roads, forged mostly by old mining

EUREKA GENERAL PLAN

companies and recreation enthusiasts. Eureka is also uniquely situated in that it is a gateway to the western half of the state of Utah for the residents of Utah and Salt Lake Counties, Utah's largest metropolitan area. This is the gateway to Utah's west deserts, which offer numerous of recreation and tourist attractions, such the Bonneville Salt Flats, the Little Sahara Recreation Area, and thousands of acres of state and federal public lands.

While Eureka may have a network of trails that surrounds the city, it does not provide many trailheads that provide access to these trails. The few existing access points lack basic infrastructure such as established parking lots, restroom facilities, trail markers, and tourist information. This makes it difficult for visiting recreation enthusiasts to enjoy the amenities Eureka has to offer and limits business activity in Eureka. Furthermore, there is a general unawareness of the recreation opportunities in Eureka. No resources are set aside or provided for marketing these opportunities on a regional and state level. Most local trails are not listed on many of the state's websites that promote recreational and outdoor activities. Private local, state, and regional associations that sponsor recreation activities do not promote Eureka, making it difficult to attract recreation enthusiasts.

9.4.1 SWOT Analysis

A SWOT analysis is a method utilized to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of a community. The following SWOT analysis was conducted based on feedback received from residents and stakeholders in 2017:

Strengths:

- A large network of trails, from dirt roads to single-person paths, that offer plentiful access to the East Tintic Mountain Range.
- Multi-purpose trails that can support a range of activities from ATV use to backpacking.
- An engaged community that is willing to support improvements in recreation opportunities.

Weaknesses:

- Lack of trailhead access within Eureka to these trails.
- No facilities (parking lots, restroom facilities, wayfinding signage) to support and sustain these trailheads.
- Lack of hospitality, restaurant and retail industries to support multi-day recreation activities.





Strengths

East Tintic Mountain Range
Multi-Purpose Trails
Engaged Community



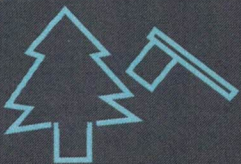
Weaknesses

Lack of Trailhead Access
Lack of Trailhead Facilities
Lack of Hospitality, Resaurant, Retail



Opportunities

Engage with Chamber of Commerce
Partner with State and Regional Agencies
Expansion of Recreation Opportunities



Threats

Lack of Law Enforcement
Confusion of Jurisdiction

Opportunities:

- Engagement of the local chamber of commerce to raise awareness of recreation opportunities.
- Partnerships with relevant state and regional agencies (Department of Natural Resources, Office of Tourism, Six County and Mountainland Association of Governments).
- Expansion of the number and type of recreation opportunities.

Threats:

- Lack of law enforcement presence that promotes a sense of security for visitors.
- Confusion over jurisdictional authority between the intersection of Juab, Tooele and Utah counties.

9.4.2 Trails

Eureka already has a network of trails that surround the city in the East Tintic Mountain Range. Map 9.1 shows a map of these trails that surround Eureka. Some of the trails in this network include the Prospector Trail System, Tintic Trail System, and Utah County Class D Roads. Most of these trails are not recognized by the state (see map 9.2 on page 95), indicating a general lack of awareness of the trail opportunities surrounding Eureka. Many of these trails are south of Eureka, where most of the historic and present mines are situated. A long term partnership with private property owners will be necessary to establish right of way easements, trailheads, and other improvements to support safe and orderly recreation.

There is also a general lack of connection between trails to the south of Highway 6 and those north of the highway, with the main connections converging through the City. This presents a significant opportunity for Eureka to serve as a "regional trailhead" for the myriad of trail users in the area and support various supporting businesses.

9.4.3 Parks and Open Space

Eureka has two city parks to accommodate sports or community events. The City also provides three baseball fields, one of which is used in conjunction by Tintic High School. While enough to sustain the local population, they all are disproportionately placed on the eastern part of Eureka.

9.4.4 Other

Dispersed camping is a popular recreation activity by local residents and visitors to the Eureka area. As a gateway to Utah's west deserts and an abundance of public land, there is also need for better management of camping as the region's popularity continues to grow. Eureka is somewhat limited by the steep slopes of the East Tintic Mountain Range, but may be able to explore opportunities to develop campground facilities in partnership with local property owners.



There is currently no organizational framework for other popular recreation activities such as hunting, target shooting, rockhounding, and climbing. No regional or state recreation events are held locally, thus contributing even more to a lack of awareness of the recreation opportunities available. The City may choose to seek partnerships with various local, state, federal, and private agencies to expand these opportunities and support greater recreation development in Eureka.

9.5 Potential Recreation Improvements

This outlines can serve as a starting place for City leaders, residents, business owners, and potential partners to develop future recreation opportunities in Eureka. A timeline detailing when each improvement should be made is provided in

Section 8.6.3 of this document.

9.5.1 Trails

The current trails network surrounding Eureka is the foundation to future improvements in recreation opportunities. Eureka should prioritize improving access to all forms of users, including OHV/ATV riders, mountain bikers, backpackers, equestrian riders, and seasonal uses such as cross-country skiing and hunting. Initial steps should be taken to improve trailhead access and facilities, along with the

necessary maintenance of existing trails, either by the city, or through agreements with counties, private property owners, or user groups.

As part of this effort, the City should create a classification system to organize trails into categories to reduce user conflicts and improve safety, and makes such categorization public knowledge through wayfinding infrastructure at key trailhead access points. Efforts should be made to address community concern about the safety of conflicting

motorized and non-motorized users on the same trail; such a classification method would help alleviate conflicts.

Increasing the trails and other related facilities for these uses will make Eureka a more attractive alternative for recreation enthusiasts and help build its reputation as one of the premier outdoors attractions for visitors.

9.5.1.1 Motorized

The primary motorized use that will operate on these trails is off-highway vehicles (OHVs), such as all-terrain vehicles (ATVs). However, as other motorized vehicles make use of these trails, the City should direct efforts to ensure that such uses are included in their plans.

ATVs are the predominant motorized use of the trails surrounding Eureka and as such should be given priority in the City's planning efforts. One of the first steps taken should be to classify all trails that are to be used for motorized purposes. Such classification should be made publicly available at trailhead access points in Eureka through the use of maps and signs.

One of the key stakeholders to engage is the Utah ATV Association, a private organization of ATV enthusiasts throughout Utah. Their primary goal is to support the use of ATV activities and trails, all which is done on a volunteer basis. The Utah ATV Association also sometimes hosts constructive events where they will build new trails or help to maintain older ones on a yearly basis. The success of the ATV trail system surrounding Eureka will only be possible through

partnerships to offer support and maintenance of the trails. In building this relationship, emphasis should be given to the fact that both Salt Lake and Utah counties are rapidly growing and will need places to use for off-highway recreation. Eureka is ideally situated, being only a 40-minute drive from the heart of Utah Valley, to fit this need.

Consideration should also be given to the use of ATVs in Eureka municipal boundaries on paved roads. Some of the

community was concerned about the noise generated from such vehicles and what would occur if ATV use increased dramatically. While this section will make no specific recommendations in this regard, it will suggest that the City staff give consideration to this as recreational ATV use increases.

Types of Non-Motorized Trails:



equestrian



pedestrian & hiking



mountain bike

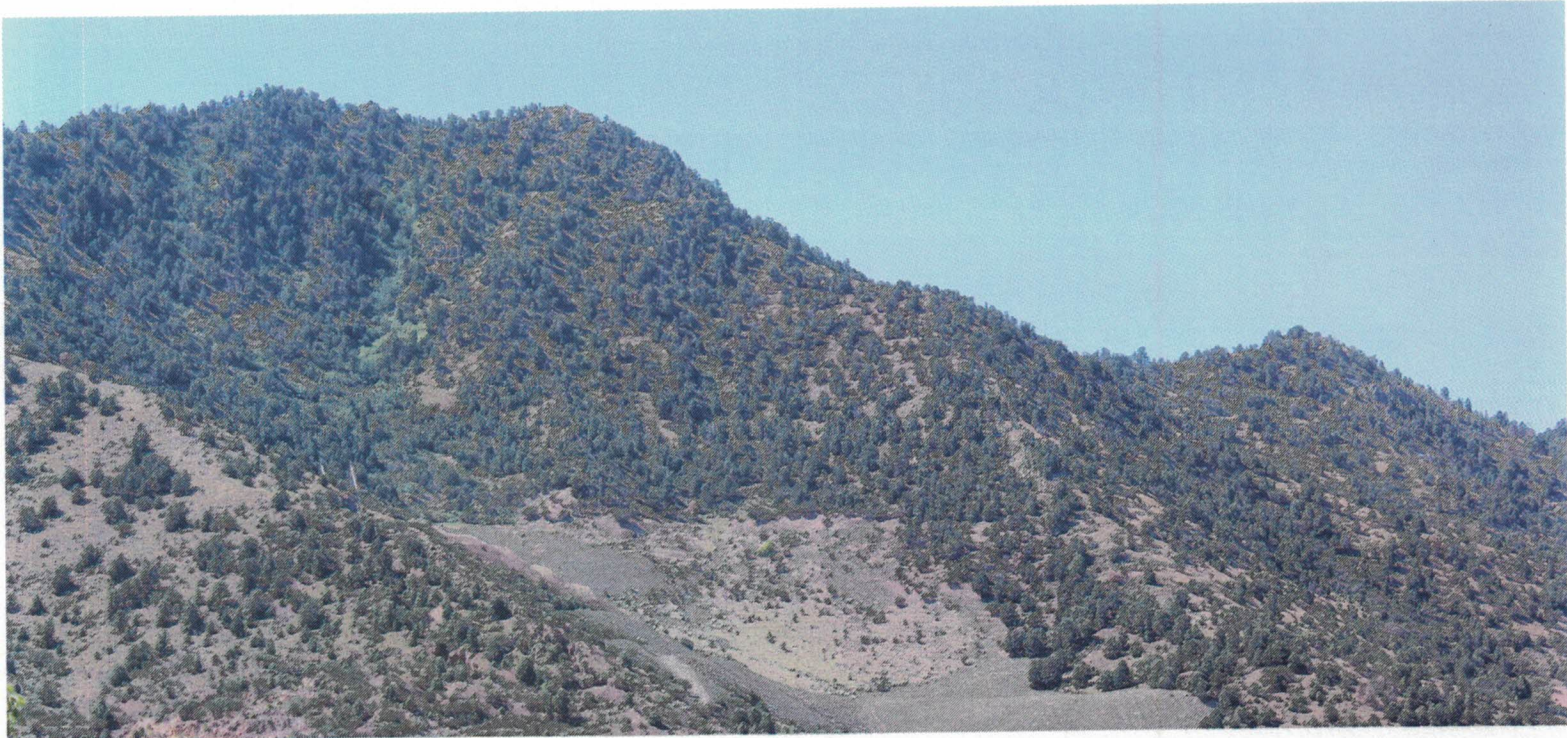
9.5.1.2 Non-motorized

Non-motorized uses, which includes equestrian, pedestrian, and

mountain biking are currently not as popular as motorized uses in the Eureka area. The opportunity to expand the trails systems to accommodate these uses should not be neglected because it will provide more recreational attractions for both local and regional users, thereby increasing the customer base for retail and hospitality businesses in Eureka. Trails should be designed to separate non-motorized users from motorized users and should be clearly delineated.

9.5.1.2.1 Equestrian

According to a study conducted by the American Equestrian Alliance, only 13 states have a higher horse to people ratio



than Utah, indicating a relatively robust equestrian presence in the state. This is a key recreation opportunity for Eureka to engage user groups, such as the local chapter of the Back Country Horsemen of Utah to develop a mutually beneficial partnership to develop and maintain equestrian facilities in the community. This would support the specific needs of equestrian users, such as larger trailhead facilities, separated trails, and other accommodations.

9.5.1.2.2 Pedestrian and Hiking

There is need to develop a separate and sustainable trail system for pedestrian hikers. This system may be paired with an equestrian trail system, but should be separated from mountain bike and motorized users to protect user safety and improve the user experience. This system may seek to create scenic loops, trails to vistas, points of interest, or historic sites to educate on local history. Special care should be taken to clearly delineate trails and provide appropriate wayfinding signage while reducing risk of injury by avoiding existing or abandoned mining operations in the area. The City should

actively engage property owners and supporting agencies when delineating this system.

9.5.1.2.3 Mountain Bike

There are currently some single track trails used for hiking and mountain biking on private land surrounding Eureka. Formalizing and expanding a mountain bike trail system would present significant opportunity for Eureka to establish itself as a popular recreation area among a rapidly growing user group in Utah while providing close to home recreation for youth in Eureka. City leaders should work with private land owners to develop a comprehensive and safe system that is clearly signed to reduce user conflict and clarify difficult levels for trails. There may be opportunities to partner with the Tintic School District and other local, state, and nonprofit agencies to develop a comprehensive trail system. Potential partners include the Wasatch Trails Alliance, the Utah High School Cycling League, and the Governor's Office of Outdoor Recreation.

9.5.1.3 Trailhead Facilities and Locations

Because many trails exist on private roads or are Utah County right of ways, the City may not have direct control over these systems, however, Eureka can make substantial improvements to a number of potential trailhead sites within City limits. Eureka acts as a junction for many of the surrounding trails, making it ideally situated to provide trailhead access.

Some general locations that would serve well as trailhead access points include the junction of Main Street and Knightsville Road, the northern end of Church Street and Eureka Cemetery to the west of the City. Map 9.3 identifies these general locations. Each of these locations are ideal because they provide access to trails north and south of Highway 6 as well as trails on the east and west ends of the City. Some trailhead improves are anticipated to begin in 2018 with funds provided by a matching grant from the Utah Office of Outdoor Recreation.

The City should strive to provide the necessary infrastructure to sustain trailhead access for a variety of uses. This would include parking facilities for both vehicles and large trailers, restroom facilities, and maps of the trail systems. Signs should be placed to indicate the type of uses allowed on each trail system and wayfinding signage should be provided throughout

the City to direct recreation traffic to trailhead access points.

9.5.2 Camping

Eureka currently has no camping facilities within its limits and there are few campgrounds in the surrounding area. Part of the reason for the lack of campgrounds is that a majority of land surrounding Eureka is private property and campgrounds typically are found on public lands.

Most of the private landowners that own this property are the mining companies. Eureka could explore opportunities to coordinate with the mining companies and other property owners to identify other potential locations for campgrounds. The placement and size of such campgrounds should be considerate of the property owner's preferences and to mitigate impacts to nearby residents or businesses.

Eureka also has the opportunity to develop campgrounds within the City limits. The ideal locations would be at or near the trailhead access points. All types of campgrounds--tent sites, RV parks, or cabins--should be considered by the City as they strive to expand accommodations in and surrounding Eureka.

