

# **Skyline Wilderness Park Development Project Update**

Vision Fund – Phase IV Project – 2013

## **Background**

In 2007, the Skyline Wilderness Area was donated to the City by Skyline Drive Preservation, Inc. with the intention of preserving a piece of urban wilderness within Rapid City for public recreation.

In 2010, the Black Hills Runners Club & Black Hills Mountain Bike Association collectively submitted an application to the Vision Fund to implement the Skyline Wilderness Park Master Plan. This plan was developed by the Parks and Recreation Department and Eastin Outdoors, Inc. The proposed project was the only submitted project that met all the requirements for each of the three categories (Civic Improvement, Economic Development and Municipal Infrastructure) within the Vision Fund.

Since the project was approved in 2010, the Parks and Recreation Department has completed a cultural resource inventory of the entire property and, with the help of a Recreational Trails Program (RTP) Grant from the South Dakota Game, Fish, and Parks, constructed a section of the Skyline Trail. The 80/20 RTP grant covered 80% of the total project costs making the total cost to the City only \$6,711.72. The grant expiration date of December 31, 2012, required the Parks and Recreation Department to construct this section prior to the larger Vision Fund Project. Two parcels (located at Fulton Street and St. Patrick Street) have been acquired for trailhead locations since the original application.

## **Proposed Project Intent**

The Vision Fund application for the Skyline Wilderness Project claimed that by developing a network of trails and trailheads for public use, the City would benefit through economic development, enhanced property values, increased public revenue and improved community health. In the past few years, Rapid City has had a unique opportunity to see some of those claims realized through the development of the privately held Hanson-Larsen Memorial Park. This park's popularity has increased exponentially in a few short years.

Hanson Larsen Memorial Park has influenced the development of Founders Park Village -- a collection of apartment complexes, townhouses and businesses directly adjacent to the park, offering tenants/owners/employees easy access to miles of trails and recreational opportunities. In 2012, Rapid City also completed a Greenway and Pedestrian Facilities project with federal funds, which created a centralized trailhead at Founders Park to accommodate the increased use of the Park, Greenway and Bike Path. The Hanson-Larsen Memorial Park has proven that development of these regionally unique, active outdoor recreational facilities, like the one proposed at Skyline Wilderness Park, pays dividends to the community by enhancing quality of life, public health, property values, and ecological and environmental opportunities, as well as attracting tourists and new residents.

The development of the Skyline Wilderness Park will complement the Hanson-Larsen Memorial Park and help draw events like the Black Hills Fat Tire Festival and other biking and running events back into Rapid City. These two adjacent parks will create a unique opportunity for Rapid City, giving it significant potential to be designated a Ride Center by the International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA), a claim that only 11 other cities can make. Volksmarches, and other organized events by local organizations and youth groups, will readily access the area through enhanced parking and trails. The outdoor recreational opportunities provided by the Skyline Wilderness Park Project will provide our City with a diverse, unique, and integrated park system that will bring economic and cultural benefits to our community.

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## Sponsorship Club Commitment

The Black Hills Runners Club and the Black Hills Mountain Bike Association are the sponsorship clubs for this Vision Fund Project. The sponsorship clubs will assist the Parks and Recreation Department with ongoing maintenance and upkeep throughout the park by utilizing club members as volunteers. An Adopt-A-Trail Program may also be developed.

## Project Scope

The Skyline Wilderness Development Project is being managed by the Rapid City Parks and Recreation Department with collaboration from the Black Hills Runners Club, Black Hills Mountain Bike Association, and the Board of Skyline Drive Preservation, Inc. The Parks Department has also been working with other City Departments to define the scope and budget of the project based on the original 2009 Master Plan. The proposed project is divided into two areas: Trail Development and Trailhead Development/Reclamation.

### 1) Trailhead Development

An RFP is being drafted to select a technical professional consultant to plan and design the trailheads and parking facilities. The design consultant will be tasked with identifying parking capacities, gates, signage, and facility amenities such as restrooms and water access, as well as addressing safety and accessibility needs. The improved parking facilities will accommodate the increased use of the trail system without negatively impacting Dinosaur Park and the Visitor Center parking area. The following access locations have been identified for development to minimize the disturbance of the natural urban wilderness areas.

- Trailheads with Parking Accommodations:
  1. Fulton Street off Jackson Boulevard
  2. Flormann Street off Skyline Drive
  3. Petrified Forest on Skyline Drive
- Trailheads without parking, Bike/Pedestrian Only Access:
  1. Cerro Court
  2. St. Cloud Street
  3. South Street
  4. St. Patrick Street

### 2) Trail Development/Reclamation

City staff is developing a design-build procurement procedure to solicit and select a professional trail building firm to develop a sustainable trail system within the Park under a design/build contract. This contract will provide the City with the best opportunity to select the most qualified firm and best priced proposal to deliver a natural surface trail system. This type of construction requires close coordination with the Parks Department, sponsorship clubs, and Skyline Preservation, Inc. to determine final trail alignments with emphasis on preserving the natural environment. The trail system has been identified by the Parks and Recreation Department with input from the sponsorship clubs and Skyline Drive Preservation, Inc. All alignments will be laid out and flagged by the contractor for acceptance by the Project Manager prior to any construction.

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## Cost Estimates

The following are preliminary cost estimates of the project as revised slightly from the original application in 2010.

Revisions reflect changes due to newly acquired parkland, trailhead size/locations, trail surfacing, and design and planning contingencies.

Project 1)	<u>TRAILHEAD DEVELOPMENT</u> – 7 Trailheads	<b>\$510,000</b>
	a. Fulton Street	
	b. Flormann Street	
	c. Petrified Forest	
	d. Cerro Court	
	e. South Street	
	f. St. Cloud	
	g. St. Patrick Street	
Project 2)	<u>TRAIL DEVELOPMENT/RECLAMATION</u> – 10-mile Trail System	<b>\$419,000</b>
	a. Skyline Trail – Phase 2	
	b. Fulton Street Access	
	c. South Street to Dinosaur Park	
	d. Cerro Court Area	
	e. St. Patrick Street Access	
	f. Amphitheater Area	
	g. Reclamation	
		<b><u>TOTAL</u>            \$929,000</b>

### *Available Funding:*

• Vision Fund	\$912,625	
• Parks & Rec CIP	<u>16,975</u>	
	\$929,600	(No additional funding is requested)

## Preliminary Timeline

The following is an anticipated timeline of the project phases.

### TRAILHEAD DEVELOPMENT

RFP Posted	May 15, 2013
Contract Signed	July 1, 2013
Design/Planning Complete	Dec. 1, 2013
Bid Project	Jan 15, 2014
Construction Start	April 1, 2014
Completion	August 1, 2014

### TRAIL DEVELOPMENT & RECLAMATION

RFP Posted	May 15, 2013
Contract Signed	July 1, 2013
Design/Build Start	July 15, 2013
Completion	Dec. 1, 2014

# SKYLINE WILDERNESS PARK – TRAILS PLAN

## Key Points *From 2010*

### **The Situation:**

- The City-owned Skyline Wilderness Park encompasses 150 acres of undeveloped forest and meadows straddling historic Skyline Drive and Dinosaur Park in the heart of Rapid City.
- Although convenient to citizens and visitors, use of the Park is limited by a lack of parking and signage, and the random maze of unmarked and unmaintained trails.
- An organized trail system, with appropriate parking and signage, is needed to make this natural asset accessible to more than 70,000 people living within 5 miles of the Park and tens of thousands of visitors to Rapid City each year.
- Currently, the lack of established and maintainable trails results in misuse and abuse of the Park. A Trails Plan will facilitate cost efficient maintenance and preservation of the Park and its natural resources.
- Rapid City's Parks & Recreation Department has developed a Trails Plan and secured a small grant to start the project.

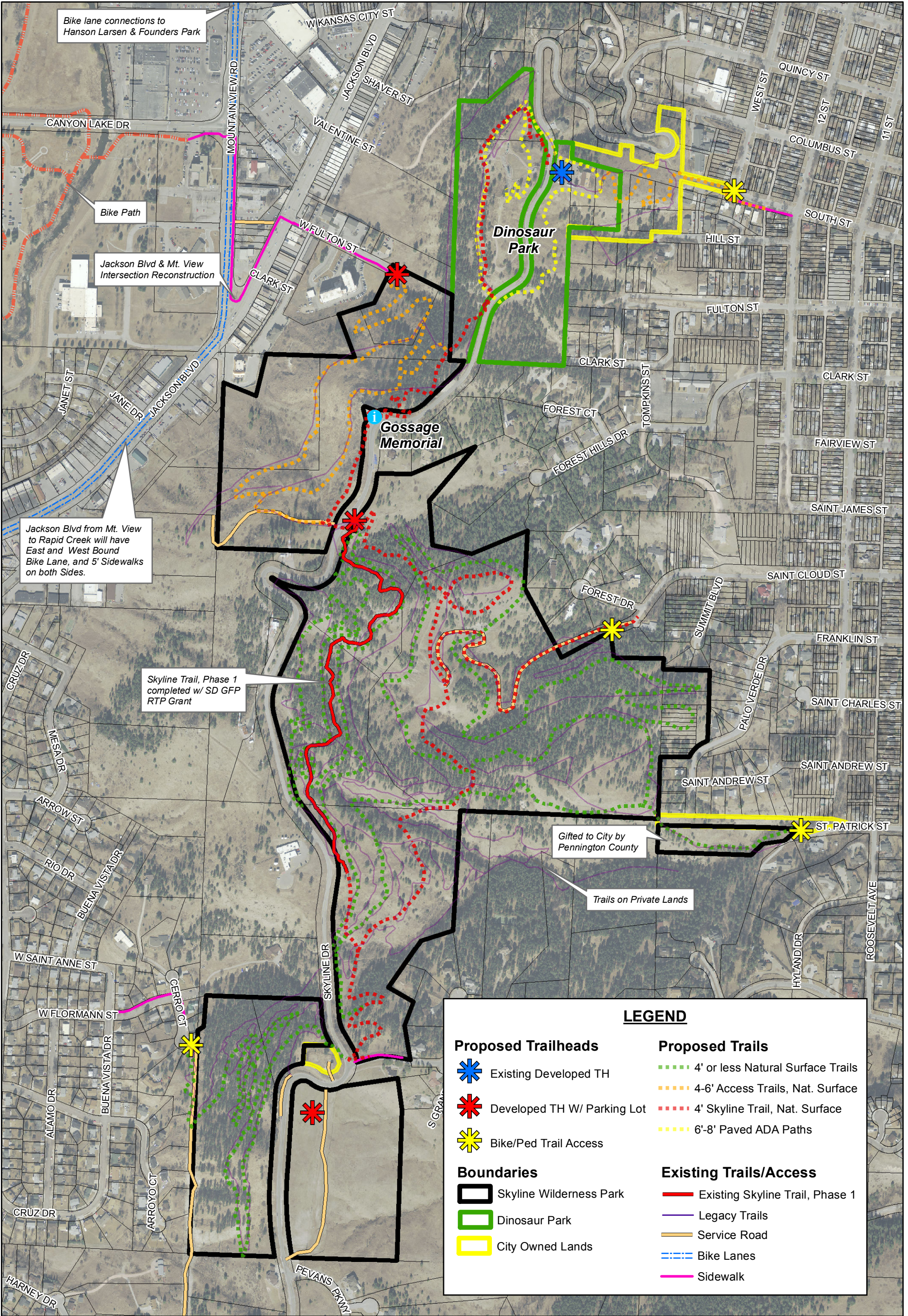
### **The Benefits:**

- The Rapid City Skyline Wilderness Park will be accessible for outdoor recreation, organized walks, marches, runs, and biking events for citizens and visitors. Many existing community activities and events will enjoy a new venue in this Park.
- Open spaces appeal to relocating businesses and attract home buyers who, according to recent surveys, desire nearby walking and biking paths.
- This Park will attract the adventure sports market, often called "Experiential Tourism," which attracts affluent, well-educated tourists who want to experience outdoor adventures. Few communities are positioned to attract this fast growing market.
- Local, regional, and national events help make Rapid City a destination for visitors. The CVB estimates visitors to Rapid City spend an average of \$200 per day and local spectators spend \$70 per day. An event like the City's Fat Tire Festival creates nearly \$1,000,000 in economic benefit. The Skyline Wilderness Park will expand this event and attract others.
- Encouraging physical activity contributes to a healthy lifestyle and reduces health care costs. Research suggests every \$1 invested in trails results in \$3 of health care benefits.
- Preservation and maintenance of the Park will be easier and more cost efficient.
- The Skyline Wilderness Park is a natural extension of the City's bike and pedestrian pathways that connect our community, parks, and downtown. It will provide an additional and unique experience for the multitude of citizenry who use and enjoy the existing Rapid City greenway.

### **The Request:**

- Invest \$912,625 of 2012 funds to implement the City's Trails Plan which includes defined trails, parking, signage, and trail information for the betterment of our community.

*Few Cities Have This Unique Opportunity!*



Bike lane connections to Hanson Larsen & Founders Park

Bike Path

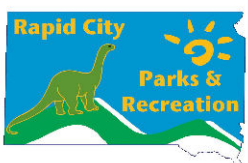
Jackson Blvd & Mt. View Intersection Reconstruction

Jackson Blvd from Mt. View to Rapid Creek will have East and West Bound Bike Lane, and 5' Sidewalks on both Sides.

Skyline Trail, Phase 1 completed w/ SD GFP RTP Grant

Gifted to City by Pennington County

Trails on Private Lands



# Skyline Wilderness Park

## Vision Fund Masterplan

