

OSMP Multimodal Assessment

Comments Received During Engagement Window 1

Please support the proposed bicycle connection between South Boulder and Doudy Draw. This connection would provide safer access to South Boulder trails, reduce parking lot congestion at Doudy Draw, and create genuine multimodal access from South Boulder. Please include bike access in the upcoming Lower Big Bluestem reroute design.

I recently learned that some folks, especially concerned parents of middle school children and high school youths, are asking OSMP Board and staff to modify significantly OSMP trail management in order to increase safer access to the south part of the West-TSA system for bikers. While I'm a cyclist myself, I'm also a grandparent and very sensitive to this expressed need. Still, I hope you (the OSBT) will not pressure staff into moving rapidly on this city-wide issue that concerns many folks, not just parents of young bikers. I've been a recreational and commuter biker for over 60 years, so I'm very conscious of the complexity of this community challenge. The Boulder Strategic Plan (and particularly item 7.C on trailhead access modalities) is already under way and no doubt will be articulated in greater detail--where OSMP is concerned--in December. If you have not experienced multi-department master plans in the past, know that this process will explore a range of alternatives generated by the OSMP staff, the Transportation staff, and the community. I am confident that it will address environmental concerns, the safety of bike riders, and also—where OSMP is concerned--the safety of pedestrians on the trails, including older adults like myself as well as young children hiking the trails with their parents. All parties, not just one recreational group, must be consulted. Let's thoughtfully permit the process to unfold.

I hope this comment method will work, since my computer is not playing nicely with the OSMP website. I plan to attend the Wed. meeting, just in case, but this is a more complete explanation of my thoughts: I'd like to comment on the Strategic 7.c. issue that has suddenly ballooned into a push by the Mountain Bike Association and parents who are members of the biking community as they endeavor to revive an old wishlist of biking constituents. These folks are hoping to find a warm reception from this board.

A bit of history:

If any of you were in Boulder during the 2010-2011 WTSA Management Plan era, you may remember the quasi-Civil War that occurred at that time over the use of bikes on the trails in the south end of the system. The community-wide Community Working Group that was established at the time (which contained an equal number of constituents from conservation groups, biking groups, and local communities, with a professional facilitator to keep things civil) came to the conclusion that bikes should be allowed on certain trails, but not all. The City Council blessed this arrangement with a unanimous vote, and it has functioned fairly well until the present day.

Since a valid visitor survey was performed in 2019, which demonstrated that 85% of Open Space users are hikers or walkers, and only 26% are bikers, the above arrangement still seems to be more than fair to the biking community.

City goals in 2026:

At this point in the renewed discussion, I'd like to focus on the immediate suggestion, brought up by the MBA and various parents of young bikers: This notion is that to get folks out of their polluting and pedestrian-dangerous cars, all we have to do is convert Open Space trails to make them multi-modal, beginning first with "only" two long and currently rather pristine trails. I feel that this is a false trade-off, and a slippery slope. I suspect that this will become apparent to you over the coming months of community-wide discussion.

Most importantly at this moment, pressing this idea is premature.

Ground-truthing:

Speaking specifically about article 7.c., I've taken three field trips to the south Boulder area to scope out the traffic and highway situation there. On the first of those trips, I explored (on my faithful Yeti bike) the current roads connection between Fairview High School, Marshall Road and the Marshall Mesa area. Even in mid-afternoon on a school day, I found that the upper part of that 12-minute bike ride is easy and peaceful, with many pedestrians and only an occasional car on the road. It is a no-brainer safe ride.

On the south end, at Hwy 170, there are admittedly safety challenges. At the worst point of these—crossing Hwy 170 to access the trails—steps are already being taken to diminish the risk to bike riders. OSMP, with the encouragement of CDOT, has a plan under way to install an on-demand lighted crosswalk across the road to a new trail connector for accessing the complex of trails on the Mesa. From there, all the bike trails in the south part of the system can be reached off-road.

Future developments

The Marshal/170/trail connection route will soon be a safe alternative, and one that certainly cannot be compared to the safety of bike riders along the shoulder of the main regional axis that is the Diagonal Hwy in north Boulder. Furthermore, the road route avoids transferring of risks: a safe road route for bike users as opposed to the increased risk to the many other trail users who desire to have peaceful hikes on Open Space trails: The latter includes the elderly, small children hiking with parents, distracted nature-lovers and birdwatchers, etc.

Current observations on bike-friendly trails

A final note on the so-called multi-modal trail model is this: If any of you have tried to hike—on foot—the lovely bike trails that we now have, such as the Picture Rock trail on Heil Ranch, or the N. Sky trail on OSMP, you will observe that there are almost no pedestrians using these any more, only an occasional long-distance runner. I do bird surveys on Picture Rock and now have a decade of data on bike and pedestrian use. Anyone on foot who can access a no-bike trail will prefer to do so: it is called the “self-select” factor. The bike trails become defacto NO pedestrian trails because stepping constantly off the trail (thus widening it and introducing weed seeds) is annoying, as is looking over your shoulder for oncoming wheeled vehicles. I hope that you all will set aside your “favorite sport” hat and put on your “Open Space protector” hat for this ongoing discussion. thanks for your time and serious consideration of this ongoing discussion.

PLAN-Boulder County has been involved in the creation of the OSMP system and its management since its inception in 1967; We have participated in passing every Open Space tax measure to fund the system; We have participated in every major planning process, including each of the Trail Study Areas, Master Plans, and management plans; We have played a significant role in developing the system; and we know its resources. This 7.c. planning process is intended to Assess Multimodal Improvements. The City-wide Strategic Plan says it is to: "Invest in and maintain a transportation system with an array of multi-modal choices to reduce vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions." We ask you to keep two important/basic concepts at top-of-mind as you pursue this planning effort: 1. PLAN-Boulder knows the natural resources in this system. We are amazed that they are not called out in the initial Staff Memo. The unique natural resources in OSMP's designated State Natural Areas and Habitat Conservation Areas must NOT be included in this assessment. Their exclusion from the outset will ensure (A) the continued carbon sequestration that occurs naturally in our native grasslands -- an important element of the city's climate action plan, and (B) the preservation of the incredible biodiversity that still sustains itself in our especially unique designated areas. See footnote). 2. With 85% of OSMP visitors frequently participating in "hiking/walking" (according to the most recent statistically valid survey), maintaining trails designated for walking/hiking WITHOUT bike use must be a high priority for this assessment. Already our system has more miles of trails on which bikes are allowed than trails where bikes are not allowed. We must sustain trails that allow for quiet, enjoyable pedestrian use that are free from conflicts with bikes. Footnote In Phase 1 -- as part of "Review existing conditions" all State Natural Areas and Habitat Conservation Areas should be included in a comprehensive map that shows all OSMP trails (coded by type of use allowed), all City Bike Paths and "multi-use" trails not on OSMP lands, and all RTD routes. In addition to this mapping, priority must be given to protecting native plant communities that are

sequestering carbon and diverse native species populations that contribute to the preservation of biodiversity. Introduction of invasive species and degradation of these natural areas must be avoided (i.e., the plan must not fragment or degrade these areas with new trails). "Priority areas" must avoid these especially high-quality natural areas. Thank you for this opportunity to comment on staff's initial plans.

Boulder County Audubon Society (BCAS) is aware of recent discussions about the possibility of adding bike access to some existing trails in the southern portion of the West Trail Study Area (TSA). Moving forward with the Strategic Plan 7.c. project, we support a robust process that explores a range of alternatives from OSMP and the community, which address environmental concerns, the safety of bike riders, and the safety of pedestrians, from young children to older adults, using OSMP trails. BCAS members were involved in the lengthy and contentious West TSA planning process, and recall the importance of considering the viewpoints and needs of everyone who uses OSMP lands. We look forward to participating in upcoming discussions.

BCAS's mission is to be "a voice for birds and wildlife conservation through habitat protection, advocacy, and nature education." We consider it of the utmost importance to prioritize protection, restoration, and enhancement of wildlife and ecosystems in management of OSMP lands. These priorities are consistent with the results of the 2019 OSMP Master Plan Survey of Boulder Valley residents, where 74 percent of respondents rated Ecosystem Stewardship and Health as absolutely essential, an additional 20 percent rated it as very important, and 79 percent of respondents felt that Ecosystem Health and Resilience should be one of the most important themes for guiding OSMP management in the future (2019 Master Plan Survey, updated January 2020, p. 14 [https://bouldercolorado.gov/media/9920/download?inline.](https://bouldercolorado.gov/media/9920/download?inline)) As long as the full range of ecological impacts are carefully considered and addressed, BCAS supports the City Strategic Plan goals of reducing vehicle miles and greenhouse gas emissions. We do not believe it is appropriate or necessary to move forward with smaller, specific proposals ahead of OSMP's planned project and timeline. Globally imperiled plant communities and native species with declining or threatened populations occur on State Natural Areas on OSMP lands and in OSMP-designated Habitat Conservation Areas. Fragmenting these important areas with additional trails and visitors will decrease the biodiversity preserved in our open space system and reduce the ability of our native grasses and forests to continue sequestering large amounts of carbon. It is imperative that this multimodal planning effort prioritizes protection of these high-value natural areas and their biodiversity. Regarding reducing vehicle miles and greenhouse gas emissions, only nine percent of the 2019 survey respondents reported that bus, bike, or walking access was a barrier to visiting OSMP. Also, transition to electric cars is underway. From a climate perspective, we would like to see an analysis showing the relative climate value of preserving functioning ecosystems vs. how much fossil fuel vehicle use can actually be reduced by any actions proposed. According to the 2019 Master Plan Survey (p. 10), the majority of OSMP visitors are on foot - 85% hike or walk. This includes many of our members, many of whom are older adults who visit open space for quiet activities such as hiking and observing nature, including birdwatching. In areas with heavy bike use including the North Sky trail, Spring Brook trail, and the Marshall Mesa area, pedestrian visitors have already been displaced from OSMP trails due to degraded, unpleasant experiences and fear for their safety. Adding bikes to more trails will cause additional safety concerns for older adults and other pedestrians, and more displacement of pedestrians. In summary, we urge you to prioritize wildlife and ecosystems and to include safety of pedestrian OSMP visitors as an important component of safety concerns, as this multimodal project proceeds. Any new trail projects should include full review of their impacts to wildlife

I oppose the proposed expansion of the southern trail system proposed by the Boulder Mountainbike Alliance due to its environmental impacts and the impacts upon the user experience of hikers. With regard to the road map for the Multimodal Improvements Assessment and the Mountainbikers request, I offer the following comments.

First, please ensure that the road map for this project is framed by the values articulated in the City Charter. And, that particular attention is paid to the requirements to preserve natural areas and water resources. For these environmental elements, the preservation requirements of the City Charter are:

(a) Preservation or restoration of natural areas characterized by or including terrain, geologic formations, flora, or fauna that are unusual, spectacular, historically important, scientifically valuable, or unique, or that represent outstanding or rare examples of native species;

(b) Preservation of water resources in their natural or traditional state, scenic areas or vistas, wildlife habitats, or fragile ecosystems.

See Article XII § 176 of the City Charter available at

https://library.municode.com/co/boulder/codes/municipal_code?nodeId=THCHBOCO

While the City is already knocking it out of the park when it comes to passive recreational opportunities, it is falling short on preservation.

Secondly, to further compliance with the environmental mandates of the City Charter, please direct Staff to develop a robust scoring matrix that expressly takes into account the environmental impacts on natural areas and water resources, including impacts on habitat, wildlife, pollinators, and native plant communities. For example, will there be increased weed dispersal in high quality natural areas? How much would it cost to manage areas which may become infested with weeds? What impacts upon wildlife and biodiversity will further habitat fragmentation have?

Thirdly, protect the experience of hikers. After all, the vast majority of people using Open Space are on foot. In fact, 85% of trail users are hiking or walking. See Figure 2: Question #2 “Activities in Which OSMP Area Visitors Engaged” in the statistically valid survey found in OSMP’s 2019 Master Plan Survey (updated January 2020). A copy is available on page 14 of 592 of the PDF available here, <https://bouldercolorado.gov/media/9920/download?inline>

I avoid certain trails because I have been verbally harassed by bikers when using them or have been placed in unsafe situations by speeding bikes. When I hike, I like to smell the earth, experience the texture and colors of plants, the quality of the light, or watch the way a bird feeds its young. I do not have the same experience when bikes are whizzing by and the riders tell me that I don’t belong on the trail.

As Trustees, you are called upon to take into account the needs of all human users, including the dominant recreational user group - the hikers.[1]

Fourth and finally, when deciding what weight to give to greenhouse gas reductions, please ensure that you receive sufficient information to be sure that the climate benefits are truly there. Because both our forests and grasslands are very good at sequestering carbon, determining the net effect of new trails is not as simple as calculating the reduction in fossil-fuel vehicle miles travelled. A disciplined analysis would take into account the direct carbon cost of the materials and machines used to construct the trail, the rate of conversion to electric vehicles, and would also compare the reduction in carbon sequestration to the reduced emissions. With this information you could determine whether the best strategy is to: (1) preserve our functioning ecosystems, or (2) reduce miles driven in vehicles consuming fossil fuels.

Thank you for reviewing my comment letter and all that you do to steward, preserve, and restore Boulder’s Open Spaces. They are one of the crown jewels of our community.

Thank you for your ongoing stewardship of Boulder’s Open Space and Mountain Parks. Your dedication to balancing the protection of our natural resources with community access is vital, and I am grateful for the thoughtful work you do on behalf of our environment, residents and future generations.

I support the City’s 7C multimodal vision, especially expanding bus service and strengthening roadway bike lanes to reach OSMP trailheads. These investments reduce car trips, improve safety, and connect communities without fragmenting wildlife habitats or adding bikes to pedestrian only trails. Protecting open space must remain the priority.

As a CU student in the late 1980s, I began cycling Boulder’s roads and hiking its trails. Each decade the roads have grown more crowded and more dangerous, underscoring the need to fix our transportation infrastructure. Safer bike lanes and better bus service are the solutions, not pushing the problem into Open Space where new trails would harm habitats and diminish the pedestrian experience.

- Safety First: Solve access with roads and buses, not by fragmenting open space. Multi-modal solutions lie in expanded and strengthened roadway bike lanes and RTD circulator buses creating more bike trails through OSMP properties fragments wildlife habitats and impacts biodiversity. Automobile and bicycle conflicts and tragic accidents on high speed roads highlight the need for improving and building safer road routes.
- True Multimodal Access: Building new and improving existing bike lanes in our roadway infrastructure, along with increased bus service, will reduce car trips to trailheads without harming open space.
- Protect Grasslands: Don't fragment habitat and undermine conservation goals by creating new bike trails through OSMP grasslands, partner with the county and state to create bike safe/road-based infrastructure.
- Pedestrian Only Trails: Avoid adding bicycle traffic to heavily used pedestrian trails, create a safe road-based alternative for bicycle vehicles. Adding bikes would increase conflict and diminish the experience for horseback riders, hikers, walkers, families, and wildlife watchers.
- Alignment with Values: Multimodal access should mean safe, sustainable connection; not sacrificing ecological integrity.

I urge the Board to recommend that the City partner with Boulder County and the State of Colorado to build and strengthen bike lanes on roadways. Access to Open Space properties, regional trails, and neighboring communities should be addressed through regional transportation infrastructure, not by creating new trails that fragment habitats.

Thank you for your leadership in ensuring we can continue to protect wildlife, ride the roads safely, and reach our trailheads in ways that honor both conservation and community. Together we can expand sustainable connections while safeguarding the wildlife habitats and natural landscapes that define our region for generations to come.

I strongly support exploring a safe, off-street bike connection from South Boulder to the Doudy Draw trail system. Riders — especially youth — currently have no safe way to reach Doudy Draw from town without riding on busy streets and highways. I go to school at Southern Hills middle school and this would allow me safe access to the trails, which would be super cool!! This connection has strong community backing, and work to make this happen can begin now. LETS DO THIS!!!!

Please keep this process moving

I have been a high school mountain bike coach for 7 years. We have had multiple safty issues getting kids from school to the Marshall trail area. Crossing and riding along Broadway is dangerous. The bike path crosses many blind street and driveway intersections where cars can not see riders until they are pulled out onto the bike path. I strongly support exploring a safe, off-street bike connection from South Boulder to the Doudy Draw trail system. Riders — especially youth — currently have no safe way to reach Doudy Draw from town without riding on busy streets and highways. This connection has strong community backing, and work to make this happen can begin now.

I strongly support exploring a safe, off-street bike connection from South Boulder to the Doudy Draw trail system. Riders — especially youth — currently have no safe way to reach Doudy Draw from town without riding on busy streets and highways. I have two daughters who both mountainbike; an off-street bike connection from South Boulder to the Doudy Draw trail system would make riding any of the south Boulder trails a lot saver. This connection has strong community backing, and work to make this happen can begin now. Please keep this process moving.

I'm writing in strong support of pursuing a safe, off-street cycling route from South Boulder to the Doudy Draw trail system. Right now, riders—especially youth—have no protected way to reach the trails without navigating high-traffic roads. Hundreds of high school mountain bikers commute from Boulder to Doudy Draw during their fall season and this route would create a safe option for them. This project has broad community support, and the groundwork to advance it can begin now. I encourage you to keep this effort moving forward

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This is a safety issue that needs addressing. Mountain bikers, especially kids need safe access to trails. Please make this [south sky] connection!

I strongly support exploring a safe, off-street bike connection from South Boulder to the Doudy Draw trail system. Riders — especially youth — currently have no safe way to reach Doudy Draw from town without riding on busy streets and highways. This connection has strong community backing, and work to make this happen can begin now. Please keep this process moving.

My name is Heather Williams... I am also the Program Director at Singletrack Mountain Bike Adventures (SMBA) which is a youth non-profit mountain bike program for kids ages 5-18 headquartered in Boulder. In addition to my Program Director duties, I ride with all our after school and summer camp groups which is about 145 days on trails with various groups of athletes between March and October each season. Some of these days include rides at Doudy Draw / Springbrook and Flatirons Vista; especially during the fall and spring with our after-school programs. Currently there is not a safe route for our groups to ride to and from the south Boulder trailheads without requiring riding on a large section of roadway with cars, limited shoulder, and a crossing where cross traffic does not stop. While Marshall Road has low traffic volume, there is very little shoulder and a group riding to the Marshall Mesa trailhead is still required to cross CO-170 which does have a higher volume of traffic and that traffic does not have a stop sign. If a group of our athletes wanted to ride to Doudy Draw without having to ride through Marshall Mesa and Community Ditch first, then they would have to cross HWY 93 at the light and ride down Eldorado Rd. to the trailhead, again a roadway with cars and increased risk of a potential collision between one of our young athletes and a vehicle. Rider safety and risk management is a priority in our program and is considered when we make our ride plan each day, which means that we are often forced to use van transportation to and from the Doudy Draw trailhead for most of our group rides there. Although this allows us to use the trails, it adds to vehicle congestion in an already crowded parking lot. A trail connection between South Boulder and Doudy Draw trailhead would create a safe route to the trails, potentially reduce traffic congestion in the parking lots, and encourage healthy and environmentally friendly transportation among our youth. The Lower Big Bluesteam trail reroute presents a great opportunity to reroute an eroded trail out of a wetland to a more sustainable alignment that can serve as a bike connector. The connection has already been identified as a priority by the community and OSBT staff. Let's continue to keep this connection a priority, especially for the health and safety of our youth.

Please support the next steps in making the Doudy draw trail system connect with Shanahan Ridge. As a resident born and raised in Boulder I have been a part of the cycling community for decades. I have also raised a family active in cycling. This connector trail is paramount to both keeping our community safe, away

from busy roads to connect to the trail system(s) and an essential part of continuing to recognize and support the outdoor lifestyle that makes Boulder a very special place. I hope you will support this process moving forward.

I strongly support exploring a safe, off-street bike connection from South Boulder to the Doudy Draw trail system. Riders — especially youth — currently have no safe way to reach Doudy Draw from town without riding on busy streets and highways. This connection has strong community backing, and work to make this happen can begin now. As a parent with two girls on the high school mountain bike team, I know they need safe options for local riding from their high school for weekday after-school practices. This would help open a lot of options. Please keep this process moving

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As a parent coach for the Fairview HS Mountain Bike Team, I strongly support exploring a safe, off-street bike connection from South Boulder to the Doudy Draw trail system. The vast majority of our practices are conducted on South Boulder Trails, and the access route we must use along Broadway, down Marshall Road, and crossing Highway 93 makes me very nervous over fear that we have a serious accident involving numerous cars commuting home and one of our young riders. Fairview riders contribute 500 hours of volunteer trail building each year and would be more than happy to make this new corridor happen and maintain it as a safe resource for the community. Please keep this process moving.

I strongly support exploring a safe, off-street bike connection from South Boulder to the Doudy Draw trail system. Mountain biking is one of the most popular clubs in the Boulder schools, and the kids really do not have a safe way to access the trails. This connection has strong community backing, and I hope that the work to make this happen can begin now. Please keep this process moving.

I live in Boulder because of the access to the outdoors, as does my family. I strongly support exploring a safe, off-street bike connection from South Boulder to the Doudy Draw trail system. Riders — especially kids — currently have no safe way to reach Doudy Draw from town without riding on busy streets and highways. This connection has strong community backing, and work to make this happen can begin now. Please keep this process moving.

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I am emailing to support the proposal to build a trail to connect Dowdy Draw to Shanahan Ridge in Boulder. Please let me know if there's anything else I can do to support this project

Please vote for it :) This connector would go from Shanahan Ridge to Doudy Draw on the West side of 93 and would give riders a safe, all-dirt MTB route instead of using busy roads and highways

Writing with massive support for the South Sky connector. As a frequent North Sky user, I can't state enough how this will dramatically improve safety of cyclists recreating in this corridor. Let's do everything we can to keep cars and cyclists safe - what a great solution we have with South Sky

Writing to express my support for a mountain bike connector between Shanahan Ridge and Doudy Draw. Help keep me and my friends safe as we ride out from South Boulder

The grasslands extending from the Greenbriar Connector trail southward to the South Boulder Creek West trail are highly rare relicts of biological and geological circumstance. Erosion has spared many areas that now include very old soils and grassland plant communities. These areas may look like just more grass to many. They have been studied by geologists, and also by botanists and ecologists. The result has been the discovery that they are part of a highly unusual and likely unique time sequence of soil and plant community development. These areas represent an element of biodiversity little known or understood yet by science. It is important to protect these natural oddities for future scientific research into how they have survived up to 2 million years of dramatic climate change. Management of the area as a Hiking Only part of Open Space has protected them. Recognition of their value has been demonstrated by designation of much of this area as a Colorado Natural Area. Allowing mechanized recreation in the area would threaten these special natural features. It would almost surely lead to their degradation. Mechanized forms of recreational access, including bicycles, ebikes or other electric motorcycles, invite adventuresome exploration of what seems to be "just grass." It is too much to expect mechanized users focused on fun and exercise to practice forbearance fostered by disciplined respect for unique natural features. Please maintain the Hiking Only management of these areas.

I'm Karen Hollweg, and I come before you as one of the very few (perhaps the only?) member of the West TSA Community Collaborative Group here tonight. I'm here to comment on and make some suggestions for improving staff's "Scope, Methodology and Schedule" for the Multimodal Improvement Assessment. As staff has pointed out, "understanding current conditions" is an essential first step in this, and in any planning process. My biggest concern is that some of the counts required to assess levels of use need to be done in warm months – NOT Quarter 1. After all, January, February and March are the coldest and historically snowiest months we have. The reason these counts are important is that before adding a new user group to a trail or street, it's important to understand current levels of use (as we learned in the West TSA planning process). As several have already pointed out, it's not safe to add bike use to a road with ...say 50 vehicles /min. zipping by – never mind a state highway with vehicles traveling at 50 to 60 mph. Similarly, it's not safe to add bikes traveling 15 or more mph to a trail with 30 or so hikers, runners, dog walkers/min. who are already using the trail.

Just as it's important to do in-person intercept surveys on a trail to find out what trail users say, it's important to do on the ground assessments of proposed multi-modal routes to assess current conditions. For example, • during the West TSA Planning Process, we counted so many people hiking, running, walking dogs on the Mesa Trail that that was one of the factors that led to its NO bike designation; and recently, on Marshall Rd. on a sunny October day, I counted 37 vehicles and 64 bikers per hour. These are important counts that should guide decision-making.

So, Once potential "focus areas" have been selected for multi-modal access, it's essential to count users on trails being considered for multi-modal use during peak use/on sunny warm days – i.e. in Q2 and 3. I realize

this will require a significant revision in the proposed timeline, but for staff's recommendations to be functional, such data is necessary

I'm writing as a South Boulder resident and frequent user of Shanahan Ridge, South Mesa, and Doudy Draw as a runner and mountain biker to express strong support for the proposed "South Sky" connection between Shanahan Ridge and Doudy Draw. The North Sky trail has shown how powerful a safe, car-free connection from town to open space can be. A similar South Sky connection would provide that same opportunity for South Boulder: allowing people to ride or walk from their neighborhood directly to Doudy Draw and the broader Marshall Mesa / Flatirons Vista network without relying on a car. This would: Improve safety by giving riders and families an alternative to mixing with high-speed traffic on Eldorado Springs Drive and Highway 93. Reduce parking pressure and congestion at the Doudy Draw and South Mesa trailheads. Directly advance the goals of OSMP's Strategic Plan Action 7C to improve multimodal access to open space. Make access to our open space more equitable for people who don't want to or can't drive. The upcoming Lower Big Bluestem reroute and the 7C multimodal effort create a unique, time-sensitive opportunity to thoughtfully plan this connection rather than trying to retrofit it later at greater cost and with more impact. I encourage you to: Direct staff to fully evaluate a safe, off-road, bike-accessible connection from Shanahan Ridge to Doudy Draw as part of the early 7C work; and Consider options such as opening the existing Greenbriar Connector to bikes and assessing whether South Boulder Creek West, Lower Big Bluestem, or a new alignment provides the best multimodal route. Boulder Mountain bike Alliance has outlined this concept in more detail here: <https://www.bouldermountainbike.org/south-sky-imagine-a-shanahan-ridge-to-doudy-drawconnection/> Please use tomorrow's discussion to keep the South Sky connection clearly on the table and to signal that you want staff to bring back concrete options for a safe, continuous neighborhood-to-trailhead route in South Boulder. Thank you for your time and for your work on OSMP

I strongly support exploring a safe, off-street bike connection from South Boulder to the Doudy Draw trail system. Riders — especially youth — currently have no safe way to reach Doudy Draw from town without riding on busy streets and highways. This connection has strong community backing, and work to make this happen can begin now. Please keep this process moving.

Do not put a bike trail from shanahan to dowdy draw. That would be devastating.

I'm writing to voice my support for a safe, off-street bike connection from South Boulder to the Doudy Draw trail system. I ride the current route multiple times a week and now ride it with my 10yr old son as well. Riders like myself and my son currently have no safe way to reach Doudy Draw from town without riding on busy streets and highways. Please keep this process moving.

I'm a South Boulder resident and strongly support a possible bike connection from South Boulder to the Doudy Draw trail system. There is no safe way to reach Doudy Draw from town without riding on busy streets and highways (crossing 93 at Greenbriar or elsewhere, also at Marshall road). The open space with the cattle on it would hardly be changed by one trail and this would make a great addition to the limited trails available to off-road cyclists in Boulder. Please keep this process moving!!

I am writing this email to state my strong support for establishing a bike connection from South Boulder to the Doudy Draw trail system. My daughter is a high school student at Fairview and she rides her mountain bike on the Doudy Draw system multiple times per week during the summer/fall (she is a member of the Fairview

Mountain bike team). Unfortunately there is no safe way to reach Doudy Draw from south Boulder without going on roads that are often busy, so this connector would serve to greatly improve bicycle safety. Please keep this process moving.

I strongly support a safe, off-street bike connection from South Boulder to the Doudy Draw trail system. Riders — especially youth — currently have no safe way to reach Doudy Draw from town without riding on busy streets and highways. This connection has strong community backing, and is a wonderful way to ensure bikers like my 2 kids (one currently at Fairview on the mountain bike team and another in a local mountain bike club) have safe access to these areas. Thank you so much for getting this process moving!

As a resident of Boulder for nearly 40 years (and an avid outdoorsman), I strongly support the bike connection from South Boulder to the Doudy Draw trail system. A couple of years ago I sat in on an OSMP call to discuss options for our High school athletes to safely ride Marshall Mesa and Doudy draw. The idea of opening this trail got me excited and relieved. Safety is the biggest driver, but the enjoyment of the outdoors is important to me and my family as well. We live in North Boulder and rarely ride or hike Doudy draw due to the amount of time on the roadways. Like many Boulder residents, we try to cut down on the use of cars. Taking the bike path to Shanahan ridge would open our options, keep us off the roads and expand Boulder's culture of cycling. Please keep this process moving. Open the trail and let's enjoy more of Boulder's trails.

I strongly support exploring a safe, off-street bike connection from South Boulder to the Doudy Draw trail system. Riders — especially youth — currently have no safe way to reach Doudy Draw from town without riding on busy streets and highways. This connection has strong community backing, and work to make this happen can begin now

Thank you for considering a proposed off-road bike connection from Shanahan Ridge in South Boulder to the Doudy Draw trail system. Cyclists of all types can currently only access Doudy Draw by riding on Marshall and Eldorado roads or driving to the trailhead. Having an off-road route from South Boulder to Doudy Draw would offer a safe alternative that would benefit everyone, especially youth. It will also help reduce car trips to the trailhead, partially addressing the issue of parking congestion. An off-road, bikeable route is something that everyone I know in South Boulder, especially those with younger riders, have wanted for years. Based on the tremendous success of the North Sky trail, a "South Sky" route seems poised for success. Now is the time to make this happen.

I've lived and played in Boulder for the past 12 years, and love all the amazing opportunities Boulder open space has to offer. I recently learned about a proposal to build a MTB connection from South Boulder's Shanahan ridge to Doudy draw. This would be an amazing development and add quality MTB experience for the local community, free up the parking space at doudy draw, and invite more people to bike from Sobo, to the MTB trail systems and Eldo on trails Please consider my strong support for such development. More MTB friendly trails would be a welcome addition to our cherished open space.

I strongly support exploring a safe, off-street bike connection from South Boulder to the Doudy Draw trail system. Riders — especially youth — currently have no safe way to reach Doudy Draw from town without riding on busy streets and highways. This connection has strong community backing, and work to make this happen can begin now. I am a high school mountain bike coach and these types of connectors keep our kids safe!

I strongly support exploring a safe, off-street bike connection from South Boulder to the Doudy Draw trail system. Riders — especially youth — currently have no safe way to reach Doudy Draw from town without riding on busy streets and highways. This connection has strong community backing, and work to make this happen can begin now. Please keep this process moving.

I wanted to express my support for a safe, off-street bike connection from South Boulder to the Doudy Draw trail system. This connection would provide a safe, off road option to access the amazing trails down by doudy draw. The North sky trail is amazing and I'd love to see something similar in South Boulder

I am the owner of Sports Garage Cycling, as well as an avid cyclist and a Coach for the Boulder High Mountain Bike team. I have lived in Boulder for over 30 years, and it has been great to see the increase in trails such as Benjamin many years ago and, more recently, the North Sky Trail. Personally, I know it makes Boulder a better place to live with added recreational opportunities and safer routes to the other trail systems. Tying the network together is important, both for the recreational aspect and for the safety of both riders and drivers. As a coach for the Boulder high school team, we work really hard to find safe ways of getting to the trails so the kids can enjoy our great open space, train, and most importantly, have fun without fearing an accident with a car. Having access to Dowdy from Shanahan Ridge would open many possibilities for routes, and it would be a big improvement to the network that is already in place. Boulder will be a safer, better place to live with this trail. Thank you for considering this addition, and I hope you vote to allow the construction of this trail!

I strongly support exploring a safe, off-street bike connection from South Boulder to the Doudy Draw trail system. Riders — especially youth — currently have no safe way to reach Doudy Draw from town without riding on busy streets and highways. This connection has strong community backing, and work to make this happen can begin now. I have 2 children who bike and apart of the biking community. I would love for them to have a safeway to get to Dowdy draw without riding on 93. Please keep this process moving and support this,

It would be so impactful for the mtb biking community to have the South sky Connector be put in the plans and come to life. Projects like this make boulder so special - and safer for bikers.

I would like to express my deep interest in a connector trail from south boulder to doudy draw that permits cyclists. As a resident of South Boulder and mountain biker, this would greatly increase my access to the Marshall Mesa trail network and prevent me from having to ride on roads to access the trail networks. This would be especially impactful for families in South Boulder who are looking to get their children out on trails without riding on roads.

It would be so impactful for the mtb biking community to have the South sky Connector be put in the plans and come to life. Projects like this make boulder so special - and safer for bikers

I'm 100 percent in favor of a South Sky MTB connection in South Boulder.

A mountain bike trail connecting to Dowdy Draw would be a tremendous addition. Currently, parking at Dowdy Draw sucks during busy times, and driving to ride your bike is even worse! Please help add a pleasant way to access Dowdy Draw without driving.

On behalf of our outdoor hiking and cycling family of 3 - including a sophomore on the mountain bike team at Fairview High School - we strongly support exploring a safe, off-street bike connection from South Boulder to the Doudy Draw trail system. Riders — especially youth — currently have no safe way to reach Doudy Draw from town without riding on busy streets and highways. This connection has strong community backing, and work to make this happen can begin now. Please keep this process moving to make a positive and lasting impact for our community! Thanks for your consideration

I've been in Boulder for over 20 years. We need more mountain bike trails in the West TSA. Boulderites waste too much time pollution loading mountain bikes into their vehicles to drive to distant trailheads because there is insufficient mountain bike access provided from within city limits. I support the proposed South Sky Trail as well as a renewed mindset to support adding additional future mountain bike trails on city open space land. In support of this trail, please consider the following points:

- No Unnecessary Bridges: build the trail in a frugal way and don't waste money using helicopters to install unnecessary over-built bridges like we saw at the North Sky trail and at Chapman.
 - Minimize Trail Closures: minimize trail closures while allowing bikes on these trails. Consider simple solutions like updating the signage and using existing trails, then upgrading them in-place and over time. Don't close trails for months-to-years as was done on the Beech Trail when North Sky was built.
 - Prioritize Recreation Access: encourage the open space department to prioritize access to recreation on our open space lands more generally, minimizing extended trail closures and looking for new ways to expand access to under supported user groups.
-

I am writing in advance of your December 10th meeting, to express strong support for the potential bike connection between South Boulder and the Doudy Draw trail and highlight the meaningful benefits it would bring to the community. The proposed route—from Shanahan Ridge to Doudy Draw on the west side of Highway 93— would provide mountain bikers with a safe, sustainable, all-dirt alternative to traveling along busy roads and highways. Currently, riders must navigate high-traffic corridors to reach these trail systems, creating unnecessary safety risks and discouraging use of the open space network. An off-road connection would significantly improve rider safety while supporting the city's broader goals around multimodal access, recreation equity, and responsible outdoor stewardship. Beyond safety, this connector would seamlessly link two highly traveled areas, reduce vehicle dependence, and enhance the overall trail experience for residents and visitors alike. It aligns with Boulder's longstanding commitment to thoughtful trail planning that respects natural resources while enabling sustainable recreation. I encourage the Board to continue advancing this connection and to recognize the substantial positive impact it could have on our community and our open space system. Thank you for your time and for your continued dedication to managing Boulder's public lands

I strongly support exploring a safe, off-street bike connection from South Boulder to the Doudy Draw trail system. Riders — especially youth — currently have no safe way to reach Doudy Draw from town without riding on busy streets and highways. My family and I have lived in South Boulder for over 17 years and routinely use the trails in the Doudy Draw trail system. Having a safe route to access these trails from town, without having to drive and park, would be a benefit for the entire community in multiple ways. We believe in your mission and our votes have always supported Open Space funding. I trust the Open Space Board will make the right decision to allow the development process to move forward on this initiative.

I am writing to express my strong support for the proposed off-street bike connection from South Boulder to the Doudy Draw trail area. As a resident of Boulder County since 1982 and avid cyclist since 1986, I am very much in favor of adding safe ways to connect between the various trail systems in the county. My wife is also a frequent cyclist who refuses to ride on roads with motor vehicles, so this would also be of great benefit to her. And my 17 year old son is a competitive cyclist (enduro mountain biking, cyclocross, etc) and I would like to see additional ways for him to be able to utilize the local trails without placing hm in danger by having to ride on streets with cars and other vehicles. All three of us in my family ride the Doudy Draw trail system frequently, and adding this connection would allow us to get into the city without needing to switch into a car to do so safely. Please continue to keep this project moving for the benefit and safety of our community.

I strongly support a safe, off-street bike connection from South Boulder to the Doudy Draw trail system. This project would improve rider safety, alleviate congestion, and solidify Boulder's reputation as a bike friendly city. Riders — especially youth — currently have no safe way to reach Doudy Draw from town without riding on busy streets and highways. As a MTB coach for Fairview HS, I experience first hand the safety risks of the team's current route to south Boulder trails - Marshall road, often crossing a busy 93 at the Eldorado Canyon intersection. It is unfortunately just a matter of when, not if, an accident will happen unless off-road access is improved. In addition to the safety concern, access to the Marshall Mesa trail system is highly congested due to popularity of the trails, lack of sufficient MTB trails throughout the city, and construction of the new trailhead. A Shanahan Ridge to Doudy Draw MTB Connection would divert substantial bike traffic and reduce the number of cars accessing the south Boulder trail networks. Finally, let's restore Boulder to its rightful place as a bike friendly destination. A "South Sky" trail to complement the recently completed "North Sky" section would signal that Boulder is still willing and able to build great outdoor access for all recreation activities. This connection has strong community backing, and is teed up to go. Please take action to approve and construct the Shanahan Ridge to Doudy Draw Bike Connection trail. It's clearly the right thing to do. I'll even offer to help build the trail, and I know dozens of FHS MTB volunteers who will do the same. Just give us the chance!

My name is Martha and I've lived in Boulder for almost 10 years and I love our trail system so much. I love biking and running and I think a bike accessible trail from Shanahan Ridge to Doudy Draw would be an incredible opportunity for the city of Boulder and its residents! A safe off-road connection between Shanahan Ridge and Doudy Draw would have such a positive impact! I'm soon moving to South Boulder and would personally use this biking trail multiple times per week to get over to Doudy Draw. The parking lots (Marshall Mesa, Doudy Draw ect) are frequently full, and riding a mountain bike on the roads is less fun and more unsafe, having a connector trail would help mitigate both of these issues. Thank you for your consideration and all of the work that you do for Boulder.

I am writing to express strong support for the development of a mountain bike connector between South Boulder and the Dowdy Draw trail system. This connection presents an important opportunity to improve safe, sustainable access for riders while advancing Boulder County's commitments to equitable recreational use. At present, riders traveling between these areas must rely on busy roads and highways, which creates unnecessary safety risks. An all-dirt, designated mountain bike route would provide a safe, environmentally responsible alternative. While the region offers numerous hiker-focused trails, there remain no comparable options for mountain bikers. This imbalance limits access for a significant and growing user group that relies on soft-surface, bike legal connections to recreate responsibly. A connector trail would meaningfully address this gap, distribute use more effectively across the landscape, and support the County's broader objectives of providing diverse, low-impact outdoor recreation opportunities. The connector would also be incredibly beneficial to the the various mountain bike teams that regularly utilize the south boulder trail network, especially those in South Boulder. Fairview, Summit and Southern Hills Middle Schools, BJC and SMBA to name a few. These teams regularly drive to the trailheads further south and the more they can connect from

town the lower their carbon footprint will be. I respectfully encourage the Board to prioritize planning, public engagement, and environmental review for a South Boulder–Dowdy Draw connector and to consider the substantial public benefits associated with enhanced bicycle access. This community needs and would greatly value this addition to the trail network. Thank you for your time and for your ongoing stewardship of our public lands. I appreciate your consideration of this important matter

I am writing to express strong support for the development of a mountain bike connector between South Boulder and the Dowdy Draw trail system. This connection presents an important opportunity to improve safe, sustainable access for riders while advancing Boulder County's commitments to equitable recreational use. At present, riders traveling between these areas must rely on busy roads and highways, which creates unnecessary safety risks. An all-dirt, designated mountain bike route would provide a safe, environmentally responsible alternative. While the region offers numerous hiker-focused trails, there remain no comparable options for mountain bikers. This imbalance limits access for a significant and growing user group that relies on soft-surface, bike legal connections to recreate responsibly. A connector trail would meaningfully address this gap, distribute use more effectively across the landscape, and support the County's broader objectives of providing diverse, low-impact outdoor recreation opportunities. I respectfully encourage the Board to prioritize planning, public engagement, and environmental review for a South Boulder–Dowdy Draw connector and to consider the substantial public benefits associated with enhanced bicycle access. This community needs and would greatly value this addition to the trail network. Thank you for your time and for your ongoing stewardship of our public lands. I appreciate your consideration of this important matter

I strongly support exploring a safe, off-street bike connection from South Boulder to the Doudy Draw trail system. Riders — especially youth — currently have no safe way to reach Doudy Draw from town without riding on busy streets and highways. This connection has strong community backing, and work to make this happen can begin now. Please keep this process moving.

It's really quite simple, riding a bike on a road with cars is scary and I always feel the potential danger of getting hit by a distracted or unaware driver. On the other hand, riding a bike on a bike path or trail is amazing. We live in Boulder because we love the outdoors. Let's make this trail a reality.

I am writing in support of the bike connection between South Boulder and Doudy Draw trail systems. An all-dirt, off-road trail to connect riders to the popular Doudy Draw area would open bike connectivity and contribute greatly to rider and traffic safety. Please support this proposal.

My family and I strongly support exploring a safe, off-street bike connection from South Boulder to the Doudy Draw trail system. Riders — especially youth — currently have no safe way to reach Doudy Draw from town without riding on busy streets and highways. This connection has strong community backing, and work to make this happen can begin now. Please keep this process moving and support and protect our kids.

I strongly support exploring a safe, off-street bike connection from South Boulder to the Doudy Draw trail system. Riders — especially youth — currently have no safe way to reach Doudy Draw from town without riding on busy streets and highways. As someone who likes to connect my rides from Boulder to Arvada, this trail would help to keep me off the road and safer when riding. This connection has strong community backing, and work to make this happen can begin now. Please keep this process moving.

I strongly support exploring a safe, off-street bike connection from South Boulder to the Douby Draw trail system. Riders — especially youth — currently have no safe way to reach Douby Draw from town without riding on busy streets and highways. This connection has strong community backing, and work to make this happen can begin now. Please keep this process moving.

Open Space Board of Trustees:

Even as a mountain biker since 1981, I strongly favor hikers only on the trails between Shanahan Ridge and South Mesa Trailhead. With increased Boulder area population, our local trails are becoming congested with hikers. Adding the mountain bikes to the trail system crowds the pathways, widens trails, increases erosion, and lessens the value of a restorative walk in the Open Space.

Although Forest Service roads are less accessible, they offer miles of scenic and challenging riding. Additionally, on-street bicycle lanes are useful for in town transportation.

We walk or ride our bikes to trails whenever possible as parking can often be problematic. I would like to comment on the Lehigh Connector trailhead on Lehigh. Our home is diagonally across the street from the trail. As everywhere trail usage has significantly increased in the past six years. Once the city of Boulder started charging for parking on Baseline road (not a neighborhood and a main road) the congestion and parking problems on or street got exponentially worse. People park right up to the edge of our driveway in their large vehicles making it dangerous to back out. They trample the plants on the apron by the curb. Their dogs poop in the rocks there (and they don't clean it up). It is impossible to park in front of our home. I don't understand the thinking in creating a situation where a trailhead in a neighborhood gets so many people funneled from the main trailheads at Chautauqua. We would certainly appreciate any help that could be provided, especially in the near impossibility of backing out of our driveway safely and having our plants trampled.

I'm submitting a comment with regards to the project goal of identifying gaps or barriers to accessing and using trails. I frequently mountain bike at Dowdy Draw and experience barriers accessing the trailhead because there is not a safe way to access the trail from my house in Shanahan Ridge. I frequently drive to the trailhead, even though it is so close to my house. I am in favor of improving access to Dowdy Draw through the development of a Shanahan Ridge to Dowdy Draw trail connector. This would greatly improve my ability to ride from my house in Shanahan Ridge and improve access for everyone -- including hikers, runners, and fellow bikers -- who want to enjoy Dowdy Draw without getting in the car.

Hello! I am an avid hiker and mountain biker living in table mesa. I'm grateful for the hiking trail access in SoBo, I wish there was a safe way to access mountain bike trails without the need of a car. While I can take a bike path part of the way to Marshall Mesa, you must bike on Marshall Road and 190 to access this network which I am not comfortable doing, even as an adult. Knowing how often Marshall Mesa is ridden by Fairview and BJC kids, a path connecting SoBo to Dowdy Draw/Marshall Mesa would be heavily utilized by this population as well. In addition, there isn't easy trail access for adaptive wheelchairs or user anywhere in South Boulder or the Flatirons, so I would also urge making a trail disability friendly. While bike commuting around the town of Boulder is easy, trail access without a car is not in SoBo. Just one trail opened to bike in SoBo would go a long way to helping our community have better trail access.

Do you have any plans to increase rangers patrolling the OSMP trails to prevent users from smoking on them?

I continue to live here (52 years) in no small part because the local trails are invaluable to me, both for the exercise, sense of community and mental well being. I use them daily, rain, snow, ice, scorching sun, regardless, it's that important to me. But at 75 with knee (and other) issues some have become less user friendly either due to "improvements" (steps) or lack of maintenance.

Coot/Rez were my winter favorite till 29 steps were put in connecting the upper and lower trails on the Rez side. Dakota Ridge (Sanitas) was a summer time favorite till massive steps were added there. As for lack of maintenance, still waiting on the de facto entrance to the Valley Trail (from Mapleton) which has become ankle turning treacherous rock.

I also take issue with charging local tax paying residents to park at Chautauqua on summer weekends. In the same way an exception is made for Flagstaff parking for locals, so it should be for those of us who continue to pay taxes for use of these trails, especially given that 80% of Chautauqua visitation is out of area.

Yes, I will continue to vote for Open Space taxation but would be grateful for consideration given to Boulder's aging population that has supported the program for decades.

We spend too much time and money catering to the cycling community. At my age (75), I can no longer bicycle. One fall could cripple me for the rest of my life. But I'm also wary of the minority of bicyclists who speed down trails (especially on paved paths, like along the creek near busy Eben Fine park. I don't want to get run over). From my house, bus service is many blocks away, so I don't take the bus. I walk to nearby trails, but we have to drive if we want a change of scenery. Stop the crusade against cars--it discriminates against older Boulder residents. You'll be one of them someday.

You need to add more parking in the Chatauqua. It could easily be done by cutting in spaces along baseline. Or by adding a whole parking lot in lower Chatauqua. I know you won't do that because it's way too practical, but the fact is that people drive to go hike, climb, picnic, listen to music or eat at the restaurant. They don't ride bikes or take the shuttle. Lower Chatauqua has no historic or untouched nature value, why not add spaces so the poor, the tourists, the handicapped and the elderly can enjoy the glory of the park?

I would love to get to more trailheads by bike, specifically my gravel bike. Connecting the south end of the Mesa Trail with a bikeable trail/fire road that starts at the Boulder city limits (off Greenbriar) would accomplish that.

Using existing trail/fire road would be all it takes, so not a fancy MTB trail, more of an access trail. This would also allow mountain bikers to access the Dowdy Draw complex of trails on their bikes. While the frontage road/Marshall Road provides a low traffic route, an off-road option would be great. The older I get, the more I seek roads w/o cars, such as Chapman, which is great.

Thank you,

David

Keep up the efforts to make the city even more walkable. I try to walk rather than drive to errands.

I really like the newish pedestrian cut-through between 31st and 30th (Target), Pearl and Walnut. It follows a

ditch. I use that pleasant path often to walk to Target and Whole Foods.

I also appreciate the mid-block pedestrian crossings with the flashing lights. Again, it makes walking more appealing.

I would ride my bike more often but I hear so much about stolen bikes that I'm afraid to leave it outside a store even if locked. I only ride my bike for pleasure, not errands.

I have a few questions for you about your budgeting plans for OSMP. I have lived in my home near OSMP since 1977.

Do you have plans for rangers to patrol and enforce no fire ie no smoking and no campfire bans on and near OSMP trails given the increased fire danger this year?

Do you have plans, given the increased fire danger, for OSMP staff and crews to remove dead trees, tall grasses and dead bushes on OSMP property in urban interface neighborhoods like Wonderland Hills?

Is there clear communication between the City of Boulder and Boulder County about OSMP urban interface maintenance?

Thank you

Hi there,

I wanted to add a comment in support of the Boulder Mountainbike Alliance's push for a bike access trail from south Boulder to the Dowdy Draw/Marshall Mesa area. As a resident of the Shanahan ridge area, when I want to bike in the Dowdy Draw/Marshall Mesa area I either have to drive to the trailhead or ride along Marshall road. Opening up bike access to go between the areas would help mountainbikers stay off the busier roads, and make access to the wonderful trails in that area significantly more convenient, pleasant, and safer as would reduce cyclists on the road. Please consider opening up a bike-friendly trail to connect south Boulder to the Dowdy Draw/Marshall Mesa area!

Thank you,
Andy Walowitz

As a frequent hiker on City Open Space, I frequently meet people who live outside Boulder or even outside Boulder County on our trails. For example, one friend's Mom from Louisville hikes or runs Boulder Open Space trails 3 times a week year round. I would like to see all open space lots charge out-of-City users. The Open Space Fund has many needs and this would be a simple way to increase capacity without construction and minimal cost while charging users that do not pay into the Open Space Fund. This method seems to work well at the South Mesa Trailhead and Flatirons Vista and I would like to see it implemented system-wide.

I also would like to see trail renovation follow the model of Lion's Lair which is highly accessible to older users because of its design. This design uses natural boulders to form steps which have options for a large step up or a step that's half the height. There are no long runs of multiple steps but rather the grade is continuously up with limited small groups of natural rock steps. I hike this trail frequently.

I was very excited about the upgrade to Anemone trail. However, I'm unable to hike this trail because of the numerous steps using pre-cut stone where there's only the one large step up choice. Plus the trail is flat or even reverses the incline in many places which requires long runs of these pre-cut steps. This makes it inaccessible to me and my many fellow older hikers in the Flatirons Club, Colorado Mountain Club and University Women's Club, combined membership totalling 2,000+. These members are dedicated hikers and are on open space trails multiple times a week but avoid the trails with many pre-cut steps. With the

increasingly older but still active population of Boulder, it's forward thinking to use a more accessible trail design like Lion's Lair. Please go back to the much more accessible design of the Lion's Lair Trail for future upgrades.

Hi,

I'd love to see safer bike access to biking trails, and in particular, the Dowdy Trail trailhead in South Boulder. The trailhead is often overcrowded and parking shortages force cars to park along (and often in) the bike lanes/shoulder along highway 170. This makes biking to this trailhead especially dangerous.

It'd be great to see a connector trail from South Boulder to Dowdy Draw, which would allow access to those trails as well as the connecting trails further east and south.

Thanks,
Sara

I just finished hiking all of the trails in the system. I rode my bike to many. Some were not convenient....I had to connect to a sign or walk a block. Seriously, this is not our highest priority!! We should be protecting our land from wildfires first and THEN looking at multi-modal transport. PLEASE, re-evaluate this project.

Before hiking on Friday, my friend and I talked about carpooling to the South Mesa Trail trailhead. I live near Baseline and Foothills. She lives near Broadway and Table Mesa. We considered the parking lot by Neptune Sports and decided the lot is for the shops. We both ended up driving separately. It would be nice if Boulder had parking lots for carpooling around town. Free lots.

If there was a shuttle bus that allowed dogs that could be great. Maybe there could be an additional tag (I already have Voice & Sight for my dog) for \$20 that would allow me to ride the shuttle with my dog (human rides free if you have the extra tag that allows your dog in the bus) and I would assume there would be the kind of "test" like V&S requires to make sure your dog is able to ride the bus safely with other dogs on board.

Thank you for all the work you do for trail access and other improvements. I would like OSMP to consider placing a natural rock at trailheads, and where gates are placed for equestrians. Not all your gates are safe for equestrians to pass through without dismounting, so a block or rock of some sort would be of use for mounting back on your horse. You take the time to accommodate cyclist with bike racks and ramps. Larimer County adds natural landscape objects, like rocks, to be "inclusive" in trail designs. They also place any chains higher on the gates so you can easily open them and close them from the top of the gate without dismounting if the gate is designed wide enough for safe passage. Recently OSMP place a sign where the new trail into hidden valley, near the Silver Canyon coffee roasters alerting users of NO BIKE use. The person placed the sign so close to the gate, which makes it difficult for equestrians to pass through without dismounting. Then there is no rock placed to remount. Please consider these natural objects for equestrian users when designing your access gates.

Best Linda Parks

Hello. I live in South Boulder near the Shanahan Ridge access point at the top of Lehigh. It is no mystery that this has become a very active access point as is obvious from the number of cars parking along Lehigh and

Lafayette. I am concerned about the initiatives in Devils Thumb to restrict parking near the trail access points. This is not fair and will only further exacerbate the parking along Lehigh and Lafayette, and spread the parking into other residential neighborhoods in the area. My understanding is that Devils Thumb agreed to the current access points in an agreement to limit the number in their community some years back. It is not acceptable to prevent parking around the trailheads at the expense of other neighborhoods.

Perhaps a shuttle from somewhere along Broadway like the Chautauqua shuttle?

I am an OSMP volunteer. I am also in my 70s. I go to any of my commitments and also Trails in a car. One time I tried walking a good distance and was hit from behind by a bicycle so I don't walk on the streets anymore.

This is wrong on so many levels. I'm speaking about the Lehigh connector project you have going on. The only people who walk or biked to that trail are the ones the wealthy people who live in the immediate neighborhood. This is not Eldo Canyon where you're gonna have a shuttle that goes in. This is a place where a lot of people in South Boulder run up to do a 45 minute, hour and a half hike. I know that the people who bought their houses right next to that hiking trail fully knowing it was popular and people park. There are now trying to get people to stop parking there. This is one of the best parts of South Boulder. If you stop people from parking there, it will mean only the wealthy homeowners are going to be able to access it. No, we cannot all ride bikes or take a shuttle in the middle of our workday. This happens all over Boulder. People buy homes near Southern Hills or right next to the Lehigh connector and then get mad because the traffic that is anticipated shows up. Do not become LA. In LA some of the best hiking was in the canyons. But those were expensive homes. So they made all of the adjoining roads no parking. So no one except those very wealthy folks and those big houses are able to use those hiking trails. And don't hide it in some we want to get people to walk rather than driving thing. This is 100% driven by this neighborhood. Do better Boulder.

You are taking away CU south which a lot of people use to connect to south boulder and beyond

Continuous sections of mtn bike access that avoids riding on roads is great, I like the expansion of trail options at Eagle Cobalt North Sky at north end of town, which you can get to by starting on your bike from Wonderland lake without having to ride on the road.

Staying off the road to get from one trail to another would be amazing!!

I'm always in favor of finding routes that bikes can take and stay off the roads with cars. Is what makes Boulder special so need to keep the tradition of being a bike friendly city.

I HATE the idea of opening up the Shanahan Ridge- Doudy Draw trails to MTBs!!! Those trails are used a LOT by hikers looking for a peaceful non-strenuous hike with great views. And to have to put up with a constant stream of teenagers on MTBs trying to break the speed of sound would DESTROY the experience!!!

Please consider the needs of pedestrians in your new plan. They usually walk a trail out and back and do not need connectors. They move slowly and appreciate wildflowers, animal signs and birds which are often

overlooked by speedy bicycles . In addition pedestrians do not impact the trails as bikes do. Many bikes pass pedestrians quickly so that the hikers have to jump out of the way. And yes, I am a long time hikers on Open Space and wish to see hikers have a say in this matter.

Martha Dick

It'd be wonderful to connect up the Shanahan Ridge Trail with dowdy draw or community ditch. That way cyclist in South Boulder would be able to easily connect up with the Marshall Mesa Trail system. A wide gravel path would accommodate hikers, mountain bikers, gravel, riders, and people with strollers.

For me the highest priority of open space lands is the protection of "natural features," e.g., animal and plant communities first, then geological and ecological elements, for example. (Humans have already appropriated most of the landscape for their use, we must remember.) Of course, managed, low impact human use has to be integrated into any plans for open space management in order to sustain public support for the continued preservation of open space from more intensive human development. This is a delicate and ongoing situation. As far as the human users go, there seems to be three major categories: bikes, horses and foot travel. I have managed to coexist (mainly as a hiker) with other non motorized users. I have avoided heavy bike and horse use "days", but I realize that there may come a time when, say bike use, is continuous, and time for hikers needs to be "carved out." I hope we never get to the point where hikers have to register for a time slot in the way the autos have to sign up (in season) to enter Rocky Mountain National Park. The situation requires monitoring periodically and assessment from time to time. But then that is what you are doing! In any event, I will repeat that the well being of the native animal and plants should always be the top priority. Realistically this requires "co-management strategies" with other public lands, e.g., national forests, wildlife corridors. I wish us and the planet good luck and will do my part.

Multi-use trails are much too hazardous for pedestrians and trail runners. Just ask my PT, who was concussed in a collision with a hit and run cyclist. Just ask my hair stylist, who stopped walking to work along a multi-use trail after a near collision. There is a culture of carelessness among many in the Boulder cycling community. As someone who loves walking, hiking, and trail running, I fear cyclists more than dogs, careless runners, and cars. I will take a car to my destination rather than walk with cyclists around.

Any increase of bike travel on Open Space is contrary to the protection of hikers and pet walkers. While I appreciate mountain biking and the use of bikes for commuting, in the past, I was forced off trail by careening mountain bikers, whose use emphasized speed, strength and agility, while mine was appreciation and protection of the natural environment. The two usages are not compatible.

I'm a regular e-biker ranging as far as N Boulder, Erie and Westminster.

Most trails are in good or great shape other than the Coal Creek and Rock Creek trail underpasses at 120th St Lafayette?

One is closed causing a risky crossing of the street, the other is often degraded by mud.

I am an avid birder and many times go in groups of 15+. There have been several instances over the past year where bikers have been verbally and physically abusive to our group. It can get ugly.

I thought hikers had the right of way, but I have had bikers push us out of the way (physically). Some in my group are well over 70 so it is dangerous.

I understand birders tend to sprawl n the trail but we keep an eye out and try to be courteous and make way for oncoming bikers.

Not sure what to suggest but thought I would comment.

Please! No more bikes on our trails. There are currently miles of trails for bikers to use. I am very much opposed to any additional trails being opened to anything with wheels.

Sincerely,
Linda Pounds

The key issue with allowing bikes on trails is the conflict it creates. While signage says bikes yield to pedestrians, it is not taken literally. FAST riders that pass you so fast without indicating their approach and almost clip you as they go by are a serious issue.....the reason I object to adding any trails to bike accessibility.

I have been clipped by a rider and though I've not fallen, riders are not considerate at all and don't care one bit, even when they have clipped me going by. So now I carry a hiking pole horizontally in front of me with a flashing light and it's the ONLY reason that I've continued to be on trails with bikes.....it still annoys me tremendously.

Please press forward with the Dowdy Draw to Shanahan Ridge connection. It will help encourage more people to bike rather than drive to those trailheads.

OSMP is too quick to close trails and "open space". We paid for that land and it should never closed short of real emergencies.

To the Council and OSBT,

I got an email from the City yesterday asking me to take this survey (link on this web page) regarding how I access OS trails, etc.:I have to say it was completely unclear what the survey was really looking for, and pretty much impossible to answer the questions because they were so general, but the actual facts are so site-specific.

To the point, this is really about the desire of some MTB riders to use the OS trails south of Shanahan Ridge and west of Broadway to access the bike trails around Dowdy Draw, etc.

Having ridden that area for a long time, and also hiked the trails in the area many times, the issue is clear: A lot of people like to hike that area to the west of 93 and north of South Boulder Creek. It's VERY peaceful, not steep, and has great views. It would be a disaster to allow MTBs to also use the area, as it would destroy that serenity of experience.

And that would be especially true if lots of the MTB riders were high school students looking to break the sound barrier by riding as fast as possible.

Plus, much of this is an area designated of ecological importance. So it's not just dirt to be torn up.

And a lot of people take dogs — not a good mix, MTBs and dogs.

And it's not as if there is no other good access for bike riders. It's easy to ride down from e.g. Fairview HS to

the underpass on South Broadway, then south on Marshall Road, cross the road to Superior (which doesn't have much traffic), ride the dirt up the hill, and then use the underpass on 93 to get to the dirt road/trail along the ditch that goes back west. (Or, of course, just ride along South Broadway and 93.)

Plus, if you want a quick dirt ride, you can turn off the north end of Marshall Road and ride the South Boulder Creek trail.

Or you can go a bit further and ride the trails to the south of the road to Superior and east of 93, which are great, and also then cross 93 at the designated light next to the trail access parking area, and get to the trails west of 93.

I know, because I've ridden all of this many times.

None of these require converting trails to allow MTBs on them.

Please leave the limited access as it is, and do not allow MTBs in that restricted area.

Steve Pomerance

I mostly walk the trails and I'm often scared by bicyclists zooming down in front of me or coming up silently behind me.

NO to opening more trails to bikes. Hikers are solo, twos, small groups, older citizens who used to bike—because our voices are singular, we do not have the voice of the organized groups, like FHS mountain biking or MBWA. As it is hikers use bike less trails more often because, though courtesy is promised, bikers do NOT always yield to hikers, slow down or even give appropriate signals. Hikers can easily be in danger from bikers. LET BIKERS USE THE ROADS - I urge you to maintain the quiet, birder friendly, wildlife friendly, hiker only trails.

Thank you for your work to equalize voices and not give in to the loudest voices.

I am adamantly opposed to combining bicycles with hikers on the South Mesa Trail or Big or Little Bluestem. I avoid other jurisdiction's trails because of the joint use. I am a hiker and love the quiet and peaceful experience I get on these trails

Permitting bicycles on these trails poses a serious safety concern for the many hikers who rely on them daily — families with young children, elderly walkers, and runners among them. The trails were designed for foot traffic, and in many sections the paths are simply too narrow to safely accommodate both hikers and bikes. When a cyclist approaches, hikers are often forced to step off the trail onto uneven or sloped terrain, creating a real risk of injury.

Beyond safety, there is the matter of the experience itself. People come to these trails for the peace and quiet of being in nature. Bicycle traffic fundamentally changes that — introducing noise, speed, and an atmosphere of vigilance that is at odds with why most people are there in the first place.

These trails can continue to serve a broad, multigenerational community well — but only if they remain spaces where people can walk without fear. Bikes belong on trails designed with them in mind, not on paths already well-used by those on foot.

I have enjoyed hiking and climbing on the OSMP trails for many years. I strongly support the preservation of the few trails in the OSMP system that are for people who walk, hike or run only, and are without dogs or bicycles. These pedestrian only trails allow for the appreciation of our superlative native plants and wildlife. They also are more quiet than the multimodal trails. Thank you for considering how important it is to have places that are peaceful and slow paced in our world.

This survey is missing a big population--like me. The survey seems to assume that everyone has a pedestrian-friendly or bike-possible way to get to trailheads. I don't. I have to drive any time I want to get to an Open Space trailhead. I can't ride a bike--I'm too unsteady. And all of the open space trailheads are too far away from me to walk. Or take the bus. I live in Frasier Meadows subdivision. The 209 bus, that once ran nicely through my 'hood, was removed in about 2008. It's now over a 3/4 mile for me to walk to any bus line. That is too far to walk to have to take a bus to get to a walk!!!

And so, How does that figure into the survey? I am dead set against putting more bikes on open Space trails--having nearly been run over far too many times on the Bobolink Trail--to say nothing of the Mt. Sanitas Valley Trail. The connector trails to the trailheads also aren't anywhere near enough to me to walk to them---in order to get to a trail to take a walk!!!

Why on earth don't you include cars and parking as one of the MODES of travel in your supposedly "multi-modal" transportation survey? And what about people with disabilities? small kids who can't walk to a distant trailhead? Are they supposed to wait until they become longer-legged adults to visit the trails?

Once again, the single minded focus on bikes, walking, and maybe hoverboards as the single acceptable Modes of transport shows just how really exclusionary the thinking in Boulder is--on most public issues.

Please don't put any more bikes on more trails, especially in places between Doudy Draw and Chautauqua. Bikes completely change the experience. Regardless of the laws, pedestrians will always be stepping out of the way for bikes, bikes negatively impact the trails, and they negatively impact the hiking experience. I used to love hiking at Doudy Draw, Flatirons Vista, Marshall Mesa... but I never go to these places to hike. As a matter of fact I tend to avoid most trails that allow bikes because the bikers do not know and follow the laws. Bike patrollers have helped, but there just aren't enough rangers out there patrolling to keep things under control. The county's Hall ranch is the same.. it is like hiking on a crowded bike highway. We have too many people and dogs already hiking to add bikes to the mix in these areas. I am a mountain biker too but you have to leave some of our beautiful OSMP lands for simply hiking. I hope you will see that this would be a huge mistake for the land and the folks who hike there.

I'm afraid I'm late to be giving my input on this. I just found out about it and wanted to put in my two cents worth. I've lived in Boulder since 1971 and have hiked extensively on open space trails over the years. As the population has exploded, there are more difficulties with accessibility.

I'm a senior citizen (79) but I still like to hike occasionally. I have to drive to trailheads and park in the available spaces. The congestion in the parking areas has sometimes been a problem and there've been occasions when I had to turn around and go home. It sounds like you're aware of this issue. I'm unable to ride a bike due to age and a neck problem which is exacerbated by bike riding. Sadly, I wish I was still able to ride my bike. But also, you have to be in really great shape to ride up to a trailhead, hike, and then ride home again. This is beyond the ability of most of us.

I've hiked on a number of occasions on trails which were also used by mountain bikers. (Betasso and Heil Valley Ranch) They've always been very polite, but inevitably it's the hiker who has to step out of the way of the biker in these situations. That can get tiresome after a while. I like that Betasso has days when it's only open to hikers and I try to always go on those days of the week. That seems like a good system. I do worry though that constant use by mountain bikes is hard on the trail itself.

My pet peeve is that I feel like a lot of the users of our open space trails are people from outside of Boulder.

This annoys me, because I feel like we in Boulder are paying for these trails, but they're getting clogged up with people from the entire Denver metro area. I don't know what can be done about this. I wish there was some way of checking for residency but it's hard to think what that would be. I'm originally from the East coast, where it's beaches that are the big issue. Each town has their own beach and these town beaches are for residents only. You get a sticker for your car that says you're a resident. There's usually someone stationed in a little hut at the entrance to the parking lot checking cars as they come in. I'd suggest something like that, but there are so many trailheads that I'm sure it would be cost prohibitive. Perhaps a system of windshield stickers that were required and it would be up to Boulder residents using the trails to check cars in the lot and report license plate numbers of cars without a sticker???

Thanks for reading this. I appreciate the chance to give my feedback.

Greetings,

I hope email this will find its way to appropriate folks, could not figure out from the OSMP website where to write my opinion about allowing bikes on, near close to the Shanahan Trail system. Please let me know if I should send this to someone in particular and huge THANKS!

I do not know if anyone from Open Space remembers when mountain bikes were allowed on open space, the mesa trail, in particular, I do. I was a runner then and am still a runner on our open space trails! (well closer to fast walker, 😊) I recall full well and remember quite vividly how dangerous the trails were with all of the mountain bikers. Not only did many of them not slow down on a fun-filled steep gnarly downhill trail, but they would run you off the trail, yell, scream and were so very rude to hikers, runners other slower cyclists. Never mind, how they destroy trails, make them wider, find rocks to jump over (which are off trail) and did not really care about the status of the trails. I have seen them ride in mud and tear the trail to bits, leaving huge divets on the trail and off. This is why there were banned from the trails. This attitude of cyclists has not changed, there are many who believe they own the trails and will not follow trail rules. I have had to jump off the trails at Betasso, Hall, Doudy Draw, Heil, Marshall Mesa etc. Not all of the cyclists are like this, but enough of them are that it really leaves a very sour taste in ones mouth when out on shared trails. Shanahan Ridge, is a huge family trail, lots of children and folks with dogs utilize this trail system. I know, I am a volunteer hiker for OSMP and this trail, esp on weekends has many many different people enjoying the many trails here. The trails cannot handle more on them and the cyclists will be just too dangerous for the variety of folks using the trails. Please do not open this area to cyclists, I am not against cyclists, I totally understand the exhilarating experience of riding full speed down a trail (I used to be a gang-ho mountain biker)...nothing better than getting air and landing and gaining speed on a corner. And this is why they cannot be on any part of the major trail system from Baseline or even Mapleton to Eldorado Springs. Too many folks use those trails and the cyclists will add a stress factor that does not need to be. I have not even gotten into the animal populations and how this will effect them...but you know this, bears and bikes, not a good meet and greet, the bears will become so stressed in an already uneasy world for them (climate change is a true factor in their survival). All of the animals, birds, etc will be negatively affected by the addition of cyclists.

Thanks for taking the time to read this, let me know if you want articles, research as to how cyclists affect trails, wildlife etc.

We have an aging population and many people going on shorter out and back hikes with a goal of experiencing natural areas and wildlife. For example, bird watching and plant identification are growing activities. A project emphasizing more biking "connections" on the south side of Open Space will conflict with this. Making connections seems like a go around for our big bike lobby to access more and more. This sounds to me like bikes making long, fast rides that might be disrespectful of others and disturb wildlife.

Please keep wildlife and quiet uses foremost in your decisions. Many of us, people and animals, will simply stop going to these wonderfully wildlife rich, biodiverse places if they are full of Boulder's ever increasing biking traffic.

Thanks.

Good Morning:

I am writing as a citizen of the City of Boulder regarding the Multimodal Assessment Project and its possibility of adding bikes to pedestrian trails between Shanahan Ridge and the South Mesa Trailhead. As a resident of the City and a user of these trails, I urge you to not allow bikes on these pedestrian trails for obvious safety issues. Me and my family already avoid so many trails in our City that allow bikes and that our tax dollars fund because we have had very dangerous encounters and simply do not feel safe. Seeing the injuries a close friend of our family sustained after being hit by a bike as a pedestrian has only reinforced these concerns for safety. The the number of pedestrian only trails in our network continues to diminish and the very vocal and well-funded bike advocacy lobby in our community for years has chipped more and more away at pedestrian only trails. For once, please stand up to them and protect these trails for pedestrian use.

John Malenich