

I INTRODUCTION

“IT SHALL BE THE FUNCTION AND DUTY OF THE COMMISSION TO MAKE AND ADOPT A MASTER PLAN FOR THE PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE MUNICIPALITY, INCLUDING ANY AREAS OUTSIDE OF ITS BOUNDARIES SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE GOVERNMENTAL BODY HAVING JURISDICTION THEREOF...WHICH IN THE COMMISSION’S JUDGMENT BEAR RELATION TO THE PLANNING OF SUCH MUNICIPALITY. SUCH PLAN, WITH THE ACCOMPANYING MAPS, PLANS, CHARTS AND DESCRIPTIVE MATTER, SHALL SHOW THE COMMISSION’S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF SAID TERRITORY...”

The Town of Winter Park has made significant progress over the last decade—its finances are sound, and significant visible improvements have been made throughout the community. At the same time, there are recent changes, and potential changes, in and near the Town that will have significant impacts on the community including:

- Intrawest management and operation of Winter Park Resort, with several planned improvements;
- several large annexations are in process, others are anticipated;
- the new Rendezvous and Grand Park (Cornerstone) developments are underway in Fraser (adjacent to the north end of town);
- Grand Elk and Granby Ranch are developing and expanding;
- the ongoing evolution in the competitiveness of Colorado ski areas.

The Winter Park Town Plan is a consolidated guide for land-use decision-making in and adjacent to the Town. It brings together, in a single document, policies and plans from a variety of sources: previous documents, work sessions with the Town Council, Planning Commission and staff, and public input from a number of public meetings.

The Town Plan is intended to be both visionary and practical. It portrays not only a potential future that will bring about an increasingly vibrant and dynamic community, but also a community that preserves an unpretentious lifestyle and glories in a spectacular natural setting. In addition to conveying a vision, the plan also identifies a number of concrete steps to attain the vision. There are policies and action items attached to almost every aspect of the plan.

In the end, the plan will only be valuable if it is used. It is the hope of the current participants in the master planning process that the plan will be incorporated into the daily decision-making process of the Town government, and will be adjusted, refined and revised as necessary to respond to future realities.

1.1 PLANNING AUTHORITY

The Town Plan is an official statement of land use policy adopted by the Planning Commission and approved by the Town Council. State law authorizes the Town to adopt a comprehensive or master plan pursuant to Section 31-23-206 of the Colorado Revised Statutes as amended:

“It shall be the function and duty of the Commission to make and adopt a master plan for the physical development of the municipality, including any areas outside of its boundaries subject to the approval of the governmental body having jurisdiction thereof,... which in the Commission’s judgment bear relation to the planning of such municipality. Such plan, with the accompanying maps, plans, charts and descriptive matter, shall show the Commission’s recommendations for the development of said territory...”

Although the Planning Commission is the agency expressly authorized by state law to prepare and adopt the final Comprehensive Plan, the Town Council also possesses the legislative power to establish land use planning policies for the Town. State law recognizes the legislative authority of the municipality’s governing body by expressly requiring that the Planning Commission’s adopted comprehensive plan be subject to approval of the Town Council. In effect, the Comprehensive Plan is not fully effective until the Town Council approves the plan.



FIGURE 1-1

A view of the Continental Divide from Winter Park

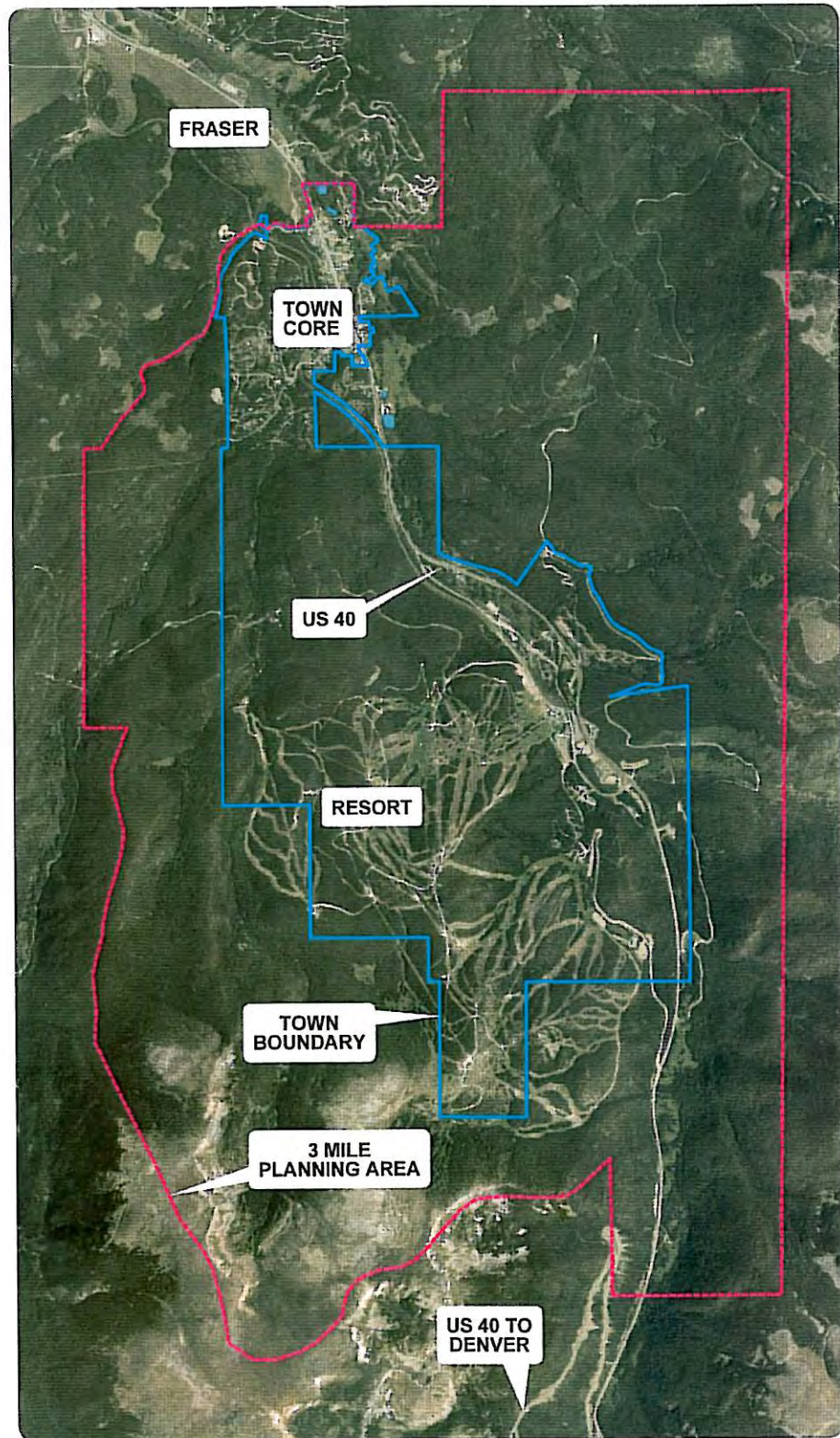


FIGURE 1-2
Winter Park Planning area.

1.2 THE PLANNING AREA

In Colorado, towns are required to establish a planning area to anticipate and influence development that happens around the community. (C.R.S. 31-12-105-1e)

This plan addresses the land within the current boundaries of the Town, as well as the land within the surrounding area (Planning Area) that might reasonably be considered for annexation, or over which the Town wishes to exert some influence in future land use decisions by others.

Figure 1-2 shows the Town boundaries and the surrounding Planning Area. The solid blue outline is the Town Boundary and the dashed pink outline is the 3-Mile Plan Boundary.

1.3 WHY WE NEED A TOWN PLAN

The Town Plan is a guide for making land use decisions. It describes how the community wants to grow, where the community wishes various land uses to take place and what the community wants to look like. The Town Plan is a reflection of many of the community's values.

Previously, one had to consult many different documents to identify the vision, plans and regulations of the Town. This document is intended to consolidate many of these documents into a single source. It incorporates data concepts, directions and policies from a number of documents (please see bibliography in the Appendix).

Purposes of the Town Plan are to:

- Bring consistency and reconcile conflicts in the plans, policies, priorities and directions that guide both public and private sector decisions regarding land use.
- Identify alternatives and priorities for key decisions confronting the Town. These include the locations of key public facilities, and actions regarding annexations, affordable housing, etc.

1.4 HOW THE TOWN PLAN WAS CREATED

The Town Plan was developed through a number community meetings, public input, and review by Town staff. It [will have been] reviewed and adopted by the Planning Commission and approved by the Town Council after public hearings.

1.5 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TOWN PLAN AND ZONING

A comprehensive plan (such as the Town Plan) is seldom used by itself. It is usually one of several documents that are used together or in sequence to make land use decisions. Ideally, it is the first level in a three level process of documents that regulate land use:

1. The Town Plan provides broad direction regarding the arrangement and assignment of gross densities, which is the density of a specific area ("bubble") of land uses without deducting the area required for parks, roads and trails, for example. In master plans such as the Town Plan, densities are often given as ranges. The land use designations ("bubbles") generally respond to natural, physical constraints such as steep slopes and flood plains, and do not necessarily follow actual ownership boundaries.

2. A Zoning Plan, is a document that assigns more specific land uses, including density of development, and which confers legally binding rights to a land owner. For example, Winter Park's R-2 zoning designation permits up to 20 units per acre. Because they convey legal rights, zoning designations usually follow property lines.

Note that a zoning designation does not usually stipulate the arrangement of uses on the land. It merely grants specific uses and density for the entire parcel. This is the reason that zoning and the Town Plan need to be used in concert with each other. The zoning plan sets the overall density or number of units and the Town Plan suggests how those units should be arranged (which areas to leave open, etc.).

3. The third level of land use regulation is comprised of subdivision, design review and building permit regulations. These are detailed regulations regarding the process for subdividing land, the technical requirements relating to design and constructing buildings (fire safety, etc.).

How are these documents used? In the example of a zone change, the zoning designation given to a parcel should be based on the land use designation given to that area in the Town Plan. For example, an area that is designated "low density residential" in the Town Plan might subsequently be zoned for single family lots (rather than apartments or a gas station). A building permit would then be granted by the Town only for building uses that are in conformance with the zoning designation for the building site. The Town would not grant a building permit, for example, to build a gas station on a lot that is zoned residential.

As another example, in reviewing an application for a development subdivision that is not requesting a zoning change, the Town would first make sure that the overall density complies with the existing zoning. Next, the Town would make sure the arrangement of uses, alignment of roads, preservation of open space, etc. are consistent with the Town Plan, including its land use designations, goals, and policies.

Therefore, once the Town Plan is adopted, it is important that the Town Plan and the Zoning Plan be kept consistent. Inconsistencies should be resolved by rezoning any parcels that are not in conformance with the Town Plan, or by amending the Town Plan, or both. It should be noted that either rezoning or amending must follow the Town's required procedures, including public notices and public hearings.

The Town Plan is intended for use by Town Council members, Planning Commissioners and other Town boards, Town staff, as well as developers and residents concerned about the future of the community. The purpose of the Plan is to provide a comprehensive guide to the physical development of the Town. It is a basic tool to guide zoning, budgeting, capital improvement decisions and policy making.

TOWN PLAN IMPLEMENTATION POLICIES

1. After adoption of the Town Plan, the Town will maintain consistency between the Town Plan and the Zoning Map. Rezoning will be consistent with the Town Plan. If a proposed rezoning will not be consistent with the Town Plan, the Town Plan must be amended prior to the rezoning.

TOWN PLAN IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

1. Since this Town Plan represents current Town directions, with regard to land use, upon adoption of the Town Plan, amend the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Map to be consistent with the Town Plan.

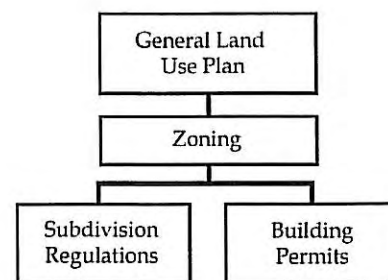


FIGURE 1-3
The General Land Use Plan (Town Plan) is the foundation for other land use regulations

1.6 RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Over the last decade a number of important accomplishments have been realized in Winter Park:

AESTHETIC PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS include:

- stone median planters in Main Street at the entries to town;
- covered bridge walkways over Vasquez Creek;
- Hideaway Park pavilion, pathway and landscaping;
- the Vasquez Creek Trail;
- decorative paving and planters (streetscape improvements) along Main Street;
- stone wall bridge over Vasquez Creek on Lion's Gate Drive;
- bike path improvements south of downtown;
- the completion of Ski Idlewild Road;
- 2005 demolition of James Peak Lodge (a failed development);
- a mill levy increase for a forest management program.

WIDENING OF US HIGHWAY 40 south from downtown to the Resort, completed in 2004, has greatly eased the traffic flow to and from the ski area.

2005 IMPROVEMENTS TO THE FRASER RIVER, including in-stream habitat, trail extensions, interpretive signage, picnic area improvements and waterfowl nesting improvements.

2005 CONFLUENCE PARK, creation of an accessible trail, accessible fishing platform, wetland mitigation, interpretive signage, picnic area improvements.

THE LAKOTA AMENDED FINAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (FDP), near the Ski Area, includes approximately 190 acres of development and approximately 489 market-rate and 6 affordable residential units as well as the preservation of wetlands and steep slopes as open space. The amended FDP allows for additional units and affordable housing dependent on water availability.

Separate from Town accomplishments, THE INTRAWEST AGREEMENT WITH DENVER for the operation and development of the Winter Park Ski Area in 2002 was perhaps one of the more significant recent events, promising to bring new investment, management and creative enthusiasm to improving the Ski Resort. Since then the first 206 condominium units (Buildings 4 & 5) have been approved by the Town and will start construction in late April 2006. The Village Core (commercial area) is currently undergoing review by the Planning Commission and Town Council.

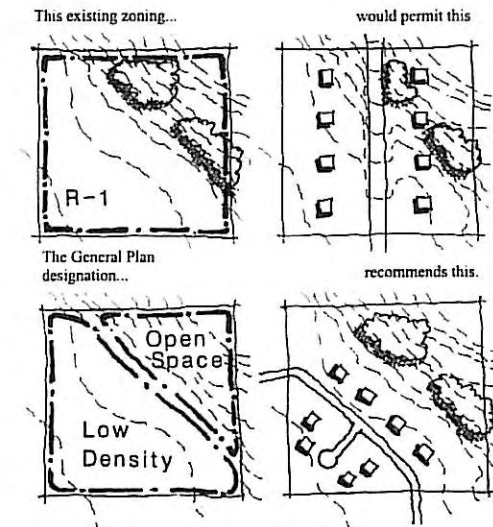


FIGURE 1-4
The Town Plan and the Zoning Regulations are used together to define specific land use directions for individual properties.



FIGURE 1-5
Entry Median on US Hwy 40 (top)
Improvements at Hideaway Park (bottom)

1.7 OVERVIEW: KEY CHALLENGES ADDRESSED IN THE PLAN

1.7.1 SUSTAINABILITY IN CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES

One of the key objectives of the Town Plan is to help identify strategies to maintain, and improve, the Town's appeal as a place to live, visit and recreate. The Town's appeal is affected by many factors, including its appearance, the health of the environment, the functionality of its services, its fiscal condition, and its overall quality of life.

The Town has many qualities that originally attracted the current residents to Winter Park and that continue to attract new residents and visitors. At the same time, nothing stands still. There are changes happening all around us – base area expansion and on mountain improvements at Winter Park Resort, commercial expansion and new developments in Fraser and Granby, and there are even economic changes happening statewide and nationally that will affect Winter Park. To provide amenities and services that are part of the Town's quality of life requires that the Town maintain a healthy economy. This requires that the Town and the Resort maintain a competitive position in the county and regional marketplace. One of the underlying objectives of this Town Plan is to examine land-use-related issues that will encourage the Town to be prosperous and sustainable in the midst of change.

1.7.2 MAINTAINING A COMPLEMENTARY RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE DOWNTOWN AND THE RESORT

Though they are physically separated, the Downtown and the Resort are both integral components of the Town of Winter Park. In spite of their different roles and character, they both have a closely intertwined, symbiotic relationship. Although the Resort is perceived as primarily a day-skier area, it actually has a large component (60% of destination visitors). The Downtown benefits substantially from both day and destination skier visits¹. The Resort base area doesn't have a large village (in comparison to Vail or Breckenridge for example). Therefore, guests staying at or near the Resort visit the Downtown for food and beverages and many destination guests lodge in the Downtown and surrounding neighborhoods. There are day skiers from Denver as well as the Fraser Valley that also patronize the Downtown. At the same time, the Resort benefits from the Downtown—it provides lodging, food and beverages, and shopping to augment the limited amenities at the Resort—adding a valuable diversity to the resort experience. In sum, the Downtown and the Resort benefit each other to a significant degree.

The plans announced by Intrawest to upgrade the Resort and implement the Village Master Plan could have beneficial spill-over effects on the Downtown if the result is an increase in overall ski area patronage and if a portion of that increase also visits the Downtown. On the other hand, if improvements at the Resort base village only increases their 'capture rate' of visitors, the benefits to the Downtown will be less. In a worst-case scenario, if the Resort patronage increases, but overall Town patronage doesn't, the base area improvements could conceivably have a negative impact on the Downtown.

This implies that the expansion and upgrading of the facilities at the Resort are positive for downtown businesses, but also raises several challenges:

- How can the Town and the Resort work together to be sure that the Downtown maintains visibility and identity at the Resort so that the downtown participates in an overall increase in visitation?
- Can the Town and the Resort work together to address economic and transportation issues? In 2005 Phase 1 of such studies were completed with additional studies underway.
- What steps can be taken to upgrade the quality of the visitor's experience in the Downtown, so that they will remain competitive with, and provide a viable, desirable additional amenity for Resort patrons?²

The Town and the Resort have executed a "master" development agreement to address community issues (economic development, transportation, etc.).

1.7.3 MAKING EASIER CONNECTIONS BETWEEN THE DOWNTOWN AND THE RESORT

US Highway 40 is currently the only physical connection between the Downtown and the Resort. It is used by both cars and buses. It will be important to make the access between the Downtown and the Resort as easy and attractive as possible.

The just-completed widening of this section of the highway will do much to facilitate vehicular access. Public input suggests that emphasis should next be given to upgrading the public transportation system. In the short term, the number one priority is to upgrade the bus system. In the longer term, there is a strong interest on the part of the Town to implement some form of direct mechanical transportation such as the long-discussed gondola.

The Fraser River Trail is an additional connection between the Downtown and the Resort. This connection is an important and growing attraction for both the Town and the Resort.

1.7.4 CHARACTER AND FUNCTION OF THE DOWNTOWN

The Downtown will continue to face growing competition from both up-valley (the Resort) and down-valley (Fraser, Granby). The improvements at the Resort hold the potential to increase the overall visitation to Winter Park. If the Downtown can increase its appeal/competitiveness it will be able to capture its share of the resort growth, and at the same time offer an increasingly attractive, enjoyable experience to residents and visitors to the Fraser Valley.

The challenge will be to gradually convert the strip commercial character of Main Street into a pedestrian-friendly 'downtown' that will encourage park-and-walk patronage that will benefit all of the merchants by extending visits and providing opportunities for impulse shopping. Associated questions facing the downtown are:

- How/where to create a pedestrian setting with a wide federal highway bisecting the Downtown?
- What should be the form of the Downtown? Does it remain linear? Can it develop multiple centers?
- What is/should be the particular role or 'niche' for Downtown businesses vis-à-vis the Resort and down-valley communities?
- How does the Downtown grow?



FIGURE 1-6

The challenge to Winter Park's downtown:
Continue to increase its share of resort growth and visitors to the Fraser Valley

¹ As indicated by the winter increase in sales tax receipts for downtown merchants.

² This focus on the downtown will also help the Town increase its own 'capture' of through traffic unrelated to the Ski Resort.

1.7.5 LOCATION OF KEY PUBLIC AMENITIES

The Town has for some time been considering a number of new or expanded public amenities, including Town Hall, a Convention Center, and the Gondola mentioned above. Obviously, some of these are much longer term considerations than others. Nevertheless, the location of these facilities could potentially have a significant impact on attracting visitors and activity to the downtown area.

1.7.6 POTENTIAL ANNEXATIONS

There are a number of large, undeveloped properties adjacent to the Town (Arrow, Idlewild, Denver Water Board, Beaver Village). When developed, they will have the potential to dramatically increase the size of Winter Park. These annexations will also bring a potential demand for public services. It is important that the Town carefully structure annexations so that service commitments do not exceed potential tax revenues.

1.7.7 AFFORDABLE HOUSING

In many resorts, the lack of affordable housing has been a major impediment to the resorts' ability to attract employees. The nationwide recession from 2000 to 2002 caused a sudden drop in business that forced a number of resorts into budget cutbacks and staff reductions, which in turn diverted attention away from affordable housing concerns. During this time, actual property values have continued to climb, however, and a rebounding national economy may soon bring the affordable housing issue again to the forefront.

Affordable housing has been a concern in Winter Park since the 1990's and remains so today. To address this issue, the Town instituted an affordable housing impact fee of \$3 per square foot of new construction. The proceeds are used by the Town to purchase land and/or fund construction of new affordable housing such as the Hideaway Junction project. Key questions are: how much will this project, and others similar, contribute to solving the affordable housing problem? Are there more cost-effective approaches to providing affordable housing that the Town should consider? It is very important to identify land for the development of affordable housing throughout the community.

1.7.8 THE FRASER VALLEY PARKWAY/RIVER ROAD

The Fraser Valley Parkway (FVP) is planned to be another north/south transportation route to alleviate periodic traffic congestion on Main Street. The FVP alignment passes through Winter Park, Fraser and Tabernash. Portions of it have been constructed, others are being implemented at least through right-of-way preservation if not actual construction. There are a number of issues related to the alignment of the FVP through Winter Park, which makes this an appropriate time to revisit the alignment of the Parkway to make sure it is coordinated with other Town decisions.

1.7.9 TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE RIVER

Rivers are a magical attraction everywhere. Like most mountain rivers, the Fraser River has a varied character—from meandering placidly through a tranquil meadow to tumbling through a narrow, boulder-strewn channel in the deep woods. The Fraser River is most accessible within the Downtown in Confluence Park and along the Fraser River Trail north and south of town. A paved bike trail starts at Vasquez Road in the Downtown area and follows the river south to the ski area.

However, in the heart of the Downtown, the Fraser River itself has, up to now, been a hidden and inaccessible asset. In the core area of Town, the river is located primarily on private land. There are only a few public road crossings that allow a glimpse of the river, and virtually no areas for the public to walk along it. Recent Town acquisitions at the confluence of Vasquez Creek and the Fraser River are beginning to address this concern.

In the Downtown core area, there is a walkway along Vasquez Creek that extends from Lions Gate Road east to Main Street, then continues through Hideaway Park to the newly created Confluence Park where the trail extends to the confluence with the Fraser River. The Town Plan provides directions for expanding development toward the River, while preserving the river as a natural and visual resource.

1.7.10 WATER SUPPLIES

The Fraser River is a primary source for potable water in the valley, including the Town. The Denver Water Board diverts a significant amount of water from the Fraser River to Front Range municipalities. Two Special Districts provide water to Winter Park—the Grand County Water and Sanitation District #1 and the Winter Park Water and Sanitation District. For new development, it is the current practice of both water & sanitation districts to provide certification that water is currently available, but they do not actually reserve water for a particular development until taps are purchased—which typically occurs much later, near the time of development and at the time of building permit issuance. If an approved development is delayed for an extended period, it is not actually guaranteed that water will be available at the time of construction. Furthermore, it is possible that the cumulative development potential of Winter Park (with future annexations) could exceed the quantity of water necessary to maintain the minimum stream flows to preserve fish and riparian habitat, as well as the attractiveness of the river. In conjunction with the Town Plan, the Council has established policies regarding water allocation and conservation.



FIGURE 1-7

The Fraser River, seen here at Beaver Village Resort is an extraordinary but largely invisible resource in Winter Park.

2 VALUES AND VISIONS

To help identify community values and concerns, and to begin to frame potential directions for the future of the Town, input for the Town Plan was gathered in multiple ways, from a variety of sources (residents, property owners and businesses).

2.1 STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS

Through input sessions with the public, Town Council and Planning and Zoning Commission, identified Winter Park's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats ("SWOTs", see Table 2-1).

TABLE 2-1: A SUMMARY OF "SWOTs" IDENTIFIED IN PUBLIC MEETINGS.

STRENGTHS:	WEAKNESSES:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Sense of Community ➤ Small town character ➤ Family-oriented community ➤ Non-pretentious / low-key ➤ Easy access to outdoor amenities ➤ Opportunity to master plan comprehensively ➤ Moderate land costs vs. other resorts ➤ Winter Park has devoted resort clientele ➤ Fraser River nearby ➤ US Hwy 40 brings people during summer ➤ Potential to capitalize on 8,000+ vehicles passing through downtown in summer peak ➤ Commercial has close-by parking ➤ Potential rail expansion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ US Hwy 40's current design prevents 'Main Street' feel ➤ Lack of cohesive pedestrian atmosphere ➤ Downtown losing market position ➤ Downtown character slow to materialize ➤ The Resort's day-skier image ➤ Lack of definitive character due to young age of community vs. other resorts ➤ Distance of downtown from ski area ➤ High land cost vs. Fraser Valley ➤ Haven't taken advantage of river
OPPORTUNITIES:	THREATS:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Not yet overrun by sprawl ➤ Annexation growth may support additional retail ➤ Intra-west may increase Winter Park visitors ➤ Growth in county will bring more traffic through downtown ➤ Vacant land available in downtown ➤ Future intermodal center in downtown 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ If the government doesn't govern (regulate growth) ➤ Growth in county may increase US Hwy 40 congestion ➤ I-70 Congestion ➤ Other resort competition (Colorado and beyond) ➤ Lack of water ➤ Demographics (impact of baby boomers) ➤ Annexations carrying capacity? (water, roads, schools) ➤ Additional rail traffic ➤ Regional community growth favors Fraser/Granby ➤ Intra-west may keep more skiers at base? ➤ Failure to follow design guidelines ➤ Development 'overruns' natural setting ➤ More pedestrian-unfriendly development

2.2 VALUES/PRIORITIES FROM A COMMUNITY OPINION SURVEY

In 2002 the Northwest Colorado Council of Governments (NWCCOG) conducted an opinion survey for the Town. They sent surveys to three categories of respondents: voter registration lists, addresses provided by the County Assessor's Office and a list of addresses derived from business licenses. The results are categorized by the three groups: voters, business owners, and all property owners. The data is further broken down between second homeowners and full-time residents.

Table 2-2 is a summary of the "priorities for Town Government". In general, the highest priorities were assigned to maintaining air, water, wildlife and scenic qualities. This could be interpreted as a general mandate to make sure that development in the future preserves the natural setting and the sustainability of the natural environment—the primary reasons most residents came to Winter Park and stayed.

A second tier of priorities included expanding recreational opportunities, protecting the 'small town' way of life, and expanding the park and trail system¹. These priorities could be interpreted as endorsement for the Town taking a strong, proactive role in planning for the community—and specifically for planning that maintains small-town character and recreation amenities.



FIGURE 2-1

Priorities from the Community Opinion Survey and comments from public meetings indicated strong public support for the Town taking a strong, proactive role in planning for the community.

¹ Also receiving strong endorsement in the second tier of priorities were wildfire mitigation and improving healthcare services. Since they are not directly related to land use planning, we do not address these priorities here.

2.3 A VISION FOR THE FUTURE—GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Distilling all the various input down to basic goals and objectives, the Town has adopted the following:

Vision: Winter Park will be...

- A small, real town that includes a world class ski resort;
- An attractive, convenient destination resort for Front Range visitors;
- A low-key, unpretentious alternative to glitzy, stylized resorts;
- A vibrant downtown with diverse retailers, night life and a high quality pedestrian environment.

Goals/Objectives: Winter Park will...

- Develop a pedestrian-friendly downtown that entices pass-through traffic out of their cars, lengthens their stay, and increases the fiscal return to businesses;
- Expand the Downtown to take advantage of the Fraser River and increase the critical mass of residences within walking distance that can increase the vitality and patronage of the downtown;
- Assure that the Town implements design standards that will evolve a distinctive, memorable character for the Town, that is grounded in a small, mountain town image;
- Assure that expansion of the community preserves the natural setting and sustainability of the environment;
- Link the Downtown to the Resort in a manner that maximizes the benefits to the Downtown, the Resort, and the visitor guests.

TABLE 2-2: SURVEY RESPONSES: PRIORITIES FOR TOWN GOVERNMENT. (SOURCE: NWCCOG COMMUNITY SURVEY 2002)

NOTE KEY AT BOTTOM

CATEGORY:	VOTER	BUSINESS	ASSESSOR		
			ALL	2ND HOME	FT
Expand business opportunities in Winter Park	41%	62%	32%	31%	36%
Create local workforce housing opportunities in Winter Park	39%	40%	38%	38%	36%
Expand tourism development opportunities	42%	71%	44%	44%	36%
Expand recreational opportunities	60%	57%	61%	61%	57%
Protect the small community way of life:	77%	61%	71%	71%	75%
Promote wildland fire mitigation	71%	60%	68%	68%	66%
Enhance traffic enforcement	46%	42%	32%	32%	45%
Promote construction of a convention center:	25%	43%	19%	19%	34%
Promote construction of a gondola linking the downtown to the ski area	53%	64%	53%	53%	66%
Improve health care services:	70%	63%	43%	43%	66%
Maintain water quality:	92%	90%	86%	86%	91%
Maintain wildlife habitat:	84%	76%	80%	80%	82%
Maintain scenic/visual quality:	90%	83%	88%	88%	91%
Expand parks/trail systems:	65%	62%	71%	71%	57%
Maintain air quality:	84%	82%	86%	85%	84%
Key:					
Second-tier priorities					
Highest priorities					

3 THE SETTING

3.1 A BRIEF HISTORY OF WINTER PARK¹

The Fraser Valley was originally discovered in 1820 and the first settlers arrived in 1850. Development began in earnest when David H. Moffat pioneered the building of a transcontinental railroad line from Denver to Salt Lake City and the west coast. Tracks over the top of Rollins Pass were completed in 1905 and used steadily until 1928, when the 6.2 mile Moffat Tunnel was opened. The Winter Park Resort, the fourth largest ski area in Colorado, now sits at the west portal of the Moffat Tunnel.

The railroad provided the impetus for another industry in Grand County: logging. While the railroad was pushing west, there was a need for timber. The logging industry flourished in the early 20th century, helping to provide valuable raw material to Denver. As Denver's population grew, its needs grew, and a commission was set up to search for and acquire water to supply the city's fast growing population. The Denver Water Board has a great impact on the Fraser Valley – its diversion of water to the Front Range of Colorado significantly diminishes the flows in the Fraser River—which, at times, limits the Town's ability to divert water for municipal services and still maintain viable water levels in the river for fish and riparian habitat.

Recreational skiing was first introduced to Grand County in 1883. The Winter Park area began to be a popular skiing destination in the early 1930s when members of the Colorado Arlberg Club purchased and cut trails on the 160 acre parcel of land known as the Mary Jane Placer, located near the west portal of the Moffat Tunnel. As interest in skiing grew, additional trails were developed to the north of the parcel at the present site of the Winter Park ski area. At the same time this was occurring, the City of Denver decided it wanted its own "winter park" to be a winter playground within easy access to the metro Denver Area. The idea for it was planted when the National Forest Service installed a rope tow on nearby Berthoud Pass in 1937 and immediately attracted 50,000 annual skiers. A ski 'boom' began when the ski area officially opened in January 1940. Lift tickets were \$1.

A land exchange was finalized with the U.S. Forest Service in 1942 in which the City and County of Denver acquired a 90 acre tract of land adjacent to the Mary Jane Placer and Winter Park ski area. The intent of the acquisition was to provide a tract of land near the ski areas on which support facilities could be developed.

In 1950, the City and County of Denver helped form the non-profit Winter Park Recreational Association (WPRA) to administer, operate, maintain and develop the 90 acre Winter Park Resort for the City and County of Denver. By the late 1960s, the Winter Park ski area had been developed to near capacity.

A major expansion was proposed on a portion of the Mary Jane Placer. The Colorado Arlberg Club entered into a lease agreement that allowed WPRA to proceed with the construction of a portion of the Mary Jane ski trails and support facilities on Arlberg Club property. In 1976, the Mary Jane ski area was born. In the early 1990s, the Resort was expanded with the development of the Vasquez Ridge and Parsenn Bowl areas to the north of the main Winter Park ski mountain. In the 1990s, the Resort was again expanded with the development of Vasquez Cirque to the south of the main Winter Park mountain.

The Town of Winter Park, originally known as Hideaway Park, was incorporated in 1978.

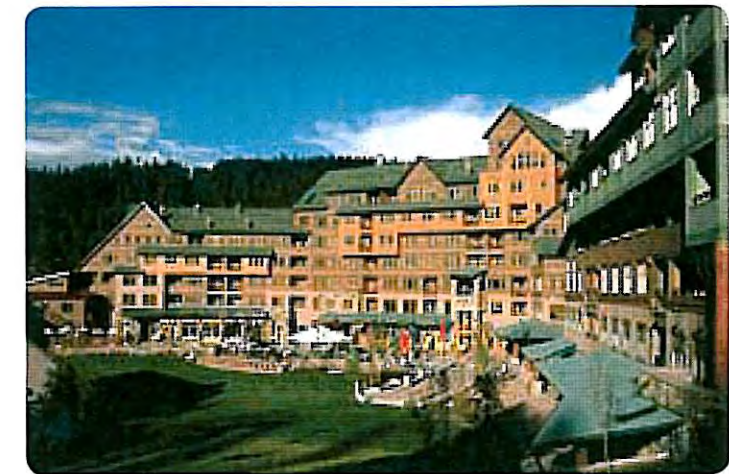


FIGURE 3-1
The Zephyr Mountain Lodge at Winter Park Resort.

¹ Source: Beaver Village Conference Center Market Study and Prospective Financial Analysis, Horwath, 1999.

3.2 PHYSICAL CONTEXT

Winter Park is located in Grand County, approximately 70 miles northwest of Denver, and is accessed from Denver via I-70 and US Highway 40 over Berthoud Pass into Winter Park and the Fraser Valley. I-70 provides access to most of Colorado's northern ski areas and is heavily traveled year round, but especially on weekends during winter ski season and summer. During the summer, US Highway 40 is heavily traveled as part of a driving loop connecting Denver to Rocky Mountain National Park.

Rocky Mountain National Park is located 40 miles to the north of Winter Park and attracts over three million visitors annually, mainly during the summer season. Lake Granby, Shadow Mountain Reservoir and Grand Lake are approximately 30 miles north of Winter Park.

Winter Park has easy access to the Denver metropolitan area. It is a mere 60 minute drive from many Denver communities. Year-round, Amtrak's California Zephyr makes two stops daily in Fraser, two miles north of Winter Park. In addition, the Ski Train provides round-trip transportation from Denver directly to the slopes of Winter Park each Saturday and Sunday during the ski season and for special events in the summer.

In general, Winter Park is a small community completely devoted to tourism and recreation. The ski area boasts the highest amount of average snowfall of any of the Front Range destination ski resorts (averaging over 360 inches annually). It has a wide variety of skiing and snowboard terrain. In the winter, a visitor can find nearly any winter sport desired: cross county skiing, sleigh rides, snowshoeing, alpine skiing, ice skating, tubing, etc. In the summer, in addition to the typical outdoor mountain activities (fishing, hiking, camping, etc.), there are 600 miles of mountain bike trails, earning the name "Mountain Bike Capital USA". The Town and the Resort sponsor a number of summer music festivals, concerts and other staged events that attract relatively large crowds.



FIGURE 3-2

Winter Park is a small community completely devoted to tourism and recreation.

3.2.1 PUBLIC LAND PLAYS IMPORTANT ROLES IN WINTER PARK

The federal government (US Forest Service) is the largest landowner in Winter Park. As one enters the Town from the south on US Highway 40, most of the terrain visible from the road is part of the Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest. The ski slopes at Winter Park Resort are to the west. As one approaches the core part of Town, the area of private land gradually expands to the east and west from US Highway 40. Some of the private land is outside the Town boundary and is under the jurisdiction of Grand County. The Denver Water Board also owns a parcel of land adjacent to the west side of Winter Park.

The public land in and around Winter Park has several important influences on the Town Plan:

1. The general public usually considers public lands to be undevelopable and preserved as open space in perpetuity. This is not always true. The federal government is generally receptive to consolidating its land for more efficient management. Often it will trade public land near urban development in exchange for private in-holdings in more remote areas.

Also, the Denver Water Board may allow their holdings to be acquired through purchase or trade. Thus, it might be possible for some public land in or near Winter Park to come into private ownership. For this reason it is important for the Town to assign land use designations for all land, public and private, within the Town's planning area.

2. In some circumstances, public agencies will make lands available to local communities for recreation and public purposes (R&PP).

There are several parcels of public land in and adjacent to Winter Park that would benefit the Town. These include:

- USFS land southwest of downtown along Vasquez Creek (potential watershed and recreation area)
- Denver Water Board land adjacent to the west boundary of the core area of town (potential open space and/or residential development, including affordable housing)



FIGURE 3-3

Winter Park and Fraser town boundaries.

3.2.2 LAND OWNERSHIP ADJUSTMENT PLAN

The Town of Winter Park and the US Forest Service created the Land Ownership Adjustment Plan (LOAP) to assist in the development of a village at the base of Winter Park Resort. A LOAP Team, comprised of representatives from the Town of Winter Park, the Forest Service, the Winter Park Ski Area and Grand County, was formed in 1987. The LOAP Team then identified approximately 730 acres of US Forest Service lands suitable for “disposal” or exchange. The lands can be disposed of through two authorities: the General Exchange Act and the Townsite Act. Such an exchange can be entered into by any citizen of the United States owning land within a National Forest boundary and is based on equalizing appraised value and not acreage.

The study is part of the Corona Area Implementation Program (AIP). The Corona AIP includes a large area from the Forest Boundary south of the Town of Winter Park (downtown), west to the Winter Park Ski Area, south to the first switchback on the northeast side of Berthoud Pass, and east to the Continental Divide. (Study maps are available at Winter Park Town Hall.)

The land ownership pattern in the LOAP Area results in the following consequences:

- The logical and desirable growth pattern for the Town is to the south toward the Winter Park Ski Area. From the Town’s perspective, it is desirable that its physical separation from the Ski Area be eliminated in an orderly, planned fashion over a period of years.
- The area between the Town core and the Ski Area is heavily encumbered with developments authorized by Forest Service Special Use Permits. A significant portion of the National Forest System land between the Town and Ski Area has an urbanized appearance and has lost its National Forest character.
- This Master Development Plan is now complete and development of the expansion area has been initiated. Numerous land ownership adjustment proposals are expected in future years. It is desirable that the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests identify land ownership adjustment actions such as sale and exchange of National Forest System lands in this area.

The purpose of the LOAP is to identify land ownership adjustment actions for National Forest System lands that will make the conditions in the Corona Area compatible with established Forest Plan goals, objectives and standards.

3.3 DEMOGRAPHICS

3.3.1 GROWTH IN GRAND COUNTY

Overall, the growth projections for Grand County (see Figure 3-4) show an approximate 60% increase of Grand County’s population from 2005 to 2020. Where will this growth appear? The Kremmling/Hot Sulphur Springs/Granby areas appears to be experiencing strong growth - from primary homes as well as second-home resorts such as Grand Elk and Granby Ranch golf course and the Sol Vista Basin ski area. As a result, this population growth — which will attract more shops and restaurants to the Granby section of US Highway 40, providing increased competition for Winter Park.

Growth is also occurring closer to Winter Park. Fraser has approved the Rendezvous and Grand Park developments at the northern border of Winter Park. Rendezvous (443 acres) and Grand Park (1,386 acres) together include a total of 3,327 residential units and 460,000 square feet of commercial space. These developments will have positive impacts on Winter Park—increased critical mass of development in the Valley and increased convenience—but will also add increased closer-to-home competition for Winter Park developments and merchants.

All of the foregoing reinforces the fact that growth and change are occurring in other areas in Grand County, and competition is increasing for Winter Park.

3.3.2 GROWTH IN WINTER PARK

Over the last decade Winter Park has been growing at approximately 2.3%. If Winter Park grows at the 2.9% projected by state demographers, Winter Park’s year-round population will grow to almost 1,600 residents by 2025.

However, year-round population accounts for only a portion of the Town’s development. Figure 3-5 shows the ratio between year-round homes (“Occupied”, 26%) and 2nd homes (“Seasonal”, 73%) from the 2000 census. In 2003, the State Demographer estimated a slightly higher percentage of second homes for Winter Park —of a revised total of 1,637 units, 1,259 units (77%) were classified as vacant—most of which are assumed to be second homes. By any measure, second homes have had, and will continue to have, a significant impact on the Town (see Section 6.2).

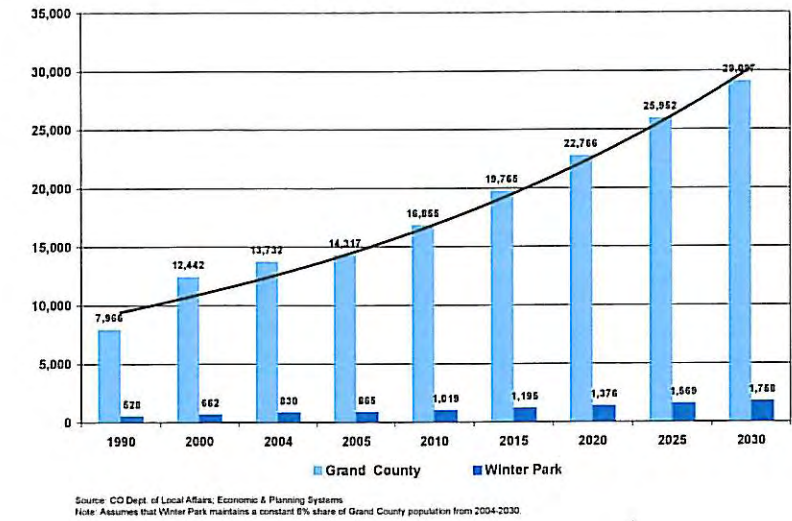


FIGURE 3-4

Population in Winter Park is projected to increase by approximately 50% from 2005 to 2020. This assumes a growth rate of 2.9%.

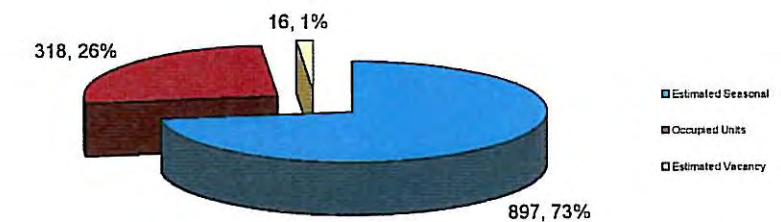
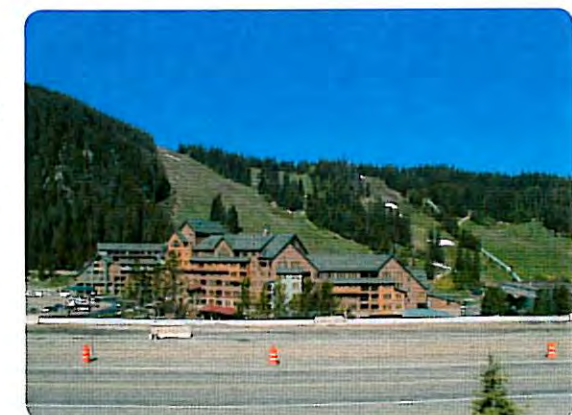


FIGURE 3-5

In 2000, second homes made up approximately 73% of the residences in Winter Park.

FIGURE 3-6

Zephyr Mountain Lodge at the Winter Park Resort, with ski runs on public land in the background.



3.4 AREAS WITH DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

Looking ahead to anticipate future conditions, needs and opportunities, there are a number of areas in Winter Park that have the capability of additional development, the cumulative impact of which is a potentially large increase in the area and population of the community.

3.4.1 UNDEVELOPED RESIDENTIAL LOTS

Within the existing, platted (approved) development areas of town there are almost 700 vacant lots, as shown in Figure 3-7.

The majority of the individual lots are in the R-1 Zone, although there are several larger areas of undeveloped R-2 zoning, and a few vacant parcels zoned D-C. This undeveloped inventory represents approximately 1900 units (120 single family + 1800 multi-family units).

3.4.2 UNDEVELOPED LARGE TRACTS WITHIN THE TOWN

Several large tracts of land within the existing Town boundaries have significant development potential (See summary in Figure 3-7 and Figure 3-9):

The VZF property (Parcels F and G) borders the Fraser River on the east side of Town and totals approximately 22 acres that would allow 105 units.

THE LAKOTA project was originally approved for a total of 258 potential units on approximately 200 acres of land, of which 107 units have been platted and 50 units have been built. A recent (2006) FDP Amendment will allow for a total of 489 units to be constructed, dependent on water availability.

LELAND CREEK, in the northwest quadrant of Town, contains approximately 76 acres and was recently annexed, zoned and platted for 73 units.

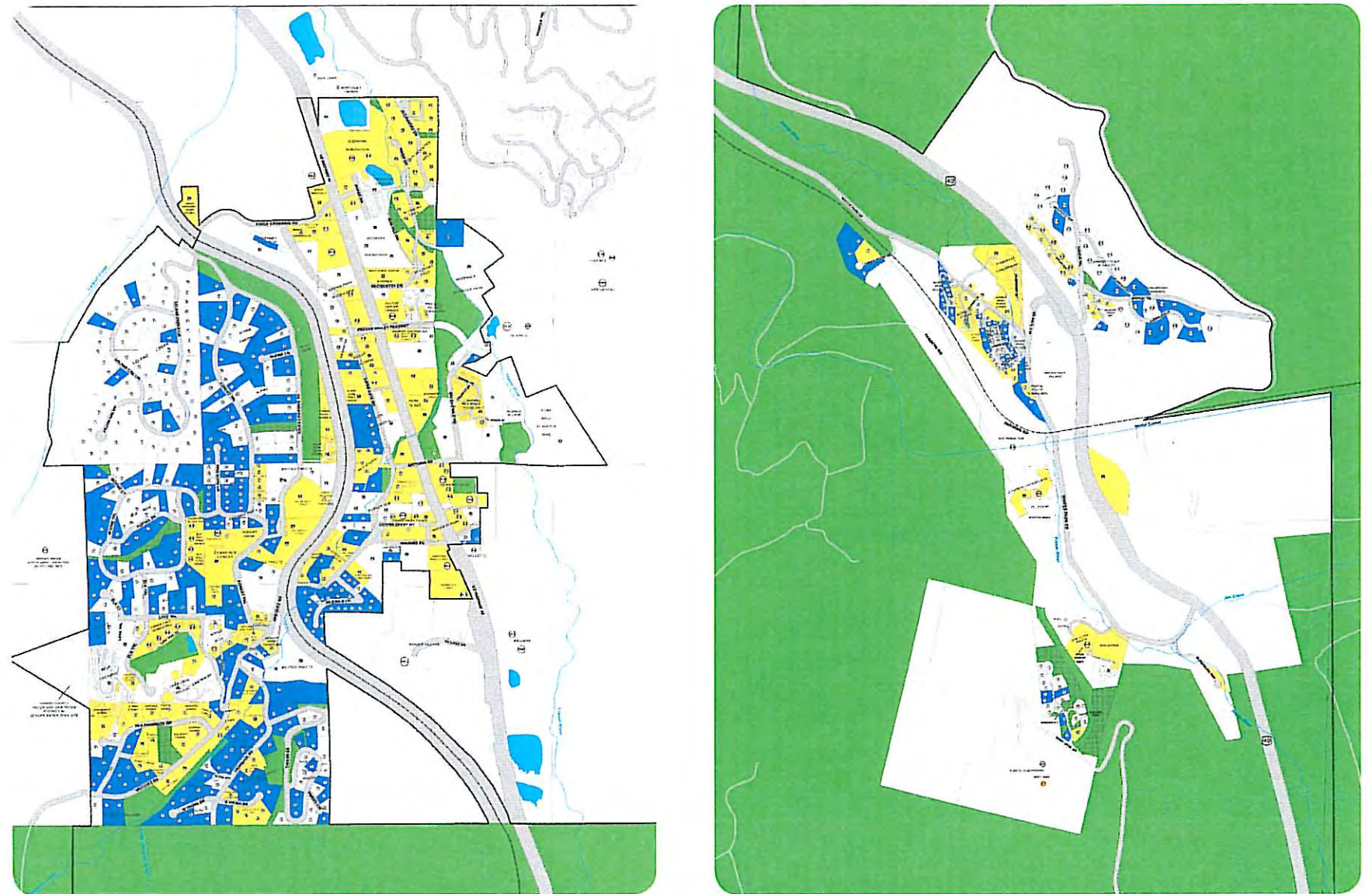
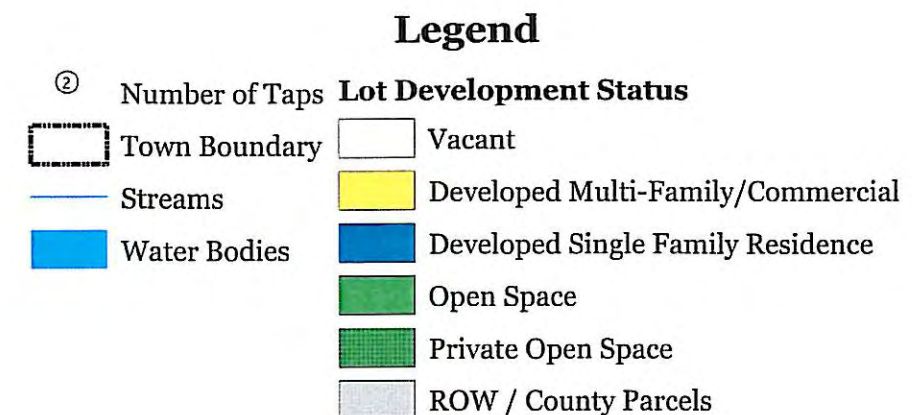


FIGURE 3-7

Platted but undeveloped parcels in downtown. Major undeveloped parcels are noted (See section 3.4.2)



3.5 POTENTIAL ANNEXATIONS

In addition to the large tracts within the Town boundary, there are potentially five large properties that may be annexed to the Town:

- Denver Water Board (200 acres +/-),
- Arrow (688 acres +/-),
- Idlewild (22 acres +/-) and
- Beavers (220 acres +/-).
- Winter Park Resort Special Use Permit²

These parcels are shown in Figure 3-8. The magnitude of the impact of just the potential annexations on the composition of the Town's housing stock is significant.

The implications, both positive and negative, of this potential significant growth include:

- A significant increase in seasonal population, a modest increase in year-round population.
- Increase in local spending, and resulting tax revenues (sales taxes and real estate transfer taxes).
- New commercial income/markets and job demands.
- An increase in need for affordable housing for workers to fill new jobs.
- Increase in traffic.
- Increase in demands on Town services.
- Development visible on hillsides.
- Increased water consumption.

3.6 SUMMARY: GROWTH POTENTIAL

The total potential development for Winter Park is 11,000 units, including already developed lots, approved and platted but unbuilt lots within the Town boundaries, and potential annexations (see summary in Figure 3-10). This is an approximation that includes a number of assumptions, but it is informative in correlating other aspects of Winter Park's infrastructure.

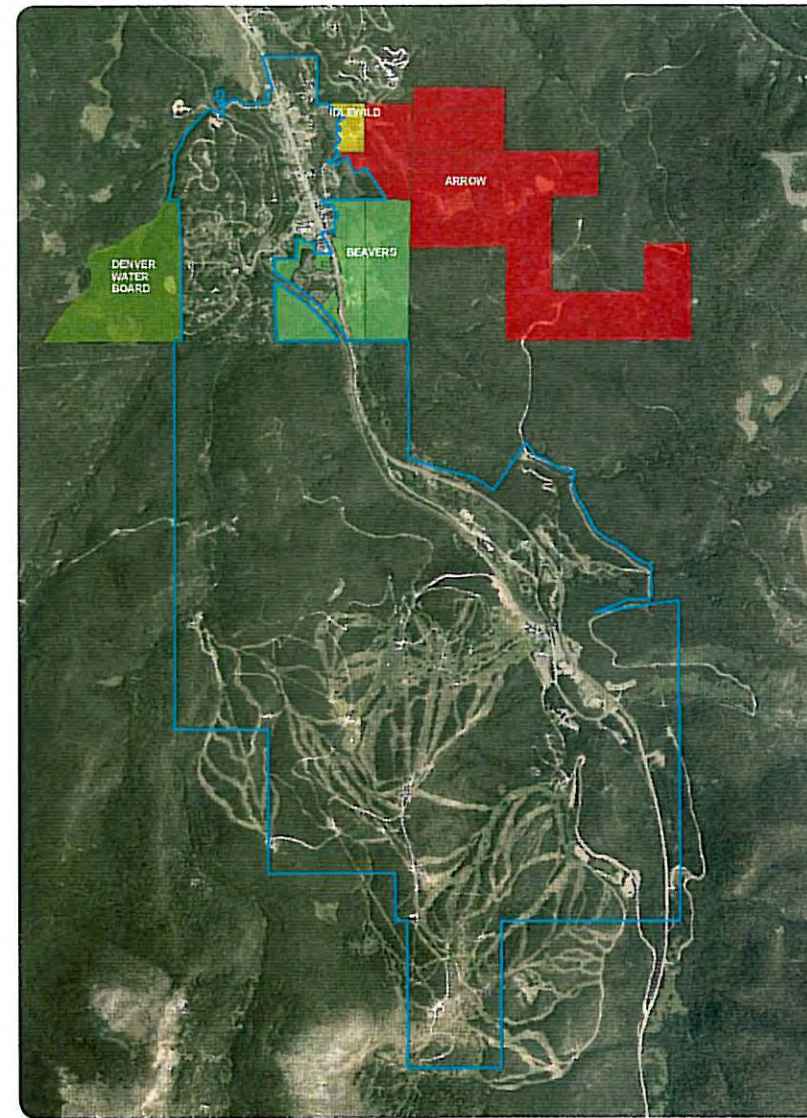


FIGURE 3-8

Potential major annexation parcels with development potential.

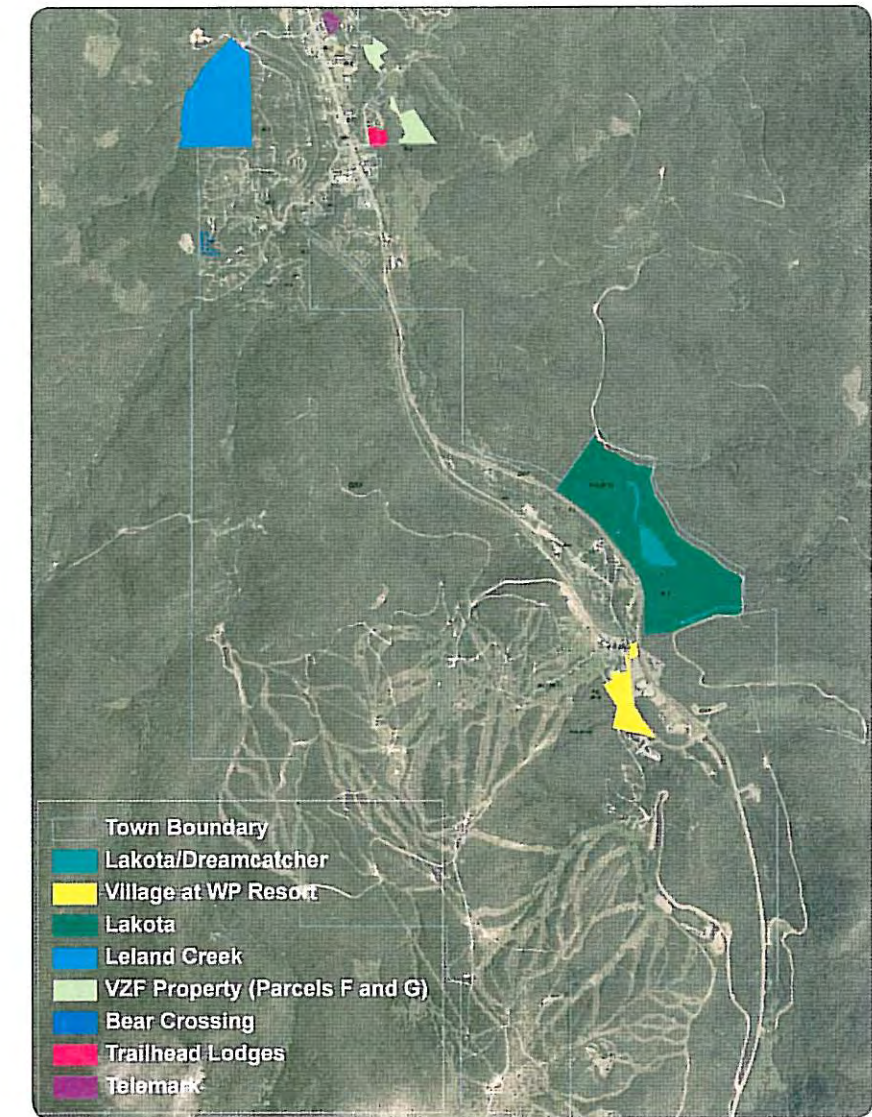


FIGURE 3-9

All parcels with major development potential in or near Winter Park.

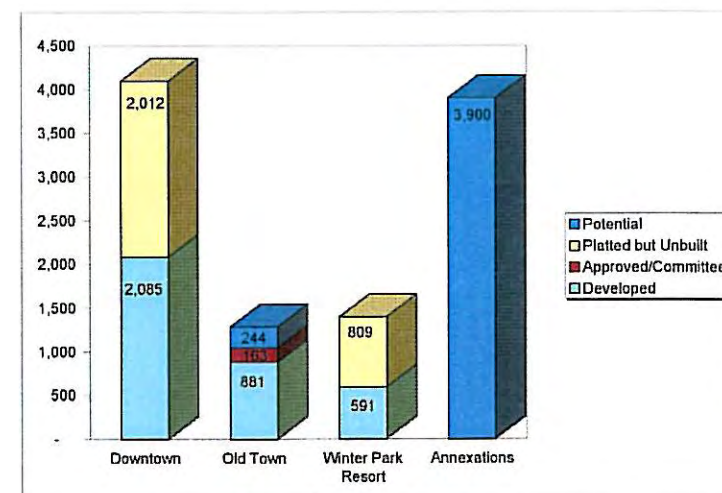


FIGURE 3-10

Buildout projections for Winter Park total approximately 11,000 units.

² Area not shown because no residential or commercial development is anticipated.

3.7 THE VILLAGE AT WINTER PARK RESORT

Winter Park Resort occupies a unique niche in the northern Colorado ski market. Because of its origin as an extension of the City/County of Denver recreation program, it has had an identity related to being affordable, catering not to the elite, but to the ‘regular folk’ of Denver, a place to learn to ski, and a place that has catered for people with disabilities to learn the exhilaration of independence and speed.

3.7.1 COMPARISON WITH OTHER NORTHERN COLORADO RESORTS

Winter Park Resort has experienced gradual, constant growth and expansion to the extent that it now competes on a scale with Colorado’s largest ski areas. Figure 3-11 compares skier visits between Winter Park and three nearby competitors over a four-year period. This is all the more remarkable given the fact that the Resort has had very limited on-site accommodations relative to its competitors (230 lodge units at the recently-developed Zephyr Mountain Lodge). In spite of this fact, the Resort experiences approximately 60% destination (overnight) guests—that are typically lodged in accommodations throughout Winter Park and the Fraser Valley.

3.7.2 DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

Intrawest has entered into an agreement with the City/County of Denver to develop and operate the Winter Park Resort. Intrawest has developed a revised master plan for the resort.

Based on the existing Final Development Plan (FDP), Winter Park Village has authorization for a total of 1,454 residential units. Approximately 240 units have been developed at the Zephyr Mountain Lodge, and 118 (of 449) have been developed at the Vintage—leaving a remaining potential for 1,096 units. One of the stipulations of the existing FDP is that the current level of day skier parking must be maintained.

In addition, there are potential residential expansions at several adjacent developments:

Winter Park Mountain Lodge	100 units
Trademark	15 units
Slopeside	14 units
Lakota	382 units

This leaves a total development potential of 1,607 residential units at or near the Resort.

3.7.3 PROPOSED RESORT IMPROVEMENTS

In October 2004, Intrawest unveiled new plans for The Village at Winter Park Resort. The proposed village design includes approximately 1,500 residential units, 32,681, square feet of commercial space divided into 24 shops and restaurants, consolidated and expanded parking lots, and a variety of amenities throughout the village neighborhoods. To date, 28,000 square feet of commercial have been developed in Zephyr Mountain Lodge with another 32,681 square feet to be completed in the Village Core. Complete development is projected to take a minimum of 15 years.

The first two new residential buildings, Fraser Crossing and Founders Pointe, will be built in the area that is currently the Moffat parking lot. These buildings will be five stories at their tallest point and will step down to two stories in a ‘U’ shaped formation, giving each building a protected courtyard area with maximum sun exposure.

Intrawest has purchased the Vintage Hotel adjacent to the Winter Park Resort main entrance and plans to convert it into employee housing for approximately 280 employees. An open-air gondola cabin (cabriolet) with automatic doors, wheelchair-accessible, will be installed adjacent and south of the Vintage Hotel and its new 1250-place parking lot to transport skiers/riders on a two-minute ride to the Village Core.

On the North Bench of the proposed Village will be developed a new Children’s Center that includes a potential interactive museum. An additional 677 parking places for these facilities are nearby.

The existing Balcony House and Administration Building will be replaced with a single structure that will combine skier/ rider services on the ground floor and residential units and administrative offices on the upper floors.

In the Hillside neighborhood where the village’s first two lodging properties have been approved (Fraser Crossing and Founders Pointe), two other residential buildings will be constructed. Building 3 is proposed immediately north of Fraser Crossing. Building 6 will be south of Founders Pointe and will include a family pool center that includes swimming pools, hot and cold spas, and a fitness facility that will serve village guests and potentially the community.

The Village Core, along the Fraser River’s west side will have a “Main Street feel” with shops on street level and some lodging on the upper floors. Also proposed is a “Roundhouse” selling sundries and coffee to evoke the resort’s strong railroad ties and history.

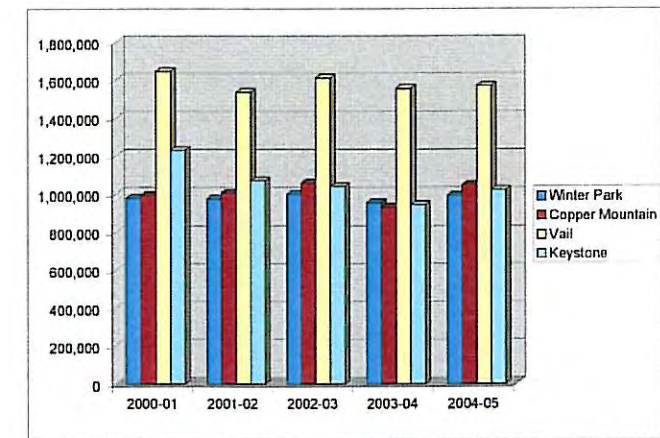


FIGURE 3-11

Annual skier visits to Winter Park and nearby competitors.

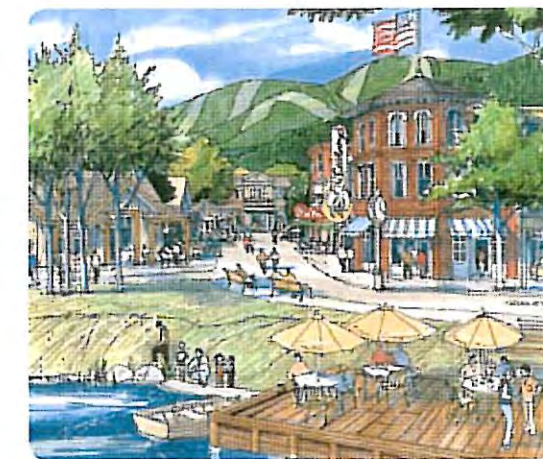


FIGURE 3-12

An illustrative sketch of Intrawest’s proposed village design at the Resort. (image from Intrawest’s “Winter Park Planning Notes.”)

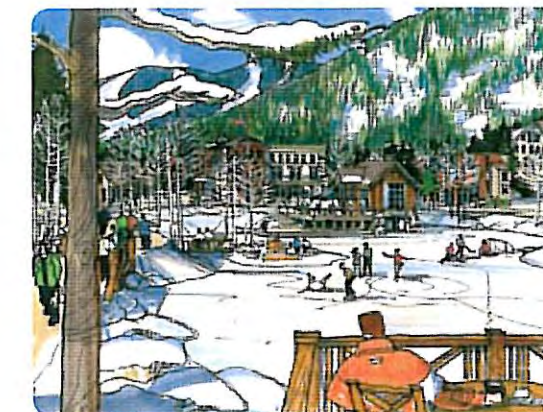


FIGURE 3-13

An illustration of the central pond in Intrawest’s development plan for Winter Park Village. (image from Intrawest’s “Winter Park Planning Notes.”)

4 INFRASTRUCTURE CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 WATER

One of the impacts of the potential overall growth described in Chapter 3 will be on the Town's water supply. Residents and businesses of Winter Park are provided water by two separate water and sanitation districts. Winter Park Water and Sanitation District serves Old Town and the Winter Park Resort area and the Grand County Water and Sanitation District #1 serves the remainder (Downtown) of the Town. Both districts obtain their existing and future water supplies from the Fraser River and its tributaries, Vasquez Creek and Little Vasquez Creek. Eventually, a significant portion of the water they divert is returned to the Fraser River in the form of treated discharge at each district's sewer treatment plant. Actual consumptive use accounts for approximately 5% of the water diverted for domestic use.

4.1.1 RIGHTS TO WITHDRAW WATER FROM THE RIVER

There are many adjudicated water rights in the Fraser River Valley. The actual amount of water in the river varies from year to year, determined by climatic condition. By law, in years where there are water shortages, upstream users with junior water rights must curtail water diversions to accommodate senior water rights of downstream users. A significant amount of water rights in the Fraser River Valley are owned by the Denver Water Board and other Front Range interests. These water rights are senior in priority to most other rights on the Fraser River and are diverted upstream from the Town and piped through the Moffat Tunnel for use on the Front Range. As a result, these diversions are not returned to the Fraser River.

The remaining water in the river must be shared between the river ecosystem and municipal and agricultural uses in the Fraser River Valley. The amount of water needed to support the river ecosystem is subject to interpretation and there is not a current consensus about the appropriate minimum level that should be maintained. However, the amount of water available for municipal use should not impact the amount needed to support the Fraser River ecosystem.

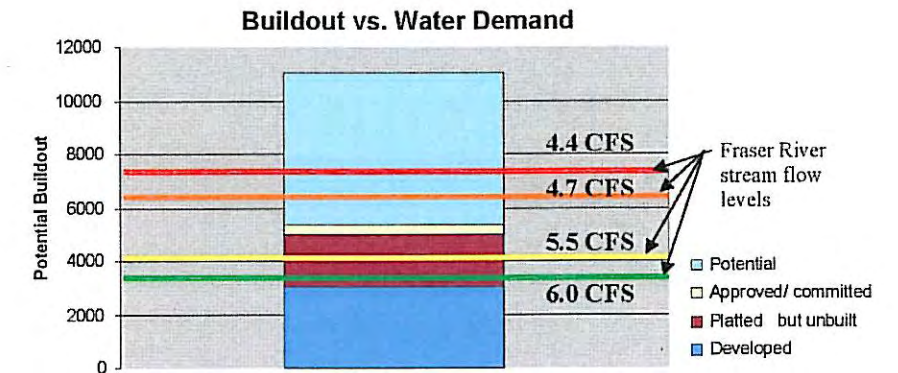


FIGURE 4-1
Potential base flow levels of the Fraser River compared to projected demand for future development. (cfs = cubic feet per second)

4.1.2 TOTAL FLOWS DECLINING

In years with average or higher precipitation, there is plenty of water for everyone. The challenge is in drought years when there is less water to go around. Drought cycles have historically occurred on approximately 25 year intervals, and last anywhere from 1 to 5 years.

The actual amount of water diverted by Front Range interests varies year-to-year according to drought conditions on the Front Range and the availability of other water sources for the Front Range. However, over the last 90 years, as the Denver metropolitan area has grown, the amount of water diverted from West Slope sources (including the Fraser River) has increased. As a result, the annual flow of water in the Fraser River has gradually declined. This makes the Fraser River even more susceptible to drought conditions and one of the rivers most heavily impacted by transmountain diversions.

The Town recently collaborated with many partners and Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) to undertake the Fraser River Enhancement Project (FREP) to “re-form” the Fraser River to a condition that can better support fish at low flows. Improvements included narrowing an “over fit” channel to consolidate flows, creating deeper holding pools to sustain fish and aquatic life, adjusting the geometry of the river to lessen sand bar deposition, etc.

4.1.3 ALLOCATING WATER TO ACCOMMODATE GROWTH

The calculation of water available for growth is complicated by several factors:

- The assumed consumption by a residence or business –each district has computed an average single-family-equivalent referred to as (SFE or EFSU) and they vary slightly about calculation of consumption during peak use.
- The effectiveness of water restrictions—the implementation of restrictions and water conservation measures could significantly reduce daily demands.
- Seasonal use —summer use includes outside irrigation for single-family residences and many businesses, less so for multi-family residences. Winter use includes the Town’s highest occupancy rates.
- Actual usage for second homes is relatively short (4 to 12 weeks per year), with time-share units and condominiums having more user days than single family homes. There is some indication that an increase in use by retirees might increase this usage over time.
- The location of water diversions—the ability to divert water is directly related to the flow at a given point on the river due to gain in the stream and return flows from diversions.

As a result, the measuring and monitoring of water availability is at times as much “art” as “science”.

Figure 4-1 shows the general relationship between the water demand from potential growth and various possible stream flows¹.

While this graph is very approximate and intended primarily for illustrative purposes, it nevertheless demonstrates that if development growth reaches the maximum projection it could exceed the available water supply for the lowest acceptable stream flow².

The two water and sanitation districts are the agencies that provide water taps for development. The Town requires a development applicant to obtain, from the appropriate water district, proof of availability of adequate water supply to service the proposed development. This puts the water and sanitation districts in a quasi-regulatory role relative to land development. It is the current practice of both water and sanitation districts to provide to developers certification that water is currently available, but the districts do not actually reserve water for a particular development until taps are purchased –which typically occurs much later, near the time of development and at the time of building permit issuance. Thus, under current procedure, if an approved development is delayed for an extended period, it is not actually guaranteed that water will be available at the time of construction.

In May 2005, the Town and the districts updated the current water availability and growth projections. The Town and districts determined that Grand County Water and Sanitation District has approximately 8,000 single-family equivalents (SFE’s) and that Winter Park Water and Sanitation District has approximately 3,400 Equivalent Single Family Equivalents (EFSU’s) available.

These studies need to be periodically updated every three to five years or whenever either district reaches 60% capacity. If not, there is a real possibility of eventually approving development that exceeds the water actually available in the future. This could conceivably lead to a conflict between future development and sustainability of the river. On the other hand, it is not unusual for actual development to be less than originally approved. Thus, the actual water needed may be less than projected.

The Town and the Districts will continue to monitor water flows, water diversions and water commitments carefully. This monitoring system and allocation system for water taps will assure that future development does not exceed available capacity or the needs of the community and the natural environment. Over the long-term, since water is so integrally tied to growth, quality of life and the efficient provision of community services, it may be in the best interests of community to more fully integrate the water districts into Town government.

4.2 ROADS

There are a number of recent and potential developments in the Fraser Valley that may have a significant impact on traffic:

- The 2002 widening of US Highway 40 to four lanes between the downtown and the Resort.
- The planned expansion of Winter Park Resort will potentially add up to 1,000 new units to the upper end of the Valley.
- Potential large developments in and near the Downtown (Beavers, Arrow, Idlewild, Lakota, etc.) could add as many as 6,000 dwelling units.
- Growth and development in Fraser and Granby could add significantly to the traffic on US Highway 40.
- Increasing congestion on I-70, especially at the Eisenhower Tunnel, coupled with recent improvements to US Highway 40 on the south side of Berthoud Pass may attract increasing numbers of skiers from the Front Range of Colorado.

It is assumed that many of the recent improvements will alleviate previous slowdowns and will greatly increase the accessibility of the Resort, and the Town. However, it is too soon to fully understand their full impacts, and whether they will be adequate to respond to the impacts of future development.

The completion of this general Town Plan, coupled with the recently-released plans for the Resort, make this a propitious time for an update of a transportation plan for the Town, and for the Fraser Valley. As an interim direction, and to provide further framework for an overall transportation master plan, below are presented several transportation-related recommendations.

¹ CFS=cubic feet per second.

² Approximately 4.4 cfs, as identified by Grand County Water and Sanitation District #1.

4.2.1 THE FRASER VALLEY PARKWAY

The Fraser Valley Parkway (FVP) has been planned valley-wide (Tabernash to Winter Park) for a number of years. It was generally perceived as a by-pass alternative to US Highway 40 from Tabernash to Winter Park. As it approached Winter Park from the north, the original FVP's alignment paralleled the Union Pacific railroad tracks to King's Crossing Road then east, intersecting with Lions Gate Drive, where it made several jogs and crossed Main Street at Rosie's Way. From this point, only a preliminary alignment was developed for the remaining road (see Figure 4-2).

Given that the FVP's original route through Winter Park did not actually create a smooth-flowing by-pass (the circuitous route being broken by a number of perpendicular turns) combined with the fact that the route diverted potential customers away from the Downtown, an alternative FVP is proposed. The proposed FVP from Kings Crossing Road continues south along Lions Gate Drive to Vasquez Road, where it turns east and re-joins Main Street. This route has several advantages: it is more continuous, shorter, and brings traffic into contact with the Downtown where there are signaled intersections.

4.2.2 RIVER ROAD

With the revised alignment of the Fraser Valley Parkway, the previous eastern section of the Fraser Valley Parkway is preserved as a separate loop. Rather than serving as a by-pass around the downtown, this eastern loop is envisioned as a means of providing multiple connections to the downtown from the surrounding annexation areas. Because this loop provides access to the Fraser River, it is referred to as River Road.

The conceptual alignment of River Road is shown in Figure 4-3. It includes a portion of the original alignment of the eastern loop of the Fraser Valley Parkway. The north end of River Road follows Ski Idlewild Road north on the west side of the Fraser River. After it crosses the river it loops southward along the east side of the Fraser River until it turns back west across the river, through the Beaver Village property, connecting back to US Highway 40 at Beaver Village Road. There is also an intermediate connection to the Downtown via an extension of Vasquez Road

TRANSPORTATION ACTIONS

1. Commission a comprehensive transportation master plan to address the transportation needs of the Town, the Resort and the Fraser Valley (at least to Fraser).

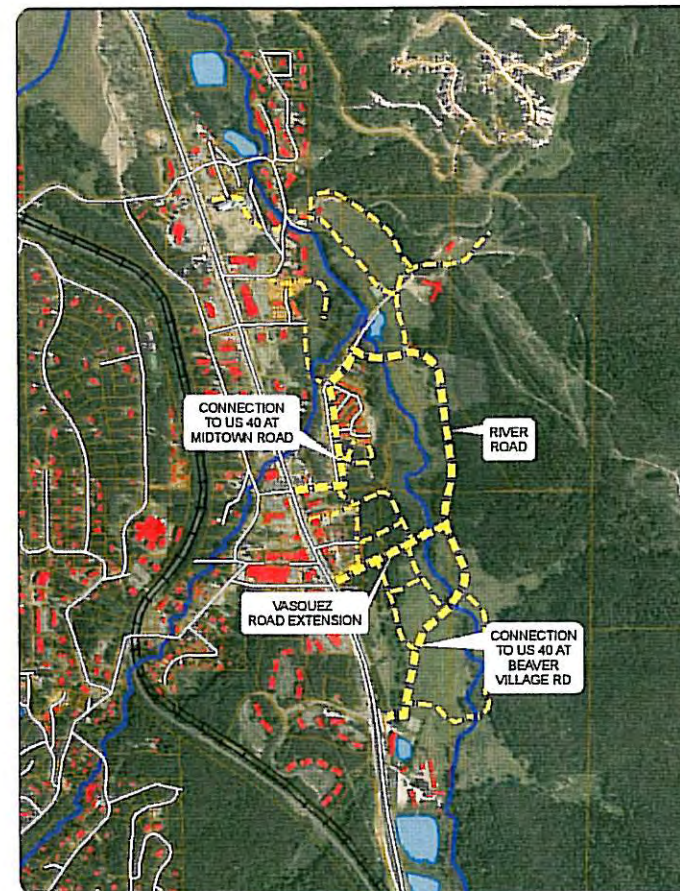
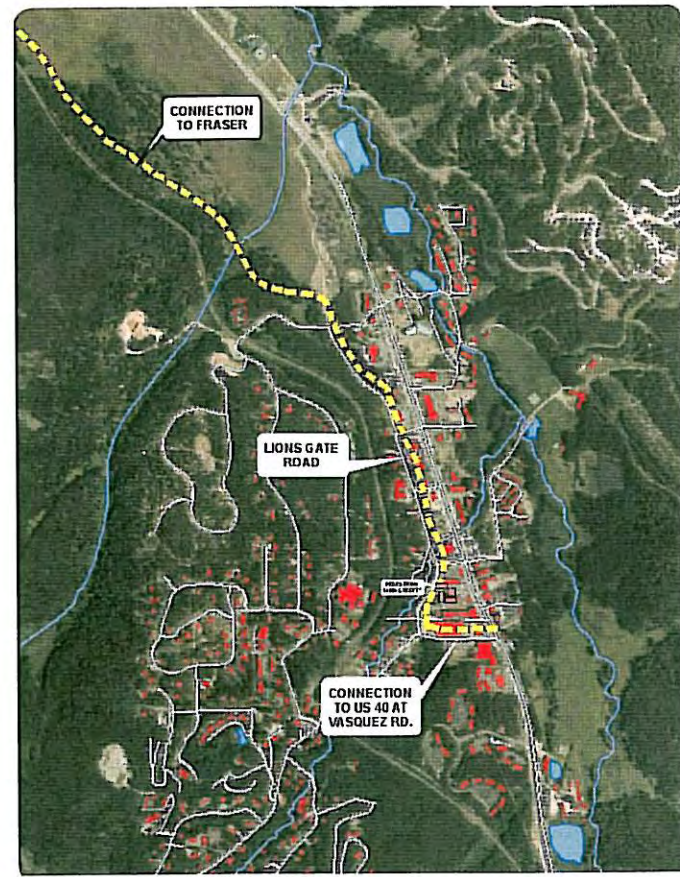


FIGURE 4-2

(left) Original alignment of the Fraser Valley Parkway. (right) Proposed alignment of the Fraser Valley Parkway.

FIGURE 4-3

Conceptual alignment of River Road.

4.3 A TOWN/RESORT GONDOLA

A gondola between the Resort and the downtown has been discussed for many years. A gondola alignment is indicated as part of the 20 year plan in the 2005 Updated Master Development Plan for the Winter Park Resort. A gondola would provide many benefits, to both the Town and the Resort, including:

- Make it possible to locate additional skier parking in the downtown, freeing up some of the limited area at the Resort base for development (the appeal of the gondola speed, comfort and views may offset the additional distance);
- Tie into or near a multi-modal transportation center to create a hub and spoke concept in Downtown for Fraser Valley transit drop-off and pick-up.
- Provide an appealing way to promote greater visitation between the Resort and the downtown, especially making it easy for resort non-skiers³, non-mountain bikers or non-hikers to visit the Town and visitors to the Town to visit the Resort (in winter and summer);
- Transport employees to and from the Resort, further lessening on-site parking needs
- Provide an “identity” feature that will help further distinguish Winter Park from other mountain resorts, an additional economic stimulus for both the Resort and the Town.
- Provide an alternative to US Highway 40 traffic in the future.
- Provide an additional downtown portal for the potential Vasquez Main Mountain expansion.
- Allow public access to the forest with fewer roads and parking required on public land (mountain biking and hiking).

As currently envisioned, there are two potential gondola alignments that would link the Winter Park Resort base area, via Cooper Creek North, to a location in the Downtown.⁴ (see Figure 4-4)

Additional study will be required to verify which of the locations will be most feasible and effective (see Section 5.6.1 for a discussion of potential terminal locations).

GONDOLA POLICIES

1. The Town currently believes that a gondola connection between the downtown and the ski area is highly desirable.
 - a. Allow public access to the forest with fewer roads and parking required on public land (mountain biking and hiking),
2. The gondola should be implemented as part of any future Vasquez Main Mountain expansion.
3. The Town is willing to participate in the funding of the gondola.

GONDOLA ACTIONS

1. Assure that a gondola is included in updates of the Resort master plan, the Forest Service EA/EIS and the Winter Park Resort Master Plan.
2. Continue feasibility studies to determine the gondola alignment.
3. Encourage the ski area to impose its own real estate transfer assessment to help finance the gondola implementation.
4. Work with the Resort to identify potential funding mechanisms and ‘partnershiping’ in the gondola implementation process.

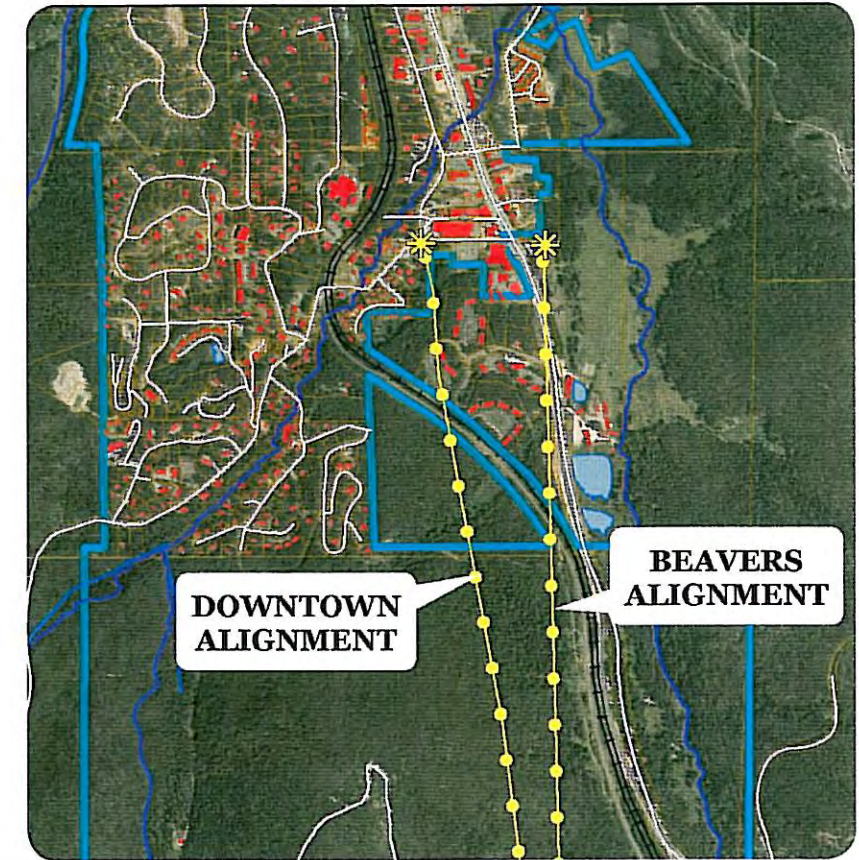


FIGURE 4-4
Possible alignments for the
Gondola linking the Town to the Resort.

³ At many resorts the number of non-skiers and part-day skiers is significant and growing.

⁴ The original 1985 Resort Master Plan specified a location near Beaver Village which is a secondary candidate due to the long walking distance from the Downtown and the resulting loss of direct pedestrian access to local businesses, unless the terminal is moved north to the vicinity of the Vasquez Road intersection.

5 THE DOWNTOWN

5.1 EXISTING PHYSICAL CONDITIONS

The Downtown is currently focused on a 5-lane street, US Highway 40, referred to as Main Street. It is loosely framed by commercial buildings that have a wide variety of styles and physical relationships to each other. The density of buildings is generally greater at the south end of downtown. The buildings on the east side of Main Street are closer together and generally line the street. The buildings are generally farther away from the street on the west side of Main Street. Included on the west side of Main Street is Cooper Creek Way, a pedestrian street partially enclosed on the south by the Town parking structure and on the north by Cooper Creek Square, a three-story brick building with exterior walkways and a central courtyard with a fountain. On the southern end of downtown, the continuity of facades and the closeness of buildings across the street from each other (“street enclosure”) give a higher degree of pedestrian-orientation.

On the north end of downtown, the buildings are spaced farther apart, and, due to a large utility easement along the east side of Main Street, the buildings are required to be set back farther from the street. For this reason, in this area it is more appropriate to have parking lots located at the front or sides of the buildings, giving this area a more auto-oriented character. Figure 5-1 shows the general extent of the auto-oriented zone at the north end of the Downtown.

5.2 THE DOWNTOWN IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Town first adopted a Downtown Improvement Plan in 1993. This plan formalized for the first time a number of concepts that are still valid directions for the Downtown today. They include recommendations for:

- Two character zones, the pedestrian-oriented Zone 1 (south) and the auto-oriented, more suburban, strip commercial character of Zone 2 (north);
- Parking behind buildings rather than in front, and shared parking rather than for each individual building;
- Preliminary alignment of a portion of the Fraser Valley Parkway;
- Creating streets perpendicular and parallel to Main Street;
- A streetscape plan with street trees, planters, decorative paving and unified street furniture; and
- A diversity of architectural styles, (rather than attempting to bring about a uniform style).

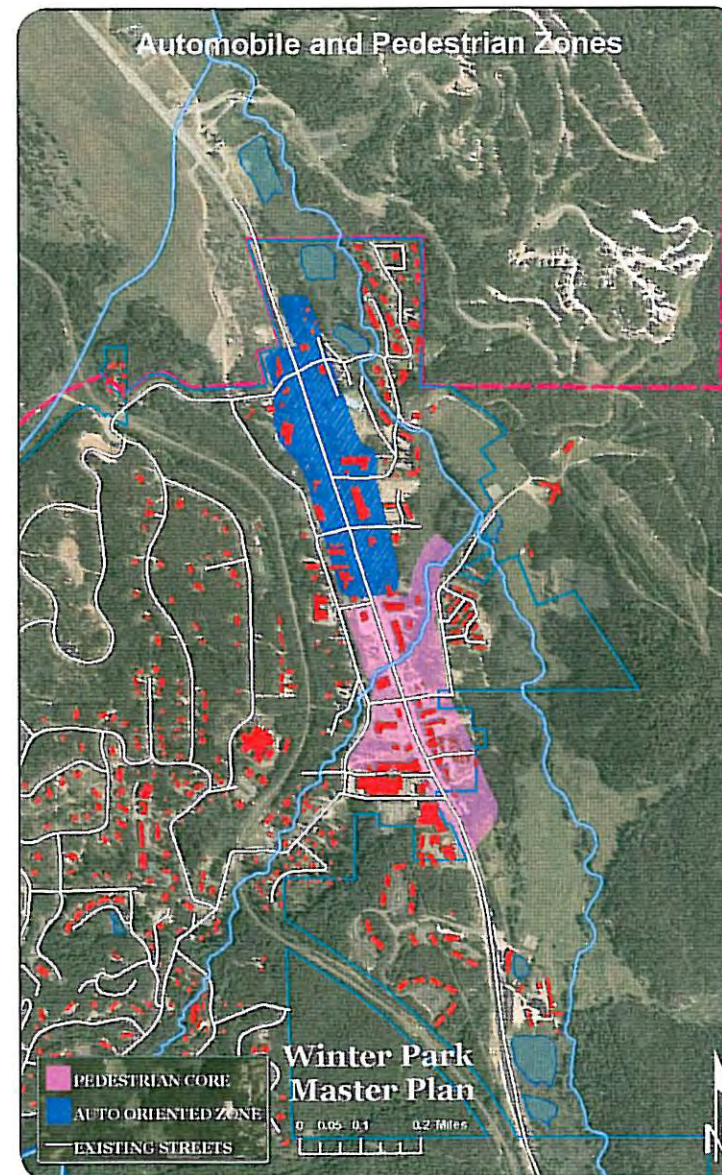


FIGURE 5-1

Potential pedestrian and auto-oriented zones of downtown.

A number of concepts of the 1993 Downtown Improvements Plan have been at least partially implemented. Many of the design concepts have been incorporated into, and elaborated upon, in the Design Regulations and Guidelines (see Section 5.7). However, there is still much to be done. The following sections build upon many of the original 1993 concepts and add new ones that will further help bring about a successful, sustainable community.

5.3 THE ROLE AND NEEDS OF THE DOWNTOWN

The Downtown fills a number of functions for Winter Park, including:

- It generates the majority of the taxes that provide essential services as well as amenities that are important to a livable community;
- It is the first impression for visitors, which conveys a message about our community's values and well-being;
- It provides an income for many residents in the Town and Grand County;
- It adds variety to the experience of visitors to the ski area, allowing it to compete with other much larger resorts;
- It provides a small, but important, source of shopping for many residents and visitors.

A healthy Downtown, in all of the aspects identified above, is essential to the sustainability of Winter Park. The fiscal, functional and aesthetic aspects of the Downtown are all interrelated. That is, to continue to generate taxes, it must continue to attract patrons. To continue to attract patrons, it must be competitive with other nearby communities and with other resort communities. To remain competitive, it must be accessible and attractive. To continue to be accessible and aesthetically attractive requires a source of revenue to finance improvements and maintenance.

What should be done to assure that the Downtown continues to be economically sustainable? First, it is important that the Downtown continue to improve relative to its competition. This is true in the Fraser Valley and especially true in the highly competitive realm of resort communities. The Rendezvous and Grand Park developments to the north in Fraser have designated commercial areas that will likely bring retail in competition with the Downtown. Further, there is an increasing competitive environment among mountain resorts, that is typified by the expansion and consolidation efforts of both Intravest and Vail Resorts. Inasmuch as Winter Park remains significantly dependent on the ski economy, we need to recognize that the Town and the Resort need to remain competitive with other ski areas.

How should the Downtown evolve and prosper? The Town has adopted several strategies:

1. Increase the pedestrianization of the Downtown.
2. Expand the core area to provide a more diverse walking environment, more opportunities for a variety of development, and to provide a greater walk-to population to help support Downtown businesses.
3. Take advantage of the Fraser River and Vasquez Creek.
4. Locate key public facilities to bring additional people-generating uses to the Downtown.
5. Continue to infill and upgrade the quality of Downtown development.

These strategies are described in greater detail in Section 5.4 through Section 5.7.2.



FIGURE 5-2

A healthy Downtown, in all of the aspects identified above, is essential to the sustainability of Winter Park.

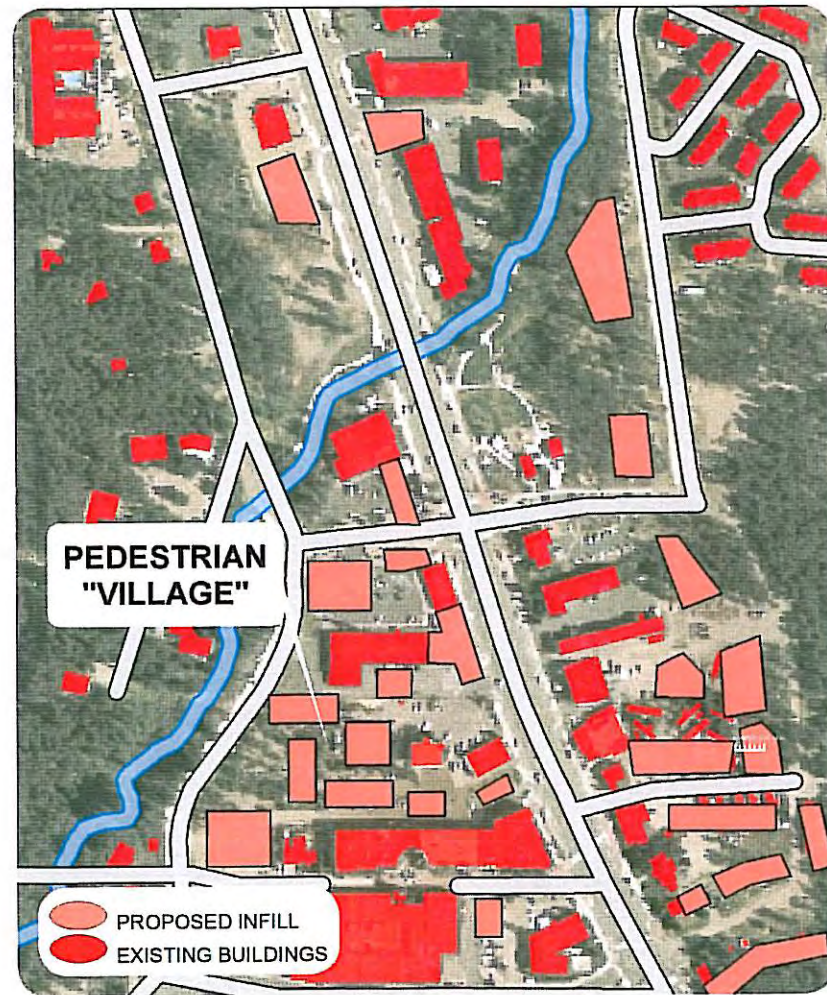


FIGURE 5-3

The downtown showing infill buildings sited to create a “village” of interconnected plazas. (Alternative A)

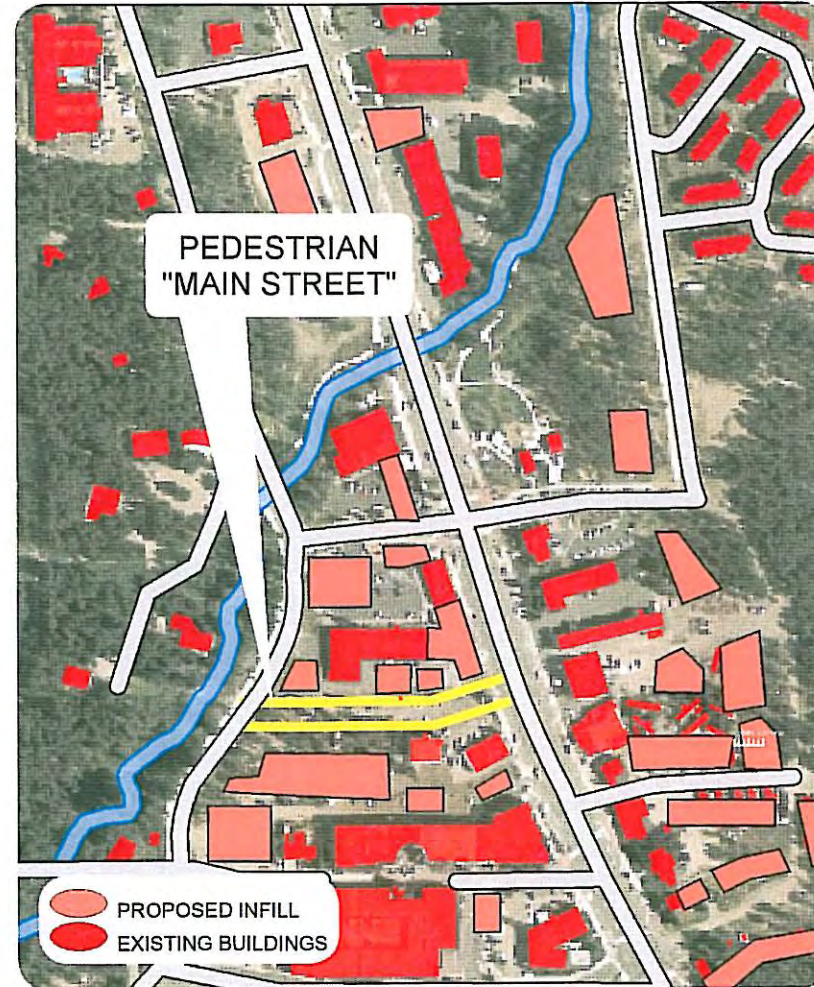


FIGURE 5-4

The downtown with infill buildings sited to create a “crossroad” street. (Alternative B)

5.4 CREATING A PEDESTRIAN-ORIENTED DOWNTOWN

A fundamental concept of downtown commercial development is that people only spend money when they walk. Creating patterns that draw shoppers by other shops on the way to their primary destination provides opportunities for impulse shopping as they pass. Thus, the pattern of virtually all successful downtown development¹ is to get people out of their cars and walking. This is accomplished by creating a continuous, attractive walking/shopping experience.

As described in Section 5.7, continuity of facades and “street enclosure” are important characteristics of a pedestrian-oriented environment. Illustrated in Figure 5-3 is the portion of the Downtown (Zone 1) that currently has the highest degree of pedestrian quality.

This pedestrian area of the Downtown could, over time, be expanded to provide greater opportunities for a broader diversity of pedestrian experiences. The “increased pedestrianization” objective can be achieved by siting additional infill buildings to create almost-continuous building facades along the pedestrian ways.

In addition to increasing the pedestrian quality of Main Street (US Hwy 40), Winter Park has, in the downtown, an opportunity to create an even more special commercial area as an extension of the Cooper Creek Square area. Two alternative concepts for the downtown are shown in Figure 5-5 and Figure 5-6. Figure 5-5 demonstrates an internal pedestrian village concept that is an extension of Cooper Creek Square. Although only diagrammatic, the arrangement of hypothetical building footprints is intended to suggest a series of interconnecting pedestrian streets and plazas that never ‘dead end’ but always draw the user to go to the end of the street to ‘see what’s around the corner’. This pedestrian village could eventually be expanded to the east side of Main Street with the potential to expand to the Fraser River.

Figure 5-6 illustrates an alternative approach to the downtown - a “crossroad” street. This concept suggests adding a new, narrow street (including wide sidewalks and on-street parking) north of Cooper Creek Square. This alternative creates a more traditional ‘main street’ environment that is complementary and more intimate than is proposed on US Highway 40. Once again, this crossroad concept could be extended across to the east side of Main Street, providing pedestrian access to the Fraser River.



FIGURE 5-5

Alternative A - infill buildings sited to create a pedestrian village.



FIGURE 5-6

Alternative B - infill buildings sited to create a new downtown “crossroad street”.

¹ Other than big-box retail such as Wal-Mart, Home Depot and Costco – for which Winter Park is not well-suited.

FIGURE 5-7
Conceptual layout of streets to expand the Downtown core.

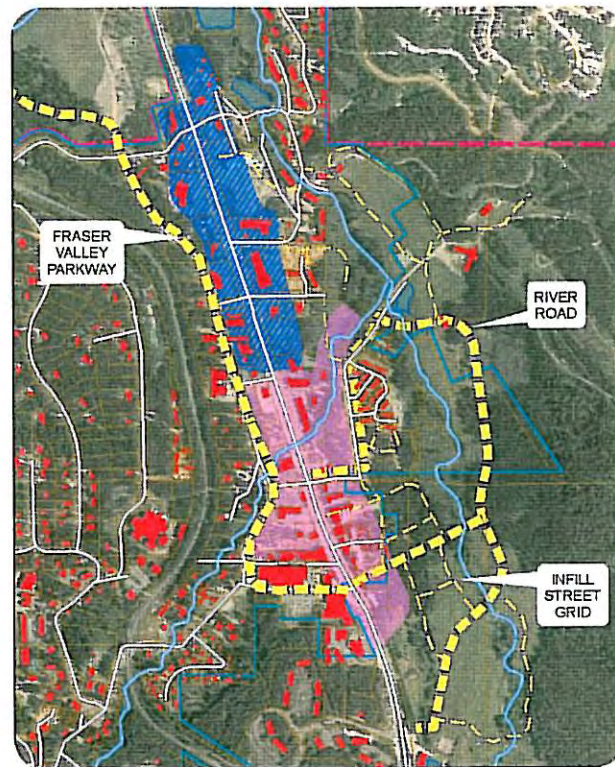
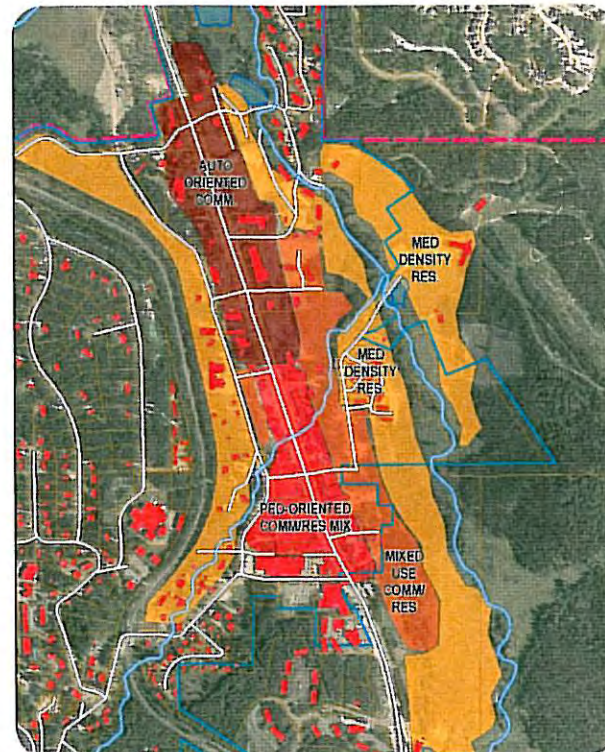


FIGURE 5-8
General land use concept for the downtown, illustrating a decreasing density from the core pedestrian area



5.5 EXPANDING THE CORE AREA

A key concept of The Town Plan is to expand the downtown core area to the east and west. This has several purposes:

- Create opportunities for significant additional residential development within walking distance of the Downtown.
- Take advantage of the Fraser River and Vasquez Creek—to make them available for public access as well as for the benefit of private development.
- Provide a “grid” street pattern that can accommodate a wide variety of uses to better respond to naturally changing market conditions over time (better than cul-de-sacs for example).

This is proposed to be accomplished by creating a grid of streets that will actually expand the fabric of the core area eastward to the Fraser River. A conceptual layout of streets is shown in Figure 5-7.

The street layout is shown as an informal² “grid”, to create an urban framework that will help unite the expansion area seamlessly with the Downtown. The grid is important to create a high level connectivity (multiple ways to get from one point to another), which is a timeless pattern in pedestrian-oriented communities.

The blocks of the street grid are sized at approximately 250'-300' by 400'-500', which will accommodate a variety of uses (ranging from shops to condos to single-family lots) and to mixed uses, which will provide even greater flexibility to respond to market conditions over time³.

An important aspect of the conceptual street layout is that in several areas, a street will front directly onto the Fraser River (not separated from the river by houses). This makes the river corridor a public amenity, rather than making it inaccessible along the back of private homes.

Figure 5-8 indicates a general gradation of land uses in the core area, with a mix of commercial and relatively high density residential in the pedestrian core, transitioning gradually to the east to a lower density mix of uses (including commercial/business/residential) to mostly residential uses as one approaches the Fraser River.

Note: The auto-oriented zone to the north of Downtown should still preserve (and expand) pedestrian sidewalks, but, due to the utility easement adjacent to Main Street, will continue to have larger setbacks from Main Street.

² Not precisely perpendicular, or straight, streets

³ For example, it is much more difficult to introduce an incremental change of use into a cul-de-sac pattern.

DOWNTOWN POLICIES

1. The objective for Winter Park's Downtown is to create a pedestrian-oriented core area that has vitality, visual interest, and diversity. To accomplish this, the Town will encourage facilities, activities and development in and near the Downtown that will attract guests and residents.
2. The Town encourages a high quality of design for the downtown that will bring an overall consistency (not theme) that will provide an identifiable character to Winter Park's key commercial area
3. Road alignments suggested in the Town Plan are conceptual desire lines subject to verification of local physical and environmental conditions and dimensions required for marketable lot depths and widths.

DOWNTOWN ACTIONS

1. Conduct a detailed study to refine the road plan for the Downtown relative to future utility alignment requirements (utility master plan).
2. Work with private land owners to acquire the ROW needed for utilities so that they also accommodate road and alley needs.
3. Working with adjacent landowners, do detailed design studies of feasibility “main street” option, (Alternative B). Present results to Planning Commission and Council for decision regarding Alternative A or B.
4. Research possible incentives/approaches to encourage infill development of downtown.
5. Convene a “Downtown Symposium” to review results with merchants and property owners and make recommendations.

5.6 LOCATION OF KEY PUBLIC FACILITIES

There are a number of new public and semi-public facilities being considered for the next 5 to 10 years. The location of these facilities can do much to stimulate Downtown development and reinforce the Downtown land use concepts described in Section 5.3.

5.6.1 GONDOLA/MULTI-MODAL TERMINAL

As currently envisioned, the north end of the gondola connection would terminate at a location in the Downtown. The downtown terminal will need to function as a multi-modal facility, accommodating cars, buses and pedestrian traffic. The location of the multi-modal facility will have a significant impact on the form and function of the Downtown. Based on the simple criterion of a relatively straight alignment, there appear to be two general locations for a Downtown gondola multi-modal terminal (see Figure 5-9). In order of priority they are:

1. West of Main Street::
 - At the west end of the parking structure (near the current Town Hall),
 - Northwest of Cooper Creek Square (adjacent to Lion's Gate Drive), or
 - South of the Lions Gate Drive/Vasquez Road Intersection,
2. East of Main Street, south of Vasquez Road.

Additional study will be required to verify which of the locations will be most feasible and effective. The terminal will require from 3 to 9 acres (range is related to parking capacity). Any of the first choice locations can take advantage of the existing Town parking structure (designed to hold one additional level) and will generate a greater pedestrian benefit to the Downtown as a whole.

GONDOLA TERMINAL POLICIES

1. The Town desires a gondola base location (multi-modal station) in the core area in order to maximize the benefit to the community (residents, merchants and guests) and the Resort. (The multi-modal transportation hub)

GONDOLA TERMINAL ACTIONS

1. Evaluate, with the Resort, the best location for a gondola terminal in downtown.
2. Evaluate, with the Resort, the feasibility of timing (bed base, ski area expansion) for a gondola.

5.6.2 TOWN HALL

The current Town Hall has outgrown its present facility both in size and function. The offices (at the west end of the parking structure) are cramped and the Council Chambers meeting space is small. An additional consideration is the facility's lack of visibility.

The Town Council has determined that the Town Hall will remain in its current location, with remodeling and expansion to meet community and staffing needs. However, if redevelopment of this area of downtown (Vasquez Road to Midtown Road and Main Street to Lions Gate Drive) were to occur, the current Town Hall structure might be used for a different purpose.

If the Town Hall were to be relocated in the future, there are four potential locations for a Town Hall facility (see Figure 5-10):

- Location 1. On Town-owned land on the east side of Hideaway Park, fronting on either Midtown Road or Ski Idlewild Road. This site has been earmarked as the preferred location for a possible amphitheater.
- Location 2. North of the existing Town Hall, perhaps fronting on Lions Gate Drive;
- Location 3. Attached to the Chamber of Commerce building (owned by the Town) on the south side of Midtown Road.
- Location 4. At the southeast corner of Main Street and Vasquez Road.

Location 1 provides desirable visibility, excellent drive-up access and is owned by the Town. A town hall in this location would help begin the process of expanding the downtown to the east. Being immediately adjacent to Hideaway Park suggests a public/semi-public use rather than private, commercial development. The Town Hall in this location would need to be a two-sided building, fronting on both the park and Ski Idlewild Road. It could be developed as a mixed-use project (Commercial plus Town offices) in partnership with a private developer. The negative of Location 1 is that it is a little farther from the Downtown, and will generate little spin-off pedestrian traffic for the Downtown.

Location 2 could be a partial catalyst for infill development north of Cooper Creek Square. The Town Hall could be part of a mixed use building (such as located on the second floor above ground floor shops). Fronting the Town Hall on Lions Gate Drive would give both visibility and vehicular access, while it would also be accessible via future pedestrian ways to Cooper Creek and Main Street. The negative of Location 2 is that the Town Hall would be usurping land that might eventually be needed, and better suited, for commercial uses.

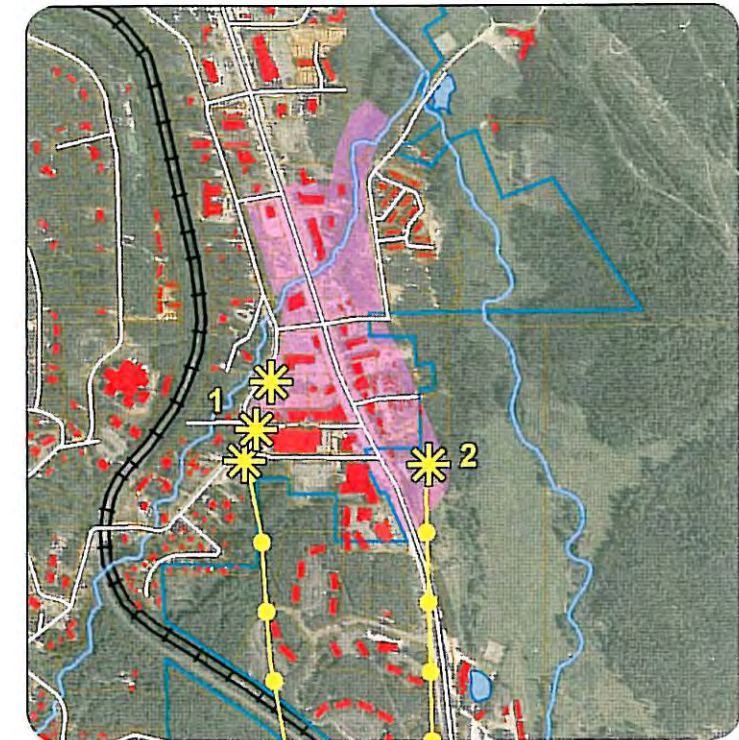


FIGURE 5-9

Potential gondola/multi-modal terminal locations.

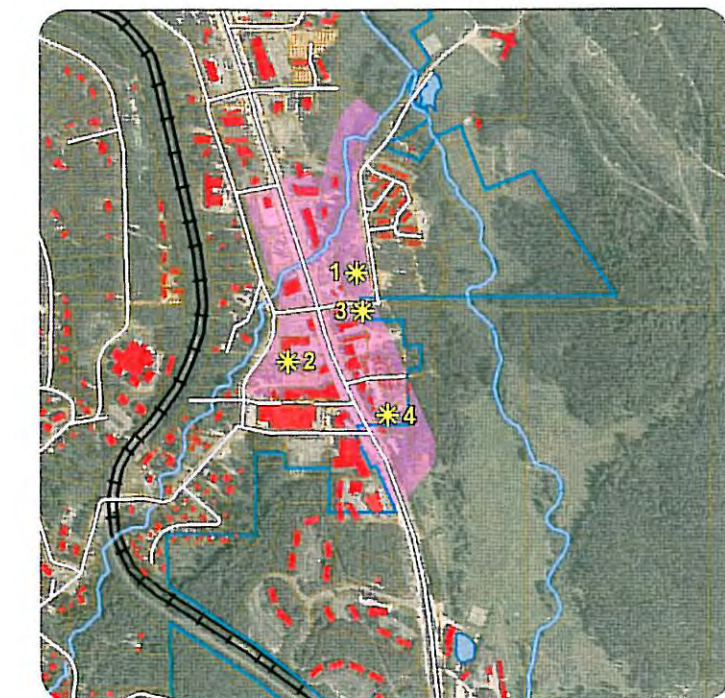


FIGURE 5-10

Potential Town Hall locations.

Location 3 would require the Town Hall to be built as an addition to the east side of the Chamber building, probably on or over the parking area. Additional study would be necessary to verify that this site can accommodate the building and needed parking. This location is central to the Town, but has less visibility from Main Street.

Location 4 is near the south entry to Town and would have high visibility. The site is currently occupied by a small one-story structure. The site slopes to the east and might allow offices or parking under the entry level of the building. The negative of Location 4 is that it displaces a potential high-visibility commercial use.

Regardless of its location, the design of the new Town Hall should be sized to accommodate both water and sanitation districts as well as the police force. The Town Hall design will be an opportunity to further demonstrate the “contemporary mountain rustic” theme of the design guidelines, including large log timbers and field stone walls similar to those found in the bridge and park structures at Hideaway Park.

TOWN HALL POLICIES

1. The Town Hall should be located in or near the core area of the Downtown.
2. The Town Hall should be a visible ‘icon’ in the community, that is, be in a visible location and have a distinctive design
3. The Town Hall should have space to accommodate future police services and both water and sanitation districts.

TOWN HALL ACTIONS

1. Update the Town Hall ‘building needs’ assessment to verify the size of the new Town Hall spaces and associated parking needs.

5.6.3 CONFERENCE CENTER

A convention center feasibility study⁴ was completed for the Town in 1999. Arising out of Town Council discussions about ways to increase year-round visitations, the study analyzed the feasibility of a hypothetical conference center/resort hotel facility to be located in Beaver Village. The premise was that the Town would develop the conference facility in conjunction with, and as an inducement to, a developer constructing an adjacent hotel facility.

After examining competitive and comparable facilities throughout Colorado⁵, the study concluded that such a facility in Winter Park “would” be able to compete aggressively for skier/tourist/transient and meeting/conference/group demand currently existing, and anticipated to exist in the future, in Winter Park as well as in the Rocky Mountain region resort market.”

Potential locations, (Figure 5-11) for a conference center/lodge facility include:

Location 1, at Beaver Village, was acknowledged in the 1999 feasibility analysis as well-suited for a conference facility due to its proximity to both Downtown (1/2 mile) and the Resort (1.5 miles), good highway access and good visibility from the highway. To those criteria could also be added the proximity of the Fraser River, a benefit for almost any type of resort development.

Location 2 has the advantage of a superb natural setting, but the disadvantages of a less visible/accessible location (until River Road is constructed), and greater (prohibitive?) walking distance to the Downtown.

Location 3 has the advantages of being in the heart of the Downtown and being within 500’ (comfortable walking distance) of the existing parking structure. Its major disadvantage is the relatively small amount of land available—which would likely require either a very creative, structured solution or a reduction in the size of the facility.

It is not clear whether the current market conditions will still justify the facility analyzed in 1999. Prior to making a significant public financial commitment to a convention center facility, an updated feasibility study is needed. The update should address current demand for a conference facility, the market competition, and should reaffirm the appropriate size and potential cost/benefit of a convention center/hotel facility.

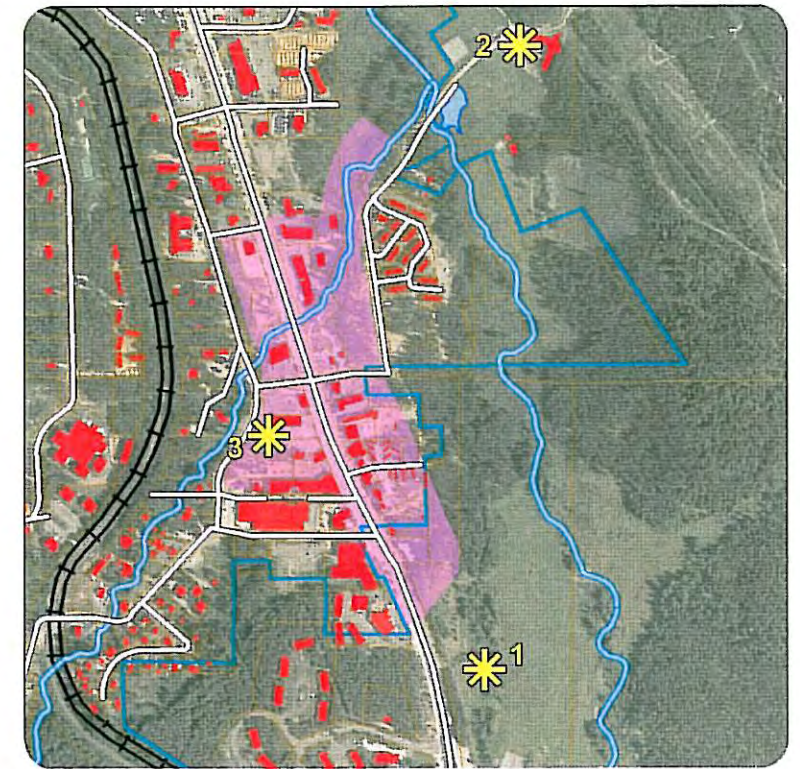


FIGURE 5-11
Potential conference center / hotel sites.

TABLE 5-1: BREAKDOWN OF PROPOSED NEW FACILITY

Hotel	Conference Center
225 guest rooms	6,000 to 8,000 s.f. of open floor space
Restaurant, lobby lounge and guest bar	7,000 s.f. of 1st class meeting rooms
Indoor/outdoor pool and spa	2,500 s.f. of office and common area
Exercise/athletic facility	3,000 s.f. of commercial kitchen
2,000 to 5,000 square feet of retail space	

Note: The facility was assumed to include free shuttle service to both the Resort and downtown.

⁴ Horvath Hospitality Consulting/Montgomery Associates, Market Study and Prospective Financial Analysis for the Proposed Full-Service 225-room Resort Hotel, November 1999.

⁵ Breckenridge, Keystone, Beaver Creek, Vail, Mt. Crested Butte, Steamboat Springs, Snowmass, Durango, Telluride as well as other facilities in Winter Park.

CONFERENCE CENTER POLICIES

1. The Town feels that a conference center hotel facility should be developed in or adjacent to the core area of Town.
2. The Town will respond to, and cooperate with (on a first-come basis), any developer that brings forth a feasible proposal for any of the three potential convention center sites.
3. The Town is willing to contribute a significant portion of the cost of a convention center if a suitable partner can be found to assure the development of the hotel and ancillary facilities.

CONFERENCE CENTER ACTIONS

1. In conjunction with one or more potential developer/partners, require (and possibly participate in) an update of the hotel/convention center feasibility study. Conduct the feasibility study in two phases. Phase 1 to address basic competitive factors and ingredients of a successful facility. If the results of Phase 1 are positive, proceed in Phase 2 to identify the pros and cons of a specific location and configuration.
2. Solicit expressions of interest from potential developers of a hotel/convention center facility.

5.7 DESIGN REGULATIONS AND GUIDELINES

The Town adopted design regulations and guidelines for the Town in 1994. The guidelines address primarily building massing, character and placement issues. The guidelines have been a valuable tool for establishing a new image for the Downtown. Among other things, they prescribe that new buildings front relatively close to streets and street corners, with parking placed behind the buildings in order to create a continuous, pleasant walking environment.

There are a number of deficiencies in the Design Regulations and Guidelines that need to be addressed to provide truly effective guidance for future design. For example, they do not address in any detail landscape and streetscape design. These elements can have an immediate unifying impact on the visual character of the downtown.

In spite of this, the Town has in fact created some very handsome landscape and streetscape structures (median planters, Vasquez Creek bridge, Hideaway Park structures). However, there is no formal design guideline to assure the consistency of future improvements. Also, some of the streetscape improvements in the downtown (crosswalk paving, curbside

planters, benches) could benefit from guidelines that would raise the level of streetscape design to the level of quality found at other resort communities.

5.7.1 CREATING ENCLOSURE

One of the biggest challenges in the Downtown is to overcome the width of Main Street—both the broad extent of pavement and the resulting building separation from one side to the other that creates a lack of ‘enclosure’, that makes the Main Street corridor less desirable as a walking experience.

‘Enclosure’ is a subtle but important characteristic that contributes to the “comfortableness” of outdoor urban spaces. Pedestrian streets are “outdoor rooms” whose walls are formed by building facades. Empirical studies have shown that there are common characteristics between the outdoor urban spaces that people find desirable.⁶ Generally, an exterior enclosure is most comfortable when the “walls” (heights of the surrounding buildings) are equal to ½ the width of the space (1/2:1 ratio). As the height of the “walls” approaches being equal to the width (1:1 ratio) a space tends to feel to most people to be “canyon-like”. As the ratio decreases to ¼:1 or less, the space tends not to feel enclosed at all. This latter condition is characteristic of Main Street today.

Until economic conditions bring about additional buildings to create enclosure, the most effective interim tool to bring about enclosure to Main Street will be street tree planting. Some street tree planting/preservation has already occurred at the north end of town and the impacts can easily be seen. Additional planting (evergreen as well as deciduous) in the core area of the downtown will make an immediate, strong impact on the character of the downtown.

5.7.2 ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER

In opinion surveys and public input, the diversity of the Downtown is perceived as giving Winter Park a “real” character (as distinguished from the artificial themes of other resorts).⁷ The Downtown today appears in reality to be a collection of many themes—from log cabin siding to urban brick buildings, and everything in between.

The Design Regulations and Guidelines address this problem by recommending that the architectural goal for the Downtown is to avoid emulating the architecture of a specific period or location (such as Southwest adobe, Swiss alpine, and Classical styles). Rather, the desired character can perhaps be described as contemporary mountain rustic. The guidelines thus allow fairly broad latitude in style, as long as it doesn’t have a connotation of a specific time or place.

⁶ See Kevin Lynch, *City Sense and City Design*.

⁷ See SWOT’s and results of NWCCOG Community Survey (Pages 7-8).



FIGURE 5-12

An example of a distinctive, existing style for Winter Park’s street furniture.



FIGURE 5-13

The Town’s medians set a standard that should be followed in future streetscape improvements.



FIGURE 5-14

An example of evergreen tree planting to give ‘enclosure’ and mountain character to the Downtown.

The guidelines effectively encourage a number of basic design considerations such as: creating visual interest and transparency at the ground floor level, making entries visible, varying the wall planes and mass of the building, etc.

However, the design guidelines lack specificity about what constitutes the contemporary mountain rustic character. There are a number of illustrations that give impressions (showing heavy log columns, stone columns, rough timber lintels, etc.), but the essential elements are not labeled or described in the text. Also, there are contradictory illustrations (all glass elements when wood, stucco and masonry are suggested as the dominant materials). While there are some recent buildings in the Downtown that are attractive and appear to capture the character suggested in the guidelines (Chamber of Commerce, Coldwell Banker Real Estate office) there are sufficient ambiguities in the guidelines that could allow buildings that do not achieve the same character or quality.

The architectural character section of the current guidelines should be expanded slightly to bring greater clarification to what is meant by a non-theme image, and how that can be achieved while still preserving the architectural interest that a resort community needs.

DOWNTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES ACTIONS

1. Update the Design Regulations and Guidelines to:
 - a. Address streetscape considerations (decorative paving design, street trees and landscaping, benches and other street amenities, etc.). Suggestions:
 - i. Incorporate the ‘boulders and heavy timber’ character of the new medians, bridges and park structures so that their design character becomes a standard that will extend throughout town.
 - ii. Adopt the heavy timber furniture as a distinctive feature for Winter Park’s streetscapes.
 - iii. Develop guidelines for unit paving (brick) that blend multiple colors/shades of brick for a mottled texture as well as varied patterns (e.g. square, basket weave and herringbone—with soldier course edging,) for a richer character. Shape the decorative pavement areas to create formal geometric patterns (e.g. squares, rectangles, circles) in the sidewalk.
 - b. Refine the definition of “contemporary mountain rustic” architectural characteristics (through a public input process) to provide developers, Town staff and review boards with an enforceable set of criteria to assure consistency in the evolution of the “Winter Park” image, preserving vitality and visual interest while at the same time avoiding dramatic disparities in design.
 - c. Clarify to a greater degree the design differences between Zone I and Zone II, including developing a consistent landscape theme for the large setback created by the utility easement along the east side of US Highway 40 at the north end of town (an opportunity for a strong landscape entry statement)
 - d. Define appropriate colors and materials for both buildings and paving, so that there is greater direction for both property owners and design review boards.
 - e. Create distinctive crosswalks on Main Street at intersection corners as well as mid-block crossings.



FIGURE 5-15
Examples of the evolving ‘contemporary mountain rustic’ character in Winter Park.

6 RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS

6.1 EXISTING NEIGHBORHOODS

Winter Park has the potential for a major increase in residential development. There are a number of existing platted but undeveloped residential lots, of a wide range of sizes. There are several relatively large, undeveloped tracts within the Town and extensive land areas with potential for annexation, in all quadrants of the Town. This Town Plan has identified the opportunity, and need, to incorporate residential development in the core area of Town to increase the amount of housing within walking distance to the Downtown. The large proportion of existing second homes (approximately 73%), suggests that the Town needs to fully understand the fiscal implications of second home development in order to assure that development does not place demands on Town services that are disproportionate to the financial benefits to the community.

6.2 PRIMARY VS. SECOND HOMES

Second homes have had, and will continue to have, a significant impact on the Town. On average in Grand County, they are occupied for an average of only 20% (72 days per year)¹. Notwithstanding, they generate a significant source of total employment (Figure 6-1). Typically, however, their revenues are largely related to construction spending (e.g. in Eagle County 18.7 jobs are generated by construction of second homes vs. 1.8 jobs generated by the spending of second home residents).

Second homes also consume a significant amount of municipal services such as road repairs, snow plowing, safety patrols, water/sewer line maintenance—even when the units are not occupied.

In summary, the fiscal stimulus of second homes is relatively short-lived, and the demand on services is long-term.

The 2004, NWCCOG Winter Park community opinion survey revealed that approximately half of the second-home respondents anticipate using their second homes more in the future than in the past. Even discounting for natural optimism and wishful thinking, this could represent a shift toward more long-term residency in the community. The 2004 analysis suggests that conversion of second homes to retirement homes has a significant beneficial fiscal impact in terms of external revenues and jobs demand; only slightly less than the impact of initial construction².

¹ NWCCOG: *What's Driving the Mountain Economy? Planner's Resource Network Conference July 2004 Levy/HSG Presentation*
² *Ibid*

These conclusions need further verification and adaptation to specific communities, but they do represent a promising opportunity for Winter Park.

What are the implications?

- Increased occupancy by retirees will bring significant additional spending into the community.
- Improvements to make the Downtown more pedestrian-friendly will allow the Town to reap more benefits from increased local spending.
- Appeal to retirees is also related to maintaining the appearance and accessibility of Winter Park's natural setting: increased trails, access to the Fraser River, preservation of viewsheds, etc.

6.3 RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

In 1997, the Town developed guidelines for residential development. While reasonably complete, as with all guidelines, their effectiveness should be assessed from time to time, and they should be reviewed and updated to reflect current building standards, to remove outdated references and to insert missing illustrations.

The guidelines include a section on Forest Thinning and Fuels Management. According to the 2002 NWCCOG Winter Park Survey, there is strong interest and concern about the threat of wildfire, to which the Town could respond by expanding and emphasizing this section.

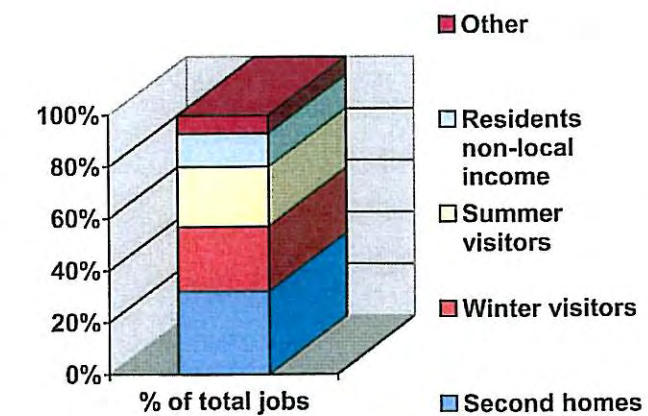


FIGURE 6-1
Relative economic contribution of various income sources.

6.4 AFFORDABLE HOUSING

One of the major challenges facing resort communities is providing adequate housing that is affordable to those that work in the community, especially at moderate to low-wage scales. Because housing limits the number of employees available, employers feel they are forced to pay premium wages.

Typically, housing in mountain resort communities is more expensive than non-resort mountain communities. This forces workers in the lower end of the income scale to commute long distances – unless provisions are made for close-in affordable housing.

A 2001 analysis of affordable housing needs in Winter Park concluded the following:

- There will be a significant demand for new employees related to new development – Resort base, Downtown commercial, residential. (An average of 100 jobs/year was estimated in 2001 – not including construction-related jobs)
- This will result in a need for an increase in affordable housing to people of low and moderate incomes. (Approximately 91 units/year was estimated in 2001)
- Some of the future demand will be met through other affordable housing projects in and near Winter Park (including Fraser and Tabernash).
- There will be a net unmet demand for affordable housing – especially when taking into consideration construction-related jobs. This demand will include both rental and ownership housing.

The Town currently levies an impact fee of \$3.00 per gross square foot of new construction (excluding parking garages and decks). A developer has the option of providing affordable housing or paying the fee-in-lieu. The proceeds from this impact fee are then used for affordable housing projects. At the time of the Town Plan, the Town had just commenced the Hideaway Junction project, which will offer “for sale”, deed-restricted affordable housing. It is located at the southwest corner of Lions Gate Drive and Kings Crossing Road, east of the Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way. The 40+ single family homes will range in square footage from about 1,700 to 1,900 square feet (including two car garages).

In light of the potential for significant new development (in-town and annexations), there is a very real potential of a gradually increasing, but significant, demand for affordable housing in the near future. It will begin with demands related to new construction. This may be followed by a lesser, but still increased, demand for commercial employment related to increased local expenditures at the Resort and in the Downtown. If there is an increase

in utilization of second houses as retirement homes, even for part of the year, this could result in even greater local expenditures, jobs, and resulting demand for housing for employees.

The affordable housing impact fee only partially covers the actual cost of providing housing for the employment demand generated by new development.³ However, it is an important tool in addressing the need. Additional study is warranted to identify affordable housing impacts, and then work with others collaboratively to help meet the needs, including employers, developers and the Grand County Housing Authority.

There are a wide variety of tools being employed by various communities to bring about affordable housing. Of these, possible strategies appropriate for Winter Park include:

- Local down payment assistance grants to first-time affordable home buyers;
- Joint ventures (providing public land to private developers)
- Taking advantage of federal grants and assistance (through housing authorities);
- Inclusionary zoning (requiring a percentage of a development to meet affordable targets);
- Incentives to achieve affordability targets (e.g. density bonuses, reduced fees and expedited approvals);
- Public/employer purchase of units;
- Requirements to provide housing for own employees;
- Take advantage of opportunities to inexpensively add apartment units ‘over-the-shops’ of commercial development.

In order for Winter Park to continue to be competitive among resort communities, both as a place to visit as well as to live and work, affordable housing needs to be monitored and addressed comprehensively.



FIGURE 6-2
Hideaway Junction is Winter Park’s first affordable housing subdivision constructed by the Town.

³ A cursory analysis suggests that it is below the actual cost for residential development and far below the cost for commercial.

RESIDENTIAL POLICIES

1. The Town will take a leadership, coordinating role in bringing about housing for a sufficient, affordable work force.
2. The cost of affordable housing should be equitably shared by the development that created the demand, and others that significantly benefit.
3. To avoid ‘enclaves’ of low-and-moderate income housing, wherever possible affordable housing should be integrated into market rate housing neighborhoods.
4. Affordable housing should be provided in house types that meet the needs of the range of family types of Winter Park workers: singles, couples, families, young, middle aged, elderly, including those with disabilities.
5. All potential resources and tools should be utilized to provide housing as cost-effectively as possible.
6. Affordable housing must be addressed in all annexations to the Town. In conjunction with annexations, in order of priority the Town desires:
 - a. constructed affordable housing units
 - b. land suitable for the construction of affordable housing

RESIDENTIAL ACTIONS

1. Collect and monitor data to track the impact of second homes on the community. This includes: visitor counts, construction costs, occupancy, expenditure surveys, retail leakage surveys, and quality of life measures.
2. Pursue introducing housing, including affordable housing, in the Downtown to increase vitality and activity. As new commercial development is proposed, explore/encourage incorporating affordable rental units and condominiums ‘over-the-shops’. Provide incentives for housing for a range of incomes in the Downtown area.
3. Update the residential design guidelines to remove outdated references, add missing illustrations, provide guidance for in-town housing types, and expand the section on wildfire mitigation.
4. Disseminate information on wildfire mitigation. Consider using available publications or create a publication using information from the design guidelines.
5. Do a detailed analysis of the impact and cost of providing affordable housing. Adjust impact fees as appropriate and feasible.
6. Review regulations and possible incentives to increase the participation of developers in creating and managing affordable housing (rather than impact fees and development by others).

7 RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

7.1 TRAILS

7.1.1 PAVED TRAILS

Many refer to Winter Park and the Fraser Valley as “Mountain Bike Capital, USA.”™ There are more than 600 miles of multi-use trails spread across the valley through peaceful meadows, past rushing streams and up rugged mountainsides. Winter Park offers a number of individual paved trail segments that are eventually planned to be expanded and interconnected into an extensive trail network that will extend from the Resort north through the Downtown to Fraser (and beyond)—as well as connecting to the back country mountain bike trails:

1. The **existing Fraser River Trail (FRT)** extends from Vasquez Road south to the Resort base area. Going south from Vasquez Road, the trail follows Highway 40 along the Beaver’s property and then winds eastward to the Fraser River and follows the river through the Lion’s Club campground, under Highway 40, along the Town’s Public Works facility and into Old Town where it joins Winter Park Drive to the Ski Resort base. This existing section of trail is approximately 3 miles long.
2. A **planned expansion of the Fraser River Trail** (Figure 7-1) will extend along the east side of the river from Downtown to the Resort. At the north end of Town it is planned to reconnect from the River to Main Street. It crosses to the west side of Main Street to join the Winter Park/Fraser bike path.
3. The **existing Vasquez Creek Trail** follows Vasquez Creek from Hideaway Park to Confluence Park. Vasquez Creek Trail crosses Vasquez Creek and provides accessible access to a fishing boardwalk on the Fraser River.
4. The **expansion of the Vasquez Creek Trail** extends to the confluence with the Fraser River where there is an accessible fishing boardwalk. With any annexation of the Idlewild property, the Vasquez Creek Trail is planned to connect with the Arapaho Trail within Rendezvous.

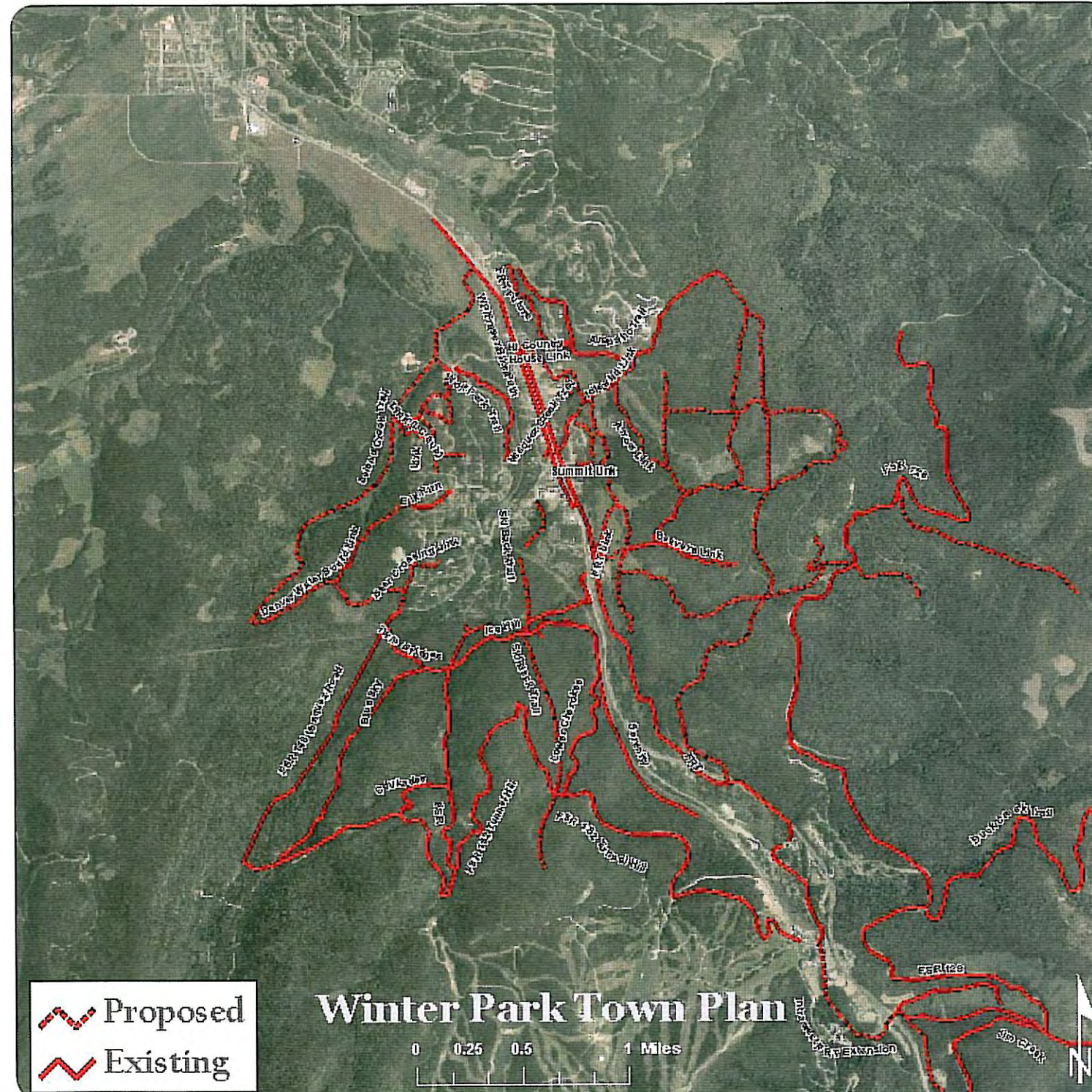


FIGURE 7-1
Existing and proposed Town trails.

5. The **existing Main Street Bike Path** extends along the west side of Main Street between Fraser and Winter Park. After it enters Winter Park it merges with the Main Street sidewalks.
6. The **existing Wolf Park Trail** extends from the south end of Wolf Park north along the east side of Kings Crossing Road almost to the crossing of the Denver & Rio Grande tracks.
7. The **planned expansion of the Wolf Park Trail** will cross to the west side of Kings Crossing Road and extend further north to intersect the proposed Leland Creek Trail.

TRAIL ACTIONS

1. Develop standards for dedication and construction of trails.
2. Assure that trails are part of the development review process.
3. Develop standards for dedication and construction of trails.
4. Assure that trails are part of the development review process.

7.1.2 UNPAVED BIKE TRAILS

Winter Park Resort offers top-to-bottom mountain biking for all levels. Riders, and their bikes, are transported to the summit of Winter Park mountain via the Zephyr Express chairlift. From there, riders have access to the Resort's 50 mile network of interconnected trails.

In addition to the mountain bike trails at the Resort and on USFS land, the following unpaved trails are planned in the overall Winter Park trail system:

1. The planned Leland Creek Trail is proposed to extend along the length of Leland Creek from Main Street south to the USFS boundary. The trail is planned to pass under the railroad tracks (north of the current Kings Crossing Road crossing) in conjunction with a new underpass being considered to replace the at-grade crossing at Kings Crossing Road. The trail will connect the Leland Creek Subdivision and the Elk Run Subdivision.
2. The planned Cornerstone Trail is proposed as a connecting link between the northwest quadrant of Winter Park and the Leland Creek Trail via a route through the Grand Park property connecting to Pine Cone Lane and/or Moose Trail.
3. The planned Denver Water Board Trail, also on the west side of Town, is proposed to connect from Elk Trail and/or Lake Trail westward through the Denver Water Board property to the Leland Creek Trail at the USFS boundary.



FIGURE 7-2

The entry to the Fraser River Trail near Vasquez Road.



FIGURE 7-3

Winter Park offers a number of individual trail segments that are eventually planned to be expanded and interconnected into an extensive trail network that will extend from the Resort north through the Downtown to Fraser (and beyond) – as well as connecting to the back country mountain bike trails.

7.2 PARKS

7.2.1 EXISTING PARKS

The Town currently has three parks: Hideaway Park, Wolf Park, and Confluence Park. Hideaway Park is located in the center of Town at Main Street and Midtown Road and serves as the Town's "Central Park". The formal part of the park is approximately 1.5 acres in size, with a pavilion, benches, restrooms, a playground, a small turf area, interpretive signage, and a path that leads northeastward to the Vasquez Creek greenway and trail (which connects to Confluence Park and the Fraser River Trail).

Wolf Park is an 11-acre linear, natural park bounded by Kings Crossing Road on the west and the D&RG railroad tracks on the east. It has parking, a picnic pavilion, tennis and volleyball courts, a playground and restroom facilities in the central portion of the park. The remainder of the park is in a wooded, natural condition. The Wolf Park Trail extends the entire length of the park (see Trails section).

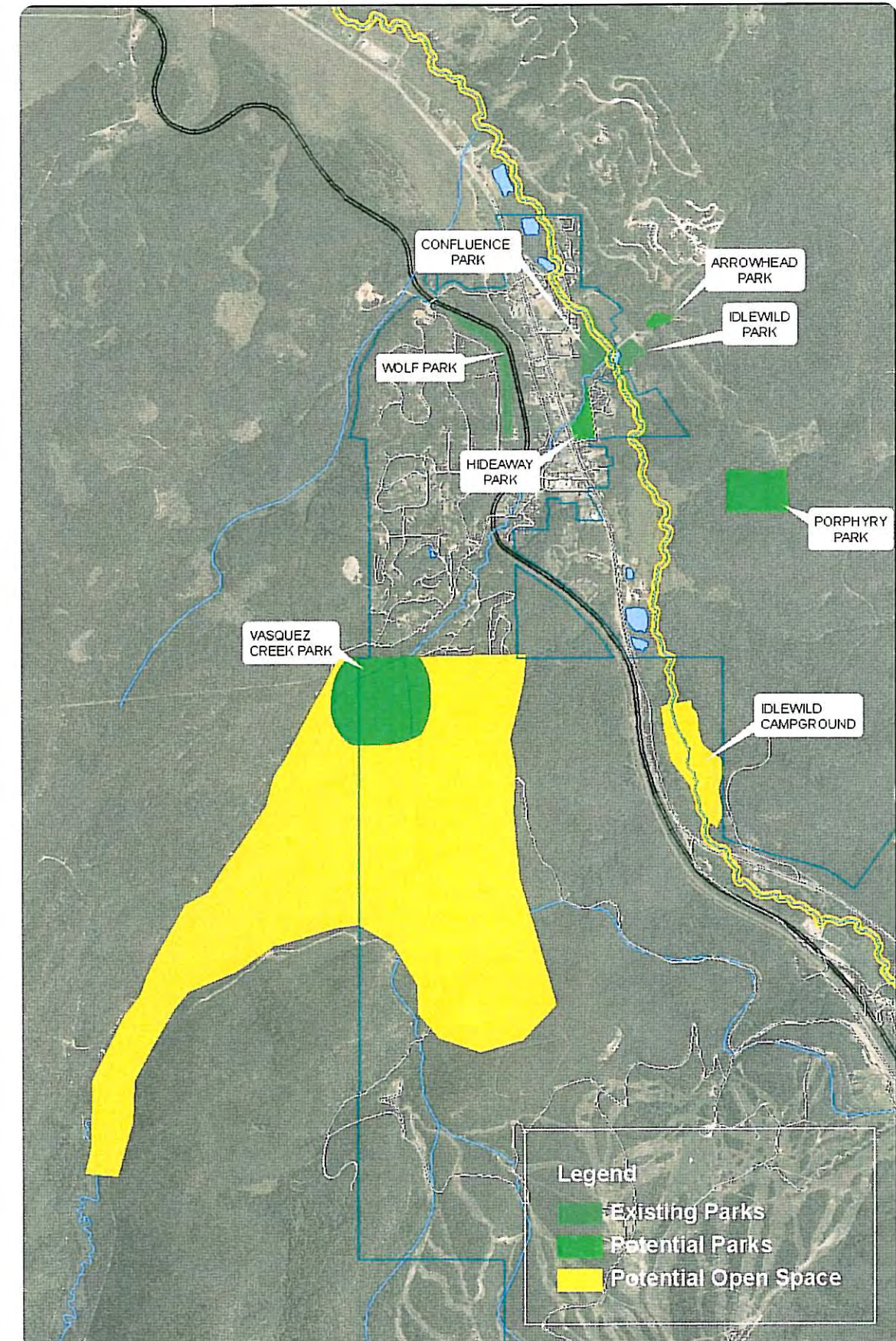
Confluence Park is located at the confluence of the Fraser River and Vasquez Creek. It includes a looped trail with an accessible segment of trail that accesses a fishing boardwalk along the Fraser River. Other improvements include a raised boardwalk, a new bridge, picnic tables, interpretive signage, and a wetland mitigation area.

7.2.2 FUTURE PARKS

As the Town grows, there will be a need for additional park facilities. New, larger developments will be required to provide neighborhood parks in conjunction with the open space dedication requirements of the subdivision ordinance. The Town must ensure that the properties dedicated for park uses are in fact usable for neighborhood recreation (sufficient flat terrain), accessible to the community, and that they are furnished and maintained in good condition.

Many resort communities have at least one large central park to accommodate turf sports such as soccer and softball, as well as community events such as concerts, art affairs, car shows, food festivals (i.e. Taste of Colorado), dog shows/events, family reunions, weddings, etc. Examples include Ford Park in Vail, Kingdom Park in Breckenridge, Aspen's Rio Grande Park, Telluride's Town Park and Park City's Miner's Park. These facilities are used for local play as well as to sponsor tournaments, and music and art festivals which bring additional visitations to the communities during the spring, summer and fall.

FIGURE 7-4
Winter Park existing and potential parks and open space.



With the expected growth in the community (including both year-round and seasonal-use homes), and the potential to take advantage of additional visitation at the Resort, Winter Park will be reaching the scale of these communities, and doesn't currently have a comparable parks facility. The Town should identify and reserve an area for a large park facility.

Future recreation needs of the Town include:

- Ice skating rink
- Amphitheater/gazebo/area for concerts
- Hill for sledding/tubing
- Turf fields for soccer/baseball
- Skate park
- Nordic Center

Park Option 1: Idlewild/High 80 Community Park

One area within the Town's 3-mile Planning Area that appears to meet the physical requirements for a large turf sports field is the former Ski Idlewild property on the east side of the Fraser River. In addition to a large open area (where the tennis courts are currently located), the property has many other amenities that make it well-suited for a large, multi-purpose park for a world-class ski community:

- Adjacency to the Fraser River;
- The old ski slopes of Ski Idlewild, which could be used for sledding and tubing (including night lighting)
- A small pond;
- Exceptional views to the south of James and Parry Peaks;
- Future access via the proposed River Road.

Figure 7-4 shows a potential setting for 'Idlewild Park'. Assembling some (or all) of the area shown will involve negotiations with multiple properties: VZF, Idlewild and Arrow. Portions of Idlewild and Arrow might be obtained in conjunction with open space dedication requirements associated with annexation. See Section 3.5 – Potential Annexations.

Park Option 2: Vasquez Creek Community Park

Another potential location for a major recreation facility is within the USFS Parcels A and B identified in Section 7.3.3 below. Public recreation uses are legitimate purposes for a land acquisition under Recreation and Public Purposes (R&PP) procedures of the federal government.

The advantage of this location is its pristine setting; the disadvantage is the distance from the Downtown and the potential impact of traffic on intervening neighborhoods.

Park Option 3: Scattered Recreation Sites

A third option for recreation facilities is to acquire smaller parcels in multiple locations. For example, some facilities could be incorporated into an expanded Hideaway Park, others could be developed in conjunction with Beavers, VZF, Idlewild, Arrow, Grand Park and the Denver Water Board properties. It is likely that this approach of individual, smaller parcels will be more flexible and easier to achieve (such as through the Town's annexation/subdivision process). However, the disadvantage of this approach is that facilities are scattered throughout the community and the synergy of a large complex is not achieved.

PARK POLICIES

1. The Town must ensure that the properties dedicated for park uses are in fact usable for neighborhood recreation (sufficient flat terrain), located within walking distance of a significant portion of residences, that they are served by trails, that they are adequately furnished and that provision is made for maintenance in perpetuity.

PARK ACTIONS

1. Prepare a detailed parks master plan that identifies land area requirements for various park needs, and then tests their suitability and impacts on various properties in the community.
2. Explore acquisition of some or all of the proposed 'Idlewild Park' through open space dedications and/or a land exchange for a portion of the Denver Water Board property on the west side of town.
3. Place fee-in-lieu contributions from future annexations into a fund for the development of the parks master plan.



FIGURE 7-5
Hideaway Park

7.3 OPEN SPACE

To some it may appear superfluous to be concerned about open space in a community that is mostly surrounded by a National Forest. However, there are a number of issues regarding preservation and use of several important natural areas in Winter Park.

7.3.1 THE FRASER RIVER

One of Winter Park's most important natural resources is the Fraser River. Like most mountain rivers, the Fraser River has a varied character—from meandering placidly through a tranquil meadow to tumbling through a narrow, boulder strewn channel in a deep woods.

Rivers are a unique resource, especially in a mountain resort community. They have magical, timeless, and attractive power. Most resorts that have rivers try to take advantage of them. In Winter Park, the Fraser River is somewhat accessible north and south of town. The southern portion of the Fraser River Trail follows alongside the river to the ski area.

In the Downtown area, the trail along Vasquez Creek at Hideaway Park was recently extended to the confluence with the Fraser River in the summer of 2005. However, in the rest of the Downtown, the Fraser River is a hidden and inaccessible asset—the only access and visibility of the river is at a few public road crossings. There are virtually no areas for the public to walk along it. Being largely located on private land, the remaining undeveloped sections of the river may potentially be developed in a manner that precludes it being a public amenity.

The Town has recently acquired several tracts of riparian areas near the confluence of the Fraser River and Vasquez Creek that are a good step toward beginning to address this concern. In addition, the Town has recently received and implemented a Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) grant to make improvements to the Fraser River corridor, which include aquatic habitat improvements, key trail extensions, interpretive signage, picnic area improvements and waterfowl nesting improvements.

However, there is still much to be done to allow the river to become a central amenity to the community. Section 5.5 describes the Town's goal of expanding the core area eastward toward, and on the east side of, the Fraser River. One of the most significant priorities identified in the Public Opinion Survey was the preservation of water quality and natural habitats. In conjunction with the expansion of the core area, the Town must also take measures to assure that the river corridor is protected as a riparian habitat, and that it is made accessible to the public where consistent with habitat protection.

7.3.2 IDLEWILD CAMPGROUND

South of Downtown, on the Fraser River is located the Idlewild Campground, managed by the US Forest Service. The Fraser River Trail accesses the campground and provides a connection to the Downtown. The campground area was considered as a potential site for a reservoir, but this land use has been rejected due to the presence of numerous ferns and high quality wetlands.

7.3.3 USFS PARCELS A & B

The Town has identified approximately 580 acres of forest land bordering Vasquez Creek and Little Vasquez Creek southwest of town as a potential area for watershed protection and a campground/community park.

The proposed land area is divided into two parcels, A and B. A portion of Parcel A, the northern parcel, is currently an informal camping area that has a higher summer use and is being negatively impacted by trash, human waste and is a detriment to water quality, erosion control, etc. If acquired by the Town, Parcel A would have a variety of public uses, including a Town park, and an improved camping area to reduce the amount of primitive camping and negative impacts from inadequate facilities. Additional uses could include a Nordic center (for winter snowshoeing and cross-country skiing) and summer mountain biking and hiking due to the proximity to existing trails. Portions of Parcel A and Parcel B (the southern portion of the property) are important to the Town's water supply: they comprise a significant portion of the watershed related to the Grand County Water and Sanitation District #1 treatment plants on Vasquez and Little Vasquez Creeks. It is in the Town's interest to obtain control of and manage these parcels. Furthermore, the Town has the close-by resources to provide adequate management of the watershed and the proposed park and campground facilities.

7.3.4 FOREST MANAGEMENT

Mountain Pine Beetle (MPB), Spruce budworm and the Spruce Beetle are the most catastrophic insect pests of Colorado's forests. Periodic outbreaks of the insect can result in losses of millions of trees. The Pine Beetle is currently having an epidemic impact on the forests near Winter Park. Scattered brown (dead) trees are beginning to appear in most forested areas, and they are spreading gradually, inexorably, in every direction. This not only has the potential of significantly increasing fire dangers, but also poses a direct threat to the Town's scenic backdrop, its visual quality and even tourism.

Most likely to be attacked are trees that are not growing vigorously due to old age, crowding, poor growing conditions, drought, fire or mechanical damage, root disease and other causes. Healthy trees are less attractive to beetles than trees under stress. Vigorously growing trees also have better defenses that allow them to 'pitch out' Pine Beetles. The most effective control appears to be quick removal of infected trees and thinning stands to promote healthy growth as well as yearly removal of standing dead.

US Forest Service policy, and the magnitude of the problem, prevents significant federal action, and so for most of the wide expanses of forested backdrop, the problem will continue to spread. However, the Town is taking action locally to limit the impact of the infestation on the trees close to Winter Park. Town citizens recently approved a ballot question creating a fund for forest management. The Town anticipates a multi-pronged effort: work with homeowners to remove dead and dying trees, work with the US Forest Service and others to thin and otherwise preserve healthy forests.

Cultural controls that promote tree health and spacing are the primary means to prevent MPB outbreaks. The best long-term means to minimize MPB losses is to thin trees. Consult a professional forester to select the best cultural practices for your land.

OPEN SPACE POLICIES

1. Maintaining the natural functions, aesthetics and sustainability of the Fraser River are of prime importance to the Town.
2. Public access to the Fraser River is a high priority of the Town, in locations and ways that are consistent with preserving riparian habitat.
3. Preserving a healthy forest is important to the health, safety and welfare of Winter Park residents.

OPEN SPACE ACTIONS

1. Identify areas along the Fraser River where public access (physical access and visual access) is consistent with sound habitat conservation.
2. Take aggressive steps to manage the forests in and near the Town to mitigate the impact of mountain pine beetles.



FIGURE 7-6

One of the many varied settings of the Fraser River.



FIGURE 7-7

Open space is a unique and important asset to Winter Park's character and appeal.

8 IMPLEMENTATION

POLICIES	ACTIONS
TOWN PLAN IMPLEMENTATION POLICIES	TOWN PLAN IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. After adoption of the Town Plan, the Town will maintain consistency between the Town Plan and the Zoning Map. Rezoning will be consistent with the Town Plan. If a proposed rezoning will not be consistent with the Town Plan, the Town Plan must be amended prior to the rezoning. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Since this Town Plan represents current Town directions, with regard to land use, upon adoption of the Town Plan, amend the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Map to be consistent with the Town Plan.
GONDOLA POLICIES	TRANSPORTATION ACTIONS
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Town currently believes that a gondola connection between the downtown and the ski area is highly desirable. A gondola will: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Allow public access to the forest with fewer roads and parking required on public land (mountain biking and hiking), 2. The gondola should be implemented as part of any future Vasquez Main Mountain expansion. 3. The Town is willing to participate in the funding of the gondola. 	GONDOLA ACTIONS
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Town currently believes that a gondola connection between the downtown and the ski area is highly desirable. A gondola will: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Allow public access to the forest with fewer roads and parking required on public land (mountain biking and hiking), 2. The gondola should be implemented as part of any future Vasquez Main Mountain expansion. 3. The Town is willing to participate in the funding of the gondola. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Commission a comprehensive transportation master plan to address the transportation needs of the Town, the Resort and the Fraser Valley (at least to Fraser).
DOWNTOWN POLICIES	GONDOLA ACTIONS
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The objective for Winter Park's Downtown is to create a pedestrian-oriented core area that has vitality, visual interest, and diversity. To accomplish this, the Town will encourage facilities, activities and development in and near the Downtown that will attract guests and residents. 2. The Town encourages a high quality of design for the downtown that will bring an overall consistency (not theme) that will provide an identifiable character to Winter Park's key commercial area 3. Road alignments suggested in the Town Plan are conceptual desire lines subject to verification of local physical and environmental conditions and dimensions required for marketable lot depths and widths. 	DOWNTOWN ACTIONS
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The objective for Winter Park's Downtown is to create a pedestrian-oriented core area that has vitality, visual interest, and diversity. To accomplish this, the Town will encourage facilities, activities and development in and near the Downtown that will attract guests and residents. 2. The Town encourages a high quality of design for the downtown that will bring an overall consistency (not theme) that will provide an identifiable character to Winter Park's key commercial area 3. Road alignments suggested in the Town Plan are conceptual desire lines subject to verification of local physical and environmental conditions and dimensions required for marketable lot depths and widths. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assure that a gondola is included in updates of the Resort master plan, the Forest Service EA/EIS and the Winter Park Resort Master Plan. 2. Continue feasibility studies to determine the gondola alignment. 3. Encourage the ski area to impose its own real estate transfer assessment to help finance the gondola implementation. 4. Work with the Resort to identify potential funding mechanisms and 'partnershiping' in the gondola implementation process.
GONDOLA MULTI-MODAL TERMINAL POLICIES	DOWNTOWN ACTIONS
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Town desires a gondola base location (multi-modal station) in the core area in order to maximize the benefit to the community (residents, merchants and guests) and the Resort. (The multi-modal transportation hub) 	GONDOLA MULTI-MODAL TERMINAL ACTIONS
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Town desires a gondola base location (multi-modal station) in the core area in order to maximize the benefit to the community (residents, merchants and guests) and the Resort. (The multi-modal transportation hub) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct a detailed study to refine the road plan for the Downtown relative to future utility alignment requirements (utility master plan). 2. Work with private land owners to acquire the ROW needed for utilities so that they also accommodate road and alley needs. 3. Working with adjacent landowners, do detailed design studies of feasibility "main street" option, (Alternative B). Present results to Planning Commission and Council for decision regarding Alternative A or B. 4. Research possible incentives/approaches to encourage infill development of downtown. 5. Convene a "Downtown Symposium" to review results with merchants and property owners and make recommendations.
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Town desires a gondola base location (multi-modal station) in the core area in order to maximize the benefit to the community (residents, merchants and guests) and the Resort. (The multi-modal transportation hub) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Evaluate, with the Resort, the best location for a gondola terminal in downtown. 2. Evaluate, with the Resort, the feasibility of timing (bed base, ski area expansion) for a gondola.

TOWN HALL POLICIES	TOWN HALL ACTIONS
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Town Hall should be located in or near the core area of the Downtown. 2. The Town Hall should be a visible 'icon' in the community, that is, be in a visible location and have a distinctive design 3. The Town Hall should have space to accommodate future police services and both water and sanitation districts. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Update the Town Hall 'building needs' assessment to verify the size of the new Town Hall spaces and associated parking needs.
CONFERENCE CENTER POLICIES	CONFERENCE CENTER ACTIONS
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Town feels that a conference center hotel facility should be developed in or adjacent to the core area of Town. 2. The Town will respond to, and cooperate with (on a first-come basis), any developer that brings forth a feasible proposal for any of the three potential convention center sites. 3. The Town is willing to contribute a significant portion of the cost of a convention center if a suitable partner can be found to assure the development of the hotel and ancillary facilities. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In conjunction with one or more potential developer/partners, require (and possibly participate in) an update of the hotel/convention center feasibility study. Conduct the feasibility study in two phases. Phase 1 to address basic competitive factors and ingredients of a successful facility. If the results of Phase 1 are positive, proceed in Phase 2 to identify the pros and cons of a specific location and configuration. 2. Solicit expressions of interest from potential developers of a hotel/convention center facility.
DESIGN REGULATIONS AND GUIDELINES POLICIES	DESIGN REGULATIONS AND GUIDELINES ACTIONS
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Update the Design Regulations and Guidelines to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Address streetscape considerations (decorative paving design, street trees and landscaping, benches and other street amenities, etc.). Suggestions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Incorporate the 'boulders and heavy timber' character of the new medians, bridges and park structures so that their design character becomes a standard that will extend throughout town. ii. Adopt the heavy timber furniture as a distinctive feature for Winter Park's streetscapes. iii. Develop guidelines for unit paving (brick) that blend multiple colors/shades of brick for a mottled texture as well as varied patterns (e.g. square, basket weave and herringbone—with soldier course edging,) for a richer character. Shape the decorative pavement areas to create formal geometric patterns (e.g. squares, rectangles, circles) in the sidewalk. b. Refine the definition of "contemporary mountain rustic" architectural characteristics (through a public input process) to provide developers, Town staff and review boards with an enforceable set of criteria to assure consistency in the evolution of the "Winter Park" image, preserving vitality and visual interest while at the same time avoiding dramatic disparities in design. c. Clarify to a greater degree the design differences between Zone I and Zone II, including developing a consistent landscape theme for the large setback created by the utility easement along the east side of US Highway 40 at the north end of town (an opportunity for a strong landscape entry statement) d. Define appropriate colors and materials for both buildings and paving, so that there is greater direction for both property owners and design review boards. e. Create distinctive crosswalks on Main Street at intersection corners as well as mid-block crossings.

RESIDENTIAL POLICIES	RESIDENTIAL ACTIONS
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Town will take a leadership, coordinating role in bringing about housing for a sufficient, affordable work force. 2. The cost of affordable housing should be equitably shared by the development that created the demand, and others that significantly benefit. 3. To avoid 'enclaves' of low-and-moderate income housing, wherever possible affordable housing should be integrated into market rate housing neighborhoods. 4. Affordable housing should be provided in house types that meet the needs of the range of family types of Winter Park workers: singles, couples, families, young, middle aged, elderly, including those with disabilities. 5. All potential resources and tools should be utilized to provide housing as cost-effectively as possible. 6. Affordable housing must be addressed in all annexations to the Town. In conjunction with annexations, in order of priority the Town desires: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. constructed affordable housing units b. land suitable for the construction of affordable housing 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Collect and monitor data to track the impact of second homes on the community. This includes: visitor counts, construction costs, occupancy, expenditure surveys, retail leakage surveys, and quality of life measures. 2. Pursue introducing housing, including affordable housing, in the Downtown to increase vitality and activity. As new commercial development is proposed, explore/encourage incorporating affordable rental units and condominiums 'over-the-shops'. Provide incentives for housing for a range of incomes in the Downtown area. 3. Update the residential design guidelines to remove outdated references, add missing illustrations, provide guidance for in-town housing types, and expand the section on wildfire mitigation. 4. Disseminate information on wildfire mitigation. Consider using available publications or create a publication using information from the design guidelines. 5. Do a detailed analysis of the impact and cost of providing affordable housing. Adjust impact fees as appropriate and feasible. 6. Review regulations and possible incentives to increase the participation of developers in creating and managing affordable housing (rather than impact fees and development by others).
TRAIL POLICIES	TRAIL ACTIONS
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop standards for dedication and construction of trails. 2. Assure that trails are part of the development review process. 3. Develop standards for dedication and construction of trails. 4. Assure that trails are part of the development review process.
PARK POLICIES	PARK ACTIONS
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Town must ensure that the properties dedicated for park uses are in fact usable for neighborhood recreation (sufficient flat terrain), located within walking distance of a significant portion of residences, that they are served by trails, that they are adequately furnished and that provision is made for maintenance in perpetuity. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepare a detailed parks master plan that identifies land area requirements for various park needs, and then tests their suitability and impacts on various properties in the community. 2. Explore acquisition of some or all of the proposed 'Idlewild Park' through open space dedications and/or a land exchange for a portion of the Denver Water Board property on the west side of town. 3. Place fee-in-lieu contributions from future annexations into a fund for the development of the parks master plan.
OPEN SPACE POLICIES	OPEN SPACE ACTIONS
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintaining the natural functions, aesthetics and sustainability of the Fraser River are of prime importance to the Town. 2. Public access to the Fraser River is a high priority of the Town, in locations and ways that are consistent with preserving riparian habitat. 3. Preserving a healthy forest is important to the health, safety and welfare of Winter Park residents. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify areas along the Fraser River where public access (physical access and visual access) is consistent with sound habitat conservation. 2. Take aggressive steps to manage the forests in and near the Town to mitigate the impact of mountain pine beetles.

9.1 ANNEXATION POLICIES

9.1.1 TYPES OF ANNEXATIONS

Three types of annexation are contemplated:

- Type I—Annexation with vesting pursuant to a Planned Development zone designation.
- Type II—Annexation with vesting pursuant to use-by-right Zoning
- Type III—Annexation with Zoning without vesting, but with use-by-right Zoning.

9.1.2 ANNEXATION PETITION

An Annexation Petition must be provided in accordance with C.R.S. 31-12-102 and be accompanied by one of the following:

- Type I - a Preliminary Development Plan pursuant to Section 7-7 of the Town Code (if Planned Development zoning with vesting is requested)
- Type II - an Annexation and Zoning Analysis (if use-by-right Zoning with vesting is requested).
- Type III - an Annexation and Zoning Analysis (if use-by-right Zoning without vesting is requested)

9.1.3 ANNEXATION AGREEMENT

Each annexation will be memorialized with an Annexation Agreement that will address not only the conditions of annexation, but also the implementation of the conditions. At a minimum, the Annexation Agreement should address the following:

- Zoning
- Density
- Open Space
- Phasing
- Miscellaneous annexation fees
- Affordable housing
- Impact fees
- Vesting
- Design Standards

9.1.4 ANNEXATION APPROVAL

The P&Z may recommend to the Town Council the Applicant's requested zoning. However, the Town Council has sole authority to determine appropriate zoning and the P&Z recommendation does not bind the Town.

An Annexation will become effective upon all of the following:

- Final approval of the Annexation Petition by the Town Council
- Recording of the Annexation Plat
- Recording of the Annexation Ordinance

9.1.5 VESTING OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS

Subject to a site specific development plan (for Type I and II annexations), the Town will consider vesting of property rights, as appropriate and of mutual benefit to the Town and the Applicant. Depending on the magnitude of the proposed development, for Type I and II annexations the Town will consider granting vested development rights for a period up to 10 years.

Although the Town will generally endeavor to treat annexations consistently, it is acknowledged that each annexation will have unique circumstances that warrant unique conditions and commitments.

If an applicant is granted Annexation based on a Preliminary Development Plan for a Planned Development District, if the subsequent Final Development Plan is not in substantial compliance with the Preliminary Development Plan, the Town is under no obligation to maintain the vested rights previously granted.

The establishment of vested rights under an Annexation agreement shall not preclude the application of Town regulations of general applicability (local improvement districts, codes, regional or state regulations).

The Town is not obligated to approve future subdivisions or building permits if adequate infrastructure services are not available.

9.1.6 LEGAL CHALLENGES TO ANNEXATION

The Town shall not be responsible if development of the annexed parcel is prevented or delayed for reasons beyond the Town's control.

The Town may choose not to defend against legal challenges to an annexation.

9.1.7 THIRD PARTY COSTS

The owner/developer will reimburse the Town for any 3rd party costs associated with review of the annexation application.

9.1.8 INFRASTRUCTURE

Developer is responsible for constructing, at developer's sole cost and expense, on- and off-site infrastructure improvements needed to accommodate impacts of the proposed development.

The design and construction of roads, driveways, power, utilities and drainage associated with the annexation are required to meet the design standards of the Town and all appropriate special districts and utility companies, unless otherwise accepted by the Town in the Annexation Agreement.

The Town may accept internal subdivision roads for dedication if the resulting development will provide adequate public benefits, financial or otherwise.

The Town, at its sole option, may choose to reimburse the landowner/developer for oversizing required by the Town, or consider creating a recapture area and recapture period (typically up to 10 years) to allow other properties to reimburse the annexing landowner/developer for reasonable costs incurred to install oversized infrastructure, the use of which will benefit other properties.

Developer shall convey to the Town and/or appropriate special district or utility company, at developer's sole expense, easements and ROW's for the installation, operation, maintenance, repair, and replacement of such infrastructure as necessary for said entity to provide service to the annexing property and the structures to be constructed thereon.

Type I and Type II annexation applications must be accompanied by proof of infrastructure service from the appropriate service provider.

9.1.9 OPEN SPACE

For Type II annexations, the proposed zoning plan must also indicate the general location of proposed open space with respect to the anticipated development areas.

The physical characteristics (size, shape, terrain, vegetation, etc.) of any open space intended to be Public must be acceptable to the Town.

Open Space areas (non-development zones) not conveyed to the Town must be managed by a single entity, such as a Homeowners Association or land trust.

For Type I and Type II annexations the initial application for subdivision plat approval of any portion of the annexing property shall include assurances of the dedication of the entire Open Space area.

For Type I annexations, all Open Space to be conveyed to the Town must be conveyed prior to the issuance of the first building permit.

For Type II annexations when it may be premature to designate specific open space for dedication (due to planning uncertainties), the Town may require the landowner/developer to convey title to *land equivalent* to the open space requirement, that will be held in escrow and later exchanged for specific dedications at the time of subdivision.

Any conveyance of any portion of the Open Space shall limit the use thereof in perpetuity to open space uses.

9.1.10 AFFORDABLE HOUSING

For annexations the landowner/developer will be required to provide Affordable Housing units on-site unless there is a significant public benefit to locate the Affordable Housing units elsewhere.

An annexing owner/developer may convey the ownership or management of his/her affordable housing units to a housing authority or other management entity acceptable to the Town.