

TOWN OF BRECKENRIDGE
OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMISSION
Monday, December 17, 2012
150 Ski Hill Road

- 5:30 Call to Order, Roll Call
- 5:35 Discussion/approval of Minutes – November 19, 2012
- 5:40 Discussion/approval of Agenda
- 5:45 Public Comment (Non-Agenda Items)
- 5:50 Staff Summary
- Trail Projects Update
 - Friends of Dillon Ranger District McCullough Gulch Trail Project Donation
- 5:55 Open Space
- State of the Open Space Report
 - Hoosier Pass Recpath Update
 - Town Council Update
 - January Meeting Date
- 7:30 Adjourn

For further information, please contact the Open Space and Trails Program at 970-547-3155 (Scott) or 970-453-3371 (Chris).

Memorandum

To: Breckenridge Open Space Advisory Commission
From: Open Space Staff
Re: December 17, 2012

Staff Summary**Trail Projects Update**

The seasonal trail crew finished work in late November, after a long and productive season. The Slalom Trail realignment project was completed, as well as the “dirty T” connection with the Upper Flume. Winter snowpack will help compact the new trails and prepare them for 2013 summer use. We appreciate the productivity of the 2012 trail crew. A season-end trail crew report is scheduled for the January BOSAC agenda.

Friends of Dillon Ranger District McCullough Gulch Trail Project Donation

As part of the Town’s grant program, Town Council approved a \$10,000 grant to fund the Friends of Dillon Ranger District’s 2013 McCullough Gulch Trail project, which will repair the upper portion of the McCullough Gulch Trail. The goal of the project is to clearly and sustainably define the popular trail to prevent the proliferation of steep social trails in the area. Council directed staff to draw the \$10,000 grant from the 2013 open space budget. The pro forma will be revised to include this donation.

Open Space and Trails**State of the Open Space Report**

As discussed at the previous BOSAC meetings, staff is presenting the final version of the State of the Open Space Report. Attached is the final draft of the report, which reflects recent BOSAC edits. This is a final draft, which is currently scheduled to be brought to Town Council on January 22, 2013.

Staff requests BOSAC review the attached report and answer the following questions:

- 1. Does BOSAC have any additional information needs to fully analyze this topic?*
- 2. Does BOSAC have any comments or suggestions to forward for the January Town Council discussion?*

Hoosier Pass Recpath Update

Recently, Summit County Government received a State Trails planning grant to develop a feasibility study for the Hoosier Pass Recpath. The County hired Belt Collins, a planning consultant from Boulder, to analyze the potential for a recpath alignment between Breckenridge and Alma. County staff and the consultants have hosted several stakeholder meetings and public open houses to evaluate the recpath concept, the results of which can be reviewed on the [County website](#). Please review this information in preparation for the BOSAC discussion.

The [Town Trails Plan](#), approved by both BOSAC and Town Council in 2009, identifies the Hoosier Pass Recpath as a priority to be evaluated and pursued. The Town has also contributed \$3,000 (50/50 cash and in-kind) to the County’s grant and feasibility study.

County staff will be available to present a status update and preliminary findings to BOSAC.

Staff requests BOSAC evaluate the provided information and answer the following question:

- 1. Does BOSAC have any questions or suggestions regarding the Hoosier Pass Recpath feasibility study?*

Town Council Update

Councilmember Ben Brewer will update BOSAC on recent Council discussions and decisions.

January Meeting Date

Is a quorum available for BOSAC's next meeting, Monday January 21, 2013, which is also the Martin Luther King holiday?

Roll Call

Jeff Cospolich called the November 19, 2012 BOSAC meeting to order at 4:06 pm. Other BOSAC members present included Chris Tennial, Devon O'Neil, Ben Brewer, Erin Hunter, Jeffery Bergeron and Jeff Carlson. Staff members present were Peter Grosshuesch and Chris Kulick. Gary Shimanowitz and Jeff Zimmerman from the Breckenridge Ski Resort were also in attendance.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes were approved as presented.

Mr. Bergeron – We need to put sign a sign across from skiers edge stating this is not the Quandary Peak Trailhead. (Staff – We will speak to Summit County Open Space about the possibility of installing this type of sign.)

Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved as presented.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Staff Summary

Cucumber Gulch Preserve Restoration

The Cucumber Gulch wetland restoration project was completed on time and under budget. Staff will continue to monitor the restoration sites to evaluate the long term effectiveness of the project.

Mr. Shimanowitz – This was a successful project that was the result of a great partnership between the Town and the Breckenridge Ski Resort.

Mr. Zimmerman – Great project between the two entities. It to ensure its long-term success will require continued cooperation and maintenance between the two entities.

Mr. Bergeron – Are there ongoing funds for monitoring and maintenance? (Mr. Grosshuesch – Yes, we will continue conducting our annual monitoring program and will be committed to maintenance when the need arises.)

Mr. Shimanowitz – We also worked with Tom Daugherty on other drainage and sediment issues on the ski resort itself.

Mr. Bergeron – Now that we have more direct drainage as opposed to sheet flow is there any way to buffer the water impact in the Gulch. (Mr. Shimanowitz - That is what we worked on with Tom.)

Mr. Cospolich – I am very happy with the outcome of this project.

Trail Projects

Three seasonal trail crew members are still working on 2012 trails and open space projects. Work has focused on X10U8 and Slalom Trails and fencing. The crew members will likely continue to work until the snowpack precludes productivity.

Mr. Bergeron –With the improved conditions and berms on moonstone I’m worried about it becoming a shuttle route? (Mr. Kulick – The rerouting and maintenance of the moonstone trail is the first step in creating a more user friendly system in the moonstone area. Long-term we will most likely be adding additional trails to separate ability levels and user groups. BOSAC will begin reviewing some these concepts next spring.)

Golden Horseshoe Cabin Cleanup

In cooperation with Summit County, five cabins on joint Town/County open space in the Golden Horseshoe were cleaned up in October. Contemporary garbage and debris was removed from all cabins, and efforts were made to “dry-in” the cabins to reduce rotting and extend the cabins’ life spans. Staff plans to fabricate and install signage to welcome users, inform them about the cabins’ ownership, address trash and vandalism issues, and reduce potential liability exposure. If the cabins attract overnight stays, yield activities that violate open space regulations (e.g. fires), or experience vandalism, staff will reevaluate the existing “open door” cabin policy.

The US Forest Service (USFS) has issued a decision notice on the proposed abandoned mine cleanup project in the Golden Horseshoe, as previously discussed with BOSAC. The USFS opted to complete the proposed cleanup of contemporary debris at many sites, and to also spare five structures in the Lincoln Townsite from removal so they can be further evaluated for management and interpretation by the Breckenridge Heritage Alliance (BHA). The BHA has indicated a willingness to consider maintaining the vacant structures, although no special use authorization has been issued.

Trail Equipment

This summer, the trails program purchased a mini tracked hauler for use in the construction and maintenance of the Town trails. Staff is now contemplating the purchase of a mini-skid loader, which would work well with the hauler and increase the trail crew’s productivity. The loader would require a capital expenditure of approximately \$30,000. Staff believes that this investment will increase efficiencies and improve long-term trail maintenance. There is still sufficient funding in this year’s trails budget line item to make the purchase.

Mr. Brewer – This isn’t replicating any machine we currently have? (Mr. Kulick – No, this is a unique piece of equipment for the Town. It will be owned by the Open Space Department but will be maintained by the Town’s fleet staff.)

Open Space and Trails

Open Space Program Metrics

Staff presented the State of the Open Space report, which summarizes many of the accomplishments of the Town’s open space program since its inception in 1997. Staff requested that BOSAC review the attached report and answer the following questions:

1. Does BOSAC have any clarifying questions regarding the information?

BOSAC – Had no clarifying questions

2. Does BOSAC have any additional information requests that are not covered in this report?

Mr. Cospolich – It would be interesting to see how some of our efforts compare to Aspen/ Pitkin County. (Mr. Kulick – We would be happy to provide that information to BOSAC at the next meeting.)

Ms. Hunter – We should release this report to the public and promote it through the newspaper, social media and other news sites. (Mr. Kulick – That is are long-term plan once Council is able to review the document and provide feedback.)

In-Town Open Space Discussion

Staff presented a preliminary review of Town’s current in-town open space. Staff’s goal was to provide BOSAC with available information during this November meeting, and then return with a final, more neighborhood-specific analysis for BOSAC’s December review. Based on the feedback provided by BOSAC, staff will present any findings to Council in January or soon thereafter.

Balancing acquisition priorities between in-town and out of town/Upper Blue properties has been discussed since the 1997 inception of the open space program. The original 1998 Open Space Plan stated:

“The Open Spaces Program will include properties within the Town boundary, and within the Upper Blue Basin, but with an emphasis on lands either within Town, or a short distance from Town boundaries. Special attention should be paid to land visible from Breckenridge, which, if developed, would adversely affect the scenic nature of Town.”(p. 12)

In 2007, the Open Space Plan was revised and the policy was revised to read as follows:

“The Open Space Program will include properties within the Town boundary, and within the Upper Blue Basin. Special attention should be paid to land visible from Breckenridge, which, if developed, would adversely affect the scenic nature of Town.” (p. 13)

This minor edit was made to recognize the growing backcountry properties (e.g. B&B) acquired and managed by the Town and County, while still articulating a balance between in-town and out of town/Upper Blue open space acquisitions.

Mr. Bergeron – as the Town ages we may face demands from people that will have special interest for programmed spaces in-Town.

Mr. Brewer - It is important to speak to individuals outside of the usual supporters of open space. This report conveys the story very succinctly to those not generally familiar with open space. By controlling 23% of all properties in-Town we have flexibility to positively shape the community.

Mr. Grosshuesch – In addition to the successes we have had and will continue to have through the Open Space program we have an aggressive agenda for parks development in the next couple years. This will include the snowplow park, five pocket parks along the Block 11 river segment and river restoration on McCain parcel.

Using the information provided in the attached State of the Open Space report and the staff presentation, please answer the following questions related to in-town open space:

1. ***Does BOSAC have any additional information needs to fully analyze this topic?***
2. ***Does BOSAC have any direction or comments in preparation for a final BOSAC discussion in December?***

Mr. Tennal – In regards to analysis a bit more direction from Council would be helpful.

Mr. Brewer – I think Council and BOSAC share the same vision on most issues but we might to look at few properties in-Town that could enhance the Open Space program.

Mr. O’Neil – We could make better use of historic resources for in-Town parks, such as the Milne Park and the Carter museum.

Mr. Cospolich – Because of our unique demographics and climate we shouldn’t use national standards for parks or open space.

Mr. Bergeron – I agree with Mr. Cospolich, due to our weather a lot of our active recreation space is indoors such as the Rec Center.

Cucumber Avian/Gondola Study

Staff presented findings from Dr. Christy Carello report entitled “*The effects of springtime gondola operation on avian populations in Cucumber Gulch, Breckenridge, Colorado.*” The report was commissioned by Town Council in partnership with the Breckenridge Ski Resort to evaluate any potential impacts that the earlier springtime operation of the gondola may have to area bird populations.

The report’s main findings are summarized as follows:

- Following the commencement of gondola operations, the total number of birds (abundance) decreased in the gondola corridor when compared to the control sites. This decrease in avian population abundance within the gondola corridor is consistent with results of the previous 2010 study, which was conducted two weeks later in the season for the July 1st start date.
- The late-arriving Cordilleran Flycatchers appeared to choose nesting sites in control areas over the gondola corridor, suggesting a preference for nesting sites away from the gondola alignment when the gondola is operational.
- The Wilson’s warbler population experienced a statistically significant decrease within the gondola corridor once the gondola became operational. This finding is consistent with the 2010 results, but does not indicate whether the birds vacated the gondola corridor only or a larger area such as the Preserve.
- Violet-green swallows attempted to nest in underside gondola cabin cavities, which subsequently moved when the gondola began summer operations.
- Dr. Carello strongly recommended that the Breckenridge Ski Resort take measures to preclude avian access to the underside gondola cavities to prevent the Violet-green Swallows from nesting in the gondola cavities, only to have the gondola move the nest site when in operation. This suggestion echoes BSR’s consultant Rick Thompson’s previous 2010 recommendation.

- No other management indicator species yielded a statistically significant decrease from the gondola operation.
- Dr. Carello also continues to recommend that gondola operations are limited during morning and evening timeframes, when crepuscular (active at dusk and dawn) species are feeding and nesting.

Staff requested BOSAC review the attached report and answer the following questions in preparation for staff's 11/27 Town Council presentation on the same topic:

1. Does BOSAC have any clarifying questions on the report's contents?

BOSAC – In general most members of BOSAC felt the report was vague and recommended having Christy on hand to give some clarity on to the report.

2. Does BOSAC have any recommendations for Council's consideration regarding this topic?

Mr. Cospolich - The watershed moment happened when the gondola went in and altered the habitat. (Mr. Carlson – That doesn't mean we shouldn't try to do anything.) Agreed.

Mr. Bergeron - I worry about how quantifiable this study is.

Mr. Carlson - I feel that the running of the Gondola does not appeal to birds. (Mr. Cospolich – Does that surprise anyone. I question if we should continue to spend a lot of money every year to study this?)

Mr. Brewer - I have a hard time figuring out where the birds actually are going, a few feet over or far away. I have concerns with birds nesting in the cabins.

Mr. Shimanowitz – We investigated the nesting issue and found no evidence of birds nesting in the cabins. We spoke with CWA the cabin manufacturer; there 37,000 of this particular model of cabin worldwide and they have never had any issues with nesting. We could have covers manufactured but it would be very expensive and would prohibit us from other maintenance and cleaning.

Mr. Carlson – Are the attendants that clean the cabins really looking for nests before they spray them out?

Ms. Hunter – I also have the same concerns as Mr. Cospolich with the same study being commissioned over and over again.

Mr. Carlson – All I can do is go with the information that is provided. Whether they are building nests or not the attraction the gondola provides seems detrimental to the birds because of energy expenditure they use to seek out unsuitable nesting sites.

Mr. Brewer – I agree with Mr. Carlson's concerns.

Mr. Bergeron – I feel the report is vague and wish Dr. Carello was on-hand to ask a few questions.

Mr. O'Neil – The report is pretty subjective and difficult to make decisions with the provided information.

Mr. Brewer – I agree the report is subjective.

Ms. Hunter – Couldn't the nesting issue whether it exists or not be solved by installing screens on the cabins.

Mr. Tennal – Is it a habitat issue or an operations issue in-terms of bird depopulation.

Mr. O'Neil – Statistically significant is used a lot in the report, which it may be due to the sample size, but the numbers don't point to a significant problem.

Mr. Bergeron – I don't think the money is wasted on these studies (Mr. Brewer – I agree).

Mr. Zimmerman – This is a very narrow study, a more meaningful study would be studying the larger context of the Gulch.

Mr. Brewer - Would we rather spend money on another study or fix the potential problem through collaboration with the ski resort. (Mr. Shimanowitz – We have reviewed Dr. Carrello's concerns and have found no evidence of there being any issues with nesting.)

Mr. Brewer – It seems risky to run if we have seen birds entering the cabin. I would like to see a cost estimate for screens and have Christy available for questions during the Council work session.

Town Council Update

Councilmember Ben Brewer updated BOSAC on recent Town Council agenda topics and direction, including the engagebreckenridge.com tool and 2013 capital projects.

Next Meeting

The next regularly scheduled meeting is on December 17, 2012 in the Administrative Conference Room at the Breckenridge Town Hall (150 Ski Hill Road).

Mr. O'Neil made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Mr. Carlson.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Jeff Cospolich, Chair



2012



10 of 18 OPEN SPACE & TRAILS

State of the Open Space Report

Photo credit: Liam Doran



**Open Space Program
At a Glance**

1996

Breckenridge voters approve 0.5% sales tax to fund open space acquisitions & management

\$240,000

Price of the Swan River Placer (AKA, the Sanitation District Parcel), the program's first purchase.

148

Size in acres of the Golden Gate Placer, the first joint purchase with Summit County Open Space

2000

Year the Cucumber Gulch Overlay Protection District was adopted

1,683

Number of acres jointly purchased with Summit County through the B&B Mines acquisition, the program's largest

4

Number of seasonal Trail Crew staff charged with maintaining the extensive trail network

59

Total number of joint acquisitions with Summit County Open Space

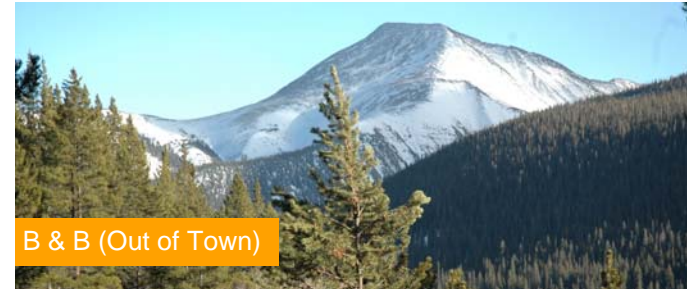
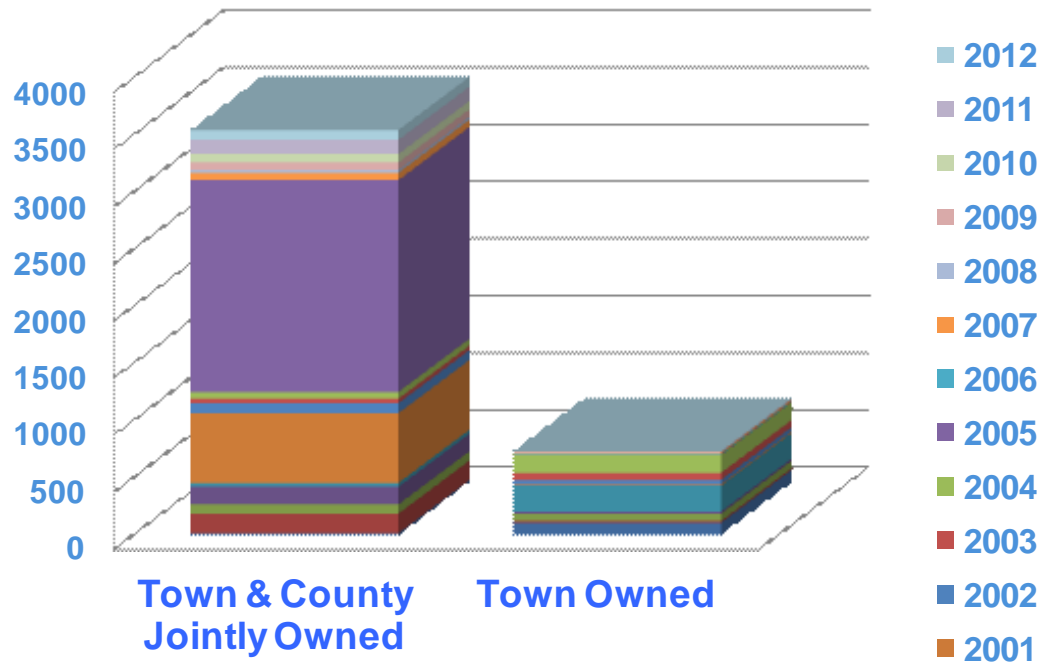
95

Total number of all open space acquisitions

Open Space Acquisitions

In 1996 a voter initiative passed which dedicated an additional 0.5% Town sales tax to open space acquisition and management. In the 16 years since its adoption, the Town's open space program has acquired a total of **4,155 acres** of property through purchases, land trades, dedications and joint purchases with Summit County Government. Of the 4,155 acres, 3,614 have been purchased and 541 acres have been acquired through land trades and dedications.

Open Space Acres Acquired

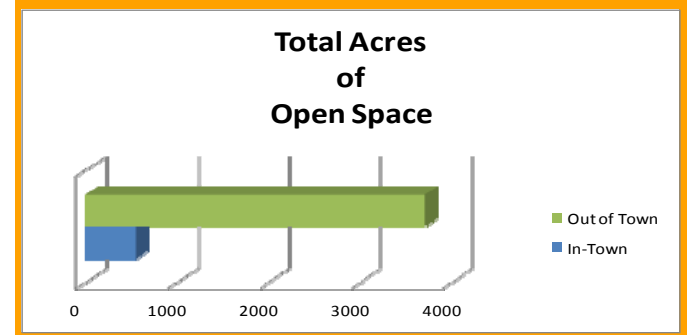


B & B (Out of Town)



Cucumber Gulch (In-Town)

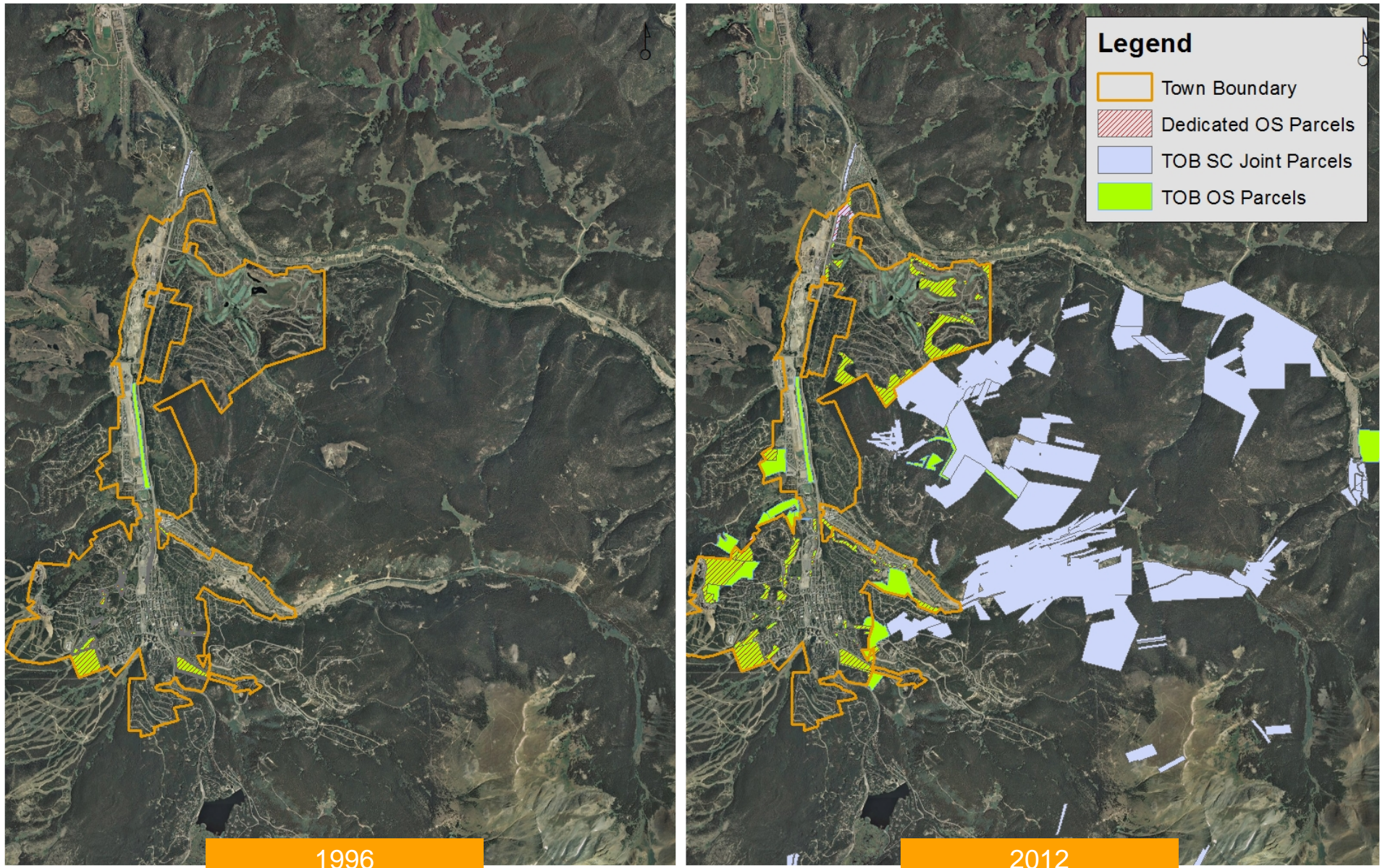
Did You Know?
 The majority of open space acquisitions have been located outside of Town limits. (3,719 acres out of Town versus 552 acres in-Town) The development philosophy in the Joint Upper Blue Master Plan has been to focus development in the core of Town and minimize development in the surrounding backcountry.



	Pre-1997	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Town & County Jointly Owned	13.68	171.55	80.81	153.69	34.95	610.68	87.47	38.72	59.23	1854.75	0.00	64.83	27.44	65.58	73.78	124.29	86.25
Town Owned	105.08	15.50	63.86	19.33	225.67	10.94	40.05	62.02	154.83	2.89	6.85	11.19	3.64	7.62	0.00	0.00	0.00

Open Space Comparison 1996 and 2012

Prior to the establishment of the Open Space program in 1997 the Town had **119 acres** of open space in its inventory. Today the program manages **4,274 acres** of open space, **3,545 acres** of which was jointly acquired with Summit Count Government. A number of the purchases lie just outside the Town boundary.



Acquisition Expenditures

The Town has spent \$17,212,344 for acquisitions since the start of the Open Space Program. Of this amount, \$7,640,226 (44%) has been used for in-Town acquisitions and \$9,572,118 (56%) has been used for out of Town acquisitions.

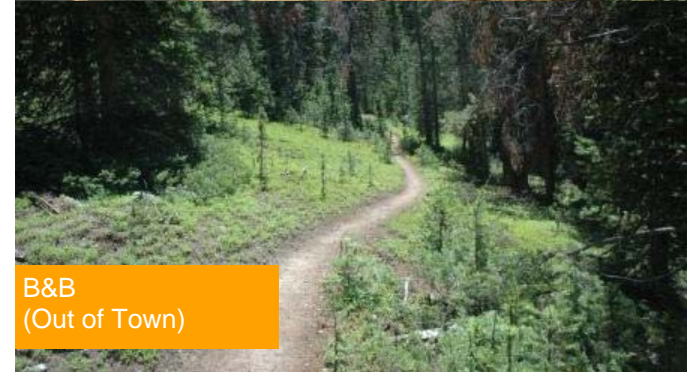
Open Space Acquisition Expenditures



	Total (TOB & County)	TOB	Summit County
In-Town	\$ 8,750,926	\$7,640,226	\$1,100,000
Out of Town	\$ 18,343,049	\$9,572,118	\$8,643,071



Groll Property (In-Town)

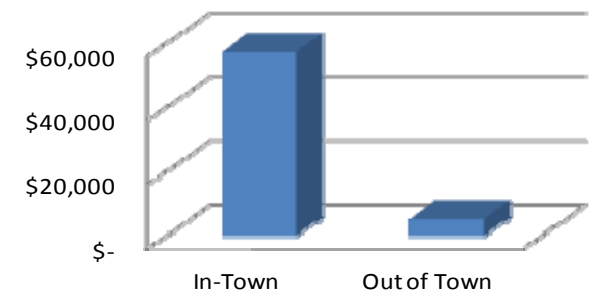


B&B (Out of Town)

Did You Know?

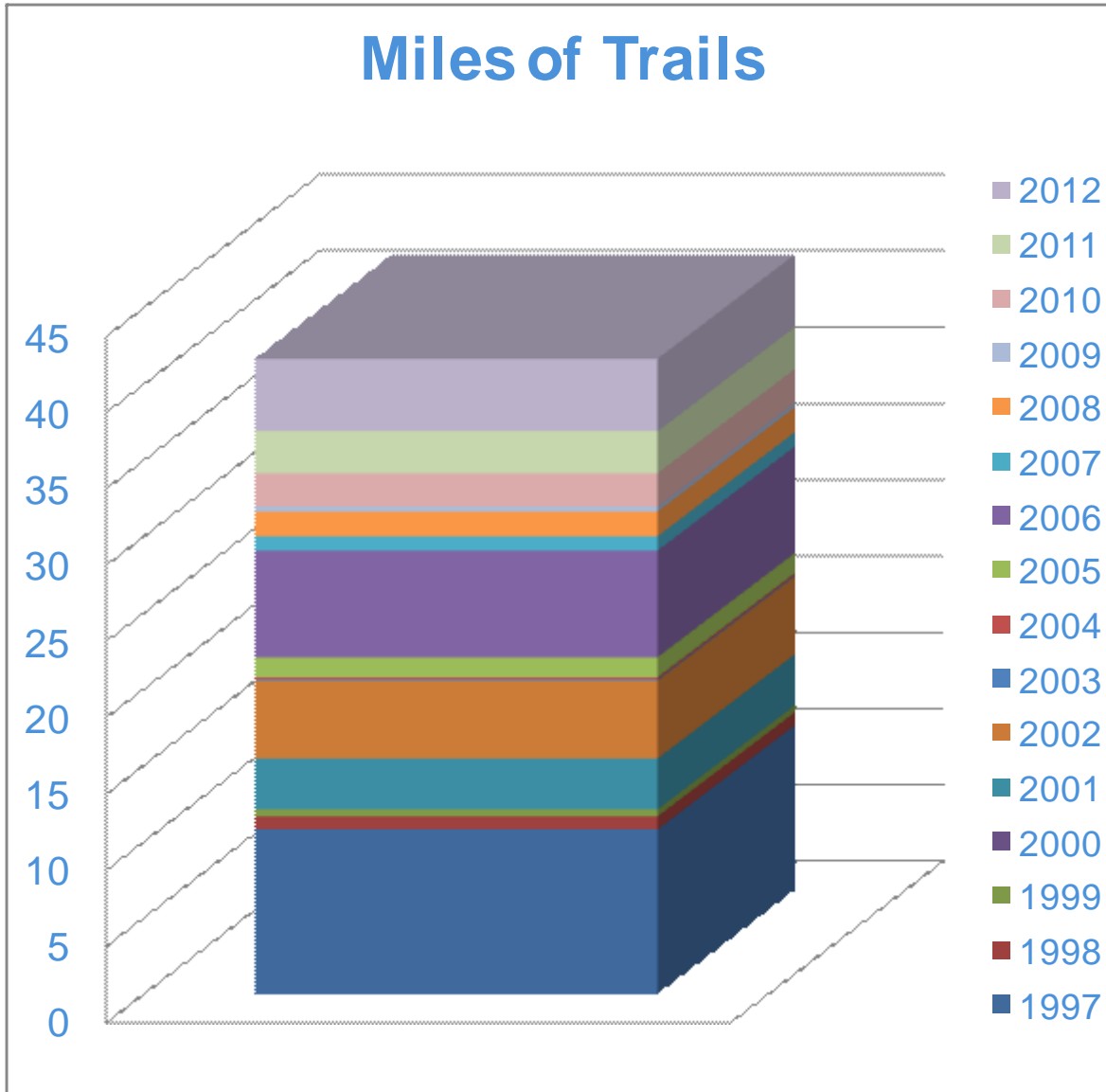
On a price-per-acre basis in-Town acquisitions are substantially more expensive (\$57,407) than out of Town acquisitions (\$5,263). Of the 552 in-Town acres acquired, only 153 have been purchased.

Acquisition Price Per Acre



Trails

Prior to the establishment of the Open Space program in 1997 the Town managed **10.8 miles** of trails. Today the program manages **41.7 miles** of multi-use trails.



X10U8 Trail



Pence Miller Trail



Toad Alley Trail

Did You Know?
In addition to the Town maintained network of trails, over 100 miles of designated trails can be found on nearby National Forest lands. Taken together, this trail network is one of the largest and most diverse in the country.

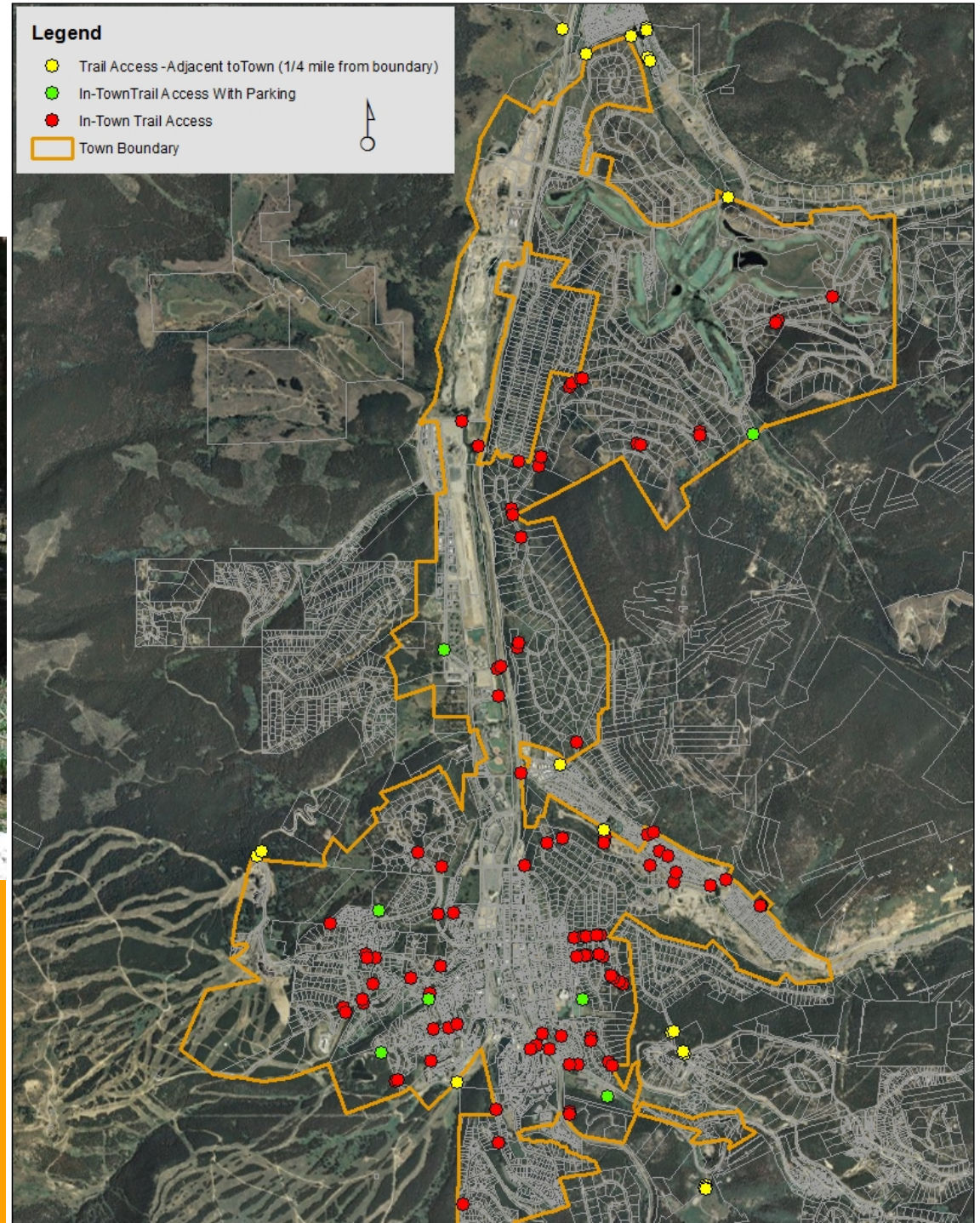
Trail Access

The Open Space program provides **120 trail access portals** located within the Town or 1/4 mile from its boundaries. The numerous portals provide convenient, legal access to Town-maintained trails.



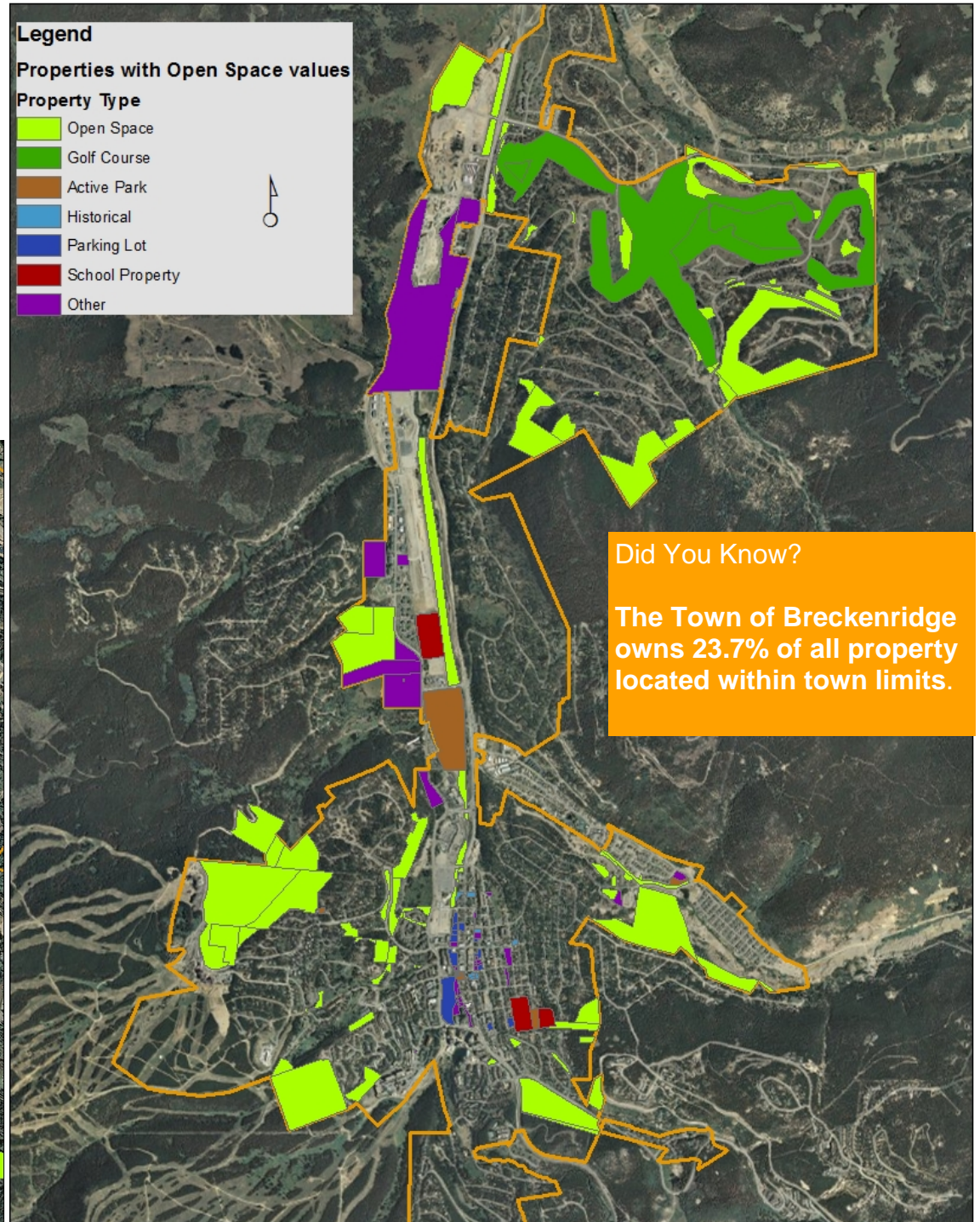
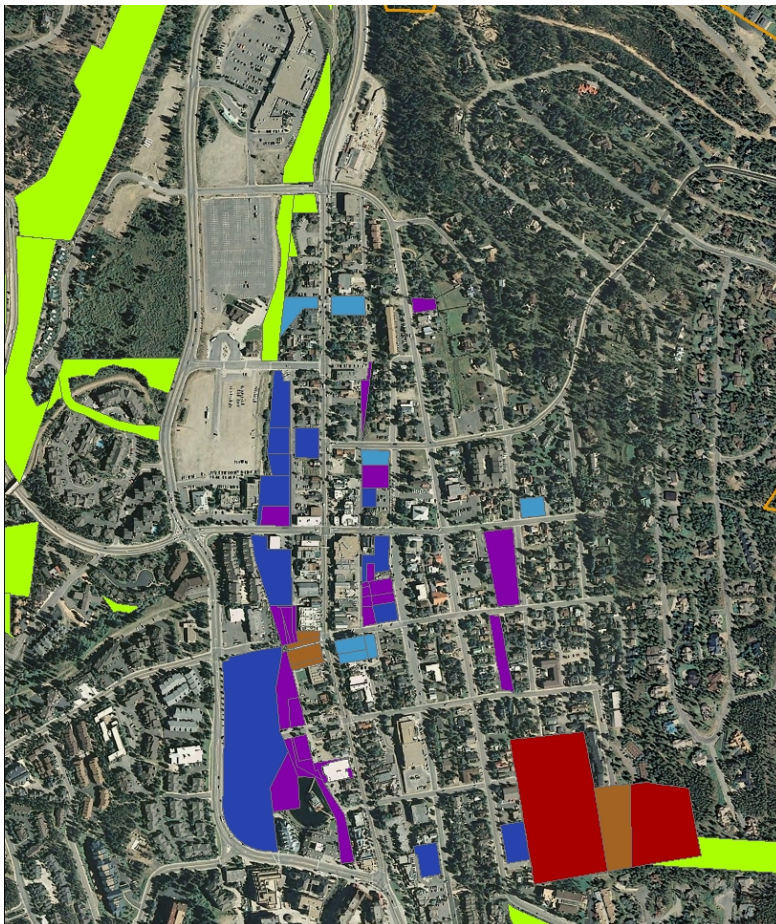
Did You Know?

80% of all in-Town properties are within 1/4 mile of a Town maintained trail access portal.



Other In-Town Properties with Open Space Values

Other community properties not managed by the open space program offer open space values such as relief from development, active park space, private open space and visual backdrop that provide open space values. Examples of properties that exhibit these qualities include historical sites, school properties, active parks, parking lots, and the golf course. Many of the in-Town open space parcels were dedicated through the development permit process.





For more information please visit www.TownofBreckenridge.com

