

COMPREHENSIVE RECREATIONAL TRAIL PLAN



Fairbanks North Star Borough
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COMPREHENSIVE RECREATIONAL TRAIL PLAN

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FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH

Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan

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II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Fairbanks North Star Borough Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan is intended to be a tool to assist the Borough and other public agencies in identifying and preserving important recreational trail corridors. Through identification of priority trail corridors and delineation of Borough policies, the trail plan will help facilitate the coordination of trails with other land development. When adopted by the Borough Assembly, the trail plan will become an element of the Borough's Comprehensive Plan.

Trail related outdoor recreation activities are particularly important to residents of interior Alaska. Since the time of the initial hunting, trapping and gold rush trails which led through the wilderness to the new townsite of Fairbanks, trails have been an important aspect of interior Alaska life. More recently some of these historic trail corridors have become used primarily for recreation. Although the purposes and uses of some of these routes have changed somewhat, the basic concept of traveling from one point to another in relatively natural setting remains much the same. Trail recreation provides Alaskans the opportunity to experience the outdoors while also reliving a part of our frontier history.

The recreational trail program has the potential to be one of the most cost-effective recreation investments the Borough can pursue. By working with both public and private land developers to reserve existing trails and establishing an active volunteer program, costs of the program can be kept to a minimum. As the trail program becomes more soundly established and trails are dedicated and identified for public use, the Borough will experience additional benefits which include a promotion of year round tourism and establishing a more attractive climate for the location of new business.

The Comprehensive Trail Plan proposes a trail program with three key elements. The first element of the program in a three category system of trails includes: 1) federal and state recreational trails, 2) the Fairbanks North Star Borough recreational trail system, and 3) neighborhood recreational trails. The second major component of the trail plan is the "Adopt-a-Trail Program". This program involves establishing agreements with trail user groups, service organizations, neighborhood associations or other interested parties to provide maintenance or other specified work on individual trails. The third key element is establishing trail dedication authority for trails identified in the Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan which cross land undergoing the subdivision process.

The Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan identifies the priority trail corridors which the Borough and other public agencies should pursue for public dedication. The plan also provides a process by which additional trails can be added to the plan at the request of citizen groups. At the same time, because Eminent Domain powers (or forced taking of land for a public need) will not be used and circumstances may change with time, there is no guarantee that all trails included in the plan will become dedicated to the public in their entirety. For this reason the trail plan should be considered a dynamic document which may change due to changing circumstances. The Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan deals primarily with trails not yet dedicated for public use. Trails systems such as the Birch Hill Ski Trails which lie on dedicated public park land are included primarily to document presently available public trails. For any trails within the Plan that are currently listed in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities RS 2477 inventory, agreements should be worked out to establish recreation and access needs as a co-use.

II. INTRODUCTION

A. BACKGROUND

Trail oriented recreation has evolved in interior Alaska as an activity which embodies the history and spirit of the “Alaskan Lifestyle” and which is well suited to the arctic environment. Trails which were originally established for mining access, logging roads, trap lines, and other purposes have become natural corridors for trail recreation. Many of these routes have remained cleared and useable up to the present time because of their continued recreational use.

In recent land use planning efforts within the Borough, trail recreation has continually been identified as a major concern in public meetings. The public involvement processes of the Borough’s Comprehensive Plan, the Borough draft Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan and the State’s draft Tanana Basin Area Plan have all indicated very strong support for preservation of existing trails.

The Fairbanks North Star Borough Recreational Trail Program was formally initiated in February 1980 with the adoption of Resolution 80-9. This resolution established the policy “for creation and management of a recreational trail system within the Fairbanks North Star Borough.” Establishment of this policy was partly the result of continued public concern as trails were displaced in state and borough land disposals. Despite this recognition of the importance of trails by the Borough Assembly, Resolution 80-9 was not accompanied by funding or support for the Division of Community Planning and existing trails continued to be lost. In the fall of 1981, a temporary trail planner was hired under a grant from the State of Alaska to work on the Circle-Fairbanks Trail project. As the funding for the temporary trail planner was about to expire, the Division of Community Planning prepared a report for the Mayor, Planning Commission, and Assembly to better explain the needs and problems surrounding the recreational trail program. This report strongly recommended preparation of a comprehensive trail plan in order to focus efforts of the Borough toward trails of community wide importance and to more clearly define mechanisms needed to make the trail program effective. The Planning Commission, Platting Board, Parks and Recreation Commission, and Trails Advisory Commission all submitted resolutions stating their support for preparation of a Trail Plan.

B. PROCESS USED IN PLAN DEVELOPMENT

In May, 1983, the Borough Assembly adopted an ordinance which provided funding and authorization for the division of Community Planning to prepare a comprehensive trail plan. Because the recreational trail plan involves many trails which require individual attention and familiarity, the Division of Community Planning decided to prepare the trail plan on an in-house basis with the assistance of the Borough Trails Advisory Commission. The Borough trails Planner has performed the majority of the work on the plan with the assistance and review of many departments and divisions within the Borough. The Trails Advisory Commission has acted as the principal review committee throughout the planning process.

Many different public agencies within the Borough have been involved and assisted in reviewing portions of the comprehensive trail plan. Most notably, all the agencies and most of the trail organizations included in the “Jurisdictional Responsibilities and Trail Inventory Paper” were provided a copy of the draft paper and requested to provide any input or comments they might have. (see Table 1 for a list of agencies and organizations). The “Legal Constraints Paper” was sent to the Alaska Department of Natural Resources and Department of Transportation and Public Facilities for their review. The Legal Constraints Paper has also

been reviewed by the State Attorney General's Office at the request of the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities.

As the plan was in progress there were a total of six meetings of the Trails Advisory Commission which were advertised in the newspaper and open to the public. Comments and discussion on the Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan took place at all of these meetings. In addition, the draft plan will be presented to the Parks and Recreation Commission and scheduled for full work sessions with the Trails Advisory Commission, Planning Commission, and Assembly. Following these work sessions and the necessary revisions to the plan, the final draft plan will be scheduled for public hearings before both the Planning Commission and Assembly.

In June, 1983, at the initiation of the Comprehensive Trail Plan project, a Trails Workshop was conducted at the Noel Wien Library. The purpose of the workshop was to obtain public input on which trails within the Borough should be placed as the highest priorities and how people felt the Borough Trail Program should proceed. Although the workshop took place on a sunny June afternoon, over 80 individuals participated and filled out questionnaires. Detailed results of the workshop can be found in the background information paper, "Summary of Public Comment".

During the Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan project, three newsletters were mailed out to interested individuals and organizations. The initial mailing list was derived from the Comprehensive Plan mailing list with the addition of persons who had contacted the Trail Planner and requested to be informed. The mailing list was supplemented by the persons who attended the Trails Workshop and anyone expressing interest throughout the project. The first newsletter was sent in early June, 1983 with the main purpose being announcement of the Trails Workshop. The second newsletter was mailed out in February, 1984 to announce the availability of the draft "Jurisdictional Responsibilities and Trail Inventory" background paper for public review and comment. The third newsletter was sent in August 1984 to announce the availability of the draft Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan for public review.

TABLE 1
Agencies and Organizations which were sent copies of the draft "Jurisdictional Responsibilities and Trail Inventory" paper for review

1. Alaska Division of Land and Water Management
2. Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation
3. Alaska Division of Forestry
4. Alaska Division of Agriculture
5. Alaska Division of Minerals and Energy Management
6. Fairbanks North Star Borough School District
7. Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
8. Alaska Department of Fish and Game
9. University of Alaska Statewide Office of Land Management
10. Federal Bureau of Land Management
11. Alaska District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
12. Facilities Engineer, Ft. Wainwright
13. Civil Engineering Squadron, Eielson Air Force Base

14. Golden Valley Electric Association
15. Glacier State Telephone Company
16. Alaska Railroad
17. Alaska Dog Mushers Association
18. Alaska Miner's Association
19. Alaska Trappers Association
20. Fairbanks Motorcycle Racing Association
21. Interior Alaska Trail Riders Association
22. Interior Farmer's Association
23. Interior River Users Group
24. Nordic Ski Club of Fairbanks
25. Northern Alaska Environment Center
26. Runner's Club of Fairbanks
27. Salcha Ski Club
28. Senior citizens of Interior Alaska, Inc.
29. Tanana –Yukon Historical Society
30. Two Rivers Ski Club

In addition to the Trails Advisory Commission meetings, the Trails Workshop and the newsletters, presentations on the trail plan and trail projects were given to several interested groups and organizations. Some of these groups include: the Nordic Ski Club of Fairbanks, the Interior Trail Riders Association, the Alaskan Malamute Club, the Tanana-Yukon Historical Society, the International Right-of-Way Association, the Alaska Society of Professional Engineers, and the Golden Heart Council of Campfire Three Wheeler Safety Clinic. The Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB) Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan is closely related to several other land use plans and studies being conducted with the Borough. Attempts have been made to make the trail plan consistent with these other plans whenever possible. Compatibility of the trail plan with these other planning projects of the Borough and other agencies will be critical in determining the long range success of implementation of the trail plan. A list of some of these plans and their relation to the Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan is included below.

SUMMARY OF PLANS RELATED TO THE COMPREHENSIVE RECREATIONAL TRAIL PLAN

FNSB Comprehensive Plan

As previously noted, once the Comprehensive Recreational Trail has been adopted by the Borough Assembly it will become a component of the Comprehensive Plan. The great deal of interest and concern in trails expressed by the community during the public involvement – process of the Comprehensive Plan was instrumental in encouraging the appropriation of funding for this trail plan.

Long Range Bicycle Facilities Plan

The Fairbanks North Star Borough Division of Community Planning completed the “Long Range Bicycle Facilities Plan” in 1981 with the cooperation of the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities. This plan remains as the principal guide to bicycle path planning and development within the Borough and is available for reference at the Borough Division of Community Planning. The Fairbanks North Star Borough Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan reviews some basic needs of the bike path system; however, bicycle paths are not the main focus of the Trail Plan.

Fairbanks North Star Borough Draft Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Plan

The draft Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan is also intended to become a component of the Borough Comprehensive Plan when adopted by the Borough Assembly. The survey of community recreation preferences conducted for the Parks and Recreation Plan indicated strong support for the Borough Trail Program and demonstrated the importance of trail recreation to Borough residents. Although this plan could not address recreational trails in great detail, it contains several major recommendations pertaining to trails which are reviewed in the “Jurisdictional Responsibilities and Trail Inventory” Background report. Several of these recommendations, such as the “100 Mile Loop Trail” are discussed in this document.

Fairbanks North Star Borough Industrial Siting Study

The Industrial Siting Study being conducted by the Borough is intended to identify and reserve one or more large blocks of land suitable for future industrial development. Most of these sites contain or are close by existing trails. If sites which contain priority trails are developed in the future some trail realignment may be required.

Tanana Basin Area Plan

The Tanana Basin Area Plan is a management plan being prepared by the Alaska Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for all state lands within the basin. The plan includes recommendations for trails for both recreational and access purposes. Because of the complexity of the trail issue, the draft plan is currently proposing that DNR prepare a separate plan dealing specifically with trails. This special plan will deal with access uses of trails as well as recreational use, and, as such, will fit well with the Borough recreational trail plan to cover a broad spectrum of trail uses. The present draft of the Tanana Basin Area Plan proposes two major trails within the Borough, the Circle-Fairbanks Trail and Chena Hot Springs Winter Trail, for legislative designation as State Recreation Trails.

Tanana Valley Forest Management Plan

The Alaska Division of Forestry is currently in the process of developing a management plan for the newly established Tanana Valley State Forest. A large portion of the State Forest lies within the Borough and many trails pass through the different units. The forest is established as a multiple use area and it will be possible to have recreational trails designated in some areas. Proposals for specific trails within the forest will need to be coordinated with the forest management plan in order to accommodate future road development, logging operations, and other uses of state forest lands.

Alaska Division of Land and Water Management Local Management Plans

There are several areas within the Borough for which the Alaska Division of Land and Water Management is establishing detailed management plans. Each of these plans addresses trails within their boundaries for both access and recreational use. State land management plans which have been completed or are currently underway include: 1) the Little Chena Management Plan; and 2) the Delta-Salcha Area Plan. Each of these plans should be referred to for information on state trail recommendations within their planning area.

Chena Flood Control Project Master Plan

The United States Army Corps of Engineers has completed a draft master plan for management of federal lands within the Chena Flood Control Project. The draft master plan includes provisions for continued use of some project lands for trail recreation. The draft plan provides for future development of a link in the proposed 100 Mile Loop Trail through the Flood Control Project. Actual trail development will depend on a local cost sharing sponsor such as the Borough.

White Mountain National Recreation Area and Steese National Conservation Area Resource Management Plans

The U.S. Bureau of Land Management is now in the process of preparing resource management plans for both of these areas designated by the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act which are units located just outside the Borough. The draft plans have several proposed recreational trails which may have a major impact on the availability of trails to Borough residents and visitors. The White Mountains plan has proposed several trails within the Borough boundaries for recreational access into the National Recreation Area.

C. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE TRAIL PLAN

There are two principal reports which are the result of the comprehensive trail plan project. The first document is the Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan Background Information and the second document is the Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan. The Background Information report consists of five individual background papers which are consolidated into one large notebook. The background studies include: 1) Review of the Existing Trail Program, 2) Jurisdictional Responsibilities and Trail Inventory, 3) Legal constraints, 4) Financial Constraints, and 5) Summary of Public Comment. These background papers are informational and are not intended to provide statements of Borough policy. Copies of individual background papers will

be available for public distribution; however, due to limited budget and need, there are only 10 copies of the entire Background Information notebooks. These reports will remain available in the Division of Community Planning or through the Trails Advisory Commission. The Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan document consists of the text of this report and the two maps in the pouch at the back. Map A is a Borough wide map while Map B covers Fairbanks and vicinity. Both maps provide general locations of priority trails proposed for public dedication. This report includes recommendations for Borough policy with regard to trails as well as recommendations for specific trails which are identified as priorities for eventual public dedication. Following public hearings and final revisions to the draft, the plan will become a component of the Comprehensive Plan when adopted by the Borough Assembly.

III. THE PROPOSED RECREATIONAL TRAIL PROGRAM

There are three main elements crucial to the development of a successful Fairbanks North Star Borough Recreational Trail Program. These three main elements include: 1) establishing logical trail priorities and responsibilities for different public agencies and the various departments of the Borough which deal with trails; 2) developing an active volunteer program which allows trail user groups to assume certain responsibilities for specific trails in order to minimize maintenance and operation costs to the Borough; and 3) establishing a trail dedication authority as part of the Borough subdivision ordinance in order to enable acquisition of rights-of-way for trails included in the Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan.

A. MAJOR COMPONENTS OF THE TRAIL PROGRAM

1. Three Category System of Trails

In order to more clearly define where the efforts of the Borough trail program should be concentrated and where other agency responsibilities lie, the Borough should establish a three category system of trails. The categories of this system include: a) major federal and state recreational trails, b) components of the Fairbanks North Star Borough Recreational Trail System, and c) neighborhood trail networks. Responsibilities of the Borough, other public agencies and trail user groups will vary according to which category a particular trail is included in (see Figure 1). The three category system of trails will provide the diversity necessary to allow public agencies to concentrate their efforts in the most productive manner, while providing a framework within which trail users can more effectively work to reserve neighborhood trail networks which may not be of state wide or community significance. In addition, a three category system will allow the Borough to more effectively address issues such as maintenance responsibilities and liability for trails which become components of the Fairbanks North Star Borough Recreational Trail System while, at the same time, not obligating the Borough to be responsible for trails which are not part of the Borough System. A more detailed description of these three categories of trails and the main elements which differentiate between them is provided in Figure 1 Summary of Trail Categories.

Figure 1 Summary of Trail Categories

Category	Primary Management Responsibility	Maintenance Responsibility	Funding Mechanism	Application of Borough Right-of-Way Acquisition Authority	Borough Acceptance of Right-of-Way Dedication
A. Federal and State Recreational Trails	Federal or State agency. May be a cooperative agreement with FNSB.	Maintenance provided through managing agency.	Funding provided by Federal or State agency. State Legislative appropriations directed towards managing state agency.	Borough rights-of-way acquisition authorities will apply where these trails cross private land.	Borough Assembly will not formally accept dedication of right-of-way. Rights-of-way remain available for public use; however the Borough does not assume responsibility.
B. FNSB Recreational Trail System	FNSB	Maintenance agreement established between FNSB and trail user groups.	Primary funding derived from Federal or State grant sources.	All Borough rights-of-way acquisition authorities will apply.	Right-of-way dedication will be formally accepted by resolution of the Borough Assembly when completed. Borough assumes primary responsibility for trail.
C. Neighborhood recreational trail systems	Trail user group or neighborhood association.	Maintenance provided by trail users.	Funding derive through a service area or user group.	Rights-of-way established on a cooperative voluntary basis.	Right-of-way dedication will not be formally accepted by the Borough Assembly. Rights-of-way which are established remain available for noted uses; Borough does not assume responsibility for trails.

a. Federal and State Recreational Trails

This category of trails includes trails established on public lands specifically for recreation and trails which lie mainly on state and federal lands which have been identified as having recreation as a primary use. When not located on designated recreational lands, delineation of permanent recreational routes for these existing trails may need to be accompanied with provisions for vehicle access routes. When located on designated recreational lands, these trails are entirely the management responsibility of the agency having authority over the land. These agencies will normally be the Bureau of Land Management or the Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation. Where these trails lie on public land not designated for recreational use, they will most likely fall within the jurisdiction and responsibility of the Division of Land and Water Management. For certain trails in this category the Borough should work with the Division of Land and Water Management to establish cooperative agreements for coordinating these trails with other resource development and to define management responsibilities. The Borough Trails Advisory Commission can play an instrumental role in defining parameters needed in these agreements to accommodate various resource needs. Trails in this category which are included in the Borough Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan and which cross parcels of private lands will be subject to Borough trail dedication authorities. In the case of state recreational trails, funds appropriated by the legislature or derived from other sources should be directed to the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation or the Division of Land and Water Management.

b. The FNSB Borough Recreational Trail System

Components of the Fairbanks North Star Borough Recreational Trail System are trails for which the Borough will have the principal management authority. These may be existing trail systems within a Borough park or recreation area or trails which cross a variety of land ownerships and have complete, publicly dedicated rights-of-way. Once complete rights-of-way are acquired for these trails, they should be identified and managed as public recreational facilities. Eventually maps or brochures identifying these trails and their uses should be made available for public distribution. Trail head areas for parking, public service and trail access should also be identified and designated on these maps. Because these trails will be identified for public use under the authority of the Borough, it will be necessary for the Borough to take measures to ensure that the trails are reasonably safe for their intended purposes in order to minimize potential Borough liability. State and federal grant monies received by the Borough should be prioritized toward trails intended for eventual public dedication as components of the Borough Trail System. In the majority of cases, grants received for trail projects through the state or federal government carry requirements for project maintenance. Because of project maintenance requirements and the need to ensure reasonably safe conditions on identified Borough public trails, trails within the Borough Trail System should have some type of regular trail maintenance or safety inspections. The primary method of providing trail maintenance should be through cooperative agreements with trail user groups through the "Adopt-a-Trail Program" (see below for further description).

All Borough trail dedication authorities will apply to trails identified for future designation as components of the Borough Trail System in the final Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan. When complete public rights-of-way are obtained and cooperative agreements for trail maintenance have been established, trails which are in the Borough Recreational Trail System should have the dedications of all rights-of-way formally accepted by a resolution of the Borough Assembly.

c. Neighborhood Trail Systems

Neighborhood trail systems include trails which may be heavily used by a local neighborhood but which are not, at the present time, of community or state wide significance. Neighborhood trail systems could be added to the Borough Trail System if requested by residents of the area. The Fairbanks North Star Borough will direct only minimal efforts towards trails in this category. Main responsibilities for the trails will lie with a homeowners association, service area, or trail user group. Citizen groups will be responsible for coordinating trail rights-of-way and providing trail maintenance. The Borough may assist in identifying these trails in new subdivisions and establishing communication between the land developers and trail users, however, Borough rights-of-way acquisition authorities will not apply. If public easements are established for these trails, they will not be formally accepted by a resolution of the Borough Assembly. Funding for these trails could be derived through a service area with parks and recreation authority or any other mechanism established by trail users. Borough grants and appropriations will not be directed toward these trails. Even if covered by an entire legal right-of-way, these trails would not be identified for public use by the Borough.

2. Adopt-A-Trail Program

The second major component of the Fairbanks North Star Borough Recreational Trail Program is to establish an active, coordinated volunteer program. Within this program, trail user groups, service areas, homeowners associations or service organizations would assume specified responsibilities or “adopt” certain trails or segments of trails. These organizations will enter into cooperative agreements with the borough which define the organization’s and Borough’s responsibilities. These agreements should be sought for those trails which are identified components of the Fairbanks North Star Borough Recreational Trail System. These agreements should normally be in place prior to the Borough formally accepting the dedication of the trail right-of-way or identifying the trail for public use. In some situations it may be necessary to develop cooperative agreements earlier in the trail dedication process in order for the Borough to meet maintenance requirements of state or federal grants.

The primary focus of the Adopt-a-Trail Program will be to establish a more formalized version of the present, user maintained trail system. Depending on the conditions and use of a particular trail, the agreements should provide for a level of care to ensure that the trail is in reasonably safe condition for its intended use. The agreements could range from minimal safety inspections of trail conditions to regular grooming and track setting which might be needed

on competitive cross-country ski trails. Although the main purpose of the program is to minimize Borough maintenance and operations costs and liability potential, the program could also be used for acquiring trail rights-of-way. In many instances, trail users are familiar with the landowners whose property a trail traverses and may be in a better position to negotiate easements than a public agency. In addition, right-of-way negotiation can require a tremendous amount of staff time to contact individual land owners. In these situations, trail right-of-way acquisition may be done more cost effectively by trail user groups. When right-of-way acquisition is done by volunteer groups, the project should be closely coordinated with the Borough Trail Planner, Attorney's Office and Division of Land Management.

A volunteer or "Adopt-a-Trail Program" has already been informally initiated by the Division of Parks and Recreation through the agreements established with the Salcha Ski Club and Two Rivers Ski Club. The Nordic Ski Club of Fairbanks is presently discussing a possible trail maintenance agreement for the Birch Hill Ski Trails with the Division of Parks and Recreation.

When Trail projects reach the point where cooperative agreements are felt necessary, the agreements should be worked out by the Trails Planner, the Division of Parks and Recreation, and the Attorney's Office. When the Adopt-a-Trail Program becomes more established, trail maintenance equipment which may be provided by the Borough should be kept within the Division of Parks and Recreation.

3. Trail Dedication Authority

In order for existing trails to be realistically reserved for continued public use, the Borough must provide authority to require trail dedications in new subdivisions. Community support for establishing this authority was demonstrated in the Parks and Recreation Plan public survey and the Borough Trails Workshop conducted in June, 1983. This authority would apply only to land undergoing the subdivision process. On private land not undergoing the subdivision process, trail rights-of-way will continue to be acquired on a cooperative basis with trail realignment being required if an easement cannot be negotiated. The trail dedication ordinance should be included as part of the overall Borough subdivision ordinance. The dedication requirement will apply only to those trails which are included in the adopted Fairbanks North Star Borough Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan and which are in Category A (federal or state recreational trail) or B (component of the Fairbanks North Star Borough Recreational Trail System).

The ordinance must provide for trail realignment when necessary to minimize impact to subdivision design. The new trail location must maintain the continuity of the trail and be located on suitable terrain. When an existing trail is completely displaced, the subdivider should be required to provide a cleared path for the relocated trail. Trail users will be responsible for any grooming or manicuring of the clearing to meet particular trail requirements.

B. ISSUES, GOALS, POLICIES, AND OBJECTIVES

This portion of the Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan outlines several of the main issues which involve recreational trails and defines goals, policies, and objectives which are needed to deal with the issues. In some instances, some of the major issue categories will include several more specific issues within the broader heading. Some of the specific policy statements are derived from Resolution 80-9 which defines the original Borough Trail Policy.

Many planning documents use the terms “goals, policies, and objectives” with slightly different meanings. For this reason, a definition of these terms, as used in this report, is included below.

Goal a long range, not necessarily attainable, statement of what the program hopes to accomplish or where the community wants to be.

Policy specific guidance or means to achieve a goal.

Objective a specific action or statement which represents movement toward fulfillment of a goal, and that is consistent with policy statements.

ISSUE 1: Agency Jurisdictional Responsibilities

There are many federal, state and local public agencies which have varying responsibilities with regard to recreational trails. In order for a network of recreational trails to be permanently established for the use of Borough residents and visitors, priorities, and responsibilities of the various agencies and departments of the Borough need to be more clearly defined. Of primary importance to the Fairbanks North Star Borough is determining where Borough trail efforts should be focused and where the Borough should work cooperatively with other agencies in recreational trail development.

Goal:

Define responsibilities of different departments of the Fairbanks North Star Borough and public agencies within the Borough which are involved with establishing recreational trails for all trails within the Borough which are included in the Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan.

Policies:

- 1) The Borough will focus the primary efforts of its recreational trail plan program toward trails which are of community wide importance, and which are identified as proposed components of the Fairbanks North Star Borough Recreational Trail System in the Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan.

Objectives:

- a. Establish a defined policy and procedure which delineates the responsibilities of all departments or divisions of the Borough with regard to developing the Fairbanks North Star Borough Recreational Trail Plan.
- b. Define specific responsibilities of each department or division of the Borough prior to initiation of individual trail projects.

- 2) The Borough will work cooperatively with state and federal agencies to encourage reservation and development of recreational trails which are of state wide or national significance which are included in the Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan.

Objectives:

- a. Develop agreements with federal, state, or local agencies involved with establishing recreational trails to define responsibilities of various agencies for establishing specific trails included in the Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan.
- b. Maintain an active involvement in the planning processes of other agencies to encourage delineation of trails included in the Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan.
- c. Establish cooperative agreements with other public agencies to define management responsibilities and provisions required to coordinate trails with other resource developments when trails included in category A of the Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan are formally dedicated for recreational use.

- 3) The Borough will continue to cooperate with the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities in the planning of a Borough wide system of bicycle paths.

Objectives:

- a. Update the Long Range Bicycle Facilities Plan on a periodic basis in cooperation with ADOT/PF.
- b. Coordinate with the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities to establish capital improvement priorities for bicycle paths.
- c. Encourage provision of dirt pathways for equestrian and other trail uses adjacent to all bikeways.

ISSUE 2: Right-of-Way Acquisition

The first essential step in establishing a permanent recreational trail network within the Fairbanks North Star Borough is to acquire legal public rights-of-way which protect recreational uses. The need for acquisition of trail rights-of-way must be balanced with other public needs such as road and land development. There must be some rights-of-way acquisition authorities or mechanisms available in order to develop a recreational trail system based primarily on existing trails.

Goal:

Establish legal reservations which protect recreational uses for all recreational trails included in categories A or B in the Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan.

Policies:

- 1) Eminent Domain powers shall not be utilized for acquisition of recreational trail easements. The exception to this rule shall be those cases of “friendly” condemnation necessary to clear title or establish value on a willing grant of easement.

Objective:

- a. Acquire trail rights-of-way on private lands from willing landowners or through the Borough Subdivision regulations.
- 2) Perpetual easement rights shall be acquired in the name of the public through dedication, right-of-way permits or by cooperative agreements.

Objective:

- a. Maintain flexibility in the types of legal reservations or agreements obtained for trails.
- 3) Easements granting public use only during certain portions of the year and for particular uses are acceptable for particular trail requirements.

Objective:

- a. Acquire trail rights-of-way meet the needs of specific trail uses or property owner desires.
- 4) When trails included in categories A or B of the Fairbanks North Star Borough Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan lie on land undergoing the subdivision process, public rights-of-way shall be dedicated for the trail as part of the subdivision requirements. At the time of initial subdivision design, trail alignment shall be adjusted, if necessary, and in so far as possible to coincide with property boundaries in order to minimize impact on subdivision design and maintain property use with the provision that the continuity, safety, and utility of the trail is maintained. When it is necessary to realign a trail, the subdivider shall be required to clear a new path. Any grooming of the new trail which is necessary to meet particular Trail needs will be accomplished by trail users.

Objectives:

- a. Establish a trail dedication authority in the Borough Subdivision ordinance to apply to trails in categories A or B of the Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan.
- b. Incorporate a review of the Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan requirements into the Division of Community Planning Subdivision review process.
- 5) The Borough will encourage subdividers to cooperate with local trail users to establish rights-of-way for trails included in category C of the Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan or to establish new trial corridors when they can enhance subdivision design.

Objective:

- a. Encourage reservation or establishment of trails in subdivisions where present or future recreational demands can be met while enhancing the subdivision.
- 6) When trails, which are included in categories A or B of the Fairbanks North Star Borough Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan are identified as R.S. 2477 rights of-way by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (see “Legal Constraints” paper for description of R.S. 2477), the Borough will encourage the establishment of cooperative agreements or right-of-way designations which provide for recreational use of the rights-of-way. Anytime R.S. 2477 rights-of-way are proposed for recreational use, any agreements or designations affecting the right-of-way must be accompanied with the provision of regular vehicle access routes for access needs existing in the same location.

Objective:

- a. Establish cooperative agreements with ADOT/PF and DNR which provide for both recreational trail protection and access needs for all trails identified as R.S. 2477 rights-of-way which are included in the Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan.
- 7) Trail rights-of-way should generally be established in a separate location from utility easements. Exceptions can be made where a trail and utility line presently co-exist or where requested by a subdivider due to subdivision design constraints.

Objective:

- a. Coordinate with utility companies and land developers to avoid designation of co-use trail and utility easements.
- 8) When trails which are included in Categories A or B of the Fairbanks North Star Borough Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan lie within land being disposed by the federal government, State of Alaska or Fairbanks North Star Borough, the trail shall be retained in public land proposed for disposal, the trail will be retained in public ownership. Easements shall be used to reserve trails in public land disposals only when the objective of the trail is to provide for pedestrian access within the subdivision.

Objective:

- a. Work with the Borough Division of Land Management and the Alaska Division of Lands to ensure that when trails which are included in the Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan lie on public land proposed for disposal, the trail will be retained in public ownership rather than placing restrictions on land going into private ownership.
- 9) Trail head areas for parking, public service and trail access shall be pursued for acquisition and public dedication when a particular trail warrants the need.

Objective:

- a. Work cooperatively with ADOT/PF, other agencies and private land owners to acquire legal reservation for trail heads to suit public needs.

ISSUE 3: Recreational Trail Use Designations

There are many different perceptions among trail users and property owners about the types of trail uses which are compatible with each other and adjacent land uses. Most frequently, the principal issue of concern has centered around compatibility of motorized and non-motorized trail use. Many homeowners do not consider motorized trail use appropriate in residential areas. In more rural areas where trail use is not as intense, less conflicts are likely to develop between different types of trail use. It is often desirable to keep recreational trails open to a variety of use types, however, if all trails are established for multiple uses, non-motorized trail users may not obtain the recreational experience they desire. In this situation, a system of all multiple use trails can eliminate the desired experience of non-motorized trail enthusiasts, in the same way a system of all non-motorized trails can eliminate the experience desired by motorized trail users. Public comment has indicated a desire for both multiple use and non-motorized trail types.

Goal:

Provide for a permanent trail system of both multiple use and non-motorized trails which is geographically distributed throughout the Borough and which can accommodate all trail user groups.

Policies:

- 1) The Borough will generally not promote development of motorized recreational trails within residential or urban areas. Exceptions to this policy can be made in cases where a location for motorized trail use is identified which is screened from surrounding residential areas, where a motorized trail can be located within a highway right-of-way or where specifically requested by residents of the area.

Objectives:

- a. Identify trails or use areas adjacent to, but not within, residential areas which can be used for motorized recreation.
 - b. Establish trail use designations which reflect the desires of local residents.
- 2) Recreational trails which are established in rural areas as part of the Borough trail System should generally remain available for multiple recreational uses. Exceptions to this rule can be made if a particular type of trail designation is needed to fulfill an identified need or demand.

Objectives:

- a. Work with state and federal agencies and local residents to ensure recreational trails established in rural areas of the Borough are available for a variety of recreational uses to the greatest extent practical.
 - b. Work with state and federal agencies to establish non-motorized trails in rural areas where significant demand is identified.
- 3) Where recreational trails are established for multiple uses and use increases to the point where conflicts become increasingly serious requiring use limitations, the primary, original recreational use shall have priority. Where trail rights-of-way are of adequate width, separate lanes for incompatible trail uses shall be established.

Objectives:

- a. Retain wide corridors for trails designed for multiple uses whenever possible in order to accommodate separate lanes for incompatible trail uses.
- b. Identify the primary recreational uses of trails when designated in order to facilitate future decisions on use priority.

ISSUE 4: Requirements for Trail Maintenance

The existing, non-dedicated system of recreational trails within the Borough has been kept cleared and maintained by the people who use the trails. This casual trail maintenance has ranged from occasional minimal brushing of trails to careful grooming and track setting on a regular basis. Many trail users have expressed a desire to continue this “trail user” maintenance arrangement. In addition, the Borough could incur a major expense which could severely limit the scope of the trail program if trail maintenance is publicly provided. At the same time, when trails are identified by the Borough for public use, the Borough must exercise certain care to ensure trails are reasonably safe for their intended uses in order to minimize liability potential. Many times funding received from the state or federal government for trail projects requires a commitment to project maintenance.

Goal:

Develop a defined trail maintenance and safety review program for all trails within the Borough Recreational Trail System which are identified for public use.

Policies:

- 1) The primary method of providing trail maintenance for trails within the Fairbanks North Star Borough Recreational Trail System shall be through cooperative agreements with trail user groups and others through the Adopt-a-Trail Program.

Objective:

- a. Establish an Adopt-a-Trail Program within the Borough in order to develop necessary agreements to ensure trail maintenance or other required work.
- 2) The Borough will provide trail maintenance only on a very limited basis when special equipment requirements make volunteer maintenance impractical or where clearly shown to be in public need.

Objective:

- a. Keep future Borough trail maintenance and operations costs to an absolute minimum.
- 3) Prior to formal acceptance of right-of-way dedications by the Borough Assembly or identification of a trail for public use, a cooperative maintenance agreement or commitment for Borough maintenance shall be made.

Objective:

- a. Identify future maintenance provisions prior to formal acceptance of dedicated recreational trail rights-of-way.

ISSUE 5: Ensuring Legal Use of Recreational Trail Rights-of-Way

When property owners are approached for trail right-of-way negotiations, they may often be concerned with the ability of themselves or the Borough to control unauthorized uses of the easement, if it is granted. When easements are established for specific purposes, those uses are the only legal uses of the easement and other, non-specified uses can be trespass. It can often be difficult or impossible to identify and report violations when they occur. If private landowners are expected to be willing to negotiate trail easements, they must be aware that the Borough will help to ensure the easements are used for their specified purposes. Many times illegal trail use occurs because of uncertainty by trail users about the trail's proper uses. Once trails are identified for their intended uses, unauthorized trail use can be greatly reduced.

Goal:

Ensure that all trail rights-of-way of trails included in the Fairbanks North Star Borough Recreational Trail System are used for their intended and legally defined uses.

Policies:

- 1) Trails identified for public use as components of the Fairbanks North Star Borough Recreational Trail System shall be adequately signed and identified for the uses allowed. All uses identified must be consistent with uses allowed on the recording instrument of the right-of-way.

Objective:

- a. Provide adequate signing of legal uses for all trails in the Fairbanks North Star Borough Recreational Trail System.
- 2) The Borough will encourage a trail user education and information program to increase public awareness of both legal and non-legal uses of trails.

Objective:

- a. Establish a trail user and property owner education and information program to increase public awareness of legal trail uses and trail courtesy.
- 3) The Borough will work cooperatively with property owners, trail users and state law enforcement authorities to ensure legal uses of recreational trail rights-of-way.

Objectives:

- a. Establish a procedure to assist trail users and landowners in reporting illegal trail use.
- b. Encourage state law enforcement for trail use violations.

- 4) The need for provision of enforcement authority shall be periodically reviewed and implemented if demonstrated to be in the best public interest.

Objectives:

- a. Monitor the need for enforcement authority on recreational trails.
 - b. Seek enforcement actions on trails if a demonstrated need and demand develops in the future.
 - c. Pursue new state laws and/or Borough ordinances to ensure the protection of trail integrity as well as providing a means of adjudicating conflicts over trail use and landowner user conflicts.
- 5) The Borough shall utilize its public right-of-way encroachment authority to protect the right-of-passage and physical integrity of all trails included in the Fairbanks North Star Borough Recreational Trail System.

Objective:

- a. Work with the Borough Attorney's Office, Code Enforcement Office and ADOT/PF to identify and resolve any encroachment or disturbance of legally established recreational trail rights-of-way.

ISSUE 6: Liabilities Related to Trails

Liability relating to trails is a legitimate concern that warrants close attention in the Borough's Trail Program. Before a private landowner can be expected to grant a trail easement across his land or enter into a maintenance agreement on a particular trail, potential liability must be minimized to the greatest extent possible. These and other concerns have been addressed in the Legal Constraints paper under Liability related to trail right-of-way.

The four main issues that were dealt with in this document include:

- 1) Possible private property owner liability related to trail rights-of-way.
- 2) Possible Fairbanks North Star Borough liability related to trail rights-of-way.
- 3) Possible liability related to co-use easements (such as trail and utility easements).
- 4) Possible liability of organizations which accept responsibility for trail maintenance.

Alaska Statute Section 09.45.795 states that "An owner of unimproved land is not liable in tort for damages for the injury to or death of a person who enters onto or remains on the unimproved portion of land if:

- 1) the injury or death resulted from a natural condition of the unimproved portion of the property; and
- 2) the person had no responsibility to compensate the owner for his use or occupancy of the property."

This statute does not distinguish particular private or public landowners and thus applies to the Fairbanks North Star Borough as a landowner as well as individual property owners. In the opinion of the Borough Attorney, a landowner would not be liable if:

- 1) A hazard was not deliberately placed on the trail by the landowner,
- 2) When attempting to remove a hazard from the trail the landowner did not make the situation worse,
- 3) While crossing the trail to get to and from their property, the landowner exercises due caution.

The Attorney also stated that because the Borough would be in charge of maintaining trails presented publicly as a Borough Trail System, then the Borough would incur the higher liability exposure. The responsibility to the Borough would be no less even if maintenance was contracted out to a user group. If the Borough presents a trail system to the public requiring minimal maintenance, it would follow that potential liability would also be minimal.

Goal:

Work towards minimizing trail liability within the Fairbanks North Star Borough Trail System.

Policies:

- 1) The Borough will encourage education programs to increase public awareness of potential liabilities.

Objective:

- a. Establish a trail user and property owner education and information program to increase public awareness on minimizing liabilities.
- 2) The need for local and state regulations on liability shall be periodically reviewed and implemented, if demonstrated to be the best public interest.

Objective:

- a. Pursue state laws and/or Borough ordinances to minimize liabilities involved with trails.
- 3) The Borough must exercise certain care to ensure trails are reasonably safe for their intended uses in order to minimize liability potential.

Objective:

- a. Encourage trail user groups to sign maintenance agreements with the Borough, strongly emphasizing careful wording to minimize liability to the organization.

C. PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Successful implementation of the Fairbanks North Star Borough Recreational Trail Program will require a coordinated effort on the part of all the departments within the Borough which are involved in the recreational trail program. For the most part, responsibilities for implementation of the trail program and individual trails projects will follow the normal breakdown of Borough work tasks. Recommendations for changes in responsibilities and clarifications of existing tasks are included below.

1. Major Responsibility for the Recreational Trail Program

This study concurs with the recommendation of the draft Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan that the primary responsibility for the Recreational Trail Program should eventually be transferred to the Division of Parks and Recreation. This is necessary to focus all the recreation programming efforts of the Borough into one division. This shift will facilitate the budgeting of recreation projects and provide a single office for coordination of all trail activities. This relocation will provide a central location for establishment of the Adopt-a-Trail-Program. The Adopt-a-Trail Program should include all trail maintenance agreements whether the trail is located in a dedicated Borough park or dedicated trail. During the trail right-of-way acquisition process, a great deal of responsibility will continue to lie within the Department of Land Resources. Trail planning should continue to be coordinated with the Department of Land Resources.

2. Role and Responsibilities of the Trails Advisory Commission

The Trails Advisory Commission (TAC) should continue its operation as an advisory commission independent of the Parks and Recreation Commission. Responsibility for coordinating the TAC should continue to lie within the Division of Community Planning with gradual shift toward the Division of Parks and Recreation. The original ordinance which established the Trails Advisory Commission places the responsibility for the TAC equally with the directors of the Division of Community Planning and Division of Parks and Recreation. Duties which should be incorporated into the responsibilities of the Trails Advisory Commission include:

- a. Assist in developing cooperative agreements between the Borough and other agencies to ensure the needs of both recreational trails and other resource developments are adequately addressed.
- b. Identify priority uses of recreation trails and assist in resolving use conflicts when they arise.
- c. Recommend priorities for trail project funding and rights-of-way acquisition.
- d. Assist in developing cooperative agreements for trail maintenance within the Adopt-a-Trail Program.
- e. Provide the initial review of proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan and formulate a recommendation to the Planning Commission and Assembly.
- f. Develop and annually update a Five Year Trail Project Working Plan.

3. Personnel Requirements

It is absolutely essential to the success of the trail program to retain the Trail Planner position on a continual basis. The Trail Planner will play a critical role in developing trail maintenance agreements, coordinating the Trails Advisory Commission, providing a source of agency and public contract and coordinating trails with other land development activities. Having the Trail Planner position funded on a continual basis will be economically beneficial to the Borough. A commitment to the continuation of this position will enable the Borough to more actively seek federal and state grant funds for trail projects with the assurance of a “project manager” to see the projects through. These grant funds for project implementation can far outweigh the cost of the single trail planner position. The position is also vital to the development of the Adopt-a-Trail Program which will greatly help to reduce future Borough trail maintenance and operations costs. The Trail Planner position should eventually be transferred to the Division of Parks and Recreation.

The scope of the Trail Planner position should be broadened to include more general, land related recreation planning concerns. In this function, the Trail Planner can serve to coordinate major land use planning efforts such as the Tanana Basin Area Plan, the Fairbanks North Star Borough Comprehensive Plan, the Fairbanks North Star Borough draft Parks and Recreation Plan and the Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan to ensure the coordination of recreation planning efforts. This role may become particularly critical if the Tanana Basin Area Plan is adopted with the present policy of conveying land with community significant recreation values to the municipalities through A.S. 38.05.315 (see Legal Constraints). If this portion of the Tanana Basin Area Plan is adopted as proposed, the Borough could acquire significant blocks of land for recreational purposes but only if a commitment is made to manage and maintain the lands. This transfer of state land could greatly facilitate acquisition of trail greenbelt corridors or open space areas as proposed in the draft Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan. The Trail Planner would assist in developing management or maintenance programs for these parcels of land, perhaps through the Adopt-a-Trail (or Park) Program.

4. Funding Recommendations

The Borough should continue to utilize a variety of different funding sources with specific trail projects chosen to meet the particular requirements of the different funding sources. The Trails Advisory Commission should continue to recommend projects for inclusion in the Borough’s Programs for Progress requests. Trail projects which meet the requirements of the Local Service Roads and Trails Program should be included in future LSR&T requests.

A major funding source which is well suited to recreational trail projects which has not been utilized by the Borough is the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (L&WCF). With the Trail Planner position now included in the general operating budget of the Borough, providing some assurance of an available project manager, an effort should be made to submit a funding proposal under this program. There is a high probability of receiving substantial trail project funding through L&WCF if a well designed proposal is submitted.

In the upcoming 1984-1985 legislative session the Borough should strongly support reintroduction and passage of legislation to establish an “Outdoor Recreation and Historic Properties Grant Program”. This legislation has been designed to specifically include recreational trail projects and could become a primary funding source if adopted. The Borough should urge that passage of the bill be accompanied with a fiscal note to initiate the grant program.

5. Revisions to the Plan

The Comprehensive Recreational Plan must be considered a dynamic plan which must be changed to reflect the changing status of individual trails or recreational use patterns. Changes to the plan should occur through two basic mechanisms: 1) a Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan amendment; and 2) a periodic review-and update of the plan itself.

Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan amendments should go through the same basic plan amendment process as the Borough’s Comprehensive Plan. The major difference would be that the initial review and recommendation on the proposed amendment would be accomplished by the Trails Advisory Commission. This recommendation will then be forwarded to the Planning Commission and then the Assembly. Additions or deletions of trails included in the Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan can be handled through this process. Only trails which are shown to have community-wide significance as well as form a connecting link with the Borough Trail System should be considered for inclusion in Categories A and B in the Plan. The Trails Advisory Commission will establish criteria to guide the consideration of adding trails to the Plan. It is strongly recommended that the Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan be reviewed and updated at –least every five years. Ideally, updating should occur in conjunction with the updating of the Borough’s Comprehensive Plan (once every two years).

6. Additional Work Required

A key element in the implementation of the Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan will be development of the Adopt-a-Trail Program. A major effort should be undertaken to organize this program and make the community aware of its presence and purpose. A series of meetings with trail user organizations, neighborhood associations or other interested groups should be organized to discuss specific details of how the program can best be run. As part of the development of the Adopt-a-Trail Program, the Borough should prepare a brochure for a “Trail Users and Land Developers Guide to Trail Dedication and Maintenance”. This brochure should be primarily designed to assist trail users in understanding how they can become more involved in reserving trails which are important to themselves and the community. The brochure should also assist land developers in understanding the Borough Trail Program and how trails can best be worked into subdivision design.

A second publication which should eventually result from the Trail Program is a brochure and map on trails and parks within the Borough. This type of information is in high demand from the Visitors Information Center and local sport shops. In addition, this type of brochure will be a valuable tool in demonstrating the availability of outdoor recreation opportunities. This will help in identifying recreational trails as an amenity to the quality of life in Fairbanks and can assist in attracting new residents and businesses to the Borough.

D. SPECIFIC TRAIL RECOMMENDATIONS

The Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan identifies forty-eight recreational trails, or trail systems which are presently established or proposed for public dedication. Individual trails are recommended as: a) state or federal trails; b) components of the FNSB Recreational Trail System; or, c) neighborhood trail systems. Each trail is also identified as generally intended for multi-use or non-motorized uses only (see figure 2). Trails identified as multi-use will normally be available for a variety of both motorized and non-motorized recreational uses. As the designation implies, motorized trail uses will not be allowed on trails designed for non-motorized purposes. Within these general guidelines individual trails or trail easements may be established for more specific use types.

The majority of the recreational trails recommended in this plan presently exist on the ground. More detailed maps of many of these trails are included in the trail inventory background paper. This plan is not intended to affect recreational trails currently dedicated for public use, but rather, documents their place and importance in establishing a comprehensive recreational trail system within the Fairbanks North Star Borough. The Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan also proposes development of several new trails or use areas. New trail recommendations are primarily intended to fulfill an identified recreational trail demand in an area located on public land. In certain situations, construction of new trails may be more cost-effective than right-of-way acquisition for existing trails and may provide a higher quality recreational experience.

Each trail proposed for eventual public dedication by the Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan may have particular requirements to coordinate establishment of the trail with adjacent land uses. The following narrative descriptions provide information on specific needs or recommendations of each trail project which have been identified at this time. As individual projects are initiated these and other parameters should be considered in the project design.

Figure 2

Trails Proposed for Inclusion in the FNSB
Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan

(Trail numbers correspond to numbers on Trail Plan maps)

I. Trails Proposed for Public Dedication

A. State or Federal Trails

<u>Trail Number</u>	<u>Trail Name (existing trails)</u>	<u>Proposed Use Category</u>
I-A1.	Chena Hot Springs- Steese HWY	N (Non-motorized)
I-A2.	Chena Hot Springs Winter Trail	M (Multi-use)'
I-A3.	Circle-Fairbanks Trail	M
I-A4.	Davidson Ditch Hiking Trails	N
I-A5.	N. Fork of the Chena Trail	M
I-A6.	Old Murphy Dome Road Trail	M
I-A7.	Old Saulich Trail	M
I-A8.	Murphy Creek Trail	M
I-A9.	Flood Control Levee Trail	M
I-A10.	Zephyr Creek Trail	M
I-A11.	Herning Hills/Bilikin Trails	M
I-A12.	Bev's Loop Trail System	M

Recommended New Trails

I-AR1.	North Star Bridle Trails	M
I-AR2.	Murphy Dome Ski Trails	N

B. Proposed Components of the FNSB Recreational Trail Network

<u>Trail Number</u>	<u>Trail Name (existing trails)</u>	<u>Proposed Use Category</u>
I-B1.	Big Eldorado Creek Loop Trail	M
I-B2.	Chena-Gilmore Connector Trail	M
I-B3.	Chena Hot Springs Road Trail	M
I-B4.	Chena Lowland Winter Trail Connections	M
I-B5.	Chena Ridge F.E. Ditch Trails	N
I-B6.	Clearly Summit-Gilmore Dome Trail	M
I-B7.	Cripple Creek-Rosie Creek Trail	M
I-B8.	Equinox Marathon Trail	N
I-B9.	Eva Creek Trail	N
I-B10.	Goose Island ORV Area	M
I-B11.	Jeff Studdert Sleddog Trails	N
I-B12.	O'Connor Creek Trail	M
I-B13.	O'Connor Creek E. Ridge Trail	N
I-B14.	Sheep Creek Dredge Path Trail	M
I-B15.	Skarland Ski Trail	N
I-B16.	Tanana Valley Railroad Trail	M
I-B17.	Skyline Ridge Trail	N
I-B18.	Gilmore Trail-Fairbanks Creek Connector Trail	M
I-B19.	Eldorado Ridge Connector Trail	M

Figure 2, continued

I-B20.	Chena Slough Trail	M
I-B21.	Noyes Slough Trail	M
I-B22.	Eldorado Creek Trail	M
I-B23.	Little Chena River-Potlatch Creek Trail System	M
I-B24.	Cranberry Trail	N

Other Recommendations

I-BR1.	100 Mile Loop Trail	Present designation varies by segment
I-BR2.	Ester Community Trail System	N
I-BR3.	Goldstream Valley Open Space/ Skyline Ridge Loop	N

C. Neighborhood Trail Networks

I-C1.	Cripple Creek Trail	N
I-C2.	Lincoln Creek Loop Trail	N
I-C3.	Twenty-three Mile Slough Sleddog Trails	M

II. Existing Publicly Dedicated Trails

A. State or Federal Trails

II-A1.	Chena Dome Trail (state)
II-A2.	Chena River Lakes Recreation Area Hiking Trail (federal)
II-A3.	Creamer's Nature Path (state)
II-A4.	Granite Tors Trail (state)
II-A5.	Pinnell Mountain National Recreation Trail (federal)
II-A6.	U of A Ski Trails (state-portion of Skarland Trail System)
II-A7.	White Mountains Summer Trail (federal)
II-A8.	White Mountains Winter Trail (federal)
II-A9.	Colorado Creek Trail (state)
II-A10.	Stiles Creek and Connector Trail (state)
II-A11.	Angel Creek Valley Trail (state)
II-A12.	East Fork Valley Trail (state)
II-A13.	South Fork Valley Trail (state)
II-A14.	Angel Rocks Trail and Connector (state)

B. FNSB Recreational Trails

II-B1.	Birch Hill Ski Trails
II-B2.	Salcha Ski Trails
II-B3.	Two Rivers Recreation Area
II-B4.	Sauna Avenue/O'Brien Street Trails

Trail Descriptions

I-A1. Chena Hot Springs- Steese Highway Trail

This trail is proposed for establishment by the State as a non-motorized recreational trail. This trail is partially coincident with the Circle-Fairbanks Trail. The portion of the trail extending south from the Circle-Fairbanks Trail has not been tentatively identified as an R.S. 2477 right-of-way by ADOT/PF and for this reason is a good route to be designated for non-motorized uses. This trail has been proposed by citizens as a hiking trail to the Borough Trails Advisory Commission and the Alaska Department of Natural Resources. A portion of this trail is also included as a hiking trail in several of the alternatives of the Bureau of Land Management's draft resource management plan for the Steese National Conservation Area. This trail could be approached as a joint federal and state effort.

I-A2. Chena Hot Springs Winter Trail

The Chena Hot Springs Winter Trail is a portion of the route used in the 1,000 mile "Yukon Quest" Sleddog Race and is recommended for legislative designation as a State Recreation Trail in the draft Tanana Basin Area Plan. The trail lies mainly on state lands and should most-logically be the primary responsibility of the Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation. Access corridors and trail heads need to be established between the trail and Chena Hot Springs Road and the North Pole Badger Road area.

I-A3. Circle-Fairbanks Trail

The Circle-Fairbanks Trail is a long standing priority of the Borough Trails Advisory Commission. Because this trail lies almost entirely on state land it should be within the jurisdiction of the Alaska Department of Natural Resources. This trail is recommended for legislative designation as a State Recreation Trail in the draft Tanana Basin Area Plan. Regardless of whether this trail is legislatively or administratively designated, the Borough should maintain an active role in coordinating the project with mineral development in the Cleary Summit area. The Borough should consider establishing a cooperative agreement with the Department of Natural Resources to clarify responsibilities for the trail and to establish necessary parameters to ensure that recreational designation of the route does not limit access to or development of mining claims. When mining claim development requiring surface disturbance occurs in this area in the future, the trailhead should be relocated. If the need for additional vehicle access develops in this area or if recreation use conflicts arise, separate routes should be established for motorized and non-motorized uses. The original, historic trail along the ridge line should be designated for historic uses such as hiking and horseback riding unless particular mining claim development or road terrain needs require use of the historic route.

I-A4. Davidson Ditch Hiking Trails

The Davidson Ditch Hiking Trails have been proposed by the Bureau of Land Management as access routes into the White Mountains National Recreation Area. Portions of these trails have been reserved and identified as "no staking areas" in the state's White Mountain Remote Parcel disposal. The Davidson Ditch corridor and some of the existing B.L.M. recreation sites along the Steese Highway may be transferred to the State in the future. Until final land ownership is determined, the project should be approached cooperatively by the State and B.L.M. In addition to the proposed hiking trails, a major aspect of this

project is acquisition, restoration and development of interpretive information on the Davidson Ditch and its siphon structures. Trailheads with interpretive displays should be established adjacent to one or more restored siphons. The Davidson Ditch Corridor provides a link to create a series of loops between the ridge line hiking trails.

The remainder of the ditch corridor should be retained as a greenbelt through the Chananika Valley. This includes the portion of the Ditch from approximately 32 through 67 mile Steese Highway and crosses entirely on land owned by the State and B.L.M. Coordination between the Borough and these two agencies to establish protective rights-of-way and management guidelines focusing on historical and recreational enhancement should be pursued.

The Davidson Ditch structures and corridor have the potential to provide a variety of historic and recreational opportunities ranging from small historic waysides to an extensive trail and greenbelt corridor.

I-A5. North Fork of the Chena Trail

The North Fork of the Chena Trail is an extension of the Chena Hot Springs Winter Trail which is used for the Yukon Quest Sleddog Race. The trail lies mainly on state lands and should be established as part of the Chena Hot Springs Winter Trail project.

I-A6. Old Murphy Dome Road Trail

The Old Murphy Road is heavily used as a recreational trail and is also the legal access to several state subdivisions. The trail is important for its use as a link between other trails in the Goldstream Valley such as the O'Connor Creek and Big Eldorado Creek Trails. It is recommended that the southern twenty feet of the Old Murphy Dome Road right-of-way be designated for recreational purposes. If the present road/trail clearing is upgraded to regular vehicle standards in the future, a new trail clearing should be provided as part of the project.

I-A7. Old Saulich Trail

The Old Saulich Trail identified on the Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan Map A is a combination of the Martin-Dunbar Trail and Allen Creek-Dunbar Trail listed in the Jurisdictional Responsibilities and Trail Inventory background paper. This combined route is the approximate location of the main recreational trail now in use in the lower Goldstream Valley. Part of this trail is presently being delineated in the state's Goldstream Agriculture land disposal. Portions of this trail may require realignment to avoid conflict with agriculture or other land development. The intent of this recommendation is to retain at least one major recreational corridor in the lower Goldstream Valley which is accessible from both the north and south sides of the valley.

I-A8. Murphy Creek Trail

The Murphy Creek Trail provides an important connecting link between the old Murphy Dome Road Trail and the Chatanika River. This trail receives a wide variety of summer and winter recreational use. It also provides access to the Chatnika Valley for property owners, loggers, hunters and trappers.

Because this trail lies entirely on State land it is within the jurisdiction of the Alaska Department of Natural Resources.

The Borough should consider establishing a cooperative agreement with the Department of Natural Resources to clarify responsibilities for the trail and to establish necessary parameters to ensure that recreational use of the route will continue but does not limit access needs such as logging, mining, or access to State land disposals.

I-A9. Flood Control Levee Trail

The flood control levee stretches 18 miles across the southern edge of Fairbanks from the Chena Flood Control Project to the mouth of the Chena River. The levee was constructed to protect Fairbanks from flooding and any recreational trail use on the levee should be compatible with that purpose.

For many years the Flood Control Levee Trail has been the main recreational trail connection between South Fairbanks and North Pole. It receives a great deal of winter use. The Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan recognizes this route as the primary option to connect the southern portion of the 100 Mile Loop Trail. It also is recommended as a bike path in the Bike Plan which was prepared by the Borough for the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities.

A three mile segment of the levee crosses property owned by Fort Wainwright being used as an Army firing range. The levee trail must be rerouted around the firing range. The most likely proposal would be to reroute the trail to the north and then adjacent to the Richardson Highway to avoid any conflict with the range. A reroute along the Richardson Highway would also be beneficial as a way to provide a connection to the Badger Road multi-use trail which is currently under construction.

Users of the Flood Control Levee Trail must coordinate with the Borough, State of Alaska, Fort Wainwright and Army Corps of Engineers to address issues of safety and maintenance. Signing road crossings, ramping the reroute connection, and providing ways to encourage use of the reroute are some of these issues. The Adopt-A-Trail program which is part of the Borough's Trail Plan should be utilized to help insure that these and other issues are addressed.

I-A10. Zephyr Creek Trail

The Zephyr Creek Trail provides a connecting link between the Steese Highway corridor and the Alpine Tundra uplands, northeast of Fairbanks. From the uplands area, trail users can travel east to the Pinnell Mountain and Circle-Fairbanks Trails or west to the Mount Prindle area. The trail is located on state and federal land and provides access for a variety of recreational trail users, including hunters, backpackers, and rock climbers. The area in the vicinity of the Zephyr Creek Trail has significant mining history and potential. Recreational trail use should be coordinated with the present and future mineral developments.

I-A11. Herning Hills/Bilikin Trails

The Herning Hills/Bilikin Trails provide important connecting links between residential areas in the Chena Hot Springs Road/Nordale Road area and the Chena Hot Springs Winter Trail. These two connecting trails are located on state land and receive a wide variety of recreational trail use.

I-A12. Bev's Loop Trail System

The Bev's Loop Trail System provides an important connecting link between Murphy Dome and the Chatanika / Washington creek drainages. The 7-Mile trail, Bev's Loop Trail, Blueberry Trail, Ralf's Ridge Trail and Wounded Thumb Ridge Trail make up the majority of this trail system. These trails were linked together over the years and provide a wide variety of year round use including skiing, trapping, snow machining and access to private parcels. All the trails in the Bev's Loop Trail System are existing except for a three mile proposed trail from a parking area off Murphy Dome Road to the 7-Mile Trail. This three mile proposed segment of trail is intended to provide a re-route around the Military's Murphy Dome Radar Station. The proposed re-route is on land owned by the State and would need to be constructed in order to provide public access from Murphy Dome Road to the rest of the trail system.

I-AR1. North Star Bridle Trails

The North Star Bridle Trails is a recommendation to establish a system of primarily equestrian trails in the Two Rivers- Pleasant Valley area. These trails should be located on state lands within the Tanana Valley State Forest and the Colorado Creek drainage of the Chena River State Recreation Area. The trails should tie into and become a part of the existing Governors Cup North Star Competitive Trail Ride route. This multi-use trail proposal must be coordinated with the management plan being prepared for the State Forest and Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation plans for the Chena River State Recreation Area. With the availability of these public lands it should be more cost effective to establish these new trails than acquire rights-of-way for the existing Governor's Cup trail. This proposed trail location can also provide good scenic qualities with fewer adjacent intensive land uses for a better recreational experience. The area identified on Map A is an approximate location where these trails can be developed.

I-AR2. Murphy Dome Ski Trails

The Murphy Dome Ski Trails are an approximate proposed location for development of a high elevation cross-country ski trail network. This proposal is consistent with the proposed habitat and recreation designation of the north slope of Murphy Dome area in the state's draft Tanana Basin Area Plan. The actual site and plans for the trail development should be coordinated with local ski clubs to ensure the best terrain and snow conditions. These trails can provide an early season training area for competitive skiers prior to adequate snowfall at lower elevations.

I-B1. Big Eldorado Creek Loop Trail

This trail lies in the Big Eldorado Creek drainage and the ridge line to the east in the Goldstream Valley. A loop trail can be made by following the Goldstream Road right-of-way between the points where the two branches of the trail cross the road. The trail also ties in with the Old Murphy Dome Road Trail.

I-B2. Chena-Gilmore Connector Trail

This trail is part of the FNSB Bridle Path project which is a cooperative effort of ADOT/PF and the Borough. Partial survey and right-of-way engineering plans for this trail have been completed. The trail forms a connecting link between trails in the Gilmore Dome area and the Chena Hot Springs Road Trail. It is also part of the proposed 100 Mile Loop Trail.

I-B3. Chena Hot Springs Road Trail

This is a dirt path in the Chena Hot Springs Road right-of-way which should eventually link the Steese Highway to the Chena River State Recreation Area. The majority of the trail is being upgraded during the 1984 season. The original scope of the project started the trail at 4.5 mile Chena Hot Springs Road. This plan recommends extending the trail all the way to the new Steese Expressway.

I-B4. Chena Lowlands Winter Trail Connections

There are many trails in the Badger Road area which make potential links to the winter trail network along the Chena River and the area to the north. The primary intent of this recommendation is to reserve one or more main connecting routes so that residents of the North Pole Badger Road area can have access to the Chena Hot Springs Winter Trail and reserved public lands such as Heritage Park and the Chena Flood Control Project which can be used for trail recreation. Additional trails could be identified in this area if requested by local citizens. This proposal identifies two segments of an extensive network which lie mainly on public land or navigable waterways. These trails are primarily winter trails.

I-B5. Chena Ridge F.E. –Ditch Trails

Both the upper and lower Chena Ridge F.E. Ditches are used as recreational trails. Portions of these trails have been reserved in state and private subdivisions or alternative routes have been provided. Some parts may be relocated within road rights-of-way. These trails can provide connecting routes to the Cripple Creek-Rosie Creek Trail and 100 Mile Loop Trail for residents of Chena Ridge.

I-B6. Cleary Summit- Gilmore Dome Trail

This trail provides an important link between the Cleary Summit area and trails around Gilmore Dome. This route can also connect the Circle-Fairbanks Trail to the 100 Mile Loop Trail. Portions of this trail are located within road rights-of-way and should be incorporated into design plans if these roads are upgraded to year round standards.

I-B7. Cripple Creek – Rosie Creek-Trail

The Cripple Creek – Rosie Creek Trail is a primarily component of the proposed 100 Mile Loop Trail. Portions of the trail have been reserved in Borough land disposals. Parts of the trail extend into the Tanana Valley state Forest and will have to be coordinated with the forest management plan. A connection- to this trail from Chena Ridge should be incorporated into the design of Isberg Road.

I-B8. Equinox Marathon Trail

The Equinox Marathon Trail is a route delineated for the Equinox Marathon Race which lies largely within trail and road rights-of-way. This race is an important state wide running event and its trail should be incorporated in future land and road developments along its course. This trail should be designated non-motorized recreation except where the Trail coincides with an established road right-of-way or active mineral access trail.

I-B9. Eva Creek Trail

The Eva Creek Trail is a portion of the Ester Dome – Ester Trail identified in the Jurisdictional Responsibilities and Trail Inventory background paper. This trail connects the Equinox Marathon Trail along Henderson Road to the town of Ester. This trail should be designated non-motorized recreation except where the trail coincides with an established road right-of-way or active mineral access trail. The lower portion of the trail passes through residential areas, making a non-motorized designation more desirable.

I-B10. Goose Island Off-Road Vehicle Area

The western portion of Goose Island has been used by the Fairbanks Motorcycle Racing Association for off-road vehicle practice and competition under a use permit granted by the Borough Division of Land Management. This land is owned by the Borough and is an ideal site for this particular type of trail recreation. It is recommended that the Borough work with the Fairbanks Motorcycle Racing Club and or other interested organizations to more permanently establish this area for motorized trail use.

I-B11. Jeff Studdert Sleddog Trails

The Jeff Studdert Sleddog Trails are the site of the North American Sleddog Championships and are a long standing priority of the Borough Trail Program. The Borough Division of Engineering has funds available for survey and right-of-way acquisition for this trail system. The trail survey is complete and some easements and cooperative agreements are in place. There are several parcels remaining which do not have easements and if these easements are not negotiated in the near future the integrity of this long standing trail system will be lost. It is recommended that some of the existing funds be used to contract professional right-of-way acquisition assistance. The project should be coordinated with the Alaska Dog Mushers Association. Once the necessary rights-of-way are obtained the trail system should be posted for general public use with the Mushers Association assuming the primary management of the trail under a cooperative agreement with the Borough.

I-B12. O'Connor Creek Trail

The O'Connor Creek Trail is a multi-use trail in the O'Connor Creek drainage used mainly for dog mushing. The trail is heavily used by local residents and provides a link between the Old Murphy Dome and the Goldstream Valley. The route is identified by ADOT/PF as an R.S. 2477 right-of-way. Alternative vehicle access routes should be developed for any public land disposals in the area. Because the trail lies mainly on permafrost terrain it should be left a recreational route with new roads built on better terrain.

I-B13. O'Connor Creek East Ridge Line Trail

This trail is identified as the Airfield Ridge Trail in the Tanana Basin Area Plan and has a long history of support by local residents. It is presently marked and maintained primarily for cross-country skiing. It is being accommodated in a private land development along the ridge and should be incorporated in the design of future public land disposals in the area.

I-B14. Sheep Creek Dredge Path Trail

This trail is extensively used for dog mushing, snowmachines and cross-country skiing. A few segments have had easements established at the edge of private subdivisions. Some realignment may eventually be required on other portions which do not have easements. The trail is proposed as part of the 100 Mile Loop Trail and creates an important link between the Cripple-Rosie Creek Trail and the Tanana Valley Railroad Trail.

I-B15. Skarland Ski Trail

The Skarland Ski Trail is perhaps the most well known and firmly established trail within the Borough Trail Program. The trail is primarily a recreational cross-country ski trail. Portions of this system which lie on University of Alaska property are used extensively for competition. There is only one parcel remaining on this entire system which does not have a legal right-of-way. This parcel should be a high priority for future easement acquisition. As an interim measure, the Borough should explore establishing a cooperative agreement with the remaining landowner which provides for continued use of the trail and eventual dedication, but which also reserves the landowners' right to realign the trail if the land is developed in the future.

I-B16. Tanana Valley Railroad Trail

The Tanana Valley Railroad Trail is a component of the Borough's original Five-Year Recreational Trail and forms a link of the proposed 100 Mile Loop Trail. The main uses of the Trail are dog mushing, cross-country skiing, and snowmachining. A large portion of the trail lies on state and federal lands. Some realignment may be required to avoid conflict with mining claim development at the eastern end of the trail near Fox. Much of the trail lies in an area designated as open space/natural in the Borough's Comprehensive Plan.

I-B17. Skyline Ridge Trail

The Skyline Ridge Trail lies on the ridge north of Farmer's Loop Road and provides a link between the Skarland Trail System and the Old Steese Highway. This trail is part of a long standing cooperative effort between the Borough and ADOT/PF called the FNSB Bridle Path project. The Trail has been surveyed and much of the right-of-way is in place. A great deal of the original path is now overlain by roads. As use of these roads increase a new, separate path for the trail should be constructed within the road rights-of-way. This should occur in conjunction with road upgrading, if possible, in order to minimize costs.

I-B18. Gilmore Trail-Fairbanks Creek Connector Trail

The Gilmore Trail-Fairbanks Creek Connector Trail is a segment of a branch of the Circle-Fairbanks Trail established in the early 1900's. It appears on a map of the Fairbanks area published by the U.S. Geological Survey in 1913 and in subsequent USGS maps. The trail was recognized in the Environmental Assessment/Land Report for the Gilmore Creek Tracking Station upon transfer of that installation from the National Aeronautic and Space Administration (NASA) to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) in 1985.

In addition to the historic significance, this trail functions as both a recreational trail by itself and a connecting trail between longer trails within the Borough Trail System. The trail is accessible – from the Gilmore Trail road, the entrance to the Gilmore Tracking Station on the Steese Highway, and the Fish Creek Road by way of the Cleary Summit ski area entrance on the Steese Highway.

The Trail provides an excellent connection between the proposed 100 Mile Loop on Tungsten Hill to the Circle-Fairbanks Trail. The trail crosses areas of active and inactive mining claims. The need for coordinating potential mining activity with a trail placement and use will likely be necessary in the future.

I-B19. Eldorado Ridge Connector Trail

The Eldorado Ridge Connector Trail provides an important connecting link between the Goldstream Alaska Subdivision and the Big Eldorado Loop Trail. The Trail begins at Waterford Road, close to the northeast corner of Goldstream Alaska. It then runs to the east about ¼ mile before connecting into the Big Eldorado Loop Trail.

A wide variety of persons use this connector including joggers, skiers, dogmushers, horseback riders, and motorcyclists. Any new road projects affecting this trail should be coordinated with the Borough to maintain the continuity, utility, and safety of this connector trail.

I-B20. Chena Slough Trail

The Chena Slough runs from the Richardson Highway through the North Pole Badger Road area connecting to the Chena River just east of Fort Wainwright. It has been recognized for its year round' multiple-use recreational value with an emphasis on canoeing, skiing, snowmachining, and dogmushing. The slough offers an excellent opportunity especially during the winter for North Pole residents to access the Winter trail network along the Chena River and the area to the north and east.

Over the years, roads constructed over the slough without bridging or with inadequate sized culverts have impeded trail user access. This has created a segmented trail use pattern along the slough and dangerous on-grade road crossings. It is recommended that any further road crossings of the slough provide adequate passage through the roadway to accommodate all trail uses. If existing road crossings are upgraded, all possible steps should be taken to provide safe trail passage through the roadway at that time. If trail access is not feasible through proposed or existing road crossings then the Borough should coordinate with Alaska DOT/PF and trail user groups to create safer existing on-grade crossings where necessary.

I-B21. Noyes Slough Trail

Noyes Slough has long been recognized for its year round multiple-use recreational value with a major emphasis on canoeing, skiing, snowmachining, and dogmushing. In 1981 approximately \$300,000 was appropriated to the Borough through State legislation for the Noyes Slough Restoration 'Project. Since that time, this money has been used for an on-going effort to enhance the slough corridor for recreational purposes, primarily canoeing.

The first position of this money was used to prepare a feasibility study for the Noyes Slough Canoe Trail. This study should be used as a guideline in establishing for use of the remaining funds. The slough which runs primarily through an urban area is in some places lacking adequate buffers between development and trail use.

The Borough should actively pursue negotiations with land owners to establish outdoor recreational zones and trail/greenbelt easements along both sides of Noyes Slough. Addressing safety related problems primarily dealing with non-motorized and motorized use conflicts should continually be a top priority in managing and planning for the Noyes Slough Trail.

I-B22. Eldorado Creek Trail

The Eldorado Creek Trail provides an important connecting link between the Tanana Valley Railroad Trail and the Big Eldorado Creek Loop Trail. This trail is primarily used in the wintertime by dog mushers, skiers, and snowmachinists. A trail easement has been established through Call of the Wild Subdivision for a ½ mile segment of the trail just south of Goldstream Road.

I-B23. Little Chena River – Potlatch Creek Trail System

This network of trails north of Chena Hot Springs Road connects the Little Chena River Valley with the Patlatch Creek drainage west of Two Rivers Elementary School. A portion of the current recreational use is located on a State and Borough wood cutting access road which is not part of the trail system. The road was established for the purpose of resource development and vehicular access to State and Borough lands. The Borough should work with local trail users, and the Alaska Department of Natural Resources on State land, to establish a safe, legal, recreational trail separated from this wood cutting access road.

This system also includes an important feeder trail that connects residential areas north of Chena Hot Springs Road with the main trail systems in the area. There are additional trails in this area that could be future additions to this trail system.

This trail system connects to the existing Chena Hot Springs Road Trail at two locations, one at approximately 13 mile Chena Hot Springs Road and the other just west of the Two Rivers Road/CHSR intersection at 18 mile. Safe crossings of Chena Hot Springs Road need to be coordinated and established with Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities.

A potential trail head location for this trail system could be located on Borough property near the existing dumpster site just west of Two Rivers Road.

I-B24. Cranberry Trail

This trail is a 2 ½ mile loop trail that provides connecting links to the O'Connor Creek East Ridge Line Trail. The Cranberry Trail receives a variety of year round non-motorized recreational use including skiing, biking, dogmushing, hiking and horseback riding. The trail is accessed by local residents from all directions, however the main public access is off of September Court using the O'Connor Creek East Ridgeline Trail of off of Pandora Drive. The Cranberry Trail should be designated non-motorized recreation with an exception to allow dog mushers training sled dogs with ATV's between August through October on the south segment of the trail crossing Tax Lot 104, Section 01, Township 1 North, Range 2 West, and Fairbanks Meridian.

I-BR1. 100 Mile Loop Trail

The 100 Mile Loop Trail is a concept originally proposed in the Borough's draft Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan. The draft Parks and Recreation Plan proposes linking existing trails within the Borough to form one major, non-motorized truck trail which other trails can connect into. It is the recommendation of the Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan that this concept be adopted as a long range objective of the Trail Program. On an interim basis, individual segments of the trail can remain open to multiple recreational uses, if so designated. As residential infill occurs along the trail and it becomes more firmly established, the need for designation of the entire loop as non-motorized should be reviewed. This can be done in conjunction with a future update of this plan. It should be kept in mind that this proposal is a general concept and in any given segment of the trail there may be several existing trails which could provide the necessary link in the 100 Mile Loop. Decisions on the final routing of this trail should be based on potential links to other trails and recreation areas and the feasibility of incorporating the trail into the land developments occurring in the particular area.

I-BR2. Ester Community Trail System

Much of the existing trail system in the Ester area is used seasonally for mining access or other road purposes. A high degree of interest in non-motorized, primarily cross-country ski trails has been expressed by residents of the area during the Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan process. It is recommended that a parcel of Borough land in the general area depicted on Map B be made available to residents of Ester for development of a trail use area. Much of this Borough land is covered by mining claims and is not well suited for residential development at this time. Location of the trail use site should be coordinated with mining activities in order to avoid a location where future surface disturbance is known to be likely.

I-BR3. Goldstream Valley Open Space/Skyline Ridge Loop

Both the Borough's draft Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan and the Comprehensive Plan identify the central portion of Goldstream Valley as an open space/natural area or public preserve. This area which largely underlain by permafrost, contains a portion of the Tanana Valley Railroad Trail and is extensively used for winter trail related recreation. The area identified on map one on the following page and also on Map B at the back of this report shows a major block of land which is almost entirely state and federal land. It is the recommendation of this plan that the Borough acquire this land for an open space/natural area available for non-motorized trail recreation. State lands can be transferred to the Borough through A.S. 38.05.315, which will be consistent with the draft Tanana Basin Area Plan. Interest in federal lands could be obtained through the Recreation and Public Purpose Act. The Borough should consider lands trades with the few private landowners in this block of land. The final part of this proposal is to eventually establish connecting trails between the Tanana Valley Railroad Trail and the Skyline Ridge Trail. This will form a large loop trail which has outstanding views of the City of Fairbanks and Alaska Range from the ridge and the more natural setting of the Goldstream Valley Open Space along the Tanana Valley Railroad Trail.

I-C1. Cripple Creek Trail System

With the development of the Borough's Cripple Creek II Subdivision, several non-motorized trail easements have been delineated which can eventually form a trail network similar to the Skarland Trail System. New state, borough, or private subdivision in this area should be encouraged to establish links to tie into this trail network. The Cripple Creek-Rosie Creek Trail is presently the primary multi-use trail in the area and part of the 100 Mile Loop. Access to this trail through subdivisions should also be provided when possible. The Borough should encourage ADOT/PF to provide a trail corridor within the Isberg Road project to connect this Trail network to Chena Ridge.

I-C2. Lincoln Creek Loop Trail

There are several non-motorized trail easements within the state's Lincoln Creek and Murphy Subdivisions. All the land in the area surrounding these subdivisions is owned by the State or Borough. Map two on the following page depicts how these existing trail easements can be connected together in future land developments to eventually form a loop trail between subdivisions approximately nineteen miles long. A portion of this loop west of Lincoln Creek lies within the Tanana Valley Forest and should be coordinated with the Forest Management Plan now in progress. Multi-use trail corridors can be incorporated into road rights-of-way in this area as has been done in Lincoln Creek Subdivision. Connections between the Lincoln Creek Trail and the Old Saulich Trail should also be reserved.

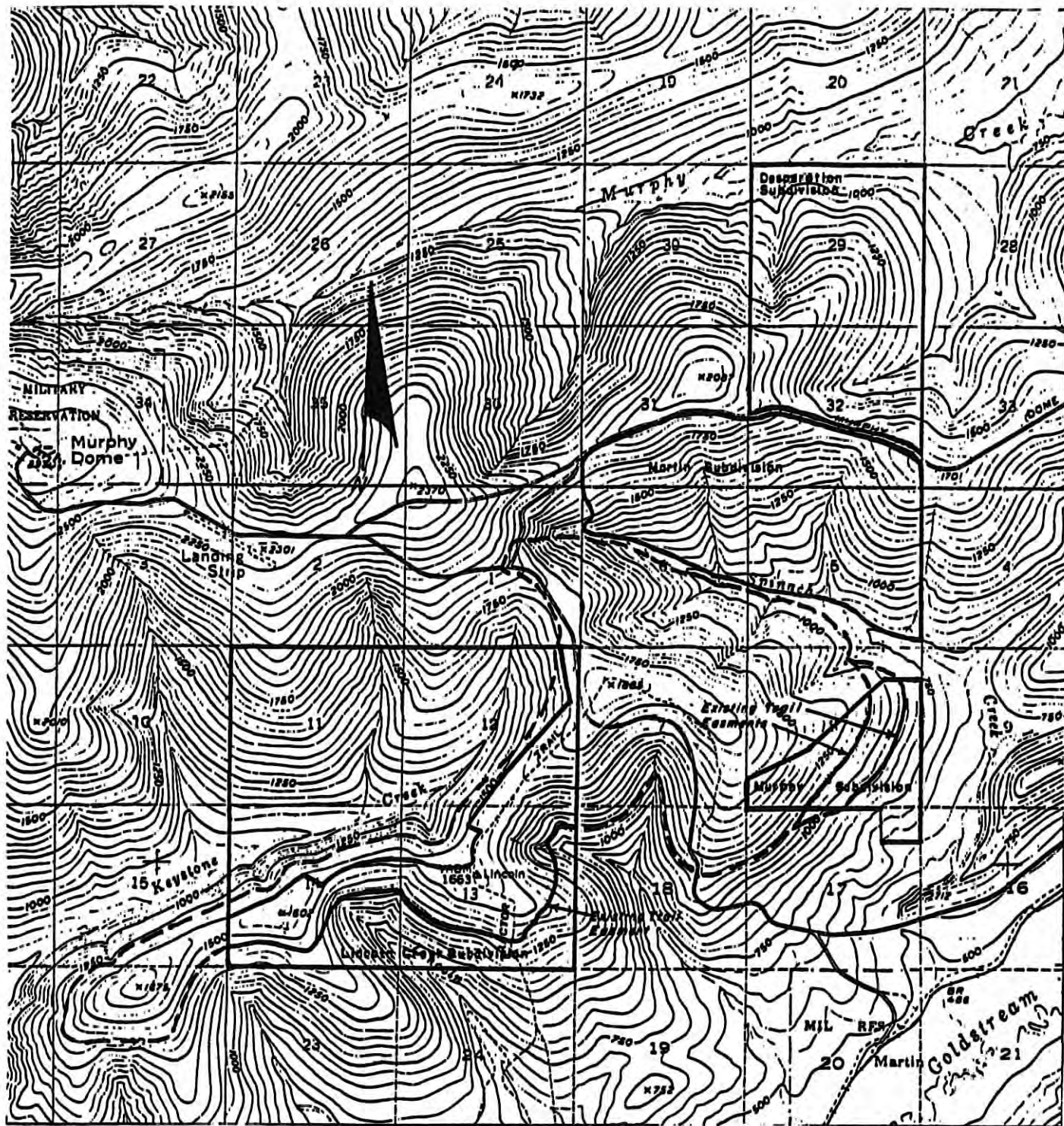
I-C3. Twenty-three Mile Slough Sleddog Trails

Both the state's Twenty-three Mile Slough Agricultural disposal and Eielson Agricultural II disposal contain reservations for trails in the area. Many of the trails are winter trails located on frozen waterways. Future road development or additional land disposals should be designed to retain the continuity of these trails to the greatest extent possible. There are two loops of this extensive Trail system which already have the majority of their legal rights-of-way established by designated tracts in state ownership, section line easements, or R.S. 2477. Retaining these loops and establishing connections to them should be the primary focus of efforts for this trail system.

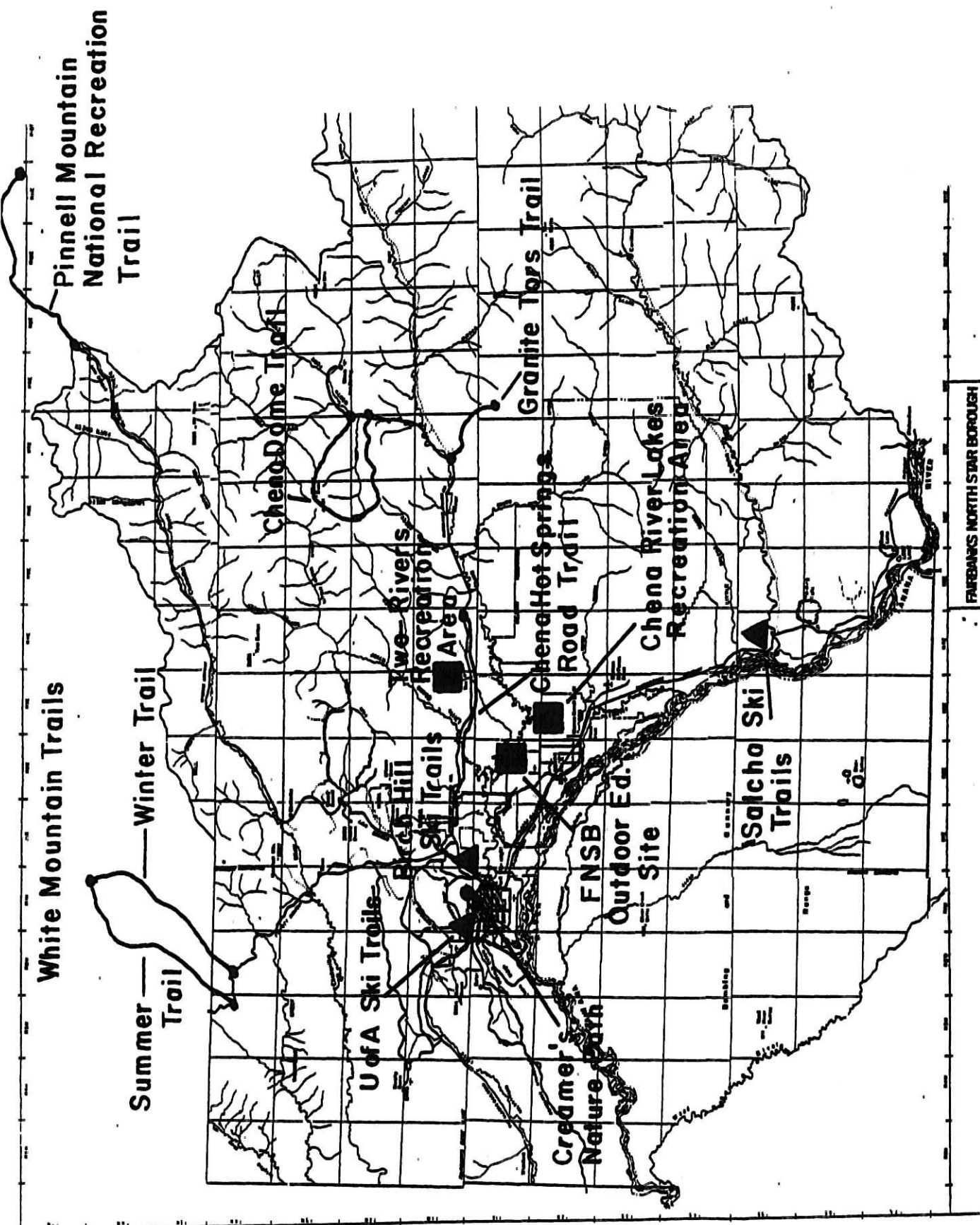
Trails numbered II-A1 through II-B3 are existing, publicly dedicated trails. These trails are presently managed by a variety of different land management agencies as described in the "Jurisdictional Responsibilities and Trail Inventory" background paper. Their general location is noted by the map on the following page.

A detailed topographic map of the Eldorado area, featuring contour lines, roads, and a proposed trail route. The map includes labels for 'Eldorado', 'Goldstream 3', 'Goldstream 2', 'Goldstream 1', 'Goldstream 4', 'Goldstream 5', 'Goldstream 6', 'Goldstream 7', 'Goldstream 8', 'Goldstream 9', 'Goldstream 10', 'Goldstream 11', 'Goldstream 12', 'Goldstream 13', 'Goldstream 14', 'Goldstream 15', 'Goldstream 16', 'Goldstream 17', 'Goldstream 18', 'Goldstream 19', 'Goldstream 20', 'Goldstream 21', 'Goldstream 22', 'Goldstream 23', 'Goldstream 24', 'Goldstream 25', 'Goldstream 26', 'Goldstream 27', 'Goldstream 28', 'Goldstream 29', 'Goldstream 30', 'Goldstream 31', 'Goldstream 32', 'Goldstream 33', 'Goldstream 34', 'Goldstream 35', 'Goldstream 36', 'Goldstream 37', 'Goldstream 38', 'Goldstream 39', 'Goldstream 40', 'Goldstream 41', 'Goldstream 42', 'Goldstream 43', 'Goldstream 44', 'Goldstream 45', 'Goldstream 46', 'Goldstream 47', 'Goldstream 48', 'Goldstream 49', 'Goldstream 50', 'Goldstream 51', 'Goldstream 52', 'Goldstream 53', 'Goldstream 54', 'Goldstream 55', 'Goldstream 56', 'Goldstream 57', 'Goldstream 58', 'Goldstream 59', 'Goldstream 60', 'Goldstream 61', 'Goldstream 62', 'Goldstream 63', 'Goldstream 64', 'Goldstream 65', 'Goldstream 66', 'Goldstream 67', 'Goldstream 68', 'Goldstream 69', 'Goldstream 70', 'Goldstream 71', 'Goldstream 72', 'Goldstream 73', 'Goldstream 74', 'Goldstream 75', 'Goldstream 76', 'Goldstream 77', 'Goldstream 78', 'Goldstream 79', 'Goldstream 80', 'Goldstream 81', 'Goldstream 82', 'Goldstream 83', 'Goldstream 84', 'Goldstream 85', 'Goldstream 86', 'Goldstream 87', 'Goldstream 88', 'Goldstream 89', 'Goldstream 90', 'Goldstream 91', 'Goldstream 92', 'Goldstream 93', 'Goldstream 94', 'Goldstream 95', 'Goldstream 96', 'Goldstream 97', 'Goldstream 98', 'Goldstream 99', 'Goldstream 100'. The map also shows a grid of section lines and a north arrow in the bottom left corner.

PROPOSED LINCOLN CREEK LOOP TRAIL



MAP TWO



Existing Public Recreation Trails

