

OVERVIEW OF PROCESS

The primary goal of this design and planning effort was to ensure the process was driven by the community's vision, goals and desires for the area. As such, the planning steps were designed as a series of feedback loops between the community, the planning team and the charrette participants in order that each successive step in the process would build from the previous one. The primary mechanism for obtaining input was a series of four public workshops to gather ideas and input on a vision for the Planning Area. After each workshop, the planning team consolidated this information and then presented it back to the community for further discussion and additional input (*Figure 7: Public Input Process*). The vision, goals and recommendations from these workshops were then used to guide the charrette participants' work as they explored planning and design ideas for making that vision a reality.

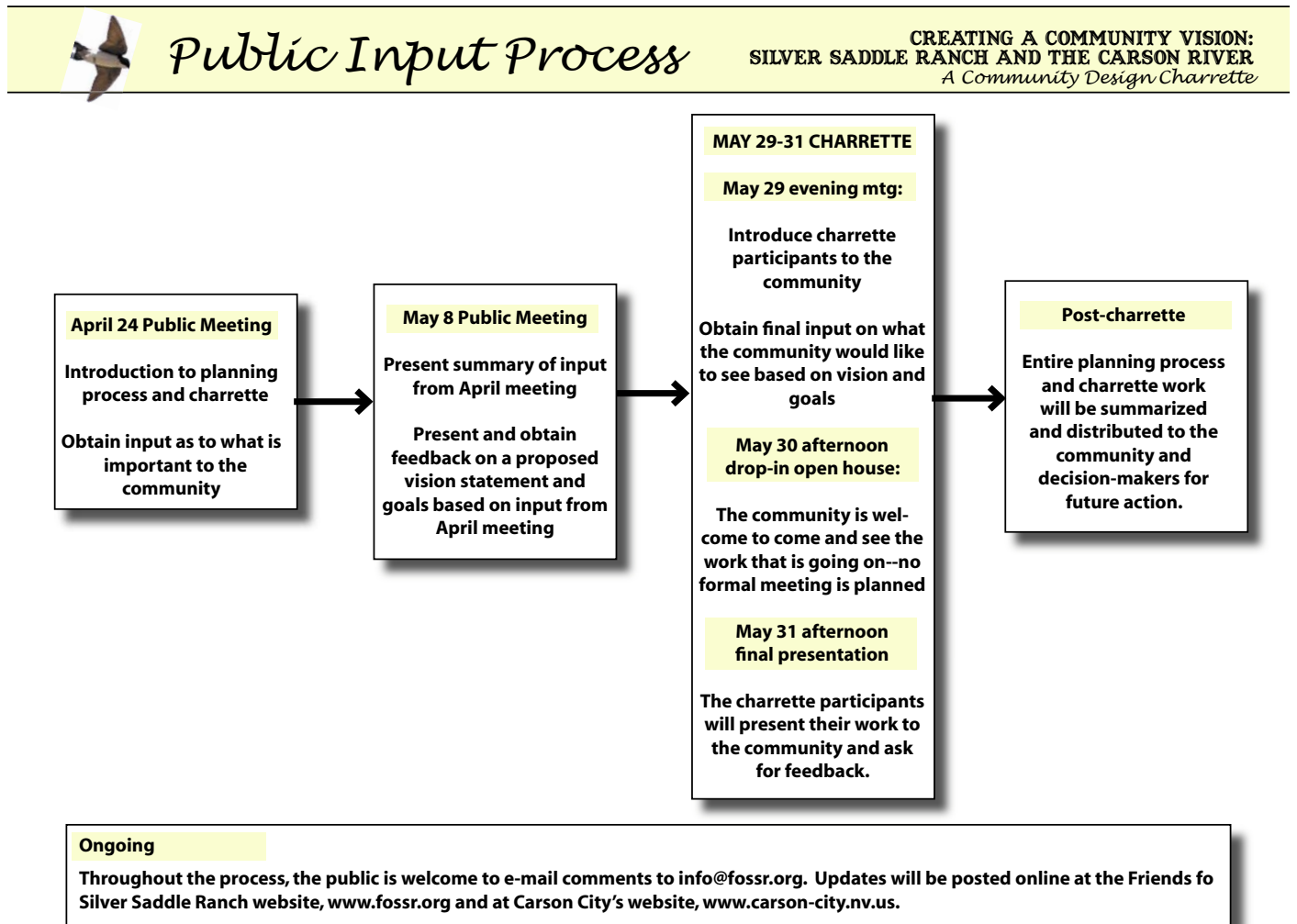


Figure 7. Public Input Process

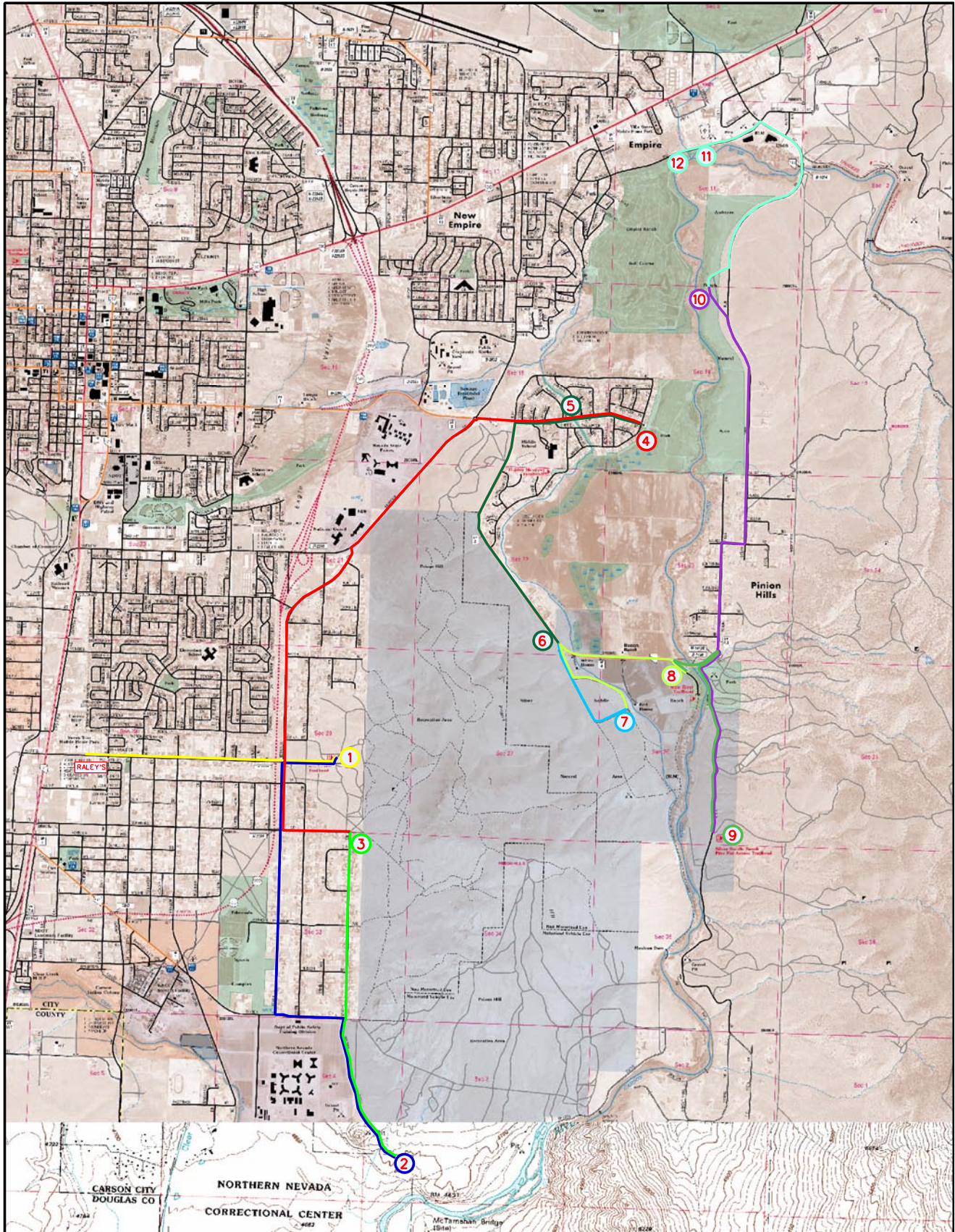


Figure 8: Self Guided Tour Route

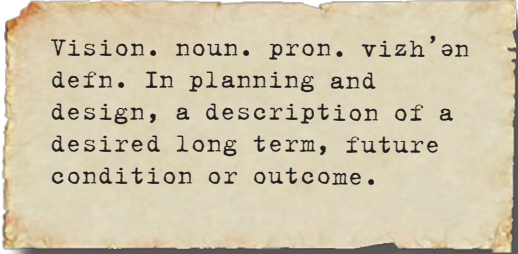
In preparation for the series of public workshops, a self-guided tour of the Planning Area was created, distributed around the community, and posted on the Internet (*Figure 8: Self Guided Tour Route; Appendix C: Self Guided Tour Brochure*). The tour guide provided a chance for people to experience the area in new ways and reflect on their ideas about what they would like to see in the future. Information about the workshops and how to submit comments was included in the self-guided tour brochure. The charrette planning team and a cadre of participants were able to share knowledge and become familiar with issues firsthand through the charrette tour of the Planning Area.

Additional outreach about the planning effort was communicated through press releases, direct mailing, informational brochures distributed at a variety of public places around the city, presentations to numerous City advisory boards, televised on the local access channel, and posted on Carson City's, BLM's and Friends of Silver Saddle Ranch's websites (*Appendix D: Charrette Informational Brochures*). Media coverage was provided by NewsCarsonCity.com, Reno Gazette-Journal, and Nevada Appeal. In addition, a panel discussion that included Carson City, BLM and Friends of Silver Saddle Ranch was aired on KUNR public radio's, "High Desert Forum". The primary goals of the outreach effort were to raise awareness about the planning area and to encourage people to engage in the process.

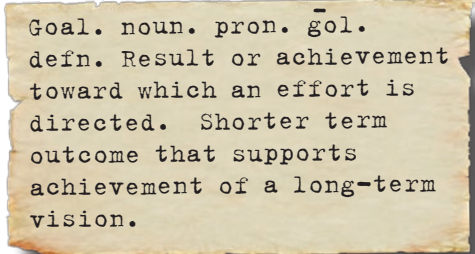
Public Workshops: Setting the Stage

Workshop 1, conducted on April 24, 2008, provided an opportunity to introduce and orient the community to the charrette process and the Planning Area. Participants were invited to share their long-term visions for Silver Saddle Ranch and the Carson River area. The last portion of the workshop was spent brainstorming ideas about important issues and other considerations for the planning of this area.

Based on input from Workshop 1, a vision statement and supporting goals reflecting the common themes identified by the community were presented for feedback at Workshop 2, which occurred on May 8, 2008. Participants were given an opportunity to suggest any revisions. In the end, the following vision and goals were developed based on this input.



Vision. noun. pron. vizh'ən
defn. In planning and design, a description of a desired long term, future condition or outcome.



Goal. noun. pron. gōl.
defn. Result or achievement toward which an effort is directed. Shorter term outcome that supports achievement of a long-term vision.

Vision

The Silver Saddle Ranch and Carson River area provides close-to-home, natural, open space that contributes to quality of life for residents and visitors. This historic landscape helps to preserve Carson City's rural heritage while providing a variety of passive recreation and trail uses that are balanced with existing agricultural uses and protection of the Carson River ecosystem and its associated values.

Goals

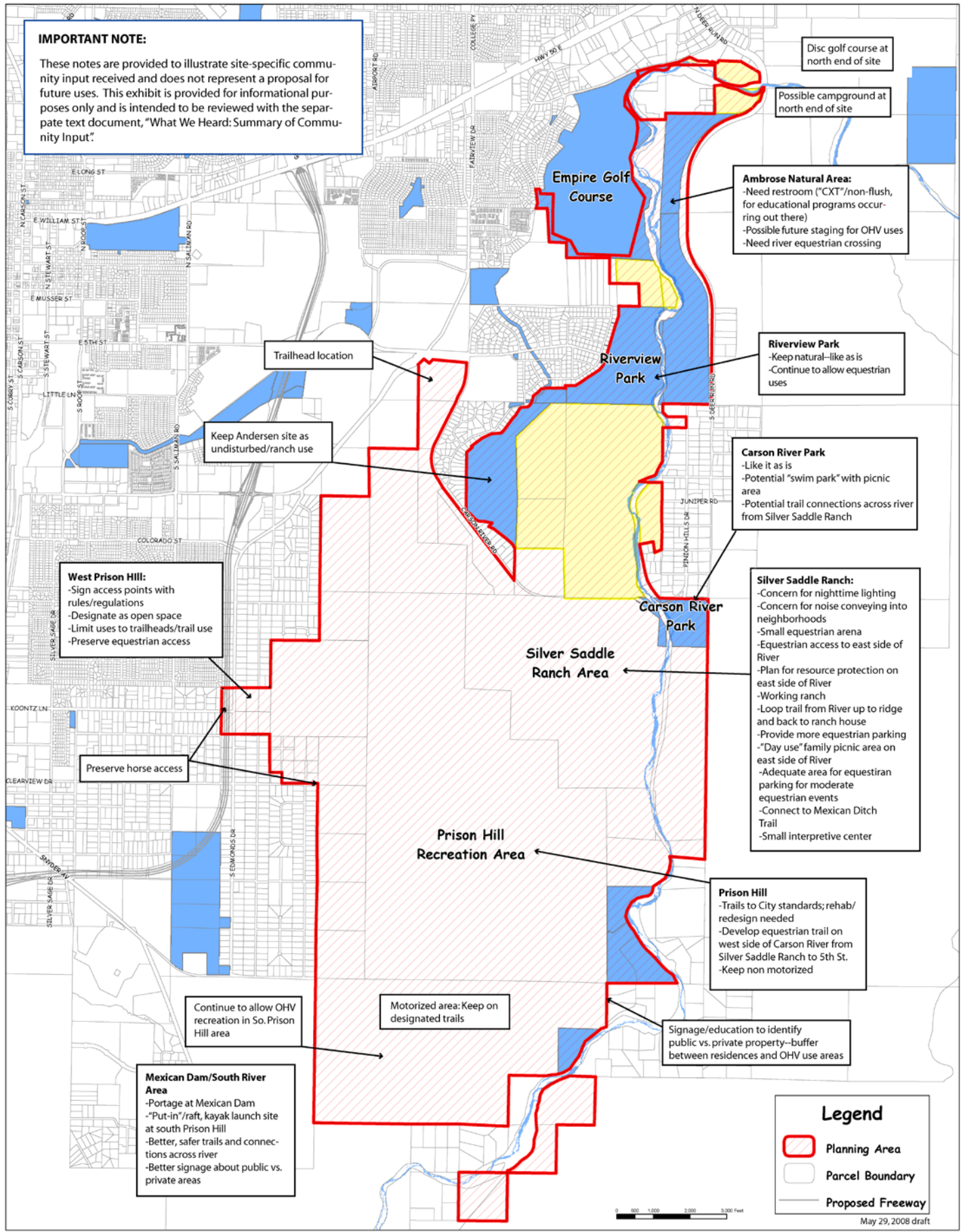
1. Preserve and enhance the area's scenic, natural, undeveloped character.
2. Protect and enhance the Carson River ecosystem including associated upland areas.
3. Provide for a variety of trail uses, passive recreation opportunities and events that are compatible with preserving the character of the area and protecting natural resources.
4. Enhance access to the Silver Saddle Ranch and Carson River area, including Prison Hill.
5. Preserve the area's cultural heritage and resources.
6. Improve on-site educational and interpretive opportunities.
7. Manage the area for improved safety, resource and private property protection.

Once there was agreement on a vision and goals, another round of brainstorming produced more specific ideas for how to achieve the vision and goals.

Following is a summary of the key concepts and ideas received from the community during the two public workshops and through direct correspondence with the planning team (*Figure 9: Site-Specific Community Comments*). A complete list of the workshop notes and other comments received is included as *Appendix E: 4/24/08 Public Workshop Summary* and *Appendix F: 5/8/08 Public Workshop Summary*.

Character of Planning Area:

- Undisturbed, quiet, open space character is what makes many people like Carson City
- Planning Area is "hidden, protected" open space but close to town at the same time
- Concerns about impacts of overly-developed park and recreation facilities
- Open spaces are contiguous and provide opportunities for connections.



**Creating a Community Vision:
Site-Specific Community Input**

Figure 9. Site Specific Community Comments

Carson City GIS Division
300 Main Street
Carson City, NV 89401
(775) 682-2222 ext. 1010

CARSON CITY, NEVADA
THIS MAP IS PREPARED FOR THE CITY OF CARSON CITY
FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY. IT DOES NOT
REPRESENT A WARRANTY, WARRANTY OR ASSURANCE
TO THE ACCURACY OR RELIABILITY OF THE DATA
DELAWAREE HOLDING



- Scenic value is high and should be preserved
- Dark sky appreciated
- Maintain working ranch—would like to see successful, sustainable agricultural operation

Quality of Life, Social, Psychological Benefits

- Quality of life—access to river, wildlife habitat
- Release/escape area for community—psychological “safety valve”
- Opportunities to engage those alienated from nature
- Source of community image and pride

Economic Impacts

- Potential for positive economic impacts from tourism and overall quality of life improvements
- Some business activities in area, specifically equestrian-related services, dependent on trail system

Natural Resources

- Healthy, functional ecosystem including habitat connectivity/corridors
- Protect and enhance diverse natural resources
- Minimize new land/resource disturbance—make any development (trails, recreation) as environmentally-sensitive as possible
- Designate wildlife protection areas and riparian protection area
- Noise/air quality concerns from motorized uses
- Manage invasive species

River, Floodplain & Water Resources

- Carson River is the only river in the city which makes it unique
- The river is suitable for seasonal water-based recreation (including rafting, kayaking, etc.)
- People want access to the river but how without impacting it
- Watershed as a whole, including undeveloped floodplain, is important for habitat, water resources, etc.
- Water quality is a concern (erosion, livestock, effluent spreading)



City staff provide background information at April 24, 2008 community workshop.

- Keep river natural and enhance habitat/vegetation—limit recreation development
- Continue irrigation of agricultural areas as part of a working ranch (explore obtaining water rights or access to reclaimed water)

Historic/Cultural Resources

- Ranch and surrounding areas a historic landscape and part of area's heritage
- Preserve Silver Saddle Ranch as a cultural resource

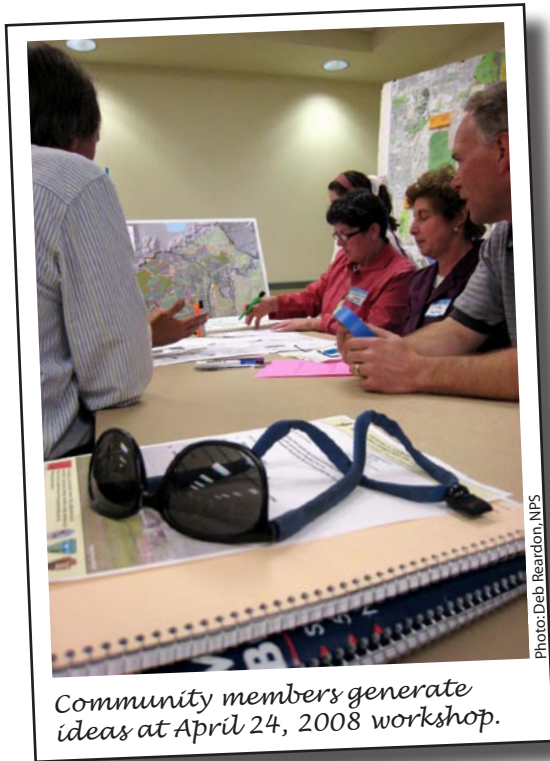
Trails

- Concerns about user conflicts. Some want to see trails multiple uses, others would prefer separated uses
- Trail planning and uses should be linked to resource protection goals
- Existing facilities at Silver Saddle Ranch support equestrian uses and should remain. Opportunity to demonstrate ranching practices
- Concern about restricting/eliminating equestrian uses. Users feel that impacts are over-exaggerated (i.e. manure, river access to water horses) and that horses are part of the area's heritage
- Need to clarify through signage and education appropriate access points, trail routes, private vs. public property, motorized/OHV vs. nonmotorized areas, river access, etc.
- Want to see better integration and connectivity of trail systems, including connections to bike trails in developed areas and loop trails including proposed access across future highway
- Keep OHV uses at south end of Prison Hill but with better signage, enforcement
- Preference is for natural surfaced trails to preserve natural character
- Bridge crossings at river and Mexican Ditch for multiple trail users are needed
- Create buffers between trails and residential areas
- Variety of trail experiences (i.e. singletrack, multiuse, elevations, etc.)
- Access to adjacent residences/neighborhoods
- Ensure Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance and universal accessibility
- Need staging areas (including for horse trailers)
- Potential wagon-carriage driving trail use



Breakout groups at April 24, 2008 workshop.

Photo: Deb Reardon, NPS



Community members generate ideas at April 24, 2008 workshop.

Recreation Uses

- Passive recreation uses preferred to maintain character of area; development intensity should relate to recreational experience
- Any recreation should be consistent with resource protection goals
- Low impact river recreation
- Bird and wildlife watching—high quality birdwatching area—potential for wildlife observation platforms
- Potential camping
- Improve fishing
- Some would like to explore hunting, while others do not want it in the planning area
- Potential for disc golf course
- Consider how recreation (including trail) uses are distributed throughout the planning area—it is large and diverse enough for many uses and different forms of recreation
- Some like the idea of extending the V&T rail with a wagon road from the V&T terminal to Silver Saddle Ranch while others think it would be too obtrusive

Education/Interpretation

- Opportunities for outdoor environmental education, including school programs—potential interpretive river rafting trips
- Potential interpretive themes/topics: watershed, history, environment
- Small/modest interpretive/nature center at Silver Saddle Ranch
- Unobtrusive signs and interpretive features needed including trail etiquette, regulations/rules, directional information

Community Engagement

- Outreach important—need a plan
- Reengage neighbors
- Foster public ownership
- Important to engage the public in planning process

Management

- Important to communicate rules and regulations (trail etiquette, dog policies, motorized vs. nonmotorized areas, etc.) and safety information
- Limit/prohibit commercial activities

- Organized events: keep relatively small and consistent with character of site and resource protection
- Funding concerns: where will the funding come from for improvements, operations and maintenance
- Partnership opportunities
- Engage the community in maintenance--opportunities for volunteer work
- Fire/fuel management important
- Monitoring, patrols and enforcement needed (i.e. rangers, on-site supervisor, neighborhood watch, etc.)

Health & Safety

- Safety is a concern (issues with drug use, homeless camps, etc.)
- Sanitation/health issues with lack of restrooms

Workshop 3, held on May 29, 2008, provided an opportunity for the community to view and comment on a summary of their ideas, which were provided in written and map formats. This workshop also marked the kick-off of the charrette with all participants invited to the event. This provided an opportunity for the charrette participants to meet community members and share any final thoughts before the core of the charrette began on Friday morning.

The Charrette

Commencing with the May 29 public workshop and kick-off celebration, the charrette began in earnest on Friday, May 30 at the Carson City Senior Citizens Center. Charrette invitees representing a cross-section of stakeholders, community members and technical experts were identified and recruited to participate. Approximately 45 people participated in the charrette.

Charrette Team Focus Areas

Given the range of sites, issues and opportunities throughout the Planning Area, charrette participants were formed into three teams, each with a separate focus area (*Appendix G: Charrette Teams*). The first team focused on natural resources including the Carson River ecosystem and natural resource issues. The second team explored trails and passive recreation considering trail networks for the whole Planning Area as well as other types of compatible recreation. Anticipating that Silver Saddle Ranch and Prison Hill would be focal areas, the third team was tasked with developing site plans and ideas for managing these sites.

While each team focused on a different area of emphasis, participants were encouraged to check-in with each other and seek counsel/advice from other teams

to feed into their work. To facilitate coordination and integration of ideas, formal check-in times provided a chance for all of the teams to reconvene and hear updates from each other.

All teams were reminded that the vision and goals developed by the community would be the foundation from which they would work. Participants were also provided with the other input obtained through the public workshops.

Charrette Process

Friday morning, the charrette participants received a brief orientation to the agenda and process for the two-day event and then quickly boarded a bus to tour the Planning Area. The purpose of the fieldtrip was to orient participants and provide an opportunity to gather information and photos of the sites that would later be used to develop planning and design recommendations. The tour route was the same as that in the Self-Guided Tour Brochure made available to the public in the months leading up to the charrette (*Appendix C: Self Guided Tour Brochure*). Participants were asked to think about how the vision and goals developed through the community input process could be implemented through planning and design.

Specific questions to spur participants' thinking included:

- Look at surrounding areas—what does the interface between uses look like? How do adjacent uses affect the site and vice versa?
- What do you see that contributes to the “rural and open space character” of the area that people want to see preserved?
- What is the topography like? How steep are the slopes and how does that affect uses?
- Vegetation patterns—what are the patterns you see and how do those relate to topography and uses of the site?
- How does water move through the site? Are there wetland areas or other areas that would limit recreation uses?
- What issues you see? Are there any opportunities? Challenges?
- What is this area as a whole? A “natural area”? A natural “regional park”? An “open space” area?



Photo: Anne Dove, NPS

Tour guide, Juan Guzman with Carson City, describes area to participants



Photo: Anne Dove, NPS

Participants at Carson River Park, a stop on the fieldtrip.



Photo: Anne Dove, NPS

Fieldtrip provided an opportunity to become oriented to area

Upon returning to the Senior Center, the group discussed their impressions of the planning area and any issues, opportunities or constraints observed (*Appendix H: Field Trip Observations*). Teams then convened to develop a simple conceptual plan for different uses. Once each team had developed an overall land use plan, the groups reconvened to share what they had developed.

Using these overall land use plans, each team then set out to develop a common understanding of the existing conditions, opportunities and constraints relative to their area(s) of focus. Based on this analysis and their observations from the field trip, each team then began generating ideas for meeting the community's long-term vision and goals for the planning area. Throughout Friday afternoon, the public was invited to "drop-in" and observe the charrette process and offer any input. At the end of the day, each team presented their progress to the others before adjourning after a long day's work.

Saturday morning, the teams reconvened to identify the tasks they wanted to complete before the public presentation that afternoon. The teams worked furiously through lunch to complete their drawings and recommendations. At 2:00 p.m. Saturday afternoon, the public was invited to hear a summary of the work that was completed over the two days and offer feedback.

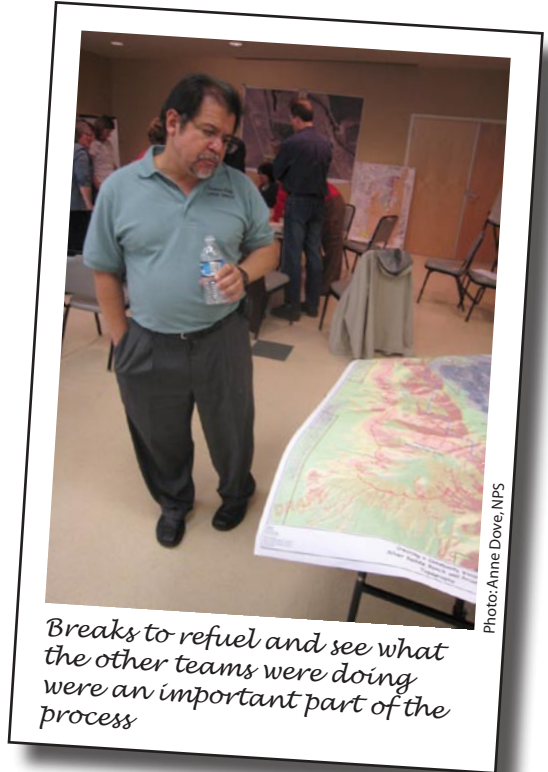


Photo: Anne Dove, NPS

Breaks to refuel and see what the other teams were doing were an important part of the process

