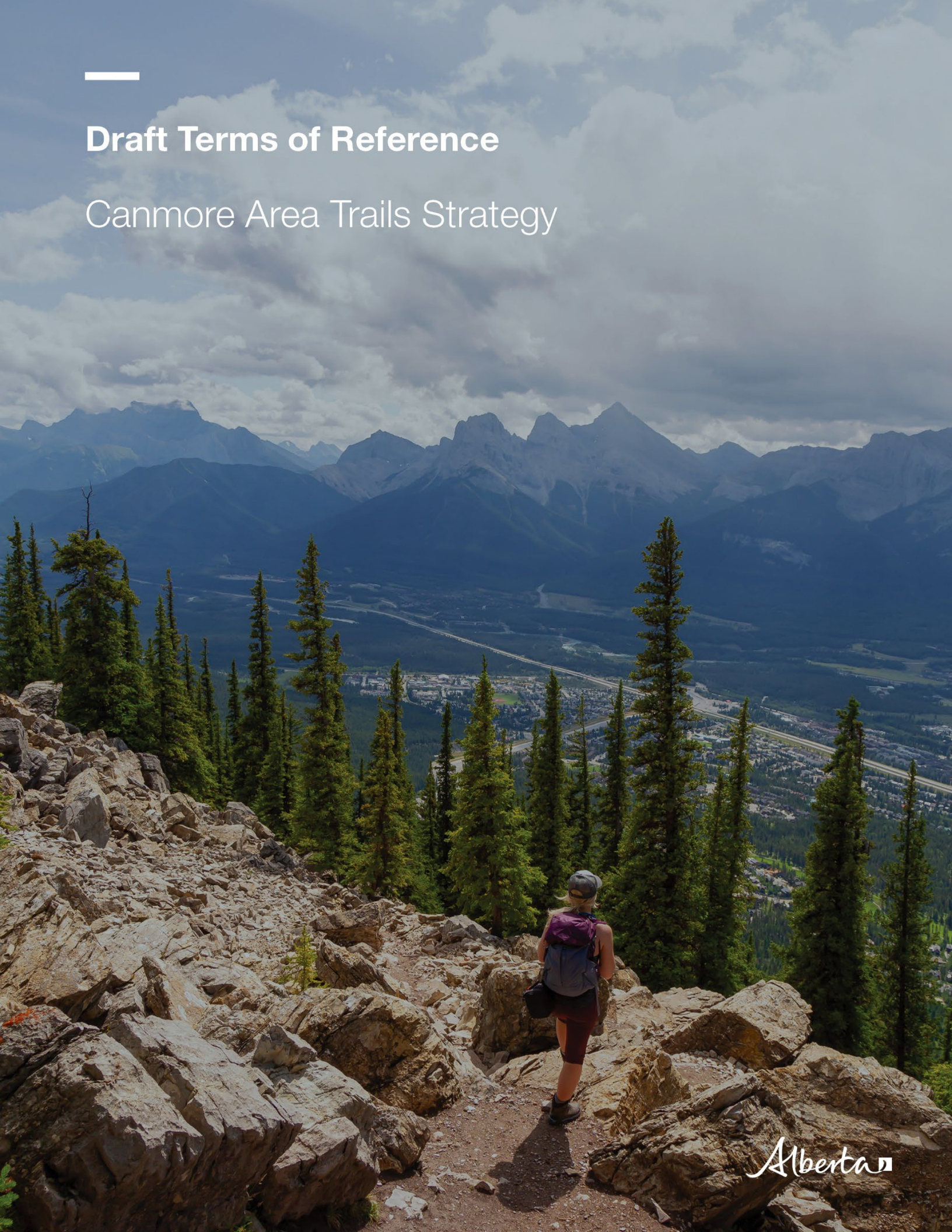

Draft Terms of Reference

Canmore Area Trails Strategy



This draft document considers and incorporates Canmore Area Trails Strategy Advisory Group input gathered between March 1 and March 17, 2024. The Alberta government greatly appreciates the time and consideration generously given by group participants.

Draft Terms of Reference: Canmore Area Trails Strategy | Alberta Forestry and Parks

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1. Purpose of this Document

The Canmore Area Trails Strategy (CATS) is an initiative that will take place over many months and will involve residents, visitors and dozens of agencies, organizations and interests. It will consider a large area of land in and around Canmore, looking at the social, environmental, cultural and economic factors related to trails and their use. This document, together with the project's Background Review, is intended to guide and inform the CATS initiative, its deliverables and how the project will proceed.

2. Background and Context

Background Summary

The Bow Valley is a complex mosaic of jurisdictions, values and land uses. There is a rich history of land managers working and planning together to identify, address and set direction on issues as they arise in the Bow Valley including maintaining healthy natural ecosystems, managing impacts of human activity and taking steps to improve human-wildlife coexistence. Trails and trail-based activities are well documented in the outdoor recreation research to have impacts on wildlife and ecosystems. To address recreational trail-related impacts, improve trail experiences and act on a number of recommendations from prior reports and studies pertaining to the area, the Ministry of Forestry and Parks is working with a variety of partners to develop a Canmore Area Trails Strategy.

The CATS initiative builds on decades of previous collaborative planning processes and guidelines for Canmore and the Bow Valley, including:

- The standing roundtable on Human-Wildlife Coexistence formed in 2018 between Bow Valley municipalities (Town of Banff and Canmore, and now, in 2022, the MD of Bighorn), Parks Canada, and the Alberta government. Its published report made several recommendations directly pertaining to trail planning and management including a reduced human footprint in wildlife corridors, temporal and spatial closure of areas and research on social aspects of recreation use. Many of the recommendations from the document have not been fully implemented.
- The Bow Corridor Ecosystem Advisory Group (BCEAG) is a formal group established in 1996 of municipal, provincial and federal land managers in the Bow Valley working together to address key wildlife corridor and habitat concerns, as well as to discuss and align issues related to human use. Recommendations from BCEAG's Recreation Opportunities Working Group as far back as 2002 have included the development of a general master trail plan in the Bow Valley.

The growth of trail-dependent outdoor recreation activities in the Bow Valley has contributed to increasing amounts of ecological impacts, human-wildlife conflict, inter-user conflict, unauthorized trails and features, sub-optimal visitor experiences and numerous other issues. The goal of CATS is to establish the basis for an integrated, authorized and sustainable trail network for lands across the Bow Valley that supports functioning wildlife corridors and habitat patches, enables treaty rights, enables economic benefits to flow to the community and maintains quality outdoor recreation opportunities and experiences for residents and visitors throughout the year.

One of the greatest challenges of the CATS process will be to protect wildlife and ecosystem function while addressing increased demand for outdoor recreation. The Bow Valley is one of the busiest, fastest growing and most desirable outdoor recreation destinations in Canada. Its trails, wildlife, vistas, amenities and outdoor recreation services are renowned around

Examples of Trail-Dependent Activities

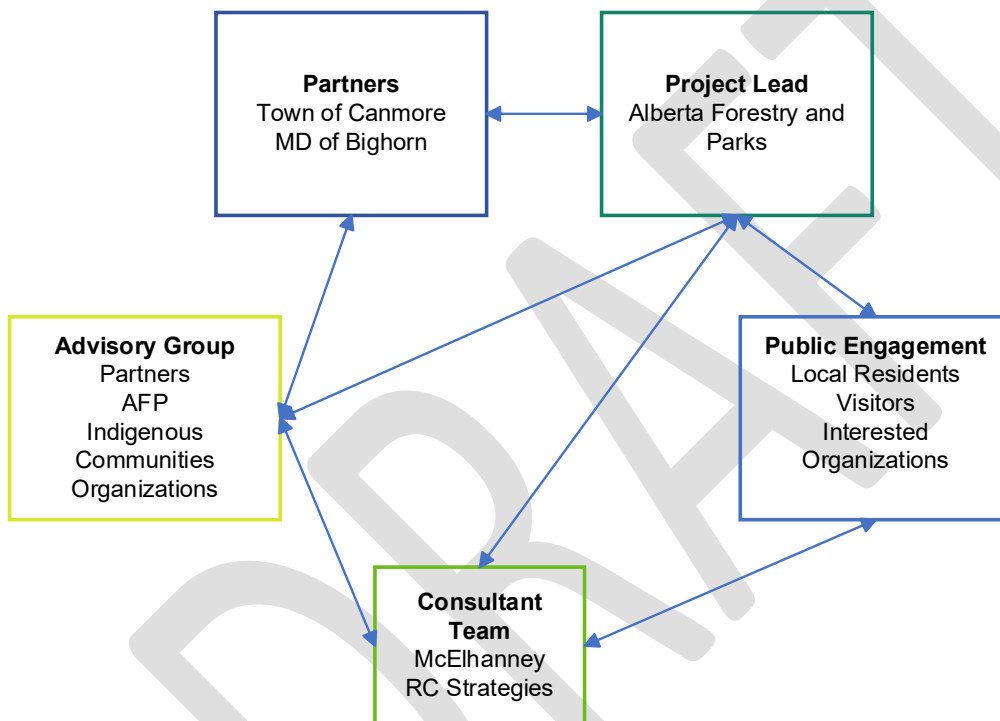
- Climbing
- Cycling and e-biking
- Dog walking
- Geocaching
- Guided trail activities
- Hiking
- Horseback riding
- Mountain biking
- Nature watching
- Nordic Skiing
- Off-highway vehicle use
- Orienteering
- Snowshoeing
- Trail events
- Trail running

the world, and they are foundational to communities' culture, quality of life and the local recreation and tourism economies that rely on them. The quality, quantity, diversity, distribution and availability of trails over the timeframe of this project will have material impacts on the daily activities and opportunities available to residents and visitors. At the same time, the Bow Valley in and around Canmore has long been recognized as one of the most important wildlife corridors in the Rocky Mountain ecosystem. Commitment to environmental stewardship is a proud hallmark of Canmore and surrounding communities, and an area-wide trail strategy represents an opportunity to apply leading stewardship principles deliberately and consistently to the local trail networks and their management.

Please see the CATS Background Review document for current state detail about the area, its trails, trail use, land uses and other context.

Project Governance

As the most significant land manager in the planning area, this initiative is led and coordinated by Alberta's Ministry of Forestry and Parks under the authority of the provincial *Public Lands Act*, *Provincial Parks Act* and *Trails Act*. The Town of Canmore and the MD of Bighorn are partners in the initiative.



Planning will be coordinated by a core team of Alberta Forestry and Parks staff with the support of other local and provincial department staff and contracted trail specialists. The planning process and structure will invite significant input and involvement of public, Indigenous, municipal and other Government of Alberta interests.

3. Project Study Area

The Canmore Area Trails Strategy (CATS) will seek to understand all terrestrial trail-based recreation on all land in the Bow Valley, including Crown land designations and land bases, the Town of Canmore, the MD of Bighorn, and adjacent communities including Exshaw, Deadman's Flats, Lac des Arcs and Harvie Heights as shown in **Figure 1**.

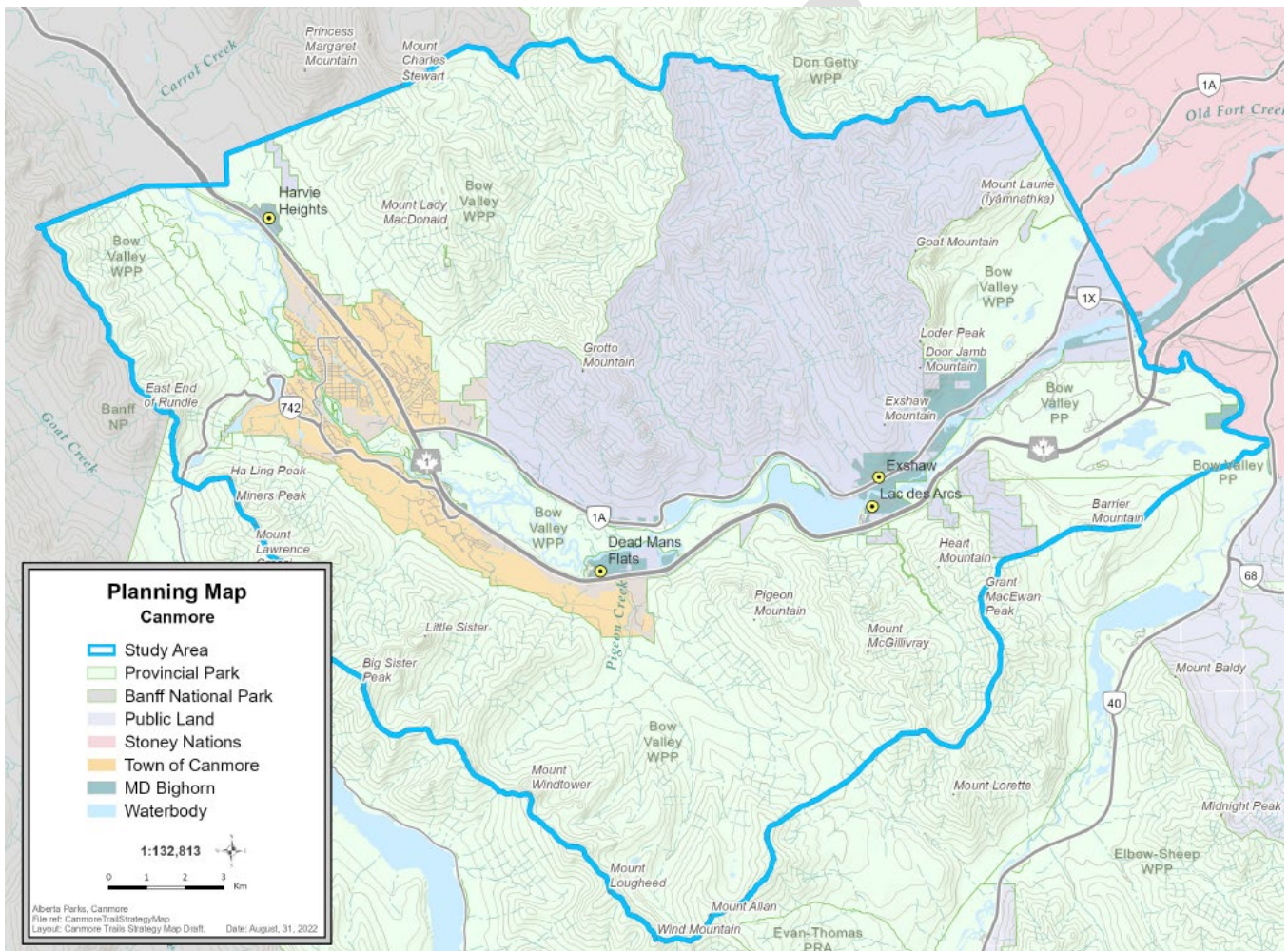


Figure 1 - Project Study Area

4. Purpose and Objectives

Purpose

The Canmore Area Trails Strategy will provide the foundation for developing, managing and maintaining an integrated, authorized and sustainable trail network in the Bow Valley that balances ecological values with quality outdoor recreation opportunities.

Strategy Objectives

The Canmore Area Trails Strategy has the following objectives:

1. Use best practice recreation and visitor use management approaches and practices.
2. Identify and recommend trail management opportunities that contribute to the improvement of wildlife corridors, habitat patches and other wildlife values in the Bow Valley.
3. Identify opportunities and recommend management actions to reduce recreation caused human-wildlife conflict by understanding wildlife and human use patterns.
4. Identify and recommend opportunities to improve visitor experience, satisfaction, safety and accessibility (e.g., accessible trails, adaptive mountain bike trails, mixed-use trail experiences) for all activity types and skill levels.
5. Identify and recommend opportunities to support tourism and the recreation economy.
6. Identify and recommend a network of trails for designation in the Bow Valley that:
 - o Addresses connectivity gaps.
 - o Addresses user experience gaps.
 - o Meets user needs and expectations.
 - o Provides a diverse and progress range of trails that serve recreational users of all technical and physical abilities.
7. Recommend a specific trails plan for the Canmore Nordic Centre Provincial Park (CNCPP) to guide management of CNCPP trails considering the unique sport-competition needs of that facility.
8. Identify and recommend opportunities to reduce conflict between and among trail users and communities.
9. Identify and recommend opportunities to improve and enhance trail user experiences with appropriate infrastructure (e.g., staging, parking, amenities).
10. Identify and recommend management actions to eliminate unauthorized trail development.
11. Identify and determine opportunities to foster trail stewardship and community involvement in trail development and management.
12. Establish and clarify trail governance, management, and operational approaches, including evaluative processes.

5. Scope

The Canmore Area Trails Strategy will focus on trails, trail activities, trail-related impacts and trail use. While its scope, purpose and objectives will partially overlap with other types of planning initiatives, the CATS should not be interpreted as a land-use plan, park management plan, wildlife management plan, recreation master plan or similar. This is a strategy about the area's trails, trail management and how active management approaches can contribute to a range of desired future conditions.

As a starting foundation, the CATS process will develop the area's first cross-jurisdictional understanding of trail-related recreation across all lands within the Bow Valley. The CATS analysis, and ultimately the strategy's recommendations, will be built from an understanding of trail inventory data and will consider matters such as trail connectivity, access, levels of use, activities, impacts and management options. While the strategy will primarily focus on planning, development and management of existing and potential trails on provincial land (public land and parks), some recommendations may pertain and apply to partnering with municipal jurisdictions. These partnerships will work toward supporting common objectives to ensure functional wildlife corridors, continuity of regional/long-distance trails, facilitating accessibility, equity, and inclusion in trail experiences and supporting tourism and the recreation economy.

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	In Scope (including but not limited to)	Out-of-Scope
Trail Location	<p>Provincial Crown land</p> <p>Trails within the study area (including those connecting beyond the study area)</p> <p>Assessment of trail-related interaction/impacts with wildlife habitat and corridors</p> <p>Existing and conceptual trail alignments</p> <p>Continuity and connection of priority trails between jurisdictions</p> <p>Water access</p>	<p>Trails on municipal-owned and private land</p> <p>Trails outside of study area</p> <p>Delineation or defining of wildlife corridors</p>
Trail Activities	<p>Warm and cold season activities permitted under applicable legislation, regulation and/or policy</p> <p>Non-motorized activities</p> <p>Motorized activities (public land only)</p> <p>Electrified mechanized activities (e.g., e-bikes)</p> <p>Commercial and non-commercial activities</p>	<p>Activities not permitted under current legislation, regulation and/or policy</p>
Trail Types and Condition	<p>Paved, aggregate and natural surface terrestrial trails (single and multi-track)</p> <p>Designated trails</p> <p>Informal, undesignated and user-created trails</p> <p>Inventory and assessment of the above</p>	<p>Paved trails within the Town of Canmore</p> <p>Sidewalks</p> <p>Water trails/routes</p> <p>Climbing areas (including via ferrata)</p>
Trail Infrastructure	<p>Infrastructure guidelines directly related to trail function, access, staging, parking, wayfinding, user comfort and safety</p> <p>Clarification of signage needs, guidance and requirements across the network</p> <p>Signage templates for variety of types of signs across the trail network, including trailhead, enroute, wayfinding, regulatory, and etiquette</p>	<p>Detailed infrastructure and amenity design and planning</p> <p>Detailed signage planning, design and implementation of the signage plan</p> <p>Indirectly related infrastructure including accommodations and access roads</p> <p>Infrastructure within lands administered by project partners</p>

Trail Management and Operations	<p>Recommendations, strategies, actions and standards related to trail locations, types and management objectives</p> <p>Other recommendations will be made on permitted activities, authorization, design, development, maintenance, winter grooming, restrictions and closures (temporal, temporary, permanent), decommissioning, future trail establishment or network alterations, trailhead access, emergency management, and monitoring and evaluation</p> <p>Recommendations related to roles, responsibilities, collaboration, capacities, processes, standards, partnerships and trail staff/volunteer qualifications</p>	<p>Specific detailed trail design and alignment</p> <p>Organizational structure(s)</p> <p>NOTE: While the CATS is being developed, interim management and operations of trails will continue under existing authorities, plans, agreements and direction. Some trail management decisions will continue to be made outside of the CATS process to respond to emerging issues, particularly ones that address environmental or safety issues</p>
Trail Experiences	<p>Analysis that provides insights into gaps in user experiences and/or progression</p> <p>Recommendations that support improvements to access, equity and inclusion</p> <p>Recommendations that support improvements to the attractiveness and quality of specific trail experiences</p> <p>Recommendations pertaining to partner services that would improve visitor/trail experiences</p>	<p>Design of specific experiences</p>
Trail User Conduct and Visitor-Use Management	<p>Recommendations on direct and indirect approaches to fostering and influencing responsible user behaviour, trail use and regulatory compliance (e.g., information, user education, enforcement)</p> <p>Monitoring approaches and procedures</p>	<p>Matters and responsibilities of partnering jurisdictions</p>
Trails Tourism	<p>Recommendations pertaining to how partners can support trails tourism, the recreation economy and the accrual of related benefits to the community</p> <p>Recommendations on how to eliminate or mitigate undesirable impacts</p>	<p>Development of specific tourism goals or targets</p>
Legislation, Regulation, Bylaws	<p>Non-binding recommendations that could contribute to improved trails or trail experiences</p>	
Policy and other planning processes	<p>Non-binding recommendations that could contribute to improved trails or trail experiences</p>	

6. Principles

CATS process, decisions, recommendations and management actions will be guided by the following principles. Area trails will:

1. **Be Safe** — Trails are designed and maintained to industry best practices.
2. **Improve Desired Ecological Conditions and Outcomes** — Trails can have an impact on local ecology, some of which can be mitigated through thoughtful design, location, and management. The network and management approaches should result in measurable improvements in specific ecological indicators of desired conditions over the current state.
3. **Be Sustainable** — The network of trails is sustainable from environmental, social, and operational perspectives. Strategy recommendations are implementable, durable, and appropriate for the area, and investments into the development, operation and management of the network are sufficient to achieve desired conditions.
4. **Offer a Diversity of Desirable Trail Experiences** — A wide variety of quality trail experiences can be welcomed and accommodated. These should be responsive to evolving trends and market interests, meet or exceed user expectations, encourage multi-modal transportation, and support the role and aspirations of Canmore as a trail destination.
5. **Be Inclusive and Accessible** — Development of the strategy will proactively accommodate a broad range of interests and perspectives. The strategy supports developing a variety of trails and amenities that challenge, reward, foster confidence and provide a sense of accomplishment for trail users of different means, backgrounds, mobilities and abilities.
6. **Be Consistently Well-managed and Coordinated** — The Alberta Government, local municipalities, communities, non-profit organizations, and private landowners have clearly defined responsibilities, effective collaborative processes and use best practices in trail development and management. These practices include using similar standards and approaches and delivering consistently high levels of service.
7. **Involve and be Informed by Public Participation and Indigenous Engagement** — The local community is involved in the development of the CATS, actively engaged in decisions about the trail network's development and management.

As shown in the background review, the current network of trails is broad and extensive. Where possible, CATS should also strive to minimize the addition of new trails. New trails shall be considered when they:

1. replace one or more decommissioned trails that are failing, redundant or in ecologically sensitive areas
2. create a formal trail required for connectivity
3. have a comprehensive justification for consideration that is aligned with the intent of the land classification
4. are required to maintain standards of national or international-level competition and where ecological concerns can be addressed.

7. Planning Process

Planning Framework

Development of the CATS will broadly align with the Visitor Use Management Framework (VUMF) process.¹

The VUMF (Figure 2 and 3) is an internationally accepted recreation management planning and decision making process that has been successfully applied in some of the most intensely visited and ecologically important destinations in North America.

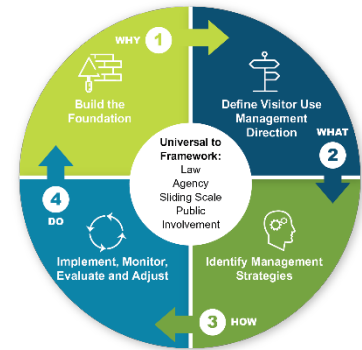


Figure 2 VUMF Process

The VUMF includes four main phases:

- 1. Build the Foundation** – Understand why CATS is needed and develop the trail strategy approach.
- 2. Define Visitor Use Management Direction** – Describe the conditions to be achieved, maintained and monitored over time.
- 3. Identify Management Strategies** – Identify strategies to manage visitor use and to achieve and maintain desired conditions and visitor experiences.
- 4. Implement, Monitors, Evaluate, and Adjust** – Implement the identified management strategies and action and adjust based on monitoring and evaluation results.

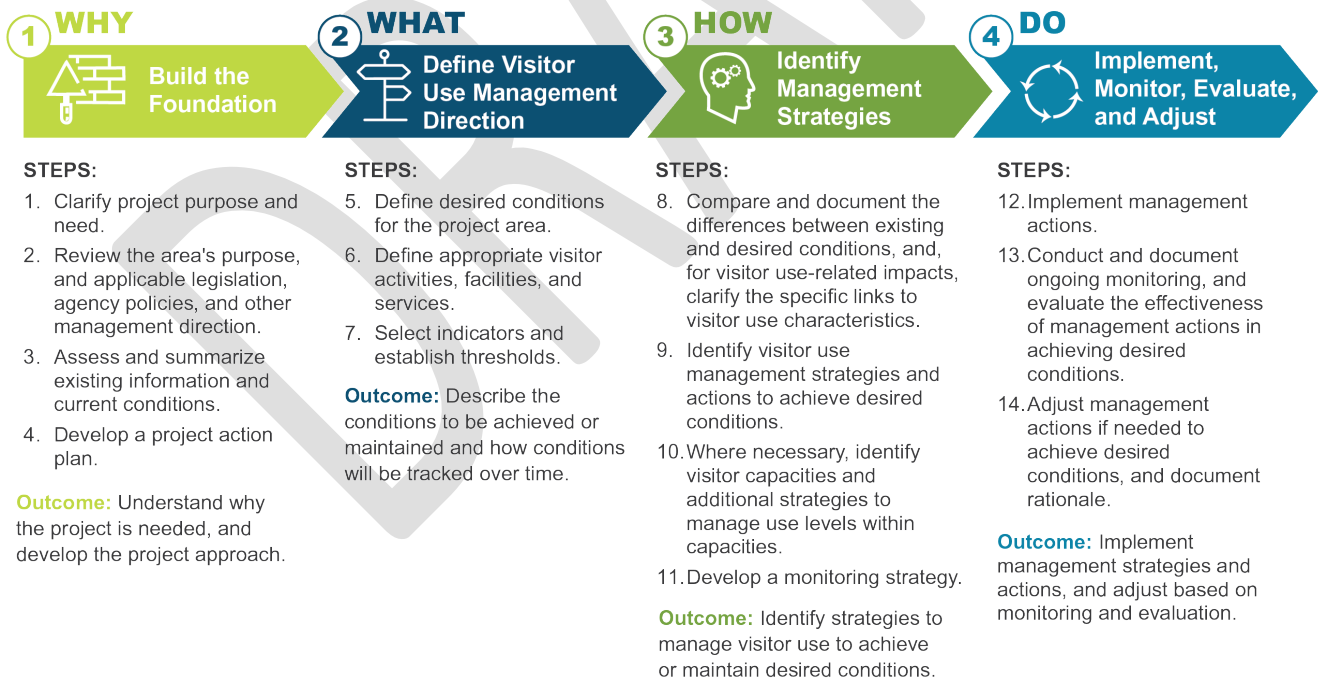


Figure 3 VUMF Process Detail

The VUMF planning approach allows for trail planning across jurisdictions and is an approach that aligns with trail management planning requirements associated with authorizing trails in provincial parks and for designating trails under Alberta's *Trails Act* on public lands.

¹ Interagency Visitor Use Management Council, <https://visitorusemanagement.nps.gov/VUM/Framework>

Strategy Development Process

Under the leadership of Alberta Forestry and Parks, the project is structured with the six phases, timelines and key deliverables outlined in **Figure 4**. Highlights of this process include:

Inventory and Background Review — To support the best understanding possible of the current state of area trails, the comprehensive background review includes a summary of land management, legislative and policy frameworks, environmental conditions and current trail and visitor use conditions. The background review also includes a current inventory of all trails (designated and undesignated) within the project area.

Engagement — Indigenous and public engagement will be undertaken throughout the process of developing the CATS. Specific opportunities will include surveys, field pop-ups, interviews and an advisory group. Practices associated with this engagement will align with the principles and approaches of the International Association for Public Participation.

The advisory group represents trail users, environmental, tourism, inclusion, sport, landowner and resource development interests. The group, which also includes representatives from municipal governments, was established to provide advice on and inform the development of a project terms of reference, background report and draft trails strategy.

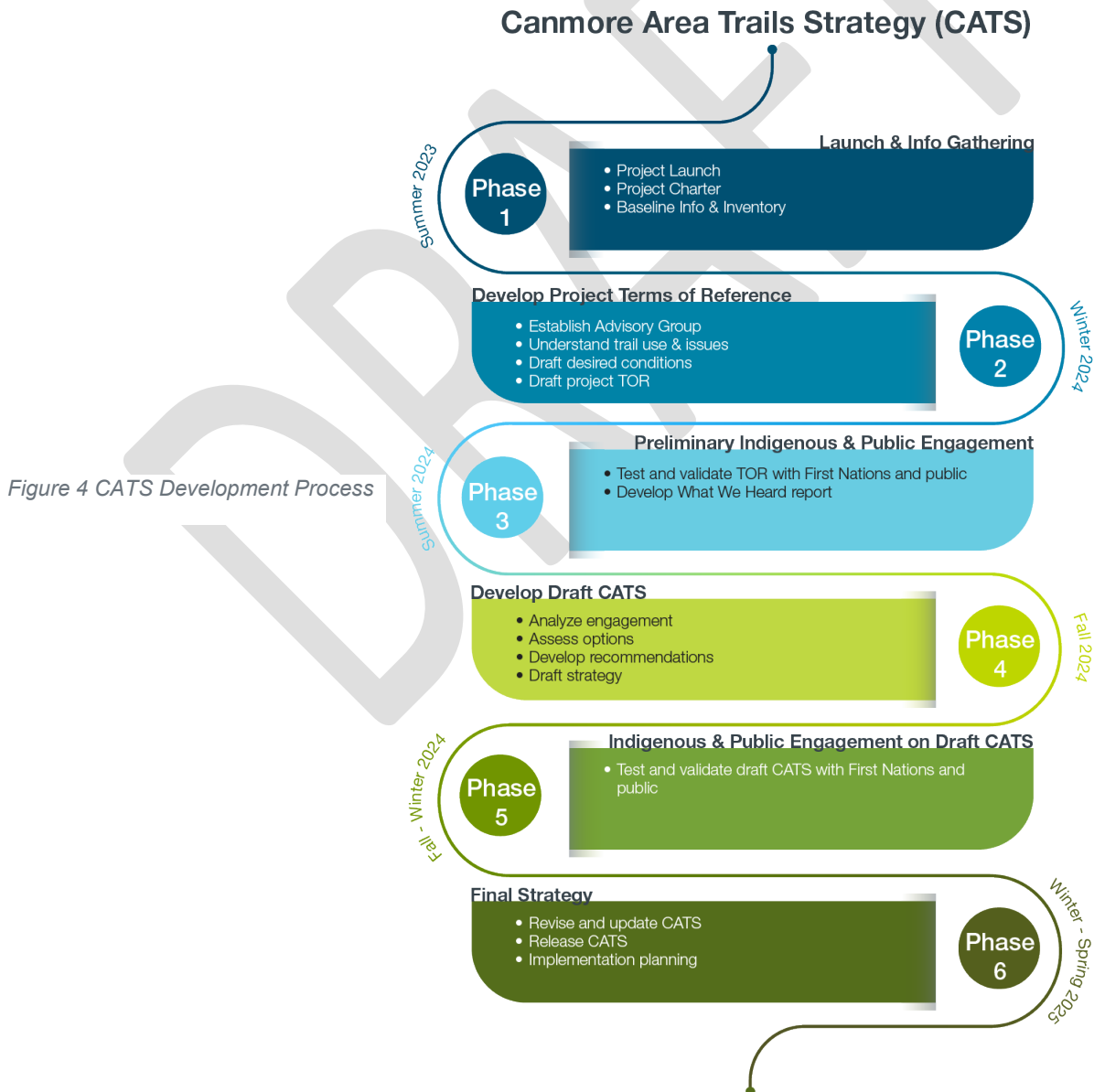
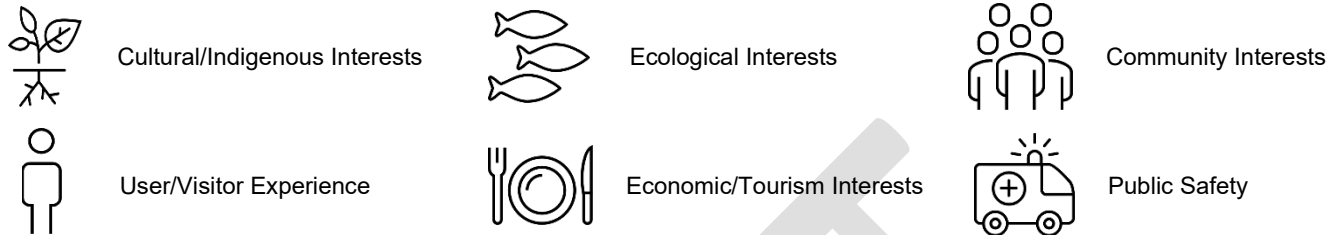


Figure 4 CATS Development Process

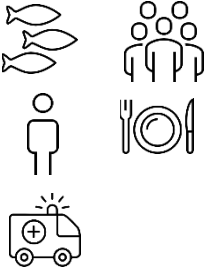
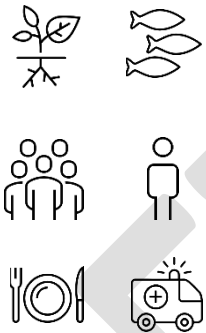
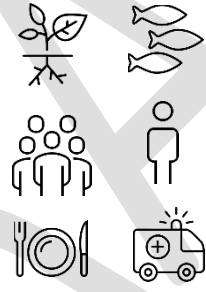
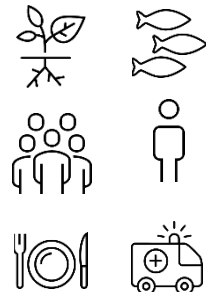
8. Planning Issues and Opportunities

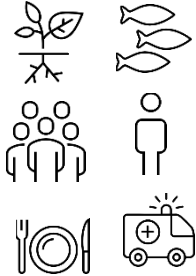
The following issues and opportunities have been identified through the scoping of the Canmore Area Trails Strategy (CATS). The issues and opportunities are related to the following affected interest categories:



The issues and opportunities provide rationale for the development of CATS and will be considered throughout strategy development.

Issue/Opportunity	Affects	Why is this important?
<p>1. Trail users and trail use negatively impact the environment, wildlife and their habitats.</p> <p><i>Examples: wildlife disturbance and displacement, invasive species transfer, wildfire, stream sedimentation.</i></p>		<p>Contributes to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced quality and quantity of wildlife habitat. • Changes in wildlife behaviors (e.g., abandonment, reduced feeding times, habituation to human presence). • Increased wildlife mortality risk and human-wildlife conflict. • Reduced numbers of wildlife and population viability. • Introduction of invasive (non-native) plant species. • Increased sediment erosion in streams impacting fish habitats.
<p>2. Trail-related impacts on historic resources, Indigenous values and traditional use.</p> <p><i>Example: Indigenous perspectives not yet incorporated into trail planning.</i></p>		<p>Contributes to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unrealized trail-related opportunities and education related to Indigenous values, communities, and interests.
<p>3. Inconsistent trail management approaches and trail infrastructure design.</p> <p><i>Examples: trail condition varies by area or trail design isn't optimized for user activities.</i></p>		<p>Contributes to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unclear information and unmet expectations for all trail users. • A lack of trail system cohesion resulting in an inconsistent user experience. • Increased liability exposure for private landowners and trail managers.

Issue/Opportunity	Affects	Why is this important?
<p>4. Some trail infrastructure is in poor or deteriorating condition.</p> <p><i>Examples: deteriorating bridges, eroding trail treads.</i></p>		<p>Contributes to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased environmental impact (e.g., sedimentation, erosion, stream obstruction). Increased public safety risk (e.g., injury, death). Lower quality visitor experience. Risk to community reputation and tourism revenue.
<p>5. Inadequate trail supply, distribution, access and accessibility.</p> <p><i>Examples: limited trails for all difficulty levels and activity types, parking challenges.</i></p>		<p>Contributes to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crowding at trailheads and on trails. Unlawful conduct (e.g., ditch parking) Vegetation trampling. Public safety and emergency response concerns. Limited numbers of accessible trails for users with mobility challenges. Residents' concerns about trail condition and trail use. Trail user conflict. Unauthorized construction of new trails. Unsatisfactory visitor experiences. Missed tourism economic opportunities.
<p>6. Insufficient trail user trip preparedness and undesirable conduct.</p> <p><i>Examples: unlawful conduct (littering, off-leash dogs, ignoring signs and closures); lack of trail etiquette (failure to yield right-of-way, riding in wet conditions creating off-trail impacts); introducing invasive species; unprepared visitation; unauthorized trail building.</i></p>		<p>Contributes to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficiently informed or prepared trail users. Wildlife disturbance, displacement and conflict. Accelerated environmental impacts (e.g., erosion, trail braiding, sedimentation). Impacts Indigenous traditional land uses and sites. Spread of invasive plant species. Increased public safety response costs. Conflict between trail users, residents, private landowners and trail managers. Risk to community reputation. Increased liability exposure for private landowners and trail managers.
<p>7. Gaps and inefficiencies in trail-related management including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staffing levels Staff or volunteer capacity Training Direction given to volunteer organizations <p><i>Examples: Insufficient staff/volunteer capacities and resourcing. Inconsistent processes and trail planning efforts.</i></p>		<p>Contributes to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited operational effectiveness. Inability to achieve management outcomes (e.g., environmental, cultural, visitor experience, safety goals). Decreased quality and effectiveness of partnerships. Inconsistent trail stewardship knowledge and skills.

Issue/Opportunity	Affects	Why is this important?
<p>8. Trail tourism impacts and opportunities are not fully understood or accounted for in trail planning, operations and management.</p> <p><i>Examples: misaligned strategic plans, increased tourism not benefiting trail stewardship, trail congestion impacting trail sustainability.</i></p>		<p>Contributes to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower quality visitor experiences. • Uncoordinated tourism goals. • Unrealized economic development opportunities. • Unintentional and unmanaged impacts. • Inequitable distribution of tourism impacts, costs, and benefits.

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9. Desired Conditions

Desired conditions express what we want to work towards. The following desired conditions describe the ideal future state of trails and trail use that will arise if the CATS meets its stated purpose and objectives. They attempt to paint a picture of what the trail experiences will be for visitors and guide how trails and trail use will be managed to minimize undesirable impacts.

Desired conditions are an important part of the VUMF process because they help describe desired outcomes and direct and focus strategy recommendations. When done well, they also allow for the development of specific targets and standards that can be used to guide clear management responses.

Ecological Conditions

- Trails are responsibly situated, sustainably designed and visitation is actively managed to:
 - minimize and mitigate disturbance and displacement of wildlife during sensitive seasons;
 - preserve the continuity of wildlife corridors;
 - maintain wildlife habitat and integrity of native plant communities;
 - avoid damage to fish habitat, watercourses, riparian areas, and wetlands.
- Human-wildlife conflicts are minimized or eliminated.

Cultural and Historic Resources

- Trails are responsibly situated, sustainably designed, and visitation is actively managed to avoid unacceptable impacts on Indigenous values, traditional use and historic resources.
- Trail planning, development, and management actively invite and incorporate Indigenous presence, messaging and involvement.
- Ongoing trail planning and management efforts actively incorporate and consider Indigenous interests.

Trail Network Conditions

- Suitable and appropriate trail management objectives and infrastructure standards are established. These guidelines then support development, management, and operation of the region's trails.
- All trails are actively proposed, considered, designed, designated, and maintained in a manner that ensures their conditions remain aligned with established trail management objectives.
- All trail infrastructure is designed and maintained to consistent, transparent and best practice standards.
- Trail and infrastructure standards are reviewed and updated at intervals that ensure the trail network is adapting to evolving preferences and expectations.
- Unsustainable, poorly designed and/or redundant trail infrastructure is improved, rehabilitated, replaced or decommissioned.

Visitor Experience and Education Conditions

- The quantity, quality, and diversity of trail-based experiences (activities, settings, scenery, amenities, services, access etc.) in the region anticipates the demands, interests, and progressive skill levels of visitors.
- A diversity of trail experiences exists including places to be social, get exercise, have fun, experience thrills and challenges as well as places for quiet contemplation in nature.
- Residents and visitors of various abilities and interests have safe and efficiently connected access to trail networks via both trails and roads.
- First responders have suitable, safe, efficient, and consistently available access.
- Trail users and their communities of interest are:
 - informed and aware of the area's ecological importance and key habitat requirements
 - informed and aware of the potential impacts of their activities
 - informed, equipped and prepared to participate in their activities safely and responsibly
 - voluntarily motivated to conduct themselves in ways that minimize undesirable impacts and that comply with regulation
 - ambassadors for responsible trail use
 - motivated to actively participate in and contribute to trail stewardship through authorized opportunities.

Trail Governance, Management and Stewardship

- Comprehensive trail development, management, operations and maintenance accountabilities and responsibilities exist at a regional scale, are clearly articulated and are widely understood.
- Alberta's government, municipal governments, Indigenous communities, land managers, landowners, trail managers, partners and the trail community are aligned in their goals and approaches and work collaboratively to achieve them.
- Changes to the network (e.g., trail additions, alterations, deletions, access conditions) occur with transparent process and with requisite authorizations. Unauthorized trail development does not occur.
- Trail user communities have opportunities and responsibilities associated with operating and managing the trail system. They are recognized and supported by the region's land managers and their responsibilities align with their interests, capabilities and capacities.
- Accountable and responsible parties (trail managers, operators, partners, staff, volunteers etc.) have access to the knowledge, skills, resources, processes, and capacities required to fulfill their responsibilities efficiently and effectively.
- Local businesses, municipalities and community initiatives benefit from trail tourism and they actively contribute support for trail system development, maintenance and management.

Community and Economic Conditions

- Ongoing planning and management efforts actively consider trail tourism objectives and impacts.
- Canmore and the surrounding area are recognized and respected as a welcoming and high-quality trail destination.
- Residents and local communities understand, are supportive of, and are committed to realizing the social, economic and environmental benefits of trails and trail-based tourism.
- Trails and trail-related visitation are stimulating the expansion and profitability of existing and new businesses that service trail visitors and strengthen local economy.
- The trail system is regularly activated in all seasons through a mix of programming, special events, festivals, races and other events.
- Trail tourism use and visitation does not unacceptably impact resident's own enjoyment of the trails, trail amenities or their quality of life.

10. Implementation

Implementation of the CATS will formally begin following the final strategy's approval under the leadership of the Ministry of Forestry and Parks with authorities established under the *Provincial Parks Act*, the *Public Lands Act* and the *Trails Act*.

It is expected that the strategy will contain recommendations that require operational, resourcing and/or capacity adjustments related to service delivery. While the exact nature and timing of these recommendations cannot be assumed or presumed at this time, the Alberta government recognizes that wildlife, sustainable trails and high-quality outdoor experiences in the area are front-of-mind for residents and Albertans.

While CATS is being developed, interim management and operations of trails will continue under existing authorities, plans, agreements and direction.