

**Hailey Greenway Master Plan – Croy Canyon Update  
Draft #1, 5/28/2021**

**This is a DRAFT to allow for decisions by the City of Hailey and WRLT, based on public comment  
The FINAL will become part of the Hailey Greenway Master Plan**

**Introduction**

The Hailey Greenway Master Plan, completed in 2018, provides a framework for future development and management of land along the Big Wood River between Bullion Street and Colorado Gulch Road. The Greenway located along the Big Wood River encompasses approximately 350-acres and includes two public parks, Lions Park and Heagle Park, as well as open space land owned by the City of Hailey (City) and two preserves, the Draper Wood River Preserve and the Colorado Gulch Preserve, which are owned by the Wood River Land Trust (WRLT).

Since 2018, both the City and the WRLT have purchased additional land located adjacent to Croy Creek extending from the confluence of Croy Creek with the Big Wood River upstream to property owned by the Animal Shelter of the Wood River Valley (Mountain Humane). Land acquired by the WRLT consists of several parcels totaling 118-acres. This land, known as the Simons/Bauer Preserve, was acquired by the WRLT to protect wetlands, aquatic and riparian habitat, open space, and to provide additional recreational connections to the Hailey Greenway. In 2020, the City acquired Lot 2 of the Croy Canyon Ranch Subdivision I. This 28-acre parcel was acquired with City assets to provide a location for municipal snow storage and for other public purposes.

The purpose of this 2021 Hailey Greenway Master Plan Update is to extend the framework for future development and land management to include the contiguous lands owned by the City and the WRLT that are adjacent to Croy Creek and the original Hailey Greenway along the Big Wood River.

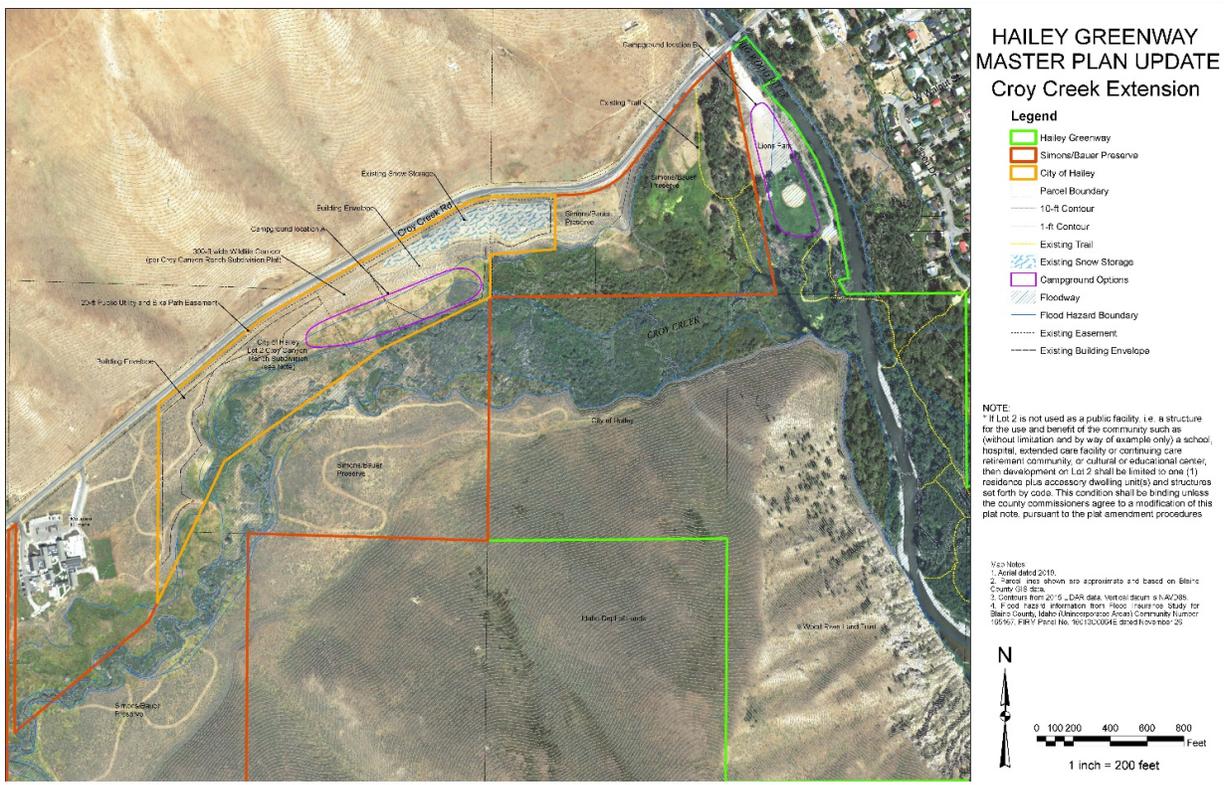


Figure 1. Master Plan Update Croy Creek Extension Project Area

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### Project Goals

Like the 2018 Hailey Greenway Master Plan, this Update was developed collaboratively with the City, the WRLT, and the community in order to coordinate management, restoration, and development efforts that balance human use with the needs of fish, wildlife, the river, and the floodplain. The vision for the Master Plan and this Update is that the Greenway remains a special place that is recognized and cared for by the entire community and is a destination for visitors to enjoy throughout the year.

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*The mission for the Master Plan is to provide a framework that, when implemented, will balance human use with the needs of fish, wildlife, the river, and floodplain.*

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Similar to the 2018 plan, the goals of the Master Plan Update were divided into three broad categories and include:

- Access and connectivity;
- Land uses; and
- Wildlife and the creek.

The goal with respect to access and connectivity is to provide a safe and contiguous trail system that can be accessed from adjacent lands and accommodate a variety of user groups. The goal with respect to land uses is to provide a balance of uses that do not negatively impact conservations goals and wildlife habitat. The goal with respect to wildlife and the creek is to maintain a stable and healthy creek ecosystem and floodplain while allowing public access in a controlled manner.

### Process and Public Involvement

In January 2021, the City of Hailey applied for a grant from the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation Recreational Vehicle Fund for the construction of a 33-site municipal campground located on their property adjacent to Croy Creek. The intent of the campground was to provide a developed campground for RVs and tent campers that is within walking distance to downtown Hailey that will help stimulate economic development and prevent ecosystem damage caused by informal, unstructured camp sites near town and the Big Wood River. During the public hearing for the grant application, it became clear that the community desired more time and opportunity to provide input on the proposed project, and the WRLT expressed a desire for further collaboration on the campground design and to explore other options that could protect wildlife habitat and the Croy Creek wetlands and floodplain. Thus, public outreach was an important part of the Greenway Master Plan Update.

Public input on the Master Plan Update was gathered through email sent to the City and the WRLT, as well as two outreach events conducted in person and online. From February 27 until May 15, 2021, emails in response to any aspect of the Master Plan were accepted by the City and the WRLT and these were incorporated into the summary of public input. The first outreach event was held on Thursday and Friday, March 4 and 5, 2021. The second outreach event was held on Tuesday and Wednesday, April 13 and 14, 2021. Input gathered during the public outreach along with input from the Master Plan stakeholders was utilized to develop the final Master Plan Update for Croy Creek.

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Figure 2. Public Outreach and Input Methods

### Outreach Session #1: March 4 and 5, 2021

The initial public outreach event was focused on listening to the desires, visions, concerns, and ideas from the community regarding the three focus areas of access and connectivity, land uses, and wildlife and the creek. Due to COVID safety policies and regulations, a maximum of 10 people were allowed to gather during a series of small group sessions held during 30-minute time slots from 5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. on Thursday evening and from 9:00 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. on Friday. Additionally, an online meeting was simultaneously held on Thursday at 5:00 p.m. Approximately 34 people participated in the in-person meetings and approximately 20 people participated in the online meeting. Most of the participants were residents of the surrounding area including Croy Canyon and the neighborhoods east of the Draper Preserve and along Bullion Street.

The following is a summary of what was heard during Outreach Session #1.

#### Access and Connectivity

Most of the feedback regarding access and connectivity was focused on Croy Creek Road and the Bullion Bridge. There are multiple types of users on Croy Creek Road, and the community felt that the road was too narrow with blind corners that made it dangerous for bikers and joggers due to the large amount of vehicular traffic on the road. Speed was cited as an issue many times, and some suggested reducing the speed limit while others recognized that people tend to drive a certain speed despite the posted limits. The desire to get bikers and joggers off the road was expressed.

The public that provided feedback was also concerned that the proposed campground would result in an increase in both recreational and vehicular traffic and would subsequently increase the danger to other users. There was also concern expressed regarding a potential bottleneck at the Bullion Road bridge that could form during an emergency evacuation when RV's are trying to exit while emergency vehicles are

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entering the canyon. One person requested that a traffic study be conducted for the proposed campground.

The community was in favor of developing additional hiking trails and paths in the Croy Creek area that could connect to the trails in the Draper Preserve. It was desired to have some trails that are ADA accessible.



*Figure 3. Jogger on Croy Creek Road*

### Land Uses

Participants were asked what types of land uses were preferred in the Croy Creek area, including the Lions Park area that was part of the 2018 Greenway Master Plan. There was support for the previously proposed uses for Lions Park, including reconnection of side channels to the Big Wood River, floodplain reconnection, and ballfield reconstruction. Most of the discussion revolved around the City owned property and the campground proposed for that property.

### *Campground Opposition*

Almost all participants in the outreach session were in opposition to the proposed campground on the City property. In general, participants opposed the campground due to perceived increases in wildfire risk, a decrease in road safety, negative impacts to wildlife, increases in noise, and concerns about how the campground would be managed. There was also repeated concern that visitors are not as respectful of wildlife or knowledgeable of the fire danger in dry lands. Some suggested that 33 sites were too many, but an acceptable number of camp sites was not agreed upon.

Nearby residents are concerned that there would be an increase in the risk of wildfire in Croy Canyon particularly due to the high winds that are common in the canyon. There have been at least two instances where residents of Croy Canyon have been evacuated in recent history due to fire, and this fear is still very fresh. Residents are also concerned about the potential increase in homeowner

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insurance premiums due to being with a certain distance of a developed campground. Several people suggested to allow only propane fires or to ban fires altogether.

Participants were concerned about noise from a campground due to generators and people being present in the area, especially without a camp host. Many were concerned about how the City of Hailey could manage the proposed campground in Croy Canyon, and they would prefer to have a camp host on site, as well as specific limits to the number of people per campsite. A few people feared that the campground could turn into a “man camp” of construction worker/workforce housing. There was also concern about campers traveling farther up the canyon and disturbing residents by looking for campsites on private property when the proposed campground is full.

Several participants requested an economic impact analysis that includes the load on City services due to the campground, the cost of liability insurance, and how the campground could positively impact the local economy. Some believed that the City should spend more money on the upkeep of existing parks rather than on a new campground. Many suggested that because the BLM is proposing additional campgrounds within the surrounding area that camping is not needed in this location.

*Campground Support*

A few participants were in support of the proposed campground. Their counter positions to those who were against the campground included that fires in the area were caused by lightning, that developed campgrounds are safer and more sanitary than dispersed camping, and that campers will support local businesses. One person stated that Hailey needs a place where people in RVs can stop, stay over, and contribute to Hailey’s economy.



*Figure 4. In-person outreach meeting*

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### *Alternative Campground Locations*

Of those that were opposed to the campground, many believed that a municipal campground is a good idea, but not in the proposed location in Croy Canyon. Alternative locations that were suggested included further up Croy Canyon at the BLM Croy Trailhead, out Rock Creek Road, in Quigley Canyon, within the City of Hailey, or on public lands farther away from town.

One commenter indicated that the campground should be relocated to Lions Park. However, several others commented that during the original Hailey Greenway Master Plan process, it was determined that Lions Park is not a good location for a campground due to impacts to the adjacent neighbors, and they were strongly against moving the campground to Lions Park.

### *Other Land Uses*

When prompted to suggest other land uses that the community believed to be appropriate for the Croy Creek area and the City property, ideas included a day use park, public works facility, school, community center, or other uses that provided more benefit to residents or the City than to visitors. Other supported land uses included conservation and preservation of the land, which is further discussed in the next section.

### *Wildlife and the Creek*

Many participants expressed the desire to protect the wildlife habitat located adjacent to Croy Creek and within its associated riparian lands, emergent wetlands, and beaver ponds. The Master Plan area also includes upland sagebrush-steppe and mesic meadows that provide habitat for birds, mammals, deer, elk, and moose, and some participants provided photographic evidence of the presence of these types of animals on the property.

Some commenters believe that wildlife in Croy Canyon has already been negatively affected by the increase in residential development and that it would further suffer from the presence of more people, an increase in light pollution, and generator noise from a campground. Thus, there was general support for preserving and enhancing the existing wetlands and floodplain adjacent to the creek and considering a land swap between the City and the WRLT or another entity that could place the land into a conservation easement and relocate the campground.

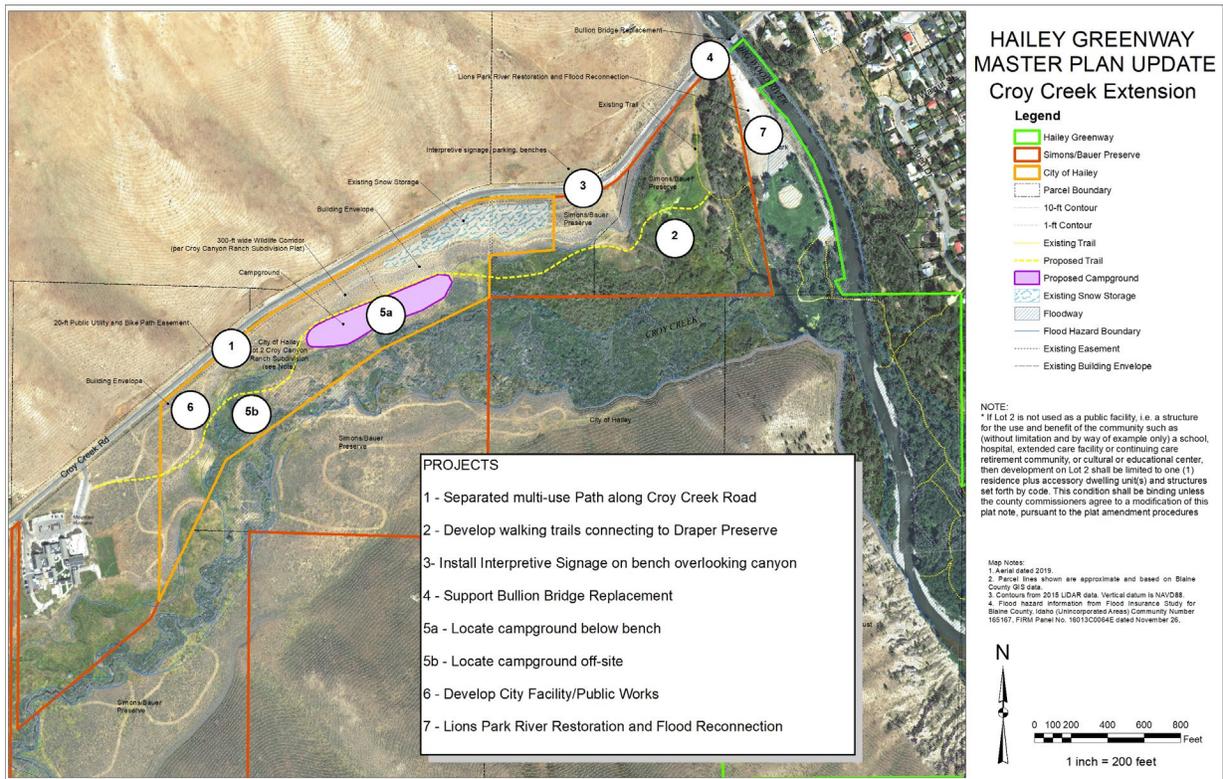
### **Outreach Session #2: April 13 and 14, 2021**

Based on the input received from the public during Outreach Session #1, email and letter correspondence from others in the community, and feedback provided by the City and the WRLT, several projects were identified for inclusion in the Master Plan Update. During Outreach Session #2, a summary of what was heard during Session #1 was presented along with a summary of the proposed projects. The projects proposed during Session #2 included:

1. Separated multi-use pathway along Croy Creek Road
2. Develop walking trails connecting to Draper Preserve
3. Install Interpretive Signage on bench overlooking canyon
4. Support Bullion Bridge Improvements
5.
  - a. Redesign the campground
  - b. Relocate the campground off-site
6. Develop City Facility/Public Works Yard
7. Lions Park River Restoration and Floodplain Reconnection

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*Figure 5. Outreach Session #2 Proposed Projects*

Many people that participated in Session #1 also participated in Session #2. For both sessions, some people participated in both the online and in-person sessions, as well as submitted written comments. Like Outreach Session #1, a series of small group meetings were held during 45-minute time slots from 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday evening and from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday. Additionally, an online meeting was simultaneously held on Tuesday at 5:30 p.m. Approximately 29 people participated in the in-person meetings and approximately 20 people participated in the online meeting.

Many people that participated expressed appreciation that the summary of their concerns and comments presented during Session #1 was accurate and that some of their concerns were addressed with the proposed projects. Feedback on projects 1. Separated multi-use pathway, 2. Walking trails, 3. Interpretive signage, and 4. Bullion Bridge improvements was all positive. There was general preference for a separated bike/ped bridge over the Wood River rather than widening the vehicle bridge. The importance of continuing the separated pathway past the project area to the Croy mountain bike trails to the west was also widely expressed. It was agreed that a separated bike path is needed regardless of the campground development. There was also support for the Lions Park river restoration and floodplain reconnection project that was part of the 2018 Hailey Greenway Master Plan.

Feedback on projects 5a and 5b concerning the proposed campground and project 6 for the City facility/public works yard was more varied. Because the City desires to develop a municipal campground, the campground was not eliminated entirely from the project options. Project 5a proposes

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to redesign the campground on the City property in Croy Canyon and implement the design and management changes outlined in Table 1. to address concerns raised by the public.

*Table 1. Campground concerns and proposed mitigation*

Concern	Proposed mitigation
Fire danger and winds	No Fires Allowed  Add interpretive information on dry climate and fire danger
Traffic concerns	Support Bullion Bridge Improvements  Add separated bike path on City property adjacent to Croy Creek Road
Wildlife impacts	Seasonal campground closure in winter  Preserve western portion of property for wildlife corridor
Wetlands and floodplains	Reconfigure camp sites outside of wetlands and floodplain
Noise, trash, dogs	Hire full-time on-site campground host

Despite the proposed mitigation measures, there was still opposition to the campground due to perceived impacts to wildlife, traffic, and general human activity. Questions remained on the economic benefit of the campground to the City, and even though fires rings would not be provided and fires would be prohibited and enforced by an on-site host, many still felt that there was fire danger from illegally created fires. On the other hand, some participants expressed appreciation that fires would not be allowed and believed that rule would address the danger.

Project Option 5b, which was to relocate the campground to another site, garnered much more support than Project Option 5a. As in Session #1, several people made suggestions for other campground locations, although suggestions were more specific. The location that was offered most frequently was Roberta McKercher Park with benefits cited including the lack of fire danger since the property is in the urbanized part of the city surrounded by pavement and its location adjacent to the Fire Department, Police Department, and an RV dump station. Other people made general suggestions to locate the campground in industrial areas of the City such as on Woodside Blvd, reasoning that an RV park is an industrial use.

Project 6 included a City public works facility on the City owned property. Although some people supported this use, others wanted to see additional options that serve a greater portion of the Hailey

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community, such as a school or community center. Still others expressed their love for the area as it currently is and wanted to preserve the area for conservation and passive recreation uses only.

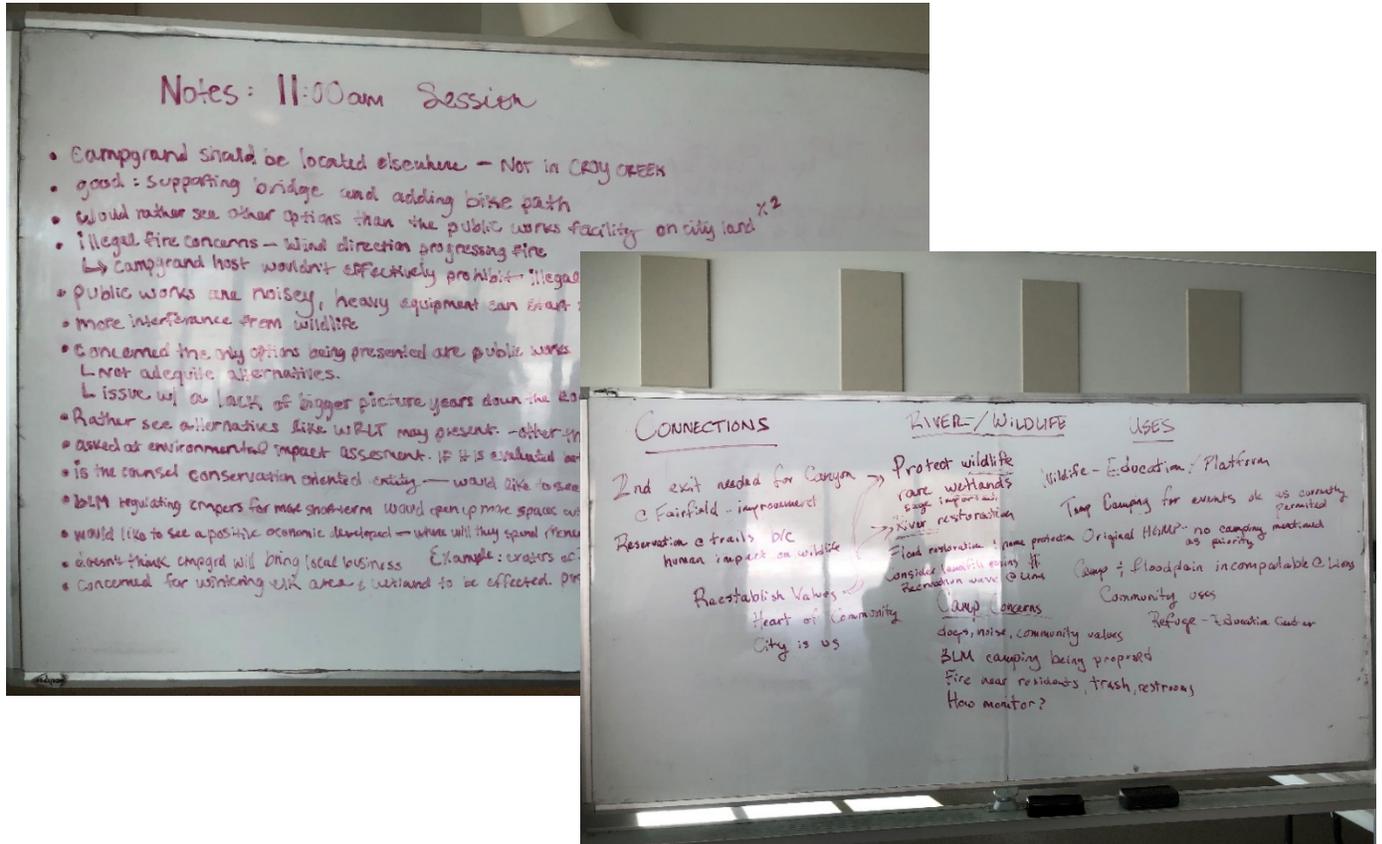


Figure 6. Sample notes from Sessions #1 and #2

## Master Plan Update

The Hailey Greenway Master Plan Update for Croy Creek was developed based on public input from Session #1, Session #2, email correspondence, and input from stakeholders including the City and the WRLT. During the Master Plan process, approximately xxx email written correspondence was received and xxx people attended the outreach events with an estimated xxx unique individuals providing input.

This section is still very much in draft form and the final decision for desired projects to include and move forward with in the Master Plan Update will be determined by the City of Hailey based on future meetings that have yet to occur.

The projects being considered for the Croy Creek area are shown in Figure 7. A summary is included here and these will be further developed with more detailed descriptions with the final Master Plan.

Xxxxx – Final List of Projects

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**Separated multi-use pathway along Croy Creek Road**

- ▶ Locate in 20-ft public utility and bike path easement.
- ▶ Removes walkers, joggers, and bikers from busy road
- ▶ Improve safety of Croy Creek Road



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### Develop walking trails connecting to Draper Preserve

- ▶ Limit to north side of Croy Creek to reduce wildlife impacts
- ▶ Utilize existing impacted area where possible

Develop trail system that respects wildlife while providing for nature experience, recreation, and access for all abilities.

Address livestock interactions, particularly during the spring and fall sheep trailing time periods.

Ongoing land stewardship, including noxious weed control, trail and fence maintenance, and dog waste from trail users.



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### Install Interpretive Signage on bench overlooking canyon

- Education regarding dry, arid region, and fire danger
- Importance of sage, wetland, and riparian habitat
- Include seating area, parking area, connection to trails

Design and creation of interpretive signage at kiosk(s), along trails to educate the public about Croy Creek and its wildlife, historical attributes, restoration, and conservation.



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**Support Bullion Bridge Improvements**

- ▶ Future widening to include bike lanes
- ▶ Work with County and other stakeholders
- ▶ Work with Blaine County to add to Capital Improvement and Transportation Master Plans



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### Relocate campground off-site – or move – TBD?

- ▶ Swap or trade unused portion of City land for land that can be used for a campground
- ▶ Will require significant coordination and resources
- ▶ Desired location characteristics
  - ▶ Close to city, walking distance preferred
  - ▶ Minimum 4 acres

If in current location – adjust location of tent sites or eliminate tent sites and campground access to eliminate impacts to 100-year floodplain and existing wetlands. Design appropriate fencing that delineates the campground boundary along Croy Creek and allows for wildlife passage. Work with Idaho Department of Fish and Game to identify meaningful wildlife corridor through the property to respect the intent of the corridor on the Croy Canyon Ranch Subdivision I plat. Relocate the corridor and expand.



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### Develop City Facility/Public Works – TBD?

- ▶ Located on bench on west side of property in building envelope
- ▶ Preserve central portion of property for wildlife
- ▶ Architecture appropriate for area

The intended use for Lot 2 of the Croy Canyon Ranch Subdivision I was for a public facility such as a school, hospital, extended care facility or continuing care retirement community, or cultural education center as stated in the notes of the recorded plat.



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Lions Park River Restoration and Floodplain Reconnection

- Identified in original Greenway Master Plan
- Reactivate isolated side channel
- Add offline sediment storage pond

