

# Girdwood South Townsite

## Summary of Public Workshops

### INTRODUCTION

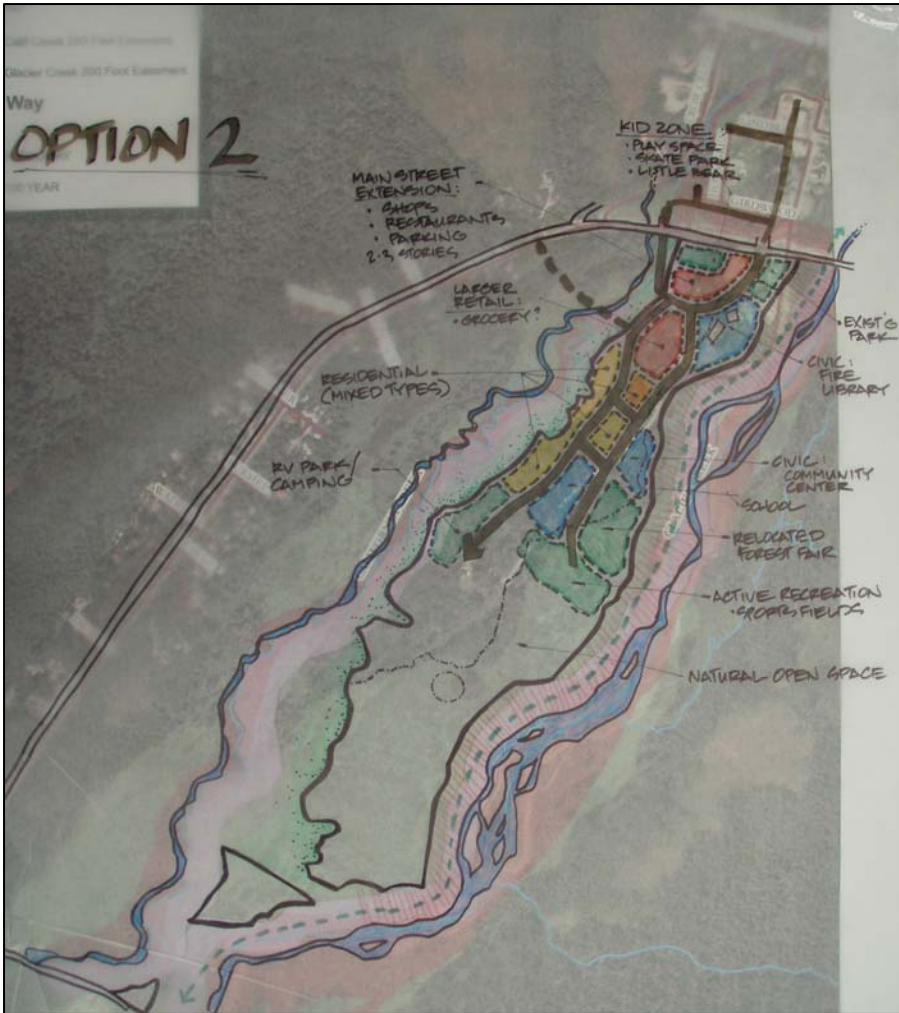
This document presents major conclusions of November 2007 public workshops to develop options for land use and infrastructure in the South Townsite area.

- Thursday evening Nov 1<sup>st</sup> (Girdwood School) – public workshop to review environmental issues and discuss issues options for roads and land uses
- Friday Nov 2<sup>nd</sup> (Glacier City Hall) – informal work session with representatives of current and proposed “institutional users” of the area, including the fire chief, and representatives of Little Bears, the Anchorage School District, Forest Fair, MOA Parks, and the proposed new high school.
- Saturday morning Nov 3<sup>rd</sup> (Glacier City Hall) – final public work session and site walk; presentation and refinement of two draft land-use/infrastructure plans

### SUMMARY OF RESULTS

- Broad agreement on a set of possible uses of the site
  - *see attached Workshop Notes and Plans for details*
- Broad (surprising) agreement on a land-use and transportation approach. Key elements:
  - Consistency with Girdwood Area Plan and Commercial Areas Master Plan
  - Concentration of development relatively close to the Alyeska Highway
  - New loop road connecting with Alyeska at the Hightower and Girdwood Place intersections
  - Focus on a mix of institutional/civic and commercial uses at the north end, then (continuing south) on residential, then open space/recreation uses
  - Strong desire to link the north and south townsite areas
  - Relocation of several existing “civic uses”
  - *see attached Workshop Notes and Plans for details*
- Moving forward with the agreed land-use plan requires sorting out a number of issues, including:
  - “bombproof” plans to locate and pay for relocation of affected uses
  - resolution of feasibility of proposed road alignment, including option to build road in 200’ river setback
  - alternative uses of land currently designated for parks and recreation

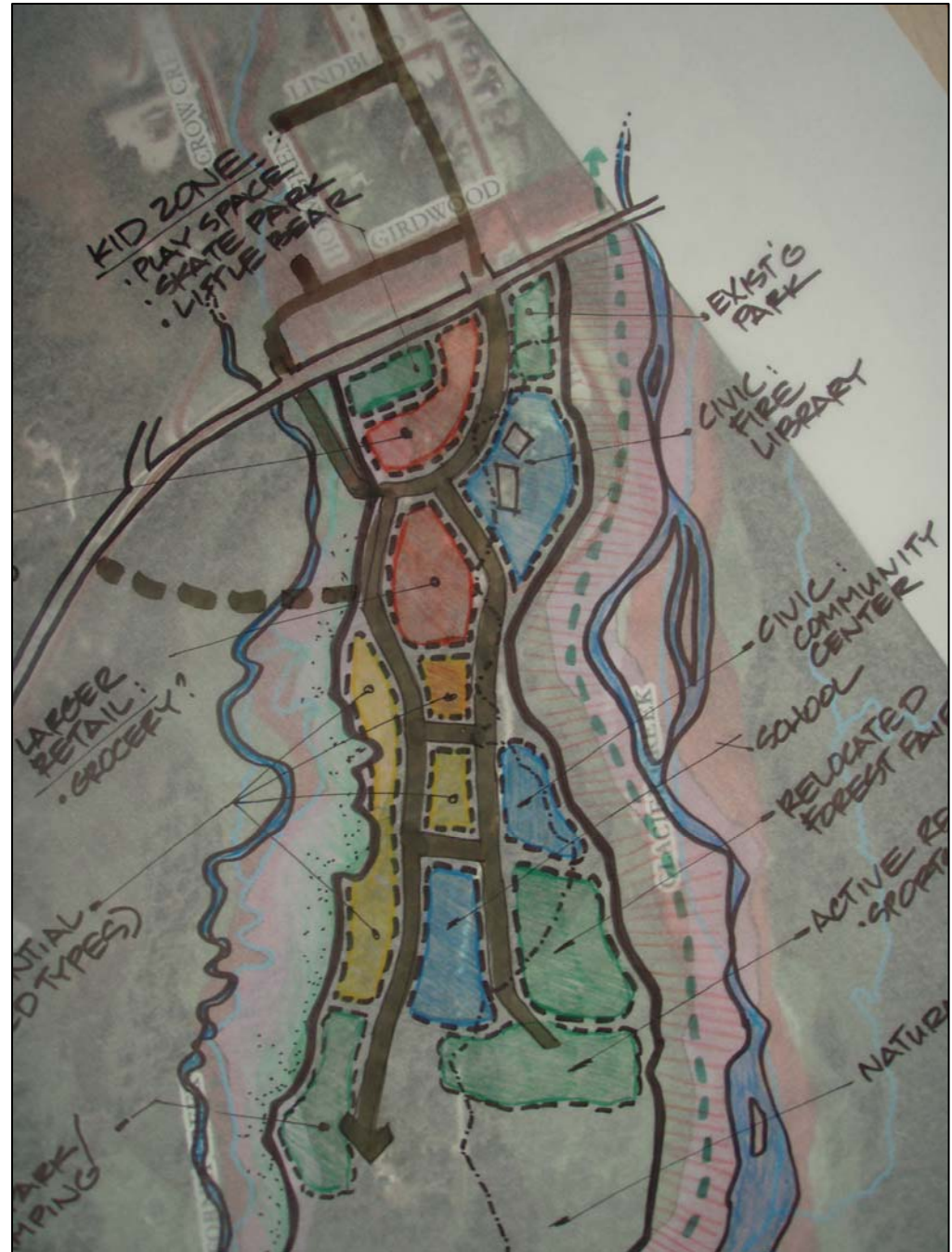




**OPTION 2 - LINKED LOOP ROADS  
COMMUNITY PREFERRED OPTION**

A::B

Draft 11.14.07



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# “COMMUNITY CONCENSUS PLAN” – WORKSHOP NOTES

## I. Road options

- Proceed with general alignment outlined in CAT plan, with a connection back to the Alyeska Highway at Girdwood Place
  - Provides a two-sided main street
  - Solves 450’ cul-de-sac limitation
- Further southward can be done with single road or additional “loop ladder”
- See Road Options matrix on p. 11

## 2. Quantifying/clarifying land-use targets:

- Commercial
  - Not more than amount equal to what exists in NGT north
  - Focus on local-serving, practical stores (bank, groceries)
  - Supplement businesses serving local day-to-day needs with more discretionary and visitor-serving stores, restaurants
  - Reserve a workable site for a grocery store (sufficiently visible, good access, good parking, etc.)
- Residential – Need two types
  - Housing within reach of working class folks – market rate, but not too costly
  - Below market rate housing – needs to be designed to address community concerns – spread lower-cost housing around – not all clustered in one location
  - Bottom line – to be a viable community, Girdwood needs to have moderate-priced housing
- Civic – Community has to step up to plate and answer questions regarding priorities: Plan can set aside “civic flex space,” but community must be responsible for setting priorities, doing background work to determine feasibility of different options (e.g., programming, estimating capital costs, estimating operating costs and revenues, developing business plan, fund-raising strategy). Civic uses needing discussion
  - health clinic?
  - community center? (community not satisfied with “community room” in library; need a space, like Glacier City Hall, that can accommodate diverse uses including storage, messy uses; also want a space that can ultimately include recreation (pool, ball, etc.), where nonprofits can have offices (radio, community school); ideally with a kitchen (principal says: location near existing school may be best)
  - arts camp functions
  - school? (find out legal issues, see Rhonda at school district)
  - community recreation center?

## 3. Design & Implementation plan:

- Summary: Move forward with initial “loop ladder” road plan, contingent upon commitments to relocate affected existing uses
- Leave in place “kid zone” – works very well today, very important community asset (success comes from highly visible location, diverse array of activities appealing to various ages of kids; above all, succeeds because kids are seen as generally safe playing at site).
- Shift Forest Fair south along California Creek (shifted location in past, can do again). Community needs to reassess scope, impacts, benefits of FF (HLB permit up for review in 2008)

- Affected existing uses
  - Tennis courts – currently needs to be resurfaced, would probably be better in different location regardless of impact of road)
  - Little Bears – Mayor’s office working with community – have prepared plan, need approximately one acre, prefer a location not on river or near large
  - Ballfield – shift south of new FF Park location?
  - Trees – grove at north end of FF?
  - GBOS and MOA parks and rec office? (in Glacier City Hall?)
  - Check re status of park land – dedicated? If so what options for road?
- Civic uses – set aside “civic flex space” (5-10 acres?)
- Residential is desired, especially “working-class housing” (not big, single family detached homes)
- Commercial – need to figure out lot sizes, parking
- Road system – may be better to have more rectilinear grid pattern than loop (slows traffic, leaves more buildable lots)
- Fire Station – access for volunteer cars, for fire hose, etc.

#### **4. Unresolved Issues Summary:**

- Alyeska Highway
- Impact on Forest Fair
- Ability to deliver on relocations of uses affected by road
- Option to build road in 200’
- Status of 200’ patent restriction (see language in golf plan)

#### **5. Level of detail, certainty drops as plan extends southward. Recall three speeches**

- Tom Yeager: Don’t prematurely decide location of uses that may be better in other places (campground just north of Alyeska Highway commercial/Original Girdwood Townsite).
- Tim Bennett: Community is stuck right now on many issues, yeah, don’t make wrong decisions, but at least put forth a set of working assumptions.
- Critical to do Townsite master plan *before* GAP revision; only way to sort out uses
- Conclusion: Need to hit balance point between desire to give direction in this Townsite plan, and at the same time, not preclude re-thinking conclusions during GAP re-write.

## **Girdwood Townsite South November 2007 Workshop Notes**

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### **“PROGRAM” – WHAT ARE THE APPROPRIATE USES IN THIS AREA?**

Outlined below are the lists of uses identified by the community as priorities for the Girdwood Townsite south area. It is recognized that not all these uses may be possible in this area, due to space constraints, uncertainties regarding market support (for commercial and housing uses) and uncertainties regarding construction and operation funding (for the civic uses).

#### **Commercial**

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- Professional services (e.g., dentist)
- Bank
- Drycleaners
- Grocery
- Hardware Store
- Barber Shop
- Grocery Store  
(not the highest priority if it means bumping other things)
- Outdoor Art Walk
- Outdoor Market
- Retail:
  - Restaurants
  - Coffee Shops
  - Clothing Store
  - Consignment/Second-Hand Store
  - Gallery/Gift Shop
  - Toy/Kids Store

#### **Civic Uses & Public Facilities**

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- Library
- High School
- Little Bears Child Care Center
- Nonprofit Community Resource Center
- Storage
- Health Clinic
- Fire Station
- Community Club Media Performance Center
- Community School Program
- Covered Community Gathering Spot
  - High visibility, snow clearance ability, covered play area

## Residential

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- Existing private residential parcels
- Housing adjacent to commercial/civic area within South Townsite
- Possible housing development in South-South Townsite (e.g., from Ruane Road)
- Need for reasonably affordable housing in Valley, generally
  - Affordable “working-class” housing at market rate
  - Affordable subsidized housing at below-market rate
- Don’t bunch all the affordable housing together
- Mixed use areas – commercial with residential over

## Recreation, Parks & Open Space

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- Forest Fair
- Campground
- Toilets, Bathhouse, Restrooms
- Camping/RV Park
- Recreation/Community center
- Ball field
- Other sports fields – would like two soccer fields
- Tennis Court
- Skate Park
- Lions Park
- Trails (see “Circulation”)
- Open Space
- Disc Golf Course (9-holes) – would like to expand to 18 holes
- Ice Skating Rink
- Swimming Pool

## Circulation & Infrastructure

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- Fire
  - Ability to accommodate many vehicles (40)
  - Safe route for vehicles
  - Route for water lines from hydrant to Little Bears, park, etc.
  - Access Road to Fire and Library
- EMS – helicopter landing area
- Adequate parking
- Trails (including Iditarod)
- Bike path connections
- Safe sidewalks, safe school & child care center access
- Access to shuttle/transit stop

- Covered waiting areas for transit stops
- Importance of shuttle to connect resort commercial/residential area with town commercial/residential area
- “Entry” to Girdwood on Alyeska Highway
- Connection between N-S Townsite
- Road Alignment (Eglof, Glacier Creek)
- Connection back to Alyeska Highway
- Existing utility easements – sewer exists, water not as extensive
- Traffic Calming measures – should start right before Crow Creek and extend past Hightower
- Secondary Access in/out of valley – Where will this go? How and when will it happen?

## **Girdwood South Townsite Community Workshop**

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### **“STR ATEGIES” - WHAT ARE PROMISING STRATEGIES TO RESPOND TO KEY PROJECT ISSUES?**

The information below summarizes results of the Thursday night public workshop. Participants were split into 4 groups, and reached conclusions on four major topics. There was significant, seemingly independent agreement among the separate groups. Conclusions at this initial workshop evolved and changed over the following two days.

#### **Group #1 – Connections**

- N-S connection to Ruane is preferred
- Need to know types and locations in other areas in order to connect to them
- Another connection to the Highway would be good, but how to avoid too many intersections

#### **Group #2 – Street Character**

- Extend Hightower out to highway at Girdwood Place (loop around) AND then connect to Ruane
- Would like to see traffic calming start just before the intersection at Crow Creek Road
- Probably need a stop light at both Crow Creek and Hightower intersections (hard to make a left turn)
- Want speed limit to be downgraded – slow traffic way down, to 25MPH
- Character of the road is important – want to work with the resort to make the look and feel consistent with their plans, create a “gateway” to Alyeska, take advantage of the turn that puts the ski hill in full view
- Question about Kids Park – is it in the ROW?
- Better signage, cooler, more “Girdwoody” to set a motif, build on the look and feel of the community
- Concentrate on civic uses first, and then commercial. Recognize that commercial will do better near the highway.

#### **Group #3 – Open Spaces & Parks**

- Parkland should be “deeper” in the project area – further south. Swap parkland of Forest Fair Park with some of the Commercial Recreation land further south
- Put low-impact recreation in wetter areas, build extensive camping, RV and similar uses
- Extend secondary road access as far south as possible
- Protect biodiversity – what are we losing by developing this area? Is development good at all?

## **Group #4 – Uses**

- Shift Forest Fair Park to southern portion of area
- Keep Kids and skate park but keep concentrated
- Bring Road out to the Highway at Glacier Creek Drive
- Locate Little Bears by Library
- Housing – multi-family, lower-priced needs
- Build RV/Camping park up from Ruane

## **Girdwood South Townsite Master Plan Project**

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### **URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES FOR SUCCESSFUL TOWN CENTERS**

- Concentration & Diversity of Uses
- Response to Setting
- Animation
- Building Scale, Mass & Small Town Character
- Street Character Relationships of Buildings to Street
- Control of Automobiles and Parking
- Public Spaces
- Connections – Cars, Pedestrians, Bikes, Skiers, Transit

## **Girdwood South Townsite Master Plan Project**

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### **PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

- Overall Goal: maintain and strengthen the townsite as the heart of Girdwood, the central place for residents to shop, eat, play, meet friends and find needed public, private and nonprofit services. As a result of doing a good job of meeting resident needs, create a good place for visitors as well.
- Specific objectives (from CAT plan)
  - Diversify retail mix
  - Increase close-in housing
  - Increase public parking
  - Improve pedestrian environment
  - Link north and south (create one, unified, mixed-use towncenter)

**GIRDWOOD SOUTH TOWNSITE  
DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVES**

**Road Options**

	Description	Advantages	Disadvantages	How to Do It
Option #1 LOOP ROAD	Loop road from Hightower back to Girdwood Place	Encourage traffic calming measures on Alyeska Highway; also encourages unification of N-S Townsite; good access to developable land; ability to effectively “phase” road project	200-foot easement; Need to move Forest Fair Park/land swap between P&R and HLB; Wetland impact;	MOA gets permission from DNR to build road within easement; Vacate State Highway from Crow Creek on; put roundabout at Crow Creek
Option #2 EXTENSION TO RUANE	Extend Hightower (Eglof/Glacier Creek) south to Ruane	Access to entire property for multitude of uses; can be second phase off of Loop Road; stays out of 200-foot easement corridors and alternative with least impact on wetlands; provides secondary access out of Valley if there is an issue with the Highway	Cuts entire area in half; costly to develop	Reserve right-of-way;
Option #3 LONG CUL- DE-SAC	Get a variance for longer cul-de-sac			
Option #4 LOOP LADDER				
Option #5 BIG LOOP	Connect elsewhere on Alyeska Highway			

# GIRDWOOD SOUTH TOWNSITE

## DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVES

### Program Options

	Existing	Proposed Future
CIVIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fire Station</li> <li>• Library &amp; Community Room</li> <li>• Child Care Center (Little Bears)</li> <li>• KEUL Radio</li> <li>• Glacier City Hall</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High School</li> <li>• Community Center/Media Center</li> <li>• Health Clinic</li> </ul>
PUBLIC RECREATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forest Fair Park</li> <li>• Kids Park</li> <li>• Skate Park</li> <li>• Tennis Courts</li> <li>• Ball Field</li> <li>• Disc Golf course</li> <li>• Lions Park</li> <li>• Campground</li> <li>• Iditarod trail, other trails</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RV Park</li> <li>• Improved trail system</li> <li>• Extended disc golf course</li> <li>• Soccer Field</li> <li>• Ice Skating Rink</li> <li>• Swimming Pool</li> </ul>
COMMERICAL	- none -	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional services (e.g., dentist)</li> <li>• Bank</li> <li>• Drycleaners</li> <li>• Hardware Store</li> <li>• Barber Shop</li> <li>• Grocery Store</li> <li>• Outdoor Art Walk or Outdoor Market</li> <li>• Grocery</li> <li>• Restaurants</li> <li>• Coffee Shops</li> <li>• Clothing Store</li> <li>• Consignment/Second-Hand Store</li> <li>• Gallery/Gift Shop</li> <li>• Toy/Kids Store</li> </ul>
RESIDENTIAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 in-holdings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mixed-use housing</li> <li>• Lower-cost and affordable housing</li> </ul>
CIRCULATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eglof, Glacier Creek</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parking</li> <li>• Connection to North Townsite &amp; Traffic Calming</li> <li>• Sidewalks/Bike Paths</li> <li>• Covered transit stops</li> <li>• Access to Fire Station &amp; Library</li> </ul>

## GIRDWOOD SOUTH TOWNSITE

### DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVES

#### Use Options

	Use Area #1	Use Area #2	Use Area #3	Use Area #4
<p><b>Option #1</b></p> <p>Circulation Pattern: One road, extending to Ruane</p> <p>(phased, with variance for road development)</p>	<p>Town Center Park &amp; Civic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fire Station</li> <li>• Library</li> <li>• Forest Fair Park</li> <li>• Campground</li> <li>• Skate Park</li> <li>• Playground</li> </ul> <p>ALTERNATIVE: Open Space, Active Kids Activities</p>	<p>Mixed-use Commercial &amp; Residential “Main Street”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commercial Retail Space</li> <li>• Multi-family Residential</li> </ul>	<p>Civic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High School</li> <li>• Little Bears</li> <li>• Community Center</li> <li>• Clinic</li> </ul> <p>ALTERNATIVE: Multi-Family Residential (townhouses, cluster housing)</p>	<p>Parkland &amp; Campground</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sports Fields</li> <li>• Active Recreation</li> <li>• Campground</li> </ul> <p>ALTERNATIVE: Forest Fair Park</p>
<p><b>Option #2</b></p> <p>Circulation Pattern: Loop Ladder Road</p> <p>(phased)</p>	<p>Town Center Park</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skate Park</li> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Pavilion</li> <li>• Little Bears</li> <li>• Lions Park</li> </ul>	<p>Commercial &amp; Civic “Main Street”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retail Space – “Main Street” Businesses w/parking</li> <li>• Grocery, Bank and Service Businesses</li> <li>• Fire Station</li> <li>• Library</li> <li>• Clinic</li> </ul>	<p>Residential</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mixed-use (residential over commercial)</li> <li>• Multi-family Residential</li> <li>• Single-family detached, small lot</li> </ul>	<p>Civic &amp; Recreation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High School</li> <li>• Community Center</li> <li>• Forest Fair Park</li> <li>• Sports Fields</li> <li>• Active Recreation</li> <li>• Campground</li> </ul>
<p><b>Option #3 - HYBRID</b> Loops w/Phased Extension</p>				