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Silverton Singletrack Society receives \$250k grant for trail construction

Colorado Parks and Wildlife awarded SSS largest possible Non-Motorized Trails Grant

By Reuben Schafir Herald Staff Writer

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The Silverton Singletrack Society received a \$250,000 grant from Colorado Parks and Wildlife to begin construction on phase one of the Baker's Park project, which will eventually include almost 30 miles of mountain bike trails. (Courtesy of Silverton Singletrack Society)



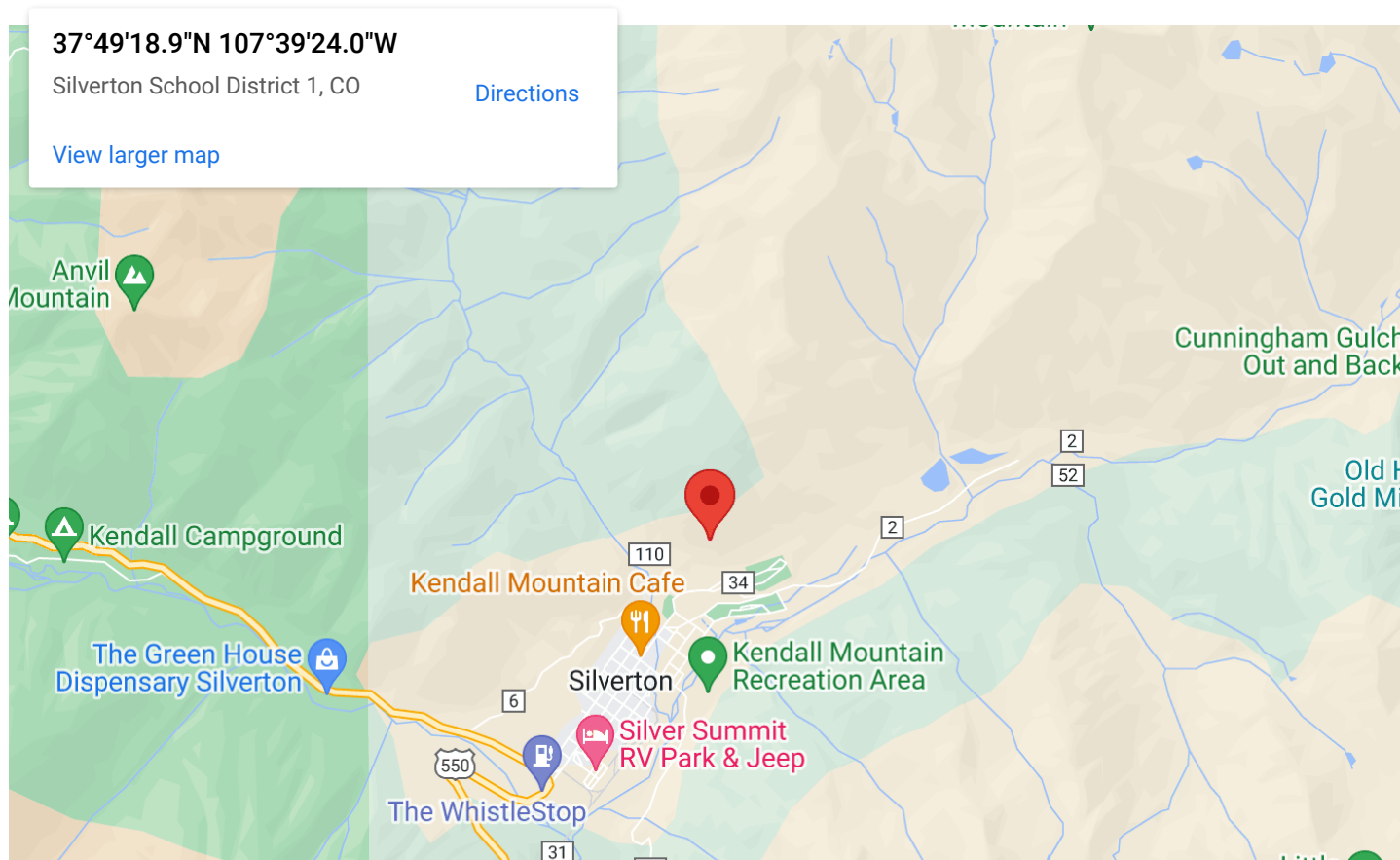
The Silverton Singletrack Society announced this week that it has received a Non-Motorized Trails Grant from Colorado Parks and Wildlife, which will enable the organization to start work this summer on phase one of the Baker's Park Trail System.

The \$250,000 award makes a significant dent in the \$900,000 that will be necessary to build phase one. The entire project, which will include nearly 30 miles of trail, is estimated to cost \$2.6 million.

"We're pretty stoked" said SSS Board President Klemens Branner. "It was definitely a lot of work, it was a two-year process."

CPW makes nonmotorized trail awards to "continue to improve outdoor recreation opportunities, including trail construction, maintenance, planning, and support while protecting wildlife, habitat, and cultural resources," according to the [agency's webpage](#).

There were 18 projects seeking funding for trail construction in this round of grant applications.



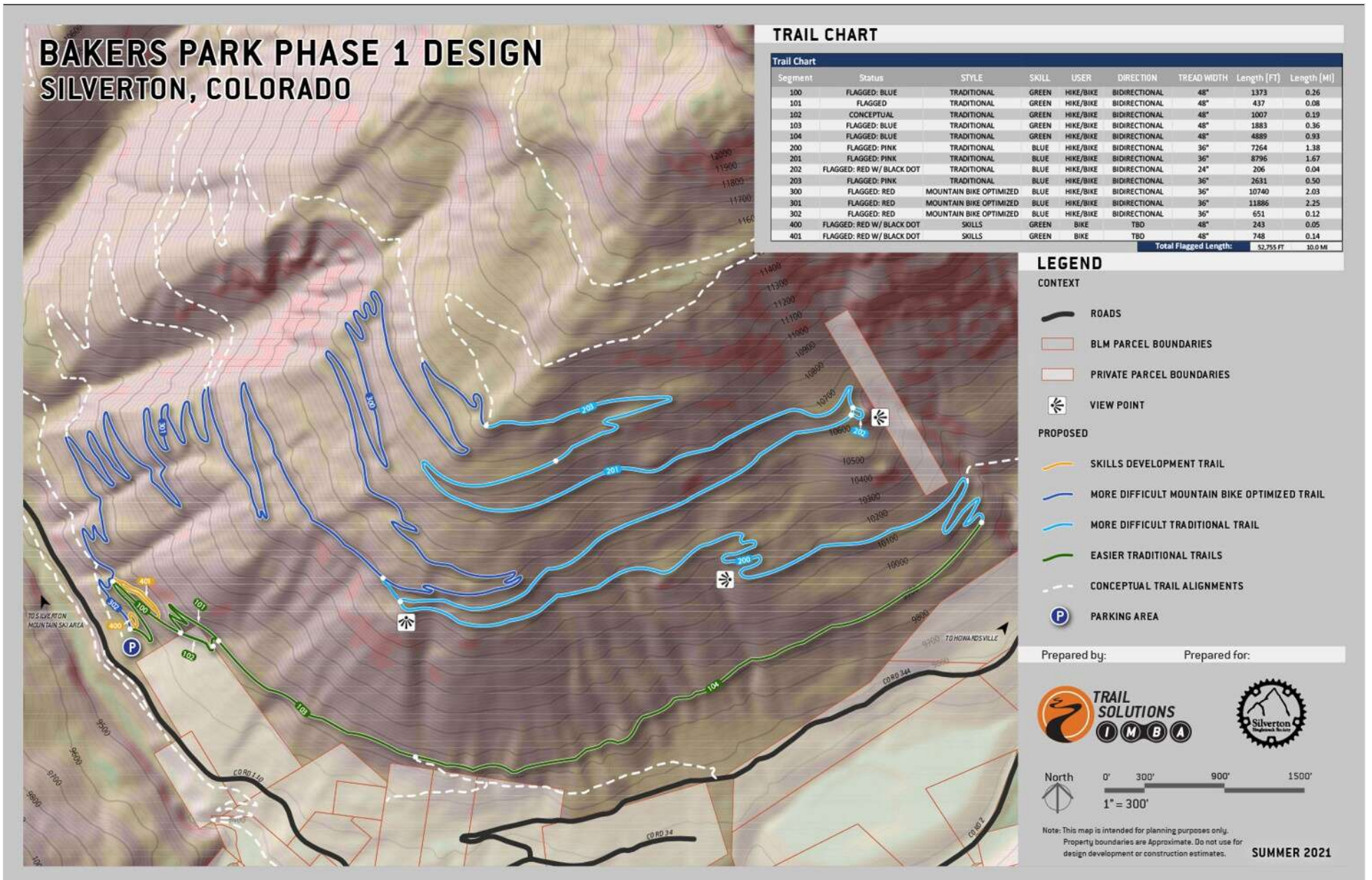
SSS initially received approval for the **project in 2020**, although the proposal was the topic of some debate in the year before its approval. The Bureau of Land Management, upon which the trails will sit, cleared the development at that time, mitigating wildlife impacts by dictating that trails would close during the winter months.

Of the total **30 miles that SSS intends** to build, 24 miles will be shared use trails, while 6 miles of trail will be one-way bike-only terrain. The trails will be located on the Storm Peak Massif.

Branner expects trail crews to begin work on the trails this summer and finish sometime in 2024.

Phase one of the project includes 10 miles of trail on an aspen-covered hillside directly north of downtown Silverton. It will also include bathroom facilities and parking.

Of the 10 miles of trail slated to be built in the next year, 0.19 miles will be dedicated solely for cyclists to develop new skills. The rest will be a mix of beginner and intermediate level trails that will be open to both hikers and bikers, although some of it will be built to optimize bicycle travel.



Phase one of the Baker's Park project will include about 10 miles of trails, most of which will be shared use. (Courtesy of Silverton Singletrack Society)



Silverton has only 10 miles of official mountain bike trails, and the new additions are likely to bolster the town's tourism economy, which relies primarily on the small ski resort in the winter and the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad in the summer.

"We've kind (had) all eggs in one or two baskets," Branner said. "... I think this will just add another component to the tourism mix to help us diversify."

With just over half the funds raised for phase one, Branner said he is hoping that this grant will "shake things loose" and facilitate more donations.

The SSS will host a celebration from 6-8 p.m. Saturday at Avalanche Brewing Co. in Silverton.

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