

Manitou Incline Site Development and Management Plan

Open House Responses

On Thursday, January 20, 2011, an Open House was held to encourage review of the draft Manitou Incline Site Development and Management Plan. The purpose was not only to promote that review, but to make sure there were no critical flaws in the draft Plan that would significantly inhibit its adoption and implementation.

The Open House was held in Memorial Hall, Manitou Springs City Hall from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. Almost 100 people attended. Each participant received a form to complete. Twenty-nine response forms were submitted and every comment is recorded below.

Are there any major elements in this plan that you believe would make its adoption and implementation more difficult? If so, please explain.

I noticed that most of the parking is a “possible” fee. Need some free parking even if it is farther away

Dog days or dog hours. My dog and I love the Incline.

Allow nights; I do the Incline in the dark about 25% of the time due to schedule with family.

Allow downhill; oddly, walking down the Incline with a bad knee is easier than running Barr Trail.

Keep improvements to the trail as minimal as possible.

Keep parking fees as low as possible.

Please allow dogs at dog owners’ responsibility.

Dogs: the Incline has been a great way to spend time with my dog, get a workout, and enjoy nature. Could we regulate the situation? Encourage plastic bags and leashes? It would be better to regulate proper use with animals than to eventually punish people for non-compliance – environmental impact.

I know people would pay for a shuttle up [to] the Incline, possibly from a location where parking is more available.

Perhaps a fee in exchange for tips for a successful climb or a coupon to local shops. I think there is a tremendous opportunity to expand tourism in Manitou via this initiative. Thank you!

Wish dogs would be allowed.

The dawn-to-dusk is a bad idea. Fine to recommend to people that aren’t regulars.

Should not have dawn-to-dusk rule; difficult and time-consuming to enforce.

If one-way rule, then need multiple bailout points.

Prohibiting pets (read: “dogs”) is the right thing to do, but users will not observe it (just as the leash laws are deemed optional).

I use the Incline at 5 a.m., which is before dawn 1 month of the year. It’s amazing how many users are on the climb before dawn. Please instead use 5 a.m. [as] an “opening time” because people’s schedules are not driven by the orbit of the earth, they’re driven by the clock and work schedules observed by a clock.

Sounds good; keep private business out, please.

Barr Trail parking lot must be at a high rate, \$20 plus for short-term parking. It is very important to discourage Incline users on a short-term time frame with a big price tag. We must discourage the traffic flow up to the lot looking for short-term parking cheap. This adds greatly to the whole “clog” situation with traffic. Only residents, Cog customers and paid or reservation holders for Barr Trail parking lot are allowed pass the Iron Springs building. If you don’t have a ticket displayed in your window or something like it, you must turn at the Iron Springs. This will help the “clog” with their parking as well. Thanks for all your time!!

The revenue estimates for parking may be overly optimistic. All such revenue will be needed for parking. I doubt there will be excess revenue to apply to the Incline.

If “use at your own risk” is established, then dawn-to-dusk should not matter.
No new taxes! Instead, annual fee or park pass.
If dogs are allowed, they should be “leashed”.

Manitou has limited resources and does not own any of the land on / around the Incline. Despite that, Manitou will shoulder a lot of responsibility for this project. Please designate El Paso County to be the rescuer of injured climbers so our Fire Department resources can be put to local use.

Need to update MS Incline web page more often. For example, this meeting was not on it this morning.
Need to designate road at top of Incline as Forest Service system trail.
Closures of social trails need to be monitored to check that they are working and still in place.
People will tear them out and go around them.

Looks good!
Potential issues: dawn-to-dusk isn’t best for users and I doubt those user patterns will change (many use before dawn); one-way without intermediate bailouts may be problematic and promote social trail formation.

Thank you for all of your hard work!
I know I’m late in this process and I know you’ve considered:
1) “Pets on leash” possibility;
2) And if the Incline is not at capacity (mid-afternoon, e.g. winter) that hikers can elect to “walk” down the Incline;
3) People going to work in the morning – it’s hard to not be up and down before sunrise.

Nighttime hiking is a good thing.
Being able to hike down would be good.
Dogs are a good thing.

I disagree with the plan to exclude dogs and night hiking. Any dog issues can be dealt with. Night is the best time to hike it (cooler, less crowded, great city views) and not significantly more dangerous. Everyone should climb at their own risk!

- 1) Parking projections are based on current usage, but could be far higher. If they are, then the parking plan will collapse. Further, nobody wants to walk up Ruxton. I think a shuttle for peak times should be planned.
- 2) Barr Trail users are mis-represented. The Incline meetings didn't get a good set of BT users who use the trail for short 1- to 2-hour trips rather than 8- to 24-hour trips.
- 3) Chamber of Commerce – where are these guys?!? This is probably the most important project that I've seen in our community in 20 years.
- 4) Manitou Vision Projects – these should be linked.

Suggest in (Traffic and Parking) Zone D, making 8 to 9 spaces on Winter by the townhomes and Iron Springs Chateau “no parking” during the day only, say from 4:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. That way visitors to the townhomes and the Iron Springs can use them in the late day when there are fewer buses and traffic.

I regret I wasn't at the meeting where certain restrictions were “vetted”; however, let me say I've hiked it close to 1,000 times. I don't bring a dog, I don't do it at night, I don't go down the Incline. But I think all these SHOULD be allowed. Safety is personal common sense, not something you legislate. I've never been disturbed by anyone's dog, I've never been run over by someone coming down. In fact, it's a good way to meet people.
I do like the guiding principles you've used to create your plans.
I do like most of the changes – particularly volunteer donations, closing social trails, not “civilizing” the trail. Thanks.

Minor comments only: Dawn-to-dusk would limit access for before work / school. Not all city parks are dawn-to-dusk, e.g. Garden of the Gods, North Cheyenne Cañon.

Do not ban dogs; put in pooper stations with trash cans.
Do not ban downhill – not that dangerous if Incline properly maintained.

Need to be realistic about funding. Plan is ambitious (yea!)
New trail connection from top of Incline to north to Ute Pass Trail is important. It provides relief to Barr Trail, lessens user impact on Barr Trail, and provides overall better trail experience for all users of area trails.
Good plan – let's get it implemented!

Stage A – Parking area F is too large for residential only. Downtown users park up to Church Street. You will be hurting the downtown corridor if you limit this to residents.
Manitou Springs Parking Authority Board isn't on the timeline for meetings; parking revenue sharing is aggressive.

I am a user who brings my dog every time I go to the Incline. It's a fantastic bonding time and I would hate to see that go away. Maybe have a place for people to put extra plastic bags for doggie excrement? If there will be trash cans along the trail, people may be more open to the idea of picking up after their pooch.
Thank you for all the hard work and dedication to this project!
I'm concerned with adequate parking.
Thanks for your excellent planning.

The solution for metered parking at the Barr Trail parking lot is critical. It must be able to discourage Incline parking with higher fees plus be able to be policed. The only way to solve the clogging traffic issues on Upper Ruxton is to make sure the only car traffic that gets past the turnaround at the Chateau is either pre-approved (obvious, through a window to Cog employees), Barr Trail traffic, Cog traffic, or resident traffic. If this isn't implemented immediately, the traffic nightmare on Upper Ruxton will continue.

Trying to pass or force a raised sales tax to fund this project... I am severely against paying for Incline users. Make this a user-funded program. Let the Incline users pay for the Incline!!!
Delaying the parking changes on Ruxton Avenue is only going to irritate residents and business owners further. Implementing the parking changes for the entire street before bowing to the users' needs is necessary!

Parking at Barr Trail lot should not charge for those dropping people off or if the lot is full (turn around). Maybe free for first 10 minutes, then charge.

Trail ideas: coming across this cause, and being one that has hiked on this trail, I had thought of a few ideas as far as adding education to the trail. That could be in the form of having at different spots of the trail, strategically placed, little information boards about the trail, different techniques in hiking (pacing, breathing), the botany and geology of the area, about the Incline itself, about Native Americans and settlers and history of Manitou, about the wildlife that used to be in this area, what is here now, and what is expected unless change [occurs], etc.. Being big on education and conservation, I think this would benefit not only people, but the different companies, too. I think, along with education, which in itself gives great recognition and efforts toward progression, but would also be a great motivation for people from reading something interesting!
In the current process of elaborating and making this fundraiser of mine a reality, I am looking for causes, facilities, organizations, etc., who help the local community. I came across this, and would like very much to help. I am still in the process of creating it, but am also growing very creative ideas in helping it along to be a success. I would very much like your organization to be part of this fundraiser and, of course [it] would help you, too, in the aftermath. Thank you.
(Contact information given)