



TOWN OF VIRGIN
Parks, Recreation,
Open Space, &
Trails Plan



SEPTEMBER 2026



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Chapter 1: Introduction

About the PROST Plan

The Town of Virgin's Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Plan is intended to serve as a practical roadmap for guiding future investments, policies, partnerships, and decision-making related to Virgin's recreation system and community resources. As the Town's first PROST plan, it takes stock of existing parks, recreation facilities, open spaces, trails, and related assets; identifies community priorities, gaps, and opportunities; and establishes a strategic framework for improvements over the next decade and beyond.

The plan is designed to help Town staff, elected officials, community partners, and residents make informed decisions about how to maintain, improve, and expand Virgin's parks and recreation resources in a way that reflects local values, supports quality of life, and balances resident needs with the Town's role as a gateway to regional outdoor recreation destinations.



Planning Process

The development of this PROST plan took place over the course of approximately 10 months between fall 2025 and summer 2026. Community engagement was a pillar of this planning process, and included two in-person open house events, two online and printed community surveys, and a public website sharing project updates and ways to be involved.

Below is the timeline of the planning process:

- Project kick-off: October 2025
- Background research & mapping: November 2025 – January 2026
- Initial Community Engagement Open House & Survey – January 2026
- Design Work – December 2025 – March 2026
- Needs Assessment and Recommendations – January 2026 – May 2026
- Community Engagement Survey and Feedback – May 2026
- Concept and Recommendation Refinement, Final Plan Development – May 2026 – August 2026
- Plan Adoption – Fall 2026



Community members at the PROST open house



Community Engagement Board





Chapter 2: Existing Conditions

Understanding the current state of parks, recreation, open space, and trail resources available to the Town of Virgin's residents and visitors is a critical first step in planning for the future. This section documents Virgin's local and regional parks, recreation facilities, open spaces, and trails, and summarizes the current funding sources that support the maintenance, operation, and expansion of these assets.

Recreation Asset Inventory

The following recreation inventory documents the parks, recreation facilities, open spaces, and trails that contribute to quality of life in Virgin. The inventory is based on direct observations, desktop analysis, and discussions with Town staff and stakeholders familiar with these resources.

The Town of Virgin's recreation system includes four parks, a BMX track facility, and access to extensive public lands (managed by a few different entities) and regional trail networks for both motorized and non-motorized recreation. While the Town does not currently provide recreation programming, it is responsible for maintaining local parks and facilities through scheduled and as-needed maintenance activities. Parks, recreation, open space, and trails are funded through a combination of General Fund appropriations, park impact fees, Recreation, Arts, and Parks (RAP) tax revenue, facility rentals, and grant funding.



Local Parks

The Town of Virgin currently maintains four parks and a BMX track facility that serve the varied needs of residents and visitors. Brief descriptions of these parks, including the key recreational resources they contribute to the community, are detailed below.

Legend

- Virgin Town Boundary
- Town Park
- Town Park Opportunities
- Sheep Bridge Nature Preserve
- Parcel Boundaries
- Existing Buildings
- River
- Stream (Perennial)
- Stream (Ephemeral)
- Wetlands
- Lake

Existing Recreation Amenities

- Trailhead
- Mountain Biking
- Hiking
- Horseback Riding
- Tubing
- OHV
- Camping
- Glamping
- RV Park

Trails & Bikeways

- Biking Only Trail
- Hiking & Equestrian Only Trail
- Multi-use Trail
- Shared Road Bikeway
- Planned Zion Corridor Trail
- Existing River Crossings

Land Ownership

- BLM
- School Trust Land (SITLA)

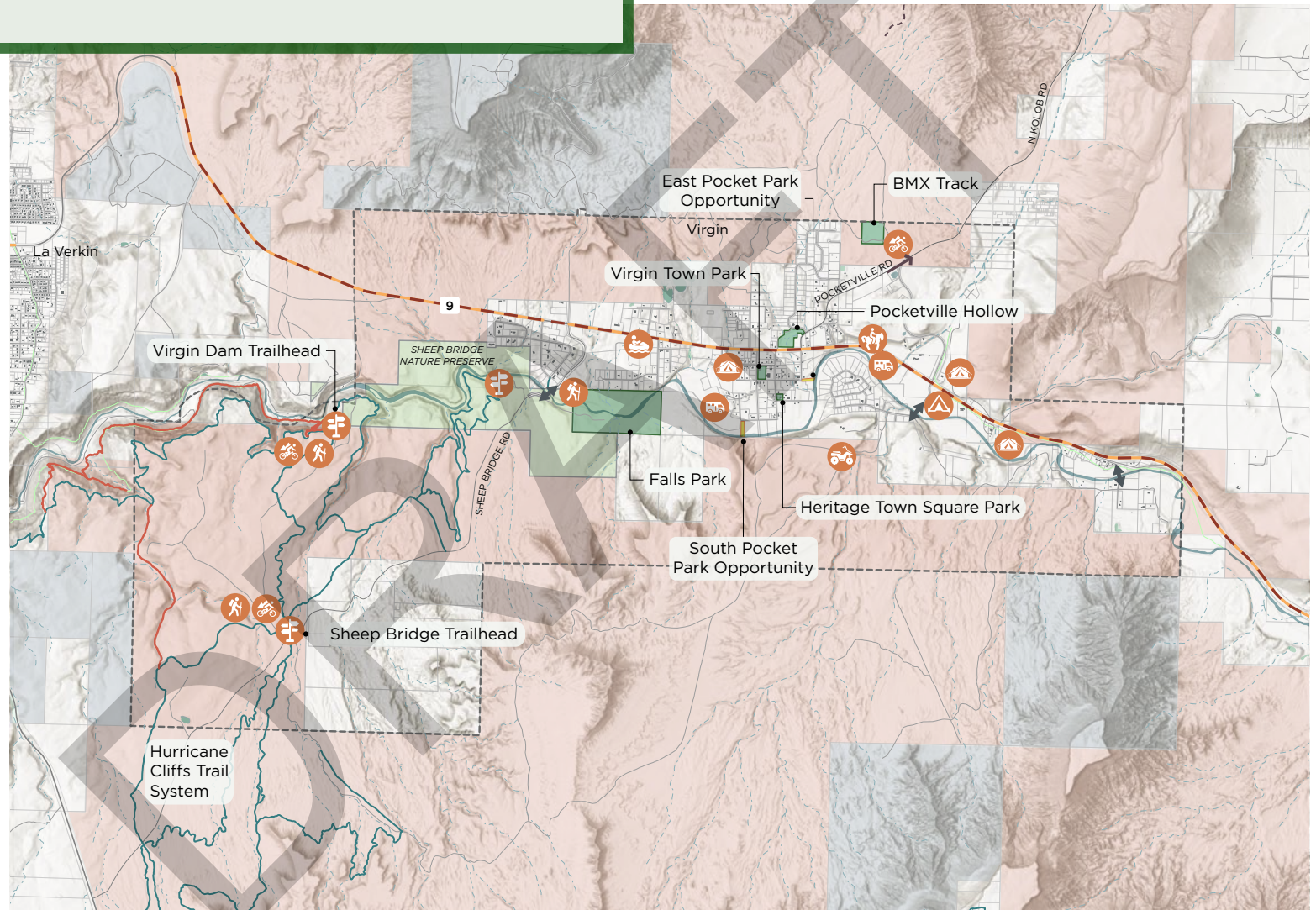


Figure 1. Town of Virgin Recreation Inventory Map



Virgin Town Park

Location: 60 S 100 W, Virgin, UT 84779

Virgin Town Park is located in the center of town. At 2.2 acres, Virgin Town Park serves as the community's primary gathering space and provides a wide variety of recreation opportunities for visitors and residents of all ages. Amenities include a softball/baseball field, playground, basketball courts, pickleball courts, picnic area and grill, pump track, and open green space. Dogs are permitted.

Street parking is available adjacent to the park, with designated parking spaces west of the pickleball courts. The park also includes two restrooms, a small kitchen and concession area used for rentals and town events, and a stage area that hosts informal community gatherings and seasonal performances. The facilities at Virgin Town Park can be reserved online.

Events are common at this park, including town-wide events such as the annual 4th of July Celebration and other town-run events.

Recreation use at the park is generally informal and includes pickup basketball games, community pickleball play and tournaments, use of the pump track and playground by local youth and visitors, and a variety of casual outdoor activities. The open space of the ballfield is also used for recreation and community events.

In spring 2026, the Town Hall relocated to a former church building adjacent to Virgin Town Park. The approximately 14,000-square-foot building has been converted into a new Town Hall with office space and a gymnasium, further strengthening the park's role as a community hub.

Recreation Amenities:

- Gazebo
- Indoor kitchen
- Stage
- Playground targeted at children aged 3-12
- Three dedicated pickleball courts
- Basketball court
- Baseball field
- Pump track park designed for bicycles, scooters, and skateboards
- Picnic tables (9)
- Benches (7)
- Grills (1)
- Trash cans (4)



Town Park Playground



Town Park Pickleball Courts and Pavilion

Falls Park

Location: Falls Park Road

Falls Park is an approximately 80-acre open space area along the Virgin River that is accessed via Sheep Bridge Road off of State Route 9. The park is accessed by a short, narrow dirt road and includes a large parking area with space for multiple vehicles. There is a pit toilet and a few picnic tables at the parking area, though shade is limited. Dogs are allowed at this park.

Falls Park is owned by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and managed in partnership with the Town of Virgin through a Memorandum of Understanding. The area is adjacent to the 419-acre Sheep Bridge Nature Preserve (see Regional Recreation Assets for more information on Sheep Bridge Nature Preserve). The Virgin River runs through the middle of this park for just over half a mile.

Falls Park serves a wide range of users, including local residents, regional visitors, and tourists traveling through the area. Visitors enjoy hiking, accessing the JEM biking trail, swimming, playing in the sand, tubing on the river, picnicking, and exploring the surrounding landscape. The area is also popular for wildlife viewing, birding, and photography. Its location along the Virgin River and near the Sheep Bridge Nature Preserve contributes to its role as a destination for both passive and active outdoor recreation.

Recreation Amenities:

- Pit toilet (1)
- Picnic tables (4)
- Fire rings (4)
- Trash cans (2)



Virgin River, Falls Park



Falls Park Picnic Area



BMX Track

Location: 425 N Kolob Ter Rd, Virgin, UT 84779

The Virgin BMX Track is a popular 10-acre BMX facility that offers scenic backdrops and opportunities for riders of all skill levels. Originally leased to the Town of Virgin in 2002, the Town took full ownership of the BMX Track from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in 2017. The facility is operated and maintained by a private concessionaire under a lease agreement with the Town.

The BMX Track serves as a regional recreation asset and event venue, attracting between 100 and 200 visitors per week. In addition to the main BMX course, a pump track is located outside the fenced track area but can only be used when the operator is present. The Town has supported ongoing improvements at the facility through grant funding, including the installation of a new starting gate, timing system, power connections, and lighting upgrades.

Access to the BMX Track is limited to club members and organized events, with use occurring when the operator is present. New members are encouraged to join. The facility hosts BMX practices, competitions, and other cycling-related events, contributing to Virgin's recreation offerings and drawing participants from throughout the region.



BMX Track Facilities



BMX Track Starting Line

Pocketville Hollow

Pocketville Hollow sits on the north side of State Route 9 in the center of town. This 6-acre park was designated as common property in 2023 and given the name Pocketville Hollow. Originally donated for flood control, the property now serves as a community park and open space.

The park features a large grassy area that is frequently used for informal recreation, along with a walking path that runs along the west side of the property. Pocketville Hollow is particularly popular with local dog owners and functions as one of the town's primary dog-friendly recreation spaces. Residents regularly use the park to walk their dogs, play, socialize, and enjoy the open lawn area.

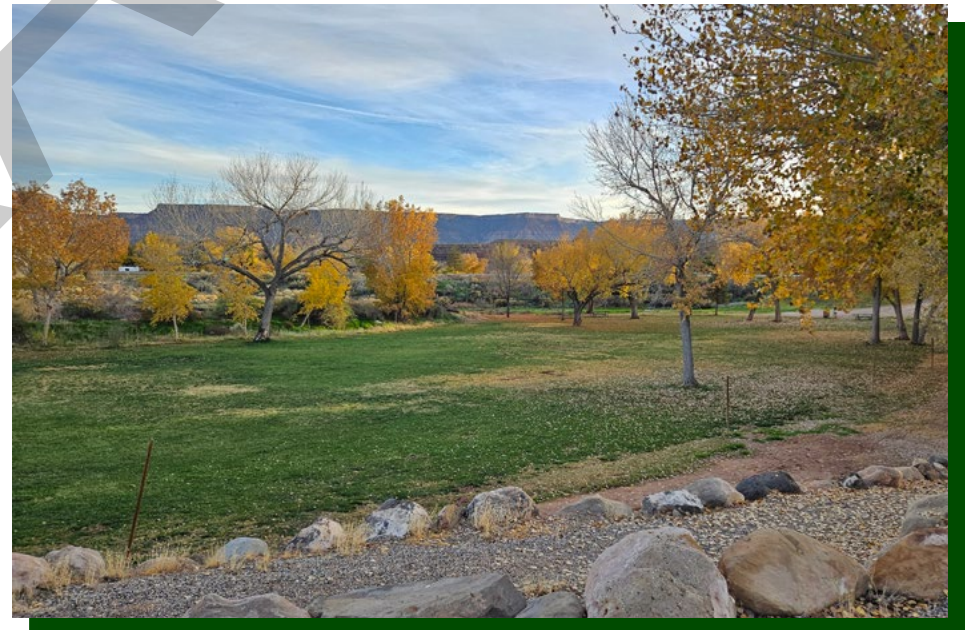
Located adjacent to the historic post office building in the center of town, Pocketville Hollow provides convenient access to outdoor recreation and contributes to the community's small-town character. Its central location and flexible open space make it a popular gathering place for residents and an important component of Virgin's park system.

Recreation Amenities:

- Dog waste station (2)
- Picnic tables (4)
- Trash cans (2)



Pocketville Hollow Access Trail



Pocketville Hollow Open Space



Heritage Town Square

Location: 114 Mill St, Virgin, UT 84779

Heritage Town Square is a centrally located community gathering space that combines historic resources with event and meeting facilities on just under one acre of land. The square includes a restored frontier church, an event facility with a full kitchen, an outdoor dance floor, a mature courtyard, a pavilion, and an old jailhouse. Additional historic features include a flagpole and wagon that help showcase the town's heritage and provide opportunities for residents and visitors to learn about Virgin's history. The park is adjacent to a historic building that, until recently, served as the Town Hall. Dogs are permitted in outdoor areas of the facility.

Heritage Town Square is a popular venue for community events and private gatherings. The site is regularly used for weddings, with guests making use of the Old Church, courtyard, kitchen, pavilion, and restrooms. The Old Church has also historically served as a venue for town meetings and civic functions.

These facilities are available to rent for private events when not in use by the town, and the price includes tables and plastic folding chairs. The kitchen includes two stoves with ovens, a refrigerator, utility sinks, a microwave, and a roll door that opens to make outside serving accessible from inside the kitchen. Parking spaces are delineated on the streets bordering Heritage Town Square. The whole premises can be reserved for use for a fee, determined by residency status. Facility rental fees may be waived for local organizations or specific event types. Partial premises and hourly reservations are also available.

Recreation Amenities:

- Pavilion with lighting
- Full event kitchen
- Courtyard
- Concrete dancing pad
- Handicap accessible restrooms (2)



Heritage Town Square



Former Town Hall

Open Space

“Open space” is a broadly defined term that can mean different things across organizations, jurisdictions, or individuals. Most people think of open space as natural, undeveloped lands that are special in some way—they may be scenic or indicative of an area’s heritage (e.g. agricultural lands), create separation between communities or land uses, provide stormwater management or flood control, or provide areas for wildlife and natural communities to thrive. Open space areas and associated buildings may be open for recreation and educational purposes. For a tourism-driven community, open space can be powerful on a variety of levels to preserve rural identity, promote areas for recreation, and reinforce quality of life.

The Town of Virgin includes significant amounts of open space inside town boundaries. Public land, even if federal, is often considered to be a type of open space when it is within or adjacent to developed areas. This is the case for the Town of Virgin, where most open space is owned by BLM; in fact, 56.7% of land in Virgin, or 4,285 acres, is managed by BLM’s St. George Field Office as part of the Color County District. Additionally, the Town owns several unprogrammed parcels of land that are currently used as open space and may have more programmed pocket park potential.

At the regional scale (see Figure 2), Virgin is surrounded by large amounts of public land. This includes wilderness areas such as the Canaan Mountain Wilderness, Blackridge Wilderness, Red Butte Wilderness, and Zion Wilderness. In the same regional scale view in Figure 2, 36% is BLM land, 25.7% is National Park Service land, 6.10% is US Forest Service land, and 3.8% is managed by Trust Lands Administration (formerly known as SITLA). The remaining 28.3% of land in the region illustrated in this map is privately owned. Many of the recreation opportunities listed above, as well as the trail systems listed below, are managed and maintained by public land management agencies.

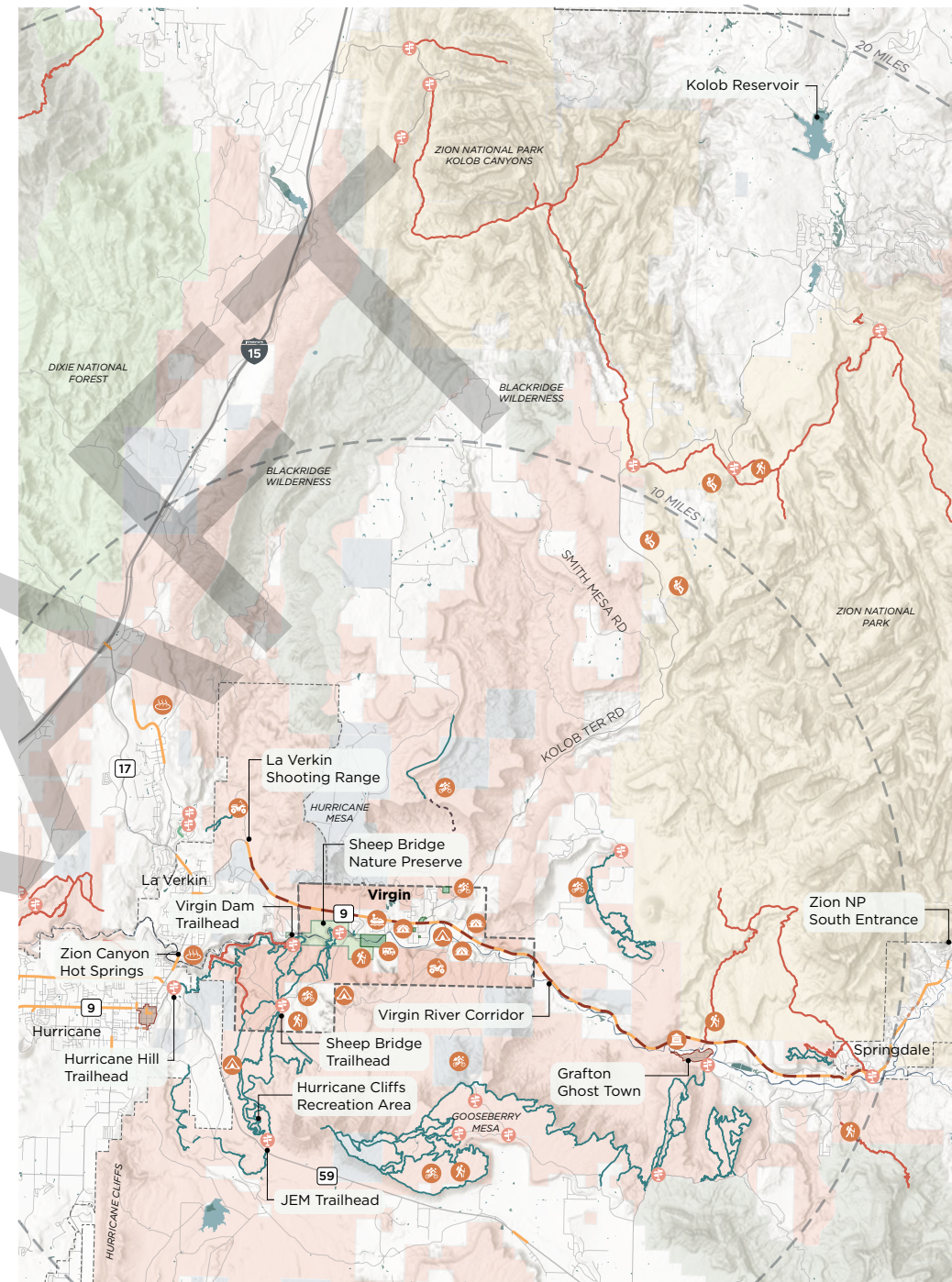


Figure 2. Regional Recreation Opportunities Map

Unprogrammed Town Land

The Town of Virgin owns several small, undeveloped parcels throughout the community that are currently maintained as open space. Two notable town-owned properties along the Virgin River have been identified as potential future pocket park sites due to their riverfront locations, natural features, and proximity to existing neighborhoods and downtown destinations.

South Pocket Park Opportunity

One parcel is located at the corner of 220 West and 240 South and extends to the Virgin River. The narrow property is bounded by residential and commercial uses and contains riparian vegetation, including willows and other riverbank plant communities. An irrigation ditch passes through the property, contributing to its role in local drainage and flood management.



South Pocket Park Opportunity Location

East Pocket Park Opportunity

A second parcel is located at the corner of North Street and East Main Street and also extends to the Virgin River. The property features mature shade trees, open areas that have been cleared of overgrowth, and remnants of a historic bridge near the riverbank. The site provides a natural setting within walking distance of downtown and occupies a prominent location along the river corridor.



East Pocket Park Opportunity Location



Trails

The Town of Virgin does not maintain a Town-wide trail system. However, the southwest side of Virgin does include a few trails on BLM land, private land, and within the Sheep Bridge Nature Preserve. Within town boundaries, there are approximately 2.2 miles of hiking trail, 11.9 miles of trails used for hiking and biking, and 3.7 miles trails on or adjacent to roads. There are two trailheads within town boundaries: the Virgin Dam Trailhead and the Jem Trailhead.

In addition, the proposed route for the Zion Corridor Trail (see Figure 1) would go directly through the Town of Virgin. According to the Zion Corridor Trail Feasibility Study from June 2020, this route would be a regional “backbone” trail connecting existing trails and trailheads and connect communities from Hurricane to Zion National Park. The recommended route would stay within the right-of-way of State Route 9.¹ Articles from September 2021 indicate that a \$10.8 million grant was awarded to build the trail and updates from the Greater Zion Office of Convention & Tourism indicate that construction on the trail commenced in 2026.²

Within the broader regional extent depicted in Figure 2, there are approximately 66 miles of trail available for hiking, 105.3 miles of hiking/biking trails, 1.1 miles of trails for biking only, and 92.5 miles of trails on or adjacent to roads. The following trail systems are standout features in the regional area:

Gooseberry Mesa National Recreation Trail:

Gooseberry Mesa National Recreation Trail is a system of technical mountain biking trails across BLM land on Gooseberry Mesa. It offers sweeping, spectacular views of Zion, canyons, and desert mesas. It is famous for its world-class mountain biking trails on slickrock and singletrack.



Regional Mountain Bike Trails



Regional ATV/OHV Trails

Hurricane Cliffs Trail System: The Hurricane Cliffs Trail System, which includes the Jem Trail, is a trail system primarily on BLM land with nearly 40 miles of beginner and intermediate trails. One of the most popular trail systems in the area, this trail system was built with mountain biking in mind, though some trails are also available for hiking, trail running, and ATVs.

Other mountain bike trail systems: Mountain biking is available on other nearby trail systems, including Grafton Mesa, Wire Mesa, and Guacamole Mesa. These areas are also used by hikers and trail runners.

Off-road trails: This area is also popular for off-roading or ATV/UTV riding. Areas such as Smith Mesa, White Trail, Gooseberry Mesa, and Dalton Wash Road are common destinations.

¹ <https://cdn.sqhk.co/laverkincity/Yujj9jh/ATTA-ZionCorridorTrailFeasibilityStudy.pdf>

² <https://www.abc4.com/news/local-news/grant-awarded-for-10-8-million-trail-from-zion-national-park-to-st-george/> <https://greaterzion.com/destination-development/>



Regional Recreation Assets

The major recreation assets and opportunities in the regional area include the following:

Zion National Park and Associated Trail Systems:

Zion National Park is a major destination, drawing visitors from across the country and the world to the broader regional area. The Town of Virgin is uniquely situated as a basecamp to access Zion, with visitors driving from Salt Lake City or Las Vegas passing through the Town after exiting Highway I-15. Zion offers opportunities for hiking, canyoneering, backpacking, climbing, camping, and horseback riding. A few of the most popular trails in the park include Angels Landing, the Watchman Trail, Emerald Pools, the Subway, and the Narrows. Kolob Canyons, in the northwest corner of the park, offers a quieter, more primitive experience for visitors to Zion with trails like the La Verkin Creek Trail, the Timber Creek Overlook Trail, and the Taylor Creek Trail. In addition to backpacking and hiking opportunities, there is a 5-mile scenic drive on Kolob Canyons Road.

Virgin River Corridor: The Virgin River is a centerpiece of the Town of Virgin. The North Fork of the Virgin River flows southwest through Zion National Park and “the Narrows” before meeting with the East Fork and flowing through the Town of Virgin. The river corridor provides hiking opportunities, fishing, tubing, swimming, and general river access for residents and visitors. It also supports diverse wildlife and plant species, including the endangered southwestern willow flycatcher and the flannelmouth sucker.³

Sheep Bridge Nature Preserve: The Sheep Bridge property was purchased by the Nature Conservancy (TNC) in 2020 and set aside as a nature preserve to safeguard the Virgin River’s water and rich, streamside corridors for nature and people in southern Utah.⁴ The Sheep Bridge property is owned and managed by TNC in cooperation with the Utah Department of Natural Resources.⁵ Recreational opportunities available at the Preserve include hiking on designated trails, two parking lots (east and west ends of the Preserve) for hikers only, educational signs, and a short one-way bike trail loop that connects to BLM’s larger system of bike trails south of our Preserve. Bikers are asked to park and begin their bike adventures on BLM’s Sheep Bridge Trailhead parking lot which can be accessed on Sheep Bridge Road, about two miles south of the Preserve. Pets are not allowed, and recreation on the river or the riparian corridor is prohibited.



Southwestern Willow Flycatcher



Sheep Bridge Nature Preserve

Kolob Reservoir: Kolob Reservoir is a 5,600 acre-foot, high-elevation reservoir near the northern end of Zion National Park.⁶ The Reservoir is owned and managed by the Washington County Water Conservancy District. The reservoir offers fishing for Bear River cutthroat, Colorado River cutthroat, and rainbow trout, as well as boating, swimming, paddle boarding, and camping.

Grafton Ghost Town and Trail: Grafton is a historic “ghost” town just south of Zion National Park. First settled by white settlers in 1859 and abandoned in the 1940s, the town has been the backdrop of several films, including Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid. Attractions include a historic schoolhouse, homes, a cemetery, and the 6.6 mile Grafton Trail that is used for biking and hiking.⁷

³ <https://www.nature.org/en-us/get-involved/how-to-help/places-we-protect/the-virgin-river-headwaters/>

⁴ <https://www.nature.org/en-us/get-involved/how-to-help/places-we-protect/sheep-bridge-nature-preserve-in-utah/>

⁵ <https://www.sltrib.com/news/environment/2020/06/02/nature-conservancy-buys/>



Camping opportunities: The beautiful landscape and proximity to Zion National Park means that the regional area is full of a wide variety of camping opportunities. From dispersed camping on BLM land to developed RV parks and “glamping” resorts, there is something for everyone.

Zion Canyon Hot Springs: Zion Canyon Hot Springs is a regional destination in La Verkin, UT. It offers geothermal hot springs, mineral soaking pools, and saunas accessible with day passes or annual memberships.

Climbing areas: Popular climbing routes near Virgin include Pandemic Wall and Lambs Knoll. Lambs Knoll, which is on BLM land, includes more than 25 established routes and canyoneering opportunities as well as a developed trailhead, day-use picnic area, restroom, and eight walk-in tent campsites available on a first-come, first served basis.

Events

Red Bull Rampage: The Red Bull Rampage is an annual freeride mountain biking competition that takes place outside of Virgin in October. Marketed as the “Super Bowl” of mountain biking, the race challenges participants to build their own creative line down jaw-dropping technical terrain. This ticketed race brings thousands of people to the Virgin area and is streamed on television and online for massive audiences, serving as a compelling advertisement for the technical mountain biking opportunities in the broader Virgin area.

Other events in the nearby area include the Frog Hollow Endurance Race, the Springdale Half Marathon, the Senior Games, and the Capstone 50k.



Redbull Mountain Bike Rider

⁶ <https://www.wcwc.gov/kolob/>

⁷ <https://graftonheritage.org/history-settlement/>



Current PROST Funding

The Town of Virgin currently funds parks, recreation, open space, and trails through a combination of sources rather than a single dedicated PROST funding stream. These sources include General Fund allocations, tax revenues, park impact fees, facility rentals, and grants.

In 2025, the Town of Virgin's budget allocated \$116,100 from the General Fund to parks and recreation. These funds supported staffing, equipment and maintenance, utilities, and other administrative expenses.

The General Fund is funded by a variety of revenue sources, including taxes, licenses and permits, intergovernmental revenue, and charges for services. Key tax revenues include the following:

- Property Tax
- Fee in Lieu (vehicles)
- Sales & Use Taxes
- Rocky Mountain Power Franchise & Energy Tax
- Transient Room Tax
- Resort Tax
- Recreation, Art, Park (RAP) Tax
- Highway/Transit Tax

According to Utah State Code, RAP Tax revenues can be used to support a wide range of recreational, cultural, or zoological facilities and programs provided by the town.

In addition to General Fund revenues, the Town collects a park impact fee of \$1,741 for each new residential and commercial development within Town limits. The park impact fee fund currently contains \$294,579.77 as of February 2026. These impact fees are restricted to park projects necessitated by new development and new residents in town. The Town Council is responsible for deciding when and how to allocate park impact fee revenue.

Parks and recreation also generates a modest amount of revenue through rentals of the Old Church, estimated at \$1,000 annually. These revenues are currently used to help repay a renovation loan.



Virgin Main Water Tank



Chapter 3: Gaps & Opportunities

This chapter evaluates how well Virgin's existing parks, recreation facilities, open spaces, and trails are serving the community today and where future investments could have the greatest impact. Building on the existing conditions assessment, this analysis considers level of service (LOS), accessibility, walkability, community input, and site-specific observations to identify system strengths, gaps, and opportunities for improvement. These analyses include comparisons to national standards and best practices for rural communities. The findings of this section provide the foundation for the recommendations and action items presented in the Action Plan.



Engagement Results

On Thursday, January 22, 2026, the Town of Virgin hosted an Open House event between 4–6 PM to kick off the town's Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails (PROST) planning process. Around 35 community members attended the event, which was held at the Old Church in the Heritage Town Square. Light refreshments were provided. At the Open House, attendees were invited to review boards explaining the purpose and focus of the PROST Plan and provide feedback on a variety of topic areas, which are summarized in **Appendix A**.

The questions asked at the Open House were also asked in an online survey that was mailed out to Virgin residents and posted on the Town website, email lists, and social media. Flyers with a link to a survey were provided to Open House attendees to share with any family members, neighbors, or friends who were unable to attend the event. The survey was open until February 16, 2026. A total of 84 people responded to the online survey, including 73 complete responses and 11 partial responses. All questions were optional at both the open house and in the survey, so it is important to note that not all respondents answered every question.

Key Takeaways

- Residents are largely satisfied with the Town's current park and recreation facility offerings, but note maintenance and improvement needs, particularly at Falls Park.
- The development of in-town walking and biking paths was a very high priority among survey and open house respondents to increase the safety of pedestrians and cyclists and better connect the Town's parks.
- Walking/hiking and mountain biking are the two most common uses of open space and trails around Virgin for respondents.
- Approximately one third of respondents "often" go to neighboring communities for recreation programming, and approximately half of respondents feel that it is either "important" or "very important" for Virgin to provide local recreation programming.



Town Event



Sheep Bridge Nature Preserve



Level of Service (LOS) Assessment

The information collected in this LOS assessment provides meaningful insight into the condition and availability of the PROST resources in and around Virgin. It also highlights important metrics that form the basis for many of the recommended actions included in the Action Plan.

PROST Level of Service context and background

According to American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates, the Town of Virgin had a population of approximately 715 people in 2024.⁸ As a small town, it serves as an important gateway into Zion National Park for visitors from the surrounding area, nearby metropolitan areas, and beyond.

The National Recreation and Parks Administration (NRPA) publishes comprehensive benchmarks for park and recreation agencies of all sizes across the United States.⁹ These benchmarks provide helpful comparisons with peer agencies, allowing park and recreation professionals to better understand their community's needs and better plan for the management of resources and facilities. The most recent data includes more than 900 unique park and recreation agencies and is aggregated by community size.

The smallest community size used for benchmarking by NRPA corresponds to small towns under 20,000 people. We cannot expect Virgin to provide the same level of facilities and services as a town more than 25 times its size; however, these benchmarks can still provide insight into Virgin's strengths and growth areas from a parks and recreation perspective.

The following metrics are included in this LOS assessment based on the NRPA 2025 Agency Performance Review:

1. Number of residents per park
2. Acres of parkland per capita
3. Facilities per capita
4. Availability and diversity of recreation programming
5. Budget size
6. Operating expenditures

Number of Residents per Park

According to the NRPA 2025 Agency Performance Review, communities with populations under 20,000 tend to have **one park for every 1,001 residents**. The national average for municipalities of all sizes is **one park per 2,411 residents**. As previously mentioned, the Town of Virgin manages **four parks for 715 residents, or one park for every 179 residents**. As a result, Virgin residents have access to significantly more town parks than residents of communities much larger in size. Furthermore, this measure does not account for the large amounts of open space and additional recreation opportunities available within Virgin town boundaries and in the surrounding area.

Acres of Parkland per Capita

Based on the NRPA 2025 Agency Performance Review, communities with populations under 20,000 manage an average of **12.9 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents** with a national average for municipalities of all sizes is at **10.2 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents**. The Town of Virgin **manages 90.5 acres** of park land, including Falls Park, Heritage Town Square, Pocketville Hollow, and the Town Park. This does not include the BMX Track, the nearby Sheep Bridge Nature Preserve, or various open space parcels within town boundaries, which are primarily managed by BLM for natural resource protection.

This means that with a population of approximately 715 people, Virgin residents enjoy 0.13 acres of parkland per capita, or **127 acres per 1,000 residents, nearly 10x the average acreage** for towns up to 20,000 people.

It is worth noting that in 2025, Virgin budgeted for 0.88 FTE to manage PROST resources. NRPA 2026 metrics indicate that the typical U.S. park and recreation agency staffs 9.2 FTEs per 10,000 residents.¹⁰ Given the number of acres of parkland that the town manages, particularly for a town of its size, this is a significant number of acres to manage, monitor, and maintain.

⁸ U.S. Department of Commerce. 2026. Census Bureau, American Community Survey Office, Washington, D.C. with estimates provided by Headwaters Economics.

⁹ National Recreation and Park Association. 2025. 2025 NRPA Agency Performance Review. <https://www.nrpa.org/publications-research/research-papers/agency-performance-review/>.

¹⁰ <https://www.nrpa.org/publications-research/research-papers/agency-performance-review/>



Facilities per Capita

An inventory of various key recreation facilities managed by the Town of Virgin indicates that on a per-capita basis, residents generally enjoy a **higher-than-average number of recreation assets than their peer communities. Virgin manages nearly 20 distinct recreation-focused amenities and assets**, from the BMX track to playgrounds and ballfields, for a population of 715 residents.

In addition to the many outdoor recreation opportunities provided by surrounding public lands, nearby towns of La Verkin and Hurricane offer indoor recreation opportunities like paid membership gyms, yoga studios,

community centers, and leisure and recreation centers offering classes and programs within 10 miles of Virgin town center.

Levels of service for the key “facilities” that Virgin manages are summarized in the table below and compared to benchmarks for agencies serving populations under 20,000.

Recreation Facility	Location	# Managed by the Town of Virgin	NRPA median benchmark for communities under 20,000
Outdoor Park and Recreation Facilities and Amenities			
Basketball courts	Town Park (smaller than regulation)	1	1 per 4,479 residents
Diamond fields (softball, baseball)	Town Park	1	1 per 1,958 residents
Dog off-leash area	Town Park, Pocketville Hollow	2	1 dog park per 10,188 residents
Kitchen	Town Park, Heritage Town Square	2	No benchmark
Pickleball courts	Town Park	3	1 per 3,483 residents
Playgrounds	Town Park	1	1 per 2,345 residents
Bike parks/pump tracks	Town Park, BMX ¹¹	3	No benchmark
Performance stage (outdoor)	Town Park	1	1 indoor performance amphitheater per 10,686 residents
Indoor Recreation Facilities and Amenities			
Indoor multiuse court	Opportunity to open new Town Hall court to the public	None currently	1 per 5,250 residents
Restrooms	Town Park, BMX, Pocketville Hollow, Falls Park, Heritage Town Square	5	1 per 2,359 residents

Table 1. Level of Service for Key PROST Facilities in Virgin

¹¹ Only open to members of the BMX Track.



Availability and Diversity of Programming

As noted, the Town of Virgin does not have a dedicated recreation department, and there are currently no indoor recreation facilities available. These factors have also limited the potential for recreation programming. However, the Town does offer two types of programming such as the Fourth of July picnic and concerts at Town Park, which meet level of service standards for small communities: **themed special events (85% of communities under 20,000 people)** and **social recreation events (82% of communities under 20,000 people)**.

While many small communities offer team sports and fitness programming, Virgin may not need to add new Town-based programs immediately. NRPA benchmarks indicate that 81% of communities under 20,000 offer team

sports and 72% offer fitness classes, highlighting recreation programming as a potential future opportunity for Virgin. However, nearby recreation options in Hurricane and La Verkin currently help fill these gaps, and for a community of fewer than 750 residents, new local programming should be guided by demonstrated demand. PROST survey results suggest there is interest in this topic: more than one-third of respondents (27 people) reported traveling to neighboring communities at least once a week for recreation facilities or programming, while nearly half (33 people) said local recreation programming in Virgin was “important” or “very important.”

These findings point to the need for additional study to better understand which programs residents want, what they would be willing to pay, and how new offerings could complement—not duplicate—services available in nearby communities.



Town Events

Annual Operating Expenditures

Annual operating expenditures can provide insight into how and where budgeting and spending occur across parks and recreation, particularly when evaluated per capita, per acre of parkland, per full-time equivalent (FTE) employee, and broken down into expenditure categories. These are summarized in the table below.

According to NRPA, the median annual operating expenditures for jurisdictions with populations under 20,000 are \$1.45 million. By comparison, the Town of Virgin budgeted **\$116,100** for parks and recreation in 2025, or about 8% of the small-jurisdiction median. On a per-capita basis, however, Virgin's spending is slightly higher than the benchmark: the median for small communities is approximately \$139.87 per resident, compared with **\$176.36 per resident** in Virgin's 2025 parks and recreation budget.

When measured by park acreage, Virgin budgets substantially less than the typical small community. The median operating expenditure for jurisdictions under 20,000 is \$9,512 per acre. Based on the 90.5 acres of parkland in Falls Park, Heritage Town Square, Pocketville Hollow, and Town Park, Virgin budgeted **\$1,393.72 per acre** in 2025, or about 15% of the median benchmark. Virgin typically budgets for 0.88 FTE, resulting in spending per FTE that is slightly above the benchmark at approximately 133% of the median.

NRPA also publishes metrics on the typical distribution of operating expenditures for communities under 20,000 people. Typically, budgets are distributed with 52% spent on personnel, 40% on operating expenses, 7% of capital expenses not included in capital improvement plans, and 1% on other expenses. By contrast, the Town of Virgin's distribution of budgeted expenses included **75% on personnel, 14% on operating expenses, 8% on capital expenses, and 3% on other expenses.**

Metric	Median for Jurisdiction Populations Under 20,000 (2025)	Town of Virgin, Parks and Recreation Budget
Annual Operating Expenditures	\$1,451,763.00	\$126,100.00
Annual Operating expenditures per capita	\$139.87	\$176.36
Annual Operating expenditures per acre	\$9,512.00	\$1,393.72
Annual Operating expenditures per FTE	\$107,982.00	\$143,295.45

Table 2. Level of Service for Annual Operating Expenditures for Virgin, based on 2025 Budget



Walkability Analysis

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) recommends that all residents within any town in the US live within a **10-minute walk**, or approximately **½ mile**, of a park or recreation facility. This benchmark is central to NRPA's [Safe Routes to Parks](#) initiative, which aims to ensure equitable and convenient access to parks for all community members.

Residents of Virgin live in a community where nearly every town boundary abuts significant swaths of public land and open space. Everyone in the community has access to open land in a 10-minute walk or less, but access to raw desert terrain is not the same as access to a public park, playground, or trailhead connected to an established trail network.

Although all Virgin residents live within immediate proximity to public lands, less than half of Virgin properties are located within a ½ mile radius of a town park or trailhead. This analysis created ¼ and ½ mile buffers surrounding established parks and open space areas, and limited those buffers based on known barriers such as ravines, rivers, and Highway 9 (see Figure 3).

Town of Virgin Recreation Access Map

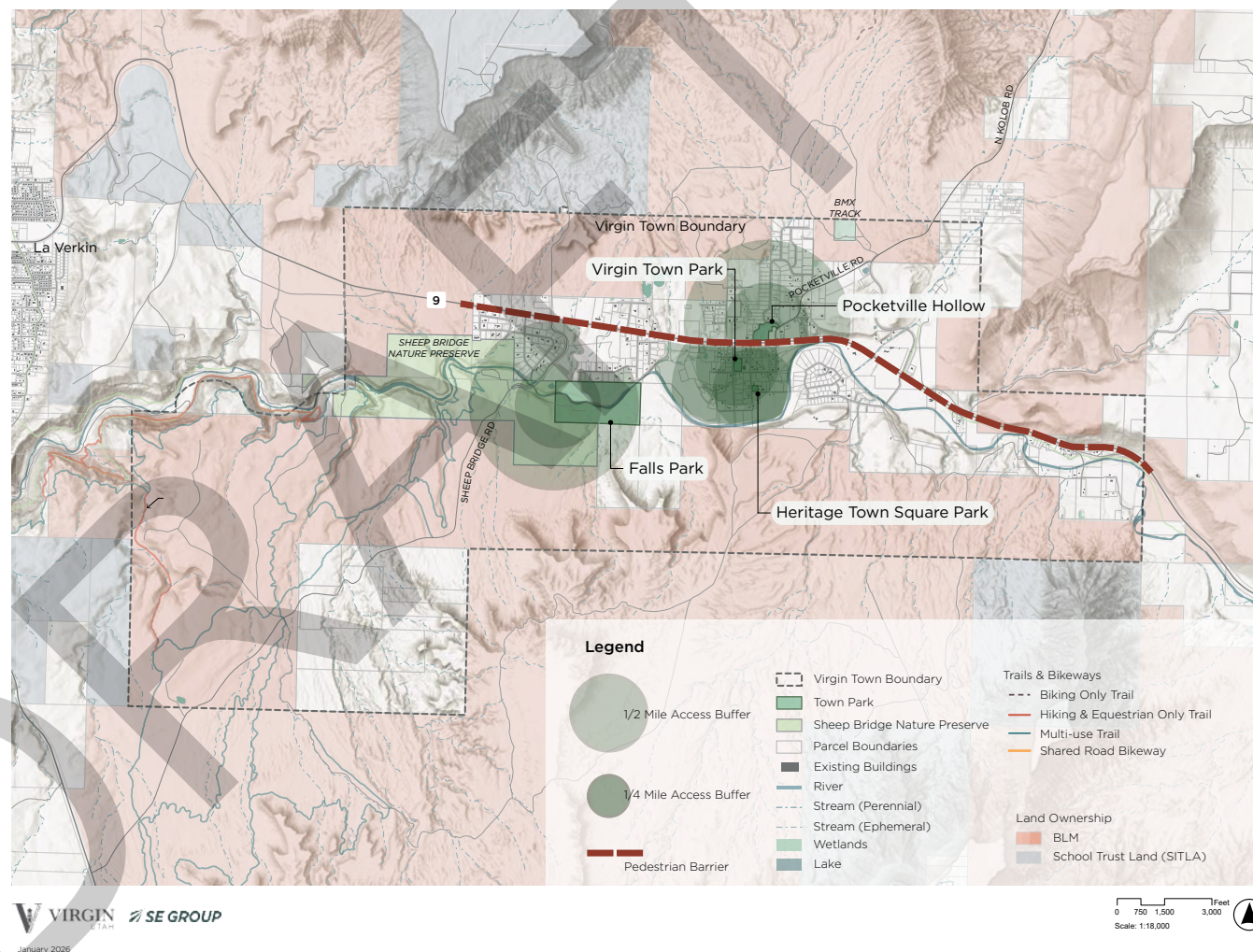


Figure 3. Town of Virgin Recreation Access Map

Access Barriers

There are important additional factors beyond just time and distance that are critical to consider when factoring the relative walkability/bikeability of a community like Virgin. Critical factors include the relative safety and accessibility of routes to parks and open spaces. For example, walkers can be deterred by incomplete and disconnected streets or a lack of physical infrastructure like pedestrian crossings, pedestrian bridges, striped and/or paved shoulders, pedestrian signals, visible crosswalks, warning signals, signs, and maps. A lack of sidewalks or cracked/uneven sidewalks can also limit walkability.

In Virgin, while many residents are within close proximity of parks and recreation facilities, sidewalks only exist along a handful of routes and are not always continuous (e.g., only portions of State Route 9). For most residents, walking on the traveled right-of-way along a street or gravel shoulders is required to access a park or recreation facility in Town.

The two major barriers to park access in Virgin are the Virgin River and Highway 9. Future improvements to create a multi-use path along State Route 9 should be complemented by efforts to reduce this transportation corridor's impediment to north-south movement by residents. Should future designs present opportunities for expanded sidewalk and improved pedestrian crossings within the town, many more neighborhoods would be able to access the parks Virgin already owns and maintains.

It should be noted that our analysis does not capture the social trails and "desire lines" established by residents walking, biking, or riding ATVs across BLM land. Many of these corridors serve to connect residential areas to public parks but are not legally secured. Well-established social trails should be subject to future review, as they represent a desire for public access that current park, trail, and roadway infrastructure may not be providing.

Neighborhood Access

In general, the western side of Virgin is better served by public parks than the eastern side.

Falls Park and Sheep's Bridge trailhead provide excellent access to the Virgin River, but this access could be improved for residents in the 700W / 150 S neighborhoods by formalizing existing social trail connections or establishing new access to these resources.

The town core south of the highway at Mill and Main streets is the most well served with park access, with the entire neighborhood bounded by the highway and river having direct access to the Town Park and Town square.

Directly north of this neighborhood is Pocketville Hollow, which serves the community, but access is limited because many residents must cross SR 9 to reach the park. Future crossing or pedestrian/bike improvements along Highway 9 should support improved access to Pocketville Hollow specifically; this was the most common location requested for improved pedestrian crossing during public engagement.

East of these neighborhoods, there are no public parks established, and though these residents broadly maintain close proximity to public lands and the Virgin River, future projects, such as a pedestrian bridge connecting the Mill & Main neighborhood to rapidly developing neighborhoods on this eastern side of the community, should look at providing improved walking and biking connections to existing parks, or potentially developing new parks on this side of the Town.



Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, & Threats (SWOT) Analysis

To synthesize the information presented throughout the Existing Conditions and Gaps and Opportunities chapters, SWOT analyses (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) were developed for each of the Town's existing parks and recreation facilities. Drawing from technical analysis, community engagement, site visits, and stakeholder input, these assessments highlight the key factors influencing each site today and identify considerations for future improvements. The findings from these SWOT analyses directly informed the recommendations presented in the Action Plan. Each of the parks is identified in the map in Figure 1.



Entrance to Falls Park

Falls Park

Strengths

Natural Assets: Falls Park has significant natural beauty, including the falls, cliffs, and direct river access, which are major draws for recreation.

Established Use: The park is a well-known and popular spot for both locals and visitors, ensuring consistent use.

Basic Maintenance: The town provides essential services such as trash removal, while BLM maintains the bathrooms.

Existing Infrastructure: The site has picnic tables, parking, restrooms, and a path system.

Weaknesses

Safety Hazards: As an inherently natural area, there are opportunities for safety hazards that could present significant risks to recreationalists, such as log jams in the river. The town has limited equipment and capacity to address such hazards independently.

Difficult Access: The narrowness and poor quality of the access road deter some visitors and create potential safety issues for vehicles. The blind turn into the park could be dangerous. The sign for the park is on a high hillside and can only be viewed from one direction.

Limited Amenities: The park lacks certain amenities, such as shade structures, which could improve user comfort, especially in summer.

Opportunities

Formalized Partnerships: There is an opportunity to clarify and strengthen the partnership with the BLM and adjacent TNC property, potentially leading to better co-management, shared resources, and funding for improvements.

Data-Driven Planning: Utilizing tools like traffic counters or data from platforms like AllTrails and Strava could provide valuable insights into visitor numbers and use patterns to inform future management decisions.

Threats

Interjurisdictional Confusion: There is a potential need for clarity around responsibility for different types of critical issues and maintenance between the Town and BLM.

Overuse and Environmental Impact: The park's popularity, especially in peak season, can lead to overcrowding, user conflicts, litter, and degradation of the natural environment without a clear management strategy. It can also lead to overflow of activities into Sheep Bridge Nature Preserve, which is meant to be primarily used for natural resource conservation.

Natural Events: Future weather events, such as major rainstorms, could worsen existing hazards or create new ones, potentially damaging infrastructure like the county bridge.



Town Park

Strengths

Centralized, flexible amenities: The park currently offers a variety of activities for many types of residents, including basketball courts, pickleball, playground, an open field, pump track, picnic/BBQ, and a stage with power. The open field offers flexibility for multi-generational, pickup-style recreation and the potential for organized programming.

High-use pickleball courts: The conversion of tennis courts to pickleball has been popular and established pickup tournaments occur with minimal noise complaints.

Event space and coordination: Kitchen, picnic tables, and BBQ available for use and rental offer opportunities for birthday parties and other events. The town has an existing event coordinator. The stage is also used for town-wide events and concerts.

Low vandalism and some pre-existing monitoring: Restrooms can remain open with low vandalism rates. Cameras are present for monitoring.

Adjacent Town Hall: The town-owned 14,000 sq ft facility has been converted into a Town Hall. This space will have significant potential for residents, including flexible space, a gymnasium, a gear library, and even postal services.

Weaknesses

Pickleball maintenance needs: The pickleball court surfaces are cracking and in need of resurfacing.

Pump track: The pump track surface and edge is steep. It's unclear how frequently this track is used.

Programming and staffing: There is only one staff member responsible for parks, which can limit programming opportunities and maintenance. Rental rate information is difficult to find on the town website and there is no signage to indicate that rentals are possible. There is also no established lending system for gear, so residents must bring their own gear for any activities they want to participate in.

Limited Amenities: The park lacks certain amenities, such as shade structures, which could improve user comfort, especially in summer.

Opportunities

Additional activities: There is regional interest in pickleball, disc golf, and casual leagues. Space could be converted to allow for other activities like cornhole, horseshoes, etc.

Community concerts: Community concerts could be more broadly advertised to capture visitors to Zion National Park and the broader regional area, especially during the summer season.

Threats

Population limitations on programming: The small, aging population and high housing costs limit the potential for youth sports participation. Daily reliance on services outside Virgin reduces demand for organized local leagues.

Funding for improvements: Funding constraints and competition for capital dollars in a small tax base could limit development opportunities.

Weather/heat: High summer temperatures could negatively affect facility use, durability of equipment (e.g., cornhole boards) and maintenance cycles.



Pavilion in the Town Park

South Pocket Park Opportunity

Strengths

Ownership: The City of Virgin currently owns the land, providing site control.

River Frontage: The property includes a section of “beach” area directly on the Virgin River, offering immediate water access.

Potential Partnerships: White Bison has previously indicated a willingness to provide access for a river trail if a park is designed.

Scenic Quality: The site offers a peaceful setting with mature trees and natural shade.

Weaknesses

Drainage and Hydrology: An existing irrigation pipe occasionally floods the property. Any recreational improvements would need to accommodate fluctuating water levels and ensure continued drainage function.

Site Configuration: The linear, narrow shape of the lot makes incorporating standard amenities, specifically onsite parking, difficult.

Maintenance Load: The existing culvert clogs easily and requires frequent clearing. Dense overgrowth can look unkempt and could create ongoing maintenance demands.

Opportunities

Public Access: There is significant community demand for legal public access to the Virgin River, and this site could serve as a primary access point.

Ecological Restoration: There is the potential to coordinate with Utah DNR or the Nature Conservancy to remove invasive species (Russian Olive, Tamarisk) and restore native riverbank vegetation.

Trail Connectivity: Development of this site could support broader river corridor connectivity, including potential integration with White Bison's existing trail system.

Threats

Flooding Events: The area is subject to monsoons and summer rains, which can cause severe flash flooding and damage infrastructure.

Invasive Species: Continued encroachment of invasive vegetation could choke out native growth and limit access if not aggressively managed.



South Pocket Park Parcel



South Pocket Park Culvert

East Pocket Park Opportunity

Strengths

Location: This park offers both river access and connectivity for Virgin residents, which are priorities expressed by the community.

Ownership: The City of Virgin currently owns the land, providing site control.

Scenic Quality: The site offers a peaceful setting with mature trees and natural shade. Rushing water creates a tranquil soundscape.

Weaknesses

Limited Parking and Access Infrastructure:

The site currently lacks designated parking and formalized access, which may constrain visitation and limit the types of uses that can be supported without additional investment.

Ongoing Maintenance and Risk Management

Needs: Portions of the site remain overgrown and may require continued vegetation management, hazard tree assessment, and routine maintenance, potentially placing additional demands on the Town's limited staff capacity.

Opportunities

Interjurisdictional and HOA Coordination:

Collaboration with the Rio De Sion HOA across the river presents an opportunity to pursue a partnership for reconstructing a pedestrian bridge. Such a connection could improve access between the neighborhood and Virgin's downtown, enhance walkability, and expand the park's role as a community connector.

Threats

Adjacent Property Owner Concerns: Successful development of the site, particularly any future river crossing, would require ongoing coordination with the Rio De Sion HOA and careful relationship management to ensure mutual benefit. Additionally, expressed concerns from the adjacent property owner to the north could pose challenges to park development, access, or long-term operations if not proactively addressed.

Flooding risk: The risk of flooding to this site is unknown and could increase with climate change or extreme weather.



East Pocket Park Parcel Access



East Pocket Park River Put-In

BMX Track

Strengths

Scenic location: The track draws visitors from outside of Virgin, with the scenic backdrop enhancing user experiences and drawing visitors to events.

Existing partnership: There is an existing partnership between the town of Virgin and the track concessionaire. The Town has assisted the track concessionaire with obtaining grants to fund upgrades at the track.

Track condition and opportunities: The track itself is in good condition and well-maintained by an experienced concessionaire. The pump track provides more accessible riding opportunities.

Weaknesses

Maintenance burden and cost: Electrical system and event infrastructure have significant safety and reliability issues. Repairs will be costly and potentially exceed existing grant funds.

Site access: The access road is rutted and poorly maintained, with minimal on-site wayfinding. In addition, the site is not open to the general public and is not broadly seen as an asset serving the whole community.

Light pollution: The lights at the BMX Track may not be night sky friendly.

Opportunities

Grant funding: Additional grant funding could bring permanent power and upgrade night sky-compliant lighting.

Increased community access: Potential to define community access windows (e.g., practice hours or supervised sessions) that build future event participation, particularly at the pump track. Partnerships with BLM, regional clubs, and schools could expand programming while maintaining permit compliance.

Advertising/Outreach: Improved digital outreach (website, social media, photo assets) could attract visitors and sponsors. Tourism linkage with Zion region and regional trail networks could boost attendance and economic impact.

Threats

Lighting concerns from community: Night sky lighting compliance and community sensitivities could delay or complicate event operations if not addressed properly.

Powerline extension: Utility extension challenges (distance from Pocketville Road) may increase costs or timeline risk.



BMX Track in Virgin (above and below)



Pocketville Hollow

Strengths

High Use & Established Function: The site is already heavily used and valued by the community as an informal dog park.

Responsible Users: Dog owners who use the park are reportedly very diligent about cleaning up after their pets, reducing maintenance burdens.

Basic Infrastructure: The site has mature trees providing shade, a large open grassy area, and some parking.

Weaknesses

Limited Accessibility: The current gravel path and terrain are not ADA-accessible.

Maintenance needs: The posts circling the park no longer serve a purpose and could be removed. There is also a social trail down from the parking lot that is causing erosion.

Limited Amenities: Aside from a bathroom, the site lacks formal amenities such as permanent seating (besides one table) or official dog park features like water stations or fenced areas.

Opportunities

Adjacent Commercial Development: The opening of the new cafe next door presents a significant opportunity to create a vibrant community hub, attracting both locals and visitors to the area.

Threats

Potential User Conflict: As the area becomes more popular with the new cafe, the informal, off-leash use by dog owners could come into conflict with other visitors who are not comfortable with dogs. Virgin does not currently have a leash law.

Visitors driving onto grass: Visitors who are unfamiliar with Virgin have reportedly driven their vehicles directly onto the grass of Pocketville Hollow.



Pocketville Hollow

Heritage Town Square

Strengths

Central location: Heritage Town Square is centrally located within the town of Virgin.

Historic feel: Many historic buildings and resources are already located in the square, which offers a lot of potential for interpretation.

Ample designated parking: There are plenty of available designated parking spots alongside Heritage Town Square.

Rental income: This space offers the opportunity for the town to generate income through rentals for weddings and other events. The old Town Hall building provides the opportunity for additional income generation.

Weaknesses

Parking orientation: The angle of the parking spaces could be evaluated to improve flow of traffic near the park.

Site orientation and interpretation: Currently, there is very little signage or information about the different historic buildings and items on site, limiting the potential for visitors or residents to learn about the history of Virgin.

Opportunities

Historic society collaboration: There is the potential to collaborate with a nearby historic society to develop signage or planning for the site.

Art or programming space: The Old Church or Old Town Hall could be used as art or programming spaces in collaboration with local or regional organizations.

Threats

Crowding/maintenance: If this area becomes more popular for visitors seeking to learn about the town, potential conflicts could arise with events like weddings.



Historic Town Hall Jail



Heritage Town Square



Chapter 4: Action Plan

Introduction

This action plan was developed to address the highest priority gaps, weaknesses, and threats identified in the above analyses. This action plan outlines the recommended steps that the Town of Virgin can take to make meaningful progress in delivering quality parks, recreation, open space, and trails services and experiences to its residents and visitors. The action plan includes conceptual designs and opinions of cost for five parks/facilities managed by the Town of Virgin, as well as recommended actions for the remaining parks, recreation programming, open space, and trail. The intent of this action plan is for Town staff and council members to refer to it as a roadmap for park improvements, grant opportunities, and funding decisions, showing both a vision of future concepts, but also a documentation of the community's priorities and preferences.

Parks Concepts

Five parks and recreation facilities were chosen for graphic concept development based on a combination of Town priorities and community feedback and priorities. A graphic concept was created for each of the featured parks to show the suggested changes and upgrades, along with a list of additional actions meant to enhance how each park is managed, accessed, signed, and maintained, and an overview of rough order-of-magnitude costs associated with each concept development. The park concepts include:

- Falls Park
- Town Park
- South Pocket Park (opportunity)
- East Pocket Park (opportunity)
- BMX Track



Engagement Results

In May 2026, the PROST project team conducted community engagement to solicit feedback on initial park concepts and recommendations about connectivity and wayfinding. Interactive engagement poster boards were available at a May 2 community event, and at least a dozen residents left ideas and feedback. An online survey that asked the same questions as the in-person open house engagement boards received 37 complete and 9 partial responses and was open throughout the month of May. Postcards were sent out to Virgin residents encouraging them to take the survey online or on paper at the Town Hall. The results of community engagement informed the final version of the following park concepts and are described in detail in **Appendix A**.

Key Takeaways

- **Residents want practical, resident-serving improvements before big new features.** Across multiple concepts, respondents emphasized fixing what already exists: bathrooms, roads, sidewalks, playground equipment, mowing, trash, parking, and maintenance. In the broader comments, several specifically asked the Town to “take care of the parks that we have,” with Town Park and Pocketville Hollow called out as priorities.
- **Town Park and Falls Park emerged as the clearest community priorities.** Town Park received the most priority votes, 28, followed closely by Falls Park, with 17 priority votes. By contrast, the BMX Track had six votes, and the pocket parks both received only four votes each. The proposed Town Park concept received the highest average score of 64.6 (out of 100), indicating that the concept most accurately met the communities needs, followed by Falls Park (62.7) and South Pocket Park (62.7). The East Pocket Park scored 57.9, while BMX park scored the lowest, with an average of 46.9.
- **Safe walking, biking, crossings, and park-to-park connectivity are major needs.** Connectivity came up repeatedly in survey comments and the mapping board. Respondents asked for sidewalks, bike paths, off-road trails, safe SR-9 crossings, links between parks and neighborhoods, and better access to BLM lands. Highway 9, Pocketville Hollow, Sheep Bridge Road, and Pocketville Road were recurring concern areas.
- **People value river access, shade, natural character, and low-impact green space.** Positive feedback across Falls Park, South Pocket Park, and East Pocket Park centered on river access, overlooks, shaded sitting areas, walking paths, natural beauty, and small-scale gathering spaces. Respondents often supported amenities when they felt simple, useful, and compatible with the landscape.
- **There is strong caution around overdevelopment, cost, tourism, and loss of small-town character.** Many respondents worried that some concepts felt too elaborate, expensive, tourist-oriented, or “urban” for Virgin. Concerns included splash pads during drought, public art, large event features, more traffic, neighborhood impacts, and amenities that may serve visitors more than residents.
- **Neighborhood impacts and public/private access conflicts need careful attention.** The pocket park concepts, BMX Track, and Falls Park all raised questions about access, parking, traffic, maintenance, noise, lighting, camping, and impacts on nearby residents. East Pocket Park in particular drew concerns about HOA/private connections, privacy, narrow roads, and whether the concept should be relocated or scaled back.



What are Rough Order of Magnitude Opinions of Cost?

Rough order-of-magnitude (ROM) opinions of cost are included for each of the park concepts as a tool in the planning phase to apply high-level costs to initial concepts to support assessment of financial feasibility and phasing analyses. These ROM costs are non-binding and include anticipated design and construction costs in 2026 dollars that are intended to provide stakeholders an initial sense of potential costs to inform decision-making, budgeting, and scope of work for grant applications. When the Town decides to begin implementation of a more defined scope of work, additional and more detailed cost estimates will be necessary to align with the identified scope of work, and to reflect current labor and materials costs. A full breakdown of ROM opinions of cost is included in **Appendix D**, as is a discussion of maintenance needs and considerations.

Elements generally include the following:

- **Design & Engineering:** Relevant architectural design, landscape design, and civil engineering, typically estimated at 10% of overall construction cost.
- **Demolition/Deconstruction:** Removing relevant structures, signage, pavement, etc.
- **Site Preparation and Earthwork:** Relevant excavation, grading, erosion prevention, and sediment control.
- **Paving and Hardscape:** Includes the horizontal services that people drive, bike, or walk on, including roads, trails, and bridges.
- **Site Improvements:** Includes vertical improvements, such as picnic tables, benches, pavilions, fencing, and signage.
- **Landscaping:** The cost of purchasing and installing plants, trees, and other living landscaping features.
- **Mobilization:** The cost of hiring and moving heavy equipment and machinery onto the property to complete the work, typically estimated at 8% of overall construction cost.
- **Permitting and Contractor Markup:** The costs to secure relevant permits, as well as contractor fees, which are typically estimated at 10% of overall construction cost.



Falls Park Concept

Falls Park is one of the most beloved parks in Virgin, with the Virgin River being the focal point. This park was listed by residents as one of parks in most need of improvement, and of the five park concepts in this plan, Falls Park was the second most important to surveyed residents, following Town Park. Potential improvements to Falls Park aim to maintain the natural and secluded feeling of the park while increasing user access and comfort. This includes upgrading the road access to the park, expanding hiking opportunities, and providing small infrastructure improvements such as shade structures, interpretive signage, and marked viewpoints. Infrastructure enhancements are intended to keep as natural a feel as possible, such as using boulders for vehicle barriers rather than man-made barriers, and wooden split rail fencing where appropriate.

This concept also includes recommendations for a formalized walking/hiking path along the river, creating a loop by developing a pedestrian bridge over the river and connecting to existing the existing hiking trail on the opposite shore. This walking trail will help to provide expanded river viewing opportunities, as well as an approachable walking and hiking area for residents and visitors.

The existing access road is currently narrow and rugged; cost estimates are included for either simply regrading the existing road, or widening it to allow two travel lanes. As Sheep Bridge Road is paved and upgraded, increased traffic is expected and the existing pedestrian crossing will likely need safety enhancements, such as a rapid flashing beacon crossing.



Pedestrian bridge over river



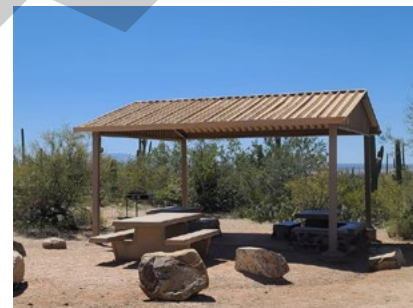
Interpretive nature & history signage



High visibility monument entrance sign



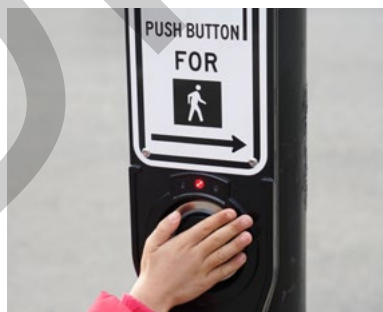
Split-rail fence



Shade structure for picnicking



Hiking trail only signage



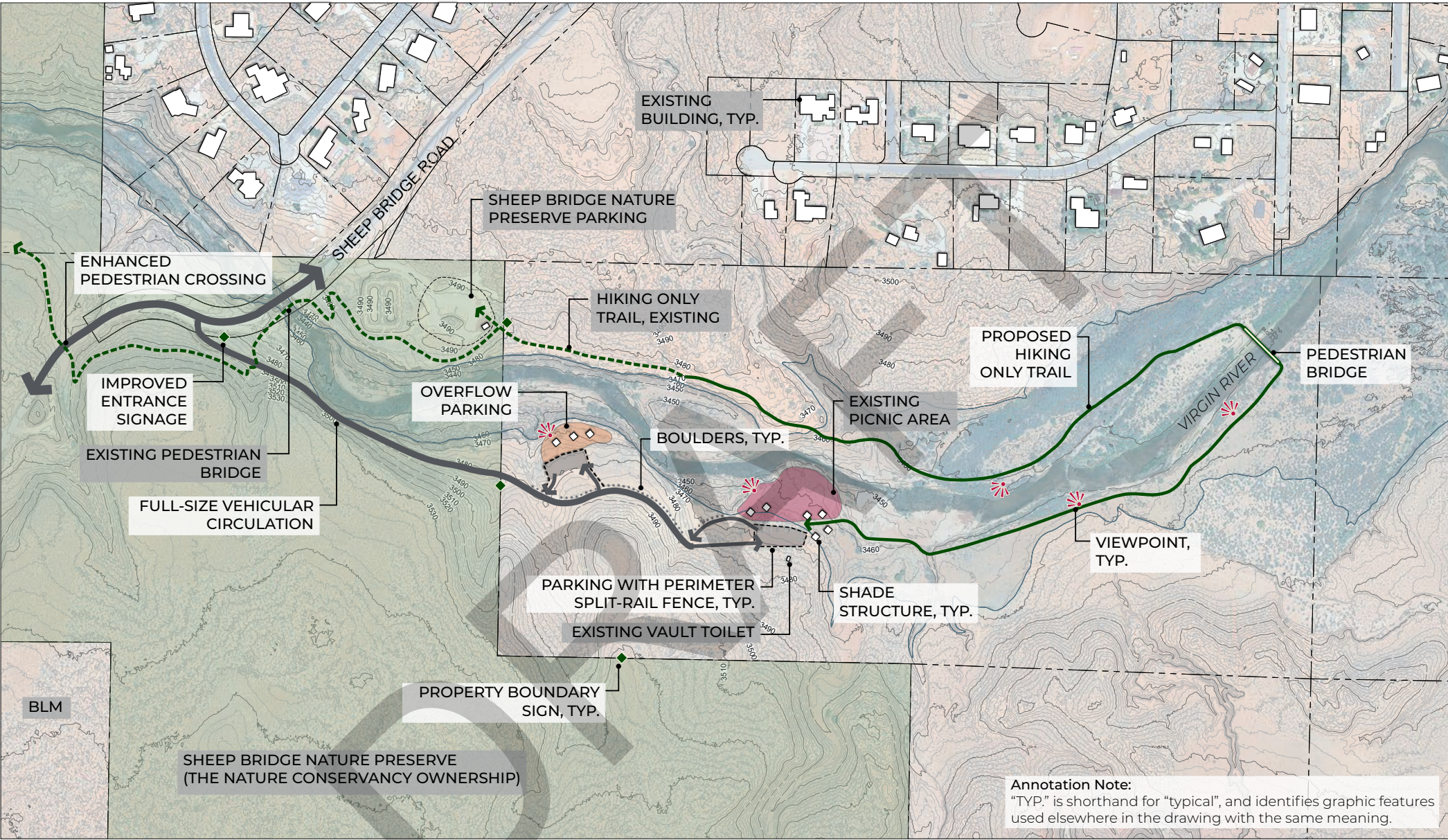
Enhanced pedestrian crossing



Viewpoint with bench

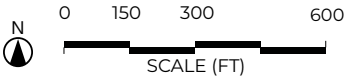


Boulders as vehicle use barrier



Annotation Note:
"TYP." is shorthand for "typical", and identifies graphic features used elsewhere in the drawing with the same meaning.

FALLS PARK CONCEPT PLAN



Additional Actions

- A. **Clarify division of responsibilities between BLM and Town.** Consider updating Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Town of Virgin and BLM to outline additional delineation of responsibilities regarding operations and maintenance (e.g., pit toilet maintenance, river, road, etc.)
- B. **Data collection:** Investigate the cost and feasibility of installing a traffic counter on the Falls Park access road to better understand vehicle volumes and seasonality.
- C. **Road improvements:** Widen and improve the access road to increase safety, circulation, and wayfinding. Develop a schedule for road maintenance.
- D. **Delineate parking** area from the viewing area using split rail fence or other structure; use rocks or other materials to block areas where cars are not supposed to be.
- E. **Improve existing or providing additional amenities at the main recreation area:** Amenities included in the design concept include a shade structure, picnic tables, benches at viewpoints, and interpretive signage.
- F. **Address signage into park from Sheep Bridge Road and along the road.** Ensure visibility from both directions. This signage could also include safety related information (narrow one-way road ahead, etc.).
- G. **Ongoing collaboration with The Nature Conservancy** to understand use patterns, improve signage and use types along trails.
 - Explore options for improving safety of dangerous road crossing of Sheep Bridge Road near the entrance.
 - Coordinate with BLM and TNC to align trail management, signage, enforcement near TNC/BLM interfaces and Falls Park.
- H. Pursue **corrections to trail routes and parking** identification on digital apps (AllTrails/Trailforks) and Google Maps.
- I. **Monitor Developments:** Observe launch of the Zion White Bison shuttle system and the paving of Sheep Bridge Road and potential impacts to access and visitors to Falls Park.

Opinions of Cost

Rough order-of-magnitude (ROM) opinions of cost for Falls Park concept are included below. This high-level ROM opinion of cost is broken down into seven "elements," and provide an opinion of cost with and without road widening, as that would be a significant cost. See appendices for a discussion of maintenance needs and considerations ([Appendix C](#)) and a full breakdown of ROM opinions of cost within each element for this park ([Appendix D](#)).

Element	Cost Without Road Widening	Cost With Road Widening
Design & Engineering	\$316,929.00	\$367,639.00
Demolition/Deconstruction	\$1,250.00	\$1,250.00
Site Preparation and Earthwork	\$21,000.00	\$21,000.00
Paving and Hardscape	\$1,753,040.00	\$2,260,140.00
Site Improvements	\$1,134,000.00	\$1,134,000.00
Mobilization	\$260,000.00	\$260,000.00
Permitting and Contractor Markup	\$326,929.00	\$377,639.00
TOTAL	\$3,813,148.00	\$4,421,668.00

Table 3. Falls Park Opinions of Cost



Town Park

Town Park, adjacent to the new Town Hall, is a central space for recreation and gathering in Virgin. Potential improvements to this park can range from minimal interventions to a complete reimagining of the space and are scalable in nature. Both options are conceptualized below in response to public comments on this park, where feedback was split between a desire to maintain the park's existing baseball field and current open space feel, and excitement about new and visionary use of this space, such as a splash pad and new stage and event space. As a result, two different concepts were created for Town Park to illustrate a "minimal intervention" option where the baseball field is preserved, and a "Park Reimagination" option where the grassy field is converted into a multi-use space and plaza. Both concepts are presented below. As the town begins to prioritize improvements to the park, more community engagement is recommended to understand the desired scale of upgrades. Of the five park concepts, Town Park improvements were most important to the surveyed residents.

Town Park Minimal Intervention

In this alternative concept for Town Park, the existing baseball field remains, providing opportunities for baseball, softball, and kickball. When not used for those purposes, the area can continue to be used as flexible open space for picnicking, play, lawn games, and events. If desired based on community input, long-term improvements to the baseball field could include fencing, stadium seating, and lighting. Other improvements in this concept include bike racks, a bike repair station, and using the existing stage for events and as an outdoor education pavilion. When considering whether to implement this concept, it will be important to assess community desire for additional programming using the baseball field, including community softball or kickball leagues. It is possible for the Town to phase the upgrades to this park, first upgrading to this level, and later expanding to the "Park Reimagination" scale shown below.



Baseball field



Nature play



Bike repair and bike racks



Stage and event lawn



Flexible open space



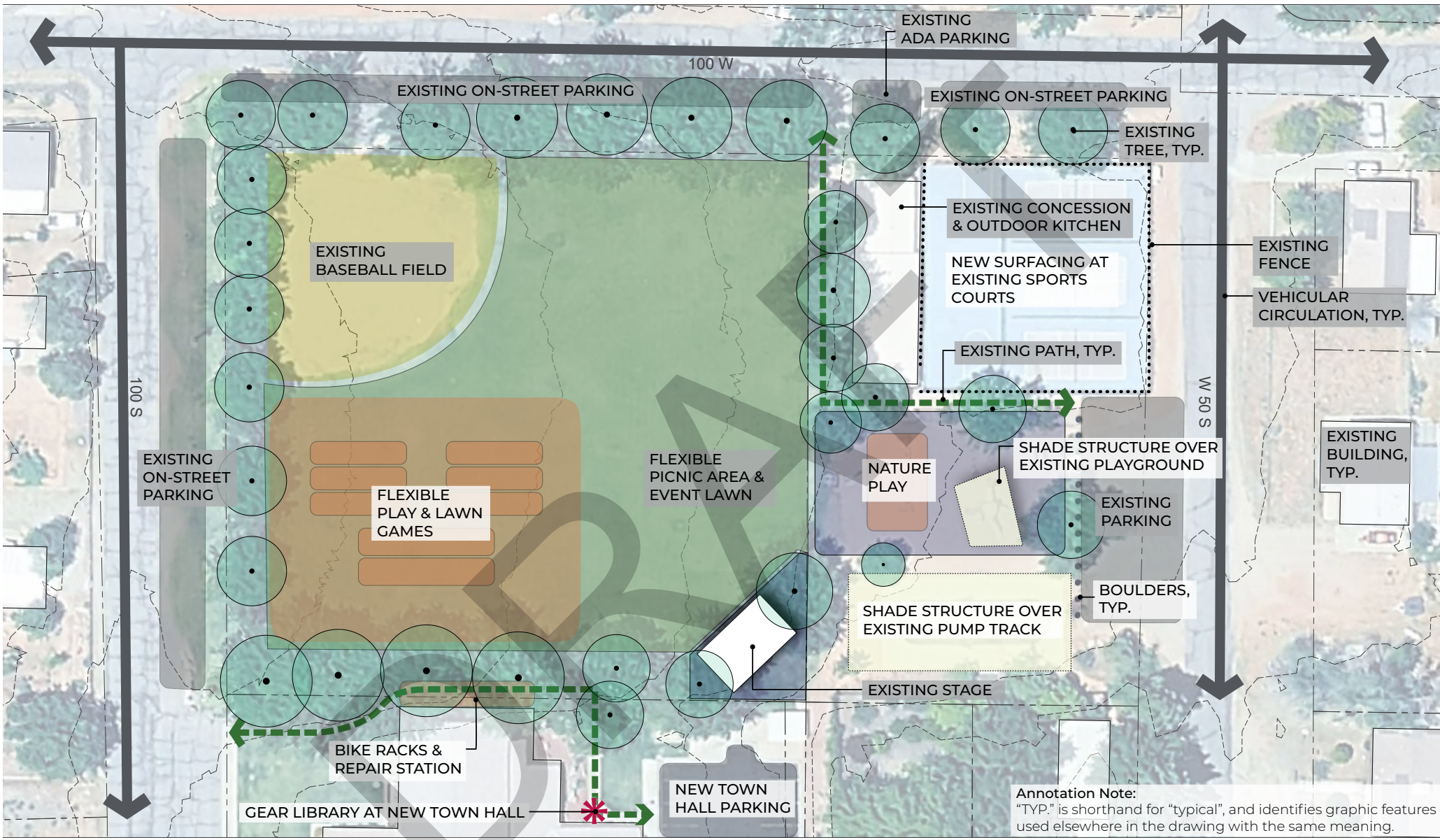
Cornhole



Shade structures over playground



Bocce courts



TOWN PARK CONCEPT: MINIMAL INTERVENTION

Town Park Reimagination

In this concept for Town Park, the existing baseball field is redesigned into four main zones including a new event lawn with stage, Town Plaza, lawn games area, and a picnicking and play lawn. Other improvements include additional shade trees, repurposing the existing stage as an outdoor education pavilion, bike repair station with bike racks, splash pad, and public art.



Nature play



Shade structures over playground



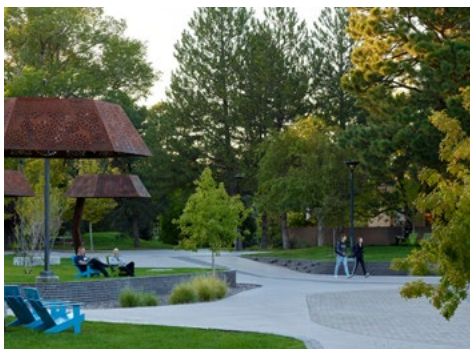
Bike repair and bike racks



Stage and event lawn



Bocce courts



Plaza connected to flex lawn space



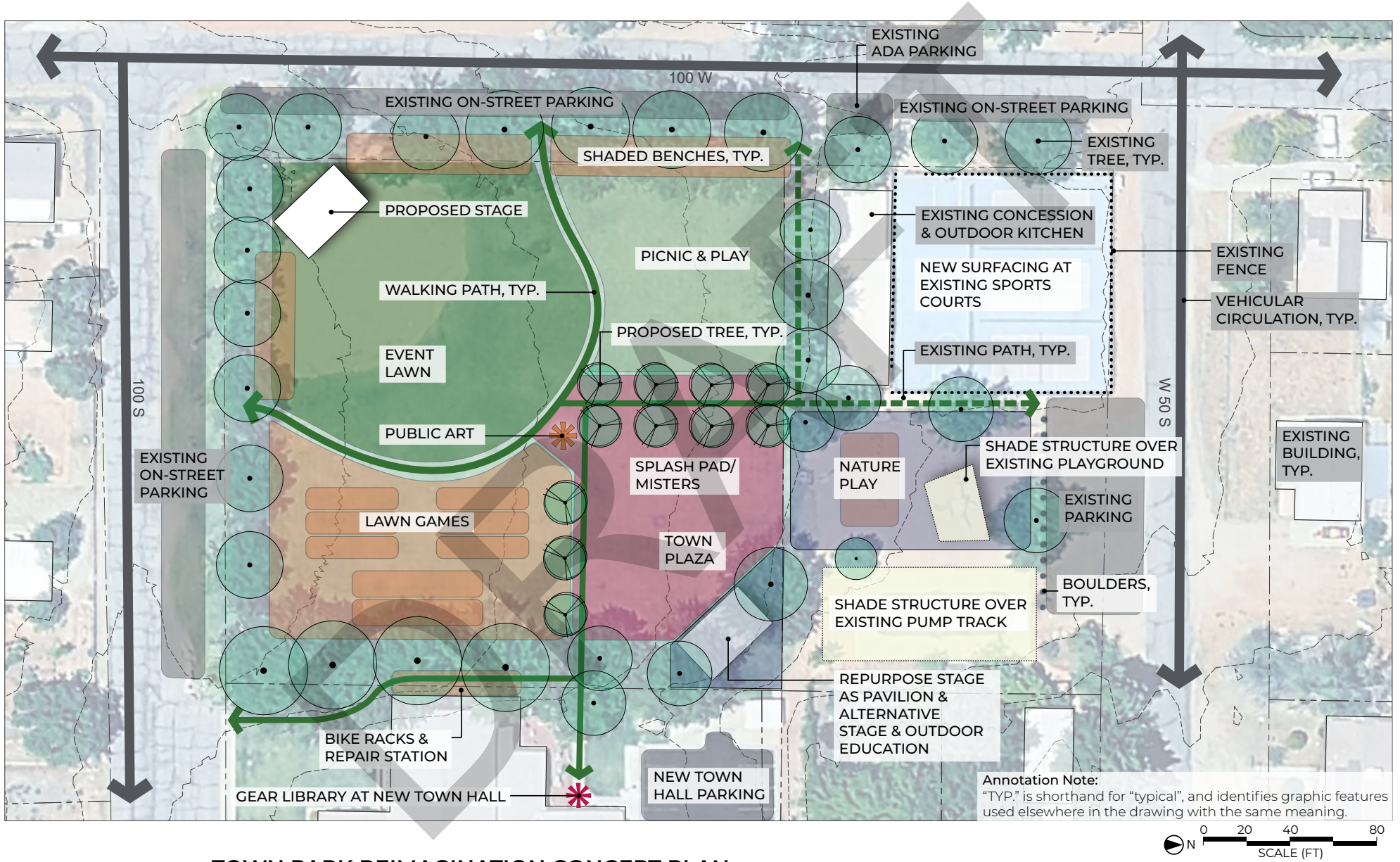
Splash pad



Cornhole



Iconic public art



TOWN PARK REIMAGINATION CONCEPT PLAN

Additional Actions

A. Facility maintenance:

- Develop cost estimates and priority plan for resurfacing pickleball and basketball courts.
- Evaluate the pump track for use and safety and review surfacing/edges.

B. Facility improvements:

Look for opportunities for new activities and programming, including cornhole, bocce, horseshoes, etc. especially utilizing the existing baseball field area. Monitor timeline and needs for updates to playground equipment or surface.

C. Additional concerts or other uses of stage:

Implement a summer concert series schedule or other uses of the stage.

D. New Town Hall potential:

- Formalize public gymnasium access plan (fees, hours, staffing) for the new Town Hall.
- Implement a small gear library or checkout system, ensuring that after-hour constraints are addressed.

E. Add recreation programming

with Town Park/Hall as the central location, using park resources or the gymnasium, including open gym, general fitness classes, yoga, etc.

F. Add shade structure(s)

above playground structure and pump track.

Opinions of Cost

Rough order-of-magnitude (ROM) opinions of cost for each Town Park concept are included below. See appendices for a discussion of maintenance needs and considerations ([Appendix C](#)) and a full breakdown of ROM opinions of cost within each element for this park ([Appendix D](#)).

Element	Minimal Intervention Costs	Park Reimagination Costs
Design & Engineering	\$139,425.00	\$244,800.00
Demolition/Deconstruction	\$27,000.00	\$30,000.00
Site Preparation and Earthwork	\$0.00	\$2,250.00
Paving and Hardscape	\$382,500.00	\$656,700.00
Site Improvements	\$872,750.00	\$1,539,250.00
Landscape	\$0.00	\$19,800.00
Mobilization	\$112,000.00	\$200,000.00
Permitting and Contractor Markup	\$149,425.00	\$254,800.00
Total	\$1,683,100.00	\$2,947,600.00

Table 4. Town Park Opinions of Cost

South Pocket Park

This currently unused town-owned parcel is envisioned as a small, neighborhood-serving pocket park with walking paths, small open lawn space, small outdoor gathering opportunities, shade structures, public art, and a river viewpoint. Future coordination with the Zion White Bison Resort to the west should include the possibility of connecting the pocket park trails to the existing White Bison Riverside Walking Trail, and the potential for public parking and vehicle circulation on the adjacent property. Shade trees are recommended along the eastern property edge to provide a natural barrier between the park and the adjacent private property, minimizing potential noise, disturbance, or trespassing. In addition, due to the existing culvert and proximity to the river, any amenities or materials in this park should be flood-adapted and suitable for periodic flooding.

Public input on this concept emphasized keeping the space natural and ensuring that park development does not negatively impact adjacent landowners and neighborhoods. Residents expressed support for the ability to view and access the river as part of this concept. See **Appendix B** for case studies and best practices regarding pocket park development.



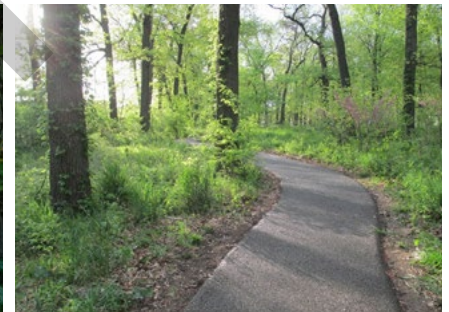
River viewing platform



Shade structure or small pavilion



Benches under shade trees



Walking path



Picnic tables & grill



Flex lawn



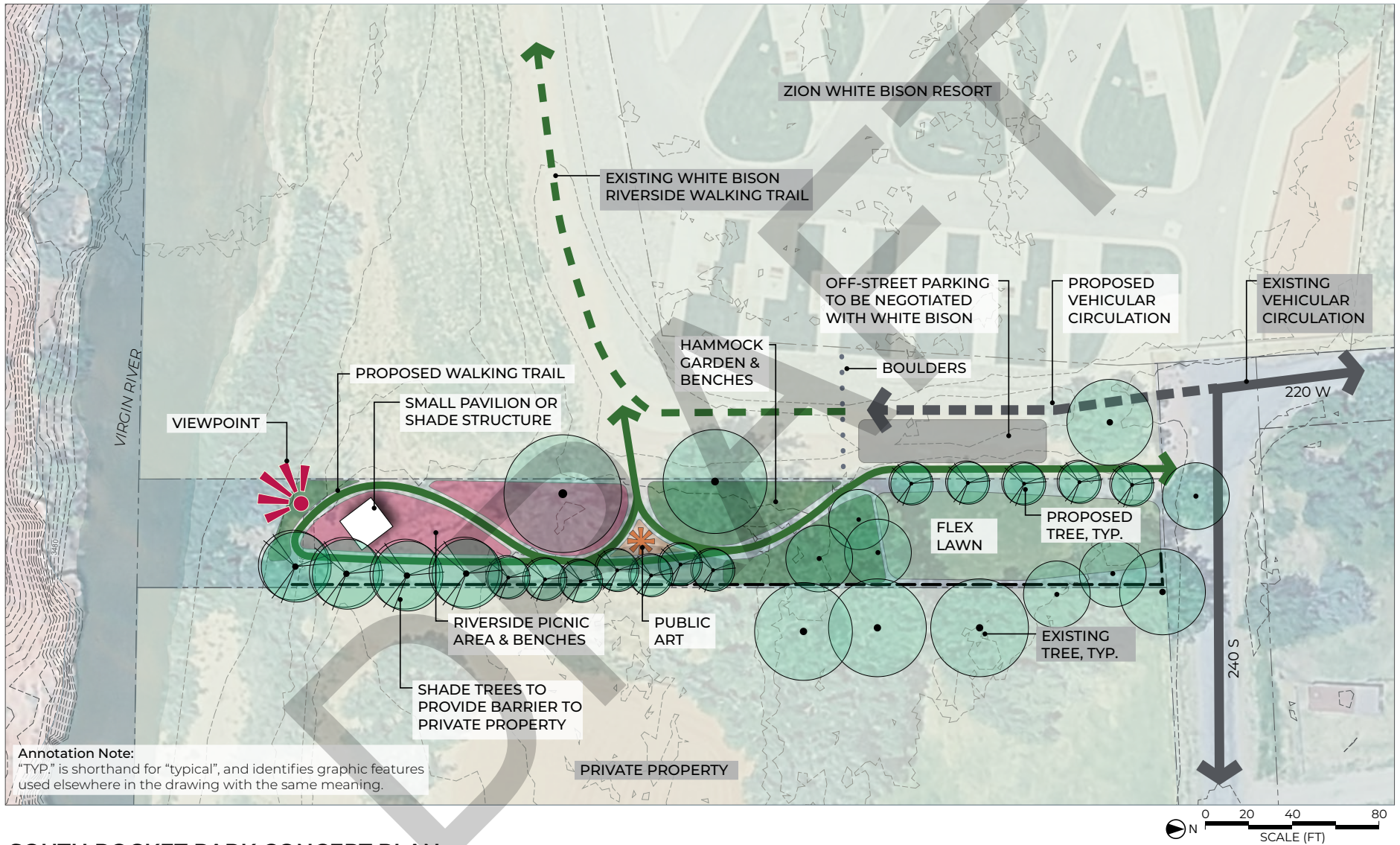
Public art



Shaded hammock garden



Interpretive nature & history signage



SOUTH POCKET PARK CONCEPT PLAN

Additional Actions

- A. **Confirm Property Boundaries and Easements:** Verify parcel boundaries and any existing easements to ensure proposed improvements are appropriately sited and legally permissible.
- B. **Regulatory Compliance:** Engage Utah DNR and other relevant agencies early to clarify permitting requirements related to vegetation removal, riparian restoration, floodplain impacts, and in-water work.
- C. **Complete a Hydrologic and Engineering Assessment:** Evaluate options for managing irrigation flows, channelizing drainage, and designing flood-resilient improvements that can withstand seasonal inundation.
- D. **Assess Environmental and Site Constraints:** Complete a high-level site evaluation to identify floodplain considerations, riverbank stability, vegetation management needs, and hazard trees to inform safe and sustainable park development.
- E. **Explore Low-Impact, Flood-Adapted Design:** Install amenities and materials suited to periodic flooding, such as movable furnishings, minimal hardscape, and informal access points rather than permanent structures. Consider water or flood-resistant amenities that could be installed in the space.
- F. **Parking Feasibility:** Assess potential solutions for small-scale parking or alternative access points due to the lot's awkward shape which makes building a parking area difficult.
- G. **Explore collaboration for parking and riverfront trail:** Explore partnerships with White Bison Resort to support trail connections, access, and parking.
- H. **Define Maintenance and Operations Expectations:** Estimate long-term maintenance needs and staffing implications associated with various development scenarios to ensure the site can be sustainably managed over time.
- I. **Identify Funding and Partnership Opportunities:** Explore grant funding, cost-sharing partnerships, or volunteer-based stewardship models that could support site improvements, brush removal, or ongoing maintenance.

- J. **Ensure clarity on overall goals for the park and conduct additional outreach to residents:** What type of space should it be providing? What gap is it filling in the Virgin park system? What type of programming or amenities would be appropriate based on these goals?
- K. **Provide park amenities** such as a walking path, picnic area near the river, a river overlook point with seating, shade in the form of new trees and a small pavilion, flexible use lawn, hammocks, and public art.

Opinions of Cost

Rough order-of-magnitude (ROM) opinions of cost for the South Pocket Park concept are included below. See appendices for a discussion of maintenance needs and considerations ([Appendix C](#)) and a full breakdown of ROM opinions of cost within each element for this park ([Appendix D](#)).

Element	Cost
Design & Engineering	\$49,715.00
Demolition/Deconstruction	\$4,800.00
Site Preparation and Earthwork	\$10,350.00
Paving and Hardscape	\$163,020.00
Site Improvements	\$235,280.00
Landscape	\$31,700.00
Irrigation	\$12,000.00
Mobilization	\$40,000.00
Permitting and Contractor Markup	\$59,715.00
Total	\$606,580.00

Table 5. South Pocket Park Opinions of Cost

East Pocket Park

This town-owned parcel on the eastern side of the town is also envisioned as a small, neighborhood-serving park with walking paths, native plants, seating, small gathering spaces, public art, and several river viewpoints. There is potential for this park to connect to the HOA on the opposite side of the river via a pedestrian bridge to replace the historic footbridge, but any connections would be developed collaboratively with the HOA. Public input emphasized keeping the space natural and ensuring that park development does not negatively impact adjacent landowners and neighborhoods. River access was a priority among community members. See **Appendix B** for case studies and best practices regarding pocket park development.



Pedestrian bridge



Benches under shade trees



Public art along paths



Desert pollinator garden



River overlook with benches



Sculptural hammock supports



Flex lawn

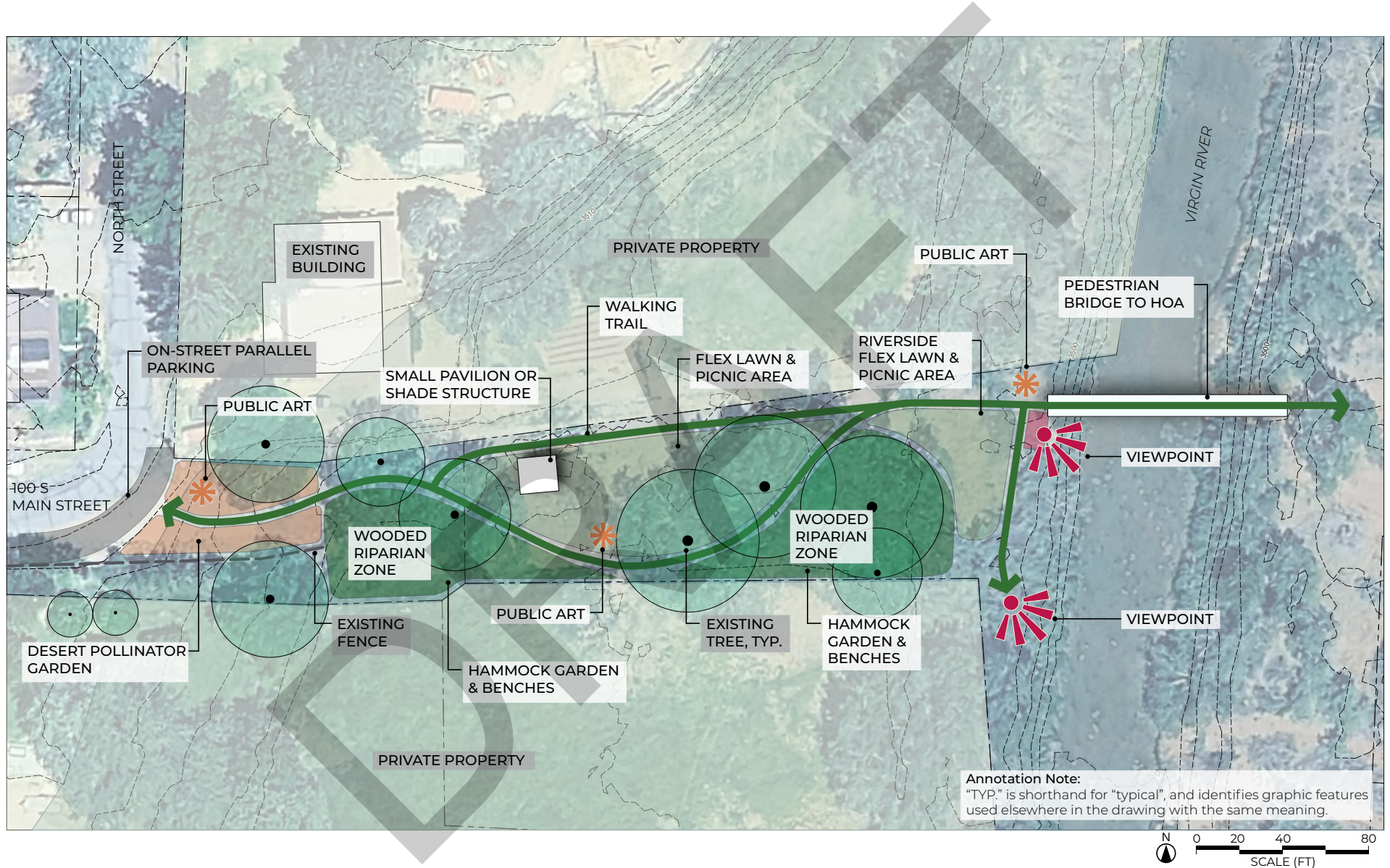


Shade structure or small pavilion



Interpretive nature & history signage





EAST POCKET PARK CONCEPT PLAN

Additional Actions

- A. **Evaluate Access and Parking Options:** Conduct a preliminary assessment of potential parking solutions, including on-street parking opportunities, shared-use arrangements, or small-scale improvements that minimize impacts to adjacent properties.
- B. **Initiate Early Stakeholder Coordination:** Begin proactive conversations with adjacent property owners and the Rio De Sion HOA to understand concerns, identify shared goals, and explore partnership opportunities related to access, connectivity, and potential bridge reconstruction.
- C. **Regulatory Compliance:** Engage Utah DNR and other relevant agencies early to clarify permitting requirements related to vegetation removal, riparian restoration, floodplain impacts, and in-water work.
- D. **Assess Environmental and Site Constraints:** Complete a high-level site evaluation to identify floodplain considerations, riverbank stability, vegetation management needs, and hazard trees to inform safe and sustainable park development.
- E. **Define Maintenance and Operations Expectations:** Estimate long-term maintenance needs and staffing implications associated with various development scenarios to ensure the site can be sustainably managed over time.
- F. **Identify Funding and Partnership Opportunities:** Explore grant funding, cost-sharing partnerships, or volunteer-based stewardship models that could support site improvements, bridge reconstruction, or ongoing maintenance.
- G. **Ensure clarity on overall goals for the park and conduct additional outreach to residents:** What type of space should it be providing? What gap is it filling in the Virgin park system? What type of programming or amenities would be appropriate based on these goals?
- H. **Provide park amenities** such as a walking path, picnic area near the river, a river overlook point with seating, small pavilion, flexible use lawn, hammocks, desert pollinator garden, and public art.

Opinions of Cost

Rough order-of-magnitude (ROM) opinions of cost for the East Pocket Park concept are included below. See appendices for a discussion of maintenance needs and considerations (**Appendix C**) and a full breakdown of ROM opinions of cost within each element for this park (**Appendix D**). .

Element	Cost
Design & Engineering	\$157,493.00
Demolition/Deconstruction	\$4,800.00
Site Preparation and Earthwork	\$16,600.00
Paving and Hardscape	\$1,136,050.00
Site Improvements	\$252,280.00
Landscape	\$24,200.00
Irrigation	\$15,000.00
Mobilization	\$126,000.00
Permitting and Contractor Markup	\$167,493.00
Total	\$1,899,916.00

Table 6. East Pocket Park Opinions of Cost

BMX Track Facility

The BMX Track is envisioned as a recreation facility that provides high-quality biking opportunities to both BMX Track members as well as the general public. Public comments about this facility highlighted concerns about neighborhood impacts from facility lights and sound systems, as well as a perception that this facility is not intended for the general public. Potential improvements to this facility include a public skills course, shade structures, improved access, and infrastructure upgrades to reduce nuisance to neighbors and the town.



Public skills course



Rider break area with water filling station



Shaded spectator bleachers



Bike wash station



Bike-themed public art as a gateway



Bike repair & first aid zone



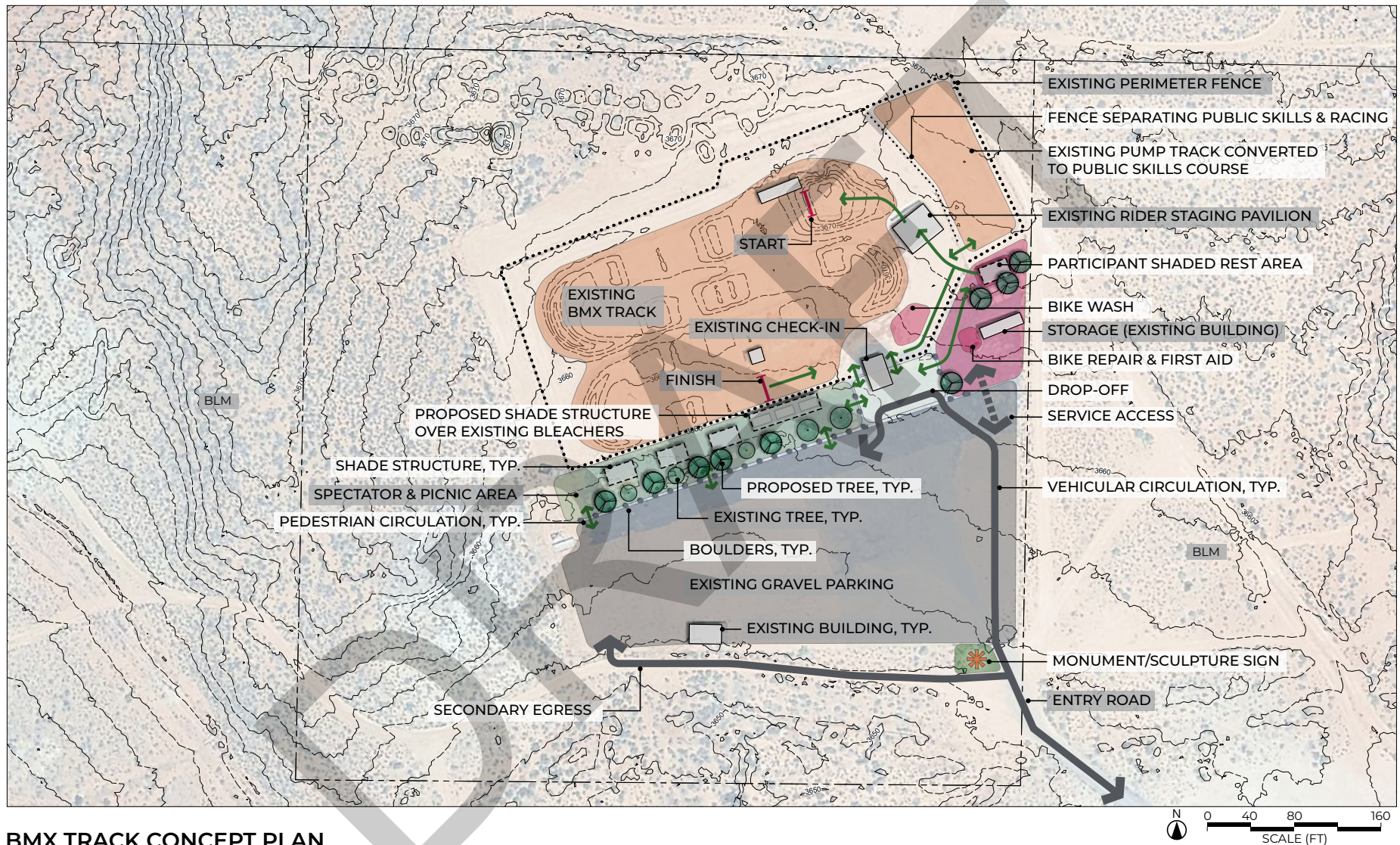
Sculptural sign at park entrance



Shade structures with picnic tables



Creative bike racks



BMX TRACK CONCEPT PLAN

Additional Actions

- A. **Prioritize safety and reliability:** Complete electrical upgrades, standardize event power solutions, and install compliant lighting.
- B. **Explore wayfinding/placemaking enhancements:** Collaborate with concessionaire and BLM to explore improvements to signage, wayfinding, and access road maintenance.
- C. **Structure community benefit without undermining events:** Define public practice windows or supervised sessions, especially leveraging the pump track; consider converting the pump track into a public skills area that feeds into BMX participation.
- D. **Concessionaire agreement:** Continue to formalize the concessionaire model with clear roles, performance expectations, and reporting requirements, ensuring continuity and risk mitigation.
- E. **Strengthen digital presence:** Encourage concessionaire to update webpage with news, photos (including wide-angle and elevated vantage shots), schedules, access rules, and contact information.
- F. **Improve circulation:** Designate a drop-off zone near the rider check-in, clearly mark vehicular circulation in and out of the parking lot, and clearly delineate pedestrian from vehicular zones.
- G. **Provide additional amenities:** Add shade structures in spectator area, consider providing bike wash and repair stations, and create a rider break area with shade trees and a shade structure.

Opinions of Cost

Rough order-of-magnitude (ROM) opinions of cost for the BMX Track Facility concept are included below. See appendices for a discussion of maintenance needs and considerations (**Appendix C**) and a full breakdown of ROM opinions of cost within each element for this park (**Appendix D**). .

Element	Cost
Design & Engineering	\$100,488.00
Demolition/Deconstruction	\$1,500.00
Site Preparation and Earthwork	\$11,200.00
Paving and Hardscape	\$10,000.00
Site Improvements	\$885,980.00
Landscape	\$16,200.00
Irrigation	\$80,000.00
Mobilization	\$110,488.00
Permitting and Contractor Markup	\$1,215,856.00
Total	\$1,899,916.00

Table 7. BMX Track Facility Opinions of Cost

Cost Comparisons & Maintenance Considerations

Below is a table that includes the estimated construction, design, and total costs for the implementation of each of the park concepts. A more detailed breakdown of the opinions of cost is available for each park in the **Appendix D**.

As mentioned, these rough order-of-magnitude (ROM) opinions of cost are included as a tool in the planning phase to apply high-level costs to initial concepts to support assessment of financial feasibility and phasing analyses. These ROM costs are non-binding, and include anticipated design and construction costs in 2026 dollars that are intended to provide stakeholders an initial sense of potential costs to inform decision-making, budgeting, and scope of work for grant applications. When the Town decides to begin implementation of a more defined scope of work, additional and more detailed cost estimates will be necessary to align with the identified scope of work, and to reflect current labor and materials costs.

Maintenance Considerations

In addition to capital improvement considerations for each of the five identified park sites within the Town of Virgin, there are also annual maintenance considerations and resulting increase in Town-employee or hired maintenance hours that need to be considered in addition to future site improvements. Maintenance requirements outlined here are not included in the Rough-Order-of-Magnitude Opinions of Cost, but should be considered in addition to capital costs.

A full matrix of maintenance needs at each park are included in the **Appendix C**, outlining potential maintenance items, frequency, range of effort in hours, and other resource needs to facilitate a fully-supported network of Town parks in Virgin.

Key site maintenance includes:

- Scheduling annual and seasonal tasks with park staff or assigned contractors
- Identifying biweekly, weekly, or daily tasks
- Scheduling weekly or daily tasks across all parks within the Town system for efficiency.

Element	Estimated Construction Costs	Estimated Design Costs	Total Cost
Falls Park (without Road Widening)	\$3,169,290	\$643,858	\$3,813,148
Falls Park (with Road Widening)	\$3,676,390	\$745,278	\$4,421,668
Town Park (Minimal Intervention)	\$1,394,250	\$288,850	\$1,683,100
Town Park (Park Reimagination)	\$2,448,000	\$499,600	\$2,947,600
South Pocket Park	\$497,150	\$109,430	\$606,580
East Pocket Park	\$1,574,930	\$324,986	\$1,899,916
BMX Track	\$1,004,880	\$210,976	\$1,215,856

Table 8. Cost Comparisons for Virgin Park Concepts



Additional PROST Actions

In addition to the parks discussed in the previous section, the following sites and initiatives emerged as priorities from conversations with staff, community engagement, and research and analysis. These recommendations do not include design concepts or opinions of cost, but include a list of priority actions to guide the Town.

Pocketville Hollow

Pocketville Hollow is a well-loved neighborhood park serving residents and visitors on the northern side of the town. Public comments about this park highlighted the need to improve pedestrian connectivity to the park, particularly at SR-9 crossings, as well as to upgrade existing infrastructure and provide a sanctioned dog play area. Potential improvements would maintain this park's quiet nature while improving the safety, accessibility, and comfort for park users.



Pocketville Hollow Park

Actions

A. Fencing and access improvements:

- Remove the wooden posts surrounding the park while ensuring protection of irrigation system.
- Assess opportunities for fencing or barriers to designate parking and prevent visitors from driving onto grass, as well as additional picnic tables or other items. Formalize road block (currently a log) through rocks, fencing, etc.
- Consider closing gate providing access off of SR-9, ensuring that parking and access occurs through Sierra Bella.

B. ADA opportunity:

Evaluate the feasibility and cost of paving the path into the park to improve ADA accessibility (especially near ADA picnic table).

C. Dog park assessment:

Assess community desire for formalizing an off-leash dog area. If supported, develop a concept plan with features like fencing and a water station.

D. Rehabilitate the social trail

leading down from parking area.

E. Collaborate with UDOT to investigate safer pedestrian crossings of SR-9.

This could include upgraded pedestrian crossing (e.g., HAWK, RRFB) or a pedestrian tunnel under SR-9. Consider developing a transit/bus stop at the park to align with pedestrian crossing needs.



Heritage Town Square

Heritage Town Square will continue to be a gathering place for Virgin residents and a valuable educational and historical resource. Community members are largely satisfied with this park as is; potential improvements would increase access, usability, and educational potential.

Actions

- A. **Parking:** Consider evaluating or adjusting parking spot orientation to improve the flow of traffic.
- B. **Interpretative Signage:** Explore opportunities to improve flow, education, and interpretation of the resources at the square. Consider partnerships with a neighboring historic society in signage development.
- C. **Placemaking and connectivity:** The Heritage Town Square could be incorporated into broader placemaking efforts for the Town, welcoming regional visitors to Virgin. Connectivity to other town parks through sidewalks or trails could enhance Virgin's walkability.
- D. **Building usage:** Consider possible uses for old Town Hall and Old Church once town operations move to the new town hall. Consider increasing marketing for weddings and other events due to additional availability of the facilities and additional revenue generating opportunities.
- E. **Evaluate current fee structure:** Compare current fee structure for facility rentals to similar town-owned event facilities in similar communities; consider partial facility rentals, half-day rentals, and weekend rentals.
- F. **Communication:** Ensure neighbors are aware of weddings and other events and enforce shutdown of music at the end of the night.



Pavilion at Heritage Town Square

Trails and Connectivity

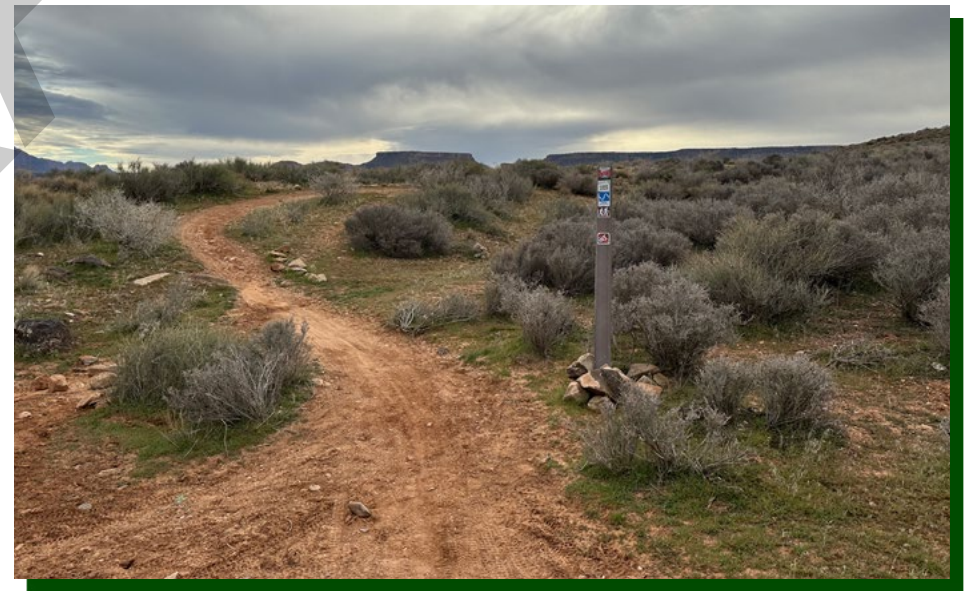
There is currently very limited in-town connectivity (e.g., sidewalks, bike lanes, multi-use paths) or trail connections within the Town of Virgin. The development of in-town walking and biking paths was a very high priority among surveyed community members to increase the safety of pedestrians and cyclists and better connect the Town's parks. Potential actions include initiatives to better connect town parks and facilities and to provide more comfortable pedestrian and cyclist connections to regional recreation and open space areas.

Actions

- A. **Park walkability:** Consider adopting a goal of a safe and comfortable 10-minute or ½ mile walk to a public park, trailhead, or playground for all residents and neighborhoods in Virgin.
- B. **Neighborhood and community connectivity:** Improve pedestrian and bicycle connectivity between neighborhoods, parks, schools, community facilities, and surrounding public lands. Prioritize connections through a combination of sidewalks, multi-use paths, bike facilities, and other active transportation improvements.
- C. **Crossing Highway 9:** Collaborate with UDOT to increase pedestrian safety on crossings of Highway 9, especially at Pocketville Hollow and to allow access for neighborhoods north of Highway 9.
- D. **Regional trail connections:** Support the development of a paved multi-use path along Highway 9 (part of the Zion Corridor trail).
- E. **ADA access:** Identify and prioritize areas with limited ADA access and connectivity.
- F. **Public lands access:** Improve and increase trail connections from within Virgin town limits to public lands. Collaborate with the Bureau of Land Management to better understand existing trail networks, social trail development, and opportunities for expanded or additional trailheads adjacent to Virgin town limits.
- G. **Sheep Bridge Road:** Improve vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian access and safety on Sheep Bridge Road to improve access to Falls Park.



In-town bike route to Kolob Reservoir



Sheep Bridge Nature Preserve

Wayfinding and Placemaking

Currently, there is a lack of cohesive signage to establish a sense of place or guide visitors to and within Virgin. Improvements to wayfinding and placemaking in town have the potential to increase safety, enhance the town's sense of place, and improve the visitor experience.

Actions

- A. **Develop Wayfinding Plan:** Consider creating a brand identity reflecting the town's character—be it its Old West feel, proximity to Zion, or agricultural roots—and implementing this through wayfinding signs that guide people to amenities like the town hall and parks.
- B. **Public Art:** Consider developing a public art program to place temporary or permanent public art pieces throughout Virgin's parks to support local artists and provide a sense of place. Public art pieces can coordinate with and support broader wayfinding initiatives.
- C. **Public Information:** Integrate recommendations on town parks and recreation opportunities, BLM destinations, dispersed camping, and other relevant recreational information into Town of Virgin webpage. Collaborate with Greater Zion Office of Convention & Tourism on marketing and



Informational sign at Sheep Bridge Nature Preserve

Recreation Programming

Many Virgin residents frequently go to neighboring communities for recreational facilities or programming. However, more than half of surveyed residents expressed that it was important to them to have local recreation programming. Any recommended recreational programming should be scaled to the size and needs of Virgin and consider resource availability and budgets. It is recommended that Virgin leverage existing recreational assets and facilities when considering future increases to recreation programming.

Actions

- A. **Old and New Town Hall:** Examine the old Town Hall and new Town Hall Gym as potential spaces for recreational programming.
- B. **Recreation Programming Engagement:** Conduct a survey of town residents to identify the most desired types of feasible recreation programming.
- C. **Recreation Coordinator:** Consider hiring a part-time recreation coordinator to oversee recreation programming.
- D. **Small-scale Programming:** Consider developing small-scale recreation programming to serve Virgin residents. This could include yoga classes, pickleball clinics, Pilates, formalized pick-up games, etc.
- E. **Expand ballfield programming:** If considering the Minimal Intervention alternative for Town Park, explore recreational programming to reactivate the Town Park ballfields, such as a softball, kickball, or wiffleball league, summer camp programming, or other partnerships with area schools.

Implementation: Areas of Focus

As a long-range plan, the recommendations included in this action plan will guide the Town of Virgin for many years. Funding, regulations, partnership opportunities, and changing community needs will all impact which projects are prioritized each year.

Based on initial community input, staff feedback, and project feasibility, it is recommended that the Town prioritize the following projects:

- **Town Park:** Prioritize existing infrastructure upgrades, upkeep, and maintenance, as well as investigate which concept is more appealing to the public and consider the tradeoffs between each concept. Because there are high-level concepts and community support for this park, the town can build on existing momentum to upgrade this park.
- **Pocketville Hollow:** Prioritize park upkeep and maintenance, as this is an important and evolving space for the community. The smaller-scale improvements at this park can be implemented over time as impactful projects with a strong return on investment.
- **Falls Park:** Falls Park was prioritized for park upgrades and improved maintenance. The park concept included in this plan can guide these improvements, and while some may be more elaborate and costly than others, improving this park will likely be a big “win” for the community, as this park is frequently used and connects residents and visitors to neighboring open space, trail networks, and recreational opportunities.
- **South Pocket Park:** As the town strives to create new park space for residents and neighborhoods, the South Pocket Park opportunity can serve as a proof of concept for new pocket park development, as well as increase access to the river – a stated community priority.
- **Trails and Connectivity:** Community input highly prioritized safer in-town connectivity, trails, and active transportation. Connecting neighborhoods and the downtown area to the town’s parks, recreation facilities, neighboring open space, and existing trail networks will improve access, utilization, and community health.



Historic Town Hall



Town Pickleball Courts

Funding Opportunities

Municipal Funding Options

The following list of potential funding sources includes the many options available to municipalities in Utah to raise revenue that could be directed to cover PROST expenses. Each option lists the pros and cons of implementing or increasing the revenue source.



Virgin Welcome Sign

Sales Tax Increase

The Town of Virgin currently has a 1% Local Sales & Use Tax rate, in addition to the 4.85% State Sales & Use Tax, the 0.25% County Option Sales Tax, .25% Transportation Infrastructure Tax, 0.1% Recreation, Art, and Park Tax (RAP), and 1% Resort Community Tax for a total combined sales tax rate of 7.45%.¹²

In FY2025, Sales and Use Tax revenue was budgeted at \$220,000, Resort Tax was budgeted at \$220,000, RAP Tax was budgeted at \$16,500, and the Transportation Infrastructure Tax was budgeted at \$16,500.

It is possible for municipalities to increase the Resort Tax rate from 1% to 1.1% without voter approval and up to 1.6% with voter approval. Based on FY2025 budgeted revenue, 1.1% tax rate would yield an additional \$22,000, and a 1.6% tax rate would yield an additional \$132,000 in revenue.

- **Pros:** Both visitors and residents are taxed, and revenue grows with economic activity.
- **Cons:** Larger share of the cost is placed on lower-income residents. Tax increases can face political challenges and could affect local competitiveness with nearby communities.

Parks Impact Fee Increase

The Parks Impact Fee is currently set at \$1,741 for new residential development. An Impact Fee Study is scheduled for 2026-2027 to explore the idea of adjusting and potentially increasing impact fee rates, including Culinary Water, Roads & Streets, and Parks & Recreation.

- **Pros:** Creates dedicated funding for capital projects and new parks infrastructure. Many recommendations in this plan could qualify for this funding source.
- **Cons:** Funds collected can only be used for park projects instigated by new development and new residents. Revenue relies on continued residential development and may experience volatility.



Town Park Ballfield

¹² <https://files.tax.utah.gov/tax/salestax/rate/26q1combined.pdf>

Recreation-Specific General Obligation Bond

A bond issue can be used for new, typically large, capital projects and improvements. Bond issues may provide opportunities to leverage other funds, such as required match amounts for federal or state grant programs.

- **Pros:** Provides access to up-front money to use for expensive capital projects that cannot be funded by the existing local government budget. Bond issue would allow the Town to spread the cost of long-term infrastructure over time, aligning repayment with the useful life of the asset.
- **Cons:** The Town must use ongoing tax revenue to repay the bond obligation over an extended period, reducing the amount of ongoing tax revenue that could be used for other local government services. Bond issues typically require voter approval.

External Grants

There are a wide variety of state, federal, and non-governmental grant programs that provide funding for parks and recreation projects. **A list of specific grant sources is listed in the following section.**

- **Pros:** External funding sources do not rely on local taxes or fees. External grants may support projects that are otherwise financially infeasible for the Town. The Utah Division of Outdoor Recreation has a particularly robust grant program.
- **Cons:** Grants are competitive and not a consistent source of funding, especially for maintenance or some staffing. Grants may require a town funding match.

Increase PROST revenue

Virgin parks and recreation currently generates an approximate annual revenue of \$1,000 from facility rentals. This revenue could be increased by increasing facility rental rates or increasing the number of facilities available for rental – such as the new town gymnasium, and/or developing recreation programs that charge program fees. This could include developing a cost recovery policy for town facilities and programs.

- **Pros:** Funding is generated by users and could supplement other PROST programs or functions.
- **Cons:** This would require staffing to administer additional events, programs, and rentals, and revenue may not outweigh the cost of staffing.



Heritage Town Square



Town Park Baseball Field

Grant Options

Federal Funding

Federal Lands Access Program

Applicants may be state, county, tribal, or city government that owns or maintains the transportation facility. Project must be located on, adjacent to, or provide direct access to federal lands. <http://flh.fhwa.dot.gov/programs/flap/>

National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program

The National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program supports community-led natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation projects across the nation. Their national network of conservation and recreation planning professionals partners with community groups, nonprofits, tribes, and state and local governments to design trails and parks, conserve and improve access to rivers, protect special places, and create recreation opportunities. <https://www.nps.gov/orgs/rtca/index.htm>

State Funding

Utah Division of Outdoor Recreation Grants

The Utah Division of Outdoor Recreation administers many state and federal grant programs to support parks, recreation, open space, and trails in Utah. <https://recreation.utah.gov/grants/>

Several grant programs of note include:

Community Parks & Recreation Grant (CPR)

- Purpose: Funding to aid in the rehabilitation and construction of assets such as community parks, sports fields, pools, and playgrounds.
- Funding Amount: \$5,000 - \$200,000

Utah Outdoor Recreation Grant (UORG)

- Purpose: new outdoor recreation infrastructure projects. Helps communities build recreation amenities that support local economic development, tourism, and quality of life improvements for Utah's residents.
- Funding Amounts:
 - Mini-Grant - Up to \$30,000
 - Tier 1 - \$30,001 - \$500,000
 - Regional Asset Tier - \$500,001 - \$1,000,000

Recreational Trails Program Grant (RTP)

- Purpose: The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) is administered by the Utah Division of Recreation to provide federal funding for the construction, restoration, and educational promotion of motorized, non-motorized, and diverse-use trails and trailside facilities.
- Funding Amount: \$10,000 - \$200,000

Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grant

- Purpose: The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) is administered by the Utah Division of Outdoor Recreation to provide federal funding for the acquisition and development of outdoor recreation spaces. Through LWCF grants, communities can protect public lands, create parks, and improve recreational facilities in order to expand access to outdoor recreation, preserve natural landscapes, and ensure that these resources are available for future generations. Project sites must remain publicly accessible in perpetuity.
- Funding Amount: \$200,000 - \$2,000,000



Utah Department of Transportation Technical Planning Assistance Grant

The goals of the Technical Planning Assistance Grant are to integrate land use and transportation planning, maximize the value of investment in public infrastructure, increase travel options to optimize mobility, and create communities with opportunities to live, work, and play. There is no funding maximum, but a local match of 6.77% is required. The program is funded at \$1.5 million annually, with funding provided on a rolling basis. <https://tpa.udot.utah.gov/learn-more>

Local Funding

Greater Zion Office of Convention & Tourism

This Greater Zion Office of Convention & Tourism provides multiple grant and funding opportunities to municipalities within Washington County:

- [The Washington County Co-op Marketing Program](#) provides funding for eligible tourism-related projects and events that attract visitors, generate economic impact, and support the quality of life of Washington County residents. Eligible projects must demonstrate a clear tourism benefit. Strong applications show how the project or event will attract visitors, generate overnight stays, increase visitor spending, or create a measurable positive impact on tourism in Washington County.
- The [Destination Development Funding Program](#) supports tourism and recreation projects that enhance the visitor experience, create economic impact, and improve the quality of life for Washington County residents. Eligible projects may include improvements to tourism facilities, venues, trails, parks, recreation amenities, and other visitor-focused infrastructure. Applicants must provide a minimum 50% cash match toward the total project cost.

National Organizations

IMBA Trail Accelerator Grants

The International Mountain Bike Association offers trail grants to municipal, state, and federal governments, along with non-profits that actively manage parks and trails. The grant awardees receive professional services from the IMBA trail solutions team. The grants typically range from \$5,000 - \$30,000 dollars require an equal match. <https://www.imba.com/programs/trail-accelerator-grants>

Trails Connecting People with Nature: A Program of the Sierra Club's Nearby Nature Initiative

In collaboration with Sierra Club Outdoors, Sierra Club's Nearby Nature Initiative broadens the conservation movement by protecting and establishing close-to-home natural spaces to ensure that access to the outdoors is increasingly equitable and available to all communities. Sierra Club Outdoors connects people to nature for the benefit of both, hosting over 265,000 people per year in the outdoors and inspiring millions more. The Sierra Club's Trails program aims to create, restore, and maintain trails in urban areas with limited access to nature and in more remote areas on public lands. The Sierra Club Foundation will award one-year Trails project grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$20,000 towards trail creation or maintenance project proposals that engage new leaders and provide opportunities for communities to connect with nature. <https://www.sierraclub.org/nearby-nature>

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation provides grants to projects that sustain, restore and enhance fish, wildlife and plants, and their habitats. The Foundation has funds devoted to species, ecosystems, and bioregions. <https://www.nfwf.org/programs>





Chapter 4: Appendix

The Appendix contains the following materials:

- A. Engagement Summaries
- B. Best Practices and Case Studies of Pocket Parks
- C. Virgin PROST Site Maintenance Considerations
- D. Virgin PROST Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) Costs

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