

WORKSHOP SUMMARY
Twentynine Palms Community Trails Plan
Public Meeting
February 26, 2009: 6-8 p.m.
Twentynine Palms Community Center

Desired outcomes:

- Awareness of the trails planning purpose and process
- Obtain information from community regarding existing trail use and key issues
- Identify interest in participating in follow-up meetings/workshops

Agenda

1. Welcome and introductions

The workshop began with a brief welcome by Randy Council (City of Twentynine Palms, Parks and Recreation) who also introduced City staff and project partners, including the Sonoran Institute, which is involved in coordinating the Morongo Basin Open Space Group, and the National Park Service, Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA) from which the City is receiving technical assistance for this planning effort.

2. Overview of meeting purpose and agenda

Following introductions, the outcomes for the workshop and the agenda were reviewed.

3. Introduction to the trails plan

To provide context about why this plan is being developed and how it fits into the City's broader plans, Charles LaClaire (City of Twentynine Palms, Community Development) described the City's planning framework and how this trails planning effort will fit into it. He described the City's general plan as the long term document that will guide the future of the City. Within the general plan are several chapters, or "elements", that address specific topics.

He further noted that given the function of trails, the result of this trails planning effort will be integrated into the City's newly-adopted "Circulation Element" that addresses roads, bikeways and how people move about the city. The long term trails plan will provide information about where trails will be located, types of uses, and how they will be built. The general plan also provides guidance on zoning for the city and related development code, which could be used as a mechanism for building trails that are identified in the plan. However, a key to understanding this trails planning effort is acknowledging that it will be a long term effort to see the trails actually constructed.

4. Breakout groups

Once the context for this trails planning effort was established, workshop participants were asked to divide into four random breakout groups. With the guidance of a staff facilitator, participants were asked to explore:

- Key issues affecting trail use in the area
- What they would like to see happen as a result of this planning effort

Each group recorded their ideas on paper and then presented a summary of their discussion to the rest of the workshop participants (*Attachment A: Breakout Groups Session 1*). Some of the key issues common to multiple groups included:

- Safety, particular as related to the relationship of trail uses to streets and Hwy 62
- Managing multiple types of trail use, particularly within the same trail corridors
- Access and connectivity—how are trails accessed and how trails in the city connect to adjacent areas such as Joshua Tree National Park (National Park), OHV use areas, and the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center (Base)
- Illegal dumping
- Enforcement
- Maintenance

After the groups shared their ideas with each other, workshop participants were asked to divide into new groups based on type of trail use (e.g. pedestrian/joggers/hikers/walkers; equestrians; cyclists; off-highway vehicle users). Each of these four groups was asked to identify:

- Trails currently used (whether “official” or not)
- Key destinations they would like to access via trails
- Potential trails for the future

In addition, each group had a map identifying current designated trails and bikeways to mark-up in response to the above-questions (*Attachment B: Pedestrian Users’ Breakout Group Notes; Attachment C: Trail Use Breakout Group Maps*).

5. Future public participation

To further define potential trails to include in the plan and identify specific trail needs, the trail planning team asked workshop participants if anyone would be interested in volunteering to participate in a user-based work group. Volunteers were asked to commit to two meetings and field/site visits as necessary. Once each group has developed their specific recommendations, the four sets of ideas will be compared and integrated into a proposed trails plan. Several people volunteered to participate for each of the user groups. Volunteers were informed that they will be contacted after the workshop to coordinate future work. Participants were also informed that there will be future public workshops to review and provide feedback on the ideas generated by these user-based work groups.

6. Wrap-up/Next Steps

The group was asked to evaluate the workshop to ensure that future forums will be most productive. Folks liked the format of the workshop, but felt the venue was too noisy and that they would have liked more interaction between the different user groups. This feedback will be considered in planning future workshops.

ATTACHMENT A: BREAKOUT GROUPS SESSION 1

RED GROUP

Key Issues

- Children's safety
- Street design (Chocolate Drop and around town): no sidewalk—kids, no shoulder—bikes
- Connectivity lacking—need to use busy/dangerous streets
- Trash—illegal dumping detracts from experience: household waste, yard waste—not biodegradable. Community-wide, open fields, lack of alternatives, dump fees prohibitive
- Dogs—no legal off-leash dog park. No dogs in parks. Joshua Tree National Park, no dogs on trails. The Base sees need
- Future development standards/codes. How will affect future trails?
- ORV staging area adjacent to legal riding areas, e.g. Gold Park, BLM/City. Park vehicles and trailers
- How can you get your ORV to legal area? Access to ORV without illegal movement
- Funding for City from state—green sticker, mitigation...can we use these funds?
- How about dual use trails?
- Designate areas with signage. Need to create and educate
- Where will they go...e.g. flood control
- Compatibility—noise and dust (ORV)
- Access—schools—destinations
- Equestrian—facility—linkages
- Connectivity
- How to cross Hwy 62
- Acquisition—easements

Goals

- Walk/exercise opportunities
- ORV trails in area (town)
- Increase communication between city and users—information, maps, precise information. How—signage, brown signs, maps, Internet, pamphlet
- Compatibility with Base. Different uses, horse with Base
- Compatibility with park—integration with general management plan; trails plan revisited; connectivity city-park; increased communication
- Goal-Base safety, commuter issues, bicycles

GREEN GROUP

Favorite Trail(s)

- Luckie
- Gold Park
- 49 Palms
- Baseline
- Utah Trail
- Base mototrack

Issues/Barriers

- Existing gates/trail access
- Lack of specific trails for walking, etc.
- Illegal dumping
- Accessibility, safety
- Enforcements
- Signs
- OHV (staging areas)
- Amenities

Results

- Connect trails—multiuse
- Base to town/town to National Park
- Designated trails
- Economic—expansion to neighboring communities
- Interpretive trails

BLUE GROUP

Issues

- Lack of trails/designated trailheads
- Signage—"Share the Road"
- Offroad and road cycling
- Soft sand—proximity to Joshua Tree National Park
- Sharing
- Maintenance
- Trails separate from the roads for kids safety
- Safety on arterials and other major roads
- One side of roadway for different uses
- Rule enforcement and volunteer maintenance
- Dumping areas
- Education
- Physical nature of trails
- Incorporate trails into development
- Use trails for tourism
- Parking/hitching
- Animal refuse
- Maps
- Shoulders
- Sharing
- Safety
- Signage
- Uses

YELLOW GROUP

- Developers build on open areas
- Designated areas for motorized ORV
- Problem of Copper Mountain Wash as part of basin-wide trail e.g. retreat center and tranquility (noise)
- Easy definition of circulation
- Trails going through private property
- Safety for all segments
- Enforcement
- Education
- Maintenance

Goals:

- Use already designated areas more fully and properly e.g. buffers, top of washes
- Maintaining wildlife corridors
- Develop connectors to trails
- Develop different types of trails
- Develop viewsheds
- Access to trails e.g. Boy Scout Trail
- Staging (trailer horses, bikes, etc.)
- Cooperation with agencies—e.g. Base, Park, BLM, etc.
- Illegal dumping

ATTACHMENT B: PEDESTRIAN USERS' BREAKOUT GROUP NOTES

(Note: Other user breakout groups provided all of their notes on maps, so their input is included in Attachment C)

Trail you use now:

- Knotts Sky Park to 49 Palms
- Chocolate Drop bike/hike trails existing
- Base of mountains bordering park/city
- Indian Cove
- Bike paths-schools to downtown
- Murals trail—historical walk through town
- Donnell Hill path along Hwy 62
- People who don't own vehicles
- Lighting issues—children, trails
- Recreational vs. safety
- Amboy—hiking Mesquite Dunes
- Tunnels/bridges



Attachment C: Trail User Breakout Group Maps

BREAKOUT GROUP GENERAL NOTES:

- High school to Split Rock to Downtown
- Historical Walk through town with murals and historical buildings/adobes
- Connect people to mural system
- Donnell Hill safe passage



Base Map Key

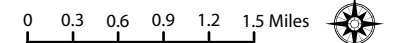
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Breakout Group Key

- Knotts Sky Park to 49 Palms
- Chocolate Drop (existing trail being used)
- Possible Trail (existing trail being used)
- Indian Cove
- Mesquite Dune Hiking
- Entrance to Joshua Tree National Park

Hiking, bike

Access from Park to Park

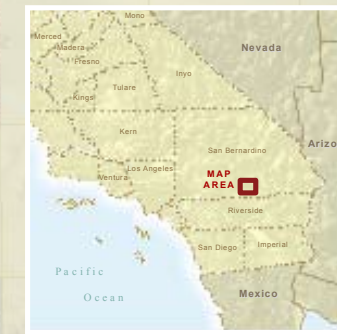


BASE MAP NOTES: February 2009
 1. Map in progress--Additional regional trails and use area data are being collected from jurisdictions and stakeholders across the Morongo Basin
 2. Some trails and use areas indicated on this map are generalized vicinity mappings of suggested trails and use area locations based on community and stakeholder input. These map depictions are designed for discussion purposes and do not imply existing legal access or adoption by local jurisdictions.

Base Map developed by Greeninfo Network & modified by SJ Weigel, Sonoran Institute & Morongo Basin Open Space Group. Workshop data added to map by National Park Service's Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program, March, 2009.

BREAKOUT GROUP GENERAL NOTES:

- Northern New York has 65 miles of horse trails at Otter Creek Park. This draws riders from Canada, Maine, NH, etc. and brings revenue to the area. Something like this would bring money to Twentynine Palms
- Connectivity to Park and Base
- Consider safe ways to cross Hwy 62. Build overpass? Crossings with lights?

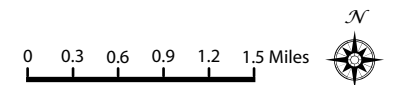
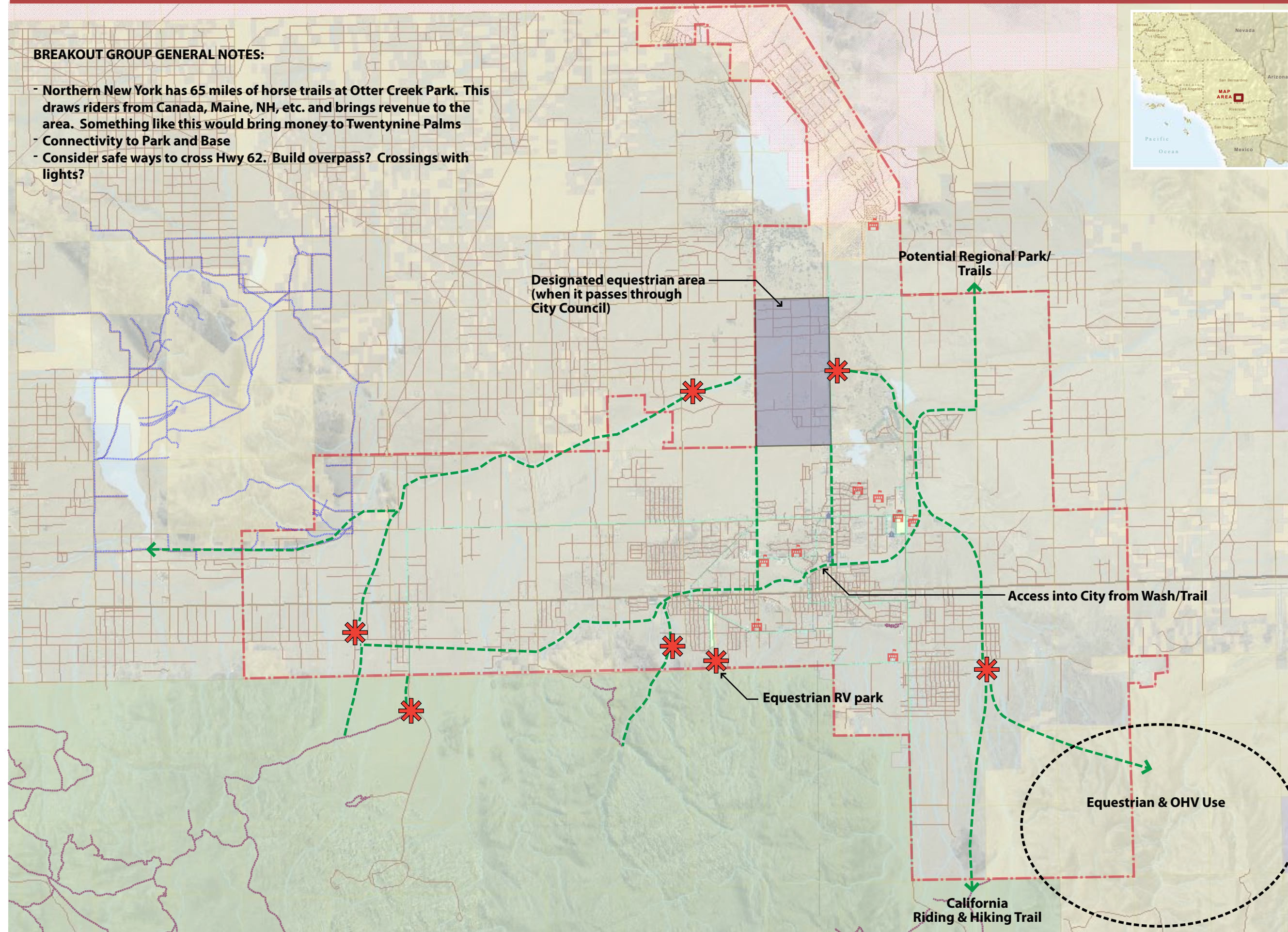


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Breakout Group Key

- Existing & Potential Equestrian Trail Use
- Staging Areas/Trailheads

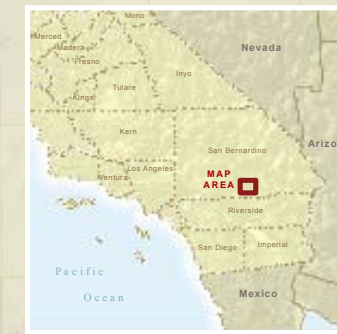


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BREAKOUT GROUP GENERAL NOTES:

- Safe connectivity to Stater Bros. and on to Luckie Park from 49 Palms and Indian Cove
- Trail to link National Park Visitor Center to Indian Cove and Indian Cove to Gold Park
- "X"s represent some safe ways to cross Hwy 62 (lighted crosswalk? foot bridge?)

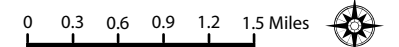
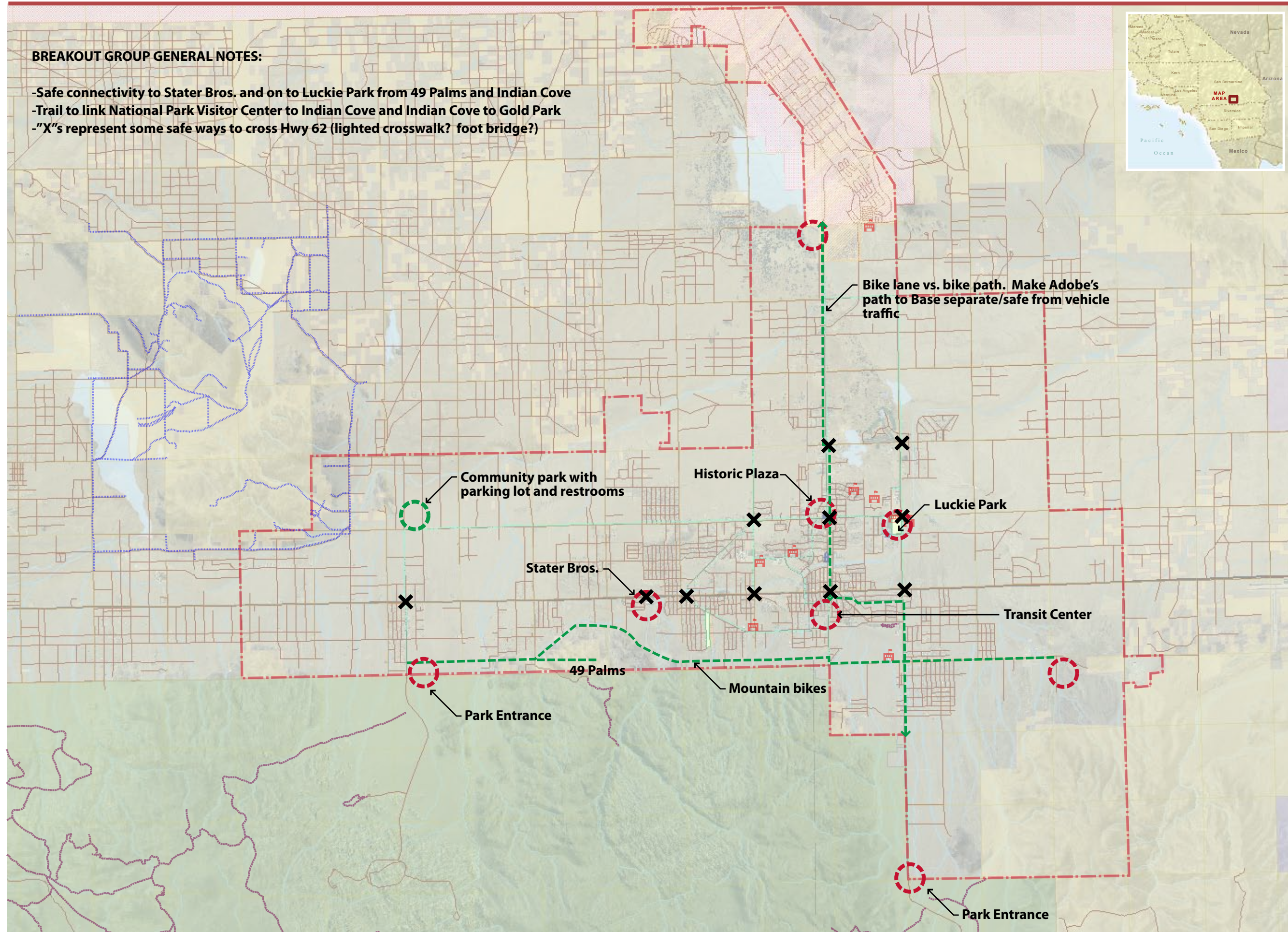


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Breakout Group Key

- Potential Bike Trail Use
- Existing destinations
- Potential destinations
- Potential controlled bike crossings



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BREAKOUT GROUP GENERAL NOTES:

-Green Sticker fund?

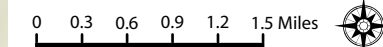
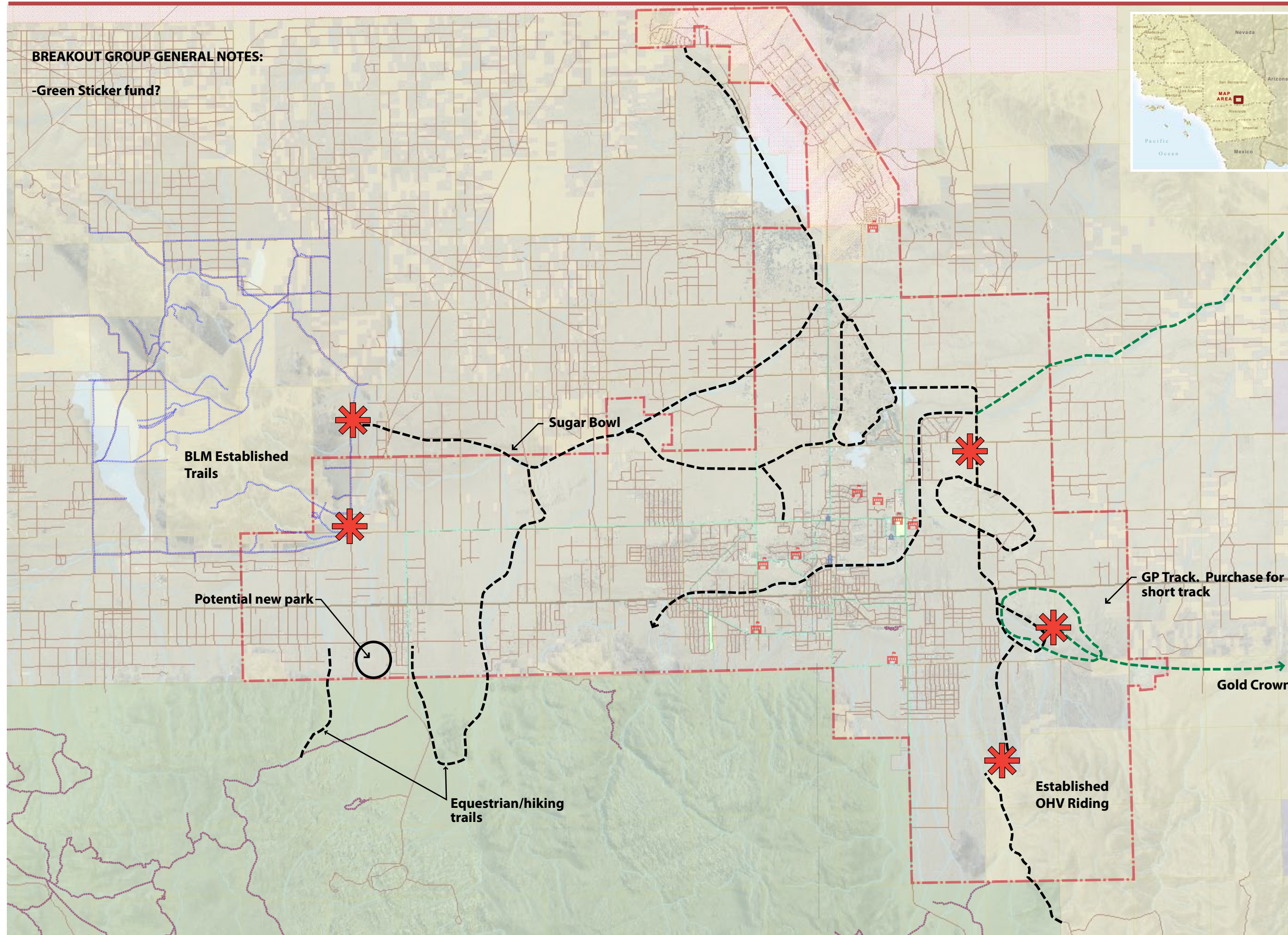


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Breakout Group Key

- Existing OHV Trail Use
- Potential OHV Trail Use
- Potential OHV Staging Area



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