

# Matthews/Winters Park

## *Project Update*

**Project improvements include expanding the parking lot and realigning trail sections to reduce road and trail congestion at this popular Park. Be alert to new traffic patterns as the project moves forward.**

**Improving access to the Park**  
Summer/Fall 2007

As a frequent visitor to Matthews/Winters Park for biking, hiking, horseback riding and picnicking, you've undoubtedly encountered a full parking lot or crowding at trail bottlenecks. Since Matthews/Winters is one of the most popular parks in the Jefferson County Open Space system, these situations have also increased impact to the natural resources and the enjoyment of the park by visitors.

As part of our philosophy of adapting management to particular situations, Open Space will be implementing new trail construction for specific user groups, new circulation patterns, trail reclamation, parking lot expansion, and parking enforcement at this park.

Open Space recognizes many park visitors have established habits of using a favorite path or loop. Although initial adjustments in trail use patterns will need to be made, these changes are expected to enhance the visitor experience over the long term.



## Project Goals

- ▶ rectify an unsafe parking situation along the park entry road and along County Highway 93
- ▶ disperse users onto the park without contributing to the existing bottleneck access at the footbridge near the picnic area and restrooms
- ▶ eliminate sections of trail that compromise the riparian corridor and health of the natural resources

# Project Details

1. The existing parking lot will be expanded to the west to accommodate the number of vehicles that would normally park along the entry road. Parking along the entry road will be prohibited. This expansion addresses safety for park visitors as well as insuring emergency access into the private properties to the west of the park. From the parking lot, a new trail will improve accessibility for those with disabilities and give walkers, hikers and horseback riders less congested access to the restrooms, picnic area, information kiosk and footbridge onto the park. Improvements will also be made for turning and parking of equestrian trailers and large vehicles.
2. With differences in speed being a primary contributor to reported visitor conflicts, cyclists will be directed away from the existing footbridge bottleneck. A biking only trail will provide access for cyclists to the east of the existing trail. This biking only access will connect with an existing trail to be renamed Village Ride, recognizing its biking only restriction. The stream crossing for cyclists will be designed to minimize impacts to the stream by using helical piercing. Users on bicycles will be able to access the restroom, picnic area, and information kiosk via a new trail segment north of the riparian area and away from the stream.
3. A well-worn trail on the south side of the stream will be reclaimed to minimize erosion and impact to the riparian corridor. The condition of this path currently contributes to erosion and weed infestation.
4. Hikers and equestrians will now have an “out and back” route on the Red Rocks Trail separating them from the bicyclists that generally ride at a faster pace.



# Other Trail Options

*within 5 miles*

- **Lookout Mountain Nature Center** (*hiker only*) From I-70 take Lookout Mountain Road (exit 256), turn right then follow the signs to 910 Colorow Road.
- **Mount Falcon East** From Colorado Highway 8, south of Morrison, turn west on Forest Avenue and north on Vine Avenue.
- **Red Rocks Park** (*hiker only near the Trading Post*) 1.7 miles south of Matthews/Winters trailhead on County Road 93 turn west into Red Rocks Park. The trailhead for Trading Post Trail (1.4 miles) is at Entrance #2.
- **William Frederick Hayden Park on Green Mountain** Provides parking just off Rooney Road, approximately one-half mile north of Alameda Parkway. There are two main trails: Green Mountain Trail Loop (6.4 miles) and Hayden Trail Loop (3.1 miles).

## *History Sideline*

When the Park was a Town

Population: 44

Matthews/Winters Park lies astride the entrance to Mt. Vernon Canyon, which was one of the early routes to the gold fields of Central City and South Park.

The Town of Mt. Vernon was founded in 1859 by Dr. Joseph Casto, a lay preacher and land promoter. Casto had hopes that Mt. Vernon would become a bustling supply town along the mining route but when Colorado's political and economic hub shifted to Denver the town of Mt. Vernon slowly drifted into obscurity.