



# **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

## **MEMORANDUM**

**Date: February 6, 2020**

**To: Mayor Evans, Vice-Mayor Shimoni and City Councilmembers**

**From: Carlton Johnson, Associate Planner  
Mark Reavis, Neighborhood Planner and Historic Preservation Officer**

**Cc: Planning and Zoning Commission  
Greg Clifton, City Manager  
Sara Dechter, Comprehensive Planning Manager  
Alaxandra Pucciarelli, Current Planning Manager  
Tiffany Antol, Planning Director**

**Subject: Southside Community Plan – O’Leary FUTS Outreach Summary**

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Through the public review of the Draft Southside Community Plan, concerns were raised surrounding the idea of a FUTS Connection between Lone Tree Rd./Franklin Ave. and O’Leary St./Ashurst Ave. (FUTS Connection). It was initially identified as a potentially beneficial use of land that is already owned by the City of Flagstaff. The concept has been met with mixed reactions. Some feel that a trail there is a good idea; that a FUTS would be a valuable transportation connection. Others think there should be more than just a trail there. Others feel that a trail there would invite illicit activity, and therefore, impact direct neighbors’ quality of life and sense of safety. This memorandum will outline the public outreach conducted to address the concerns on this FUTS Connection concept, per City Council’s request for additional and direct outreach at the January 14, 2020 Work Session.

The FUTS Connection was chosen for inclusion in the Draft Southside Community Plan by the stakeholder group in October 2019. The Stakeholder Group was created by the Southside Community Association. They were chosen to represent the broad interests of the Southside neighborhood. They met 14 times in meetings open to the greater public over the summer and fall of 2019 to consider, revise, and evaluate goals, policies and strategies. The variety of opinions on the proposed FUTS Connection was discussed during their meetings.

City staff hosted three public meetings during the Draft Southside Community Plan's 60-day public review. The meeting on January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2020 centered around the more controversial public projects, most notably the idea of the FUTS Connection. The meeting started in the Riverside Church on Verde St. Then a field trip was taken to the conceptual park proposed on Ellery St. and then to the location for the FUTS Connection. Meeting attendees raised concerns about public safety during this field trip. Sgt. Frank Higgins was present at this meeting and was able to directly address this concern. He provided information about peer reviewed studies and his experience, which demonstrate that inviting constructive use of an area deters illicit activity.

The continued mixed reactions to the idea of a FUTS Connection were communicated to City Council on January 14, 2020. City Council directed City staff to conduct further outreach to the parts of the neighborhood most connected to the FUTS Connection idea. So, City staff decided to create more and improved drawings and go door-to-door to discuss the idea with each household directly affected by the proposed FUTS Connection idea. These drawings were transmitted to the Council and City Management via email on January 31, 2020.

On January 29, 2020, City staff hung door hangers on doors on the east side of O'Leary St between Butler Ave and Franklin Ave, the north side of Franklin Ave between O'Leary St and Lone Tree Rd, Ernest St, the west side of Elden St between Butler Ave and its cul-de-sac about one block south, and Fuller Way (see Appendix C for a map of contacted properties). The door hangers were specific for Southside outreach. They included project and City branding, and contact and website information. A new sticker with updated text was placed over outdated text. The full text of the door hangers read as follows:

The Draft Southside Community Plan is now available. The 60-Day Public Review is an important step in the adoption of a specific plan. The Draft Plan can be found on the project website: [www.flstaff.az.gov/southsideplan](http://www.flstaff.az.gov/southsideplan).

Based on the feedback received during this 60-Day Public Review, goals, policies, strategies and illustrations may be changed. Nothing is final. The time to comment is now!

We are reaching out to all people immediately surrounding the Rio de Flag between Ashurst/O'Leary and Franklin/Lone Tree. There are ideas for a trail/public space in this area, we want to get feedback from those that will be impacted the most. We will be back with time to chat over maps and drawings on **Friday, Jan 31 between 9 and noon and Monday, Feb 3 between 2 and 5**. We hope to see you then, or please contact us (213-2615) and we can set up another time to discuss. [this last paragraph was the new sticker]

City staff knocked on the same doors in which door hangers were placed during the specified times. Many of the doors with no answer on 1/31 were knocked on again on 2/3. City staff did not receive any calls. A complete list of the comments received during this door-to-door outreach can be seen in Appendix C. Three distinct comments from two commenters were negative, nine distinct comments from six commenters were neutral or design suggestions, and 16 distinct comments from 16 commenters were positive.

Most of the community that was contacted is in favor of the FUTS Connection. The idea has been consistently met with positive reactions during other public outreach. Some concerns still

exist related to inviting non-constructive activity into the area. All people that have expressed concern with the idea live directly adjacent to the project area. This provides opportunity for targeted mitigation to address those concerns. Based upon discussions with the neighborhood, it appears that solutions to help lessen concerns exist. Notably, the concerned neighbors would like a wall that keeps disruptive activity out of their private property. The ability to address many concerns through design and the popularity of the FUTS Connection idea overall suggests that it is an appropriate concept to show in the final Southside Community Plan. The Southside Community Plan will add text to ensure that final design of the FUTS Connection considers adjacent neighbors' concerns and builds-in some contingency money to accomplish mitigation ideas.

## **Appendix A: Related excerpts from the Draft Southside Community Plan**

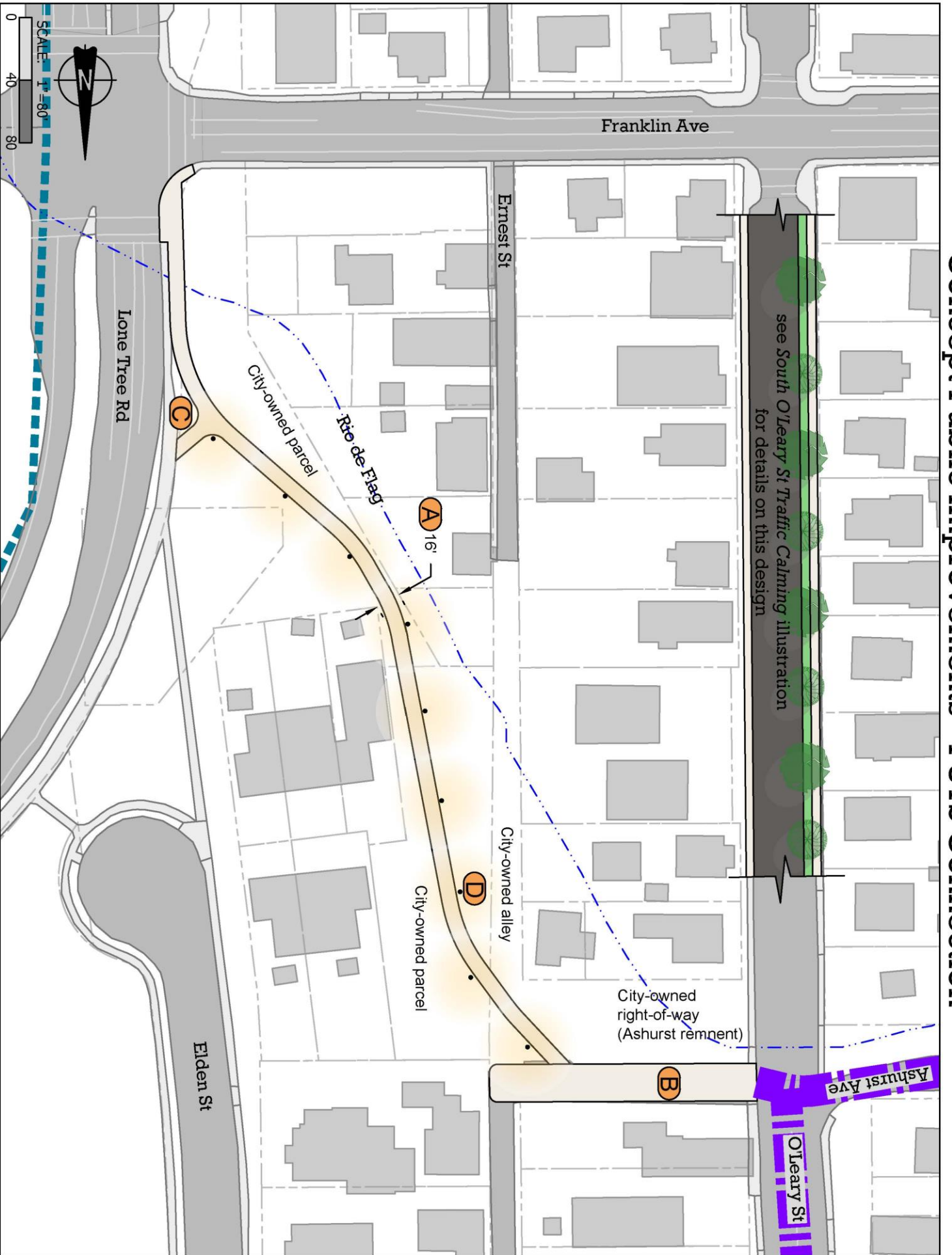
### **Concept Public Improvements – FUTS Connection**

This FUTS illustration takes advantage of land already owned by the City of Flagstaff. It would connect the Sawmill, the Sinclair Wash FUTS, and the Lone Tree corridor to Southside’s commercial areas and to Downtown. This FUTS has several topographic advantages for cyclists as it follows the Little Rio de Flag through a semi-natural setting and avoids the hill that exists near the intersection of Franklin Avenue and O’Leary Street. Design of this area would need to incorporate Crime Prevention through Environmental Design principles in order to provide a safe walking path at all times of the day and night.

Features:

- A. The narrowest point of City-owned land is approximately 16 feet. It exists east of the steep slopes near the Rio de Flag’s defined channel.
- B. Existing asphalt extends east from O’Leary Street in line with Ashurst Avenue. Redesigning this alley would provide fire access and allow low-frequency vehicular traffic to private properties. Vehicles would not be allowed south down the trail or to park in this area.
- C. The use of the trail could increase if the City provides multiple ways to get onto the FUTS. Increased access and visibility will increase its use. Frequent use will deter illicit activities.
- D. Pedestrian-scaled, dark-sky compliant lights along the route may be considered to increase safety and comfort for users at all times of the day if they are financially feasible and if they meet maintenance requirements set by other City policies.

# Concept Public Improvements - FUTS Connection



**Appendix B: Additional materials created for 1/31/20 and 2/3/20 outreach**

**PROPOSED O'LEARY F.U.T.S**

*The proposed FUTS is planned to run from Lone Tree Road to O'Leary Street, it parallels the Rio de Flag on City of Flagstaff owned land.*



FUTS @ O'Leary



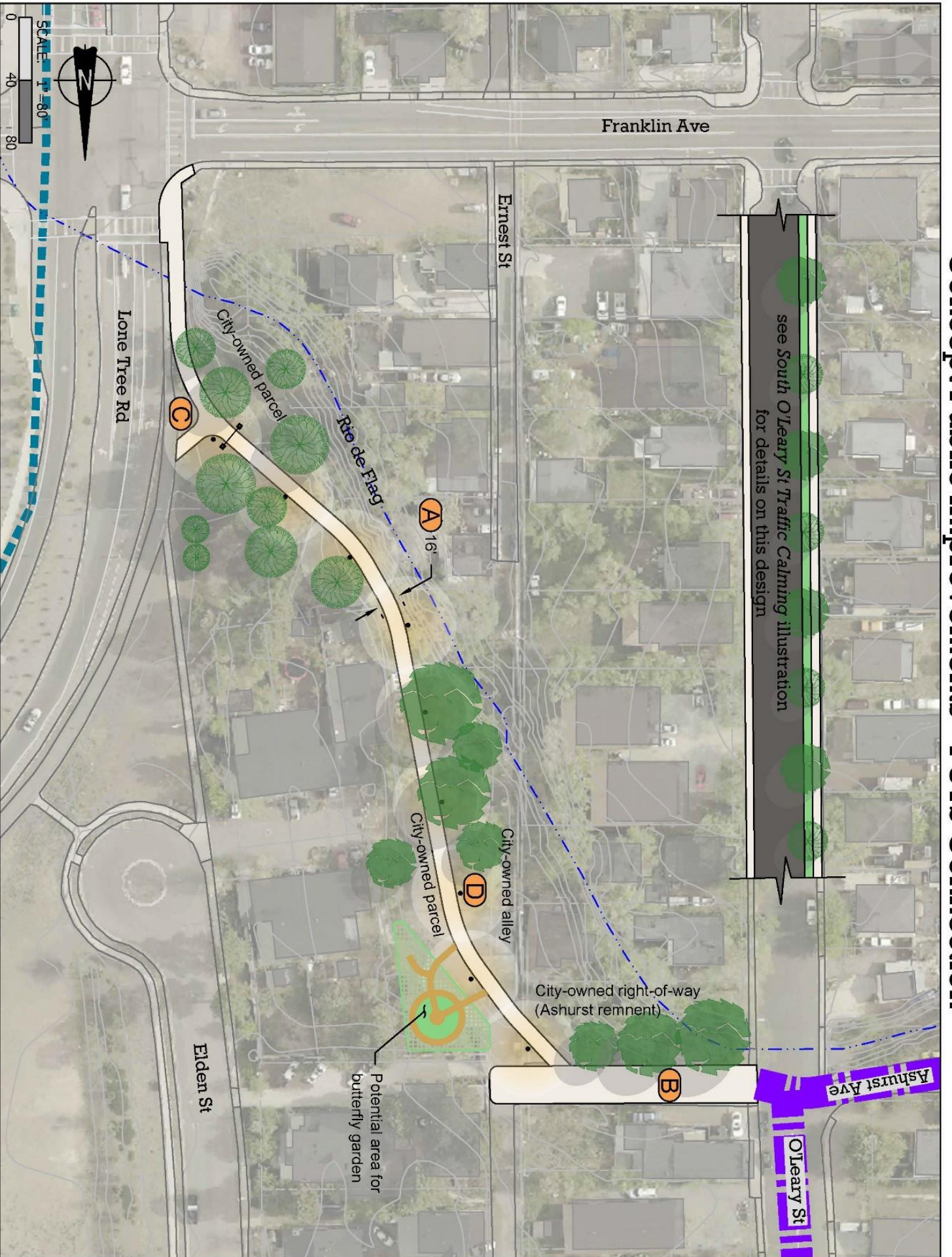
FUTS along Rio de Flag w/ pollinator garden

*Lighted trail with post lights & neighborhood fencing*



FUTS @ Lone Tree entrance

# Concept Public Improvements - FUTRS Connection



## Appendix C: Comments on potential FUTS Connection while going door-to-door on 1/31/20 and 2/3/20 and map of contacted properties

green=positive, red=negative, clear=neutral

About time for some improvements, a trail would be really good for seniors, I like walking around.
Spend money on cleaning up trash instead of on a trail and fancy stuff.
It's sad for people sleeping in area, called police only 2-3 times but people are there every day, they go to the bathroom, drop bottles, even jump over my fence into my backyard.
A greenspace could be wonderful if it's kept up. Lights would be good, cut down bushes so there are not hiding places, could put in a bathroom, don't want more traffic to be more trash.
Want a wall around my house [if the trail happens]. Make it smooth and non-climbable, as tall as allowed. Want it all the way to front property line too. A wall is my number 1 priority.
Consider the potential conflicts with vehicles and bikes along Ashurst east of O'Leary, especially for the green house that faces Ashurst. Also evaluate conflicts with the gas infrastructure near here.
Birds like the Elm trees that the trail would go through, try to save the big trees here.
Could we add parking at the west end of Fuller Way [in relation to FUTS connection improvements, as a way to help out these residents].
Don't want benches for loitering, a trail without benches would be okay.
A trail sounds like a good plan.
Trails are good, I walk my dog, so I like trails.
Need access on alley still for my parking access.
Trail sounds neat, great.
Trail sounds fine.
Great idea for a trail, looks cool.
I would use a trail there constantly, would cross Lone Tree at Franklin.
Add dog bag stations to keep it clean.
The trail could have park amenities or be more naturalized, a park would be good for my 2 year old.
A trail would be nice, I would use it and walk my dog there.
I like the trail idea, I would use it, a trail there would help create more constructive uses of the space.
A trail would be great.
I would love a trail there, I would use it, my 4 roommates agree, it would be good to connect to other areas for biking.
A trail would be totally fine, I walk and bike, would like new trails for connectivity.
I rent here and whatever you do won't affect me and its fine.
I hope you get that trail through, its well needed.
I would love a trail personally, students are loud, and it would cut down on noise on Franklin, lights would be a good addition.
I like the trees that are there, so try to keep as many as you can [especially the ponderosas]. The trail is a positive idea overall.
Would use a trail there, we area runners. Already have some of the wrong users of that space, so adding a trail won't make a difference.

# FUTS Connection Outreach - Jan 29, Jan 31 and Feb 3, 2020



