

## Chris Cawley

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**From:** Chris Cawley  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 12, 2018 5:54 PM  
**To:** Harris Sondak (hsondak@townofalta.com); 'Cliff Curry'; 'elisedmorgan@gmail.com'; Margaret Bourke; Sheridan Davis  
**Cc:** Piper Lever; John Guldner; Jen Clancy; Nora Pincus; Mike Morey  
**Subject:** Food for thought, Alta Summer Recreation  
**Attachments:** haas rapid appraisal report 8-7-18 FINAL.PDF

Dear Alta Town Council,

Over the last few days, I've received some thoughts from you in response to the discussion prompt in Piper's council meeting material email last Friday regarding summer recreation in Alta and the Town of Alta Vision Statement. Interestingly, each of the three statements are distinct from one another in form and in specificity, in a way that makes them complimentary to one another. Hopefully it's not too late to ask you to peruse these tonight, and come prepared with your thoughts on each of these ideas; what do you agree with, and what don't you agree with?

Eventually, a Town of Alta Summer Recreation Management Program plan, which we could use to work with Alta Ski Area and other partners, would look something like what we have below: a statement of a vision or general preferred scenario, some goals that relate to the vision, and strategies that relate to each of the goals.

I have attached the Haas report because the observations and recommendations will continue to be valuable. **Please note the council meeting tomorrow will be at 8 AM.**

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Here's Harris' take on the vision statement, with some adjustments to reflect a preferred summer experience:

Alta's summer experience is focused on our context as the headwaters of Little Cottonwood Creek. New development in our commercial core – such as a community center and year-round hotels, restaurants, and coffee shops – will include shops where picnic supplies and guidebooks are available. Public transportation will be robust so people will be able to reach our mountain town – with its clean air and cool temperatures – without driving their own vehicles. Public, plumbed, restrooms will be available at transportation nodes and trailheads.

We will welcome people who come to enjoy hiking, birding, biking and photography in our beautiful and protected natural setting. People will be able to learn about and see sustainable management of a mountain environment. The noise from human activities will be limited, and escapable, but several weekends or holidays each summer there will be some music and food and drink centered festive activity. There will be easier walking trails for families, yet relative solitude will be available to those who work for it by hiking on our more strenuous trails.

Here is a statement of goals Margaret referenced from the 2011 Albion Basin Transportation Feasibility Study:

- Protect natural resources (watershed, wildflowers, wildlife and air quality)
- Enhance and improve visitor experience through improved/increased education, interpretation and/or orientation
- Manage and improve safety
- Manage visitor access to ensure sustainable recreation
- Accommodate a diversity of users and ability types
- Identify cost effective/financially viable solutions
- Support local economic business opportunities

Finally, here is Cliff's list of "Strategies and tactics for accommodating increased Albion Basin summer visitors:"

1. Base area services/transportation
    1. Sunnyside Lift
    2. Food and retail
    3. Toilets
    4. Garbage/recycling
    5. ASL price Summer Road vehicle use to cover actual impacts
    6. Parking fee areas
  2. Cecret Lake Trail
    1. Main trailhead at Albion base, signed: Cecret Lake via Albion Meadows
    2. Sign the current Cecret Lake trailhead as: Cecret Lake Short Hike (recommended for young children and limited ability)
    3. Harden trail and Cecret Lake area in heavy use areas
    4. Accommodate more users with wider trail – 3 meters
    5. Revegetation/barriers at social trail areas
    6. Garbage and recycling containers at trailheads and lake
  3. Other hiking trails
    1. Trail building, realignment, connection, maintenance
    2. Signage: distance and difficulty
  4. Mountain bike trails - Signed and separated from hiking trails
    1. Lower
    2. Upper
    3. Castle Loop
  5. Funding: transportation funds
    1. Town share of sales tax increase
    2. Other transportation funds
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See you tomorrow,

Chris Cawley  
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**From:** Chris Cawley  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 13, 2018 7:00 AM  
**To:** Harris Sondak; Cliff Curry; Elise Morgan; Margaret Bourke; Sheridan Davis  
**Cc:** John Guldner; Piper Lever; Mike Morey; Nora R. Pincus  
**Subject:** Summer Recreation comments from Margaret

Dear Alta Town Council,

While it may be too late for you all to consider these comments in advance of the meeting, I thought I would pass along these more excellent comments from Margaret on her vision and goals for Alta Summer Recreation:

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In terms of *vision*:

Alta has been known for nearly a century as a world class ski area with unsurpassed snow. In recent decades, Alta, and LCC in general, have become more and more a place to seek summer recreation. As a warming climate brings a shorter and more erratic ski season, plus more hot summer days in the Salt Lake Valley, we expect this trend to accelerate.

Alta is unique in this country, being situated in a beautiful natural environment yet is close to a major urban center. The pressures from the latter threaten the former. For Alta to continue as a place of refuge and beauty, it must take steps to preserve it's character.

To limit the degradation to the Alta natural environment, the Town of Alta sees its mission as one of managing its prime resource, its surroundings: to preserve and protect it from the degradation that comes from misuse and overuse. Toward that end, the Town intends to partner with surrounding governmental entities and local businesses and nonprofits to create a future where the essential elements of this unique community are sustained.

My list of *goals* is slightly different, but does mention sustainability as the 2011 Feasibility study did, but is more akin to Cliff's bullets than the Mayor's prose:

- conserve natural resources for today and future generations,
- ensure the majesty and grandeur of our mountain setting predominates,
- provide opportunities for peace and solitude for diverse abilities and incomes,
- improve safety to people, flora and fauna,
- educate people on the value of natural resources and the etiquette in the "wild," and
- reduce pollution and degradation to natural resources.

I want the management system to be adaptable such that it ensures sustainability of the rural natural visitor experience; that is our resource. And the system must consider sustainability as one measure for

action, jeopardy, a level of fragility, or degradation to the resource trigger analysis and possible changing practices either in reducing demand or increasing supply. A quality experience is important, and to suggest that because some find an "expressway" type of experience acceptable is not an appropriate measure; one can find a municipal park, an amusement park, in other places. Alta is not that.

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