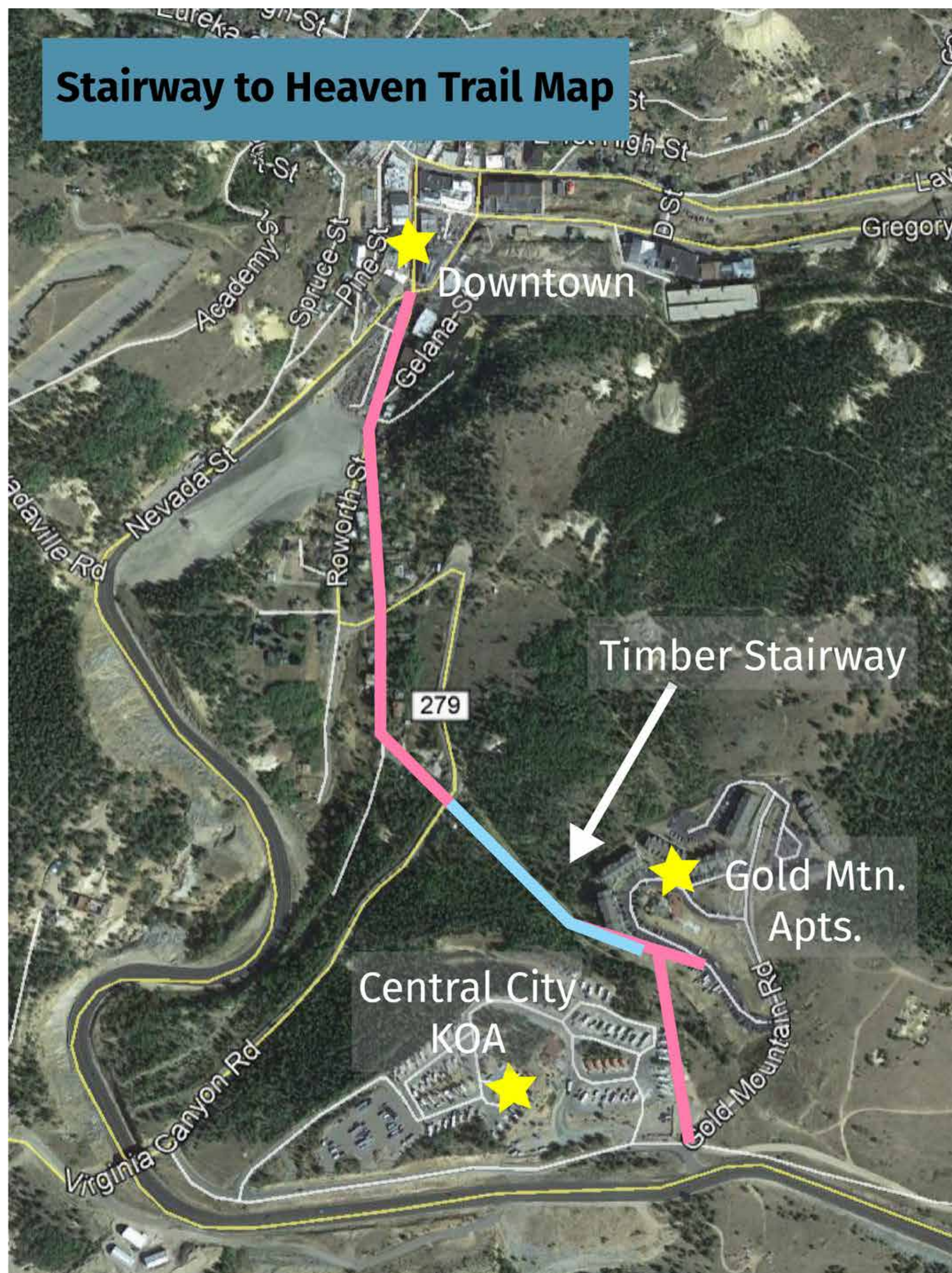


Stairway to Heaven: A Predictive Economic Impact Analysis

This project, prepared for Central City, Colorado, utilizes and analyzes outdoor recreation and trail economic impact reports to apply national trends and case studies to the Trails Master Plan, which was adopted in December 2020. One of the three priority projects outlined in the plan is the Stairway to Heaven, a trail that would connect a population center of Central City to the commercial and entertainment district downtown. As a result of this report, three alternatives were presented that indicates the economic potential of constructing the Stairway to Heaven and other trails in the plan.



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The proposed Stairway to Heaven trail (outlined in the Trails Master Plan) would connect Gold Mountain Village Apts and Central City KOA to Downtown by way of a Timber Staircase and developed path along Spring Street.



After reviewing relevant literature and case studies, three alternative scenarios were formed.

- 1. Modest Commuting**
This scenario utilized Colorado averages for walking as a commuting choice and a modest rate of recreation by existing Central City visitors.
- 2. Active Community**
Urban rates of walking by residents and a relatively high rate of recreation by existing visitors were assumed in the second scenario.
- 3. Generative Tourism**
With a full-build out and marketing plan, this scenario assumed that the trail system in Central City would draw a new demographic of visitors to the region and incentivize them to stay and explore.

With a limited budget, municipalities need to know if there is evidence that their plans will achieve the goals that were set forth. For Central City, knowing that the Stairway to Heaven will bring direct economic impact to the city was extremely important before committing or pursuing funding.



Stairway to Heaven
Predictive Economic Impact 

Central City wants to:

- diversify their economy
- build a new trail system
- attract new demographics

Utilizing case studies and literature, the Stairway to Heaven trail will bring

1	2	3
\$190,534	\$380,184	\$4,059,384

in direct economic impact

By: Paige McCallister, May 2021

Written For: City of Central, CO