

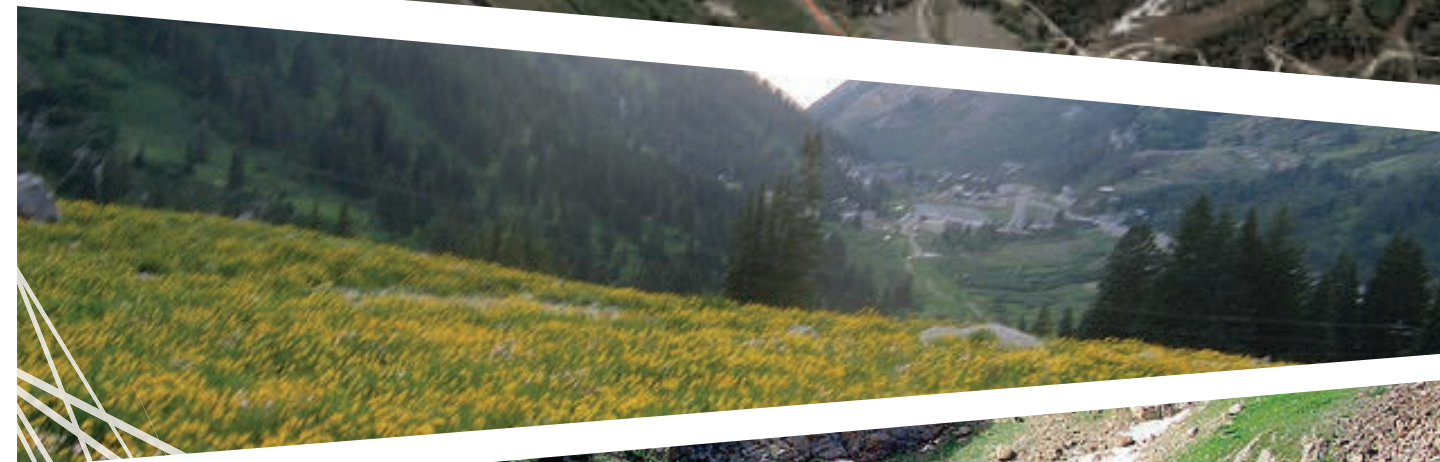
ALTA TOWN CENTER

CONCEPT SKETCH & MASSING STUDY

January 18th, 2015



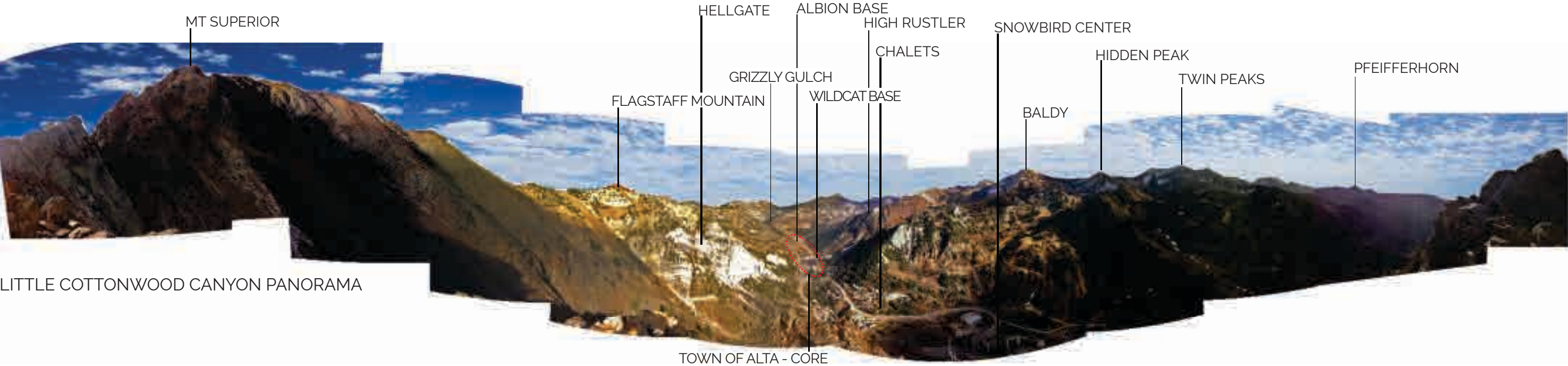
LOGAN SIMPSON
DESIGN



This study is intended to help the town of Alta visualize general plan policy and long-term community goals, as well as possible regional mass transit concepts that could affect Little Cottonwood Canyon. Images contained in this study do not represent development approved in the Town of Alta.

- 1.0 INTRODUCTION & APPROACH**
- 2.0 PLACEMAKING**
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INTRODUCTION

The Town of Alta (Town) has prepared this Concept Sketch and Massing Study to provide technical and design guidance for future development. This study includes comprehensive site analysis and investigation, and provides conceptual guidance that is consistent with the Town's general plan and vision. With future prospects that may include a major transit investment, a visual rendering of scenario options was needed to help Town staff and officials envision opportunities and consider preferences.

The Town is nestled into one of the world's most stunning canyon settings. Little Cottonwood Canyon (LCC) provides some of the best terrain for big mountain skiing and backcountry adventure in the world. The Town was founded over 150 years ago, during an era of mining claims and frontier spirit, and benefits from being located only 12 miles from metropolitan Salt Lake City, Utah. Over the years, Alta has weathered several severe economic cycles, been wiped away by devastating avalanches and rebuilt, and has played a major role in North America's ski industry. In recent decades, the Town has developed an identity as home base for what has become one of the world's unique ski areas. Alta Ski Resort has strongly branded and differentiated itself as "a place for skiers". In keeping with

this identity, the Town hasn't experienced substantial change or development since the 1970's.

For decades, avalanche management, traffic congestion, parking limitations, and the general safety and reliability of travel conditions have been acute challenges for LCC. These challenges have been studied in various planning projects and analyses, but no major action has been taken. In 2014, a comprehensive master planning process called the Mountain Accord brought together multiple user-groups, land-owners, and government partners to help shape the future of the Central Wasatch Mountains. In the context of Mountain Accord, the issue of reliable transportation in Little Cottonwood Canyon has become a core question. The need and desire for transit solutions in the canyon have become widely recognized, and the prospect of fixed transit modes such as Bus Rapid Transit or Rail are being considered in detail. While a major transit investment would introduce forces for change, it would also provide the opportunity to design a small, highly-functional Town Center layout leveraging the Town's unique location, cultural charm, and historical roots.

APPROACH

Site analysis began with development of composite maps. These maps are graphical illustrations of on-site conditions, where each layer of information is combined at identical scale. This helps render a clear comparison of a site's opportunities and constraints.

In support of this composite-map-based site analysis, precedent investigations of ski towns around the world were conducted by measuring their form, texture, scale, solar aspect, and attributes of place. Several of these analog towns were scaled and placed in the composite map to analyze. An analog with features that resonated strongly was Zermatt located under the Matterhorn in Switzerland. It is important to note that it is not the town of Zermatt itself, but instead several of the design features of Zermatt that resonated. These features include a fine-grained urban fabric, overlapping transportation/transit infrastructure, irregular street grids, and the evolution of its town square under the shadow of the iconic St. Mauritius Church.

These features, and the best features of other analogs that were analyzed, provided inspiration to rethink a future Town Center location, layout, and design with some "abstract idealism", rather than

focusing on current circumstances and limitations. After all, the current town is different from the original Alta mining town of the 1870's in every regard – form, texture, color, materials, location, and layout. A future town adapted to transit use would be expected to evolve in important ways as well.

With analysis and research complete and a clear technical understanding of the landscape's assets and limitations, several layouts, massing concepts, and site concepts were developed. These concepts connect existing planning influences, current and future uses, and community/commercial desires of the Town. After meeting with and presenting to the Planning Commission, three Concept Plans and 3D renderings were developed, each focusing on different development patterns. These concepts and renderings spatially demonstrate how the alternatives perform in relation to existing infrastructure and development objectives and the limitations of the sites.

Alta Circa 1873



Placemaking is a people-centered approach to community development. It plans, designs, and promotes "great public spaces" at the heart of every community. Placemaking contemplates and accommodates human uses and needs by ensuring each community has a cultural and social center that provides a functional and desirable setting where residents and visitors focus key hours of their life, including events, work, and play. A great public place is sociable and diverse, active and usable, comfortable and attractive, and accessible and convenient. It is memorable, unique, and authentic. It is a place for social interaction, economic activity, food, water, shade, and warmth. It is safe both day and night.

Placemaking begins with an understanding of how a community functions, how people interact, and where those interactions occur. Once these dynamics are understood, a vision for a place that can serve as the community "heart" may emerge at a particular site. The vision can evolve quickly into implementation ideas, beginning with small-scale, do-able improvements that bring immediate benefits to the space and the people who use it. It can also blossom into a long-term program of carefully articulated design and improvement.

Design is one of the many factors in placemaking, but the place itself and the amenities it provides are the anchors for suc-

St. Mauritius Church, Zermatt



cess. To extend our earlier example, Zermatt evolved over time, but its evolution unfolded from an inspired beginning with architecturally-iconic civic buildings connected to a functional public plaza. This evolution, with a great public place at its heart, yielded one of the world's most authentic places with its own variety of architecture and design. Zermatt, of course, is one example of thousands of memorable and unique places.

The Town of Alta, likewise, has assets that provide an extraordinary placemaking canvas. Beginning with the right place, a singular, sunny, south-west-oriented spot in the base of the canyon, this study provides several ap-

proaches to layout, design, circulation, and orientation of a future town center. This center would be designed to emerge as an authentic extension of the best aspects of Alta's past and present, and would maintain a scale that honors and preserves Alta's cultural and community heritage while also leaning into its future. The results of this study should be vetted by Alta's "public" and adopted only through proper process.



The 11 steps of placemaking

1. The community is the expert.
2. Create a place, not a design.
3. Look for partners.
4. You can see a lot just by observing.
5. Have a vision.
6. Start with the petunias: lighter, quicker cheaper.
7. Triangulate.
8. They always say "It can't be done."
9. Form supports function.
10. Money is not the issue.
11. You are never finished.

Source: Project for Public Spaces



Facing Pages

Parish church of St. Mauritius in Zermatt, Switzerland has functioned as a religious and cultural center since its original construction in 1285. Over the centuries the church has been enlarged and renovated several times and was rebuilt in 1913 to its present day form.

Alta Circa 1873



1873 HISTORIC ALTA IN EXISTING CONTEXT



This graphic shows Alta circa 1873 overlayed upon a 2014 model of the Town. Today, this original site is largely vacant and is located within the existing town center limits.

3.0 PRECEDENT PHOTO ANALYSIS



LES HOUCHE, FRANCE



JACKSON HOLE, WYOMING



LES HOUCHE, FRANCE



SUGAR BOWL, CALIFORNIA



ZERMATT, SWITZERLAND



CANAZEI, ITALY



JACKSON HOLE, WYOMING



BEAVER CREEK, COLORADO



MAMMOTH, CALIFORNIA



BEAVER CREEK, COLORADO



WHISTLER, CANADA



BEAVER CREEK, COLORADO



ZERMATT, SWITZERLAND



VAIL, COLORADO



KIRKWOOD, CALIFORNIA



SASS FEE, SWITZERLAND

ALTA TOWN CENTER



ZERMATT, SWITZERLAND



VAIL, COLORADO



JACKSON, WYOMING



WHISTLER, BRITISH COLUMBIA



AVORIAZ, FRANCE



BRECKENRIDGE, COLORADO



COPPER MOUNTAIN, COLORADO



TELLURIDE SKI VILLAGE, COLORADO

PRECEDENT PHOTOS

4.0 HISTORIC ALTA PHOTOS



SUGAR BOWL, CALIFORNIA



SUGAR BOWL, CALIFORNIA



AVORIAZ, FRANCE



VAIL (SOLARIS), COLORADO



BEAVER CREEK, COLORADO



CANAZEI, ITALY

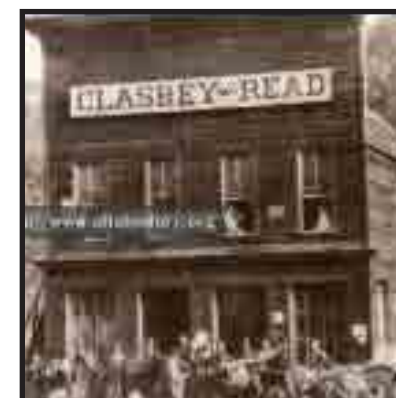


ST. MORTIZ, SWITZERLAND



BEAVER CREEK, COLORADO

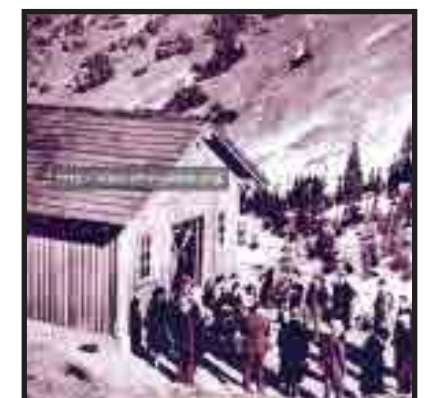
ALTA TOWN CENTER



ALTA GENERAL STORE



1875 ALTA



WATSON SHELTER, ALTA



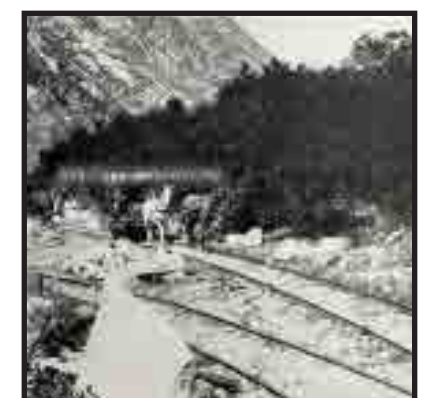
1870'S ALTA



ALTA TRAMWAY SKETCH



HISTORIC BRIDGE



MULE RIDE



1873 ALTA



PERUVIAN LODGE



POWDER RIDGE ROAD



VOLLEYBALL AT WILDCAT BASE



PERUVIAN LODGE



MOTHER LODGE



WILDCAT BASE



DEEP POWDER HOUSE



TOWN OFFICES & GOLDMINER'S DAUGHTER

ALTA TOWN CENTER

PHOTO INVENTORY

1. South elevation from below is more attractive
2. Existing residential development
3. Winter/summer activities bring life to base area
4. Parking lot is not aesthetically pleasing, dominates view
5. Expansive structure with poor site orientation
6. Wildcat base is the first to enter afternoon shade
7. Lacks placemaking details
8. No sense of arrival or entry to the Town of Alta



RUSTLER LODGE



ALTA LODGE



WILDCAT PARKING LOT



FUTURE TOWN CENTER



ALBION BASE LOT



TRANSFER TOW



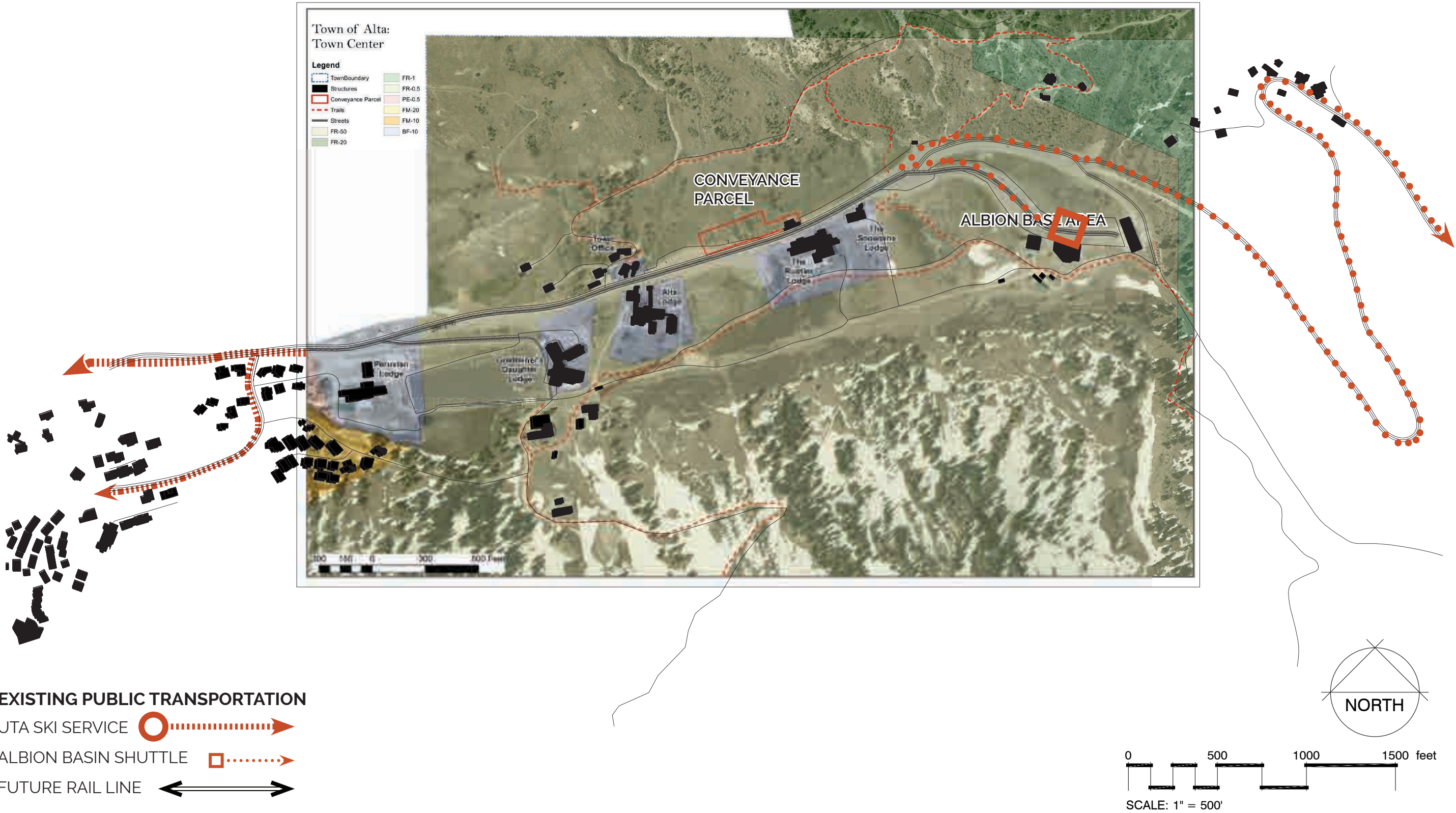
ALBION BASE SIGN

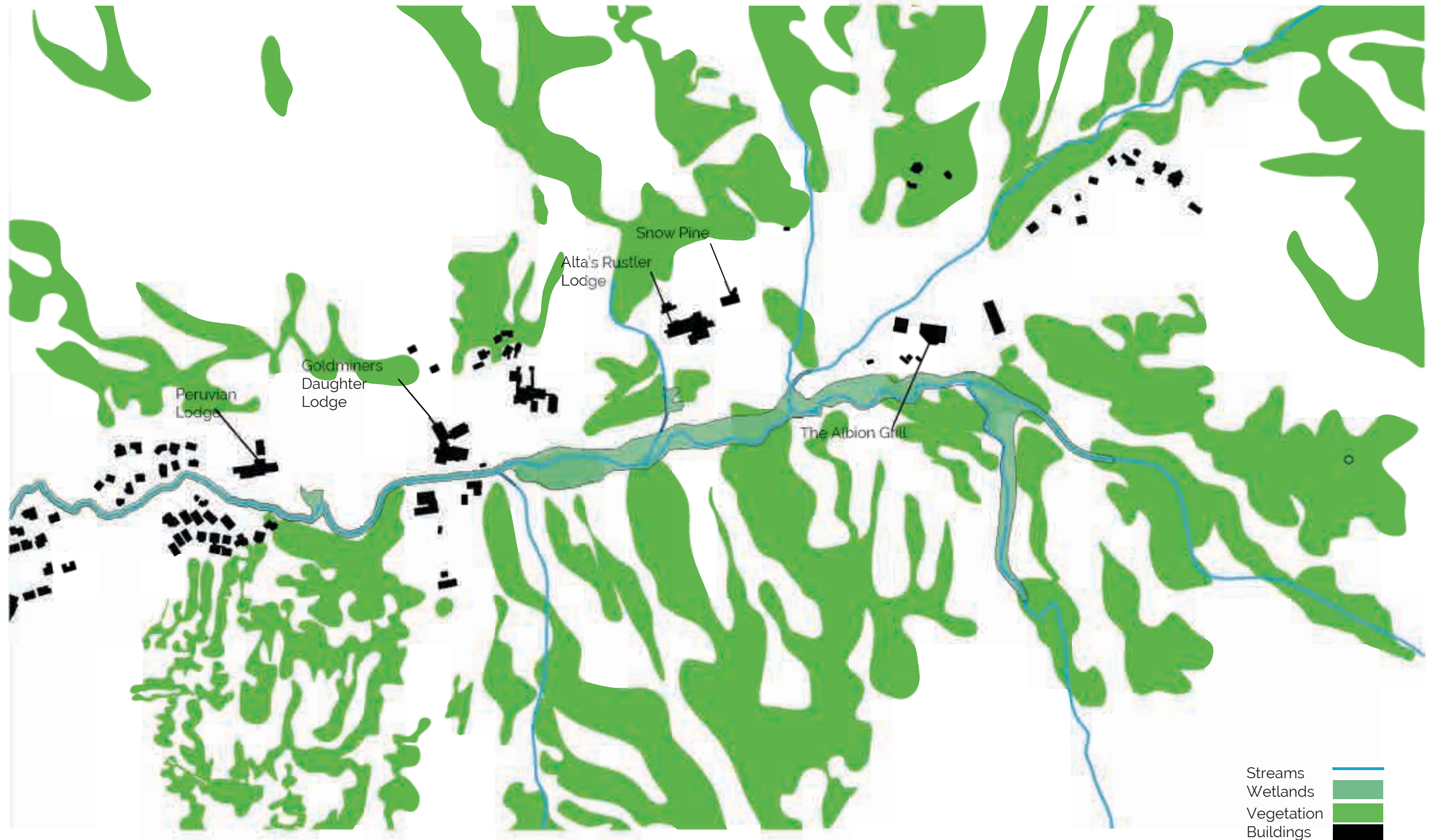


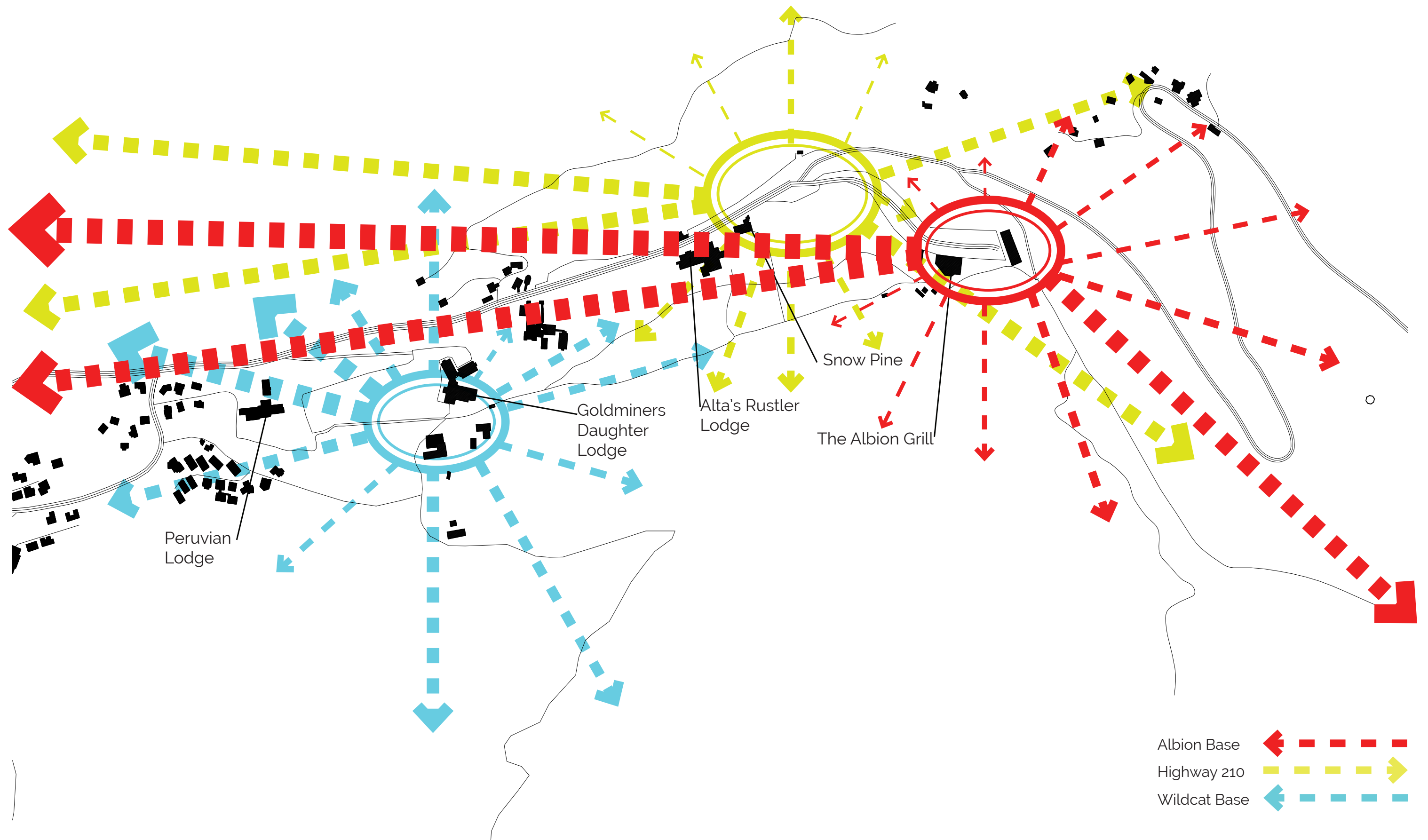
MUNICIPAL WATER SOURCE PARKING LOT

PHOTO INVENTORY




1. Provides quality views to the ski area. South elevation is more attractive
2. Good views, poor pedestrian access
3. Expansive lot dominates view & entry experience
4. Valley's western alignment enables views to Mt. Superior/High Rustler and sunsets
5. Existing structures have poor entry experience from parking lot
6. Attractive ski views
7. Expansive uninviting parking with small monument sign
8. Large parking area with no amenities or facilities for visitors

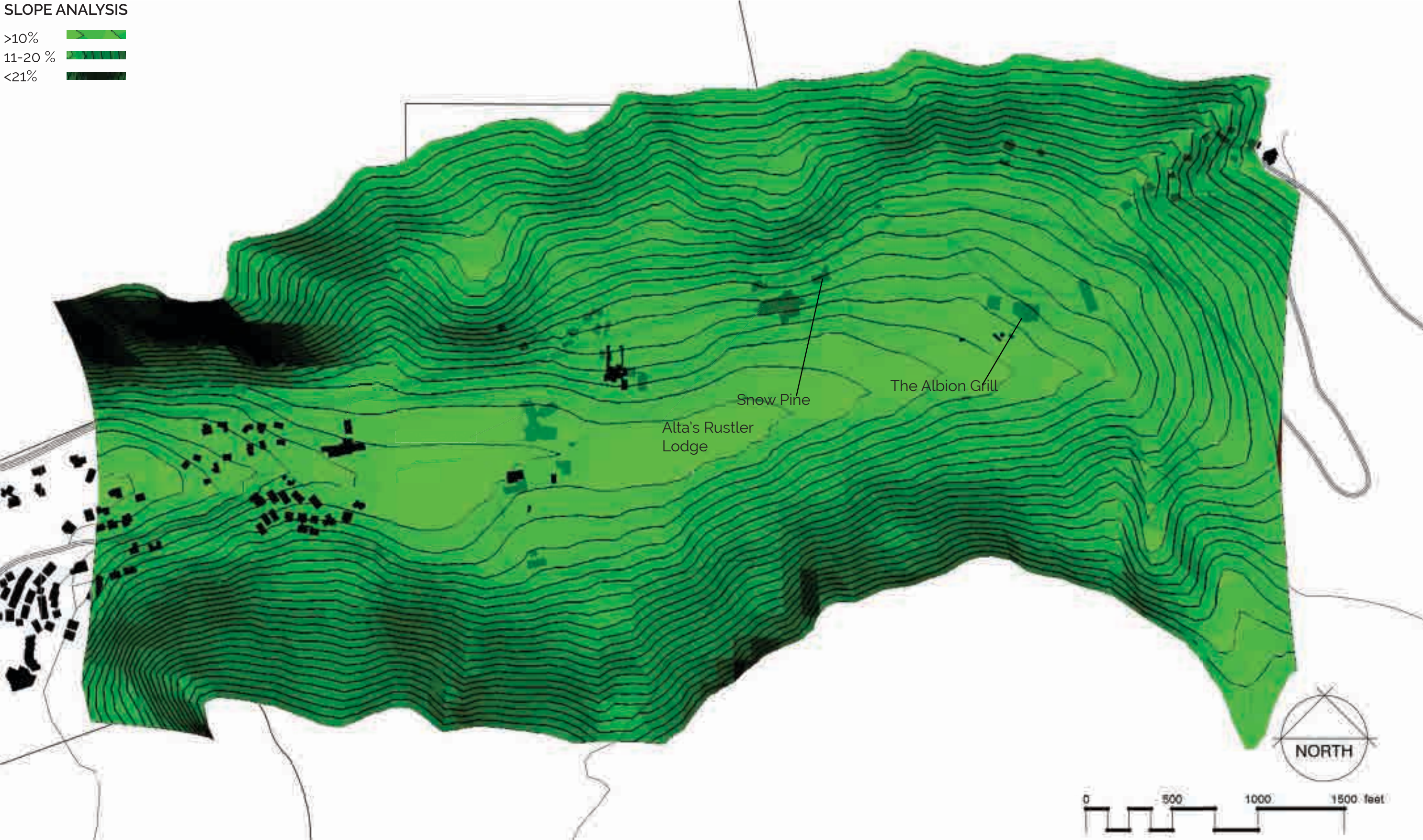






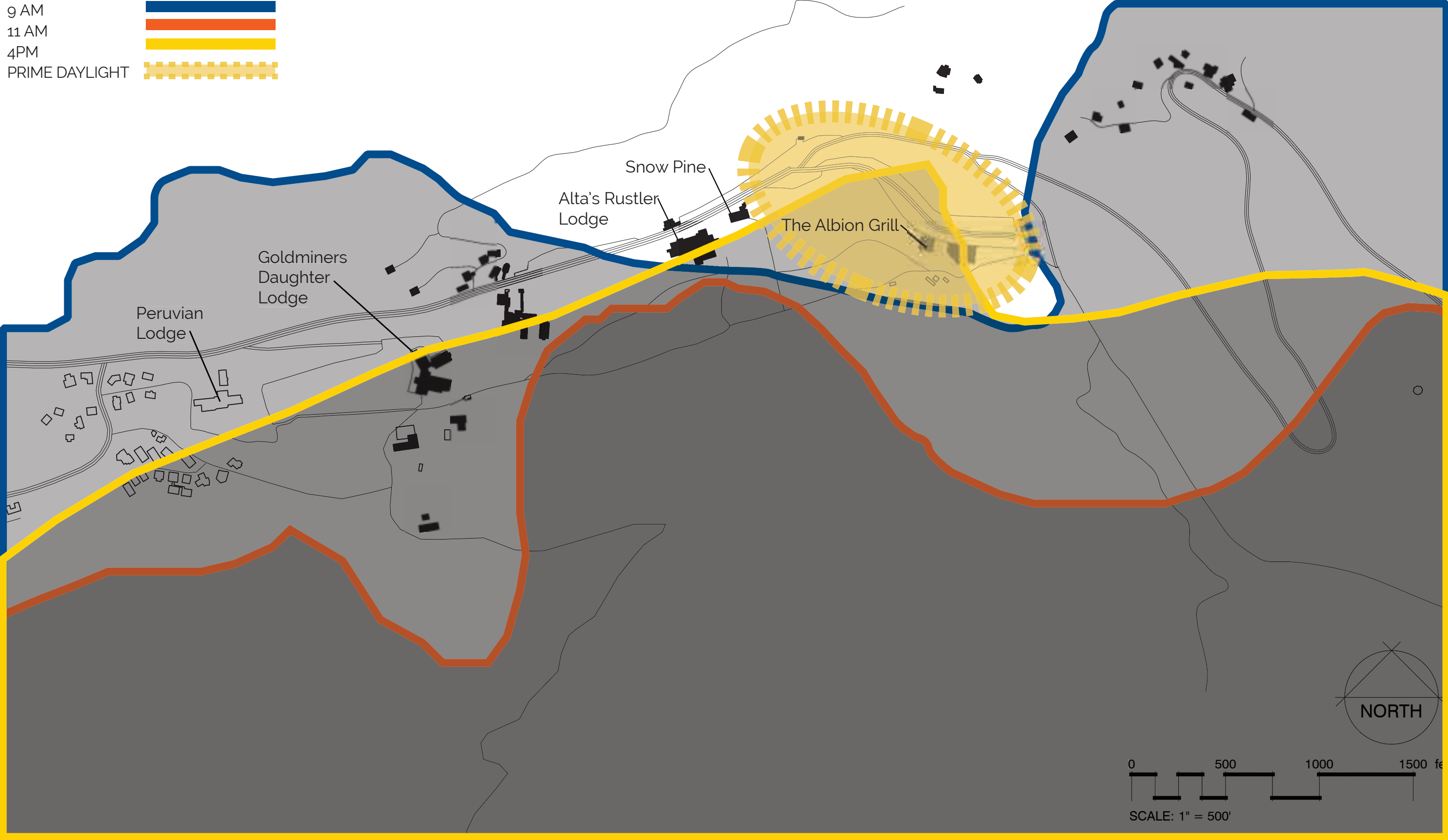
SLOPE ANALYSIS

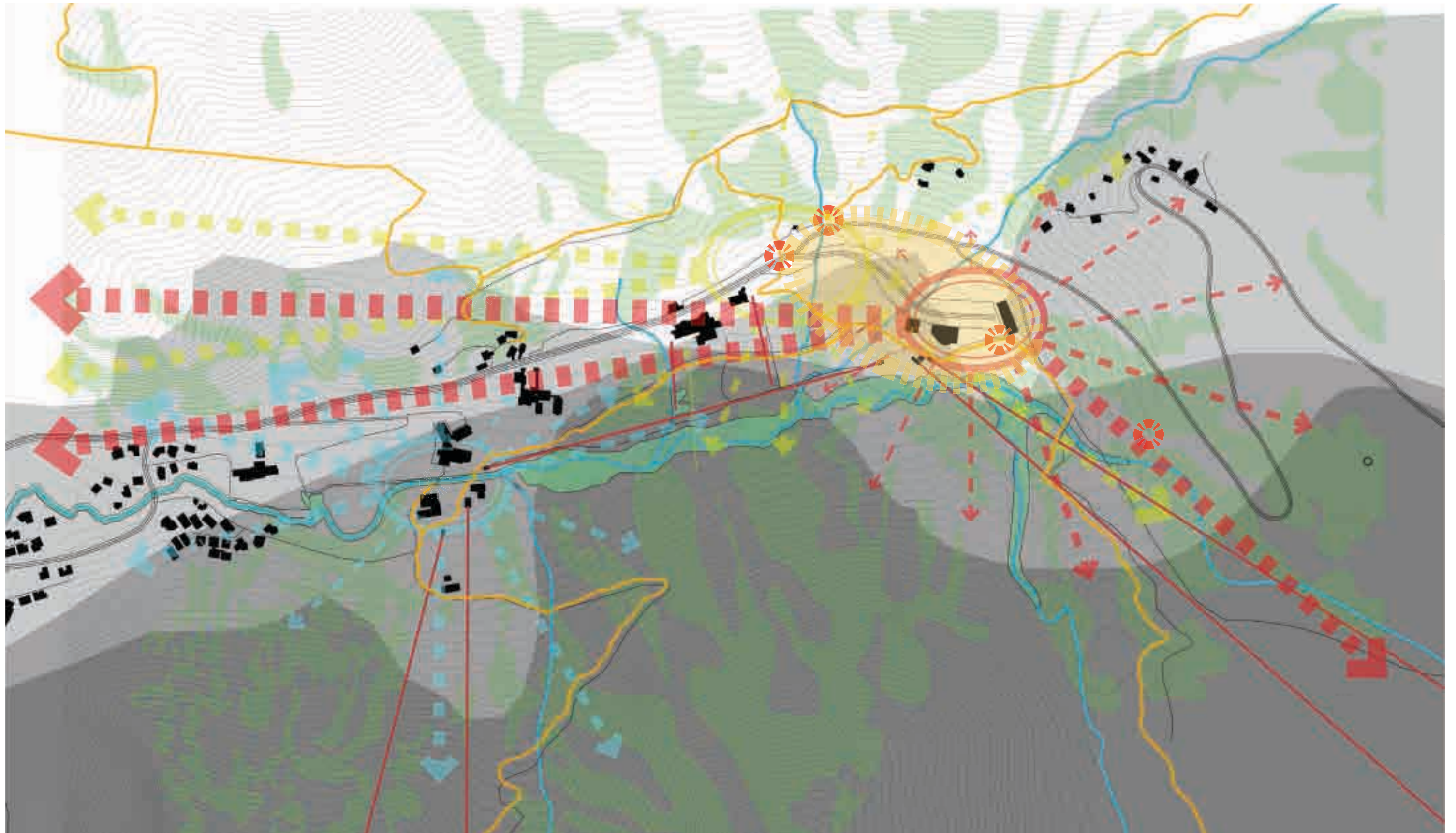
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- 11-20 % 
- <21% 

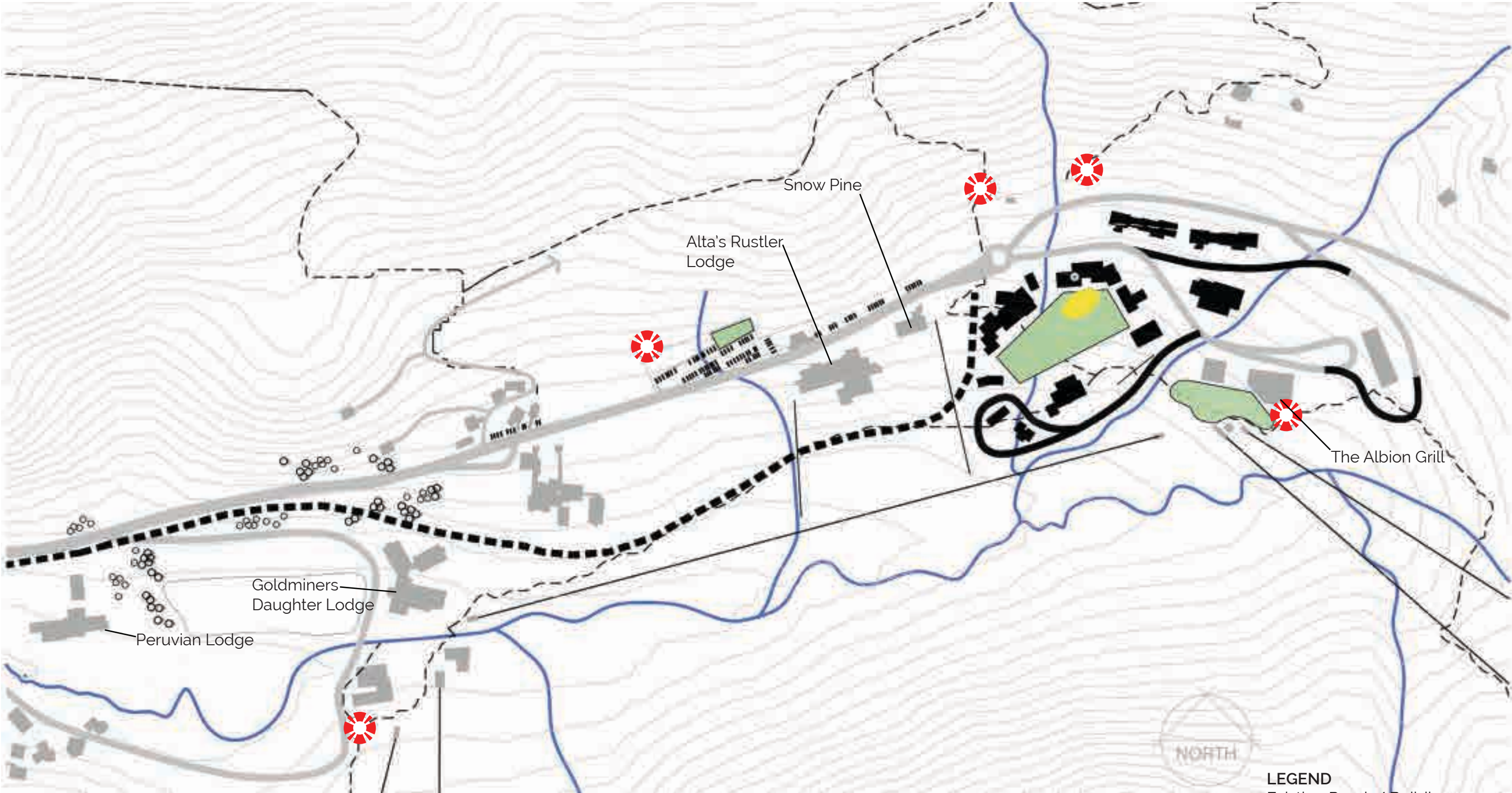


5.0 SHADOW ANALYSIS ON WINTER SOLSTICE

- 9 AM
- 11 AM
- 4PM
- PRIME DAYLIGHT

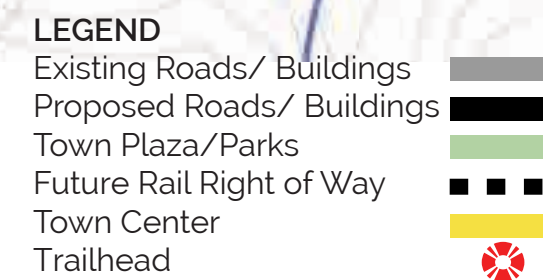
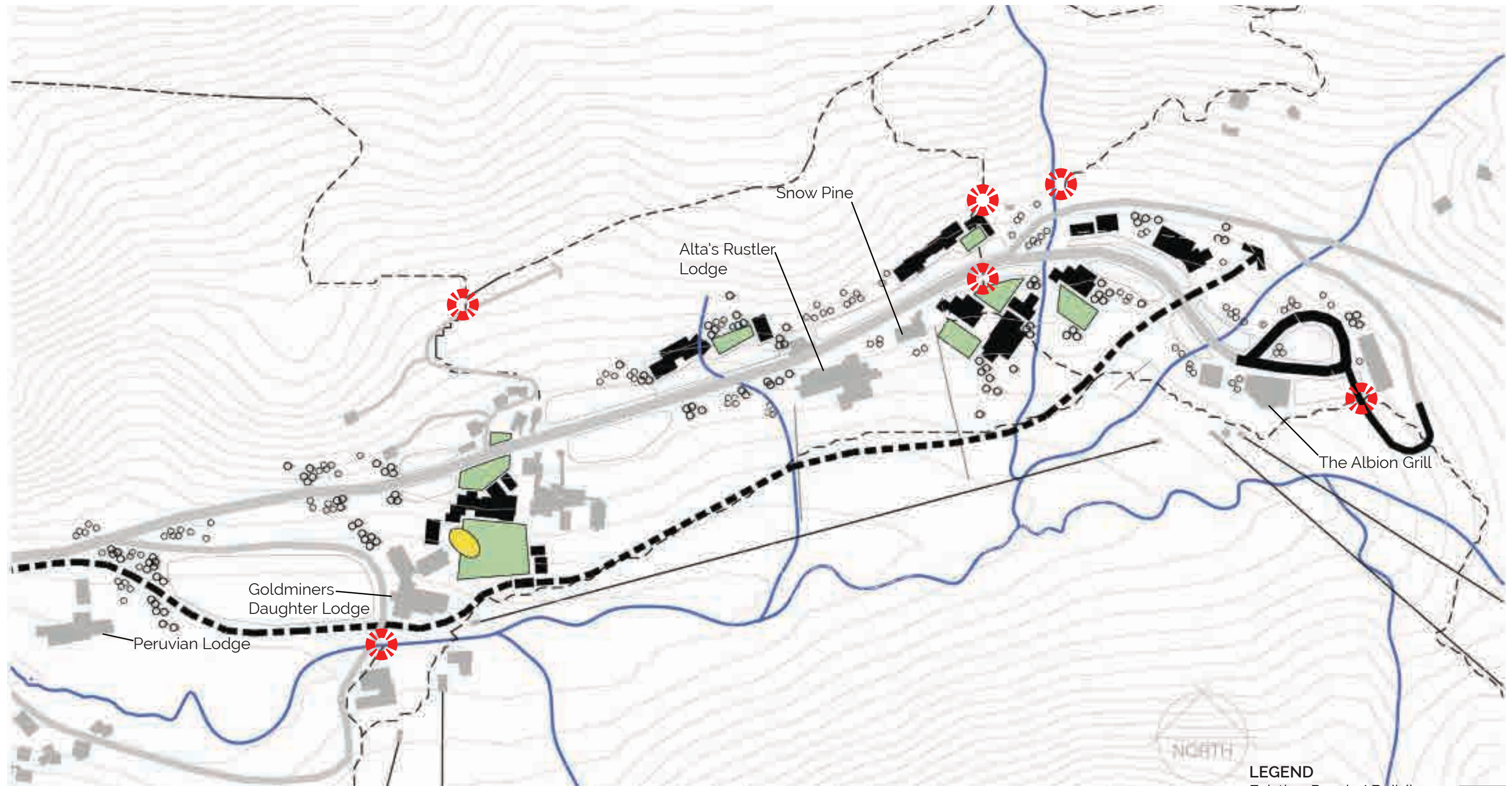


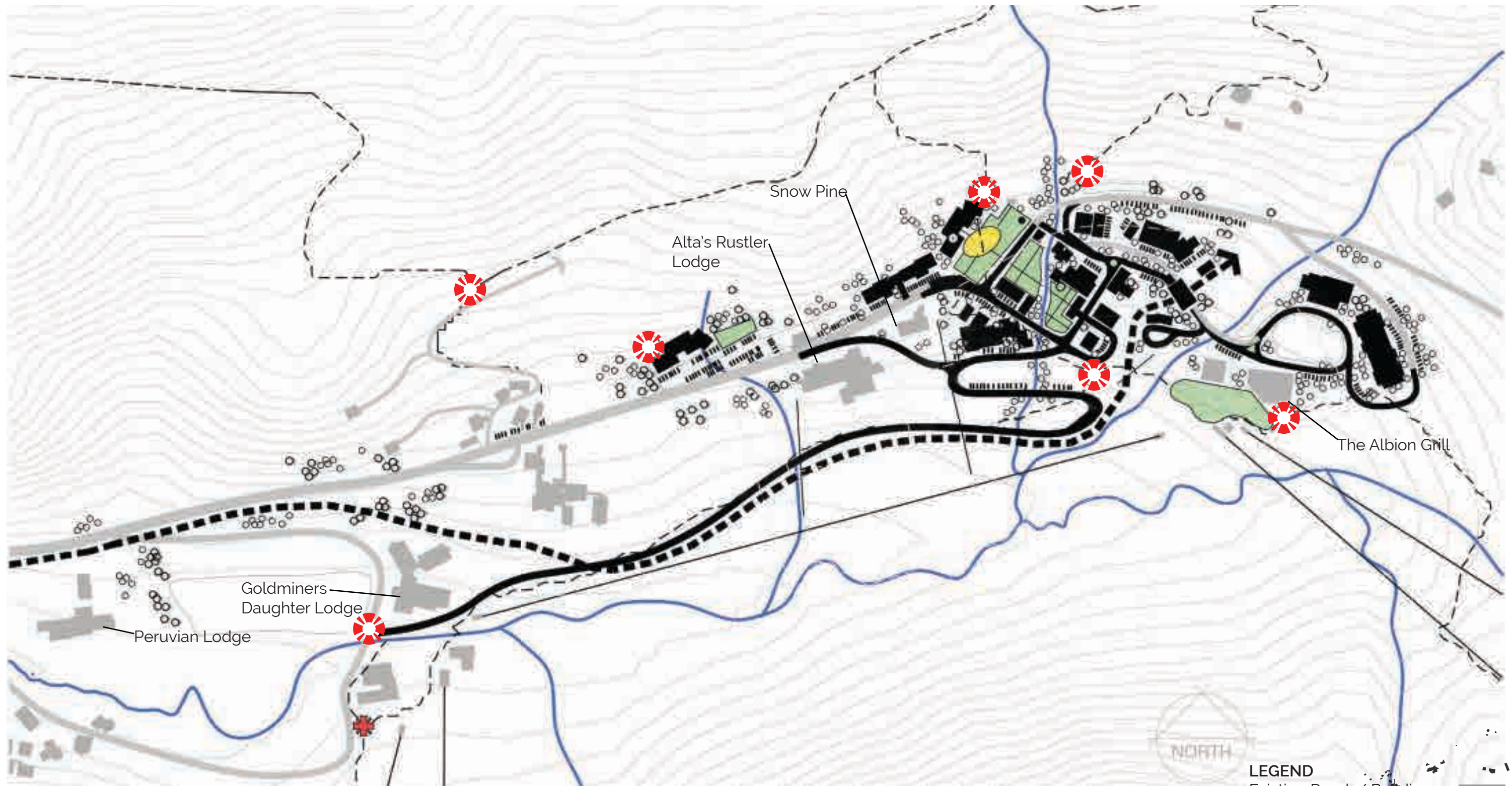




LEGEND

Existing Roads/ Buildings	
Proposed Roads/ Buildings	
Town Plaza/Parks	
Future Rail Right of Way	
Town Center	
Trailhead	





- LEGEND**
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Program Elements

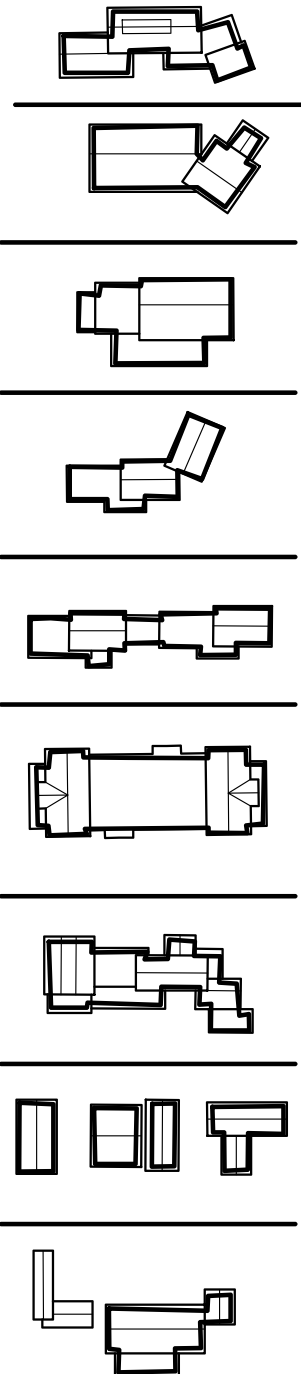
Three massing concepts were developed in draft and final form to illustrate how an identifiable Town Center might be situated and designed. For all concepts, integration of a sense of place, the unique histories of Alta, and preservation of the pristine environmental setting were prioritized. At the same time, each place was imagined with the vision of a few hundred people walking, biking, or attending events and actively socializing. The designs concentrate people in center(s) and maximize the opportunity for interaction by anchoring activity at a town square with modestly-scaled mixed use development, a community center, and prioritized access to trails and ski lifts.

After completing the first three draft concepts, the details of each were reviewed with the Planning Commission and Town staff. Several features of each concept were adjusted, and detailed rendering and massing work was then undertaken for each. The three final concepts, render the spatial arrangement of distinct patterns for development within the Town. These massing concepts each propose 8-10 new building elements, including:

- Light rail transit station
- Community center
- Commercial/office space
- Small public library
- Elementary school classroom
- Post office
- Transient accommodations of up to 100 guest rooms.

These options will also provide attractive pedestrian open space, year-round activities including trailheads and signage, and native landscaping to establish and protect environment and aesthetics.

Building Typologies

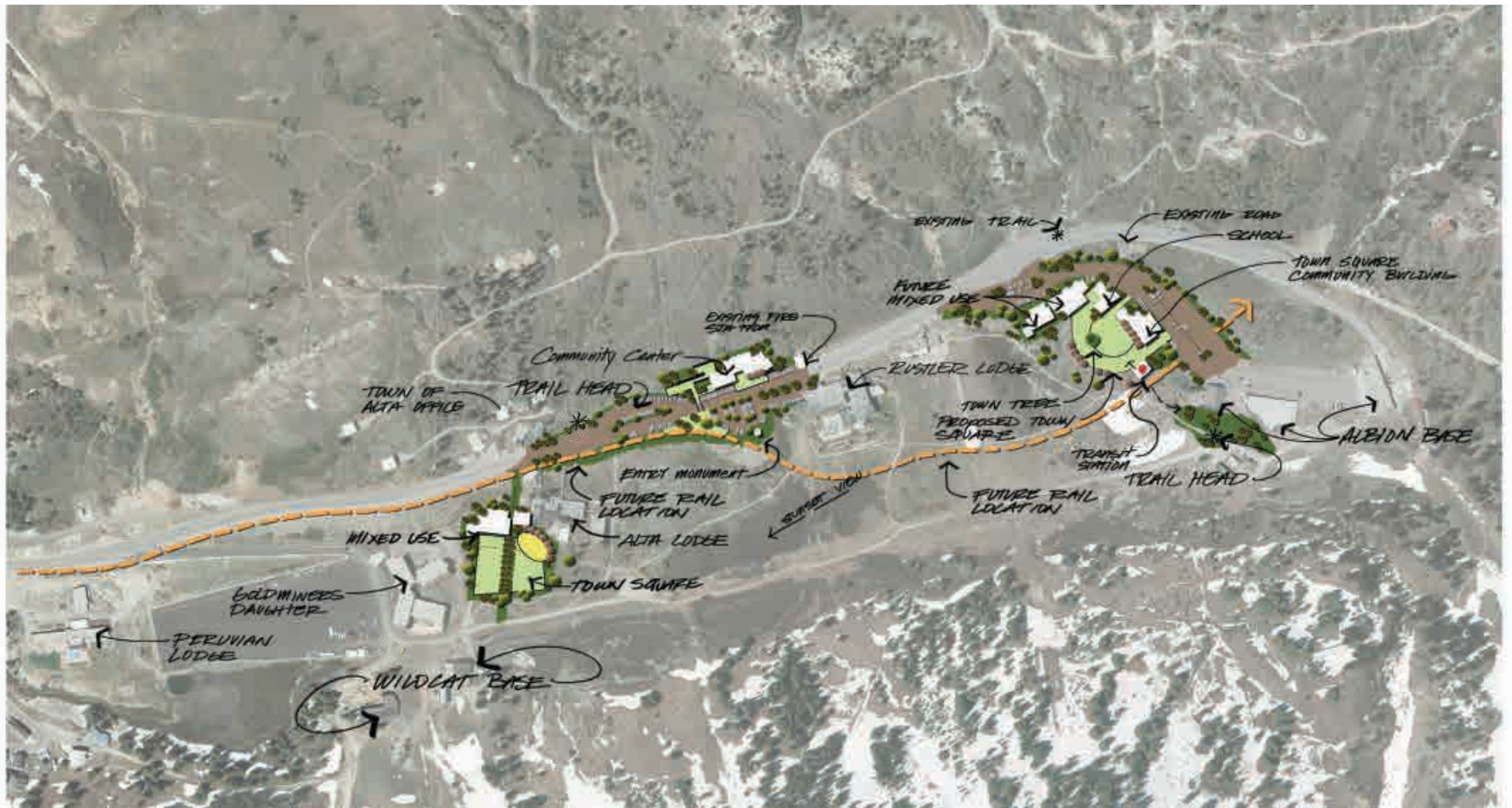




Final Concept 1: "The Community Center" focuses program elements into the Albion base area while aiming to maximize the use of existing roadway and other infrastructure. Future rail is kept on the roadway prism, and the transit stop lies just behind the town center. There

are two future road additions that enable the site to be terraced into four distinct levels. This design allows services and utilities to be alley-loaded and kept out of sight. This layout maximizes solar orientation of the community and draws people to the

center of the plaza deck for activity and views. Upon a site inventory analysis, a large Douglas Fir stood out in the center of the proposed town square and is labeled 'town tree' on the plan(s).



Final Concept 2: "Village Centers" cluster development into three areas that utilize existing infrastructure. This concept, more than the others, is an extension of the current land use pattern in the Town. The result is that activity in the Town is dispersed among three locations rather than being consolidated to a

primary center. Roadway infrastructure is preserved and leveraged, and the rail follows the roadway until approximately mid-town, where it descends to mid-slope on the north side of Little Cottonwood creek.

The town square in this plan is focused in the Wildcat Base area, and provides an ice skating rink, a plaza, and space for mixed-use development opportunities. In the conveyance parcel at mid-town, a community center is constructed and accommodates conven-

tions, a post office, and a small coffee shop. This parcel also provides a parking lot and public restrooms to accommodate dispersed recreation users. The remaining program elements, including civic uses, the transit station, and a secondary town square, are sited in the Albion Base Area.



Final Concept 3: The "Complete Town Center" concept rethinks the way the future Town functions for residents and visitors, and maximizes the placemaking opportunity without fixating on the constraints of current infrastructure. This concept requires a new commercial core boundary to be drawn around the

Albion Base Area, enabling the concentration of development and maximizing environmental preservation. The main program elements are consolidated around a highly functional town center with an iconic structure being the keystone of the plan. Rail quickly descends to the south side of Little Cot-

tonwood Creek, and weaves through the lower portions of the tree line before entering town, where a transit stop drops off residents and visitors at the town square, from which most of the town is easily walkable. Highway 210 is realigned to enter the Town from below, providing the best views of the town and its landscapes.

The Town tree is centered in a secondary plaza deck. A new internal road grid is organic and wanders about the Town's major and minor locations.





Proposed Buildings

Proposed Buildings



ALTA TOWN CENTER

Proposed Buildings

Proposed Buildings



THE "COMMUNITY CENTER" CONCEPT

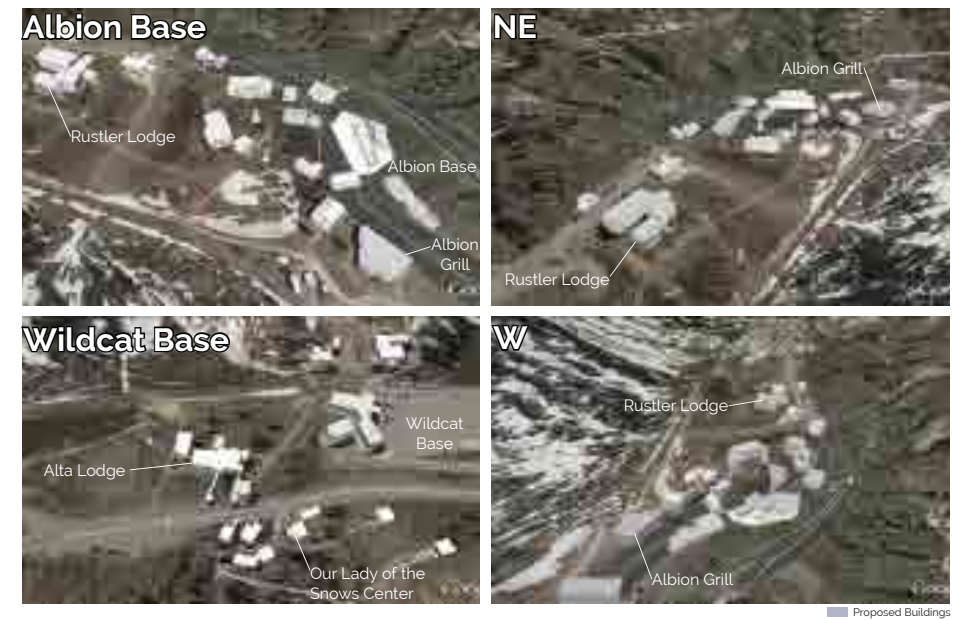
THE "VILLAGE CENTERS" CONCEPT

THE "COMPLETE TOWN CENTER" CONCEPT

DRAFT CONCEPT STUDIES



3D MASSING MODELS



FINAL PLAN CONCEPTS



Final Concept 1: "The Community Center" focuses program elements into the Albion base area while aiming to maximize the use of existing roadway and other infrastructure. Future rail is kept on the roadway prism, and the transit stop lies just behind the town center. There are two future road additions that enable the site to be terraced into four distinct levels.

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Watercolor rendering of "Complete Town Center" concept



Town center showing building form, pedestrian plazas, and rail alignment



Vail, Colorado



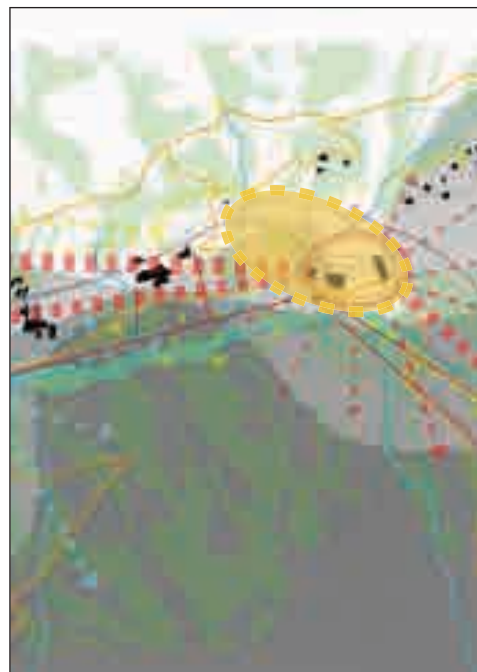
Zermatt, Switzerland



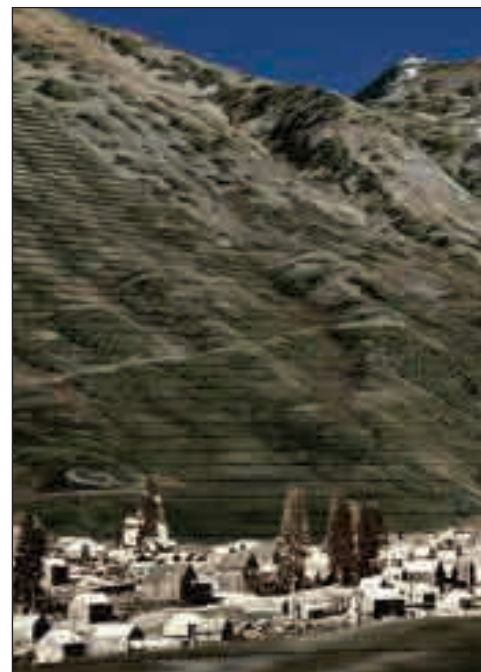
Albion Base parking lot looking west towards Mt. Superior



White block model of "Complete Town Center" Concept



Spatial Analysis Composite



Historic Alta in 3D Model



Watercolor rendering of "Village Centers" concept at conveyance parcel location



