CENTRAL OHIO GREENWAYS FORUM

DECEMBER 8, 2020
9:30 – 11:00 AM I MICROSOFT TEAMS

AGENDA:

COG Trail Prioritization Effort
Melinda Vonstein & Cheri Mansperger

Rails to Trails Conservancy: Trail Moments
Eric Oberg

Legislative Trails Caucus Planning
Brian Housh

Ohio to Erie Trails Update
Matt Simpson

CORPO Rural Trail Planning
Mike Borger

Regional Trails Roundtable Discussion
Letty Schamp
Central Ohio Greenways Forum

December 8, 2020
9:30 – 11:00
Trail & Active Transportation Prioritization Study
Central Ohio Greenways – Trail Development Working Group
Franklin County

120 Miles of Existing Trails

176 Miles of Proposed Trails
120 Miles of Existing Trail
120 Miles of Existing Trail

14% Population Can walk to a trail from home.

Walk to a trail from 23% of Jobs

Pedestrian Friendly Access within 1/2 Mile of Existing Trail
Franklin County, Ohio
120 Miles of Existing Trail

27% Population Can bike to a trail from home.

bike to a trail from 28% of Jobs
296 Miles of Existing and Proposed Trails

39% Population could bike to a trail from home

bike to a trail from 41% of Jobs
54 Segments

Ranked based on potential impact on

Social Equity
Public Health
Environment &
Economy

Connections vs. Projects

51 Trail Segments

Adjustment factor for segment length

54 Segments

Ranked based on potential impact on

Social Equity
Public Health
Environment &
Economy

Proposed Trail Segmentation
Franklin County, Ohio
Trail Segment Ranking Criteria

**Connectivity**
- Low stress roads
- Existing Trails
- Existing Access Points
- Proposed Access Points
- Bus Stops
- Barriers

**Health/Environment**
- Acres of Parks
- Miles of Riparian Corridor
- Number of Crashes

**Equity**
- Poverty
- Unemployment
- Race
- Disability
- Population
- Zero Car Households

**Economy**
- Jobs
- Education Facilities
- Cultural Amenities
Ranking of Proposed COG Trail Corridors
Franklin County, Ohio

Source: MORPC

The information shown on this map is compiled from various sources made available to us which we believe to be reliable. In the event of any discrepancy, our information takes precedence.

MORPC
Central Ohio Development Services Corporation

Ohio Location Map
120 Miles of Existing Trail

27% Population Can bike to a trail from home

bikes to a trail from 28% of Jobs
120 Miles of Existing Trail

50 Proposed 1st mile / last mile connections

45% Population could bike to a trail from home

Improving Access to Existing Trails Within 1 Mile
Franklin County, Ohio

Simulation of expanded bike friendly access, with selected road facility improvements
296 Miles of Existing and Proposed Trails

59% Population could bike to a trail from home.

bike to a trail from 62% of Jobs
120 Miles of Existing Trails

176 Miles of Proposed Trails

50 Miles of "Recommended Trails"

76% of Population and Jobs
466 Neighborhoods experiencing high rates of poverty
466 Neighborhoods experiencing high rates of poverty

40% of the high poverty Neighborhoods are served by current trails
466 Neighborhoods experiencing high rates of poverty

59% of the high poverty Neighborhoods will be served by existing and proposed trails.

85% of the high poverty Neighborhoods could be served by existing, proposed, and “recommended” trails.
MOVING FORWARD FROM THE PANDEMIC: PLANNING TO SUSTAIN AND GROW THE TRAILS, WALKING AND BIKING MOVEMENT
THE UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY OF THE MOMENT

- Pandemic accelerating shift in social norms and individual behaviors
- Surging trail use, bike boom and changing home/work norms
- Demand for outside space and decreased traffic resulted in rapid deployment of “streets for social distancing”
- Pandemic elevating long-standing equity issues, including access to trails/outside
- Confluence of funding opps: reauthorization, stimulus (TBD), challenging state budgets, presidential transition
ATTITUDES + BEHAVIORS

- 75% believe that trails contribute significantly to the well-being of a community.
- 46% say they now consider trails and open spaces to be important, whereas 37% considered trails to be important before the pandemic.
- 78% said it is very important to have access to places to walk and bike that are completely separated from vehicle traffic.
- 70% would like to use the trail a lot or a little more frequently.
- 66% are getting outside about the same or more than they were before the pandemic.
- 86% say that having access to open space/outdoors has reduced their stress.

Source: RTC survey conducted via SurveyMonkey, May 2 – May 22, 2020 among 1,980 respondents including 740 RTC members and 1,240 respondents from the general public, representing an oversample of 31% Latinx, 33% Black and 36% White.

Source: RTC ongoing Trail Moments survey conducted via SurveyMonkey, Sept. 7 – Nov. 30, 2020 among 1,060 respondents from the general public, Representing 74% White, 9% Latinx and 4% Black.
Trails are nice to have
I use trails for fun
I need trails in my neighborhood
I demand trails for my community
STRATEGIC APPROACH

**Strategy #1**
Showcase Diverse Trail Use and Capture the Story
Audience: New-to-trails walkers, bikers, runners, etc.

**Strategy #2**
Encourage Quick Build Infrastructure Change
Audience: Mayors, local decision makers

**Strategy #3**
Amplify and Influence
Audience: Trails, Bike, Outdoors, Health, Funder Sectors
“We take for granted these public spaces and the impact they can have ... just to be able to take a run and connect with nature and back into your own mind is priceless.”

—Quest Skinner, Washington, D.C.

“I feel like running saved my life. ... If I hadn’t gotten into exercise ... [t]here’s no doubt I would have had a heart attack.”

—Vincent Viars, Morgantown, West Virginia

“Trails are a literal escape from the monotony and existential angst of 2020. I am grateful to have rail-trails nearby, and thankful for our park staff and volunteers for keeping them in such nice condition.”

—Amy Collins-Werfield, Columbus, Ohio
"Riding these trails has been so impactful; it has brought me a healthy way to work out the stresses of life—and a peace of mind."

—Anamaria Spiteri, Lake Geneva, Wisconsin

**Story Curation: Hundreds of Survey Responses**

“The next thing I know I had almost spent 2 hours there. Since I have been walking the trails lately I was able to take a short cut back to my vehicle. I am enjoying exploring and reconnecting to our city here.”

Robin Harrison, 55-64
Identified as Black, F
Houston, TX

Since March I have been doing daily walks, long weekend bike rides and getting to hike some of my bucket list adventures! I am no longer as stressed and I have even found a new job that’s closer to home and way less stressful! I think it all had to do with having the time to think on those daily walks and really go after what I wanted!

Jessica DeVirgi, 25-34
Identified as Caucasian, F
Hazlet, NJ
Being on the trail has been a whirlwind! So many emotional and physical ups and downs. From the 1 mi nature walks to the +30 mi ultra runs in all climates. Now that the snow has started to fall let’s keep the whirlwind going! Let’s squeeze in a few last runs before switching over to...
1700+ Signs Distributed in 30 states
IA, FL, OH, PA, IL, NH, WA, MD, VA, WI, NY, TX, MI, VT, TN, AL, SC, IN, AR, MN, CT, NM, CO, UT, NE, MA, CA, GA, NJ, and WV

Paso del Norte Trail
September 29 at 7:56 PM - El Paso, TX 📍

As people seek out spaces near their homes to be active at a safe physical distance, trails have proven to be so important to so many spaces to play, commute, walk, bike, run and explore. This is why we have partnered with @railstotrails to capture these moments of joy, moments of solitude, moments for exercise and self-care. 🚴‍♂️ 🍃

We hope you’ll share your “Trail Moments” and the stories of how trails have impacted your life during COVID-19. 😊

Thank you, Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, for your support of trails!

Paso del Norte Health Foundation El Paso Border Coalition for Fitness Sun City Cruisers Podium Finish Sport Boutique-Cafe-Indoor training

#TrailMoments #pdntrail #pasodelnortetrail #trails See Less
—at Independence Bike & Hike Path.

Paso del Norte Trail is at Playa Drain Trail.
September 29 at 8:04 PM - El Paso, TX 📍

Para muchos de nosotros, salir al aire libre o a los senderos en donde podemos jugar, caminar, andar en bicicleta, correr y explorar a una sana distancia ha sido de gran importancia y ayuda. 🚴‍♂️ 🍃

Por eso hemos decidido colaborar con @railstotrails para capturar esos momentos. Tus historias y experiencias son significativas y marcan la diferencia. Esperamos que nos puedas ayudar compartiendo tus historias 😊

#TrailMoments
The Trail Moments campaign shows how important local and regional trails are to health and wellness.

Press release from the Forest Preserve District of Will County:

The Forest Preserve District has joined a Trail Moments campaign to show how important local and regional trails are to our health and well-being, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The effort was organized by the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, a nonprofit group that promotes the creation of trails from former rail lines. The Forest Preserve District has installed signs promoting the campaign on its converted rail line trails to encourage those who use them to share their special Trail Moments with others. The Forest Preserve District's rails-to-trails paths are the Joliet Junction, Old Plank Road and Wauponsee Glacial trails.

"We believe that these trails are part of the fabric of the communities they serve and offer users a safe way to exercise their minds and bodies and experience a little bit of the nature around them," said Ralph Schultz, the Forest Preserve District's chief operating officer. "And we'd like to hear from others how these trails have impacted their lives."
SHARE THE TRAIL

Practice Safe Social Distancing on the Trail

Before you head out, check to ensure the trail is open. Be prepared that trails may have limited services: facilities may be closed, and maintenance and security may be limited or unavailable. Find trail-manager contact info at TrailLink.com. Check coronavirus.gov for the latest public-health guidance.

- Keep 6 feet between you and others at all times.
- On the trail, do not gather in groups.
- Avoid playgrounds or other areas where groups may form.
- Carry water, hand sanitizer and disinfecting wipes to further protect yourself.
- Leave any area where you cannot maintain a 6-foot distance.
- Do not touch your face.
- Wash or sanitize your hands frequently.
- Stay home if you exhibit any symptoms of illness.

Visit railstotrails.org/COVID19 for resources and information about ways to stay healthy and well during this time of social distancing.
#RecreateResponsibly

**Winter Edition**

- **Know Before You Go**
- **Practice Physical Distancing**
  - 6ft
- **Plan Ahead**
- **Play It Safe**
- **Explore Locally**
- **Leave No Trace**
- **Build an Inclusive Outdoors**
OH Legislative Trails Caucus - Opportunities

Trails are at the heart of healthy, thriving communities!

Brian Housh
Midwest Policy Manager
Trails Caucus Best Practices

- Bipartisan, Bicameral, Multi-Regional & Diverse (e.g. District, Background)
- Co-Chairs from Both Parties and Both Chambers
- Coalition/Stakeholder Group to Support Caucus & Provide Leverage
- 2-4 Caucus Meetings/Events Annually
- Legislative Platform – Vision, Mission & Goals
- Caucus Newsletter & Regular Engagement Tactics (include Legislative Aides)
Ohio Trails Caucus in Action

• Mar 29, 2017 - Caucus Forms; Now 49 Members (Over 37% of Legislature; Convenes May & Sep)
• Oct 25, 2017 Kickoff Event with 200+ Legislators & Staff & Partners on Scioto Trail near Statehouse
• Nov 29, 2017 - Senate Unanimously Passes SCR 15 Designating 2018 “Ohio’s Year of the Trails”
• Jan 2018 - Dept of Natural Resources Launches Online Trail Map (trails.ohiodnr.gov)
### Caucus Mission & Goals

- **Improve existing** trails
- **Ensure** smart planning for future trails; develop a statewide trails network
- **Connect** Ohioans with opportunities for outdoor recreation and active transportation

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiatives / Near-Term Goals:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ Legislator Awareness Event</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Online Trail Map (Jan 2018)</td>
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<td>✓ New State Trail Plan (May 2019)</td>
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<td>o Build Capacity within Relevant State Agencies</td>
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<td>o Statewide Economic Impact Study to Measure Benefits</td>
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*Ohio Legislative Trails Caucus*

*Creating a Statewide Trails Network to Connect Ohioans*

Join a growing list of state legislators committed to connecting Ohio's trails. Contact Nate Shipman at Nate.Shipman@ohiosenate.gov
“California of the Midwest”

MID-TERM (2019-2020) GOALS
Completion of short-term Caucus goals help focus these objectives:

1. Create State ATP/RTP to Accelerate Trail Network Development
2. Establish Dedicated Trail Maintenance Funding Source
3. Expand Funding for Trails, including Clean Ohio (Trails) Fund

Potential funding mechanisms – bonds, gas tax increase, dedicating recreation-related (e.g. bike/bike parts) sales tax revenues, increasing sales tax, other innovative funding sources/strategies
The OhioNetwork

“A multi-regional coalition advocating to complete & execute trail/active transportation plans across the Buckeye State, creating a statewide trails network to connect Ohioans.”

Ultimate Goals:

• Statewide Recreational/Active Transportation Trail Network
• Innovative Policies to Support Trail Network Development
• Increased Dedicated Funding for Construction & Maintenance
• Funding Assistance to Complete Local/Regional Trail/AT Plans
• Connecting People, Places & Opportunities
Opportunities – We Need YOU!

*What are the priorities and How do we move forward?*

- **The Ohio Trails Vision Implementation**
  - 12/22/2020 (10-11:30) – OhioNetwork Meeting

- **Connectivity & Maintenance**

- **Advocate Training**
  - 1/6/2020 (10-Noon) – COG Vision & Telling Your Stories

- **Caucus Membership**
  - Thank You to Tina Maharath, Stephanie Kunze & Andrew Brenner + Adam Miller, Richard Brown, Beth Liston, David Leland, Laura Lanese & Erica Crawley
  - Hearcel Craig + Mary Lightbody, C. Allison Russo Dontavius Jarrells & Kristin Boggs
Questions?

Brian Housh
Midwest Policy Manager
brianh@railstotrails.org

Connect with RTC:
www.railstotrails.org
@railstotrails
Ohio to Erie Trail Progress (326 miles is 85% Complete)

- Delaware County - 2.5 miles of trail construction
- Licking County Trailhead
- Camp Chase Trail (Battelle Darby Creek Metro Park) - 1 mile Construction
In The News

- Ohio Trail Connections Summit
- Promote OTET tourism
  - Wilderness Voyagers
  - WomanTours
- Plan your trip
  - Lodging and campsites
  - Bike shops
  - Attractions
  - Trail alerts
- 326 Club

326 Club = Tourism!
Questions?

www.ohiotoerietrail.org