

Appendix B

***Connecting Communities* Informational Handout**

CONNECTING COMMUNITIES –

GALLATIN COUNTY TRAILS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

WHAT IS THE TRAILS ADVISORY COMMITTEE?

The Committee was appointed in August 1999 as a formal “advisory committee” to the Gallatin county Planning Board. It includes 11 volunteer committee members from around the county, with a mix of experience and skills relating to public trails.

WHAT’S THE PURPOSE OF THE COMMITTEE?

The County Planning board charged the Trails Advisory committee with two primary tasks:

- Inventory existing trails and planned trails in Gallatin County; and
- Develop a proposal for a county-wide trail system. This task includes developing criteria for siting trail corridors, identifying potential corridors, estimating costs and other resource requirements for the potential trail corridors, and setting priorities among the possible new trails.

DOES THIS MEAN THE COMMITTEE WILL TAKE THE LEAD IN ACQUIRING LAND OR EASEMENTS AND DEVELOPING TRAILS?

No, that’s the job of other organizations. The committee’s job is to develop a county-wide vision that the County commission can incorporate into its planning and funding cycle, and trail developers can use to guide their projects.

WHERE WILL THE IDEAS FOR THE TRAIL NETWORK COME FROM?

The ideas for trail corridors will come from the trail users and landowners of the county. The committee welcomes these ideas, in any form that interested citizens wish to convey them. The committee will be meeting with city commissions, town councils and school boards in 10 locations around the county, to discuss its work. These meetings will be followed by well-publicized open houses, to solicit ideas for the trails proposal.

WILL THE PROPOSED TRAIL NETWORK INCLUDE VERY SPECIFIC TRAIL ROUTES? WILL IT NAME THE PARCELS OF LAND TO BE TRAVERSED?

In most cases, no. That requires a great deal of research and negotiation between landowners and trail developers. The proposal **will** identify the situations where one particular corridor is clearly superior to alternatives – the availability of a continuous route along a road right-of-way vs acquiring easements from multiple landowners, for example.

HOW WILL THIS WORK TAKE INTO ACCOUNT ALL THE TRAILS ON FEDERAL AND STATE LAND WITHIN GALLATIN COUNTY?

The inventory of existing trails will include the trails on public land. The proposal for new trail corridors can also include trails on public land such as National Forest land. However, the Gallatin County Planning Board has directed the committee to concentrate its efforts on **connecting the communities** of Gallatin County in the trail-network proposal. In this way, new trails can serve as transportation routes as well as places for recreation. Most new trails in or adjacent to our communities are likely to be on city land, private land, or highway rights-of-way.

WHAT TRAIL USES WILL BE INCLUDED IN THE INVENTORY AND THE PROPOSAL?

All allowed trail uses will be noted in the descriptive data that accompanies the map of existing trails. For new trails, types of appropriate uses will be suggested for each new proposed trail corridor. Since the proposal will focus on areas in and around communities, most of these new proposed trails will probably be limited to non-motorized uses.

WHAT'S THE SCHEDULE FOR THE WORK OF THE TRAILS ADVISORY COMMITTEE?

The meetings with city councils and commissions will take place during the winter of 1999-2000. The opens houses will be held in spring 2000. The committee will present its inventory and proposal to the Planning Board by late winter, 2001. It is anticipated that the Gallatin County Commission will then hold a public hearing on the proposal and formally adopt it as part of the county master plan of "growth policy".

HOW CAN AN INTERESTED CITIZEN HAVE A SAY IN THE TRAILS PROPOSAL?

Thin about how and where trails in your neighborhood could be an improvement to your quality of life. A safe route for your children to bicycle to the library or the pool in town? A long-distance bicycle commuter trail that you could use to get to work in the summer? A scenic path that would be attractive to tourists, drawing them out of their automobiles in your town? A bike route through town that would mitigate traffic congestion? These are among the purposes that new trails would serve. Talk to your neighbors, then bring your ideas to a trails open house so they can be included in the trails proposal.

WHO ARE THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS?

Gretchen Rupp (chair)	586-8363	Greg Johnson	282-7766
Laurita Vellinga	586-7771	Carol Collins	995-4467
Sandra Smiley	585-1787	Mike Welch	994-0375
Gary Vodehnal	587-5030	Michele Corriel	388-4062
Cecelia Reiner	585-9699	Gene Townsend	285-3633
Cyndi Crayton	585-2789		