

TRAIL TOWNS

— Capturing Trail-Based Tourism —



A GUIDE FOR COMMUNITIES IN PENNSYLVANIA

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A project of Allegheny Trail Alliance

This project was administered by the Regional Trail Corporation and financed in part by a grant from the Keystone Recreation Park and Conservation Fund, under the administration of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.

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Additional funding provided by:

National Park Service

Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail Office

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Dedicated in memory of Steering Committee member

JOE BENDEL

(1931 - 2003)

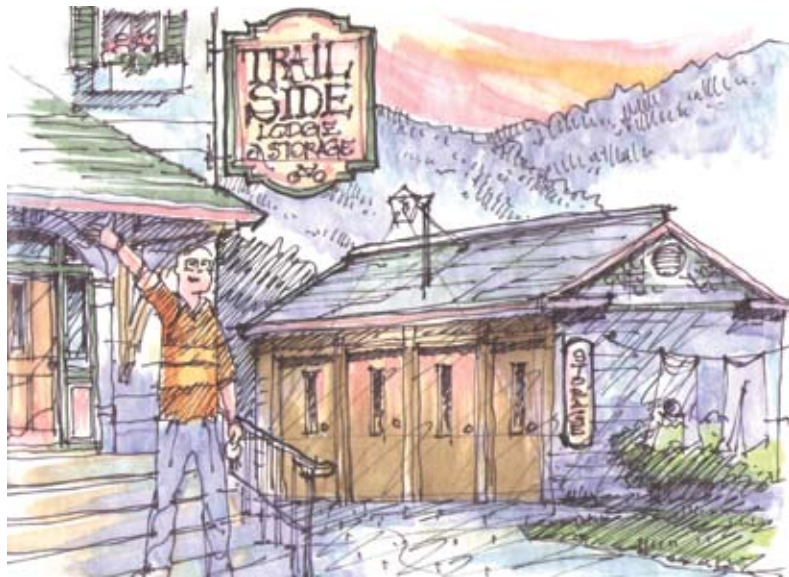
Mayor of McKeesport and Civic Leader

W E L C O M E

Recreational use of rivers and trails can bring new visitors to nearby communities. This guide is designed to help leaders in these communities, these “Trail Towns,” take advantage of the economic opportunity that rides or walks into town. It will help you transform your town into a more inviting and memorable tourist destination, and in the process, make your town a better place for your own residents to live, work and play.

The Trail Towns Guide will take you through an organization process; help you work with or create a local group focused on downtown revitalization; give you the tools to identify what your town needs to become a Trail Town; give you ideas as you start your town’s revitalization; and give you tips on how to make your hard work last over time. However, please remember that the contents of this guide are suggestions. Feel free to modify or adapt these ideas in ways that best work for you. Be creative. After all, your approach should be as unique as your town.

This guide is not designed to help a community build a trail, but rather to enhance a community that already has a trail in or near it. It focuses on communities near non-motorized, multiple purpose trails, such as towpaths and rail trails. Although there are many different types of non-motorized trails, the needs of trail users have many elements in common once they become pedestrians on your downtown’s sidewalks.



TRAIL TOWNS

Capturing Trail-Based Tourism
A guide for communities in Pennsylvania

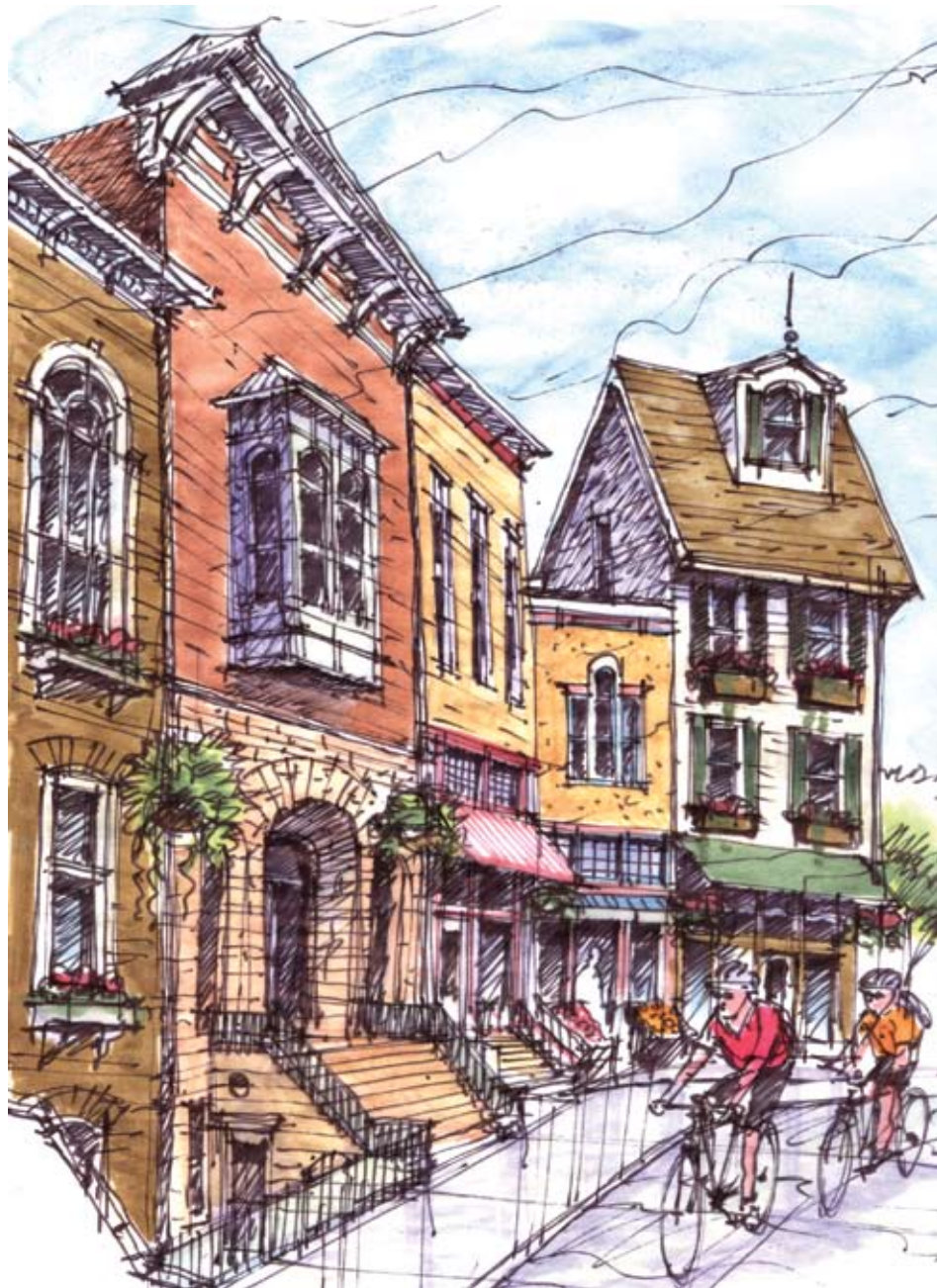
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SECTION 1: WHAT IS A TRAIL TOWN?

A “Trail Town” is a destination along a long-distance trail. Whether on a rail trail, towpath, water trail, or hiking trail—trail users can venture off the trail to enjoy the scenery, services, and heritage of the nearby community with its own character and charm. It is a safe place where both town residents and trail users can walk, find the goods and services they need, and easily access both trail and town by foot or vehicle. In such a town, the trail is an integral and important part of the community.

A Trail Town is a vibrant place where people come together. It may have a bike shop, an ice cream parlor, casual restaurants, a grocery store, and quaint local shops. It has wide sidewalks, clean streets, bike racks, and benches at convenient locations. It has places to rest for the night. It generously meets the needs of both the trail users and the town residents. A Trail Town is a friendly place that encourages trail users to visit and welcomes them with warm hospitality.

Trail Towns are not stand-alone communities; they are linked by the trail corridor. Trail users may be passing through a town on a day trip or long-distance trek, or may drive to a community and park to access a river or trail.

Trail users want to explore interesting places in their travels and will need services that your town can provide. Basic elements of a Trail Town strategy include:

- Enticing trail users to get off the trail and into your town
- Welcoming trail users to your town by making information about the community readily available at the trail
- Making a strong and safe connection between your town and the trail
- Educating local businesses on the economic benefits of meeting trail tourists’ needs
- Recruiting new businesses or expanding existing ones to fill gaps in the goods or services that trail users need
- Promoting the “trail-friendly” character of the town
- Working with neighboring communities to promote the entire trail corridor as a tourist destination.



Any trail, long or short, is a valuable asset to a community. It provides free recreation for people of all ages and fitness levels, and offers opportunities to study nature or local history. This guide is oriented to towns that connect to long-distance trails, ones that attract travelers from outside the local community and are not used solely by nearby residents. Studies show that the longer a trail is, the farther people will travel to visit it, the longer they will stay, and the more money they will spend. A day-tripper will spend four times as much as a local user will spend, and an overnight visitor will spend twice the amount that a day-tripper will spend.

SECTION 2: THE TRAIL TOWN AND MAIN STREET

How do you begin to build a Trail Town? It is important to understand that the initiative has to come from within your community. And becoming a Trail Town is as much about local attitude as it is about physical improvements. Consider these points as you start creating a Trail Town environment in your community:

- Your town can grow and thrive in new ways because of a nearby recreational trail
- The more Trail Towns there are along a corridor, offering hospitality and services, the more attractive the region will be for tourism. Your neighboring town's success is important to your town's success
- Leadership and initiative from within the community will be necessary to turn your town into a Trail Town
- A safe and well-maintained trail is the centerpiece, so it's important to cooperate with and support the local trail-building and maintenance group
- A core bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly philosophy should be adopted by your town
- Trail users should be accommodated both physically and socially within the town
- A work plan, your blueprint, should be developed, then chipped away at as funds and energy allow. Make changes as successes (or failures) happen.
- Goods and services for trail users will be appealing to other types of tourists and residents
- Local law enforcement agents can be important ambassadors in your town and along the trail.



The first step to take advantage of the tremendous community and economic development benefits of being a Trail Town is for members of the local community to organize themselves for this effort. A great way to organize your local community effort is to start with one of the most well-known and successful revitalization programs—The National Main Street Center's "Four Point" or "Main Street Approach."

The "Four Point" or "Main Street Approach" offers a complete outline for downtown revitalization that has been successful in more than 1,700 towns and cities throughout the United States. The following four points are the keys to the success of the "Main Street Approach."

ORGANIZING gets everyone working toward the same goal. The tough work of building consensus and cooperation among the groups that have an important stake in the downtown area can be eased by using the basic formula of a hands-on, volunteer-driven program and an organizational structure consisting of a board and committees to direct the program.

DESIGN gets a Trail Town into top physical shape. Capitalizing on its best assets—such as historic buildings and traditional downtown layout—is just part of the story. An inviting atmosphere created through attractive window displays, professional sign-age, well-maintained sidewalks, accessible parking areas, appropriate street-lights, and inviting landscaping conveys a visual message about what a Trail Town is and what it has to offer.

ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING finds a new purpose for the town's enterprises. By helping existing downtown businesses expand and by recruiting new ones to respond to today's market, Main Street programs help convert unused space into productive property and increase the competitiveness of business enterprises.

PROMOTION sells the image and promise of a Trail Town to all prospects. Marketing the downtown's unique characteristics to local customers, investors, new businesses, and visitors requires an effective promotion strategy. It forges a positive town image through advertising, retail promotions, special events, and marketing campaigns carried out by the local volunteers.



SECTION 3. ORGANIZING TO CREATE A TRAIL TOWN

Some fundamental information should be gathered as you start organizing your Trail Town effort. To be successful, it's important to have the right team assembled from your community to plan and implement this initiative. As you go through this section, you may feel that you need more help or technical assistance than is available within your community. You may want to seek help from your county or state community development agency. A good place to start is contacting your county's planning department.

Now, take a few moments to write your answers in the space provided.

A. Define the Trail Corridor

1. Is there a long-distance recreational corridor in close proximity (within two miles) to your town? Yes No
2. What kind of trail is it? _____
3. What is its name? _____
4. How long is it? _____
5. Who manages the trail? _____
6. Who is the key contact or **Liaison** for the trail?

Trail Liaison: _____

Trail Liaison Phone No.: _____

Trail Liaison E-mail: _____

B. Assess Local Capacity A vibrant Trail Town program could be part of your business district revitalization plan. You need to understand your local community's ability to plan and implement any new programs or ideas.

1. Does a downtown or business district revitalization organization currently exist in your town? (If you are uncertain about this question, contact your local municipal office. They should be able to provide you with this information.) Yes No

If **YES**, list the name of the organization, the **Downtown Contact** person and his or her phone number.

Organization: _____

Downtown Contact: _____

Downtown Contact Phone No.: _____

Downtown Contact Email: _____

2. What kind of organization is doing downtown revitalization?
 - “Main Street” organization
 - Chamber of Commerce
 - Merchants Association
 - Other: Specify _____

3. Is the organization regional (operates within the whole municipality or a larger area) or local (operates only in your downtown)?
 - Local Regional

4. Does the organization implement its activities using the National Main Street Center’s “Four Point” or “Main Street Approach?”
 - Yes No

5. Is the organization an IRS recognized 501(c) 3 non-profit corporation?
 - Yes No

If you answered **No** to question B.1 you may want to contact the Pennsylvania Downtown Center, www.padowntown.org, to obtain a copy of their workbook, *Getting Ready for Downtown Revitalization*. This is a handbook specifically designed for communities that do not have a central business district revitalization organization in place and would like to learn more about the process. It is also an excellent resource for communities that have had less than satisfactory results with earlier downtown revitalization efforts.

The **Catalyst** is a community member who organizes the Trail Town program. If a downtown/business district revitalization organization already exists in your town, the **Catalyst** could be someone that is currently affiliated with it.

6. Are you willing to serve as the **Catalyst** to start a Trail Town effort in your community?
 - Yes No

7. If you are not, do you know someone that may be willing to serve as the **Catalyst**?

Potential Catalyst A: _____

Phone No.: _____

Potential Catalyst B: _____

Phone No.: _____

Once you have answered these questions, you are positioned to start the process of creating a Trail Town in your community.

1. If a downtown/business district revitalization organization already exists, the **Catalyst** should call the **Downtown Contact** person to discuss the Trail Town concept and how it can be integrated into the on-going efforts. The **Trail Liaison** also should be at this meeting.

- OR -

2. If a downtown/business district revitalization organization does not exist, then the **Catalyst** should work with the local business community and the local municipal government to help organize an introductory meeting to explore the possibility of creating one. Appendix B has references to groups you can contact about getting started. The discussion at the meeting will help determine the level of local interest in moving forward with the idea of becoming a Trail Town and putting together a **Steering Committee** to begin working on the idea locally.

A sample agenda for a kick-off meeting can be found in Appendix A.4.

Although the primary job of the **Catalyst** is to start the process to gauge interest in making Trail Town changes in your community, he or she should be prepared to take a lead role in the planning and implementation process. This is particularly true if no revitalization group currently exists in the community. If one does exist, the **Catalyst** should be prepared to play an active role with the organization.



The **Catalyst** and the **Trail Liaison** should work in close concert. It is important that the community understands the plans and needs of the trail organization. This will make it easier to provide a high-quality experience for the visitor and for the community itself.

C. Create or Enhance Your Local Organization: Everyone in your community has a stake in the downtown's future. Residents, businesses, property owners, government officials, and non-profit organizations are part of your downtown universe. Some you may know very well; others, you may not know at all. However, in order to be successful, the local downtown revitalization program must involve as many interested groups and individuals as possible from throughout the community.

Downtown revitalization requires the cooperation and commitment of a pro-active, broad based coalition of public and private groups, including:

- Local trail organizations
- Businesses
- Civic groups
- Historical societies
- Local government
- Financial institutions
- Consumers / customers / visitors
- and many others.

For some communities, the Trail Town concept will be the primary vision upon which the desired revitalization of the business district will be built. For others, it will be an important part of a larger vision. In either case, the Trail Town goals must be integrated into the strategies and activities of the various committees.

D. Develop the Local Volunteer Base: Becoming a Trail Town also involves mobilizing volunteers to carry out activities. Different groups have different interests in the downtown. Try to make your volunteer base as broad as possible. Involving all concerned groups will increase the range of ideas and will help to ensure an adequate source of future volunteers.



E. Get the Message Out Locally: Create a marketing committee and a catchy name for your organization—something that lets people know what you do and is easily remembered. Develop a relationship with your local media, especially the newspaper's editorial board. Explain to them what you are doing and how they can help you. Keep a scrapbook of clippings of your Trail Town activities to record your progress.

Subscribe to newsletters put out by your local organizations to keep track of their interests. Submit articles to them, especially stories that can provide a good photo opportunity. Offer to speak at community events and meetings on behalf of your organization.

F. Build Partnerships: Bring people together at the very beginning to see what ideas your community has for this transformation. **This process of developing broad-based local interest and “buy-in” is as important as your final plan.** Have church, service, and youth groups come together so everyone knows what is happening. Decide who in your community has something to gain. They are your stakeholders and get them involved. Find out if your stakeholders will offer help on different projects and keep them well informed.

Spend time taking an inventory of existing community groups. Identify key people in these groups and figure out who gets results within the community. It is helpful to meet with those whose goals match yours and brainstorm ways to unite the community around this effort.

G. Find the Resources to Implement Your Trail Town Ideas:

Community and economic development are high priorities for county, state, and federal governments, and there may be public funding available to assist you. The key is articulating a clear and compelling request that demonstrates value and long-term return to the community. Get in touch with your state and federal House and Senate members and ask them for guidance. Funding opportunities and programs change over time, and legislative staff can help you understand current initiatives.



H. Take One Step at a Time: Your Trail Town development will progress and evolve over time. Spend some time evaluating your town’s strengths and weaknesses and try to create a new vision for your town. Generating ideas is an exciting and energizing process, but not all ideas will, or should, be implemented. The activities that your town takes on should be evaluated by their outcomes, not outputs. Sustained increased business activity in your downtown is an outcome; a kick-off parade is an output. You may want to start your implementation with a small project with good potential, one that might have a good “bang for the buck.” Use your resources prudently on projects that are well thought out and their potential impact thoroughly evaluated.

SECTION 4. TRAIL TOWN DESIGN ISSUES

A. Assess the Physical Character of Your Trail: The next step in preparing a plan for your Trail Town is to assess the physical characteristics of your central business district and how they relate to your trail. This will help you understand your trail and the challenges a visitor might encounter. You can use the Physical Assessment Worksheet found in Appendix A.2 to help assess the characteristics of the relationship between your trail and your town.



Trail Towns can thrive along long-distance trails, which link communities through one or more counties or states. These trails tend to be used by those seeking at least a day-long excursion, but some may be on the trail for multiple days. Most users will require some degree of goods and services. Long-distance trails attract tourists, especially those with interesting structures, surrounded by natural beauty, or near places of historic interest. Generally, the longer the trail, the

farther visitors will travel to use it; and the farther they come, the longer they stay and the more they will spend.

1. *Type of Trail in Your Town*

The first item to evaluate in assessing the physical aspects of your Trail Town is to determine the **TYPE** of trail that is running through, or in close proximity to, your central business district. The general categories are as follows:

- Cycling
- Hiking and walking
- Observing nature
- Horseback riding
- Commuting
- Winter use (cross-country skiing, snow shoeing)
- River/Water use (canoeing, kayaking, rafting).

It is very likely that the trail in your community is not exclusively one type of trail, and it may be used by different users at different times of the year. Use the worksheet in Appendix A.1 to indicate the various types of users who are likely to be on your trail during the course of a year. It is also useful to determine the approximate number of people who will use the trail and visit your town during the course of the year. This analysis will be important information to share with business leaders so they understand the trail clientele. It will also be important in achieving the desired attendance for special community events.

2. *Know Your Seasons*

The next item you will want to determine is when visitors are coming into your town. What time of the year is your trail used?

Knowing who is using your trail and when they are using it can provide helpful information for targeting these specific audiences for marketing campaigns or in planning local festivals. For instance, some trails may be used by hikers year-round, by cyclists mostly in the late spring, summer and fall, and cross-country skiers in the winter. You may want to identify the usage cycle of your trail for each type of user by utilizing the worksheet in Appendix A1.

3. *Trail Geography*

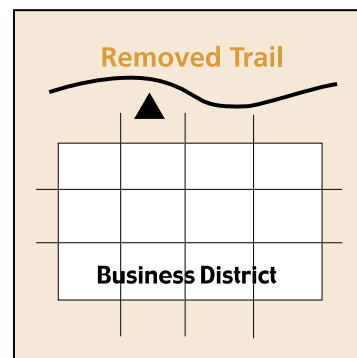
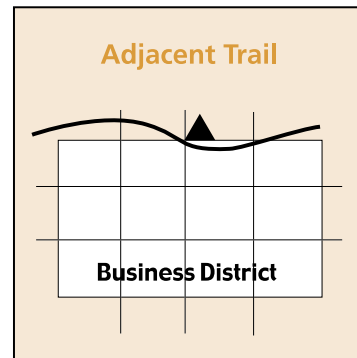
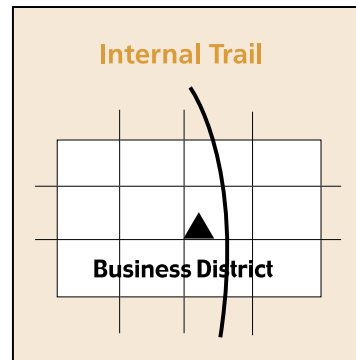
An important element you will need to assess is your physical trail-to-town relationship. You will need to understand both the linear distance and elevation challenges that exist between the trail and your town's business district. The linear distance can be described in one of the following three ways:

- Internal Trail
- Adjacent Trail
- Removed Trail

Internal Trails are those where the trail actually goes directly through the central business district of a community. There might be an obvious “gateway moment” on the trail when you know you have reached a town. It is important to guide visitors to the services that might not be right along the trail.

Adjacent Trails are those that have a trail located immediately adjacent to a downtown area, usually within 1/2 mile from the edge of the business district. The town can be seen from the trail, but perhaps not the central business district. The trail user must get off the trail to get to town. In such communities, it is important to create a gateway—an attention-getter—and supplement it with good wayfinding signage, brochures, or other means to encourage and direct the trail users to visit your downtown.

Removed Trails are those where the trail is located up to two miles away from the central business district. The town may not be visible from the trail, making it more challenging to entice trail users to the town. Town maps placed at the trailhead can indicate the goods and services that are offered and wayfinding signage can guide trail users into your town.



It is also important to understand the change in elevation between town and trail, the vertical distance. A good learning exercise for your Trail Town committee would be to start at the trail, walk or cycle to your central business district, then walk or cycle back to the trail. Topography is easily overcome in a motorized vehicle. You need to understand first-hand what your non-motorized visitors experience.







Another aspect of geography that should be analyzed is RANGE, which refers to distance from other nearby trailheads as well as distance from other sites or attractions that bring in tourists. As the range between trailheads increases, the more likely goods and services will be welcomed by trail users. It is important that merchants, law enforcement, and the local post office be familiar with the total length of the trail and the distance to the next towns and access points on the trail. This will ease concerns for trail users and will prepare the post office for trail users who wish to send or receive packages.

By looking at your town on a map, you can determine what other activities may occur near or along the trail that are in relatively close proximity to your business district. For example, if a state game land is located near your town, you may have hunters who will use your town as a starting point. Subsequently, the range of goods and services you offer in your town may be expanded to meet the unique needs of these hunters as well as year-round trail users.

4. *Identifying Key Connecting Elements*

Now that you have identified the physical attributes between the Trailhead and the business district, the next step is to identify and map the key connecting elements between the trail and your business district. These key elements are identified and defined below. Each of these items should be identified on a Trail Town planning map.

Trail Elements

-  Trailhead
-  Portal
-  Pathway
-  Gateway
-  Center
-  Nodes

- a. **Trailhead:** The areas where users can access the trail. This area is accessible by road and usually provides parking and some amenities for trail users (toilets, information, and rules).
- b. **Portal:** The point at which users of the trail exit the Trailhead with the intent of visiting the nearby community.
- c. **Pathway:** The corridor that trail users follow from the portal to the central business district.
- d. **Gateway:** The point at which trail users enter the business district of a community.
- e. **Center:** The central business district of the community that may serve as a hub of goods and services for the trail user.
- f. **Nodes:** Specific points of interest along or near the Pathway or in the Center that will be visited or utilized by the users of the trail.

In examining each of these elements, it is important to understand the function and the inter-relationship between each. A brief discussion of these elements follows:

The Trailhead or Access Area: Establishing a Trailhead is normally a responsibility of the trail building organization. However, the Trailhead is also the site where the trail user may first come in contact with your Trail Town. **It is the point where the user will make his or her initial and most important decision: whether to come into your town.** As a result, it is important for your organization to work closely with the local trail group to ensure that the necessary amenities are in place to make the Trailhead a high-quality facility. Together, your organization and the local trail organization should develop clear, appropriate information for visitors and make it available at the Trailhead. You may also wish to work together to provide certain amenities such as water and toilet facilities. It is also a great place to station a volunteer greeter, who can answer questions about the trail and town.

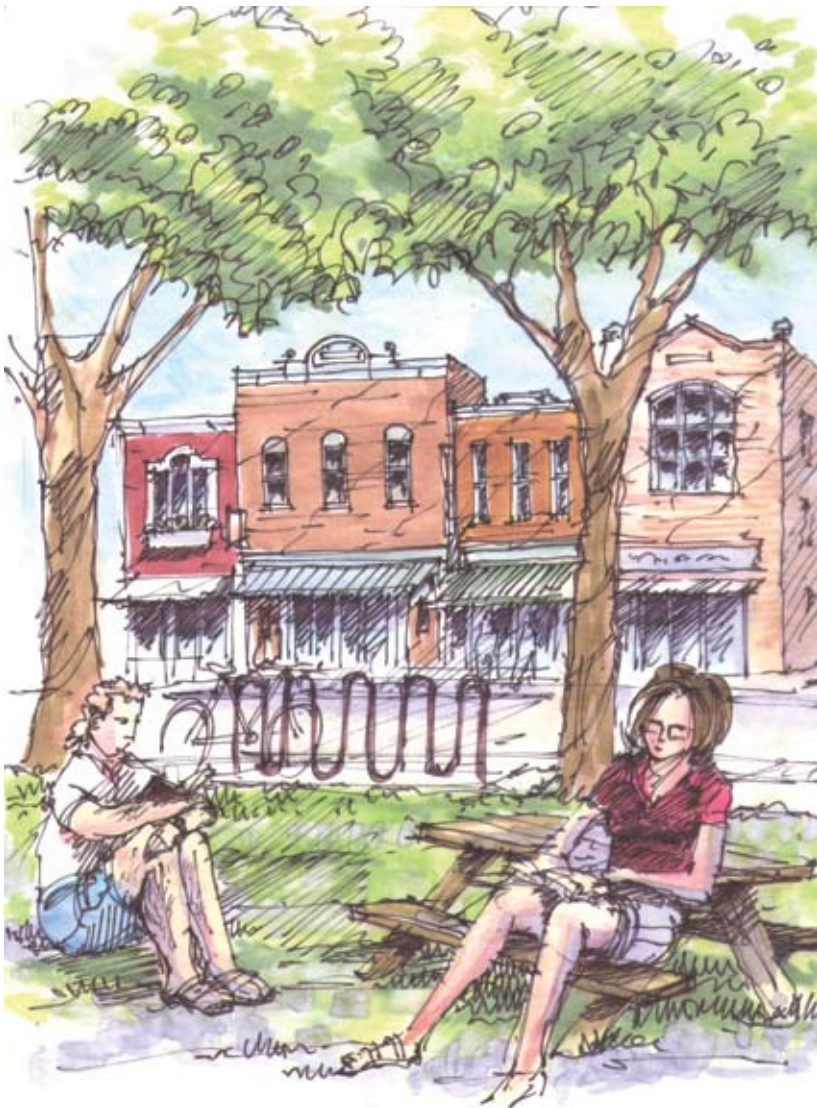
The Portal: This point is the spot where the trail user begins his or her journey to visit the various places in your community. The Portal may also function as the Gateway on an *internal* trail. In the case where the Portal is *adjacent* or *removed* from the central business district, the Portal may be the point at which a wayfinding signage system begins that will direct the trail users to various tourist and businesses in your community. In either case, the Portal should be a welcoming point that clearly begins the process of directing the trail user through your community.

The Pathway: The Pathway is the corridor that links the Portal at the Trailhead to the center of your community. The Pathway may be relatively short, or in some cases extend for a few miles. The trail user follows the Pathway to get to the various visitor and businesses in your community. It is the route that will be defined by your wayfinder signage system if you have installed one. The Pathway should be assessed for its cleanliness, safety, lighting levels, physical condition, and trail user interaction with local traffic. Also, keep in mind local home and business owners who are located alongside the Pathway. Will they welcome trail users or dislike the increased bicycle traffic near their property? Efforts should be made to address their concerns. If a wayfinder system is installed, it should clearly describe where places of interest (such as bed & breakfasts, historical sites, etc.) are located if outside of the downtown area.

The Gateway: This is the point at which the trail user enters into your central business district. It will ideally be located at the edge of your business district that is closest to the Trailhead along a well-developed Pathway. The Gateway should welcome the trail-user, and other visitors, into your central business district. It should also be the point where directional signage to individual tourist attractions and business goods and services within the district should begin.



The Center: The Center is your business district. It is a collection of business and amenities that may be of interest to the trail user. The Center, like the Pathway, should be assessed for its cleanliness, safety, lighting levels and physical condition. In particular, the Center should also be assessed on the availability of amenities that will help trail users enjoy their experience. For example, are there bike racks at the restaurants for bicycle users, or hitching posts for equestrian trail users? Is there outdoor seating at restaurants? Other issues that should be addressed in the Center include the availability of items such as ATM machines, pay phones that accept credit cards and public restrooms. A checklist of Center amenities for your Trail Town is included in Appendix A.3, which provides worksheets that will help develop and organize your new Trail Town plan.



Nodes: These are specific points either in the Center or along the Pathway that are of particular interest to the trail visitor. They may include businesses that cater to the specific user (a bicycle repair shop), lifestyle interests of the trail user (a hobby shop or an antique shop), the duration of time the user will spend on the trail (a public shower room or local lodging), or to all trail users (medical supplies, water, a casual dining restaurant, snack food, etc.) Before it is possible to identify all of the Nodes you wish to promote in your community, it is important for you to understand the socio-economic characteristics of your trail user (see Section 5).

Once you have identified the previous connecting trail elements, use a map or sketch of your town and trail to identify the locations of these six components. This can help you to get a better idea of how they relate to each other. You can also try to plan the flow of trail-related traffic through your town on this map or sketch.

In completing this assessment of the physical characteristics of the relationship between your trail and your town, you will probably have identified several areas where your community could make improvements to become more trail-friendly. These items should be clearly defined and planned for as part of your Trail Town action strategy.

B. Evaluate Public Amenities: The next step in the Trail Town assessment process is to make a more in-depth evaluation of the amenities that trail users will encounter in your community. Such amenities may include:

- Well-marked crosswalks
- Pedestrian-friendly sidewalks
- Clearly identified bike paths that are well maintained
- Directional wayfinder signage where visitors can see them
- Portal and Gateway signage or indicators
- Public restrooms
- Local maps
- Marketing materials
- Local medical services
- Camping

This list represents only a small portion of the public amenities that your community or your Trail Town organization might provide to trail users. This listing is also dependent on the nature of your trail users. A more complete listing of the types of public amenities that should be assessed in your community is in the Business Checklist section of Appendix A.3.



It should also be noted here that not only physical amenities, but local laws and regulations will also impact the development of public amenities and may affect your town's visitor readiness. In particular, zoning laws regulating outdoor vending, sidewalk encumbrances, and off-premises signage may impact the ability of your community to develop trail-friendly amenities. When conducting your public amenity assessment, these local rules and regulations should also be evaluated. Reference materials for sample ordinances can be found in Appendix B.2.

All of the items detailed in this section would normally fall under the responsibility of the local or county government. Given budgetary limitations, not all local governments will be able to undertake all of the steps necessary to ensure that all of the public amenities are adequately dealt with. In this arena, your Trail Town organization can be an invaluable partner working with local government in completing such projects by providing financial resources and encouragement.

C. Assess Business Amenities: After looking at public amenities, the next area to be evaluated are visitor amenities that the business community provides. The local businesses that will be of interest to the trail user will largely depend on the characteristics of the individual trail and its primary visitors. In this regard, your organization can help local businesses to gain an understanding of the needs of the trail user. Goods and services will be addressed in Section 5.

From a design standpoint, you may wish to conduct an assessment of visitor-friendly amenities that are available within the community. Such an assessment may include items such as:

- Bike racks or ski racks located outside businesses
- The extent to which restrooms are available to the public, not just for “customers only”
- Overall hours of operation and weekend hours
- The availability of outdoor vending machines.

Types of businesses likely to be used by trail visitors is included in Appendix A.3.

Enhancement of existing businesses and the generation of new business opportunities should be a part of your Trail Town plan. Businesses providing such amenities or trail friendly hours of operation are voluntary and hopefully many will realize the value from a self-interest perspective. Education, encouragement, and financial incentives may be needed, especially to encourage participation by small or marginal businesses.



SECTION 5. ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING FOR A TRAIL TOWN

Economic restructuring is a “Main Street” term that refers to the functions of business expansion, business retention, and new business recruitment. It also deals with the key issue of market demographics. A “Main Street” mindset can play a critical function.

A. Understand Your Trail User-Customer:

In any downtown revitalization effort, understanding your customer is one of the most important and most basic activities that a business cluster can undertake. A business cluster comprises those businesses that provide goods or services to a common customer base.

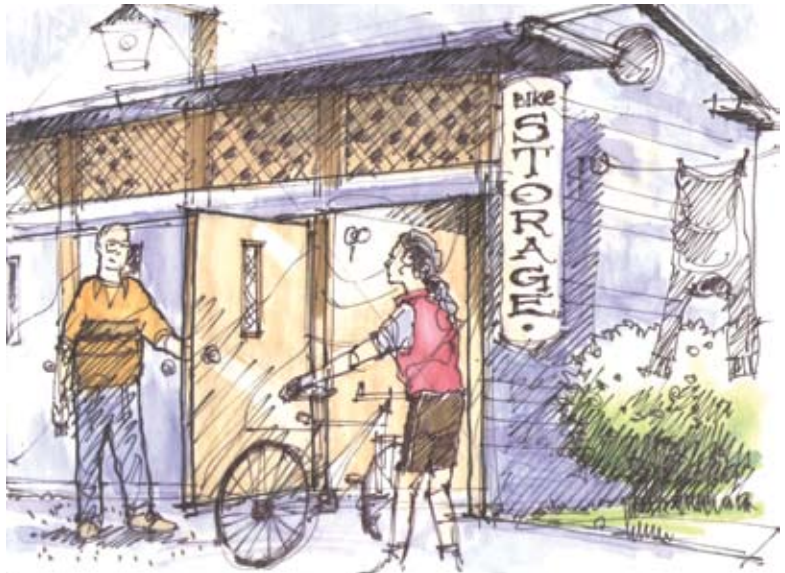
It is important to consider two basic elements in order to understand your customer base. The first of these elements is the socio-economic characteristics of the individual customer base. Many trail tourists are affluent and well-educated.

The second element is the lifestyle preferences of the customer base. These items relate to the choices that the customer base makes as a group in terms of items such as:

- Average dollars spent annually on the activity
- Number of times the activity was undertaken in the past year
- Dining and shopping preferences of the group.

By understanding both the socio-economic and lifestyle preferences of the trail-customer base, the local Trail Town organization can begin to make decisions about how best to attract these customers into the community’s central business district. You may want to work with neighboring Trail Towns and commission a study to clearly define your potential markets.

In determining how the local business community might respond to the needs of the trail user group, it is important to distinguish between basic needs and longer-term needs. Basic needs are the items that most trail-users will require on an average day trip. Longer-term needs are the goods and services required by multiple day users of the trail, who, for instance, may need to wash clothes or make repairs to their bicycle. Even if they choose not to stay the night, they will still need water, a restroom, and places to eat. If your town is the starting point for a trip, a safe place to park a vehicle is needed. There are related business opportunities for those goods and services that trail users may find of interest due to their broader lifestyle preferences. All of these elements present business growth opportunities for local Trail Towns.



B. Assess Basic Trail User Needs: There are basic items that trail users will want access to on a regular basis. The function of assessing the extent to which the local community is providing all or most of the goods and services in this category falls to the committee that would be providing the economic restructuring function in the “Main Street” revitalization effort. A trail-user specific list of basic goods and services that this committee should look for in its town is included in Appendix A.3.

C. Assess Longer-Term Needs: In addition to the certain needs of daily trail users, your community may have the opportunity of benefiting from visitors who are on the trail for a multi-day journey or who travel from out of the region to use the trail. These users will have more specific needs, such as overnight lodging, e-mail access, laundry needs, etc. Assessing the capacity of the community to provide these more advanced goods and services would fall upon the shoulders of the economic restructuring committee. Appendix A.3 also provides a checklist of longer-term needs for the multi-day trail user. Overnight lodging is a key component to a community’s success in taking advantage of the economic impact of the trail.



D. Encourage Related Business Opportunities: The final grouping of potential business opportunities relates to those non-trail interests of the basic trail customer base. For instance, a Trail Town that has a large number of users who frequent a wildlife sanctuary alongside the trail may benefit from an art gallery that specializes in wildlife artwork. It’s known, for instance, that active outdoor recreation enthusiasts are more likely than the average American consumer to visit hobby shops.

E. Assist the Local Business Community: You can assist the business community in a variety of ways with the economic restructuring function. An effective way to advance the economic restructuring is to develop an “economic gardening” approach to the business development issues related to the trail. Using this approach, one or more members of the committee would develop an in-depth understanding of the characteristics of the trail user customer base and the trends in the activity itself. Then, through informational bulletins and educational sessions, the Trail Town concept is nurtured and grown in the community. Businesses that cater to this customer base will also flourish. The committee may also wish to provide funding to ensure that magazines, books and publications that provide current information about the trail activity are available in the business section of the local library.

A second way to assist businesses is to develop local financial incentives and identify specific financial resources that will enable local businesses to take advantage of the potential offered by the trail. Such incentives may include façade grants that help to physically promote the image of a Trail Town or small business loans to expand a product line or service that is needed by the trail user, but is not currently available in the community.

SECTION 6. PROMOTING YOUR TRAIL TOWN

The “Main Street Approach” suggests that there are three components to any good business district marketing strategy. The first is to generate a general image for your town. The second is to hold special events that encourage existing and potential customers to come into your business district and explore its shops, restaurants and services. The final component is a retail promotion calendar that actually entices people to come into your downtown and purchase goods and services. All three of these are necessary to create an effective promotional campaign for your Trail Town.

A. Promote a Trail Town Image: The first element of your Trail Town promotional effort is to convince people that you have an active and welcoming Trail Town environment in your community. This “top-of-mind” awareness, or “branding,” of your town is a critical part of your strategy. By its nature, a Trail Town concept is based on drawing in tourists that extend beyond your local market. It is doubtful that your community will realize the full potential of the Trail Town concept unless the larger regional population base is aware of it and what it has to offer. Creating the logos, graphics, print ads, electronic ads, web sites, and other general marketing materials that brand your business district as a Trail Town should be the function of your organization’s promotions committee.

B. Hold Trail Town Events: Once this brand identification has been established, the next step is to get people, particularly existing and potential users of the local trail, into your town to explore. An effective way to do this is by holding special events. Special events that tie to your town’s history or heritage can be beneficial and fun for residents and visitors alike. Such events might include a “kick-off” event when sufficient physical assets are in place that the Trail Town concept can be physically seen. Annual familiarization events held just before trail season that feature sessions such as trail safety classes, bicycle safety inspections, and a tour of local trail user assets might be an example of the kind of special events that will attract potential trail users into your community. Work with your local historical society to develop an annual event that celebrates the corridor’s past, be it railroad, canal, or river transportation. Folklorists, historians, or re-enactors can help bring your history alive.



C. Conduct Trail Town Retail Promotions: Once people are coming to your business district, you want them to purchase goods and services in the businesses in your community. Pre- and post-season sales, special weekend sidewalk sales, holiday sales, and joint advertising by the local trail-related business cluster are all examples of retail promotions that the local Trail Town organization might organize in cooperation with local merchants and/or the local chamber of commerce.

It should be noted here that promotion and marketing of the Trail Town concept can be very effective, but also expensive. It is important that your Trail Town organization forms partnerships with local businesses, local merchants associations, local chambers of commerce, local tourist promotion agencies, and perhaps most importantly, the trail development organization to effectively market the Trail Town concept.

Positive referrals, and word of mouth advertising are very important. Customers or visitors who have a pleasant and rewarding experience will return and recommend the business to their friends. Hospitality training is important and may be available through your tourist promotion agencies.



SECTION 7. PULLING IT ALL TOGETHER—THE TRAIL TOWN MASTER PLAN

Once you have evaluated your town and identified some needs, the next step is to begin planning your town's future and begin some projects. It is important to show people that your organization is ready and willing to improve your town. This commitment can be shown by attending local government meetings, placing small amenities (benches, planters, etc.) around town that carry your group's name, and having meetings that are open to the public. Hopefully, the community will take an interest in what you are doing and will help support the master plan.

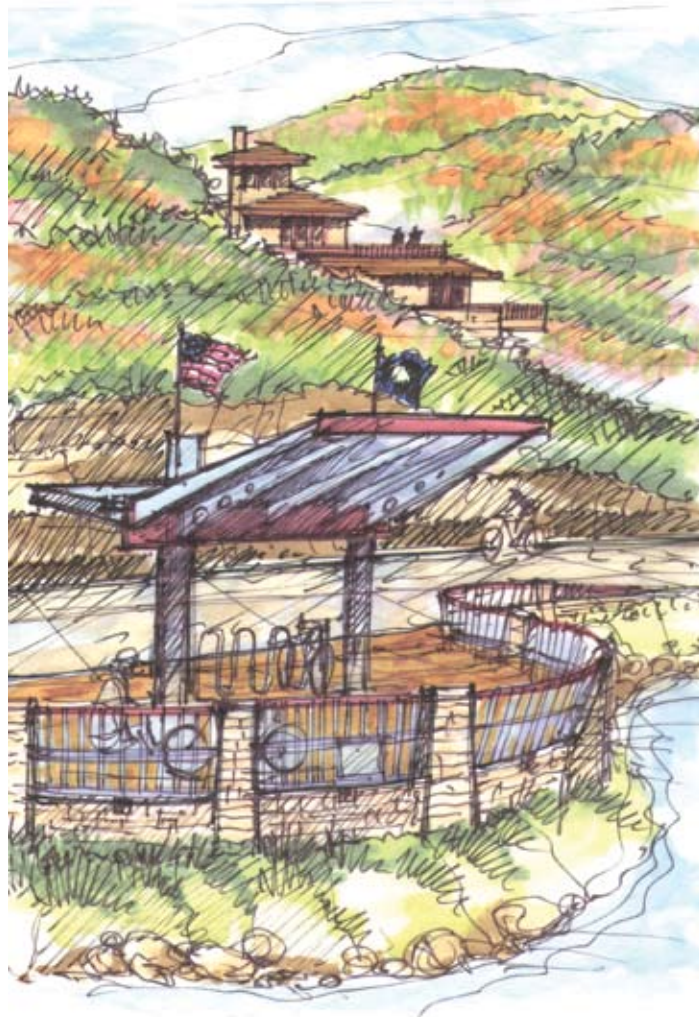
Your organization can brainstorm and draft your Trail Town Master Plan. Developing a plan for your town is essential because it becomes a blueprint for action, but it does require time, thoughtful consideration and debate, and prioritization.

A dilemma arises between spending too much time on developing a plan and impulsively running out and implementing the first idea that comes to mind. If you want to implement a project ahead of adopting a plan, you can form a short list of key goals for your Trail Town and tackle an easy project that meets one of your goals.

While goals will vary from town to town, Trail Town organizations can include within their goal list the following components of community development:

- Provide a Gateway Moment
- Create a Sense of Place
- Develop a Welcoming Atmosphere
- Establish the Right Mix of Services
- Promote Trail-Oriented Events.

A. Provide a Gateway Moment: The “Gateway Moment” is a physical feature that indicates to trail users that they have entered your town. As they move through the Gateway, the space signifies the entrance to your central business district. In order to provide an effective “Gateway Moment,” you must consider ways to attract people's attention to your community and to your town. Provide your visitors with a sense of excitement, and they will want to stop and visit. To do this, consider the signage that exists between the trail and your town. Consider the aesthetic quality of your town from the angle of the trail corridor. Does the town appear inviting? Be aware that the Gateway to the town should physically greet your visitors with its landscape and immediate amenities.



B. Create a Sense of Place: Emphasize the assets that are unique to your town and beautify your central business district. Start small, perhaps by adding planters or placing town banners on lampposts. It is very important before you begin this project to ask your townspeople what they would like to see happen to make their town more attractive or interesting. It is also important to consider maintenance. Engaging the help of gardeners in your community can give their talents a public showcase.



The design should consider your town's history and the things that make it stand out from other towns. For example, Hershey has lampposts topped with a Hershey Kiss design; Meyersdale's downtown has a maple theme; Latrobe flies green banners commemorating Rolling Rock beer; Youngwood's banners reflect its railroad heritage; Canonsburg has a monument to Perry Como which plays his music; and Uniontown has built a square honoring General George Marshall.

Brick sidewalks or accents add color and design to your streetscape. They can also be engraved to add history or to honor people who have contributed to your revitalization project. Planters add a natural feel to your downtown, and when placed in the roadway,

such as in a middle left turn lane, can aid in traffic calming. Tree planting can create a warm and inviting atmosphere in your town and should be done with guidance from a professional landscape architect.

Cleanliness should be kept in mind. Make sure there are plenty of trash receptacles and choose a grate design that will allow trash to fall through the grate and will not trap it. When choosing planters for your sidewalks, pick ones that are taller than four feet or shorter than two feet as sidewalk planters around waist level will be used as benches, trash cans, and ash trays. Heavy concrete planters are best to prevent theft.

Next, take a look at your street-level infrastructure. Parking meters, overhead lines, and telephone poles all add clutter to your main street, preventing it from having a relaxed atmosphere. Running telephone lines underground or along alleyways will enhance the appearance of your main street. Reduce the number of parking meters on your street by placing two on one pole, or if there is a lamppost next to a space, place a meter on it. Replace any basic utilitarian lampposts on Main Street with something more decorative and historical.

Improving the look of your downtown's buildings is a long-term project, but a painted mural on a building's walls will tell your visitors your town has begun work. Façade work is a top priority in the "Main Street Program." Handsome buildings might be altered over time, hiding the original storefront, covering the second story, and bricking up windows. Restoring a building's façade can be costly; fortunately, if your town chooses to join the "Main Street Program," funding may be available to assist.

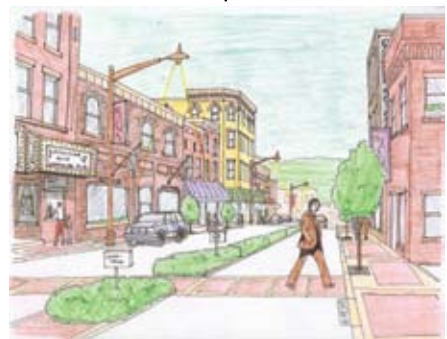
C. Develop a Welcoming Atmosphere: Begin by creating a community that is safe for walking and cycling. Visitors should feel safe while riding their bicycles, crossing your streets, and exploring your town. This can be accomplished by calming automobile traffic and providing amenities that trail users might appreciate and need. Some examples are:

- Paint or repaint crosswalks at all intersections in town
- Limit the use of Right-Turn-on-Red, which often presents a hazard to pedestrians
- Direct walkers and bicyclists using signage, brochures, even paint footprints or icons that lead them to special attractions
- Add traffic signs warning motorists of pedestrian traffic
- Add pedestrian signals that give people of all ages enough time to cross the street
- Create bike lanes on the street (See Appendix B.4)
- Place benches in your downtown
- Make sure your streets are well-lit at night, especially to and from popular destinations
- Build shared-use paths for bicyclists and pedestrians to avoid dangerous intersections
- Provide street parking that will narrow the street, calming traffic, and act as a barrier between street and sidewalk traffic
- Extend curbs and sidewalks at pedestrian crossings to improve their visibility and decrease crossing distances
- Build concrete medians in the road that provide pedestrians refuge when crossing.

Remember to keep in mind emergency vehicle access when redesigning your streets. A fire truck will have a very difficult time navigating a street that is too narrow, costing it valuable time. It will also make wide turns, so be certain that curbs leading to single-lane, one-way streets are wide enough for it to get through.

It is important to make cyclists as safe as possible. Contact your PennDOT bicycle/pedestrian coordinator for assistance in planning. When PennDOT begins a new project, they have a bicycle and pedestrian checklist (see Appendix B.3) that they must go through; however, bicycle and pedestrian issues are only considerations. Without enough emphasis and support on the importance of sidewalks or that paved shoulders are needed, they might not be included in the project.

Creating bike lanes, painting crosswalks, and adding pedestrian signals will help, but aggressive drivers may take exception to driving behind a bicyclist. More experienced bicyclists will be more likely to ride closer to traffic, adding to their visibility, but making it harder for people to drive around them.



A cyclist's speed on a paved road can be 10-20 miles per hour while the vehicular speed limit in downtown areas is usually 25 mph. Making drivers aware of bicyclists through traffic signs that reinforce a "Share the Road" mentality might not be enough. Your local government needs to be willing to punish drivers responsible for accidents involving bicycles at least as severely as drivers responsible for two-car accidents. A town whose drivers are aggressive towards bicyclists will quickly get a bad reputation. Also, be certain that bicyclists are held accountable to traffic laws as well.

D. Establish the Right Mix of Services: Once the trail tourist has entered your town, it is important to provide the right businesses and services that will accommodate the needs of your visitor. Easily accessible grocers, ice cream stands, and restaurants are important. You may want to make certain that there is a full-service bicycle shop near the trail while any business with a bicycle rack near the entrance would be appreciated. Camping areas near the trail, or a historic home that has been turned into a bed and breakfast in the central area of town, may also be options.

E. Promote Trail-Oriented Events: You can organize events in your town that trail users and your community will enjoy and want to be a part of. For example, you might have a weekend festival with street performers playing music, or you might organize a community bike ride along the trail. Perhaps you might work with a local micro-brewery and develop a trail themed beer for Oktoberfest. Whatever means you can find of promoting the trail will ultimately promote your community. The trail can become the vehicle and tool used to help you further develop your own town as a place where people enjoy visiting and living. Refer again to Section 6 for more ideas.



In Conclusion: remember that a plan for your town should not be a static document, but rather should be reviewed every year. Budgets, people, and trends are constantly changing and your town's plan may need to change to accommodate these changes. Reviewing your plan allows you to see what has been accomplished, what was done that might not have fulfilled its potential, and what has exceeded expectations. Accomplishments should be celebrated and new ideas should be integrated into the plan. This is also the time to wrap up projects that have come to their planned conclusion and to cut projects that are not working. Make sure you keep your elected officials at the local, state, and federal level apprised of your progress and your challenges.

Finally, you must consider how you will maintain the improvements you have made. Funding and community support to take on additional projects may be diminished if completed projects are not cared for adequately.

Stay focused and remember to take small steps instead of attempting to tackle everything all at once. It may not be a quick process, but it can be a steady process. Your new Trail Town will be an inspiration to new tourists and visitors. But more importantly, it will help renew your own community's sense of pride and identity.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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SECTION 8. APPENDICES

Appendix A.1

USAGE OF TRAIL BY MONTH AND USER WORKSHEET

Different user types will use the trail at different times. This table will help you track who is on the trail, what events to have and when, and what special seasonal offerings your community may want to provide.

See Section 4, A.1 and A.2 for more information on trail user types and trail seasons.

	Cyclist	Hiker	Exercise Daily Walker	Equestrian	Nature Watcher	Winter Traveler	RiverWater Traveler	Commuter Traffic
January								
February								
March								
April								
May								
June								
July								
August								
September								
October								
November								
December								
Estimated # of Yearly Users								

X=No users of this type on trail

1=Low months for users of this type on trail

2=Moderate/Average months for users of this type on trail

3=Heavy months for users of this type on trail

4=Peak month for users of this type on trail

Appendix A.2

PHYSICAL ELEMENTS OF TOWNS ALONG YOUR CORRIDOR WORKSHEET

Trail Corridor Name _____

Length of the Corridor _____ miles

The Counties the Corridor Serves _____

	Community Name (eg: North to South)	Approximate Distance From Previous Town	Geography1	Topography2
A				
B				
C				
D				
E				
F				
G				
H				
I				
J				
K				

1. **I** is Internal; **A** is Adjacent; **R** is Removed. See The Trail Towns Guide Section 4.3 for definitions.
If R (Removed) note distance.

2. **L** is Level; **M** is Moderate; **S** is Steep. See The Trail Towns Guide page 16.

This worksheet should help you understand your physical challenges and those of neighboring Trail Towns. It may show how you can collaborate to solve similar problems. For instance, if your town and several others are not located close to the trail, you may want to explore sharing a shuttle service, or perhaps hiring a transportation consultant to help improve access.

TRAIL TOWNS

Self-Assessment for

YOUR COMMUNITY NAME

NAME

DATE

BOOK NO.

Appendix A.3

TRAIL TOWN SELF-ASSESSMENT

Introduction

There is a new interstate in your town, and its travelers, for the most part, are on bicycles! This interstate is YOUR TRAIL and this recreation and tourism corridor can become a lightning rod for new opportunities in your town. Visitors are hungry, need supplies, may want to spend the night and want to explore interesting towns along the trail. What they need is a “Trail Town.”

To create a Trail Town, you need a dedicated core group of citizens that can envision a “healthy” downtown, both physically and economically, and organize fellow residents and merchants to join in. The Trail Town program is patterned on “Main Street” principles, so communities who have participated in the program will recognize the format. Communities who wish to learn more can contact the PA Downtown Center for information and training opportunities (www.padowntown.org).

The success of the Trail Towns also relies on communities becoming bicycle and pedestrian oriented. There is technical assistance available through your local PennDOT engineering district and your regional Metropolitan Planning Organization or Rural Planning Organization. A number of resources and websites are included throughout the manual, but, an especially helpful website is the League of American Bicyclists www.bicyclefriendlycommunity.org.

Building a Trail Town, like all things, happens step by step. The first step was building the trail to your community and now it is up to the community to entice the trail visitors off the trail and into the heart of your downtown. You need to help them have a satisfying experience, allow them numerous opportunities to spend leisure time and tourist dollars in your community, and to have them tell their friends about the great time they had on the trail and in your town.

Tips on How to Use the Self-Assessment

1. Convene interested residents, merchants, local elected officials, and someone from the local trail organization. Invite your Bicycle-Pedestrian Coordinator from your regional PennDOT engineering district (in Pennsylvania <ftp://ftp.dot.state.pa.us/public/pdf/YTPCD.pdf> for your Bike-Ped Coordinator contact information).
2. Set a date (and rain date) to do a walking tour of your town. Meet at the trail access area, divide into teams of two or three people (two is preferable), distribute the blue books, and determine a time and place to regroup. Encourage the use of cameras to capture the good, bad, and the ugly. Creating a slide show with these images can be a powerful tool to stimulate discussion and decision making.
3. Each team may wish to stop for a “coffee break” mid-tour to collect thoughts, record observations and begin to draw conclusions.

4. Allowing for two to three hours, depending on the size of your downtown area, reassemble the self-assessment team to discuss general observations. What great assets does the town have that you would want to promote or enhance? What needs does your town have? Pick one or two items and develop an action plan to address them. Make sure someone is identified to take responsibility to move the plans forward. Another person should be commissioned to hold all the self-assessment booklets, and consolidate all the answers and comments into a single report that can provide the basis for a long-term plan for the community.

If you have difficulty figuring out how to move forward, you can contact the Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs (www.boroughs.org) and they can help develop community leadership and local capacity. Another good resource is Penn State's Rural Development program.

5. Record your progress and keep your local newspapers informed. Invite your local elected officials and legislators to help dedicate the new amenities that your town constructs or installs.

6. Revisit the summary report from time to time and add new projects to your busy lives. The visitors, and your residents, will be most appreciative of your efforts.

A self-assessment guidebook to community development

It's a beautiful fall weekend and Roy and Mary Tandem decide to pack up the family and the bikes and head to Pennsylvania—to spend a few days biking on Your Trail. They have the trail maps and have decided to stay with a college buddy who has opened up a high-tech company in Your County. They know their teenagers will want to stop frequently—for food—and they're glad that the map shows towns about every ten miles along the trail.

The weather is glorious and everyone is having a great time, until the first flat tire and the realization that the pump was left in the car! Luckily the unfortunate incident happened right as they approached YOUR TOWN. Everyone dismounts and heads toward town.

What did they find?

Please complete the following Trail Towns Self-Assessment guide to give yourself a better sense of where your town may need some enhancement. The “~” can be used to indicate a mid-ground answer, like somewhat, or sometimes.

TRAIL TOWNS SELF-ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

Traffic & Access Issues Checklist

General Access Between Trail and Town		YES	~	NO
T1	What is the distance between the business district and the trail? In blocks or miles:			
T2	Is there an easy grade between trail and town? (Hint: Ride bike—do you need to use your smallest chain ring?)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T3	Is it easy for visitors to find and access downtown from the trail?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Signs		YES	~	NO
T4	Can motorists easily find and access the trail from town?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T5	Are sign ordinances being enforced?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T6	Is there a Wayfinder signage system?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T7	Is there adequate Wayfinder signage to the trail?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T8	Is there adequate Wayfinder signage to the town?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T9	Is there sufficient signage for getting around town?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T10	Is there sufficient signage for finding businesses and services?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T11	Can visitors tell they've entered town?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T12	Can visitors tell they've left town?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Safety		YES	~	NO
T13	Are the roadways swept and kept clean and free of debris?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T14	Are there bike lanes in town?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T15	Are bike lanes and road shoulders free of potholes and debris?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T16	Are the sidewalks swept and kept neat and free of debris?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T17	Are the sidewalks in good shape?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T18	Is there sufficient room on sidewalks to walk side-by-side?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T19	Are steep sidewalks well maintained and even?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T20	Do curb crossing ramps have a gentle slope?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T21	Are all sidewalks flat (vs. sloped) before driveway aprons?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T22	Are all sidewalks continuous (vs. stopping abruptly), in the central business district?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T23	Are crosswalks well marked?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T24	Do the majority of motorists respect pedestrians in crosswalks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T25	Are there pedestrian walk/don't walk signals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T26	Do signals allow enough time for a child or older adult to cross the street?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T27	Are pedestrians highly visible to motorists at crossings? (unobstructed view for pedestrians and motorists)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T28	Do you feel safe when walking through town?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Parking		YES	~	NO
T29	Is there sufficient on-street parking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T30	Are off-street parking lots placed behind stores?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T31	Are sidewalks free from cars exiting driveways and parking lots?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T32	Are there bike racks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T33	Are bike racks placed in safe and secure areas?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T34	Are bike racks placed in easy-to-find places?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T35	Are bike racks well-placed to prevent interference with sidewalk use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T36	Are bike racks simple enough for the rookie rider to use correctly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T37	Are there creative bike racks, eg. combo bike rack/bench or dual use of decorative metal fencing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T38	Are there hitching areas for horses?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Business Checklist

Operations		YES	~	NO
B1	Is the central business district easily identified?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B2	Do business hours match customers' needs (i.e. open on weekends)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B3	Are downtown businesses clustered in a compact area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B4	Are customers greeted warmly when they walk through the door?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B5	Are the merchandise and store clean and well kept?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B6	Do businesses cross-promote?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B7	Are there window displays that show off the community's heritage?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B8	Do businesses encourage window-shopping?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Accommodation & Amenities		YES	~	NO
B9	Do businesses offer out-of-town shipping for large items?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B10	Are there public-accessible restrooms in the businesses?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B11	Do businesses offer information on the town/region?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B12	Can employees answer questions about the town or region?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B13	Do employees answer questions in a friendly manner?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B14	Do shops carry souvenirs, especially related to the town (eg: Meyersdale maple syrup)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Signs		YES	~	NO
B15	Are businesses' signage clearly visible and well-designed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B16	Do the signs clearly state what is being sold?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B17	Do businesses clearly indicate that they're opened?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B18	Are business hours posted on front door or window?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Does your town have the following types of food service?		YES	~	NO
B19	Outdoor vending machines	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B20	Grocery, or portable food	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B21	Coffee shop	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B22	Ice cream	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B23	Family-style restaurant	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B24	Fast food or chain restaurant	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B25	Informal café with wait service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B26	Bar or tavern	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B27	Restaurant with liquor service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Does your town offer the following retail services?		YES	~	NO
B28	Bike rental	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B29	Bike equipment and repair	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B30	Convenience/quick stop	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B31	Drug store	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B32	24 hour ATM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B33	Bookstore	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B34	Laundromat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Does your town offer these services and amenities?		YES	~	NO
B35	Hotel or Inn	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B36	Bed and Breakfast	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B37	Motel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B38	Nearby camping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B39	Emergency medical service available	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B40	Family medical services available	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B41	Shuttling service to nearby town (max 25 miles)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B42	Shuttling service to distant locations (max 250 miles)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B43	Taxi service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B44	Public park or green area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B45	Restroom at the trail access point	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B46	Map/town information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B47	Calendar of events	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B48	Access to public email service (i.e. at library)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B49	Sufficient trash cans in town	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B50	Does the town use special events to encourage people to come to town?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B51	Do businesses use gimmicks or clever marketing tactics to invite people in? (eg: Free Ice Cream)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B52	Does the town organize or promote town-to-town bike rides?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B53	Is there a library, local historical society office, and/or museum in town?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- B54 Are these places open on weekends?
- B55 Is the trail linked to downtown events and happenings?
- B56 Is the town linked to trail events and happenings?

Design Checklist

Visual Appearance

YES ~ NO

- D1 Is there a sense of place and/or a unique identity to downtown?
- D2 Does the town appear economically healthy?
- D3 Does the town feel safe?
- D4 As a whole, are you enjoying your walk of downtown?
- D5 Are walls and storefronts kept free of graffiti?

Buildings & Parking

YES ~ NO

- D6 Are all buildings occupied?
- D7 Is there evidence of building code enforcement?
- D8 Is there a solid strip of businesses? (eg: not broken up by parking lots.)
- D9 Are historic buildings restored and recognized?
- D10 Are the structures in town in a good condition overall?

Store Fronts

YES ~ NO

- D11 Are store windows clean?
- D12 Are store windows lit at night?
- D13 Are store fronts maintained?
(eg: no broken glass, crumbling brick, peeling paint, etc.)
- D14 Do stores have attractive window displays?
- D15 Do stores have flowers?

Streetscape & Amenities (street furniture)

YES ~ NO

- D16 Are there enough benches?
- D17 Are the benches well-placed?
(Are they in the shade, near high pedestrian traffic areas, etc.)
- D18 Are parks/green spaces well placed and used appropriately?
- D19 Do all parks have adequate bike racks and benches?
- D20 Are street trees used effectively?
- D21 Do restaurants offer outdoor seating?
- D22 Are there audible amenities—chimes, church bells, music, etc.?
- D23 Are there banners & hanging baskets?
- D24 Are there drinking fountains or sources for potable water?
- D25 Does the town use human-scale night lighting?
- D26 Are sidewalks wide enough to accommodate pedestrians?

Appendix A.4
SAMPLE AGENDA

Trail Town Meeting

_____ __, 20__

Your Town, PA

1. Welcome: Mayor of Your Town
2. Introductions: Catalyst
3. Overview and History of the Trail: Trail Liaison
4. General Vision for a Trail Town Vision - Needs and Opportunities:
Catalyst or Chamber of Commerce Executive
5. Committee Assignments
 - Organization
 - Design
 - Economic Restructuring
 - Marketing
6. General Discussion
7. Set next meeting date

Appendix B

RESOURCES

B.1. Pennsylvania Agencies and Organizations

Pennsylvania Downtown Center
www.padowntown.org

Penn State Cooperative Extension & Outreach
www.extension.psu.edu

Pennsylvania Environmental Council
www.pecpa.org

PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
www.dcnr.state.pa.us

PA Department of Transportation
www.dot.state.pa.us (Link to "Regional Information")

PA Department of Community and Economic Development
www.inventpa.com

PA Department of Environmental Protection
www.dep.state.pa.us

Pennsylvania State Representatives
www.house.state.pa.us

Pennsylvania State Senators
www.senate.state.pa.us

Pennsylvania Greenways
www.pagreenways.org

B.2. Planning and Implementation Resources Streetscape Links:

Planning Resources:

National Main Street Center - www.mainstreet.org
Pennsylvania Downtown Center - www.padowntown.org
Pennsylvania Greenways - www.pagreenways.org
Smart Growth Network - www.smartgrowth.org
Project for Public Spaces - www.pps.org
Carfree Cities - www.carfree.com
American Planning Association - www.planning.org
About Planning - www.aboutplanning.org
Great Streets - www.greatstreets.org
American Society of Landscape Architects - www.asla.org

Public Amenities (bike racks, benches, etc.):

www.dero.com
www.theparkcatalog.com
www.lacorss.com
www.upbeatinc.com
www.keystoneridgedesigns.com
www.wabashvalley.com
www.unitedrecept.com
www.ironsmith.cc

Lighting:

www.whatley.com
www.fancystreetlight.com

Community Bridges:

<http://bridge.skyline.net/history>

Banners:

www.flagandbanner.com/fab/flag.asp
www.flagline.com/id02A3046
www.gettysburgflag.com/attention.htm
www.aaafalg.com

Bicyclist and Pedestrian Safety:

PennDOT Bike Safe
www.dot.state.pa.us/bike/web/index.htm

U.S. Department of Transportation Bicycle and Pedestrian Program
www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bikeped/index.htm

Federal Highway Administration Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Research
www.fthrc.gov/safety/pedbike/pedbike.htm

Traffic Calming Handbook:

<http://www.dot.state.pa.us/Internet/pdHwyIntHS.nsf/frmTrafficCalming?OpenFrameset>

Bicyclist and Pedestrian Communities:

Pennsylvania Municipalities
<http://sites.state.pa.us/govlocal.html?papowerPNavCtr=I30207I#30214>

League of American Bicyclists
www.bikeleague.org

America Bikes
www.americabikes.org

America Walks
www.americawalks.org

Walkable Communities, Inc.
www.walkable.org

National Center for Injury Prevention and Control
www.cdc.gov/ncipc/bike

National Center for Bicycling and Walking
www.bikewalk.org

Bikes Belong
www.bikesbelong.org

City and State Plans and Resources:

City of Madison, Wisconsin Bicycle Information
www.ci.madison.wi.us/transp/bicycle.html

Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan
www.odot.state.or.us/techserv/bikewalk/obpplan.htm

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/about/conplan/local

Pittsburgh City Planning Bicycling Plan
www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us/cp/html/bicycling_plan.html

Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
www.dot.state.pa.us

Pennsylvania Municipal Authorities
www.municipalauthorities.org

Appendices B.3 (Resources)

Bicycle and Pedestrian Checklist

Planning and Programming Checklist

Project _____
 SR _____ Segment _____ Offset _____
 Team Members _____
 _____ Date _____

Item	Considerations	Check	Comments
1. Consistency with Bicycle/Pedestrian Planning Documents	Is the transportation facility included in or related to bicycle and pedestrian facilities identified in a master plan? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MPO/LDD bike/ped plan. • Local planning documents. • BicyclePA Routes. • Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Will the transportation facility provide continuity and linkages with existing or proposed bicycle/pedestrian facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Is the transportation facility included in or related to a regional/local recreational plan? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rails-to-Trails. • Greenways. • Local, State, National Parks. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Existing and Future Usage	Do bicycle/pedestrian groups regularly use the transportation facility? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bike clubs. • Bicycle commuters. • Hiking, walking, or running clubs. • Skateboarding or rollerblading groups. • Bicycle touring groups. • General tourism/sightseeing. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Does the existing transportation facility provide the only convenient transportation connection/linkage between land uses in the local area or region?	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Could the transportation facility have favorable or unfavorable impacts upon the bike tourism/economy of an area/region? Consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local businesses • Chamber of Commerce • Tourism Promotion Agencies. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Are there physical or perceived impediments to bicycle or pedestrian use of the transportation facility?	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Is there a higher than normal incidence of bicycle/pedestrian crashes in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Safety	Is the transportation facility in a high-density land use area that has pedestrian/bike/motor vehicle traffic?	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Bicycle and Pedestrian Checklist

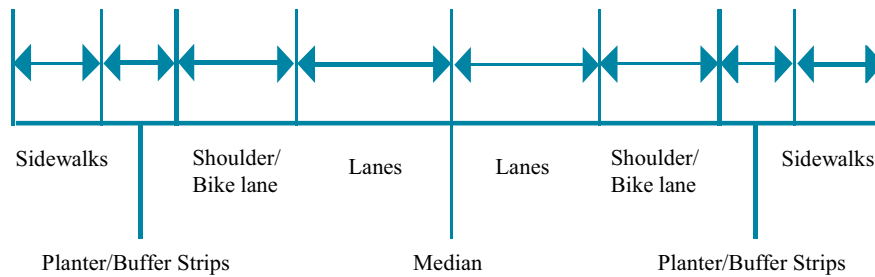
3. Safety (continued)	Is there a high amount of crossing activity at intersections? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Midblock • Night crossing activity • Adequate lighting. 		
	Would the transportation facility (and all users) benefit from widened or improved shoulders or improved markings (shoulders, crosswalks)?		
4. Community and Land Use	Is the transportation facility in a city, town, or village?		
	Is the transportation facility within/near a community or neighborhood?		
	Is the transportation facility the “main street” in a community or town?		
	Could bicycle or pedestrian usage impact economic development?		
	Are sidewalks needed in the area? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presence of worn paths along the facility. • Adjacent land uses generate pedestrian traffic. • Possible linkages/continuity with other pedestrian facilities. 		
	Is the transportation facility a link between complimentary land uses? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential and commercial. • Residential and business. 		
	Is the transportation facility in close proximity to hospitals, elderly care facilities, or the residences or businesses of persons with disabilities?		
	Is the transportation facility within or near educational buildings?		
5. Transit	Is the transportation facility on a transit route?		
	Is the transportation facility near park-and-ride lots?		
	Are there existing or proposed bicycle racks, shelters or parking available? Are there bike racks on buses?		
6. Traffic Calming	Is the community considering traffic calming as a possible solution to speeding and cut-through traffic?		

Bicycle and Pedestrian Checklist

Scoping Checklist

Project _____
 SR _____ Segment _____ Offset _____
 Team Members _____ Date _____

Right-of-Way Needs Diagram



Element	Number Required	Width Required	Total Width
Sidewalks			
Buffer Strips			
Shoulders			
Lanes			
Median			
Total Right-of-Way Required			

Pedestrian Facilities

Item	Considerations	Check	Comments
1. Sidewalks	Appropriate width: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.5 m – 2.1 m (5'-7') for residential, commercial, and industrial. 2.5 m (8') minimum for high use areas/CBD. 2.1 m (7') width for bridges. 0.6 m (2') shy distance for vertical barriers. 1.2 m – 2.1 m barrier separating traffic from pedestrians on bridges. 		

Bicycle and Pedestrian Checklist

Sidewalks (cont'd)	Applicability of planter or buffer strips.		
	Connectivity with other pedestrian facilities.		
	Proximity to transit bike/ped generators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transit stops. • Schools. • Park & rides. • Nursing homes. • Offices. • Business environments. • Athletic fields. • Recreation facilities. 		
	Observe pedestrian patterns for special needs such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Midblock crossings. • Islands and refuges. • Night crossing activity. 		
	ADA needs and concerns.		
2. Signalized Intersections	Crosswalks provided and marked.		
	Intersection bike/ped crash history reviewed.		
	Is there a dedicated pedestrian phase, if so how long?		
	Crossing distance is minimized.		
	Ped heads and ped pushbuttons provided.		
	ADA needs and concerns.	Retirement homes	
	Schools		
	Medical facilities		
3. Traffic Calming	Is the community considering traffic calming as a means to curb speeding and cut-through traffic?		

Bicycle and Pedestrian Checklist

Bicycle Facilities

Item	Considerations	Check	Comments
1. Bikelanes/Paved Shoulders	Appropriate width of bike lane: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.5m (5') adjacent to curb • 1.8m (6') standard. 		
	Connectivity with other facilities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bike lanes • Shared use trails • Trail heads/parking areas. 		
	Maximize width of shoulders and provide appropriate markings as per <i>AASHTO Green Book</i> .		
	3 m (10') vertical clearance from fixed obstructions (excluding road signs).		
	Angle and smoothness of railroad crossings. Avoid angles of incidence of <70 degrees or re-design.		
	Bridge accesses provided/pinch points avoided.		
	Parking parallel or angled.		
2. Signalized intersections	Inventory existing bicycle facilities.		
	Intersection bike/ped crash history reviewed.		
	Crossing distance is minimized.		
	Considerations for bikes making turns.		
	Bike detection. Elevated push buttons.		
3. Traffic Calming	Is the community considering traffic calming as a means to curb speeding and cut-through traffic?		

Bicycle and Pedestrian Checklist

Final Design Checklist

Project _____
 SR _____ Segment _____ Offset _____
 Team Members _____ Date _____

Pedestrian Facilities

Item	Considerations	Check	Comments
1. Sidewalks and Signalized Intersections	Crosswalks are at least 3 m (10') wide.		
	Crosswalks are prominently marked using at least 6" line.		
	Pedestrian signals are provided.		
	Pushbuttons are provided and accessible.		
	Minimize crossing distance.		
	Maximize pedestrian visibility at crossings.		
	Coordination of turn phases with walk/don't walk signs.		
	Proper lighting type and placement.		
2. ADA Requirements	Pushbuttons accessible.		
	Pushbuttons height 1.0m – 1.1m (3.5'-4.0').		
	Large pushbuttons used.		
	1.5m (5') recommended passage (sidewalks).		
	5% maximum grade recommended (sidewalks).		
	2% cross-slope maximum.		
	Textured curb cuts.		
	2 curb cuts per corner at intersections.		
	Curb cuts flush with street surface 0.6cm (1/4" tolerance).		
	Running slope of new curb cuts 1 in 12 max.		
	Longer signal cycles.		
	Audible crossing signals.		
	Level landings on perpendicular curb ramps.		
	Proper head/shoulder clearance for visually impaired.		
	Coordinate utilities with ADA requirements.		
	Proper lighting.		
3. Traffic Calming	Analyze landscaping growth potential for future obstructions.		
	Any conflicts with minimal distance that should be included in the project.		
	Coordinate and minimize signage conflicts.		
3. Traffic Calming	Consider traffic calming as a means to improve pedestrian and general traffic safety.		

Bicycle and Pedestrian Checklist

Bicycle Facilities

Item	Considerations	Check	Comments
1. Bikelanes/Bikeways	Bicycle safe grates, RC-34, Sheet 3 of 9.		
	Manhole covers flush with roadway surface.		
	Inlets flush with roadway surface.		
	Rumble strips type and placement.		
	Driveway aprons.		
2. Signage	Conflicts eliminated with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turns at intersections. • Through movements. • Bicycle and pedestrian conflicts. • Parked cars, angled vs. parallel. • Driveway aprons. 		
	3m (10') vertical clearance from signs and structures.		
	"Share the Road Signs."		
	"Wrong Way Signs."		
	Lane stenciling.		
	Bike lane designation signs.		
	No parking signs.		
	Bike lane striped.		
	Transition from bike lane to bikeway.		
	Consistent width on roadways, bridges, and intersections.		
Overlap bike lane/shoulder stripe over pavement joints.			
Meet or exceed AASHTO criteria.			
3. Traffic calming	Consider traffic calming as a means to improve pedestrian and general traffic safety.		

THE DOOR PRIZE TO AVOID

Door-Zone bike lanes should do us all a favor and go away.

By John Schubert

Imagine a traffic control device you must disobey to save yourself from serious personal injury or death. Imagine that many “bicycle advocates” avidly promote this traffic control device. You don’t have to imagine it. I’m talking about the door-zone bike lane. If you don’t want a dooring accident (the act of being struck by a suddenly-opened car door while on a bicycle), don’t ride next to parked cars in a door zone.

You have the rights of a vehicle operator, and one of those rights is to claim safe space on the roadway. The door zone isn’t safe.

Dooring accidents occur frequently. Some are quite severe, and more than a few are fatal. In my opinion, a door-zone bike lane is the result of a misguided belief that bicyclists need special space, marked just for them, to feel validated, or to be encouraged to ride.

According to policy makers, it is cost prohibitive to widen narrow city streets, so the only place to add bike lanes is the door zone, next to parked cars. The reason it’s available is because it’s too dangerous for motorist traffic. But it is available, so we can put paint on it, and by gum,



Increasingly common, police visit the scene of a dooring accident.

we can call it a bike lane!

The door-zone bike lane stands apart from other bicycle facility design controversies because it takes an ordinary street, that was probably safe to begin with, and turns it into a trap for uneducated riders who don’t know any better.

What do door-zone bike lane advocates tell cyclists? Here’s what I’ve read and heard:

Ride slowly and be ready to jam on your brakes. Stay on the outside half of the bike lane. Be ready to swerve. Watch the insides of parked vehicles for signs of activity inside. Rely on the fact that it’s illegal for a person to open a car door without first checking behind.

Each of these bits of advice is utterly useless. Most people don’t ride slowly enough to stop

in time. My colleague, John Allen, a founder of the Cambridge Bicycle Coalition, calculates the maximum safe speed for bicyclists at six or seven miles an hour. The minimum non-wobbling speed for many riders is also around seven miles per hour. So the fastest speed you can ride safely is the slowest speed you can ride at all.

Be ready to swerve? No, I'm not making this up. Chicago's department of transportation says so at www.chicagocarto.com/bikemap/doorzone.html. It says, "Keep track of traffic behind you so you'll know whether you have enough room if you must swerve suddenly out of the 'Door Zone.'" This is an unsafe and nerve-wracking way to ride.

You can't see through headrests or tinted glass. Trying to do so is a dangerous distraction from the other things you should observe while riding.

Motorists make mistakes. We avoid accidents by evading each other's mistakes. But a door-zone bike-lane accident is what engineers call a single point failure mode. If the motorist opens the door at the wrong time, the rider has no way to avoid the accident.

Moreover, a parked motorist can't always see the approaching cyclist. Dan Gutierrez, director of the California Association of Bicyclist Organizations, once nearly doored a rider because the rider had popped from the sidewalk onto the road during the time between Dan's rearward visual check and the moment he opened the door.

I first encountered the arguments against door-zone bike lanes about thirty years ago. In 1978, I helped write a manual on bicycle facility design for the United States Department of Energy. I did what I could to make the gist of this article federal policy. Obviously, I didn't do enough.

A survey on the website of New York City's Transportation Alternatives (www.transalt.org) shows that roughly two thirds of the respondents have either had a dooring accident or have nearly had one.

In the bicycle safety class Gutierrez teaches, he has found that many riders underestimate the width of the door zone. He instructs his students to ride an estimated five feet from parked cars. Then they get out the measuring tape and learn what five feet really looks like.

Policy makers don't seem to be interested in changing the situation regarding door-zone bike lanes.

The city of Chicago has installed many miles of them. They published a bike lane design guide

book which purports that non-door-zone bike lanes can be squeezed into a narrow city street. It achieves this magic through deceit: the scale drawings in the book are falsified. The cars in the drawing are well under five feet wide whereas much of the personal car fleet in the United States is over six feet wide. In other words, they are door-zone bike lanes.

Cambridge, Massachusetts, a city with door-zone bike lanes, had a high-profile fatality on July 2, 2002. Dana Laird, a thirty-six-year-old PhD candidate with a promising career in international relations, was killed when a SUV door opened in her path. After Laird's death, the pro bike-lane essay on the city's website was revised to omit the part that said the bike lanes "indicate the correct position" on the roadway.

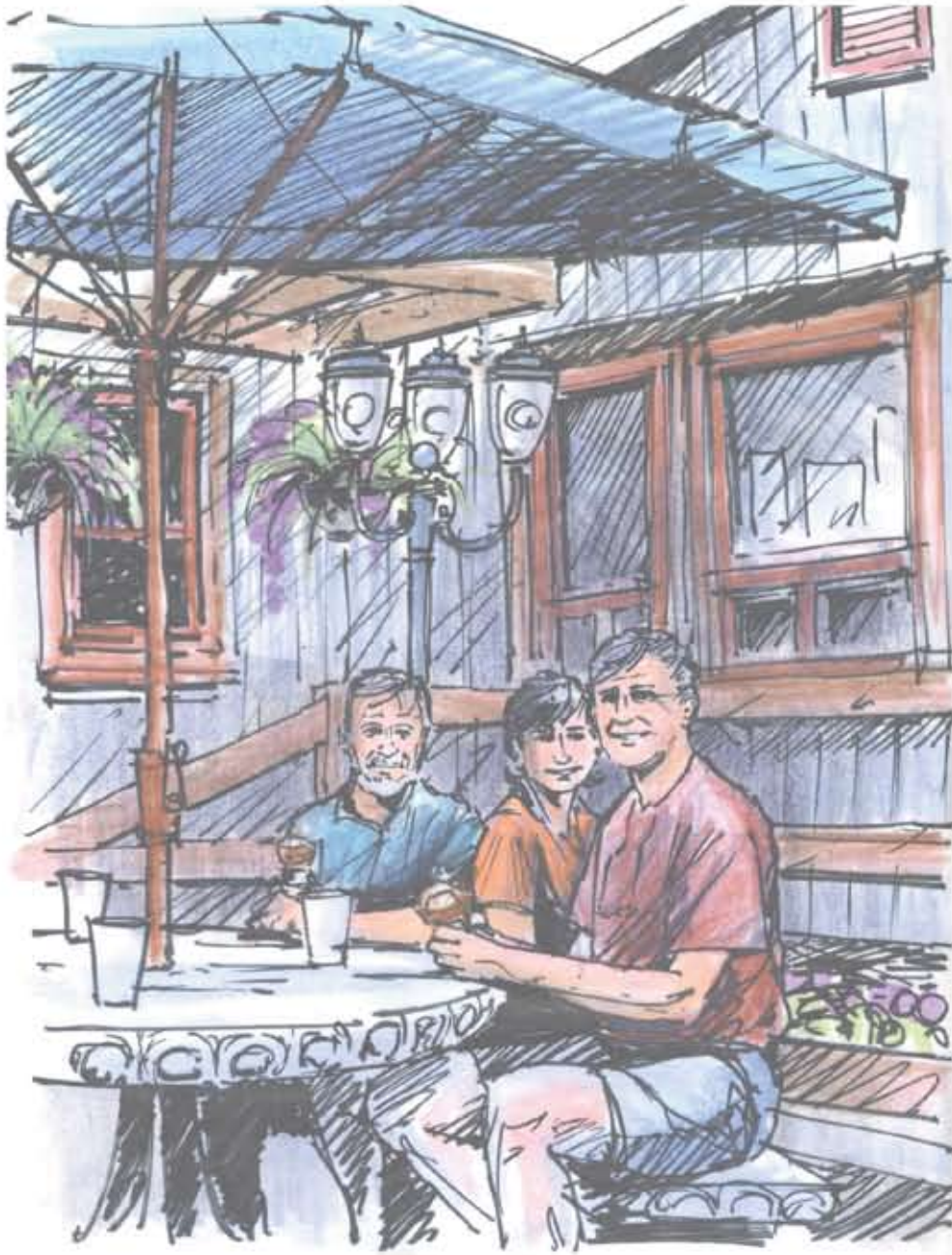
Also in 2002, our nation's Transportation Research Board haughtily rejected a very thoughtful paper on door-zone bike lanes by former Boston City Bicycle Coordinator Paul Schimek. The reviewers who rejected the paper were unabashedly ideological in their rejections. One reviewer wrote. "There has been no research to show that without bike lanes cyclists would ride further out from the door zone..."

This is a bogus argument. If a traffic control device promotes a dangerous behavior, it is no defense to state that the dangerous behavior can exist without the presence of the traffic control device.

Before a door-zone bike lane is painted, you have the right to the whole dang road. Why give that up to ride in the most dangerous part?

Used with permission from Adventure Cyclist

JULY 2004
ADVENTURECYCLING.ORG



TRAIL TOWNS

— www.atatrail.org —