

# Welcome to Livingston and Park County Trails!

Park County is located in south central Montana and includes the beautiful Paradise and Shields Valleys. It is surrounded by the Absaroka/Beartooth Range, the Crazy Mountains and the Gallatin Range. The Yellowstone River runs through Paradise Valley and winds its way through the city of Livingston. Livingston, Montana is the county seat and is also a gateway to Yellowstone National Park. It is a land of open spaces, mountains, wetlands, rivers and ranches. So go explore and enjoy - let us know what you think. See you on the trail!



## Background

Livingston and Park County are experiencing a period of rapid growth that is changing the area and threatening the rural lifestyle that residents have enjoyed for over a hundred years. In response to expressed public interest, the Livingston City Commission and Park County Commission jointly created a task force in January 2005 to develop a trails plan for the city and the immediately surrounding area. The task force met regularly for the better part of the next two years, reviewing city and county documents, meeting with staff, analyzing model trail plans from other communities, contacting landowners, and gathering input from the public at large. A survey was conducted of residents in zip code 59047, which most closely approximates the area of consideration. The key findings of the survey indicated frequent use of existing trails as well as strong support for an expanded trail system in the area. The task force's efforts resulted in the Livingston/Park County Trails and Greenways Plan.

## Why Do We Need a Trails Plan?

Trails provide numerous benefits to communities. A well thought out trails plan will provide city and county planners, landowners, and developers with a framework for trails-related subdivision review and help ensure that trails are incorporated into all future development decisions. A network of non-motorized pathways in the Livingston area will ensure that children, local citizens, and visitors can travel safely on pathways that connect residential areas, schools, parks, and commercial areas. In addition to offering alternative modes of transportation to motorized vehicles, trails (and parks) benefit individuals and improve communities by providing needed recreational opportunities, promoting health and fitness, contributing to economic vitality, increasing property values, and protecting natural resources.

## Trail Types

This plan proposes 32 trails within the Livingston Neighborhood area, each of which is classified either as a pathway or a shared roadway. Pathways are physically separated from motorized vehicular traffic by open space or barrier. They may also serve a major recreation function and see use from a wide range of user types, including bicyclists, walkers, joggers, wildlife watchers, rollerbladers, skiers, etc. Shared roadways are either bike lanes or bike routes. Bike lanes are on-street striped lanes designated for the exclusive use of bicyclists. Bike Routes are signed shared roadways recommended for bicycle travel with bicyclists occupying the right-hand side of the traffic lane (to the left of parked cars). In addition, the High Ground Neighborhood Trails Area and the Public Lands Recreational Trails Areas are proposed although no specific trail alignments have been identified. The Shields Valley pathway, Paradise Valley pathway, and a bike route along the Frontage Road from the west I-90 exit to Jackson Creek Road extend farther out into the county.



## Our Goals

**Trails connect neighborhoods, schools, businesses and parks, providing close-to-home recreational opportunities and avenues for non-motorized transportation.**

**Trails link Livingston with neighboring communities and outlying areas, including Paradise Valley, Shields Valley, Bozeman Pass and the Gallatin National Forest.**

**Greenways provide access along the Yellowstone River, Fleshman Creek, and other linear areas of open space, while preserving wildlife habitat and other valuable ecological services provided by these corridors.**



## Trail Alignment

Selection of proposed trail alignments was guided by the following objectives and timely opportunities:

- Developing high priority routes and destinations identified by the public.
- Creating connections between neighborhoods, schools, businesses, and parks.
- Locating trails along linear corridors such as rivers, rail lines and road/utility easements.
- Correcting existing unsafe situations. Opportunities may exist to jointly plan and develop trails used by children walking or biking to school, and to improve the safety, efficiency and convenience of school drop-off zones.
- Working within the subdivision review process to establish public trail corridors. Land undergoing subdivision review is subject to parkland dedication requirements, which direct developers to set aside a portion of their development for parks. This requirement can be used to obtain dedicated trail corridors within which public trails can be constructed.
- Working with MDT during planning for reconstruction of a segment of State Highway 89 and the highway bridge over the Yellowstone River. These two MDT projects have the potential to create a cornerstone of the city/county trails system by 2010: a trails hub that connects trails on all sides of the river and bridge as well as a major arterial route along Park Street.
- Improving bike/pedestrian facilities in downtown Livingston during the upcoming urban renewal district street improvement project. The needs of pedestrians and bicyclists should be considered during street re-design and construction.
- Serving the non-motorized transportation and recreational needs of fast growing neighborhoods such as the north side of Livingston and elsewhere.
- Locating recreational trails on public lands and in areas with development constraints, such as steep slopes.
- Potential rail banking. The Shields Valley Trail can be constructed on the existing rail bed if a rail banking agreement can be negotiated with Montana Rail Link and Burlington Northern Santa Fe.

This trails plan is conceptual; exact trail alignments, widths, surfacing, uses, and other features will be determined during site planning and design for any specific trail. It is anticipated that additional trails beyond those listed herein will be proposed in the future as growth occurs and opportunities arise. Some, but not all, of the trails proposed to cross through private lands have the preliminary agreement of the landowners. For others, landowner support is not or cannot be known at this time. Because this is a long-term plan, some high-priority trail alignments are shown that do not or may not currently enjoy landowner support. However, respect for private property rights is an essential element of this trails plan. Landowner negotiations must be successful before any trail project will be allowed to proceed.

## Recommendations

- Establish a Park County Park Board (board of park commissioners) to spearhead efforts to develop a county-wide trails system. The board's initial focus should be upon trail development in the City of Livingston and the areas immediately surrounding the city, as envisioned in this plan.
- Adopt this trails plan and incorporate it into the city and county subdivision review process. By officially adopting this trails plan and incorporating it into subdivision review, the city and county can require all future subdivisions to comply with and connect to the proposed trail system.
- Require land dedication as opposed to cash-in-lieu whenever possible to satisfy parkland dedication requirements of subdivision review.
- Incorporate this trails plan into city and county transportation planning and capital improvement programs.
- Appoint a citizens advisory board to ensure that MDT's upcoming Highway 89 road and bridge projects comply with the non-motorized transportation facilities proposed in this plan.
- Expand this plan to a county-wide scale, as soon as feasible, and adopt this broader plan for purposes of planning and subdivision review.
- Coordinate trails development with the School District.
- Coordinate trails development with the health community.

## Funding

Development in the Livingston/ Park County area will continue at a rapid rate and pathway corridors must be secured soon or they will no longer be available opportunities. Funding for construction, maintenance and management of the trails system can come from a variety of public and private sources. Sources of support include government-sponsored programs; grants and foundations; private individuals, organizations, and volunteers; and other creative funding and land acquisition strategies. However, even if all construction costs could be covered by grants, consistent funding still will be needed for maintenance and management. These funds probably will need to be provided through local government through three avenues currently available to the city and county including the general fund, property tax levee, and bond initiative. Occasionally, funding may be sought to purchase an easement.

## Trail Etiquette

- Stay on designated trails.
- Trails are for non-motorized use only.
- Always respect private property. Follow all posted warnings and advisories.
- Respect your fellow trail users and the trails.
- Politely alert others when passing or approaching.
- Pack out your litter.
- Keep dogs in control, follow leash laws, and clean up after your dog by using plastic bags to dispose of waste properly.
- Know your weeds and try not to spread them. Remove and dispose of plants and seeds attached to you, your bike, or your dog.
- Respect wildlife.



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# Trails Plan Park County Livingston

## How You Can Help

Private individuals, families, neighborhood associations, conservation groups and service organizations often donate cash, labor, equipment, and materials for sections of trails in their communities. These may include local running or mountain biking clubs, bird watching organizations, kennel clubs, and wildlife organizations. Another very important contribution to any trail project is the donation or below cost sale of lands or trail easements along proposed trail routes.

Become familiar with the Trails Plan and other local planning and regulatory tools. Encourage your city and county officials to follow recommendations found in the Trails Plan and take advantage of opportunities to implement the Trails Plan. Become involved with those planning processes where trail opportunities can be incorporated. Organize your neighbors and volunteer to maintain a trail in your neighborhood.

## For More Information

The complete Trails Plan, and full sized 34" by 44" maps, are available in the city/county planning offices.

County Planning office 222-4102  
County Commissioners' office 222-4106  
City Administration office 222-2005

## Thank you!

The Livingston Trails Plan and this brochure were developed with assistance from the National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program and a locally appointed Trails and Greenways Taskforce. The City of Livingston and Park County commissions supported this effort and have adopted the Trails Plan. Also to be acknowledged are the affected private landowners and the general public who provided input and guidance. The illustrations were provided by Julianne Jones.



# Pathway Descriptions

Note the map legend indicating which trails are existing or proposed. Those trails identified as proposed should not be used by the general public until landowner negotiations and trail alignments are final. The map is intended for the use of trail planners, city and county officials, and developers.

- 1 YELLOWSTONE RIVER SOUTHWEST**  
From Mayors Landing southwest along the Yellowstone River to the end of the levee trail at Miles Park.
- 2 GIRL SCOUT**  
From View Vista Drive, north through the park to connect to the Treasure Trails Girl Scout camp, then to the existing pathway along Fleshaman Creek at a new footbridge at M Street.
- 3 MAYORS LANDING/HIGHWAY 89 BRIDGE CONNECTOR**  
From the end of Lewis Street or from the new footbridge at Q Street, to the State Highway 89 bridge at KPRK.
- 4 YELLOWSTONE RIVER SOUTHEAST**  
From the State Highway 89 bridge to the area across the river from 9th Street island.
- 5 YELLOWSTONE RIVER NORTHEAST**  
From the State Highway 89 bridge north along the Yellowstone river corridor to Rustad Lane, then south to State Highway 89.
- 6 CITY WATER PLANT**  
From the State Highway 89 bridge to Garnier Avenue at Grandview.
- 7 FRONT STREET**  
Adjacent to Front Street from Star Road to Main Street.
- 8 STAR ROAD RAILROAD CROSSING**  
Connects Highway 10 West to Altair Dr.
- 9 HISTORIC BOZEMAN TRAIL CONNECTOR**  
From Star Road near Mars Park to Meredith Ranch Road to the Historic Bozeman Trail.
- 10 HIGH GROUND CONNECTOR**  
From Fleshaman Creek trail at Star Road, along Fleshaman Creek Road to 8th Street, to the HRDC easement, to High Ground Avenue and the High Ground Neighborhood Trails area.
- 11 HIGH GROUND NEIGHBORHOOD TRAILS AREA**  
A system of trails could be developed in the area of hilly terrain from the water tower to the Green Acres subdivision, including connections with adjacent neighborhoods and public parcels.
- 12 NORTH PRAIRIE**  
Along a proposed 'Livingston Loop Road' from North 9th Street to Hidden Ridge Road.
- 13 HISTORIC BOZEMAN TRAIL**  
Along the proposed Bozeman Trail from Meredith Ranch Road to Meig's Road.
- 14 HIGHWAY 10 WEST**  
From Livingston, paralleling Highway 10 to the west I-90 interchange (exit 330), connecting with the frontage road.
- 15 BILLMAN CREEK**  
Connects the Billman Lane area with the Highway 10 and Frontage Road trails at the I-90 interchange, roughly paralleling Billman Creek.

# LIVINGSTON/PARK COUNTY TRAILS AND GREENWAYS

