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projects/mt/mtrail/

Public Involvement Opportunities

Public involvement is important to any successful project development process. It is a proactive process that gives the public an opportunity to participate in all phases of the project. The public is invited to participate by attending Open House informational meetings, as well as reviewing and contributing input on ongoing project information.

The website developed for the study provides online opportunities to comment on the *Bozeman to Bridger Mountains Trail Project*. Dates, times, and locations for all community outreach events will be announced in advance by using local media and the project mailing list. Notices will also be posted on the project website.

The project team will collect and consider all public comments received to better understand community views on potential issues. People with a specific interest in this project are encouraged to join the mailing list. They can do so by submitting their names and contact information to Kirk Loftsgaarden of FHWA at kirk.loftsgaarden@dot.gov, Carolyn Poissant of the City of Bozeman at cpoissant@bozeman.net, or Lisa Stoeffler of the Gallatin National Forest at lstoeffler@fs.fed.us.

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Issue

1

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Bozeman To Bridger Mountains Trail

Montana Highway 86 (Bridger Canyon Road)



this issue

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OPEN HOUSE MEETING #1

Please Join Us!

Bozeman:
Wednesday, October 8
4:00 PM—7:00 PM
City Commission Room
City Hall
121 North Rouse Avenue

Purpose:
Open House Meeting #1 will allow the project team to describe the scope and schedule for the project and highlight existing conditions and key design considerations. The informal meeting will also provide an opportunity for the public to comment on issues relevant to the development of the new trail. No formal presentation is planned.

Project Description

The City of Bozeman and Federal Highway Administration Western Federal Lands Highway Division (FHWA), in partnership with the United States Forest Service-Gallatin National Forest (USFS), and the Montana Department of Transportation, has started a project to design and construct a bicycle-pedestrian path along Montana Highway 86 (Bridger Canyon Road) from Story Mill Road in northeast Bozeman to the "M" parking lot. The project will examine potential alignments and design considerations for a new 2 mile long path and a possible bicycle-pedestrian crossing under the highway to provide connectivity between the "M" parking lot and Drinking Horse Mountain trailheads.

Project Scope

The Bozeman to Bridger Mountains Trail project will begin with a feasibility phase to provide a high level look at the available options for the path. This will include analyzing conceptual design options in order to evaluate the advantages/disadvantages, costs, right-of-way impacts, safety and potential environmental impacts of each alignment. The information developed during the feasibility phase will inform the next steps of the National

Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. Key stakeholder and public input is critical for identifying important issues related to design development and potential impacts. At this time no determination has been made as to where the path may be located.

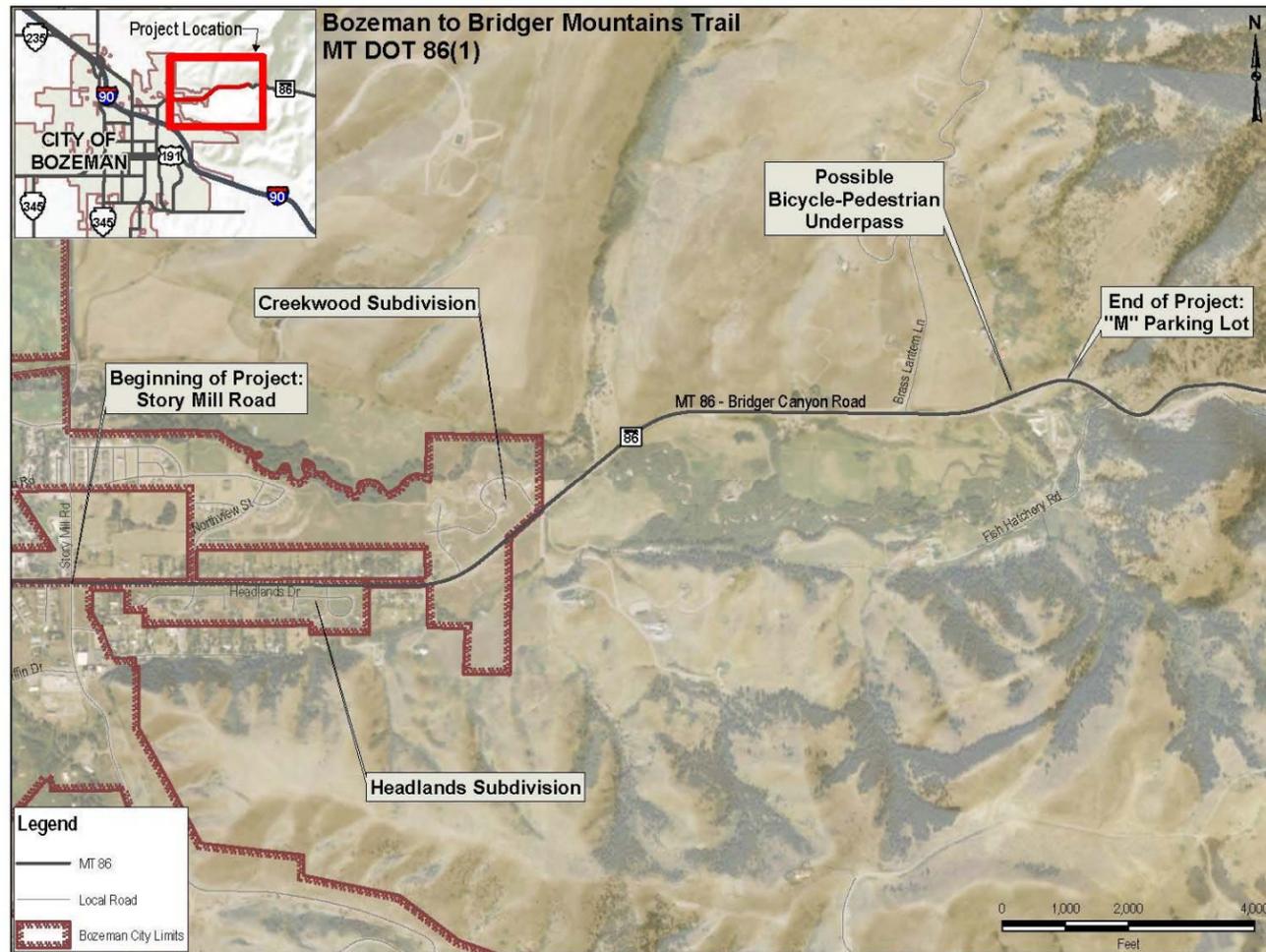
Project Benefits

The Bozeman to Bridger Mountains Trail project will provide a designated pathway for pedestrians and bicyclists as an alternative to using Bridger Canyon Road.

The City of Bozeman has made a concerted effort to develop additional not-motorized opportunities in and around Bozeman. The project will connect to Bozeman's 60-mile long "Main Street to the Mountains" trail system and provide access to public lands and recreational opportunities in the Gallatin National Forest and Bridger Mountains.

Project Area

The proposed project comprises a 2.1-mile section of bike path adjacent to MT Highway 86. It starts at the Story Mill Road intersection and ends at the “M” parking lot. The proposed path would utilize existing trail segments on the south side of MT 86 across the Headlands Subdivision, and on the north side of MT 86 across the Creekwood Subdivision. East of the Creekwood Subdivision to the “M” parking lot, multiple path alignments are under consideration.



Representative Project Area Photos



Existing trail across Headlands Subdivision



Montana Highway 86 midway through project

Project Background

Bozeman’s “Main Street to the Mountains” trail system includes over 60 miles of greenway trails linking parks and neighborhoods throughout the community. This existing trail system crosses MT 86 at Story Mill Road, the proposed starting point of this project. The proposed project would provide a link between the existing trail system and the highest-use trailhead in the Gallatin National Forest at the “M” parking lot.

Currently, bicyclists and pedestrians use MT 86 to access the trailheads at the “M” parking lot. As a result, pedestrians typically travel the short distance between Bozeman and the “M” parking lot by car. Overflow from the parking lot uses the shoulders of MT 86, further constricting the already congested area. The proposed trail would potentially alleviate some of the overflow and congestion by providing an alternative route for pedestrians and bicyclists to access the “M” and associated trails.

Project Funding

The City of Bozeman and partner agencies applied for funding from the Federal Land Access Program (Access Program). The Access Program was created by Congress through the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) to improve access to and through federal lands. The program is directed towards public highways, roads, bridges, trails, and transit systems that are under state, tribal, municipal, or local government jurisdiction or maintenance and provide access to federal lands, such as the Gallatin National Forest.

The Access Program requires a local funding match for each project. The City of Bozeman has committed to the local match for this project through the Trails, Open Space and Parks Program (TOP). The TOP program was created for the purposes of paying the costs of designing, constructing or equipping on open-space land, trails, parks and natural areas or multi-use recreational fields and facilities, or employing such lands in the preservation or enhancement of water quality, and acquiring rights to or interests in or improving open-space lands in or near the City.

Preliminary Project Schedule

The preliminary project development phases of the *Bozeman to Bridger Mountains Trail Project* began in August 2014. Construction is tentatively planned for 2016, pending the results of the feasibility analysis and NEPA process.

Bozeman to Bridger Mountains Trail

PRELIMINARY PROJECT DEVELOPMENT SCHEDULE

MAJOR WORK TASKS	2014		2015				2016			
	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4
Project Feasibility and Preliminary Design Phase	█		█							
Environmental (NEPA) Phase	█		█							
Public Involvement Opportunities	█		█							
Final Design Phase				█						
Construction Phase							█			