

# MON RIVER TRAIL SYSTEM

Bringing Health and Wealth to Morgantown, West Virginia

The Mon River Trail System is a vibrant 48-mile rail-trail network in north central West Virginia and a critical link in the Parkersburg to Pittsburgh connection envisioned by the Industrial Heartland Trails Coalition. Studies conducted by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy and West Virginia University in 2017 reveal the trail system's impact on the region and its contributions to Monongalia County's growing economy, where business development and property values have increased substantially along the trail since its opening in 1998.



## \$6 MILLION

The amount annually that trail users contribute to the Morgantown, West Virginia, region.



On average, tourists (traveling 50+ miles) **spend \$316 per trip** while staying in the area.



A family of four would have spent **\$722 per trip**.



Trail users spend nearly **\$230 on hard goods** (bicycles, running shoes, etc.) annually.



**Bicyclists outspent other trail users** on lodging (\$100 vs. \$59 per night) and soft goods (\$15 vs. \$10).

*"The rail-trails ... are critical to the quality of life, transportation functionality and economic growth of Monongalia County. To attract new businesses and encourage high-quality employees to move here for employment and retain them and existing residents, significant enhancement and increased connections to this [trail] system ... should be at the highest priority for the region. **Whatever the cost, find a way to fund it and do it fast!**"*

–Morgantown, West Virginia, business owner



## 27 PERCENT

The increase in trail use on the Mon River Trails System since 2015. **205,000+** people visited the trail in 2017.



**46 percent of trail users far exceed** the CDC recommendation of at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical exercise per week.



Trail users learned about the trail in a variety of ways. Top sources include **word of mouth** (42 percent), **driving past** (14 percent) and **local bike shops** (8 percent).



Strategic investment in **trail promotion and marketing** it as a major biking destination could increase the trail's local economic impact.

Rails-to-Trails Conservancy conducted a trail user survey June to September 2017 to explore the Mon River Trail System's economic impact on the region. Results of the survey were analyzed alongside trail user counts underway since 2015, and a local business study conducted by West Virginia University in 2017 ([railstotrails.org/monriver](http://railstotrails.org/monriver)).  
**Learn more at [railstotrails.org/ihtc](http://railstotrails.org/ihtc).**

