





SUMMIT WORKBOOK

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Cover photos, from left to right: Vermont's Lamoille Valley Rail Trail in Walden, courtesy Vermont Agency of Transportation; California's Nimitz Way, David Joel Lee; Wisconsin's Oak Leaf Trail, David Schlabowske, courtesy Wisconsin Bike Fed; Virginia's Mount Vernon Trail, Milo Bateman; Pennsylvania's Cynwyd Heritage Trail, Thom Carroll.

Photo opposite: Ohio and Erie Canal Towpath Trail, Jason Cohn.



This is where the vision of trail networks at the center of healthy, thriving communities becomes reality. Your work to develop a regional trail network puts you in the middle of a movement built upon over six decades of progress to forge a nation connected by trails—preserving transportation corridors to create new access to the outdoors and nature, new opportunities for mobility and economic development, and new ways to deliver quality of life. The nation's 42,000+ miles of trails are transforming the way people connect to their communities and to one another.

These trails are at the foundation of the more than 150 trail networks being developed in communities across the country—from rural towns to bustling suburbs and major cities—with nearly half of all Americans living in counties where a trail network is active or planned. In every single state, and in Washington, D.C., and Puerto Rico, people are embracing the powerful role that connected trails and active transportation infrastructure serve in their everyday lives. They want to be able to safely get around their communities without a car, whether that's to get to school, go to work or enjoy an afternoon of adventure outside. They want trails to connect everyone, everywhere.

At the TrailNation™ Summit, Rails to Trails Conservancy is curating an opportunity to tap into this growing momentum. Over the next few days together, we'll immerse ourselves in the learning, relationship building and strategy setting necessary to accelerate the pace of trail network development and catalyze new opportunities to create and connect trails across the country. We'll share expertise, ideas, challenges and untapped potential to maximize the impact of this essential infrastructure for the prosperity, health and resilience of every community.

Cleveland is the perfect backdrop for this event. Our host trail network, the Cuyahoga Greenways, represents an ambitious vision to link more than 815 miles of existing and planned trails, bikeways and greenways across the region—connecting communities and neighborhoods to parks, jobs, schools, cultural destinations and Lake Erie. With a unique and effective partnership of public and private agencies and organizations, Cuyahoga Greenways brings to life the many ways trail networks can transform a region. While we're in Cleveland, we'll spend some time together outside, experiencing firsthand the vision, progress and partnerships fueling this innovative project.

WELCOME

A Community of Leaders

At the Summit, we will gather as visionaries, advocates, planners, champions and doers with one shared mission: to build a nation connected by trails. Our time together will serve as a catalyst for change, an incubator of ideas and a space for connection. We will foster relationships across geographic lines and state boundaries that will keep us grounded and inspired, harnessing our expertise and experience to generate progress.

Summit attendees and speakers collectively represent nearly 40 states and trail networks of every size and stage—bringing a rich diversity of perspectives, geographies and lived experiences that make this movement so powerful. We know how much we learn when we listen to and honor the stories, successes and challenges of others, which is why RTC has designed an experience intended to lift up each of our voices so that we can leverage our collective efforts for action. We are excited not only for what you will take away from this gathering, but also for what you will contribute.

To deepen this exchange, participants will be grouped into cohorts of peers from across the country who represent communities similar to their own. While those working to build out trail networks of every size and in every type of community experience similar motivators and challenges, the barriers and benefits we face are unique to the geographies we represent—regardless of the state where we're operating.

These rural, suburban and urban cohort groups will move through the sessions as teams, walking away with deeper knowledge, fresh perspectives and strategies to empower local action. Plus, you'll build a network of peers from across the country—your future sounding boards and troubleshooting teams. Our intention is that you leave with more than notes and ideas: We want you to walk away with new professional networks and strategic action plans that extend far beyond the Summit.

Action Planning for the Future

The Summit is a thoughtfully designed, deeply engaging educational journey. The most important marker of success will be in the action it inspires when you return home. RTC has developed this workbook to be more than a space to take notes. This has been structured to become your guidebook, with key takeaways, action plans and new contacts to cultivate. In each plenary session and throughout the master class sessions, you will be challenged to think big and to break down your own next steps to put what you're learning into practice. There's even a page inspired by our hard-copy daybook planners with a to-do list, follow-up notes and space to capture snippets of the energy we're all powering at the Summit ... like lightning in a bottle. We hope you'll keep the workbook and turn to it often.

This work takes bold leadership, tenacious advocacy, cross-sector partnerships, creativity and unwavering belief that it's all worthwhile. That's why your presence here matters. We are deeply grateful to our sponsors for their generosity in making this gathering possible. And we thank each of you—our attendees and speakers—for making the time to be here. We know how many demands pull at your schedules.

At a time when so many people feel isolated and disconnected, trails provide something unique and deeply needed: a point of connection. They connect us to nature, to our communities and to each other. To thrive, we all need what trails inherently provide: joy, health and a sense of belonging.

This Summit is about advancing the vision that every community has the opportunity and the access to develop trail networks, and to prioritize trails as essential infrastructure. That's the future we're building together.

With gratitude,

Team RTC

Resources

Working with thousands of partners, we've met successes and challenges in advancing the nation's trail networks—experiences that inform RTC's technical assistance tools that are designed to catalyze this work and are on full display at the TrailNation™ Summit. These resources are the result of decades of real-world experience and learning in the field, providing advocates, local leaders and planning professionals with the information and tools they need to create, connect and maintain trails and active transportation networks in every type of community. As you apply the lessons from the Summit in your work to advance trail connectivity, we encourage you to reference these resources often.

The information RTC shares during the Summit also will be available online. You can access session slides, recordings of the plenaries, and additional tools to support your work at **rtc.li/summit-resources**.

TRAILNATION INITIATIVE

RTC's TrailNation initiative (**railstotrails.org/trailnation**) brings together the model projects, the leaders and champions, and the resources across four key program areas to accelerate the pace of equitable trail development nationwide, creating new access to this essential infrastructure and the benefits it brings for everyone in America:

- Model projects that serve as learning laboratories to inform future trail network development across the country
- The Collaborative, a nationwide peer-learning community that connects advocates, leaders and professionals from across sectors and disciplines to foster trail network development
- The Playbook, which is the guide for network development, offering the insights, tools, strategies and case studies necessary for progress
- The Accelerator—RTC's newest program—that provides targeted support to rural and small-town communities to bring their trail visions to life

New information, webinars, learning opportunities and tools are added regularly.



Sign up for RTC's TrailNation Collaborative Newsletter so you are in the know.



TRAIL-BUILDING TOOLBOX

The Trail-Building Toolbox (**railstotrails.org/trail-building-toolbox**) covers more than 40 topics on every stage of trail development, from planning and land acquisition to maintenance and activation.



RESOURCE LIBRARY

Looking for specific insight, a case study, a report or webinar recording, and more? RTC's Resource Library (railstotrails.org/resource-library) is a living archive of timely research, articles and information, including everything from sample contracts to relevant white papers, fact sheets and RTC's on-demand webinar content.



TRAILLINK

TrailLink is RTC's free trail-finding platform that provides detailed maps and information on more than 42,000 miles of multiuse trails across the country. It's a tool for you to easily provide information to constituents about regional trails. Is a trail missing from the platform? Let us know at **traillink.com/submit/submittrail**.

TrailNation Summit: Schedule of Events

Day/Time	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3	Cohort 4	Cohort 5	Cohort 6
Monday, Oct. 27						
4:00 P.M.			REGISTRAT	TION OPENS		
5:30 - 8:30			Welcome Reception	on - Hilton 5th Floor		
7:00	From Rails to Trails Documentary Screening and Q&A With Peter Harnik [Superior CD]					
Tuesday, Oct. 28	3		,			
8:00 A.M.			Breakfast	- 5th Floor		
8:30 - 9:50		Welcome and Me	orning Plenary - From Amenities to Essential	s: The Case for Trails and Active Transporta	tion [Superior CD]	
9:50 - 10:05			Moveme	ent Break		
10:00 - 11:30			World Café: Big Ideas. Fast Connec	ctions. Real Solutions. [Superior CD]		
11:45 - 12:30	COHORT 1 Meet & Greets [Veterans BC]	COHORT 2 Meet & Greets [Superior A]	COHORT 3 Meet & Greets [Superior C]	COHORT 4 Meet & Greets [Superior B]	COHORT 5 Meet & Greets [Superior D]	COHORT 6 Meet & Greets [Veterans A]
12:30 P.M.			Lunch Plenary - Joy Tr	ansforms [Superior CD]		
1:30 - 1:45			Moveme	ent Break		
1:45 - 3:15	COHORT 1 Mobile Tour:	COHORT 2	COHORT 3 Mapping Trail Networks for Implementation & Advocacy [Superior C]	COHORT 4 Engaging End Users: Marketing, Messaging & Trail Activation [Veterans BC]	COHORT 5 Overcoming Obstacles to Trail Network Implementation [Superior A]	COHORT 6 Trails as Economic Engines [Superior B]
3:15 - 3:30	Leveraging Trail Connectivity	Mobile Tour: Restoring Access, Building Resilience:		Coffe	e break	
3:30 - 5:00	for Quality of Life in Rural and Suburban America	The Euclid Lakefront Story	COHORT 3 Trails as Economic Engines [Superior B]	COHORT 4 Mapping Trail Networks for Implementation & Advocacy [Superior C]	COHORT 5 Engaging End Users: Marketing, Messaging & Trail Activation [Veterans BC]	COHORT 6 Overcoming Obstacles to Trail Network Implementation [Superior A]
		·	Bro	eak		
6:00 - 8:00		Traill	Nation Pitch Fest and Networking Reception	at the Cleveland House of Blues - 308 Eucl	id Ave.	
Wednesday, Oct	29					
7:30 A.M.			Plenary space open:	s, breakfast available		
8:00 - 8:50		Break	fast Plenary - Philanthropy's Role in Powerin	g Community Growth Through Trails [Supe	rior CD]	
8:50 - 9:00			Moveme	ent Break		
9:00 - 10:30	COHORT 1 Overcoming Obstacles to Trail Network Implementation [Superior A]	COHORT 2 Trails as Economic Engines [Superior B]	COHORT 3	COHORT 4	COHORT 5 Mapping Trail Networks for Implementation & Advocacy [Superior C]	COHORT 6 Engaging End Users: Marketing, Messaging & Trail Activation [Veterans BC]
10:30 - 10:45	Coff	ee break	Mobile Tour: Legacy to Livability: Trail-Driven	Mobile Tour: Restoring Access, Building Resilience:	('ottop brook	
10:45 - 12:15	COHORT 1 Engaging End Users: Marketing, Messaging & Trail Activation [Veterans BC]	COHORT 2 Overcoming Obstacles to Trail Network Implementation [Superior A]	Waterfront Revitalization in Cleveland	The Euclid Lakefront Story	COHORT 5 Trails as Economic Engines [Superior B]	COHORT 6 Mapping Trail Networks for Implementation & Advocacy [Superior C]
12:15 - 12:30 P.M.			Moveme	ent Break		
12:30 - 1:30			Lunch Plenary - Funding Trail Investment in	a Shifting Political Landscape [Superior CD	0]	
1:30 - 1:45			Moveme	ent Break		
1:45 - 3:15	COHORT 1 Mapping Trail Networks for Implementation & Advocacy [Superior C]	COHORT 2 Engaging End Users: Marketing, Messaging & Trail Activation [Veterans BC]	COHORT 3 Overcoming Obstacles to Trail Network Implementation [Superior A]	COHORT 4 Trails as Economic Engines [Superior B]	COHORT 5	COHORT 6 Mobile Tour:
3:15 - 3:30		Coffe	e break		Mobile Tour: Legacy to Livability: Trail-Driven	Leveraging Trail Connectivity
3:30 - 5:00	COHORT 1 Trails as Economic Engines [Superior B]	COHORT 2 Mapping Trail Networks for Implementation & Advocacy [Superior C]	COHORT 3 Engaging End Users: Marketing, Messaging & Trail Activation [Veterans BC]	COHORT 4 Overcoming Obstacles to Trail Network Implementation [Superior A]	Waterfront Revitalization in Cleveland	for Quality of Life in Rural and Suburban America

Cuyahoga Greenways TrailNation Network

The Cuyahoga Greenways serves as the backdrop for the TrailNation™ Summit. This world-class trail network is a model for the nation that connects urban, rural and suburban communities, uniting them through transportation choice, economic growth, increased resilience and easy access to outdoor recreation amenities. As you explore the regional trail network during the TrailNation Summit mobile tours, consider what tools and strategies brought partners together in the development of this trail network.

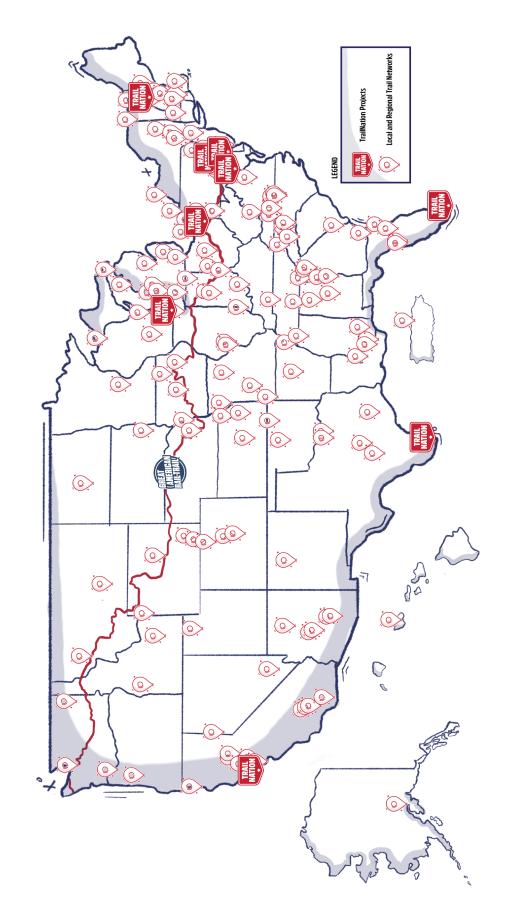


EXPLORE CUYAHOGA COUNTY'S GREENWAYS NETWORK.

America's Trail Networks

District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. The trail networks included in this assessment are locally adopted, shape and size. More than 150 trail networks are developing nationwide, reaching every state, the Across the country, trail networks are delivering transformative benefits to communities of every in development (either planning, construction or both), and comprise two or more multiuse trail segments or contiguous loops that provide seamless connectivity without traffic interaction.

network that isn't represented on the map, reach out to Mary Ellen Koontz at **maryellen@railstotrails.org.** Explore the trail networks in development nationwide at rtc.li/trailnetworks. If you are working on a trail



TrailNation Summit Plenary Sessions

These sessions with national leaders from government, philanthropy, advocacy and nonprofit organizations tackle the challenges and opportunities facing the trail network movement. Offering advice and inspiration, these sessions will spark ideas and innovation to empower your work.

FROM AMENITIES TO ESSENTIALS: THE CASE FOR TRAILS AND ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

Across the country, progress to connect trail networks is being fueled by leaders in all levels of government. What do you think is motivating their efforts, and how are they building support for trail and active transportation networks as essential to the well-being of the places and the people they serve?

NOTES:	

PLENARIES

JOY TRANSFORMS

In many communities, trail networks are spaces that spark joy and create a shared community identity, unlocking the key ingredients of place-based transformation that fuels economic growth and quality of life. In a time of increased loneliness and polarization, what does it mean for trails to serve as conduits for community connection and increased quality of life? How do we harness the joy of trails into action that makes meaningful impact for communities?

NOTES:	
	_
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	_
	_
	_

PLENARIES

FUNDING TRAIL INVESTMENT IN A SHIFTING POLITICAL LANDSCAPE

After years of unprecedented federal investment in trails, walking and biking, changes in federal funding opportunities demonstrate increased need to diversify funding sources and pursue new means of funding connected trail networks. What innovative solutions and strategies are being harnessed to fill funding gaps with both public and political support?

IOTES:	

PLENARIES

PHILANTHROPY'S ROLE IN POWERING COMMUNITY GROWTH THROUGH TRAILS

Philanthropy plays a catalytic role in the form of both funding and strategic partnerships. Consider how philanthropy and other sources can support the long-term growth of your trail network.

NOTES:	

Engaging End Users: Marketing, Messaging & Trail Activation

In every community, the effort to advance regional trail networks depends upon successful outreach and engagement. It is fundamental to growing the knowledge, shifting the attitudes, and inspiring the behavior and action among different groups of people who are necessary to bringing a trail network vision to life. Identifying the audiences most able to achieve the network's goals, followed by strategic outreach, inclusive messaging, effective partnerships and relevant programming, are necessary ingredients for building public and political support to create, connect and maintain trails now and into the future.

Everyone you talk to likely has a different reason why trails matter to them—or don't. How we perceive trails—whether we're supportive of the idea, concerned about the implications of the infrastructure on our neighborhood, or opposed altogether—is shaped by our lived experience. That's why it's critical to capture a range of perspectives from opponents and supporters to learn from them and shape efforts to educate and engage around a project. And that's how we ensure that trail networks are built in ways that serve people and places, reflecting the priorities of the communities they connect.



Through effective marketing, messaging and engagement, we can move people along the continuum of support for trails—from little to no support for trails, to loyal stewards of their region's trail networks. While the audiences we seek to engage may evolve with the project, effective outreach and engagement occurs at every stage of trail network development to build the internal cohesion, political will and public enthusiasm needed to develop trail networks, activate them and realize their potential as hubs of thriving communities.

This action-planning template outlines the questions and decision points to guide an outreach and engagement plan rooted in impact. Respond to the following prompts to shape your plan.

THE FOUNDATION

TRAIL NETWORK

What is the name or description of the trail network?

GOAL

Consider what victory looks like for your trail project. What are you trying to achieve? How will you know when you've been successful? Consider how success changes in years 1, 2 and 3. Distill to one goal that articulates a specific outcome and the reason this work matters right now, e.g., "Build a regional trail network that connects counties and creates transportation opportunities for work and school."

ENGAGING END USERS: MARKETING, MESSAGING & TRAIL ACTIVATION

OBJECTIVES

While specific, goals are intended to be far reaching. Breaking these outcomes into smaller steps can help to more strategically identify opportunities for influence. What are three indicators that progress is being made?

	l in the way of success. What may people no s knowledge, attitudes or behaviors are chai	eed to think or do for you to achieve the goal? nging?
•		
•		
•		
AUDIENCE		
		ed to know something or do something differently for se enthusiasm can you channel into project outcomes?
issociation needs to learn more	e about how a trail can benefit its residents.	unlock federal match dollars. Or a homeowners While the public may benefit from the trail network als knowing, thinking or doing something differently.
Vhich three audiences are mos	t important to moving the project forward o	nt this stage?
1		
3		
DENTIFYING OPPO	DRTUNITY	
or the audiences you've identi	fied, map out what you know about them.	
VHAT'S THEIR CURRENT P	ERCEPTION?	
How familiar are they with the pain? What do they have to los		is special about it to them? What do they have to
AUDIENCE 1	AUDIENCE 2	AUDIENCE 3

MASTER CLASS

HOW DO THEY GET INFORMATION?

UDIENCE 1	AUDIENCE 2	AUDIENCE 3
onsider the people, organizati	ES THE AUDIENCES YOU'VE IDENTIFIE ions, brands or institutions with whom or whoortant issues?	ED? here they spend time. Who has special access to
nsider the people, organizati no do they listen to about imp	ions, brands or institutions with whom or wl	
nsider the people, organizati no do they listen to about imp	ions, brands or institutions with whom or whoortant issues?	here they spend time. Who has special access to
nsider the people, organizati no do they listen to about imp	ions, brands or institutions with whom or whoortant issues?	here they spend time. Who has special access to
nsider the people, organizati no do they listen to about imp	ions, brands or institutions with whom or whoortant issues?	here they spend time. Who has special access to
nsider the people, organizati no do they listen to about imp	ions, brands or institutions with whom or whoortant issues?	here they spend time. Who has special access to
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	ions, brands or institutions with whom or whoortant issues?	here they spend time. Who has special access to

ENGAGING END USERS: MARKETING, MESSAGING & TRAIL ACTIVATION

INSIGHT

WHAT ELSE DO THEY CARE ABOUT?

Let's dig deeper into the audiences you've prioritized to identify the nuance that can help engage them more deeply.

DIENCE 1	AUDIENCE 2	AUDIENCE 3
it are the barriers preventing th		do? What are the benefits to them if they o
AT COULD MOTIVATE THEM at are the barriers preventing th DIENCE 1	nem from doing what you want them to d	
t are the barriers preventing th	nem from doing what you want them to d	
t are the barriers preventing th	AUDIENCE 2 ———————————————————————————————————	AUDIENCE 3
are the barriers preventing th	AUDIENCE 2 ———————————————————————————————————	AUDIENCE 3

MASTER CLASS

MESSAGE

WHY SHOULD THEY CARE?

Emphasize how the project	helps them and	supports their intere	ests.
AUDIENCE 1		AUDIENCE 2	

AUDIENCE 1	AUDIENCE 2	AUDIENCE 3
HOW CAN WE DIRECTLY ADD What can we say or do that wou		
AUDIENCE 1	AUDIENCE 2	AUDIENCE 3
What's something specific they c	an do to support the project? Consider din an event or organizing an event, etc., and in	ect action, like participating in a meeting to learn ndirect action, like posting on social media, sending
AUDIENCE 1	AUDIENCE 2	AUDIENCE 3

ENGAGING END USERS: MARKETING, MESSAGING & TRAIL ACTIVATION

BASED ON THE PROFILE OF YOUR AUDIENCES YOU'VE SKETCHED OUT, WHAT'S THE SINGLE MOST COMPELLING THING YOU CAN SAY TO ENGAGE THEM WITH THE PROJECT?

AUDIENCE 1	AUDIENCE 2	AUDIENCE 3
STRATEGY		
and engagement) and activities fo	r each type of media. Where/from whon	eive your messages), tactics (broad ideas for outreach in does your audience get information? Who do they are they most likely to give you their attention?
		your website, email marketing, printed materials, etc., e amplified across other media channels.
AUDIENCE 1	AUDIENCE 2	AUDIENCE 3
		hat it can be shared with authenticity by people on social nent and amplification of your goals and your message.
AUDIENCE 1	AUDIENCE 2	AUDIENCE 3

ENGAGING END USERS: MARKETING, MESSAGING & TRAIL ACTIVATION

EARNED MEDIA: This is media exposure that is gained organically through public relations efforts or word-of-mouth, including news stories, testimonials and reviews, sharing of content, etc., and can help build influence and credibility and grow the visibility of your project or other issues that are important to your goal.

AUDIENCE 1	AUDIENCE 2	AUDIENCE 3
		, ads in newspapers or on television or radio, sponsored it reinforce your key messaging and call to action.
AUDIENCE 1	AUDIENCE 2	AUDIENCE 3
	e with resources available to reach your aud ompetition, cultural appropriateness, etc.?	liences through these channels? What will be most
AUDIENCE 1	AUDIENCE 2	AUDIENCE 3
PERFORMANCE		
	rts are working? Are there results you can co nt strategy is having an impact?	ount or feedback you will receive that lets you know

Mapping Trail Networks for Implementation and Advocacy

It's been said that if a photo is worth a thousand words, a map is worth a million. That power can be harnessed in bringing your trail network vision to fruition. While no single approach is appropriate for every project, many trail managers, advocates and coalitions have been successful in advancing their trail networks by leveraging Geographic Information Systems (GIS) in a multitude of ways that we will highlight in this session.

As outlined in the TrailNation™ Playbook, the strategy of developing, refining, analyzing and promoting a geospatial trail dataset enables partners to visualize existing routes, identify current gaps and potential corridors to project future growth, and prioritize projects that align with community needs, equity goals, funding opportunities, and broader social and economic impacts.

WARM-UP AND NOTES

The state of the s	
MY TOP THINGS What are the top questions or topics related to mapping and advocacy that you'd like to discuss during this class?	HELP ME! Considering the work you do, what help or info might you want to get from colleagues here?
PEOPLE I MET Make some notes about who you talked with and any follow-up you want to do.	NOTES/RESOURCES TO REMEMBER

PLANNING FRAMEWORK AND ACTION PLAN WORKSHEET

Figure 2:



The steps involved in the mapping and analytics process, as illustrated in the TrailNation Playbook.

1. DEVELOPING A GEOSPATIAL TRAIL DATASET TO SUPPORT THE VISION

A common early step to defining a trail network involves establishing clear criteria, such as connectivity, accessibility, feasibility and geographic location. This work is essential for determining which trails should be included. These criteria also foster collaboration across jurisdictions and ensure that the network reflects shared goals and values.

Developing criteria for inclusion in the trail network may be especially useful for regional trail visions that include multiple jurisdictions that have not formally collaborated on connecting trails between their municipal, county or other regional boundaries. This process can provide additional focus for a newly formed collaboration and can help ensure early buy-in from partners.

Often done in parallel with criteria selection is the work of collecting, standardizing and refining geospatial datasets to visualize the network's scope. This collaborative effort not only strengthens relationships among stakeholders but also guides strategic decisions and supports equity by highlighting disparities in trail access.

Once the data are collected and filtered based on the established criteria, coalitions use mapping tools to visualize the emerging network and engage stakeholders. Interactive maps and spatial analyses support advocacy, public engagement and investment strategies by demonstrating the network's potential impact. Maintaining and updating the dataset is an ongoing process, requiring coordination among partners and technical expertise.

Commonly used tools to compile and visualize geospatial data for trails include software platforms like ArcGIS, QGIS and Google Earth Pro paired with handheld GPS units and mobile data-collection apps like ArcGIS Field Maps and QField.

Stakeholder engagement is critical at this stage. Local governments, metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), state departments of transportation (DOTs) and other agencies, and community groups contribute valuable insights and data. Given the often-lengthy timelines for trail and network development, this mapping process affords the ability to provide periodic progress updates on projects. It also supports storytelling and advocacy by illustrating the potential impact of a connected trail network.

Case study: The Capital Trails Coalition has used mapping to unify stakeholders, prioritize trail segments and advocate for funding in the Washington, D.C., metro area. Their success highlights the importance of data-driven collaboration and regional coordination.

How spatial data helps: Bringing layers of geospatial data together allows you to see a complete picture of what's currently on the ground and what the future could look like. That picture, which could include existing and planned trails, land use, schools, business districts, parks and rivers, helps everyone agree on what should be included in the network and what's missing.

Reflection questions:

- Who in the region already collects related data—like the MPO, parks department or state DOT—and how could they be partners?
- What sources of trail, land use and transportation data are the most accurate, well maintained and accessible for the network vision?
- How can the dataset be standardized so it works well across your platforms and can be easily updated over time?
- Does the data capture not just existing trails but also proposed alignments, access points and connections to destinations?
- What gaps exist in current data, and how can community partners or field work help fill them?

MAPPING TRAIL NETWORKS FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND ADVOCACY

THAT I THE TRAIL RET WORKS FOR THE LEFTER TAILOR AND ADVOCAGE
REFLECTIONS
2. ANALYZING AND VISUALIZING THE EMERGING TRAIL NETWORK
After defining the network—a process that can and should be iterative to incorporate changes in opportunities, resources and goals—planners use geospatial analysis to assess access, connectivity, equity and impact. Visualization tools help identify gaps, underserved areas and opportunities for multimodal integration. Equity mapping ensures that trail investments benefit all communities.
Effective visualization supports public engagement and policy advocacy. Maps can highlight trail density, proximity to transit and demographic overlays. These insights guide strategic planning and help secure funding.

Case study: Since 2012, the Circuit Trails Coalition has leveraged geospatial data and analysis to advance a goal of stitching together incredible trails across the Greater Philadelphia—Camden area. Today, as the network approaches 500 miles, coalition members continue to employ strategies powered by GIS on their way to completing the full 800-mile network, one of the nation's largest.

How spatial data helps: A geospatial approach can help analyze who has access to the network today, who's left out and how new connections would change that picture. Maps can make inequities visible and opportunities more apparent.

Reflection questions:

- What information would help make the case for the trail (e.g., showing the number of households within a 10-minute walk or which neighborhoods currently have no access)?
- Imagine showing a mayor or funder a single map. What would you want them to understand right away (e.g., "this trail connects five job centers" or "this neighborhood has no safe trail access")?
- · Are the maps and analyses highlighting inclusivity, such as access for underserved or disconnected communities?
- How can geospatial tools be used to forecast future demand or environmental impacts of the completed network (e.g.,
 partnering with state departments of environmental protection and conservation groups to identify proposed trail network
 sections that pass through environmentally sensitive areas)?

REFLECTIONS			

3. PROJECT PRIORITIZATION AND GAP FILLING

Mapping helps prioritize trail segments based on feasibility, readiness and projected impact. Along with local outreach and community engagement, which are essential, network partners leverage a variety of datasets to identify critical gaps and align projects with funding and policy goals. Collaboration with MPOs and regional partners ensures coordinated development.

As has been the case throughout this process, the modeling and analysis that rely on accurate and comprehensive geospatial data can be powerful tools for public engagement, advocacy and securing funding, ultimately helping to bring the trail network vision to life.

MASTER CLASS

Case study: Formed around a federal Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant opportunity, the Parks to Passes project is a collaborative effort aimed at planning a trail from Butte, Montana, to the Montana-Idaho border. The interstate team leveraged GIS data and analysis to identify and advocate for several high-priority corridors, ultimately securing a \$6.3 million grant award in 2025.

How spatial data helps: Including geospatial analysis in your process can allow you to more accurately score and rank projects by showing where new trail segments would have the most impact—whether that's improving safety, equity or economic impact.

Reflection questions:

- Which geospatial criteria (safety, equity, connectivity, economic impact, health and environmental benefits) are most important to apply in prioritization?
- How can spatial analysis reveal "high-impact" gaps where new connections would unlock the most value? (Example: Developing a short, missing segment between two existing trails could instantly create a safe 10-mile loop.)
- How can maps be used to see which gaps matter most to residents? (Example: Overlaying survey responses or community feedback onto a trail map can show where demand is highest.)
- How can mapping tools be used to prioritize projects in a way that's fair, inclusive and clear to both stakeholders and the
 public? (Example: An active transportation plan can incorporate data like locations of reported crashes or high-injury
 rates of nonmotorized road users, and include community input on safety needs to help prioritize bike/ped project
 improvements).

REFLECTIONS		

4. ADVOCACY AND STORYTELLING

With the significant investment of time and effort involved in developing, refining and analyzing the geospatial trail network dataset, it is critical to be able to convey the value of the vision in ways that garner both interest and support. This involves considering your audiences, the various presentation format options available (static or interactive), and the blend of art and science that is cartography.

How spatial data helps: Maps make the case visually; they can persuade funders, inspire the public and help decision-makers "see" the vision. Pairing maps with insightful narrative and personal stories makes them even more powerful.

Reflection questions:

- What story do you want the map to tell (e.g., safety, economic growth, connecting people or quality of life)?
- How might the same map be presented differently depending on the audience (e.g., showing job access for city officials, health access for hospitals or tourism opportunities for local businesses)?
- What personal or community stories could be paired with the maps (e.g., "this trail gap makes it unsafe for kids to bike to school," or "this connector would double the number of families within walking distance of a park")?

REFLECTIONS		

MAPPING TRAIL NETWORKS FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND ADVOCACY

ACTION PLANNING: MAPPING YOUR EXPERTISE, AROUND THE WORLD

Use this space to reflect on the planning framework themes and record insights and takeaways from your small group discussion.

1 WRITE THE TOPIC PROMPT OR QUESTION HERE	2 WRITE THE TOPIC PROMPT OR QUESTION HERE	3 WRITE THE TOPIC PROMPT OR QUESTION HERE	4 WRITE THE TOPIC PROMPT OR QUESTION HERE
INSIGHTS/TAKEAWAYS	INSIGHTS/TAKEAWAYS	INSIGHTS/TAKEAWAYS	INSIGHTS/TAKEAWAYS

Overcoming Obstacles to Trail Network Implementation

Across the country, communities face similar—yet unique—challenges as they seek to build out their trail networks, ranging from community connection to health and economic revitalization, landowner opposition and rights-of-way, addressing mobility needs and strategies for integrating trails with existing infrastructure and transit. But whether we're working in rural, suburban or urban communities, addressing these challenges and building public support and political will are essential to success.

What are th	e three biggest challenges standing in the way of moving your trail network or project forward?
1:	
2:	
3:	
CTION	PLANNING
hink back to t ou'd like to di	the three challenges you identified at the beginning of the master class. Choose one of those three obstacles that rill down on. Which challenge is the most pressing?
lost pressii	ng challenge:

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES TO TRAIL NETWORK IMPLEMENTATION

One way to understand the obstacles getting in the way of advancing your trail project is to identify the **issues** and **dynamics** that are contributing to the obstacle.

Issues are context-based objective, structural or logistical facts contributing to the obstacle.

<u>Example:</u> If the obstacle is landowner opposition, the **issues** might be: Right-of-way (ROW) runs behind multiple properties, so there are numerous owners to negotiate with; lack of a clear maintenance provider or funding stream for maintenance; or one of the landowners along the ROW is a county commissioner who has political power.

Dynamics are relational forces that shape how people respond (e.g., fear, anger, distrust, resentment, values conflicts); they often involve emotions that are at play in the situation creating the obstacle.

<u>Example:</u> If the obstacle is landowner opposition, the **dynamics** might be: fear of increased crime caused by the trail; fear of the trail causing gentrification and displacing homeowners; lack of trust of local government; the belief that private property owners' rights should take precedence over preserving ROW for public use; or anger at local government.

Identify 4–6 issues and 4–6 dynamics that are contributing to the obstacle.

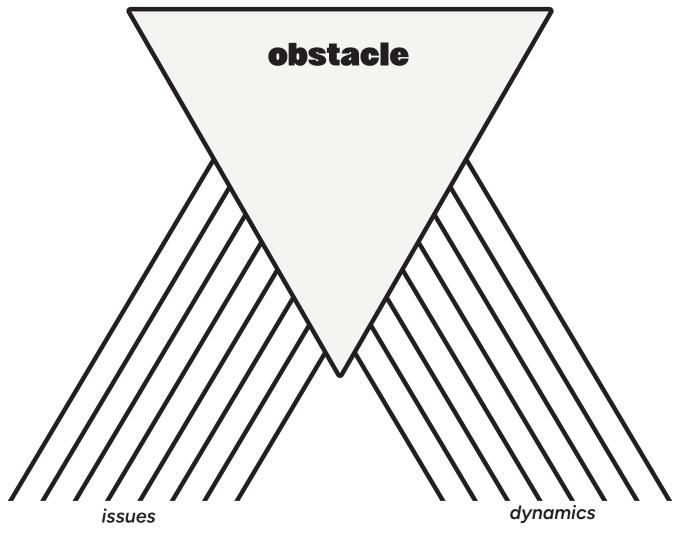
ISSUES	DYNAMICS
1:	1:
2:	2:
3:	3:
4:	4:
5:	5:
6:	6:

MASTER CLASS

Look at the diagram below. Imagine an obstacle (something preventing your trail project or network from moving forward) is represented by an upside-down triangle. Now imagine pillars propping up the triangle to keep it from falling. These pillars represent the factors that keep the obstacle in place. On one side, the pillars are the issues contributing to the obstacle. On the other side, the pillars are the dynamics contributing to the obstacle.

This visual tool can be a useful way to "see" what is contributing to an obstacle that is preventing advancement of a trail project or trail network implementation. In other words, removing just one contributing factor might be enough to help you overcome the obstacle and move your project forward. Fill in the issues and dynamics pillars for the obstacle on which you're focusing. Use the issues and dynamics you identified to fill in the pillars on each side.

Figure 3:



Look at the pillars on both sides of the triangle. Identify one pillar that you think you might be able to address. The pillar can be either an issue or a dynamic. Which is it?

NOTES:			

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES TO TRAIL NETWORK IMPLEMENTATION

STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME OBSTACLES

This Strategy Matrix is designed to help you think creatively and strategically about how to address challenging issues or dynamics. Rather than relying on just one tactic, the tool prompts you to look across multiple categories—policy, partnerships, messaging, organizing, funding, data, leadership and timing.

By working through these categories, you'll see how different levers of change can be combined. For example, a funding strategy may gain more traction when paired with strong messaging, or an organizing effort may succeed only when anchored by trusted community leaders.

Policy and Regulation: What laws, ordinances, policies or budget decisions could address this barrier?

<u>Example:</u> Secure a county budget line item for trail maintenance, update zoning codes to allow easements, or adopt a resolution that affirms the community benefits of trails to rebuild trust and political will.

Partnerships and Coalitions: Who else could stand with the project to build momentum and credibility?

<u>Example:</u> Bring in health systems, local businesses, schools or regional planning agencies, as well as trusted community leaders who can bridge divides and strengthen legitimacy.

Messaging and Narrative: How could communications, storytelling or framing shift perceptions?

<u>Example:</u> Share testimonials from nearby residents, create infographics showing safety and health benefits, and elevate stories that directly address concerns about property rights, crime or displacement.

Organizing and Community Power: How can grassroots action or volunteer engagement move things forward?

<u>Example:</u> Mobilize residents to attend hearings, organize neighborhood walking tours, or host petition drives that both show demand and create dialogue with skeptics.

Funding and Resources: What financial tools or resource streams could unlock progress?

<u>Example:</u> Apply for state or federal grants, seek local philanthropy, or secure sponsorships that cover both physical improvements and trust-building activities such as listening sessions or community events.

Data and Evidence: What information, maps or analysis would strengthen the case?

<u>Example:</u> Use maps to show gaps in access, economic benefit projections or health impact data, and pair these with surveys or visualizations of community perceptions and concerns.

Leadership and Champions: Who could be a trusted voice or decision-maker to carry this forward?

<u>Example:</u> Recruit a county commissioner, a school superintendent, or a well-respected local business owner or parent to visibly champion the trail and counter skepticism.

Process and Timing: Are there opportunities in the decision-making calendar or project pipeline?

<u>Example:</u> Align advocacy with a comprehensive plan update, state budget cycle or leadership transition, and use these windows to reframe narratives or introduce solutions while attention is high.

MASTER CLASS

ACTION PLAN: IDENTIFY THREE STRATEGIC ACTIONS

Working with a partner, use the numbered spaces below to write down at least three strategy actions you need to take to overcome the obstacle. (Note: You can write down more than three; feel free to write down as many as you want!)

When you have finished writing down at least three actions, use the lines below the actions to write down the steps you need to take to complete each action. Be as specific as you can. Write all the steps needed.

In the example below, the pillar you are trying to remove is the "lack of a maintenance funding plan," and you have identified a strategic action and the steps necessary to execute that action.

Strategy Action 1: Build a coalition to advocate for a dedicated maintenance line item in the county budget.

Steps:

- 1. Identify which department holds maintenance responsibility (e.g., parks, public works, transportation, etc.).
- 2. Research current budget cycle and deadlines.
- 3. Recruit 3-5 influential partners (business leaders, local health system, parks nonprofit) to co-sign a letter.
- 4. Schedule a meeting with the county commissioner who chairs the budget committee.

Using the space on the next page, make a timeline for your actions and the steps needed to enact them. Next to each action and step, write down a date by which you will take the action. If it's helpful, write a date next to each step as well.

Make a plan for checking in with your partner in a month or two here:

- Choose a date and time to meet with your partner to report on how things are going with your action plan.
- Put it in your calendars so it's on your schedule!

Me	eeting date and time:
	Partner Name:
	Partner Organization:
	Partner Contact Information:

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES TO TRAIL NETWORK IMPLEMENTATION

Strategy Action 1:	Date
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Steps:	
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Strategy Action 2:	Date
Steps:	
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Strategy Action 3:	Date
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Steps:	
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Trails as Economic Engines PLANNING FRAMEWORK AND ACTION PLAN WORKSHEET

This planning framework is designed to help assess and activate the economic potential of trails in your community. Each section flows through three steps:

- 1. Why this matters
- 2. Context lens with rural, suburban and urban examples
- 3. Reflection questions: Apply lessons to your own context with targeted prompts that reveal opportunities, gaps and next steps.

Use this planning framework to identify assets, gaps and opportunities while generating action steps that link trails to retail, Main Streets and local economies.

The Action Plan Worksheet is where participants translate insights from the master class into tangible, time-bound steps for their own trail projects. It serves as both a personal roadmap and a tool, ensuring attendees leave with clarity about what comes next.

SECTION 1: CORE TRAIL ASSETS

Why this matters: Identifying core trail assets helps identify where trail use already converges with community activity and where opportunities exist to strengthen those links.

CONTEXT LENS:

Rural: Trailheads may be tied to small downtowns, historic depots or natural landmarks.

<u>Example:</u> A converted rail depot as a trailhead/event hub

Suburban: Heavily used access points often sit at the edge of shopping centers or park-and-ride lots.

<u>Example:</u> Build trailheads into Main Street revitalization.

Urban: Trailheads can link directly to transit hubs, waterfronts or dense neighborhoods.

<u>Example:</u> Urban rail-trail trailheads that connect directly into diverse commercial corridors

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- · What are the busiest trailheads in the community, and why?
- Which businesses or civic anchors are closest to those trailheads?
- · Could any of these serve as hubs for events or seasonal activations?
- · Are there vacant or underutilized parcels nearby that could be catalytic sites?
- How do trail users currently interact with nearby businesses or amenities? How do these businesses/amenities interact with trail users?
- Do trailheads connect seamlessly to Main Streets, retail corridors or transit stops, and nonmotorized infrastructure—or are they isolated?
- What wayfinding or design improvements would make connections clearer and stronger?
- How accessible are trailheads for pedestrians, cyclists and people with disabilities?

REFLECTIONS

TRAILS AS ECONOMIC ENGINES

SECTION 2: ECONOMIC DATA AND GAPS

Why this matters: Understanding user data, business gaps and property value trends makes the economic case for investment. You can also identify short-term activation opportunities to test long-term viability.

CONTEXT LENS:

Rural: Retail mix may be limited; missing services (lodging, dining) are often top gaps.

<u>Example:</u> Trail towns investing in small inns and cafés

Suburban: Corridor reinvestment may hinge on diversifying retail beyond big-box and addressing affordability for local businesses.

<u>Example:</u> Bridge park project links trails with mixed-use redevelopment and downtown centers.

Urban: High demand can push rents up, risking displacement of small businesses and residents.

<u>Example:</u> New York's High Line spurred retail growth but also gentrification pressures.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- What's the current retail mix near the trail?
- What are the residential demographics and current rental/housing rates?
- Which businesses are missing that residents or visitors want? What is the sales leakage (goods/services residents currently leave town to buy)?
- · What are average commercial rents, and which businesses can/can't afford them?
- What data (foot traffic, vacancy, spending) would help make your case?
- · Who uses the trail most (commuters, tourists, locals)? Who is not using it, and why might that be?
- Are there tourism or hospitality services missing that would extend visitor stays (rural context)?
- · What event or "pop-ups" could you test in the next six months to highlight retail or service gaps?

REFLECTIONS		

SECTION 3: DESIGN, LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION

Why this matters: Design determines whether trail users are connected safely and seamlessly to where people work, live, shop and play. Connectivity improvements and activations bridge gaps and strengthen links.

CONTEXT LENS:

Rural: Barriers may include state highways separating trailheads from downtowns.

<u>Example:</u> Safe crossings added to connect trailheads to main streets

Suburban: Auto-oriented corridors may require redesign to support walkable trail-to-retail connections.

<u>Example:</u> Redevelop a conventional suburban arterial into a vibrant mixeduse district.

Urban: Challenges include fragmented grids, unsafe crossings or hostile edges like highways.

Example: The Atlanta Beltline built plazas and wayfinding into neighborhoods.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- · How easy is it for trail users to reach Main Streets, business districts, nearby attractions and residential areas?
- Is it intuitive for people to find retail/commercial corridors while walking/biking/rolling?
- · Are zoning codes supportive of trail-adjacent small businesses?
- What design barriers exist (unsafe crossings, disconnected developments)?
- Which connections feel unsafe/uninviting during the day? At night?
- · Where could wayfinding, lighting or plazas guide trail users into retail areas?
- What land use, zoning or transportation planning tools or programs can be pulled into this project? Examples include
 zoning overlays, form-based codes, tax increment financing (TIF), safe streets policies, façade improvement programs,
 federal grants (RAISE; Safe Streets and Roads for All, SS4A; Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality, CMAQ), state DOT
 programs, etc.
- Which transportation planning processes (Transportation Improvement Program, TIP; Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, STIP; MPO studies) are underway, and how could the trail be inserted?
- · What is the history of land use planning in the community? Who has been engaged/excluded?
- · What pending development plans could incorporate trail connectivity?

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SECTION 4: PARTNERSHIPS

Why this matters: Trails succeed as economic engines when planners partner with organizations that host events, finance development and sustain activation.

CONTEXT LENS:

Rural: Chambers of commerce or tourism boards often host trail-linked events.

<u>Example:</u> Wineries and chamberled festivals along long-distance trails

Suburban: Business improvement districts (BIDs), Main Street programs or local developers can co-manage spaces.

<u>Example:</u> Suburban BIDs sponsor trail markets.

Urban: City departments, anchor institutions or cultural organizations may play a stronger role.

<u>Example:</u> Trail friends groups that function as both trail manager and cultural event host

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- Who are the most influential local partners for trail-based economic development?
- Do you have political champions? Agency champions? Private-sector champions? Business anchors?
- · How can partnerships ensure benefits reach underserved residents?
- Which financial partners (banks, community development financial institutions [CDFIs]) could support small businesses along the trail?
- How could the community best involve/leverage its MPO/rural development organization/council of governments/ transportation planning organization, etc.?
- Could a BID, Main Street or TIF district sustain ongoing activations?
- Who is served by the trail? Are neighborhood groups and community leaders represented in existing partnership and planning efforts?
- · What incentives/policies could encourage stronger partnerships?

REFLECTIONS		

TRAILS AS ECONOMIC ENGINES

ACTION PLANNING - TRAILS AS ECONOMIC ENGINES

Use the template on the next page to move from inspiration to action. Each section includes prompts and examples to help you develop your action plan.

1. Challenge I'm tackling	
What specific barrier or opportunity are you working on that would allow you to unlock more economic potential from your trail?	
Examples: Lack of safe crossings, vacant retail strip, zoning hurdles, disconnected trail segments, political resistance, funding gaps	
2. Who needs to be at the table	
Who has influence, resources or lived experience that could make or break this effort?	
Think beyond your usual suspects.	
Examples: Local business owners, chamber of commerce, schools, faith leaders, public health, youth groups, transit agency, parks department, developers, neighborhood associations	
3. Policy/funding lever to use	
What policies, funding, tools or programs can be pulled into this project?	
Examples: Zoning overlays, form-based codes, TIF, safe streets policies, federal grants (RAISE, SS4A, CMAQ), state DOT programs, philanthropic funds, BID	
4. Taking action (next 90 days)	1
What small, tangible step can you take right away?	
Examples: Meet with three business owners along the corridor, secure city council sponsor for a resolution, draft a simple concept sketch, identify match funding, host a pop-up demo of trail-retail activity.	
5. Big win in six months	
What success would prove you're on the right track?	
Examples: Request for proposal (RFP) for corridor plan created and issued, commitment of matching funds, a coalition formed with 10+ partners, pilot project implemented, earned media coverage that builds momentum	
6. Accountability partner	
With whom will I share my plan within the next two weeks? Write down a peer, colleague or community partner who can support you.	
Peer feedback: My partner suggested	
	1

World Café

BIG IDEAS, FAST CONNECTIONS, REAL SOLUTIONS.

The TrailNation™ Summit World Café features conversations that are fundamental to successful trail network development. This fast-paced, highly interactive session emphasizes actionable insights and hands-on advice from industry experts tailored to real-world trail development challenges, providing new strategies, fresh ideas and personal connections that are the seed for lasting partnerships.

At the Summit, you will have an opportunity to meet with up to six table hosts (topics listed below), but we encourage you to explore the range of topics and engage with these experts over the long term. Use this section to capture new points of contact, key takeaways and your action plan after each conversation.

ACTIVATING AND MEASURING THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF TRAILS

FOURTH ECONOMY

Alongside economic development experts, explore how trails contribute to local and regional economies—and how to measure and communicate that impact effectively.

ASSESSING TRAIL GROWTH WITH EVALUATION AND METRICS

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA SAN DIEGO AND UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

Learn how to measure success and evaluate progress on your trail network—knowledge you can leverage for funding proposals and to build connections with leaders, from your local council to congressional representatives.

BEST PRACTICES FOR EFFECTIVE COALITION BUILDING AND ENGAGEMENT

INSTITUTE FOR CONSERVATION LEADERSHIP

Coalition building is a critical, but at times challenging, aspect of creating equitable trail networks. What practices allow coalitions to be led in ways that engage members and center your goals and intentions, resulting in actionable results and sustainable growth for your trail network?

BUILDING WALKABLE COMMUNITIES THAT THRIVE

KATE KRAFT, RTC BOARD MEMBER AND FORMER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, AMERICA WALKS

Through the lens of community change and public health, discuss what strategies localities are using to design places that prioritize people over cars, connect trail networks to everyday destinations and foster inclusive, vibrant public spaces.

CREATING INCLUSIVE TRAILS AND EVENTS FOR ALL

SPECIAL OLYMPICS OF NORTH AMERICA

Creating events for all requires a thoughtful and welcoming approach, but help ensure that all members of your community feel welcome on the trail. Alongside a public health and physical activity expert, explore strategies to ensure your trails and events are truly accessible for all.

DEMONSTRATING DEMAND WITH TRAIL COUNTS AND DATA

ECO-COUNTER

From demonstrating demand to supporting funding applications, learn how trail count and analytics technology can move your trail network development forward.

DESIGNING TRAILS FOR ACCESSIBILITY, INCLUSION AND UNIVERSAL MOBILITY

JULIETTE RIZZO, DISABILITY ADVOCATE

Using universal design, explore how trail and transportation infrastructure can create safe, inclusive mobility options for all, including the more than 64 million Americans with disabilities.

ENGAGING BLACK WOMEN, GIRLS AND FAMILIES IN THE OUTDOORS

SHE IS FOCUSED

Explore how trail and community design can intentionally center the voices, experiences and leadership of Black women, girls and families. What strategies accelerate building inclusive, healing-centered spaces through outreach, partnerships and culturally responsive design?

ENGAGING LOCAL FOUNDATIONS FOR TRAIL SUCCESS

VAN BEUREN CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

This session will explore how trail advocates can effectively engage local foundations to support trail development and community connectivity, offering practical strategies for approaching funders, crafting compelling cases for support and positioning trails as powerful tools for place-based impact.

EXPLORING TRAIL TOWNS AND TOURISM

CYCLE FORWARD

Learn how to demonstrate the importance of trails for your community with this conversation about how to build and maintain an effective community of support for your trail.

FEDERAL FUNDING AND POLICY ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

RAILS TO TRAILS CONSERVANCY

Discuss the latest federal policy developments impacting trails and active transportation, and learn how to effectively engage Congress in support of your trail network in light of recent federal funding clawbacks, a new five-year federal transportation law and a legislative threat to railbanking.

LEGAL STRATEGIES FOR TRAIL DEVELOPMENT

ANDREA FERSTER, RAILS TO TRAILS CONSERVANCY GENERAL COUNSEL

From navigating railbanking and corridor preservation to understanding easements, liability and landowner relations, explore actionable insights, real-world examples and methods for how to prevent or defend against legal challenges to trails, and how legal strategy can protect long-term access alongside one of the nation's foremost legal experts on rail-trails and railbanking. Please note: This session is for educational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice.

MARKETING STRATEGIES TO MAXIMIZE TRAIL NETWORKS

OUTRIGHT

How can trail networks, which are essential local assets, be maximized as regional destinations? How can those who love these trails be transformed into passionate advocates? Join Outright, the team behind Rails to Trails Conservancy's brand strategy, to explore marketing approaches that connect with outdoor enthusiasts, maximize the potential of these networks and build a community of champions. Learn how targeted campaigns, creative storytelling and smart advertising can cut through noise, amplify awareness and connect (the right) people to place.

OUTDOOR RECREATION AND RURAL PROSPERITY

KANSAS OFFICE OF RURAL PROSPERITY

Explore how a state agency works with communities to identify policy priorities, remove barriers to growth and promote successful rural initiatives—many of which include outdoor recreation and trail infrastructure—to advance rural revitalization efforts.

PROVEN STRATEGIES FOR CORRIDOR ACQUISITION

OPEN SPACE INSTITUTE

Acquiring corridors for trail development is both an art and a science. In conversation with an established land conservation expert, gain the tools and resources you need to structure and complete land acquisitions in your community.

SIGNAGE AND BRANDING TO UNITE YOUR TRAIL SYSTEM

GUIDE STUDIO

Building your trail network's brand helps users understand your network as a cohesive, connected system. Learn how branding experts worked with partners across the IndustrialHeartland Trails Coalition network to develop a brand that unifies communities across four states.

THE ROLE OF TRAILS IN DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

MAIN STREET AMERICA

Across the country, communities are harnessing trails as a tool for downtown revitalization efforts. Learn the tips and tricks to both demonstrate the economic power of trails and collaborate with your local business community.

STATE AND LOCAL POLICY STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

RAILS TO TRAILS CONSERVANCY

Compare notes on policy strategies that are and aren't gaining traction, and explore what works in building political will at all levels in this collaborative discussion on emerging state/local opportunities to align policies and public investments to meet the growing demand for connected trail and active-transportation networks.

TRAIL NETWORK PLANNING AND DESIGN

TOOLE DESIGN GROUP

Trail network development raises a variety of challenges—from community engagement obstacles to design and construction. Learn how active transportation planning experts navigate these challenges to keep planning efforts moving ahead.

WORKING WITH RAILROADS ON RAIL-TRAIL CONVERSIONS

CSX CORPORATION

Gain insights on how a Class I railroad is building partnerships and collaborating with trail sponsors and government entities to encourage rail-trail conversions that spur economic development, and learn what motivates railroads to work with local partners.

WORLD CAFÉ

TOPIC	POINT OF CONTACT
TOP TAKEAWAYS:	
ACTION ITEMS:	
TOPIC	POINT OF CONTACT
TOP TAKEAWAYS:	

WORLD CAFÉ

TOPIC	POINT OF CONTACT
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ACTION ITEMS:	
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WORLD CAFÉ

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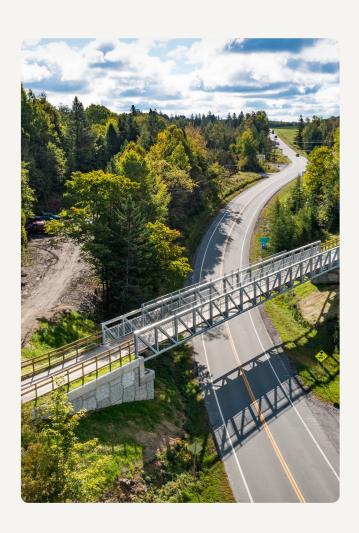
Plan for Action!

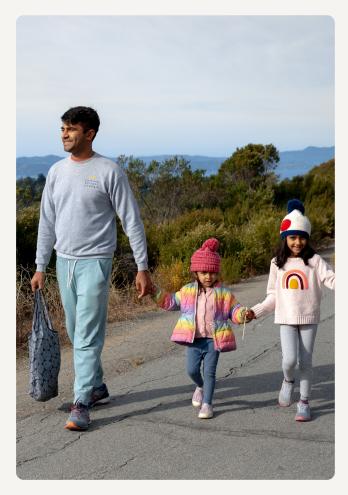
The TrailNation™ Summit is designed to provide inspiration and spark action to empower your work long after you leave Cleveland. Use this space like you would your day planner. Keep track of the ideas you want to pursue, new connections to follow-up with and action items to implement after you leave!

To-Do's	Don't Forget!
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PLAN FOR ACTION!

PLAN FOR ACTION!





Rails to Trails Conservancy is the nation's largest trails organization—with a grassroots community more than 1 million strong—dedicated to building a nation connected by trails, reimagining public spaces to create safe ways for everyone to walk, bike and be active outdoors.