

Valley County Pathways Master Plan



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valleycountypathways.org

Table of Contents

Executive Summary3
Valley County Pathways Master Plan12
Purpose and Need15
Public Outreach and Feedback.....23
Identification of Pathway Corridors25
Goals28
Recommended Implementation Schedule29
Funding Opportunities for Pathways30
Design Standards34

- Attachment A - Valley County Pathways Master Plan Map
- Attachment B - McCall Area Pathways Master Plan
- Attachment C - Greater Donnelly Area Pathways Plan
- Attachment D - City of Cascade Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan
- Attachment E - Idaho Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan

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www.valleycountypathways.org



Executive Summary

More than 11 years after Valley County Pathways completed the first concept master plan for a system of valley-wide pathways, much has changed. In the mid-2000s, when Tamarack Resort was fully permitted and moving full steam ahead with ambitious development plans, there was a real sense of urgency to reserve pathway corridors in the valley -- at least on a conceptual level -- to link the communities of McCall, Lake Fork, Donnelly and Cascade. "We must act now to reserve key pathway corridors before they are bulldozed or paved over," the 2005 Master Plan stated. "Development around the resort area and in Valley County in general has been sprouting at a frenetic pace. The building boom is happening from McCall to Cascade, and the formerly sleepy town of Donnelly is in the epicenter, with numerous projects now under construction and more on the way."

Operating under that sense of urgency, the Valley County Pathways Committee wrote the original concept master plan in 2005, presented it to the Valley County Planning & Zoning Commission and Valley County Commissioners for approval. With strong public support, and unanimous support by the elected officials, the plan was approved.

Since that time, the plan has provided a vital and important vision for the future. Valley County Planning & Zoning Commission has used the plan for guidance as new development proposals have occurred. New pathways have been built in McCall, Donnelly and Cascade. All of those communities have created new pathway plans in the last several years. Valley County Pathways has extended the Crown Point Trail via a donation of private land, and pieced together easements and property donations to create the North Valley Trail, south of McCall. The bookends of connecting the old Union Pacific Railroad right of way between McCall and Cascade have been secured, but much work remains to obtain public right of way in that corridor between Lake Fork and Pine Lakes Ranch.

Meanwhile, the urgency of development has changed. In 2008, the Great Recession began to unfold, and the majority owners of Tamarack Resort filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection as the value of real estate in the United States took a deep plunge. The recession brought nearly all development in Valley County to a halt. That gave city and county planning staff officials time to take a deep breath and brace for the next economic recovery. The economy picked up again in 2012, and it has been gaining steam ever since.

With the conclusion of the Great Recession, many industries have fully recovered throughout the West Central Mountains and some are even expanding. New industries, like craft breweries, light manufacturers and artisans have sprouted up in the region, resulting in an expanded focus on recreation and live-work community-based

infrastructure. With the addition of new housing in Donnelly and McCall, and more and more people from the knowledge economy relocating to the area, providing the pathway systems for connected communities has been widely considered the most important missing link to help grow local economies.

Most recently, community involvement in the national America's Best Communities (ABC) competition has inspired new-found cooperation among Valley and Adams counties for everyone to work together on a detailed 21-point economic revitalization strategy. The region is now branded as the "West Central Mountains." A comprehensive update of the Valley County Pathways master plan was singled out as one of the most important initiatives in the economic revitalization strategy. To that end, the ABC initiative has been a catalyst in updating the Valley County Master Plan, and it's timely to do so.



Eleanor Putman talks about why she chose to donate 1/4-mile of the railroad right of way to Valley County Pathways in 2005, extending the Crown Point Trail to the Vista Point area.

Today, it's fair to say that the public priorities among elected officials, economic development officials and residents of the two-county area have tilted more in favor of pedestrian pathways, water trails and Nordic trails than ever before. This is a positive change that will benefit the two-county area in terms of economic development, travel and tourism, and creating more pathway amenities for local residents.

In this master plan update, we are sharing and incorporating new pathway plans developed by the cities of McCall, Donnelly and Cascade, updating the goals and priorities for Valley County Pathways, and incorporating the Payette River Basin Water Trails plan. The Water Trails plan, which is an online information resource (<http://valleycountyedc.org/water-trails>), provides detailed information and maps for 10 paddling trips in the North Fork Payette River

Basin. These water trails trips are shared on our master plan map. Connectivity is more important now than ever before.

The new Master Plan will work to integrate pathways into new and existing developments, and look for connections to the other local and regional plans at play. Connecting our communities has been a key goal from the beginning. The new Master Plan also provides an important connection from Valley County to Adams County to build a "bridge" across county lines and tie together pathways in both counties. As a new feature, the plan identifies key national forest trailheads and connections to water trails adjacent to the valley trails.

In addition, under the mantra of "thinking big" we bring up the possibility of linking together the Weiser River Trail, the North Valley Trail, Crown Point Trail and other potential rail-trail corridors that could be used in the future to make a giant loop from New Meadows and McCall to Cascade, Smith's Ferry, Banks, Horseshoe Bend, Emmett, Payette and Weiser, and back to New Meadows via the Weiser River Trail. We're calling that route the "Big Loop" for now. Until the freight and scenic railroad line is phased out between Cascade and Payette, we can work on fulfilling pathway connections in Valley County and Adams County, while tracking what happens to the



Hugh Fulton of Melba and Donnelly explains the history of the Boulder Creek property donated to Valley County Pathways for the Boulder Creek Trail in 2012. VCP board member Damon Yerkes is on the right.

railroad corridor down the road, or we might say, “down the rails.” When and if that railroad section is phased out and abandoned, pathway advocates should be prepared to seize the day and ensure that we can turn the railroad corridor into a public pathway.

To summarize, key milestones accomplished by Valley County Pathways since 2005 include:

- Creation of Valley County Pathways as a 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization, VCP web site, brochures, T-shirts and stickers. (www.valleycountypathways.org)
- Extension of the Crown Point Trail by ¼ mile in each direction through a donation of real property from the Putman Family to Valley County Pathways in 2006.
- Creation of the North Valley Trail from River Ranch to Heinrich Lane via property donations and easements. The trail opened in 2007 and new pieces have been added since that time.
- Acquisition of multiple easements on the old Railroad Right of Way from the Idaho Power Company from McCall to Donnelly.
- Creation of The Strand in Cascade, a 2-mile trail that runs along the North Fork of the Payette River from the south bridge to the Water's Edge RV park. The trail also ties into pathways and observation decks at Kelly's Whitewater Park on the North Fork Payette River, and it parallels The Strand Water Trail. Special thanks go to Dwight Jividen for development of The Strand and to the Mark and Kristina Pickard family for the beautiful pathways, green space and observation areas next to the whitewater park.
- Creation of the Boulder Creek Trail in Donnelly through the donation of property by Hugh and Georgia Ann Fulton and a substantial grant from the Boise National Forest Resource Advisory Council (RAC). The trail opened in 2012.
- Linking up groomed cross-country ski trails from the Activity Barn to the North Valley Trail for xc skiing, snowshoeing and fat biking, working with Brundage Mountain Resort. The new xc trails at the Activity Barn are a substantial improvement to the overall mileage and diversity of the winter trail system.
- Improved highway signage pointing out pathway trailheads to motorists and tourists visiting the valley.
- Creating a new master plan map, outlining existing and proposed pathway corridors along with xc ski trails, water trails and key public trailheads in Valley County and Adams County.



Valley County Pathways board members (L to R) Damon Yerkes, Dwight Jividen and Andy Olavarria take a walk on The Strand in Cascade.

- Working to expand space for bike lanes on Warren Wagon Road when the Federal Highways Administration plans to repave a 5.5-mile section of the road in 2018.

Milestones accomplished by our partner organizations:

- Substantial update of the McCall Area Pathways Master Plan in 2012.
- Creation of the Donnelly Pathways Master Plan in 2014 with an emphasis on creating pathway corridors that tie together between Donnelly and Lake Cascade.
- Creation of the Cascade Bike and Pedestrian Plan in 2015.
- Development of a new, detached pedestrian pathway from the City of McCall to Bear Basin Road (summer use only at this time).
- Creation of the Payette River Water Trails online story board and detailed guide to 10 water trails in the North Fork Payette River Basin. This product turned out extremely well. See more at <http://wcmedc.org/recreation/>.
- Creation of a new detached pedestrian pathway along Deinhard Lane between the Ridley's Shopping Center and Spring Mountain Drive.
- Creation of a new detached pedestrian pathway from River Ranch to Lick Creek Road, and then along Lick Creek Road to Shady Lane.

Pathways Defined

When we use the word “pathway” in this document, we are referring to:

- Shared lanes on roadways – Where cyclists share the road with motorists without any particular shoulder or bike lane.
- Paved shoulders.
- Bike Lanes – These are typically 4 feet minimum, according to AASHTO standards, and they are signed and striped as bike lanes.
- Detached pathways – These are generally the best-case scenario to provide a separate space for pedestrians and cyclists in terms of optimum user comfort and safety.
- Natural surface trail – the North Valley Trail that runs along the old Railroad Right of Way south of McCall is an example of a natural surface trail. These trails are more inexpensive to develop and depending on the grade, typically do not require as much maintenance.
- Sidewalks.
- Water trails – These are recreational corridors for canoeing, kayaking, Stand Up Paddle Boarding, rafts and other human-powered watercraft. Water trails provide unique scenic experiences and can be used to connect to community destinations.
- Nordic trails – With extra funding, our detached pathways can be converted to cross-country ski trails in the winter with grooming equipment. This has been done with the North Valley Trail and Activity Barn trails south of McCall. The trails are open to xc skiing, snowshoeing and fat biking.



The North Fork Meanders, starting from North Beach, is an example of a water trail. A group of women try out the rapidly growing sport of Stand Up Paddle Boarding, the most popular water sport in America.

Purpose and Need

Why is it important for Valley County to develop a valley-wide pathway system?

Research and experience related to existing pedestrian pathway and greenway systems across the United States indicate that pathways create multiple public benefits.

Pathways:

- oCreate new opportunities for recreation and for people to commute to work or shopping areas without using fossil fuels
- oBoost local economies.
- oProvide transportation links to culturally or historically valuable areas.
- oTie together parks, schools, waterways and communities.
- oCreate opportunities for people to improve physical fitness and live healthy lifestyles.
- oEnhance a community's quality of life.
- oPreserve open space corridors.
- oIncrease safety.
- oSave money for pedestrian commuters.
- oReduce traffic congestion.
- oCreate educational experiences as we have seen on the Boulder Creek Trail in the Fulton Natural Area in Donnelly.

See more detail about these benefits in the Master Plan.

In our experience in Valley County, when new pathways have been built, people begin to use them immediately, and they very quickly provide multiple benefits in terms of a place to engage in health and fitness, recreation, transportation (commuting to work or shop) and safety benefits.

Identification of Pathway Corridors

Valley County Pathways has identified a number of proposed pathway corridors in Long Valley that would create an outstanding linked pathway system. We have updated this section, discarding old corridors that did not pan out, and adding new ones that make sense looking ahead to the future:

Old Railroad Right of Way – The Old Union Pacific Railroad Right of Way in Long Valley offers the best opportunity to develop a long-distance pathway in Long Valley that links together Cascade, Donnelly and McCall in a quiet setting away from a busy road or highway. The bookends of the RR ROW are secured, but in the middle, much work remains to be done. VCP needs to work with landowners on property easements and/or donations of property to secure the long-distance corridor in a way that respects private property rights and landowner long-term goals.

Norwood Lane – If the RR ROW corridor does not pan out as a regional pathway corridor, Norwood is an excellent alternative for a public road thoroughfare between Lake Fork and Donnelly. “Share the Road” or “Bike Route” signage should be posted along Norwood to show people the way on this corridor.

Farm to Market Road – Farm to Market Road between McCall and Donnelly is a popular and scenic bicycle route. It provides access to many private homes along the road, the Jug Mountain Ranch development, Roseberry and several other historic sites. Because Farm to Market Road is a key access route to areas with public trails, such as in Jug Mountain Ranch, and to historic Roseberry, it makes sense to study this corridor as a place for a detached pathway on the east or west side of the existing road. In the meantime, “Share the Road” or “Bike Route” signage should be posted along Farm to Market Road to increase safety for cyclists and pedestrians.

West Mountain Road – West Mountain Road is another north-south corridor where we could work toward developing a detached pathway or bike lanes from the Blackhawk Development to Tamarack Falls. The

road is paved from McCall to Blackhawk. This corridor ties into U.S. Forest Service access points on No Business Road, No Business Saddle and No Business Lookout, and Tamarack Resort.

East Roseberry Road – Either striped bike lanes or a detached pathway should be developed between Donnelly and the historic town of Roseberry on Roseberry Road. Because of the existing popularity of Farm to Market road as a bicycle destination, and the potential to develop a loop system between Farm to Market Road and the old RR ROW back to McCall, East Roseberry Road should receive priority for funding and development.

West Roseberry Road – The City of Donnelly is working on a detached bike path along West Roseberry to Dawn Drive and City Beach on Lake Cascade. A longer-term goal is to develop a pathway along West Roseberry to the existing detached pathway in the Meadows subdivision. A connection to Tamarack Falls should be made via bike lanes or a detached pathway.

East Lake Fork Road – Existing bike lanes have been striped between Jug Mountain Ranch and Lake Fork on East Lake Fork Road in the past. If this road becomes a major collector, it would make sense to widen the bike lanes or work on developed a detached pathway on this section of road.

West Lake Fork Road – It makes sense to provide striped bike lanes or “Share the Road” signage on West Lake Fork Road to take cyclists from the old RR ROW to Lake Fork. From here, people would cross Idaho 55 and take East Lake Fork Road to Farm to Market Road, and then loop back to McCall.

Shoreline of Lake Cascade – There is great potential to develop pathway sections around Lake Cascade for two reasons: 1) The Bureau of Reclamation, a federal agency that manages the reservoir, owns substantial amounts of property around the lake, and the Boise National Forest owns substantial portions of the southwest corner of the lake; 2) The BOR is supportive of developing a pathway around Lake Cascade from a policy level. In its 2002 Resource Management Plan for Lake Cascade, the BOR recommends Recreation Objective 2.10.3: “Seek opportunities to link trail segments over time into a contiguous system that stretches completely around the reservoir (Lake Cascade RMP, Page 5-36).”

Connection from The Strand in Cascade to Crown Point Trail – Several public road routes already exist from the end of the The Strand to the Crown Point Trail and Campground. A pedestrian crossing on Idaho 55 should be identified, and then “Share the Road” or “Bike Route” signs should be posted to show people the way to Crown Point Trail via Lake Way or other routes.

North Fork Payette River – In the vicinity of Smiley Lane and Hartsell Bridge, the North Fork of the Payette River is bounded by several large tracts of BLM land and one tract of state land. If it is possible to develop pathways on either side of the river in this area, that may connect to the future pathway on West Mountain Road, that would be an appropriate long-term goal for the regional pathway system.

Cabarton Road – Cabarton Road is a rural scenic byway from points south of Cascade to Clear Creek. A detached pathway on Cabarton Road south of Cascade would make sense because it is a very scenic corridor that eventually runs along the Payette River, and it ties into Forest Service trailheads on Snowbank Mountain, the Cabarton Water Trail, and the Snowbank road itself. If the railroad gets phased out south of Cascade, the RR ROW in this area would provide the detached pathway corridor along Cabarton Road. If the railroad does not get phased out, another option might be to create a pathway next to the rail line in the RR ROW.

Connection to Adams County – A public corridor tying together Valley and Adams counties should be developed along Fish Lake Road to Big Creek Road and the Weiser River Trail near New Meadows. The corridor should be signed with “Share the Trails” or “Bike Route” signage to increase safety for pedestrians and cyclists and show them the way.

Other regional corridors will emerge as Long Valley becomes developed for housing and commercial development. Valley County Pathways and Valley County government should watch for these developments and amend the pathways concept master plan accordingly to follow growth in strategic corridors.

Goals

The following is a list of goals that will help our communities achieve an overarching goal of establishing a viable and enduring pathways system in a timely manner:

Goal 1. The Valley County Planning and Zoning Commission should adopt the updated 2017 Valley County Pathways Master Plan and incorporate its goals and proposed pathway corridors into the Valley County Comprehensive Plan. The plan should create a priority system for developing Class I (detached pathways) and Class II pathways (bike lanes).

Goal 2. Valley County Pathways should develop a map and brochure of the Valley County Pathway System in the early stages of development, and update the map over time, as needed, to keep it current.

Goal 3. The Valley County Planning and Zoning Commission should require individuals and developers who propose new developments and subdivisions to blend their proposals into the vision for a valley-wide pathways system.

Goal 4. The Valley County Planning and Zoning Commission should obtain pathway right of way easements from new developments in cases where the development overlies key pathway corridors. Such easements should be held by Valley County government or VCP.

Goal 5. Valley County Pathways should work with Valley and Adams county officials and community groups to determine how best to pay for the acquisition of easements, fund the development of new pathways and provide regular financial support for pathway maintenance. See next section on “Funding Opportunities for Pathways.”

Goal 6. The Valley County Planning and Zoning Commission should require individuals and developers who are creating new subdivisions or other developments to develop finished pathways. If a new, benevolent developer chooses to build a finished pathway, following the desired statewide pathway standards, they should receive development credits in some fashion to compensate them for contributing to the valley-wide pathway system.

Goal 7. Valley County Pathways should work with existing landowners and subdivision owners to obtain temporary or long-term access agreements to key pathway corridors in high-priority areas. These negotiations need to be done in a way that respects landowners’ private property rights.

Goal 8. Valley County Pathways should work with the Valley County Road and Bridge Department to collaboratively look for opportunities to incorporate pedestrian and bicycling facilities into the design of road and bridge projects in areas where regional pathways are proposed and elsewhere.

Goal 9. In new development areas where potential links to the regional valley-wide pathway system can be established, developers should be strongly encouraged to create neighborhood pathways, bike lanes and/or sidewalks to encourage and accommodate safe pedestrian travel to regional pathways.

Goal 10. Valley County Pathways should work in a collaborate fashion with the Valley County Road and Bridge Department, Valley County schools, city governments and state parks to increase communication about the potential for developing pathways to create safe routes to schools and parks.

Goal 11. Valley County should create a program to provide regular maintenance, sweeping, pavement repairs, striping and signs along pathways and bike lanes.

Goal 12. Valley County Pathways should ensure that pathway master plans developed for the cities of McCall, Donnelly and Cascade and Valley County are consistent and in synch with each other and the Valley County Pathway Master Plan. So far, we are on track.

Goal 13. Valley County Pathways should maintain a design standard for pathway signage and develop a system of signs that maintain a consistent character and design. Such signs should be placed throughout the pathway

system as it is developed. This goal is in the implementation stage.

Recommended Implementation Schedule

Highest-priority projects:

- Work on property easements or donations of property along the old Railroad ROW from Lake Fork to Pine Lakes Ranch. In particular, VCP is focusing on working with property owners along the RR ROW between Lake Fork and the city of Donnelly, starting from the south and north ends and moving toward the middle.
- In the interim, develop “Share the Road” or “Bike Route” on Norwood Lane from Lake Fork Road to West Roseberry Road in Donnelly, providing a public road corridor for bicyclists, walkers and trail-runners, tying together the communities of Lake Fork and Donnelly.
- Develop public road corridor connecting Valley County to Adams County and the Weiser River Trail. We have identified the Fish Lake Road and Big Creek Road as the public roads connecting a public corridor between the two counties. These corridors should be signed with “Share the Road” or “Bike Route” signage to show people the way to connect to Adams County and the Weiser River Trail.
- Work on developing a detached pathway or bike lanes from Roseberry Road to Roseberry (aligns with City of Donnelly priority) and on Farm to Market Road from Roseberry to Elo Road, Krahn Lane and Sampson Trail to link Farm to Market to McCall (aligns with city of McCall priority).
- Work on developing a detached pathway on West Mountain Road from Blackhawk to Tamarack Falls.
- Work on developing a detached pathway on West Deinhard Lane to the junction with the existing McCall bike path near Mission Street.
- Continue working on pathway corridor around Payette Lake. New, wider bike lanes will be built on Warren Wagon Road on the west side of the lake in 2018. In the meantime, we recommend applying for grant funds to commission a study of building a detached pathway around the east side of Payette Lake. A study will help understand the different land ownerships and costs involved.
- Work toward more detached bike paths along Lick Creek Road from Shady Lane to East Side Drive. This initiative connects to the goal of building a pathway around Payette Lake.
- Work toward building bike lanes or a detached pathway along Davis Road to Gold Fork Hot Springs, a popular destination.
- Work with the Bureau of Reclamation and the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation to develop pathway corridors around Lake Cascade. A system of priorities should be developed for these potential pathway segments to determine which ones should be focused on in the near term vs. long term.
- Develop detached pathways between the city of Donnelly and Tamarack Falls on West Roseberry Road. The City of Donnelly is working on developing a detached pathway on the south side of West Roseberry Road to Dawn Drive and the city beach as a high-priority.
- Develop a detached pathway along Cabarton Road from the Clear Creek junction to the city of Cascade.

Funding for Pathways

Our financial section details a menu of options available for financing the development of pathways. Clearly, financing pathways has been our largest challenge. Valley County and Adams County have a small tax base to cover many needed services. Pathway advocates need to be as creative as possible and use each and every financial program possible to find ways to fund pathway projects.

We hope the America’s Best Communities initiative will help stimulate further discussion about financing pathways. And if the West Central Mountains group wins the ABC competition, we hope some of those funds could be used for pathway studies or projects. We also believe that state and federal grant programs, two-year serial levies and a possible formation of a recreation district in the northern half of Valley County all hold great promise.



Valley County Pathways Master Plan

Valley County Pathways developed the following vision and mission statements for the goal of achieving a valley-wide pathway system:

Vision Statement

A north-south pathway system in Long Valley would seek to connect the communities of McCall, Donnelly, Lake Fork and Cascade, complete a pathway around Payette Lake, and establish a pathway corridor around Lake Cascade. To the maximum extent possible, the Valley County Pathway System would connect valley trails to community and neighborhood pathway networks, tourism amenities and services, parks, schools, natural areas, and national forest roads and trails.

See Pathway Master Plan Map, Attachment A

Mission Statement

To create a north-south pathway system in Long Valley that links communities and fosters the development of pathway corridors along scenic transportation routes and our most prized natural resources, our lakes and rivers. The purpose of establishing a valley-wide pathway system is to enhance alternative transportation routes, tourism and recreation, economic development, and public health and safety.

Introduction: History and background

In July of 2004, a citizens group formed the Valley County Pathways Committee. For many years, people from different areas in Long Valley have thought about the potential of developing a valley-wide pathway system that could be used for walking, biking, running, roller-blading, horseback riding, commuting, cross-country skiing and snowmobiling. Most of this effort was focused in McCall. The Valley County Pathways Committee created an organization that would make a pathways system possible throughout the Long Valley region. Our group consisted of long-term residents, recreation-related business owners, teachers, retired Forest Service people, attorneys, Tamarack Resort employees, and more.

In traveling around the West, our committee members had experienced world-class pathway systems in Boise, Sun Valley, Coeur d'Alene, Spokane, Seattle, Summit County, Colorado, Western Europe, and many other locations. We sensed that a pathway system in Valley County would benefit our area in a similar way that these pathways have benefited their communities, in terms of creating safe and convenient pedestrian travel corridors,

new recreation areas, new bike-commuting routes, a catalyst for economic development and more.

In the mid-2000s, VCP was worried about the rapid residential and commercial development booming throughout the valley. Time was of the essence to reserve and develop strategic pathway corridors before they were lost. As a committee, we believed that Long Valley was and is one of the most beautiful places on earth, and as our economy flourishes and growth occurs, we owe it to our community and our grandchildren to seize the moment and develop a first-class pathway system that reflects our world-class setting.

Within one year of forming the Valley County Pathways Committee, we developed a concept master plan as the first logical step in the process of developing a valley-wide pathway system. The Valley County Pathways Concept Master Plan provided a blueprint for local government to use in future planning decisions related to new development and the creation and preservation of pathway corridors. It was adopted by the Valley County Planning and Zoning Commission and the Valley County Commission in the fall of 2005 with strong citizen support and unanimous support by our elected officials.



Steve Stuebner takes a break during a volunteer work day on the North Valley Trail, a detached pathway that runs along the old railroad right of way south of McCall.

The vision embodied in the original concept Master Plan was a bold one -- we identified the old Union Pacific Railroad Right of Way between McCall and Cascade as our single highest priority for acquisition of easements or donations of property for developing new trails. It's a 30-mile corridor that runs north-south through the valley and ties together the communities of Cascade, Donnelly, Lake Fork and McCall. The nationwide effort to convert rail-trails into public trails seemed like a great model to follow. Because the rail line was abandoned in 1979, prior to national rail-banking legislation in the mid-80s, the RR ROW reverted to private landowners. We have been negotiating with property owners one at a time – and there are more than 20 landowners along the RR ROW between Cascade and McCall – so that makes things move slowly.

Nevertheless, the vision of a valley-wide pathway system is powerful. And landowners have stepped up to help us with property donations in exchange for tax benefits, temporary access easements and permanent easements.

Key milestones accomplished by VCP since 2005 include:

- Creation of VCP nonprofit organization, web site, brochures, T-shirts and other marketing collateral. Valleycountypathways.org
- Extension of the Crown Point Trail by ¼ mile in each direction through a donation of real property from the Putman Family to Valley County Pathways in 2006.
- Creation of the North Valley Trail from River Ranch to Heinrich Lane via property donations and easements. The trail opened in 2007 and new pieces have been added since that time.
- Acquisition of multiple easements on the old Railroad Right of Way from the Idaho Power Company from McCall to Donnelly.
- Creation of The Strand in Cascade, a 2-mile trail that runs along the North Fork of the Payette River from the north bridge to the RV park. The trail also ties into pathways and observation decks at Kelly's Whitewater Park on the North Fork Payette River, and it parallels the Cascade Water Trail. Special thanks go to Dwight Jividen for development of The Strand and to the Mark and Kristina Pickard family for the beautiful pathways, green space and observation areas next to the whitewater park.
- Creation of the Boulder Creek Trail and Fulton Natural Area in Donnelly through the donation of property by Hugh and George Ann Fulton and a substantial grant from the Boise National Forest Resource Advisory Council (RAC). The trail opened in 2012.
- Linking up groomed cross-country ski trails from the Activity Barn to the North Valley Trail for xc skiing, snowshoeing and fat biking, working with Brundage Mountain Resort. The new xc trails at the Activity Barn are a substantial improvement to the overall mileage and diversity of the winter trail system.
- Improved highway signage pointing out pathway trailheads to motorists and tourists visiting the valley.
- Creating a new master plan map, outlining existing and proposed pathway corridors along with xc ski trails, water trails and key public trailheads in Valley County and Adams County.
- Working to expand space for bike lanes on Warren Wagon Road when the Federal Highways Administration plans to repave a 5.5-mile section of the road in 2018.

Milestones accomplished by our partner organizations:

- Substantial update of the McCall Area Pathways Master Plan in 2012.
- Creation of the Donnelly Pathways Master Plan in 2014 with an emphasis on creating pathway corridors that tie together between Donnelly and Lake Cascade.
- Creation of the Cascade Bike and Pedestrian Plan in 2015.
- Development of a new, detached pedestrian pathway from the City of McCall to Bear Basin Road (summer use only at this time).
- Creation of the Payette River Water Trails online story board and detailed guide to 10 water trails in the North Fork Payette River Basin. This product turned out extremely well. See more at <http://valleycountyedc.org/water-trails/>
- Creation of a new detached pedestrian pathway along Deinhard Lane between the Ridley's Shopping Center and Spring Mountain Drive.
- Creation of a new detached pedestrian pathway from River Ranch to Lick Creek Road, and then along Lick Creek Road to Shady Lane.

VCP is proud of the accomplishments made thus far, but we also have a long way to go to fulfill the full vision of our Master Plan. We have secured the bookends of the RR ROW between Cascade and McCall, but we have much work to do in the middle.

At the macro level, VCP recommends securing studies that would look into the feasibility of developing detached pathways along Farm to Market Road, West Mountain Road and East Side Drive on Payette Lake. We also would like to work together with the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation and the Bureau of Reclamation to look at the feasibility of developing public pathways around Lake Cascade. The BOR's own management plan endorsed the concept of developing trails around the lake, but no forward movement has occurred beyond the written page as yet. This project area has huge potential since the BOR and Boise National Forest control most of

the land around the lake.

We also need to signing a public road corridor that links Valley County and Adams County via Fish Lake Road near the Little Ski Hill over to Big Creek Road and on to the Weiser River Trail near New Meadows. These public road corridors provide a vital link between the two counties and tie together Valley County trails with the 83-mile Weiser River Trail, a non-motorized rail-trail that runs from New Meadows to Weiser. This is a key goal of the West Central Mountains marketing region.

Now, Valley County Pathways comes forward with an updated Master Plan in 2017. The Master Plan outlines a series of goals and priorities for developing a north-south system of pedestrian pathways throughout Long Valley, while also embracing new pedestrian pathway plans by the cities of McCall, Donnelly and Cascade, a new Water Trails online story board and recreation guide, and a connection to Adams County and the Weiser River Trail.

The Valley County Master Plan is intended to dovetail with the 2012 McCall Area Pathways Master Plan (Attachment B), the 2014 Donnelly Pathways Plan (Attachment C), and the 2015 City of Cascade Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (Attachment D).

There is a new Master Plan map (Attachment A) that details the vision of the master plan, identifies pathway corridors both proposed and completed, and shows connections to camping areas, Forest Service trailheads, Idaho State Parks and Payette River Water Trails.

Purpose and Need

Why is it important for Valley County to develop a valley-wide pathway system?

Research and experience related to existing pedestrian pathway and greenway systems across the United States indicate that pathways create multiple public benefits:

- Create new opportunities for recreation and for people to commute to work or shopping areas without using fossil fuels.
- Boost local economies.
- Provide transportation links to culturally or historically valuable areas.
- Tie together parks, schools, waterways and communities.
- Create opportunities for people to improve physical fitness and healthy lifestyles.
- Enhance a community's quality of life.
- Preserve open space corridors.
- Create educational experiences as an outdoor classroom.

1. Create new pathways for recreation and for people to commute to work or shopping areas without using fossil fuels. New pathways not only create new convenient places for people to recreate, but they also provide a safer transportation corridor apart from streets and highways for people to travel by foot or bicycle to school, work or to community centers where they may need to shop, conduct business or visit friends and family.

2. Boost local economies. Communities that have developed significant pathway systems have realized many economic benefits. Short-term economic benefits include trail-related design, engineering and construction jobs, followed by increases in travel and tourism, hotel services, bed and breakfast establishments, and retail services such as restaurants, ice cream shops, and bicycle rental and repair shops.

Across the United States, pathways and greenways are stimulating tourism and recreation-related spending. In the months following the opening of the Mineral Belt Trail in Leadville, Colo., the city reported a 19 percent increase in sales tax revenues.



Pedestrian pathways in the valley floor are mostly flat, making them easy to use for young children, seniors and others who want to enjoy an easy-going recreation experience close to home.

- The Great Allegheny Passage trail in Pennsylvania generated a positive economic impact of \$14 million a year, according to a 1998 study, even though the trail was only half-completed at the time.
- The Mineral Wells to Weatherford Rail-Trail near Dallas, Texas, draws about 300,000 people annually and creates local revenues of \$2 million a year, according to the National Transportation Enhancements Clearinghouse in 1999.
- The Summit County (Colorado) Recreational Pathway System draws more than 500,000 visitors per year. An economic survey of Summit County pathway users showed that visitors generated \$4.3 million in direct benefits to Summit County per year.
- The 70-mile Trail of the Coeur d'Alenes between the Idaho-Montana border and Heyburn State Park near Plummer attracted at least 87,000 visitors in 2004, the first full year of operation, according to the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation. New businesses have sprouted such as two bike shops, and business activity has increased according to hotel and restaurant owners in the Silver Valley.

At the root level, pathway systems serve as the bedrock of tourism and travel business in a local community. They create transportation links between hotels, shops, restaurants, recreation areas, scenic areas and parks. They create safe, convenient places for hotel guests to go hiking, biking and sight-seeing right outside their door. In a place like Valley County, a pathway system on the valley floor creates a place for people to recreate at a beginning level on a user-friendly flat surface. As they develop endurance and skills, they may venture onto national forest trails, and discover a whole new experience.

Recent economic information for Valley County from the Idaho Department of Labor show that tourism and recreation are a key driver for the local economy. The January 2017 snapshot report for Valley County shows that tourism and recreation provide 23 percent of the jobs and income in the area, second only to government and local education jobs. During the June-September tourism season, the McCall and Cascade areas are getting increasingly busy, with strong visitation from second-home owners, tourists and non-residents, and winter tourism has been strong as well.

If You Build It, They Will Come

Many Americans prefer to visit places such as greenways and trails which offer safe, scenic recreation and transportation for the whole family. The U.S. Department of Transportation, in its National Bicycling and Walking Study (NBWS) final report estimates that 131 million Americans regularly bicycle, walk, skate or jog for exercise, sport or recreation.

According to recent research conducted by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, 85 million people use rail-trails across America in a single year. Given these numbers, it is easy to understand how communities can profit by responding to trail users' needs. Suburban and rural trails that encourage "vacation-style" trips tend to generate more revenue per user than urban and suburban trails used primarily by nearby residents. However, a substantial amount of revenue can still be generated from the large number of users that a residential trail typically attracts.

Trailside Property has a Premium

Value. Homebuyers have begun to recognize the benefits of bicycle and pedestrian facilities and are showing a preference for properties close to those facilities. "Walking and biking paths" ranked third among 39 features identified by homebuyers as crucial factors in their home-purchasing decisions, according to a recent study by American Lives, a research firm serving the real estate industry. "Community designs that deliver low traffic and quiet streets" were ranked first, and "lots of natural, open space" was second. The increased salability of listings is considered to be the greatest value that the Northern Central Rail-Trail has brought to trailside properties in Baltimore County, Maryland. According to a 1994 study conducted for the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, "if two identical properties are for sale and one is near the trail and the other is not, the trail is used as a selling point and helps many nearby owners sell their property faster." (Analysis of Economic Impacts of the Northern Central Rail-Trail).

In addition, 63 percent of survey respondents, comprised of trail users, nearby landowners and local businesses, felt the trail added value to nearby properties. Not only has Seattle's Burke-Gilman Trail been used as a selling point for nearby properties, but it has also been proven to increase the value of those properties. According to a study conducted by the Seattle Engineering Department, "property near but not immediately adjacent to the trail is significantly easier to sell and, according to real estate agents, sells for an average of 6 percent more as a result of its proximity to the trail. Property immediately adjacent to the trail, however, is only slightly easier to sell..."



Shirley Olen enjoys a memorial bench that was built for her late husband, Erv Olen, an original member of the Valley County Pathways Committee. The bench is located on the Crown Point Trail.



The Crown Point Trail is an example of a pedestrian trail that connects to Lake Cascade and the Lake Cascade Water Trail.

The 376 kilometer (235-mile) Katy Trail traverses nine counties and adjoins 35 towns in Missouri, ranging in population from 60 to 60,000. Within weeks of the trail dedication, new and old businesses were vying for tourist dollars. Restaurants, bed-and-breakfasts, bicycle rental shops, antique dealers, and campgrounds all opened to meet the needs of hundreds of thousands of visitors. A recent user survey on the trail's western half showed that it generated an estimated \$3 million in local revenue.

Bicycle and pedestrian trails also attract high-quality businesses by providing commuting options for employees, scenic places for stress-free strolls at lunchtime, and safe, convenient sites for family recreation. Choosing a location that will help attract and retain key personnel was cited as the number one factor in selecting office locations, and corporate real estate executives now say employee "quality of life" issues are as important as cost when deciding where to locate a new factory or office.

The construction of multi-use trails allows more Americans to replace automobile trips with non-motorized trips. According to the NBWS final report, the American public saves from 3 to 14 cents for every automobile kilometer (5 - 22 cents per mile) displaced by walking and bicycling due to reduced pollution, oil import costs, and costs due to congestion, such as lost wages and lost time on the job.

In our experience in Valley County, when new pathways have been built, people begin to use them immediately, and they immediately provide multiple benefits in terms of a place to realize health and fitness, recreation, trans-

portation and safety benefits.

3. Provide transportation links to culturally or historically valuable areas. If pathway corridors were established between McCall and Cascade, and between Donnelly and Roseberry, there would be opportunities to create an interpretive historical tour of the valley, educating pathway visitors about the history of Long Valley including Native American occupation, the fur trapping era with Francois Payette, early white settlement by Thomas McCall and Finnish emigrants, and other pertinent information. Visitors will be drawn to the historic community of Roseberry to learn more details about our local history.

4. Tie together parks, waterways and communities. Our committee's vision seeks to connect Valley County communities such as McCall, Lake Fork, Donnelly, Cascade and Roseberry, and other neighborhoods around the valley such as Blackhawk Ranch, Jug Mountain Ranch and Tamarack Resort. The notion of linking our communities by pedestrian pathways can only be a positive thing. Linking the places where we live, work, learn and play with pathways is a crucial element in our nation's effort to build safer, healthier, more livable communities.



Runners participate in a fun run in the historic community of Roseberry. A detached pathway on Farm to Market Road would create a destination trail to Roseberry.

Pathways reconnect us to our neighbors by creating common ground for social interaction. They reconnect us to our families by providing safe and healthy recreation areas for children, parents and grandparents. Pathways also can create safe routes to schools so children and their parents can commute to school in a safe environment away from busy streets and highways. Trails reconnect us to nature by giving us access to green space for recreation and relaxation.

By incorporating the Payette River Water Trails into the Valley County Pathways Master Plan, we can realize the connections between pedestrian pathways and Water Trails throughout the valley.

5. Create opportunities for people to improve physical fitness and healthy lifestyles. Pathways create healthy recreation and transportation opportunities by providing people of all ages with attractive, safe, accessible and

low- or no-cost places to cycle, walk, hike, jog or skate. If pathways are located close to communities, they make it convenient for people to incorporate exercise into their daily routines. National trends show that Americans are increasingly becoming obese and suffer from health problems related to physical inactivity. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) estimated more than 68 percent of Americans are overweight or obese, which has been shown to increase the risk for developing heart disease, type 2 diabetes, some forms of cancer, and other disabling medical conditions. The Surgeon General recommends moderate physical activity – 30 minutes a day, five days a week – to combat the threat of diseases from obesity. Pathways provide a place for people to get regular exercise through walking the dog, commuting to work, walking to town and biking to school. Individuals must choose to exercise, but communities can make that choice easier by providing attractive and safe networks of sidewalks, bikeways and trails for people to use.

6. Enhance a community's quality of life. How people gauge their quality of life can be a subjective thing. Most national surveys show that communities with pathway networks have a higher quality of life profile than those without them. Quality of Life indices usually include things like education, employment, environment, health, human rights, income, infrastructure, public safety and recreation. If people have the option of accessing a pathway network near their home, and the pathway provides an opportunity for recreation and fitness, and gives them the option of walking or cycling to work instead of driving, they feel that their quality of life has been enhanced by having access to pathways. Parents who can send their kids to school on pathways feel their quality of life has been enhanced by not having to drive their kids to school, and knowing that their children will arrive to school safely.

7. Preserve open space corridors. By creating pathway corridors, communities protect ribbons of open space that can also provide benefits to wildlife and the natural environment. While these benefits would not be the principal aim of Valley County Pathways, ribbons of open space that would be preserved through the creation of pathway corridors would be an ancillary benefit. VCP also is open to working with the Payette Land Trust on any mutually beneficial projects.

8. Create educational experiences. One benefit that we've observed with the Boulder Creek Trail is education, thanks to the creativity and initiative of teachers at Donnelly Elementary School. The teachers turned the Boulder Creek Trail into an outdoor classroom. Interpretive displays posted along the trail provide information about water and plants. Students have been raising trout in school and releasing them into Boulder Creek. Students



The Boulder Creek Trail in Donnelly provides an educational experience for Donnelly Elementary School children.



Donnelly Elementary kids take a walk on the Boulder Creek Trail on the day of the trail dedication in 2012.

also have traveled to the upper Boulder Creek watershed in the Payette National Forest and learned the differences between a pristine stream in the forest and a stream that runs through civilization on the way to Lake Cascade.

Our partners in the Boulder Creek project include Trout Unlimited, Central Idaho Recreation Coalition (CIRC), the City of Donnelly, Donnelly Elementary School, the U.S. Forest Service, Idaho Fish and Game, the McCall Outdoor Science School, and the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality. Money for stream restoration and education was received by Trout Unlimited from the Laura Moore Cunningham Foundation, New Belgium Brewing, Idaho Power, DEQ 319 funds and the Lightfoot Foundation.

"The Boulder Creek project is an outstanding example of how we can blend environmental education and restoration work along with the development of recreation pathways for the community to enjoy," Andy Olavarria, president of VC Pathways, said in a VCP newsletter. "The property donation by Hugh and Georgia Ann Fulton was critical to making the whole project possible. We also have to thank Leslie Freeman and Damon Yerkes for pulling together a very innovative and exciting project that will have lasting benefits for students and the community."

As part of the project, Idaho Fish and Game and TU volunteers are restoring a quarter mile of Boulder Creek by planting 500 riparian shrubs to stabilize the creek bank last fall. Several hundred more plants will be planted this spring by Donnelly Elementary School 5th grade students and Fish and Game volunteers. The Donnelly students stabilized a severely eroding section of bank using a log-grid design.

Donnelly 5th graders took part in creating interpretive signs for the Fulton Natural Area trail. The stream-restoration project became an outdoor classroom, teaching visitors about wetland and stream ecology. The Donnelly students also monitor water quality in the stream. "The Boulder Creek meadow is becoming an outdoor science lab in our backyard," says Dierdre Bingaman, 5th grade teacher at Donnelly Elementary. "The students are definitely taking ownership. They're like, this is our creek, and we're going to protect it."

What is the urgency for creating a Valley County Pathway System?

In the mid-2000's, Valley County Pathways was concerned about the frenetic pace of development. After Tamarack Resort was fully permitted and authorized to begin development in 2003, a building boom occurred from McCall to Cascade, and the formerly sleepy town of Donnelly was in the epicenter, with numerous projects under construction and more on the way. Members of Valley County Pathways felt it was crucial to reserve pathway corridors throughout the valley before development occurred, so the best opportunities were not missed. "We must act now to reserve key pathway corridors before they are bulldozed or paved over," the 2005 master plan said.

However, things changed in 2008, when the Great Recession began to unfold, and the majority owners of Tamarack Resort filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection as the value of real estate in the United States took a deep plunge. The recession brought nearly all development in Valley County to a halt. That gave city and county planning staff officials time to take a deep breath and brace for the next economic recovery. The economy picked up again in 2012, and it has been gaining steam ever since.

With the conclusion of the Great Recession, many industries have fully recovered throughout the West Central Mountains and some are even expanding. New industries, like craft breweries, light manufacturers and artisans have sprouted up in the region, resulting in an expanded focus on recreation and live-work community-based infrastructure. With the addition of new housing in Donnelly and McCall, and more and more people from the knowledge economy relocating to the area, providing the pathway systems for connected communities has been widely considered the most important missing link to help grow local economies.

Most recently, community involvement in the national America's Best Communities (ABC) competition has inspired new-found cooperation among Valley and Adams counties for everyone to work together on a detailed 21-point economic revitalization plan. The region is now branded as the "West Central Mountains." A comprehensive update of the Valley County Pathways master plan was singled out as one of the most important initiatives in the economic revitalization plan. The ABC initiative has been a catalyst in updating the Valley County Master Plan, but it's certainly timely to do so slightly over 10 years after the original plan was adopted.

With the economy picking up steam again, it's important for pathways advocates to monitor new subdivisions and other developments that come before the Planning & Zoning Commission and watch for opportunities to develop pathways that could link to our regional pathway corridors or maybe part of those corridors. Now is the



The Boulder Creek Trail boardwalk in Donnelly was built with an army of volunteers. Two professional builders helped us do things right.

time for thoughtful planning. Some developers will voluntarily reserve easements and pave pathways as part of their subdivision because they know that pathways are a valuable amenity that will help sell homes and lots and elevate home values. Other developers may not want to invest in paving a pathway segment, but as long as the county reserves an easement in a key pathway corridor, the county and the pathways committee can work together to find ways to finance the development (see pathway funding options, page 30).

Other new developments proposed in Valley County may not necessarily overlie key pathway corridors, but they may present strategic opportunities for creating safe routes to schools, building links to nearby national forest lands or have some other strategic value. Street-side bike lanes or sidewalks may suffice in these types of developments.

The bottom line is that Valley County Pathways believes that the 2017 Master Plan will equip Valley County P&Z and Adams County P&Z with a strategy that will allow development to move forward, while at the same time, add value to the community’s infrastructure in the form of new pathway corridors and pathway segments.

Public Outreach

All of the communities that recently updated their pedestrian pathway plans have engaged in substantial public outreach to set and fine-tune priorities for the future. Valley County Pathways intends to hold several open house meetings in 2017 to share the latest Master Plan map and vision for the future. We want to share the broad vision of the VCP Master Plan, show how they sync with the pedestrian plans completed by Cascade, Donnelly and McCall, and get the public’s feedback on the plans.

Figure 15

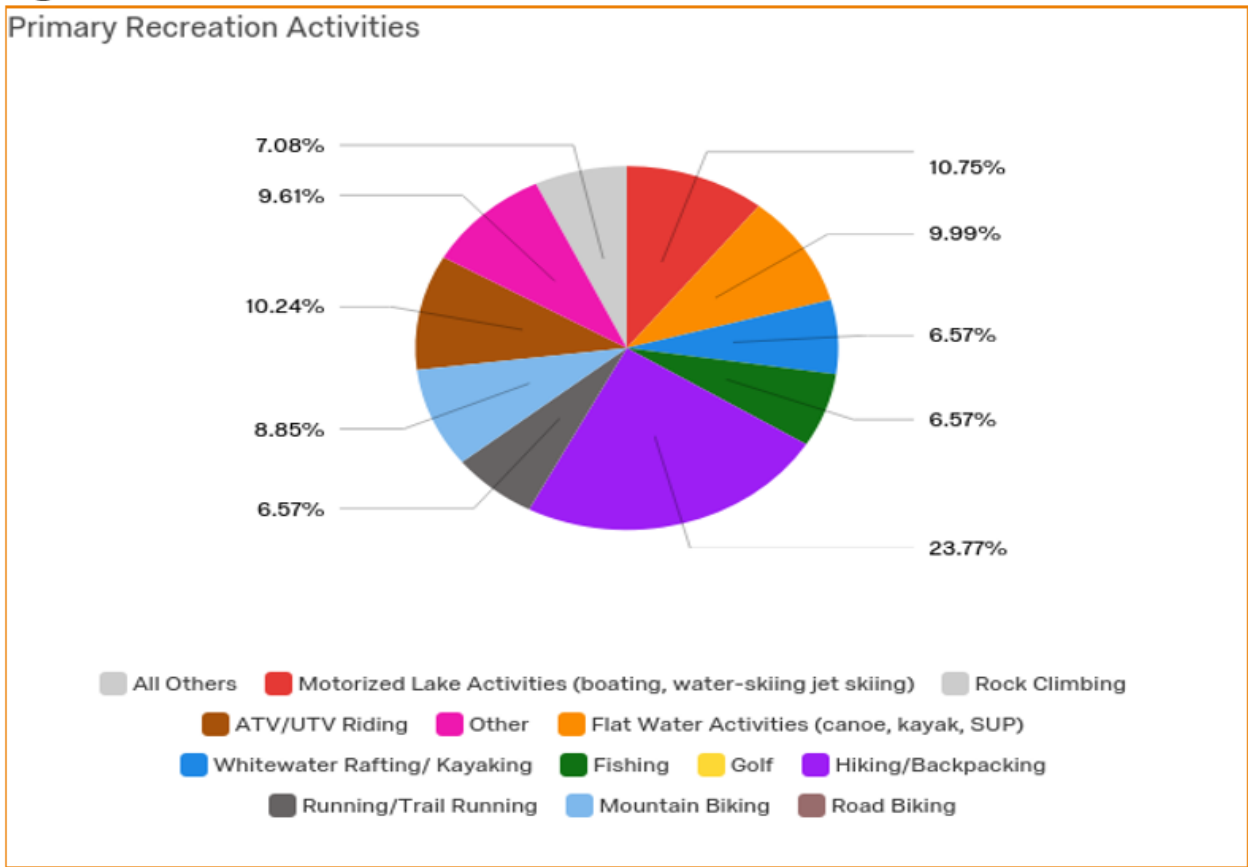


Figure 15: Primary recreation activity percentages
From: McCall Recreation Survey 2016

On a less formal level, VCP officials have been sharing drafts of the new Master Plan with community officials from Cascade, Donnelly and McCall, and getting their input on the Master Plan Map. VCP also has shared the draft Master Plan with Valley County economic development officials and planning staff, and Valley County Road Department staff. VCP sees the Master Plan as a dynamic document that will change and evolve with time and as new development occurs.

Feedback from Tourists/Visitors and Second-Home Owners: A McCall Summer Recreation Study in 2016 surveyed 1,000 visitors to gauge their interest in various recreation activities and other opportunities that brought them to the area. The results of the survey probably can be expanded beyond the immediate McCall area as they provide insight into why people visit the greater McCall and West Central Mountains region, and what they like to do when they visit.

Seventy-seven percent said they came for leisure and recreation, and 15 percent visited for business reasons. Among season visitors and second-home owners, 74 percent said recreation opportunities were what brought them to McCall. Nature, beauty, work, family and friends were other driving factors.

Asked what types of recreation they wanted to do when visiting McCall, hiking/backpacking were the top activities, followed by flatwater boating (SUP, canoeing and kayaking), fishing and mountain biking. (See Figure 15)

Local preferences for recreation seem to follow national trends. In a 2014 Outdoor Foundation report, they found that top 25 activities in America are -- SUP #1, running #2, triathlons #3, sea kayaking #5, whitewater kayaking #6, and whitewater rafting #7.

The biggest motivator for being outside was for a workout/fitness. Among youths aged 6-17, the top interests were all types of biking #1, running #2, fishing #3, camping #4, and hiking #5.

Considering that SUP is currently the fastest-growing outdoor sport in the nation, it makes the Water Trails even more important for Valley County. Road biking has been becoming more popular in Valley County with the annual “Cascade Four Summits” ride, which has attracted more than 400 participants per year. Mountain biking has become more prominent with the addition of trail networks in Bear Basin, Jug Mountain Ranch, Tamarack Resort and the Payette National Forest. In 2016, the McCall area received a “Silver” rating by the International Mountain Biking Association (IMBA) for the breadth of mountain biking riding opportunities in the area.

The bottom line that one can glean from the McCall survey and the Outdoor Foundation recreation survey information is that our communities have an excellent array of recreation amenities and infrastructure so people can plug into the activities they like to pursue. But it will add even more value to our communities if we can real-



Walking and biking are among the top 5 most desired activities among Valley County residents and on a national basis.

ize the vision of creating long-distance pedestrian trails like the RR ROW between Cascade and McCall because that will create a singular recreation amenity that can draw visitors and tourists to the area for the purpose of experiencing that trail.

The same is true of the “Big Loop” concept that would tie together the Weiser River Trail with Valley County pedestrian pathways and then take people downhill from Cascade to Smith’s Ferry, Horseshoe Bend, Emmett and Payette to the Snake River, and then over to Weiser to complete the loop. That trail, if ever realized, could become a singular tourist draw in and of itself.

VCP’s vision of a pedestrian trail around Payette Lake will dovetail nicely with the Central Idaho Mountain Biking Association’s plans to build a singletrack mountain bike trail around Payette Lake. CIMBA recently announced a fundraising drive to hire IMBA Trail Solutions team to build a trail from the Payette Rim Trail to North Beach in 2017. See CIMBA web site for more information. Detached bike paths or bike lanes around Payette Lake will accommodate road bicyclists and visitors who would prefer to stay on a flatter trail without any obstacles (except traffic), while the mountain bike trails will accommodate more adventurous riders with the skill set to tackle dirt trails with multiple natural obstacles. And the bike lanes/bike paths around the lake will provide a transportation corridor for mountain bikers to reach the dirt trails, and to paddlers who wish to reach trail-heads for Water Trails. It all fits together!

Identification of Pathway Corridors:

Valley County Pathways has identified a number of proposed pathway corridors in Long Valley that could create an outstanding linked pathway system in Long Valley. These corridors have been identified through talking with our Valley County neighbors, developers, business officials, county and local government officials. After 11 years of experience, the list of corridors has been refined to what seems most realistic and doable:

Old Railroad Right of Way – The Old Union Pacific Railroad Right of Way affords Valley County an opportunity to develop the longest pathway in Long Valley that wouldn’t be adjacent to a road or highway. This is critical because it will provide people with a nice pathway corridor away from motorized vehicles in a quiet setting. Nationwide, more than 22,700 miles of abandoned railroad right of way have been converted into recreation, transportation and greenway corridors since the 1960s. Unfortunately, Union Pacific Railroad closed the old rail line between Cascade and McCall in 1979, four years before Congress passed “rail-banking” legislation that allows local governmental entities and non-profit groups to purchase abandoned railroad sections from railroad companies for the purpose of converting rail lines into them into trails. The Friends of the Weiser River Trail used rail-banking to acquire 83 miles of rail line between Rubicon and Weiser in the 1990s.

Soon after the line was abandoned, the old Union Pacific line between McCall and Cascade reverted into private ownership in many areas in Long Valley. However, portions of the old RR ROW are still owned by the Bureau of Reclamation around Lake Cascade. Idaho Power Company purchased some easements along the RR ROW between McCall and Donnelly for the potential expansion of power lines in Long Valley. Valley County Pathways received permission from Idaho Power Co. to develop pathways on these easements if VCP can obtain permission or easements from the property owners.

How the old RR ROW can become part of the pathway system:

- oValley County Pathways works one-on-one with property owners to obtain donations, access agreements or easements on the RR ROW. This has been ongoing since 2005.

- oValley County could negotiate for easements from new developers when they come forth with new subdivision or development proposals before Valley County government.

- oValley County Pathways could acquire additional easements of the RR ROW as new funds became available

- oAdjacent landowners could voluntarily provide easements to VCP for use of the RR ROW by signing a temporary access agreement. Temporary access agreements remove liability concerns for private landowners, and ensure that pathway sections receive periodic maintenance.
- oThe Bureau of Reclamation develops new pathway segments on the Old RR ROW on BOR land.

Connection to Adams County – A public corridor tying together Valley and Adams counties should be developed along Fish Lake Road to Big Creek Road and the Weiser River Trail near New Meadows. The corridor should be signed with “Share the Trails” or “Bike Route” signage to increase safety for pedestrians and cyclists and show them the way.

Farm to Market Road – Farm to Market Road between McCall and Donnelly is a popular and scenic bicycle route. It provides access to many private homes along the road, the Jug Mountain Ranch development, Roseberry and several other historic sites. Because Farm to Market Road is a key access route to areas with public trails, such as in Jug Mountain Ranch, and to historic sites, it makes sense to study this corridor as a place for a detached pathway on the east or west side of the existing road. When new developments come along that require Valley County to expand the highway right of way to 100 feet, the county may be able to acquire an easement for a detached pathway at the same time. This is likely the most promising prospect for acquiring a pathway easement along Farm to Market Road.



Farm to Market Road is already a popular destination for cyclists. A detached pathway along the scenic road is one of our goals.

It seems clear that if a pathway can be developed along Farm to Market Road, it would be immensely popular for local residents who may wish to commute to McCall or Donnelly or wherever they work or shop, and to locals and tourists who would use the pathway for recreation outings. If VCP is successful in developing a pathway along the old Railroad Right of Way on the west side of Idaho 55, then we would develop a 30-mile loop system to travel to Roseberry, cross Idaho 55, and return to McCall via the RR ROW. Shorter loops could be accomplished if people went just as far south as Lake Fork Road and crossed Idaho 55 at that juncture.

West Mountain Road – Valley County Pathways has contemplated the need to develop a pedestrian pathway along this road corridor between Blackhawk and Tamarack Falls. The road is paved from McCall to Blackhawk at the present time. The county will need to wait for more developments to be proposed in the area to acquire more right of way along West Mountain Road to provide enough space for a detached pathway.

East Roseberry Road – Either striped bike lanes or a detached pathway should be developed between Donnelly and the historic town of Roseberry on Roseberry Road. Because of the existing popularity of Farm to

Market road as a bicycle destination, and the potential to develop a loop system between Farm to Market Road and the old RR ROW back to McCall, East Roseberry Road should receive priority for funding and development.

West Roseberry Road – Ideally, a detached pathway or bike lanes at minimum should be developed between Donnelly and the junction of West Roseberry and Norwood, connecting to the future extension of a detached pathway from West Roseberry to Tamarack Falls.

East Lake Fork Road – Existing bike lanes have been striped between Jug Mountain Ranch and Lake Fork on East Lake Fork Road. If this road becomes a major collector, it would make sense to widen the bike lanes or work on developed a detached pathway on this section of road.

Lake Cascade – There is great potential to develop pathway sections around Lake Cascade for two reasons: 1) The Bureau of Reclamation, a federal agency that manages the reservoir, owns roughly 65 percent of the property around the lake, and the Boise National Forest owns substantial portions of the southwest corner of the lake, bringing the total public ownership of the lakeshore to approximately 80 percent; 2) The BOR is supportive of developing a pathway around Lake Cascade from a policy level. In its 2002 Resource Management Plan for Lake Cascade, the BOR recommends Recreation Objective 2.10.3: “Seek opportunities to link trail segments over time into a contiguous system that stretches completely around the reservoir (Lake Cascade RMP, Page 5-36).”

The 2002 management plan also recommends the development of public trails in various areas around the lake, including between Tamarack Falls and the Osprey Point Group Use Site on the west side of the lake, and in some areas on the eastern side of the lake.

Connection from The Strand in Cascade to Crown Point Trail – Several public road routes already exist from the end of the The Strand to the Crown Point Trail and Campground. A pedestrian crossing on Idaho 55 should be identified, and then “Share the Road” or “Bike Route” signs should be posted to show people the way to Crown Point Trail via Lake Way or other routes.

West Lake Fork Road – It may make sense to work toward striped bike lanes on West Lake Fork Road in the event that the old RR ROW is developed into a pathway from Donnelly to McCall. This would allow cyclists to travel out to Lake Fork either on the old RR ROW or on Farm to Market Road, and then loop back to town.

Norwood Lane – If the RR ROW corridor does not pan out as a regional pathway corridor, Norwood is expected to become another major collector road between McCall and Donnelly in the middle of the valley. This is a public road that could be signed as “Bike Route” between Donnelly and Lake Fork to give bike-commuters and gravel grinders a thoroughfare to follow. This road would become a good alternative to the RR ROW corridor if the need arises, and if it doesn’t, then Norwood may be close enough to the RR ROW that new developments proposed in this area should be required to develop connecting pathways or bike lanes at minimum.

North Fork Payette River – In the vicinity of Smiley Lane and Hartsell Bridge, the North Fork of the Payette River is bounded by several large tracts of BLM land and one tract of state land. If it is possible to develop pathways on either side of the river in this area, that may connect to the future pathway on West Mountain Road, that would be an appropriate long-term goal for the regional pathway system. Hartsell Bridge is also the put-in/take-out for the Water Trail on the North Fork Payette River.

Cabarton Road – Cabarton Road is a rural scenic byway from points south of Cascade to Clear Creek. A detached pathway on Cabarton Road south of Cascade would make sense because it is a very scenic corridor that eventually runs along the Payette River, and it links to the Snowbank Mountain Road and the Cabarton Water Trail.

Goals

The following is a list of goals that will help our communities achieve an overarching goal of establishing a viable and enduring Valley County Pathways System in a timely manner:

Goal 1. The Valley County Planning and Zoning Commission should adopt the updated 2017 Valley County Pathways Master Plan and incorporate its goals and proposed pathway corridors into the Valley County Comprehensive Plan. The plan should create a priority system for developing Class I (detached pathways) and Class II pathways (bike lanes).

Goal 2. Valley County Pathways should develop a map and brochure of the Valley County Pathway System in the early stages of development, and update the map over time, as needed, to keep it current.

North Valley Rail-Trail



www.valleycountypathways.org

Goal 3. The Valley County Planning and Zoning Commission should require individuals and developers who propose new developments and subdivisions to blend their proposals into the vision for a valley-wide pathways system.

Goal 4. The Valley County Planning and Zoning Commission should obtain pathway right of way easements from new developments in cases where the development overlies key pathway corridors. Such easements should be held by Valley County government or VCP.

Goal 5. Valley County Pathways should work with Valley and Adams county officials and community groups to determine how best to pay for the acquisition of easements, fund the development of new pathways and provide regular financial support for pathway maintenance. See next section on “Funding Opportunities for Pathways.”

Goal 6. The Valley County Planning and Zoning Department should require individuals and developers who are creating new subdivisions or other developments to develop finished pathways. If a new, benevolent developer chooses to build a finished pathway, following the desired statewide pathway standards, they should receive development credits in some fashion to compensate them for contributing to the valley-wide pathway system.

Goal 7. The Valley County Pathways Committee should work with existing landowners and subdivision owners to obtain temporary or long-term access agreements to key pathway corridors in high-priority areas. These negotiations need to be done in a way that respects landowners’ private property rights.

Goal 8. The Valley County Pathways Committee should work with the Valley County Road and Bridge Department to collaboratively look for opportunities to incorporate pedestrian and bicycling facilities into the design of road and bridge projects in areas where regional pathways are proposed and elsewhere.

Goal 9. In new development areas where potential links to the regional valley-wide pathway system can be established, developers should be strongly encouraged to create neighborhood pathways, bike lanes and/or sidewalks to encourage and accommodate safe pedestrian travel to regional pathways.

Goal 10. Valley County Pathways should work in a collaborate fashion with the Valley County Road and Bridge Department, Valley County schools, city governments and state parks to increase communication about the potential for developing pathways to create safe routes to schools and parks.

Goal 11. Valley County should create a program to provide regular maintenance, sweeping, pavement repairs, striping and signs along pathways and bike lanes.

Goal 12. Valley County Pathways should ensure that pathway master plans developed for the cities of McCall, Donnelly and Cascade and Valley County are consistent and in synch with each other and the Valley County Pathway Master Plan. So far, we are on track.

Goal 13. Valley County Pathways should maintain a design standard for pathway signage and develop a system of signs that maintain a consistent character and design. Such signs should be placed throughout the pathway system as it is developed. This goal is in the implementation stage.

Recommended Implementation Schedule

Highest-priority projects:

- Work on property easements or donations of property along the old Railroad ROW from Lake Fork to Pine Lakes Ranch. In particular, VCP is focusing on working with property owners along the RR ROW between Lake Fork and the city of Donnelly, starting from the south and north ends and moving toward the middle.
- In the interim, develop “Share the Road” or “Bike Route” on Norwood Lane from Lake Fork Road to West Roseberry Road in Donnelly, providing a public road corridor for bicyclists, walkers and trail-runners, tying together the communities of Lake Fork and Donnelly.
- Develop public road corridor connecting Valley County to Adams County and the Weiser River Trail. We have identified the Fish Lake Road and Big Creek Road as the public roads connecting a public corridor between the two counties. These corridors should be signed with “Share the Road” or “Bike Route” signage to show people the way to connect to Adams County and the Weiser River Trail.
- Work on developing a detached pathway or bike lanes from Roseberry Road to Roseberry (aligns with City of Donnelly priority) and on Farm to Market Road from Roseberry to Elo Road, Krahn Lane and Sampson Trail to link Farm to Market to McCall (aligns with city of McCall priority).
- Work on developing a detached pathway on West Mountain Road from Blackhawk to Tamarack Falls.
- Work on developing a detached pathway on West Deinhard Lane to the junction with the existing McCall bike path near Mission Street.
- Continue working on pathway corridor around Payette Lake. New, wider bike lanes will be built on Warren Wagon Road on the west side of the lake in 2018. In the meantime, we recommend applying for grant funds to commission a study of building a detached pathway around the east side of Payette Lake. A study will help understand the different land ownerships and costs involved.
- Work toward more detached bike paths along Lick Creek Road from Shady Lane to East Side Drive. This initiative connects to the goal of building a pathway around Payette Lake.
- Work toward building bike lanes or a detached pathway along Davis Road to Gold Fork Hot Springs, a popular destination.
- Work with the Bureau of Reclamation and the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation to develop pathway corridors around Lake Cascade. A system of priorities should be developed for these potential pathway segments to determine which ones should be focused on in the near term vs. long term.
- Develop detached pathways between the city of Donnelly and Tamarack Falls on West Roseberry Road. The City of Donnelly is working on developing a detached pathway on the south side of West Roseberry Road to Dawn Drive and the city beach as a high-priority.
- Develop a detached pathway along Cabarton Road from the Clear Creek junction to the city of Cascade.

Funding Opportunities for Pathways

Local and State Funding Sources

Bond Referendums for Greenways. Communities across the nation have successfully placed on local ballots propositions to support greenway development. The Charlotte-Mecklenburg County, NC area passed four consecutive referendums that generated more than \$3 million for greenways. Guilford County, NC passed a referendum in 1986 that appropriated \$1.6 million for development of a specific greenway corridor. In Cheyenne, Wyoming, a greenway bond referendum was used to fund the first three miles of local greenways. Residents throughout the United States have consistently placed a high value on local greenway development and voted to raise their own taxes in support of greenway implementation. However, this option requires a 66.6% majority in Valley County to succeed – a very high bar indeed.

Serial levy. Idaho State Code provides cities and counties with the authority to raise funds for temporary two-year supplemental property tax levies. The city of Boise used this financial instrument to raise \$10 million for the purchase of open space in the Boise Foothills to protect open space, recreation trail corridors, wildlife habitat and watershed values. The measure required a simple majority to pass, and it passed by a 60 percent favorable vote in May 2001. It required a comprehensive grass-roots campaign to pass the serial levy. Although a serial levy raises property taxes, it only does so for a two-year period. This makes the levy increase easier to swallow for voters, knowing it won't last forever, like school levies and jail bonds.

Creation of a Recreation District. Blaine County has made strong gains in the creation of public trails and pathways and other recreation facilities through the passage of a county-wide recreation district. The Blaine County Recreation District has an annual budget of about \$600,000 per year. State law limits the size of property tax levies for recreation districts to .06 percent of the taxable value of a district. The size of a district is discretionary. Boundaries can be drawn to coincide with the area where public benefits would be provided. Under state law, recreation districts can charge user fees, and they can use their funds for purchasing private land or easements. They also can accept donations of private property. . The South County Recreation District in Valley County raised funds for a planned community center and swimming pool. Now, there may be an effort to create a North County Recreation District to help fund pathways and other recreational needs in the area. If a new district is proposed, it would need a minimum number of signatures to get on the ballot, and it would have to be passed by the voters. VCP would support the formation of a North County Recreation District.

Local-option sales tax. This is a potential tool for so-called “resort cities” in Idaho, cities with a population of fewer than 10,000 people whose principal economy is based around tourism and recreation. However, this tool is not available to counties in the state of Idaho for recreation and parks purposes.

Impact fees. Idaho State law allows cities and counties to collect impact fees on development. There is a multi-step process for determining what type of impact fees would be charged, and what it would be used for. The city of Boise charges five impact fees for parks that total \$655.70 for single-family homes. Summit County, Colorado, charges parks and open space impact fees that total \$520 for single-family homes. State law provides for a multi-step process for developing impact fees. It might behoove the county to appoint a special panel consisting of community members, developers, real estate professionals and government officials to develop recommendations for impact fees.

Greenway Trust Fund. Another strategy used by several communities is the creation of a trust fund for land acquisition and facility development that is administered by a private greenway advocacy group, or by a local greenway commission. A trust fund can aid in the acquisition of large parcels of high-priority properties that may be lost if not acquired by private sector initiative. Money may be contributed to the trust fund from a variety of sources, including the municipal and county general funds, private grants, and gifts.

Local Private-Sector Funding. Local industries and private businesses may agree to provide support for greenway development through one or more of the following methods:

- Donations of cash to a specific greenway segment
- Donations of services by local businesses to reduce the cost of greenway implementation, including equipment, materials and labor to construct and install elements of a specific greenway
- Reductions in the cost of materials purchased from local businesses that support greenway implementation and can supply essential products for facility development.

One example of a successful endeavor of this type is the Swift Creek Recycled Greenway in Cary, NC. A total of \$40,000 in donated construction materials and labor made this trail an award-winning demonstration project. This method of raising funds requires a great deal of staff coordination. (Note: Some materials used in the "recycled trail" were considered waste materials by local industries!)

Local Highway Technical Assistance Council (LHTAC) - LHTAC provides assistance for transportation plans, road signage, and other technical assistance. Located at lhtac.org.

Adopt-A-Trail Programs. These are typically small grant programs that fund new construction, repair/renovation, maps, trail brochures, facilities (bike racks, picnic areas, birding equipment).

State Water Management Funds. Funds established to protect or improve water quality could apply to a greenways/trails project if a strong link exists between the development of a greenway and the adjacent/nearby water quality. Possible uses of these funds include: purchase critical strips of land along rivers and streams for protection which could then also be used for greenways; develop educational materials, displays; or for storm water management.

Volunteer Assistance and Small-Scale Donation Programs

Greenway Sponsors. A sponsorship program for greenway amenities allows for smaller donations to be received both from individuals and businesses. The program must be well planned and organized, with design standards and associated costs established for each amenity. Project elements that may be funded can include mile markers, call boxes, benches, trash receptacles, entry signage and bollards, and picnic areas.

Estate Donations. Wills, estates and trusts may be dedicated to the appropriate agency for use in developing and/or operating the greenway system. By naming a pathway after the donator, a "legacy" relationship may be established as an incentive to support pathway development.

"Buy-a-Foot" Programs. "Buy-a-Foot" programs have been successful in raising funds and awareness for trail and greenway projects within North Carolina. Under local initiatives, citizens are encouraged to purchase one linear foot of the greenway by donating the cost of construction. An excellent example of a successful endeavor is the High Point Greenway "Buy-a-Foot" campaign, in which linear greenway "feet" were sold at a cost of \$25/ foot. Those who donated were given a greenway T-shirt and a certificate. This project provided over \$5,000 in funds.

People 4 Bikes Community Grants - The PeopleForBikes Community Grant Program provides funding for important and influential projects that leverage federal funding and build momentum for bicycling in communities across the U.S. These projects include bike paths and rail trails, as well as mountain bike trails, bike parks, BMX facilities, and large-scale bicycle advocacy initiatives.

Federal Government Funding Sources

Some Federal programs offer financial aid for projects that aim to improve community infrastructure, transportation, housing and recreation programs. Some of the Federal programs that can be used to support the develop-

ment of greenway systems include:

National Recreational Trails Program (IDPR). These grants are available to government and non-profit agencies, for amounts ranging from \$5,000 to \$50,000, for the building of a trail or piece of a trail. It is a reimbursement grant program (sponsor must fund 100% of the project up front) and requires a 20% local match. This is an annual program, with an application deadline at the end of January. The available funds are split such that 30% goes towards motorized trails, 30% to non-motorized trails, and 40% is discretionary for trail construction. The Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation administers this program in the state of Idaho.

Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) – Federal bike/ped and Safe Routes to School funding handled at Idaho Transportation Department. Approximately \$3.8m per year is available, max amount to apply for is \$500,000. Non-profits, jurisdictions, school districts can all apply. Communities must have a 7.43% cash match.

Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG). The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) offers financial grants to communities for neighborhood revitalization, economic development, and improvements to community facilities and services, especially in low and moderate-income areas. Several communities have used HUD funds to develop greenways, including the Boscobel Heights' "Safe Walk" Greenway in Nashville, Tennessee.

Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grants. This Federal funding source was established in 1965 to provide "close-to-home" park and recreation opportunities to residents throughout the United States. Money for the fund comes from the sale or lease of nonrenewable resources, primarily federal offshore oil and gas leases and surplus federal land sales. LWCF grants can be used by communities to build a variety of parks and recreation facilities, including trails and greenways.

LWCF funds have been used to build pathways and greenbelt segments throughout the state of Idaho. LWCF also have been used to purchase easements for trails in general and to purchase scenic easements in the Sawtooth National Recreation Area. Communities must match LWCF grants with 50-percent of the local project costs through in-kind services or cash. All projects funded by LWCF grants must be used exclusively for recreation purposes, in perpetuity.

Southwest Idaho Resource Advisory Council. This body can fund projects on federal lands for various amounts in the five- to six-figure range. Projects must have the support of the Boise National Forest. Valley County Commissioner Phil Davis and County Public Lands Coordinator Lois Van Hoover are members of the Southwest Idaho RAC.

Conservation Reserve Program. The U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), through its Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, provides payments to farm owners and operators to place highly erodible or environmentally sensitive landscapes into a 10-15 year conservation contract. The participant, in return for annual payments during this period, agrees to implement a conservation plan approved by the local conservation district for converting sensitive lands to less intensive uses. Individuals, associations, corporations, estates, trusts, cities, counties and other entities are eligible for this program. Funds from this program can be used to fund the maintenance of open space and non-public-use greenways, along bodies of water and ridgelines.

Wetlands Reserve Program. The U.S. Department of Agriculture provides direct payments to private landowners who agree to place sensitive wetlands under permanent easements. This program can be used to fund the protection of open space and greenways within riparian corridors.

Federal Land Access Program (FLAP) – To improve transportation systems that provide access to, are adjacent to, or located within federal lands. Here is the link: <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/fastact/factsheets/fedlandsaccessfs>.

cfm. Good source of funds if the state has a lot of public lands.

Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention (Small Watersheds) Grants. The USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) provides funding to state and local agencies or nonprofit organizations authorized to carry out, maintain and operate watershed improvements involving less than 250,000 acres. The NRCS provides financial and technical assistance to eligible projects to improve watershed protection, flood prevention, sedimentation control, public water-based fish and wildlife enhancements, and recreation planning. The NRCS requires a 50-percent local match for public recreation, and fish and wildlife projects.

Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Program. The USDA provides small grants of up to \$10,000 to communities for the purchase of trees to plant along city streets and for greenways and parks. To qualify for this program, a community must pledge to develop a street-tree inventory, a municipal tree ordinance, a tree commission, committee or department, and an urban forestry-management plan.

Small Business Tree-Planting Program. The Small Business Administration provides small grants of up to \$10,000 to purchase trees for planting along streets and within parks or greenways. Grants are used to develop contracts with local businesses for the plantings.

Economic Development Grants for Public Works and Development of Facilities. The U. S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA), provides grants to states, counties and cities designated as redevelopment areas by EDA for public works projects that can include developing trails and greenway facilities. There is a 30-percent local match required, except in severely distressed areas where federal contribution can reach 80 percent.

Design Arts Program. The National Endowment for the Arts provides grants to states and local agencies, individuals and nonprofit organizations for projects that incorporate urban design, historic preservation, planning, architecture, landscape architecture and other community improvement activities, including greenway development. Grants to organizations and agencies must be matched by a 50-percent local contribution. Agencies can receive up to \$50,000.

Grants through Private Foundations and Corporations

Many communities have solicited greenway funding from a variety of private foundations and other conservation-minded benefactors. Some grants are:

American Greenways Eastman Kodak Awards. The Conservation Fund's American Greenways Program has teamed with the Eastman Kodak Corporation and the National Geographic Society to award small grants (\$250 to \$2000) to stimulate the planning, design and development of greenways.

REI Environmental Grants. Recreational Equipment Incorporated awards grants to nonprofit organizations interested in protecting and enhancing natural resources for outdoor recreation. The company calls on its employees to nominate organizations for these grants, ranging from \$500 to \$8,000, which can be used for the following:

- Protect lands and waterways and make these resources accessible to more people
- Better utilize or preserve natural resources for recreation
- Increase access to outdoor activities
- Encourage involvement in muscle-powered recreation
- Promote safe participation in outdoor muscle-powered recreation, and proper care for outdoor resources

Coors Pure Water 2000 Grants. Coors Brewing Company and its affiliated distributors provide funding and in-kind services to grassroots organizations that are working to solve local, regional and national water-related

problems. Coors provides grants, ranging from a few hundred dollars to \$50,000, for projects such as river clean-ups, aquatic habitat improvements, water quality monitoring, wetlands protection, pollution prevention, water education efforts, groundwater protection, water conservation and fisheries.

Bikes Belong. Bikes Belong Coalition is sponsored by members of the American Bicycle Industry. The grant program is a national discretionary program with a small budget, to help communities build TEA-21-funded projects. They like to fund high-profile projects and like regional coalitions. An application must be supported by the local bicycle dealers (letters of support should be attached). Bikes Belong also offers advice and information on how to get more people on bikes. Government and non-profit agencies are eligible and no match is required. The maximum amount for a grant proposal is \$10,000. Applications may be submitted **at any time and are reviewed as they are received.**

Wal-Mart Foundation. This foundation supports local community and environmental activities and educational programs for children (among other things). An organization needs to work with the local store manager to discuss application. Wal-Mart Foundation only funds 501(c)3 organizations.

Idaho Foundation for Parks and Lands. Founded in 1972, the Idaho Foundation for Parks and Lands is a state-wide public benefit privately funded organization whose mission is to preserve and protect open space lands and unique natural, scenic settings for public benefit through various flexible conservation methods. The Foundation has been instrumental in the purchase of valuable lands and easements for state parks, greenbelt pathways, blue-ribbon trout streams and more. The Foundation's board president is Don K. Weilmunster.

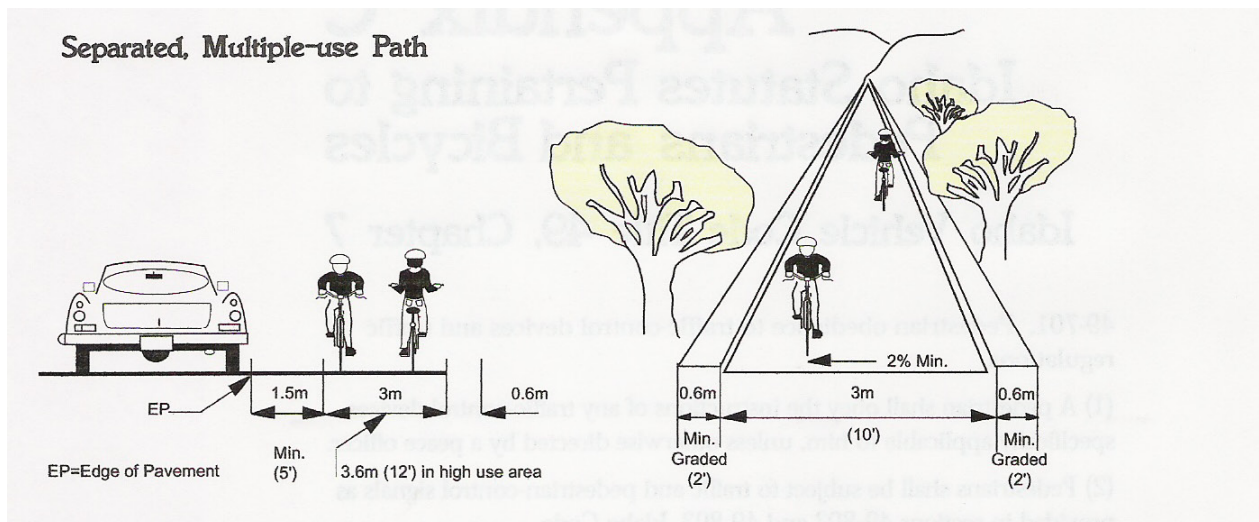
Design Standards for Pathways

National standards and guidelines have been developed for pedestrian pathways (AASHTO). These standards and guidelines have been embraced by the Idaho Transportation Department, FHWA and other states to protect the safety of pathway users and to provide a consistent policy direction to highway planners and engineers.

AASHTO design guidelines divide pathways into two categories: separate/detached pathways (Class I) and road-side bike lanes (Class II).

Definitions:

Pathways are defined as facilities that provide for pedestrian and bicycle travel.



A Class I Pathway or Bike Path provides for multi-use two-way travel completely separated and detached from

any streets or roads. The pathways should comply with standards and guidelines developed under the American Disabilities Act.

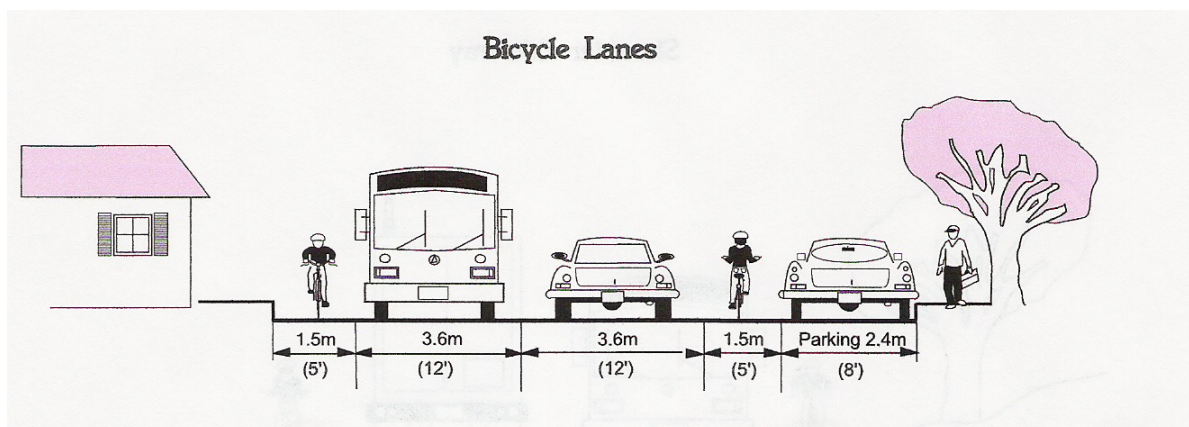
A Class II Pathway or Bike Lane provides a striped lane for one-way bike travel along a street or highway auto travel lane. Bike Lanes are intended to delineate the portion of the right of way assigned to bicycles and automobiles and to provide for more predictable movements by each.

A Class I Separated Multiple-Use Path is physically separated from motor vehicle traffic by open space or barrier, and it may be within the roadway or independent right of way.

Where a separated path parallels a roadway, there must be a 5-foot minimum width separating the pathway from the roadway, or a physical barrier of sufficient height (4.5 feet) minimum must be installed.

A 10-foot standard width must be used for a separated multiple-use path. Paths should be 12 feet wide in areas with high bicycle volume or where they are used by a combination of bicyclists, pedestrians, skaters and joggers. A minimum of 2 feet graded area should be maintained adjacent to both sides of the pavement to provide clearance (shy distance) from poles, trees, fences, and other obstructions. Because of the relatively low number of public users expected in the short-term, and with limited budgets in mind, the Valley County Pathways Committee recommends a 10-foot standard for paved Class I pathways.

Separated multiple-use pathways are the safest for travel and create opportunities for recreation besides bicycling.



A Class II Bike Lane is a portion of the roadway that is designated for preferential use by bicyclists.

Bike lanes are established on arterial and collector streets. The minimum width for a bike lane is 4 feet or 5 feet from the face of a curb or guardrail. There should be a clear riding zone of 4 feet if there is a longitudinal joint between the pavement and the curb-and-gutter section. Bike lanes in excess of 6 feet wide are undesirable as they may be mistaken for a motor vehicle lane or parking area.

Bike lanes must always be well marked and signed to call attention to their preferential use by bicyclists.

If parking is permitted, the bike lane must be placed between parking area and the travel lane and have a minimum width of 5 feet.

Bike lanes must always be one-way facilities and carry bicycle traffic in the same direction as adjacent motor vehicle traffic. Bike lanes on one-way streets should be on the right side of the roadway, except in areas where a bike lane on the left will decrease the number of conflicts.

Thumbnail cost estimates for building pathways

The cost of building asphalt or compacted surface pathways seems to vary widely, depending on whether projects are funded on a local, state or federal level, and whether design and engineering costs are completed in-house or by a consulting engineering firm. A number of thumbnail estimates follow from a variety of sources.

Parametrix, a design and engineering firm, has researched costs for design leading to construction of paved 10-foot separated pathway projects for the McCall area. Parametrix has done a number of pathway design projects throughout the Pacific Northwest. They looked at recent average costs for resort community pathway systems. These cost factors are computed in 2005 dollars.

For typical pathways in flat or rolling terrain, construction costs would range from \$300,000 to \$600,000 per mile. In steeper mountainous terrain, such as around Payette Lake, construction costs could be \$1,000,000 or more per mile. Design costs would vary substantially depending on funding sources. If local funds are used, design costs (assuming no Rights of Way or structures are included) would vary between 15%-20% of construction costs, or \$40,000 to \$100,000 per mile. If federal funds are used, the design costs would increase to 40% or 50% of construction costs because of environmental and other requirements.

Boise Parks & Recreation Department experience: The Boise Parks and Recreation Department uses a thumbnail of \$150,000 per mile for a 12-foot asphalt pathway, using in-house design and engineering services.

The City of McCall applied for and received a Recreation Trails Program grant from IDPR in the amount of \$13,660 to construct a natural surface trail 4-6 feet wide from the western edge of McCall to USFS Bear Basin Road, a distance of about 1 mile. The total cost was \$17,334.67, including a great deal of volunteer labor.

Tamarack Pathway experience: Tamarack Resort has constructed more than five miles of 8-foot-wide cart paths in the resort's Osprey Meadows Golf Course. Tamarack's thumbnail estimate for building asphalt cart paths has been running approximately \$2.50 per square foot, including excavation, clearing, material costs, asphalt and preparation. Using this thumbnail, a 5-mile pathway 10 feet wide would cost about \$132,000, or \$26,400 per mile.

Strawberry Construction has built a number of wooden bridges 12 feet wide on Tamarack's golf course. The thumbnail cost for the bridges has been about \$500 per linear foot. The bridges can be anchored by prefabricated abutments on either side.

All of these estimates are provided to give Valley County Planning & Zoning Commission members and the Valley County Commissioners an idea of how much it will cost to build pathways on a per-mile basis.



Conclusion

Valley County Pathways envisions that it will take many years – perhaps more than 20 – to realize the vision of a pathway system that we have laid out before you with this updated Master Plan. It will take time to obtain easements and rights of way for pathways, and it will take time to secure funding sources for pathway development. But it is of paramount importance to work with Valley County Planning & Zoning and the Valley County Commissioners to incorporate the Master Plan into the county's comprehensive plan to help with planning future growth and build on the foundation that's been laid for a world-class pathway system.

Valley County Pathways also looks forward to working with Adams County Planning & Zoning and the Adams County Commissioners to adopt the plan as well, and work on pathway connections to the Weiser River Trail.