

Friend of Sparta Trails

Addressing Legitimate Trail Concerns

Safety

Trail design will enhance corridor safety, through landscaping, a uniform surface, and barriers to unauthorized access. Street crossings will be clearly marked for pedestrians.

Crime

Numerous studies have shown that trails do not cause an increase in crime nor provide a haven for drug users. In fact, trails generally have a lower crime rate than their surrounding neighborhoods. Typically, the presence of lawful trail users and law enforcement personnel convince criminals and druggies to go elsewhere. When is the last time you heard of a burglar stealing a TV and making his escape down a trail on a bicycle?

Noise

Surveys from other trails indicate that trail noise is virtually never a problem. The natural vegetation that borders our trail should buffer most noise. Sparta trails will be closed from dusk until dawn, for safety and to alleviate any noise concerns that could arise.

Property Values

Numerous studies have demonstrated that trails either increase or have no affect on property values. One recent study found that 94% of the realtors who sold houses along a trail felt that the trail either increased or had no effect on the sale price. Many realtors use a homes proximity to a trail as its main selling point.

Increase tax burden

Many sources of federal, state, local, and private funding are available to help for our trail. Trails are remarkably inexpensive public facilities given the number of people they serve. Any increase in tax burden would be voted on by the entire community.

Parking

As trails become more popular, parking can become a problem. Creating Trail Heads with parking lots will be constructed. If a real residential parking problem arises, new parking regulations will be enacted and enforced.

Crossing Dangers

Well marked signage with reflective street markings will give ample time for trail users to stop at crosswalks before safely continuing on the path. Signage marked on the road will give caution to vehicular traffic for crossing trail users. The trail will also feature “speed bumps” at every trail / street intersection to keep trail users alert to the upcoming street crossing.

Quality of Life

After trails are constructed, less than 3% of adjacent land owners move. Healthy lifestyles, exercise, and outdoor recreation is an important quality of life benefit for the overall community. It is common for landowners to “expect the worst” when a trail is being planned. Studies show that almost 2/3 of those abutting landowner who initially oppose the trail find that it has actually improved their quality of life.

Loss of Privacy

It is fair to say that some adjacent landowners may experience some loss of privacy once the trail is open. However a thick row of trees and shrubs along residential areas with additional vegetative screening where warranted should alleviate most concern. Moreover, most trail users are interested in their own exercise, nature studies, or interaction with other trail users, not with off-trail sites.

Trail Access

No one will be authorized to access the trail from your property without your permission. The trail will be legally accessible only from marked public access sites. Security posts (bollards) will be placed at trail entrances to prevent unauthorized motor vehicle access. The trail may also be patrolled by law enforcement personnel when it is closed, further discouraging unauthorized trail access.

Litter

Trash has not presented a problem on most trails. Our trail will follow a regular maintenance schedule, will contain many well-placed waste and recycling receptacles, and will frequently be cleansed of any foreign substances.