



Proposal for Berrien County Bike, Hike and Paddle Trails Master Plan

The Friends of Berrien County Trails is currently seeking funding to develop a Berrien County Bike, Hike and Paddle Trails Master Plan. The professional fees to develop this comprehensive county-wide plan is \$45,000. The goal of this plan is to promote trail connectivity, alternative transportation, safety for all users, recreational opportunities and economic development. Having a county-wide plan will provide a resource for governments and agencies securing grant funds to implement the county wide vision for trails.

Trail facilities addressed in the plan will include Shared Use Paths, Paved Shoulders/Bike Lanes, Sharrows, US Bike Routes, County/Local Bike Routes, Water Trails, and Parks with Hiking Trails, Mountain Biking Trails, Cross Country Skiing Trails and Equestrian Trails.

The planning process will engage the entire County, local governments, community groups, and citizens in developing a robust trail master plan that will connect cities, villages, townships, parks and major destinations throughout the county.

Project Manager & Fiscal Agent: Friends of Berrien County Trails- a 501(c)(3) non-profit

Purpose of the Master Plan:

- Inventory and analyze the existing and planned trail routes in Berrien County;
- Provide an overarching guide for future trail planning and implementation throughout Berrien County;
- Provide for enhanced connectivity between cities, villages, and townships and major destinations;
- Serve as a guide for local governmental agencies for planning future investment priorities;
- Provide supporting documentation for requests and applications for future funding and grants;
- Recognize trails as a key amenity that enhance the vitality of communities and the region;;
- Attract world class talent to our local businesses;
- Promote economic development and redevelopment;
- Support tourism; and
- Provide for a healthy lifestyle.

Planning Process:

- Inventory and analyze existing and planned trail routes in Berrien County;
- Conduct a robust community and stakeholder engagement process;
- Identify community economic development and tourism opportunities that relate to connecting trails to local communities and businesses;
- Develop recommended strategies for future facility improvements, enhanced economic impact, funding and implementation.

For More Information on the Friends of Berrien County Trails visit www.BerrienTrails.org



Friends of Berrien County Trails

Berrien County Bike, Hike and Paddle Trails Master Plan

The Friends of Berrien County Trails would be the fiscal agent and project manager for the Berrien County Bike, Hike and Paddle Trails Master Plan. The Friends of Berrien County Trails would subcontract with Abonmarche for the development of the plan and be the main point of contact for the project. The Southwest Michigan Planning Commission will also provide guidance for the project. Below is some information on the Friends.

Please see our website for more www.berrientrails.org.

For information on the Berrien County Trails Plan visit www.berrientrails.org/bcmasterplan.asp.

The **Friends of Berrien County Trails** is a Michigan registered 501(c)(3) non-profit.

The **mission of Friends of Berrien County Trails** is to support the construction and maintenance of trails (pedestrian, bicycle and waterway) within Berrien County and connecting to adjacent counties and encourage trail use.

Our Goals:

- Educate (increase awareness and understanding of trails, how they benefit our communities and what is needed to develop/expand the trails network)
- Advocate (promote the value of trails with municipalities, schools, user groups and community groups)
- Identify & Develop Trails - (assist in creating specific routes and solicit support from relevant municipalities, assist with obtaining right-of-way and initiating construction)
- Secure Funding - (establish multiple funding streams to provide impactful financing for trails development and maintenance)

Our Core Values:

- Improve Safety
- Connect Communities
- Improve Health & Wellness
- Support Economic Development
- Build World Class Trails

