



Link

Information:

Trail Towns A vision of economic development in small towns

Trail Towns is a nationally recognized program that helps communities take advantage of the economic opportunities that a nearby trail may bring to your town. You can access the Trail Town Guide at <http://atfiles.org/files/pdf/Trail-Towns-Guide.pdf>

On October 28, 2016, town officials, businesses, local citizens and trail users were invited to participate in a "Trail Town" needs assessment. The assessment exercise provides key insight into how local stakeholders perceive their community and how businesses address the needs of trail users who visit towns like Forest City. This meeting included a walk from the Forest City Trailhead, off Commerce Blvd, to the center of town to evaluate this connection through the eyes of a visiting trail user. The results of the assessment are as follows:

General access between trail and town: The grade between trail and town for walkers or bikers is moderate and it is not easy for visitors to find and access downtown.

1. Better signage is needed on route 247 at the entrance to Commerce Blvd and the Forest City Trailhead.
2. Better signage is needed from the trailhead to Forest City's Business District.
3. Once on Main Street better signage is needed for finding businesses and services.

Safety:

1. The roads are kept clean and free of debris but there is a need for a bike lane or sidewalks from Commerce Blvd to town.
2. A crosswalk is needed on route 247.
3. Crosswalks are well marked in town.
4. People feel safe when walking through town.

Parking:

1. There is sufficient on-street parking.
2. Bike racks are needed in front of businesses.

Businesses:

1. The central business district is easily identified and clustered in a compact area.
2. Customers are greeted warmly and stores are clean and well kept.
3. There is no public access to restrooms.
4. Businesses signage is not clearly visible and well-designed.
5. The trail is not linked well to downtown events and the town is not linked to trail events.

Food and business services available:

Grocery, convenience/quick stop, gas, pharmacy, library, ATM, coffee shops, restaurants, bar or tavern.

Not available:

Ice cream, bike rental, laundromat, hotel or b&b, nearby camping, sufficient trash cans.

Design:

1. There is a sense of place and or a unique identity to downtown.
2. The town feels safe but not economically healthy.
3. All buildings are not occupied but structures in town are in good condition overall.
4. Not all store fronts have attractive window displays.
5. There are enough benches but they could be better placed.
6. There are not adequate bike racks.

For more information about Trail Towns and the Progress Fund, contact:

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