



Connecting Cambria

Resetting the pace for bicycle & pedestrian infrastructure in Cambria County

Cambria County
Planning
COMMISSION



Acknowledgments

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Cliff Kitner, Cambria County Recreation & Conservation Authority (CCCRA)
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With support from the Steering Committee and partner agencies, this plan was developed by the following Cambria County Planning Commission staff:

Katie Kinka, AICP, Senior Planner, Project Manager
Ethan Imhoff, AICP, Executive Director
Shanna Murphy-Sosko, AICP, Community Development Planner
Chris Allison, Transportation Planner

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Toni-Renee Anderson
Lonnie Batdorf
Debra Orner
Reverend Sylvia King
Diane Waksmunski
Jim White
Russell F. Kiel



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Introduction

As Cambria County continues its shift to a post manufacturing economy, the development of a recreational culture looms as a catalytic force to drive investment and attract people to the region. Given the County's mountainous landscape, and several burgeoning recreational initiatives, this culture may be soon to develop. Several recent planning efforts prioritized investments in recreation, including the award winning Alleghenies Ahead/Cambria County Comprehensive Plan (2018), and Johnstown's Vision 2025 (2015). With recognition that investment in recreational amenities is a key component of any strategy to retain and attract a talented workforce, these initiatives specifically call attention to the need for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. The Alleghenies Ahead/Cambria County Comprehensive Plan states:



Cyclist hugs the existing roadway shoulder, traveling through Munster Township.



Family with stroller in tow traverses through Ebensburg Borough.

“The region’s recreational amenities play an important role in attracting investment to the region by contributing to the set of lifestyle options that will make the Southern Alleghenies competitive to business and households that could locate almost anywhere. Parks, trails, rivers, museums and restaurants – and everything in between – make the region attractive to tourists and bolster the service economy, but their role in making the region a good place to live is of foremost importance.”



Now more than ever, multimodal transportation is a priority at the state level with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation. Taking the lead from Transportation Secretary Leslie Richards, transportation engineers and planners are now encouraged to think about transportation infrastructure more holistically, putting bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure on an equal footing with highways, roads and bridges. This emerging approach, formally called PennDOT Connects, considers the social, environmental, economic and community impacts of transportation infrastructure.

Purpose of 2018 Update

A prioritized list of bicycle and pedestrian projects helps PennDOT District 9-0, the Cambria County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and local municipalities better guide transportation investments in Cambria County. PennDOT will remain a primary funding source for many of the bicycle and pedestrian projects proposed throughout the County. Therefore, it is extremely important for Cambria County to express its recreational values and priorities through this planning process.



Cambria County has been, and continues to be a leader in the area of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. It is the only county in the Southern Alleghenies region that pays full time staff to build and maintain rail trails. It is also the only county in the region whose recreation authority owns rail trails (the Cambria County Conservation and Recreation Authority).

Furthering efforts to create recreational culture, the county recreation authority recently developed a series of events on its trails to draw both local residents and visitors from outside the region. And many local non-profit groups have followed with trail promotion and the development of their own recreational events.

This planning process involved many local stakeholders, both trail users and non-trail users, who considered the public safety, health and economic development purposes of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. Dialogue was extensive, and the opportunities for input were many. The overarching recreational goals in the comprehensive plan guided the process. But many of the projects are unique to this plan and the local residents who thought of them.

The **purpose** of this plan is to enhance public safety and health, increase transportation options, and position Cambria County to capitalize on its recreational assets through the development of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. Several implementation items are already underway, and the Planning Commission looks forward to working with local stakeholders to further advance goals and objectives of the plan.









Status Update of Previous Initiatives

The Cambria County Planning Commission developed the first **Cambria County Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan** in **2000**, and subsequently updated that plan in 2006. The stated vision of the 2000 plan, continued in the **2006 update** was:

“The region values and promotes the importance of walking and bicycling for transportation, recreation, tourism, health and wellness, quality of life, and economic development, and will actively plan and provide for the integration of bicycle and pedestrian projects into the transportation system.”

Both plans focused mainly on trail development and recreation. Goals for the 2000 plan were grouped into four focus areas: *Safety, constituency building, funding, and coordination*. The goals of the 2000 plan were largely carried over in the 2006 update, with the addition of *linkages, and alternative forms of transportation*.

Priority projects and initiatives from the 2000 and 2006 plans are listed in the following matrix, along with an update of their status.

Project	Status	Quick Check
Cambria & Indiana (CandI) Trail	Eight miles of the trail were completed in 2017, with another two miles set to be constructed in 2019. The remaining five miles of the trail have been designed and are ready for construction when funds become available. An extension of the trail from Ebensburg to Lorretto is also in the planning phase, with right of way expected to be acquired in 2019, with design and construction to follow.	
Path of the Flood Trail	The trail has been completed between Ehrenfeld and Johnstown, however a two-mile section to complete the trail from Ehrenfeld to the South Fork Dam site is still in the development phase.	
Institution of Bike Racks on CamTran Buses	Complete; CamTran began installing bike racks on buses in 2006	
Mainline Trail	Not completed; Due to the number of private properties on the route, as well as terrain restrictions, completion of this trail is considered a longer-term priority. This trail corridor has been designated as the official route of the 911 Memorial Trail, planned to connect the Flight 93 Memorial site to New York City.	
Goucher Street Pedestrian Corridor	Partially completed; Intersection, crosswalk, and signalization improvements focused on pedestrian safety were made at the intersections of Goucher St. & Menoher Blvd., as well as Goucher St. & Willett Blvd., adjacent to the Goucher St. commercial corridor.	
Patton to Carrolltown Trail	As of 2019, design work for this trail has been completed, right of way has been acquired, and some materials have been purchased. The project sponsor has so far been unsuccessful in securing State funding for construction.	

Other notable projects from the previous plans include the completion of the **Jim Mayer River Walk**, and the **Sandyvale Cemetery Public Gardens**, both of which have been substantially completed since 2006.

An important initiative of both plans was the activation of the Cambria County Bicycle/Pedestrian Committee. This group was intended to be composed of representatives from PennDOT, the Cambria County Planning Commission, trail organizations, bicycle and walking groups, public transit and others. The group has thus far remained inactive; however a position for a bicycle/pedestrian and trails representative has been added to the Cambria County Metropolitan Planning Organization Technical Committee.

In conclusion, while much progress has been made in implementing the 2000 and 2006 Cambria County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plans, a few key initiatives still need to be carried forward into the new plan.

There are several existing plans and initiatives in Cambria County that tie into bicycle and pedestrian planning, and this plan will capture and incorporate all of those initiatives, including the following:



Cambria County Long Range Transportation Plan

Expansion and enhancement of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure was identified as an important initiative of the 2016 Cambria County Long Range Transportation Plan. Another recommendation from the plan was the addition of a bicycle and pedestrian representative on the Cambria County Metropolitan Planning Organization. That recommendation has been fulfilled.



Alleghenies Ahead: The Comprehensive Plan for Cambria County & the Alleghenies Region

Completed in 2018, Alleghenies Ahead identified the promotion and development of recreational assets as a key action item for plan implementation, as way to improve quality of life and enhance the appeal of the region.



Johnstown Urban Connectivity Plan

This plan seeks to provide connections between the City of Johnstown and its transportation facilities, such as the Johnstown Inclined Plane, with trails bordering the city, such as the Jim Mayer Trail and the Path of the Flood Trail.



Corridor Plans

There are several recently-completed corridor plans in Cambria County, including the US 219 Carrolltown Corridor Plan and the Cresson Admiral Peary Highway Corridor Plan. Each plan has identified implementable projects to improve bicycle and pedestrian mobility along their respective corridors.

*All above icons are **hyperlinked**. Click on an icon to visit/review the corresponding planning document online.

Where Are We Now?

While Cambria certainly leads the region in trail planning and development, it is clear to those of us who plan for multiple transportation modes, that we have a long way to go when it comes to planning, developing, and maintaining more **complete streets** for County residents. Because previous initiatives have maintained a stronger focus on new off-road, rail-trail development for purposes of creating regional linkages, the County still lacks a consortium of sophisticated local data and information for existing on-road bicycle and pedestrian *conditions*, including countywide bike/ped counts. For this reason, the CCPC and the Steering Committee focused on collecting and evaluating baseline, county-wide quantitative and qualitative data, including:

- 1. All existing off-road trail systems (pages 11-13)
- 2. Annual transit ridership (urban & rural routes) & vehicles available at home (page 14)
- 3. Areas of greatest need (page 15)
- 4. Bicycle and pedestrian crash locations (page 16)
- 5. Municipalities that maintain a sidewalk ordinance (page 17)

This information helped illustrate a reasonable, and practical picture of existing conditions to work from. Very quickly, we learned that if this plan is to be successful, it needs to maintain a key focus on both basic, context-appropriate, and accessible infrastructure, as well as a complete bicycle-pedestrian culture and attitude shift.

Complete Street?

“Complete Streets are streets for **everyone**. They are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities. Complete Streets make it easy to cross the street, walk to shops, and bicycle to work. They allow buses to run on time and make it safe for people to walk to and from train stations.” -*National Complete Streets Coalition*

National Complete Streets Coalition



Learn more about Complete Streets by visiting

Walking, Wheeling & Cycling in Cambria Today



Very early on in the planning process, the need was expressed for a **county-wide map of all existing trail assets**. We were aware that most of the trail data exists somewhere, but nothing was in one place that had all assets shown. We collected data from the Pennsylvania Spatial Data Access (PASDA), the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), various trail enthusiast websites and internal data from the Cambria County GIS Center and the Cambria County Conservation and Recreation Authority (CCCRA). Using the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) model, we mapped all major existing trails and future trails that are planned and proposed.

The NRPA definition of planned as a “trail planned for the future” and proposed as a “trail right-of way (ROW) acquired or agreed to by all owning/managing partners.” We only considered “planned” trails as projects that feasibility and funding has been seriously considered by interested parties and will likely move into the “proposed” category within the next few years. “Proposed” trails are trails where construction has either begun or is scheduled to begin. For “open” trails, we included established off-road bicycle and pedestrian trails and excluded small walking trails that may be part of a municipal park complex or other related asset. A “closed” trail is one that exists but is not open to the public at the moment. The map will regularly be updated to reflect any status changes or new projects as they occur (see pages 11-13).

When considering areas where the greatest need for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure exists, studying **bus route and vehicles available** data is important in determining where people who do not have access to private transportation are coming from and travelling to. To complete this analysis, we obtained both urban and rural bus route ridership data from CamTran for the years 2014-2018 and vehicles available from the U.S Census Bureau American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

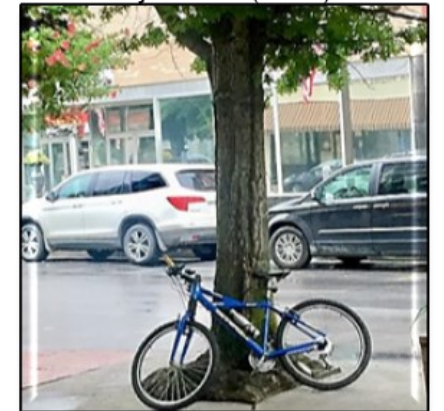
We determined that the greatest concentration of households without a vehicle are located in the City of Johnstown, specifically the Oakhurst, Coopersdale, Prospect and Central Business District neighborhoods. Given this information, it is not surprising that the Oakhurst Coopersdale bus route has the highest ridership with 675,923 riders during the 2014-2018 time period. This route includes the Morrellville, Oakhurst and Coopersdale neighborhoods and ends at the transit station in downtown. The second most popular bus route is the Moxham, Horner Street and Ideal Route (454,902 riders) which begins and ends at the downtown transit center and has stops in the Moxham, Hornerstown and Riverside neighborhoods. Heavy bus ridership is concentrated in areas where there is a larger number of households without vehicles who could potentially walk or cycle to their destinations if safe infrastructure is in place (see page 14).

After gaining a better sense of where pedestrian and bicycle travel is likely concentrated within the County's most densely populated areas, the CCPC took a closer look at the bus ridership and vehicle available map to identify areas potentially in greatest need of retrofit or improvement. Using this information, the Steering Committee identified **six locations for infrastructure improvements**. Aerial imagery was then imported to provide better visual context for these project locations. Suggested improvements include, the installation of new sidewalk and a bike lane, as well as urban trail improvements and 'share the road' signage. All projects identified within the Greater Johnstown area have been coordinated with the efforts of the Johnstown Urban Connectivity Plan. Detailed descriptions for these projects can be found in the **How Will We Get There?** section on page 24.

One of the short-term goals of this plan is the creation of a **bicycle level of service map**. This map will assign a rating to a state road to determine its suitability for on-road cycling and level of difficulty. The rating will be determined by various roadway parameters including traffic volume, shoulder width and condition and pavement width and condition. Cyclists will be able to view the map and determine the state routes where they feel comfortable engaging in on-road cycling. Once completed, the map will be made available to the public on the Cambria County Planning Commission website.

If we build it, will they come? Pictured here, are sightings of bicycle user traffic in and around the City of Johnstown. With a canvas like Cambria's, folks often wonder, "What comes first, the chicken or the egg?" Must we wait until there is user demand to justify making infrastructure investments to support cycling as a viable transportation mode? Or do we build the infrastructure to allow users the comfort and safety of a cycle-friendly landscape? We do know that a burgeoning urban cycling community within the City does exist, **currently**—but building out the necessary infrastructure and awareness/education around cycling at the appropriate scale will remain our challenge and our charge.

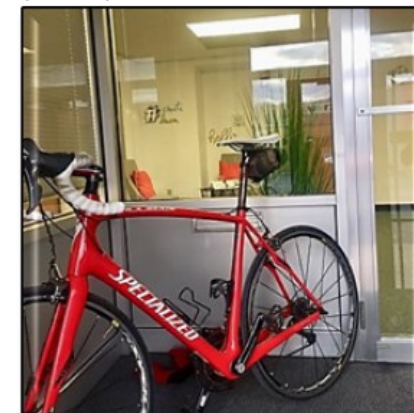
Outside of Balance Restaurant, Downtown Johnstown (8/3/18).



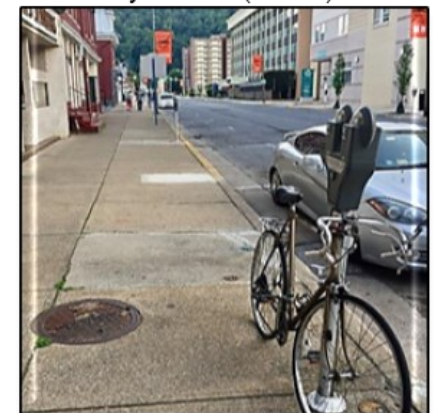
Outside of City Hall along Market Street, Downtown Johnstown (7/16/18).



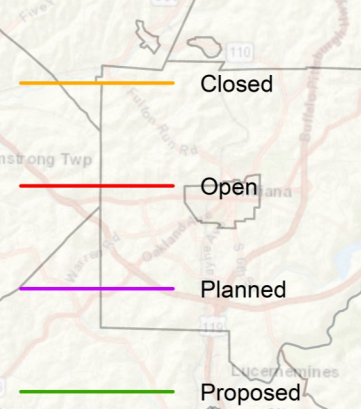
Inside 814 Worx, Downtown Johnstown (2/28/18).



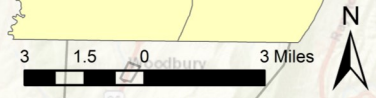
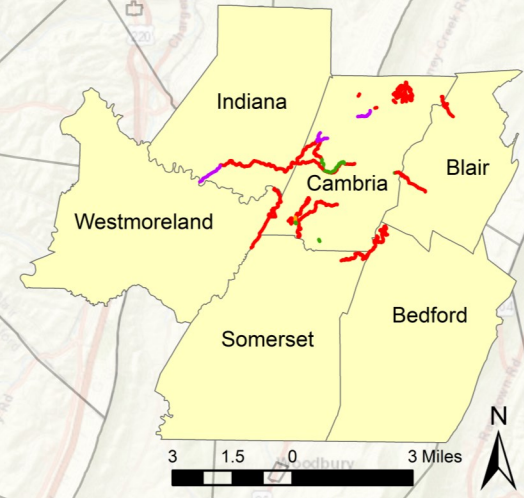
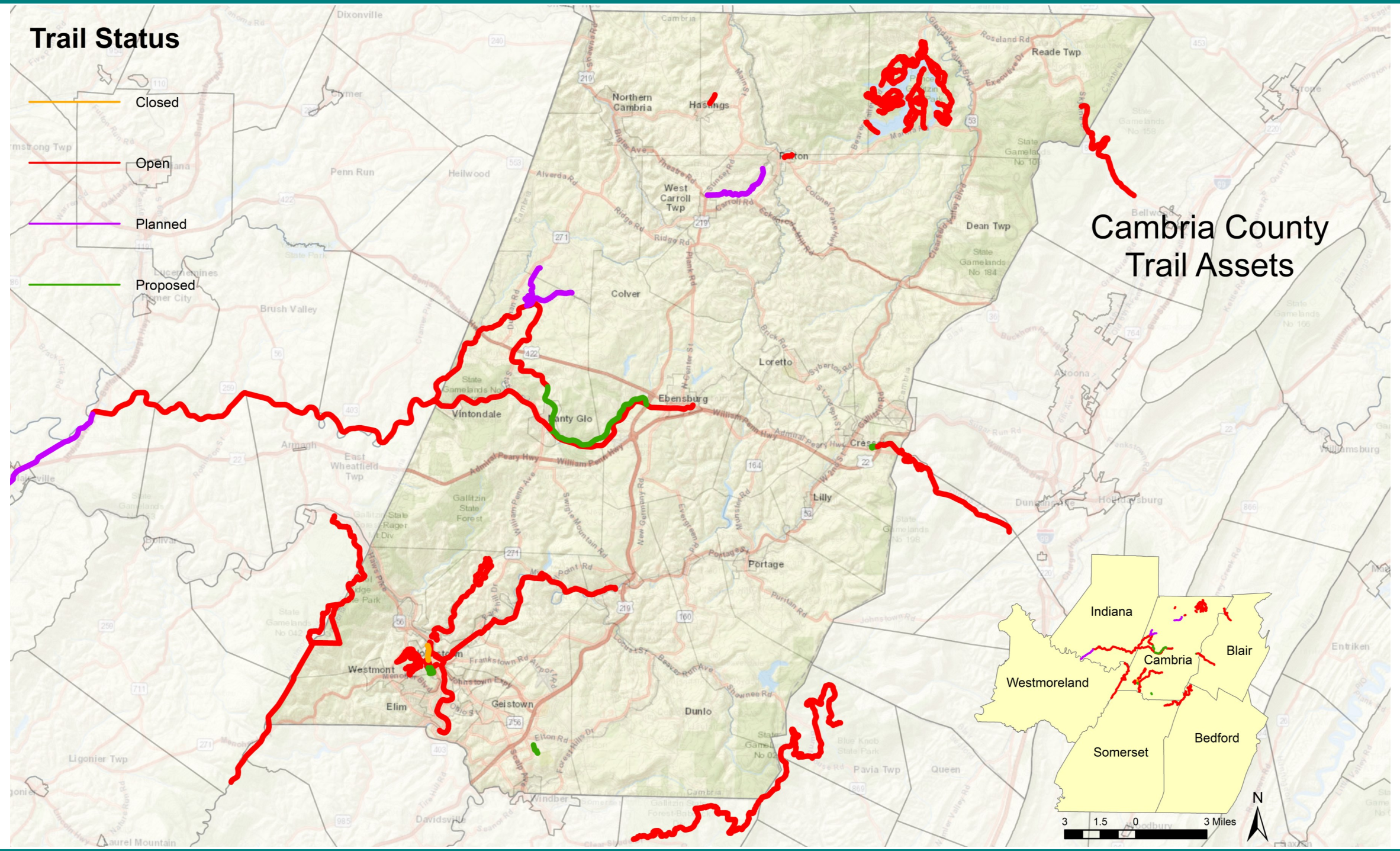
Along Main St./Market St. intersection, Downtown Johnstown (6/17/18).



Trail Status

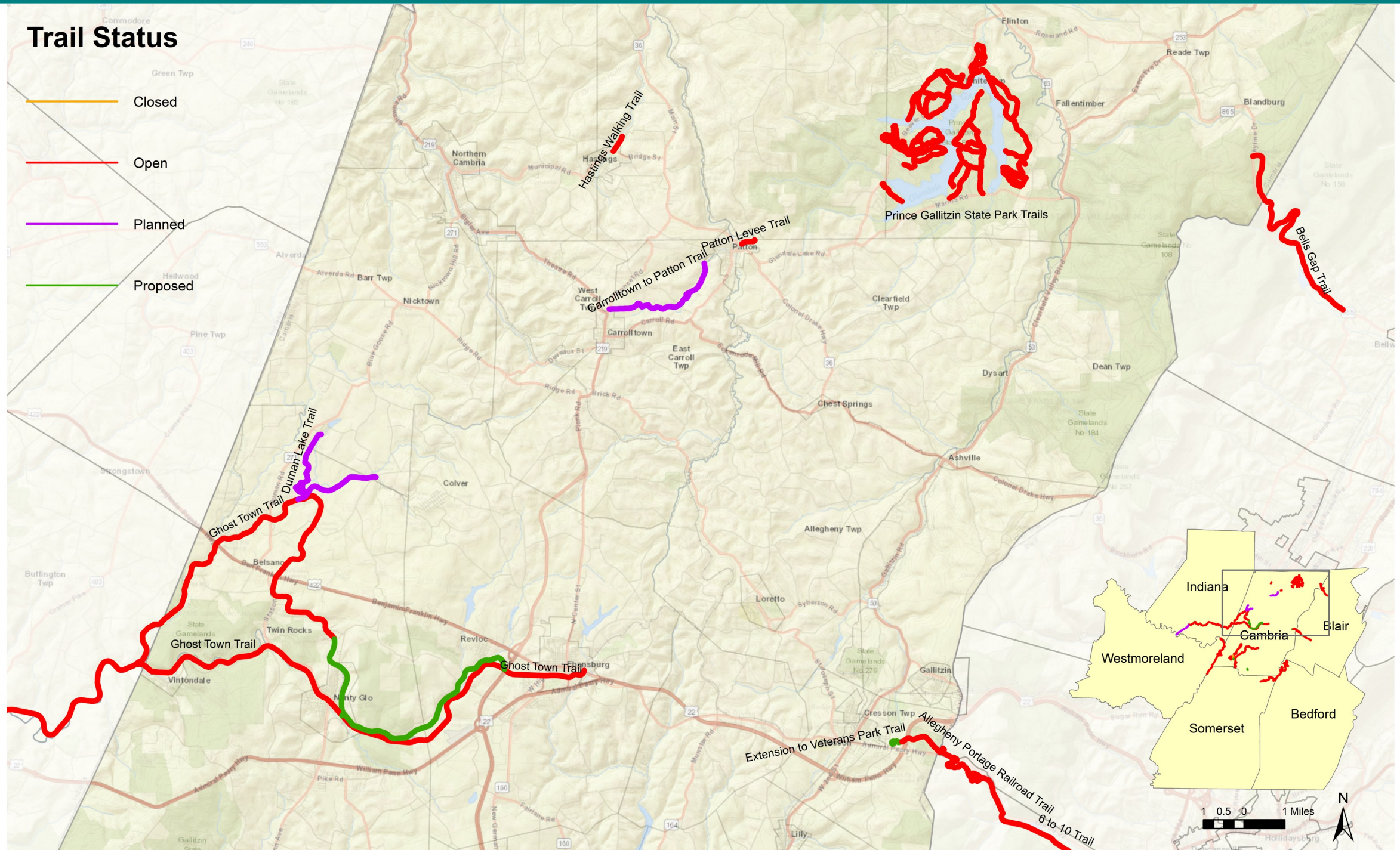


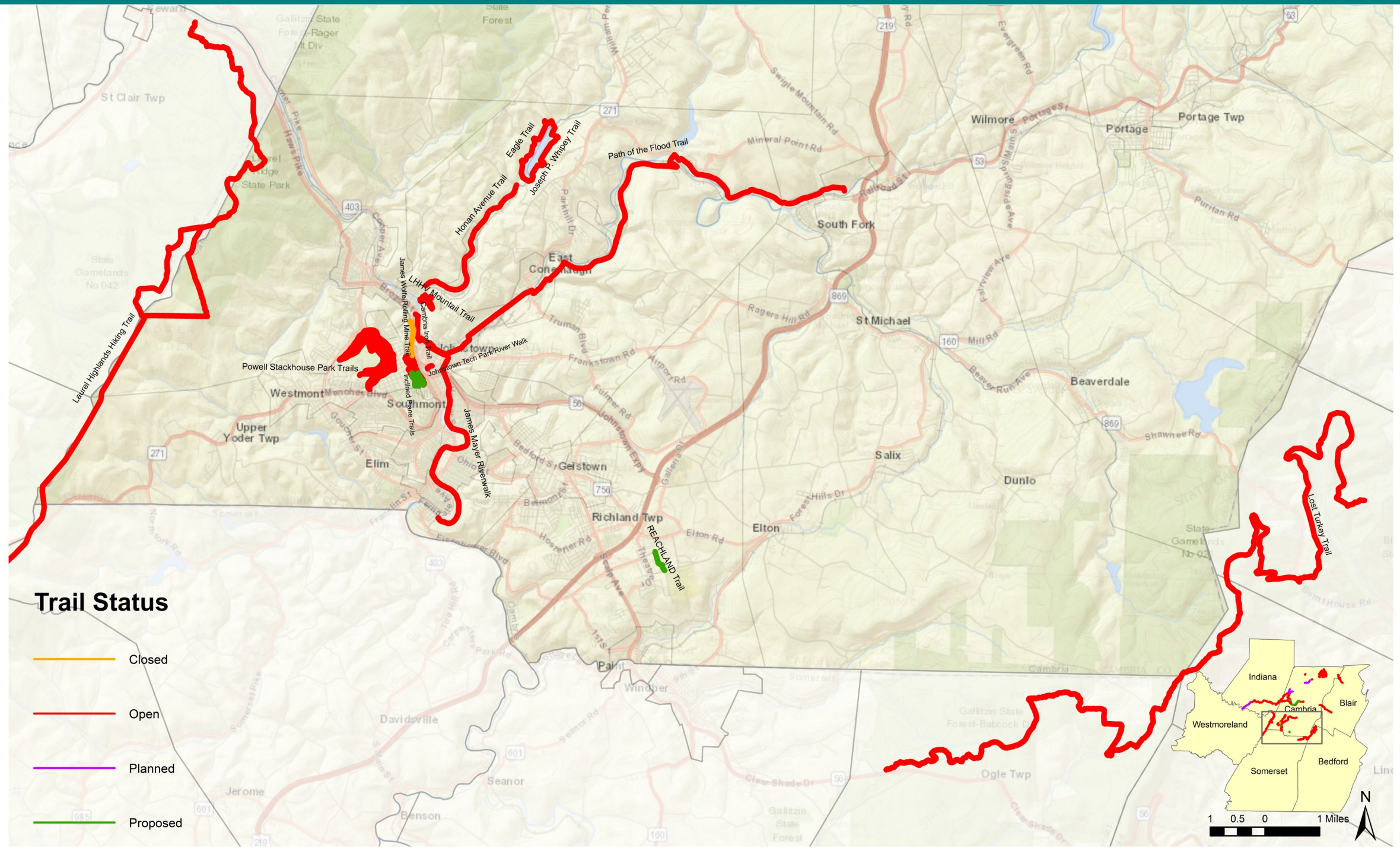
Cambria County Trail Assets



Trail Status

- Closed
- Open
- Planned
- Proposed





CamTran Total Ridership and Vehicles Available by Household

Urban Routes

Number of Riders 2014-2018

- Oakhurst/Coopersdale, 675,923
- Moxham/Horner St./Ideal, 454,902
- Scalp Ave./Galleria, 402,426
- Hystone/Westwood, 370,054
- Galleria/Scalp Ave., 345,695
- Richland Town Centre, 297,999
- Arbutus/Belmont/Galleria/Eltan Rd., 140,748
- Prospect, 128,078
- Coopersdale/Minersville, 108,513
- Dale/Solomon/Oakland, 90,331
- Downtown Shopper, 38,059
- Westmont/Brownstown, 37,391
- Southmont/Westwood/Laurelwood, 33,400
- Windber/Richland Town Center, 29,345

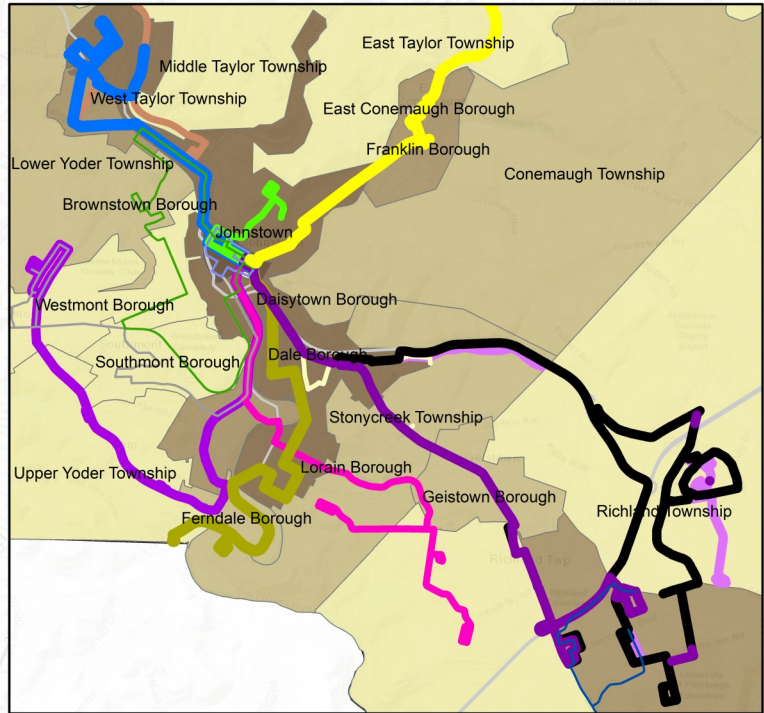
Rural Routes

Number of Riders 2016-2018

- Route30, 90,769
- Route31, 14,537
- Route33, 10,202
- Route32, 5,438
- Route36, 4,002
- Route34, 1,259
- Route35, 1,428

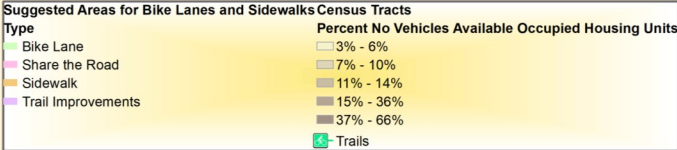
Estimated Percentage of Occupied Housing Units with No Vehicles Available

- 3% - 6%
- 7% - 10%
- 11% - 14%
- 15% - 36%
- 37% - 66%



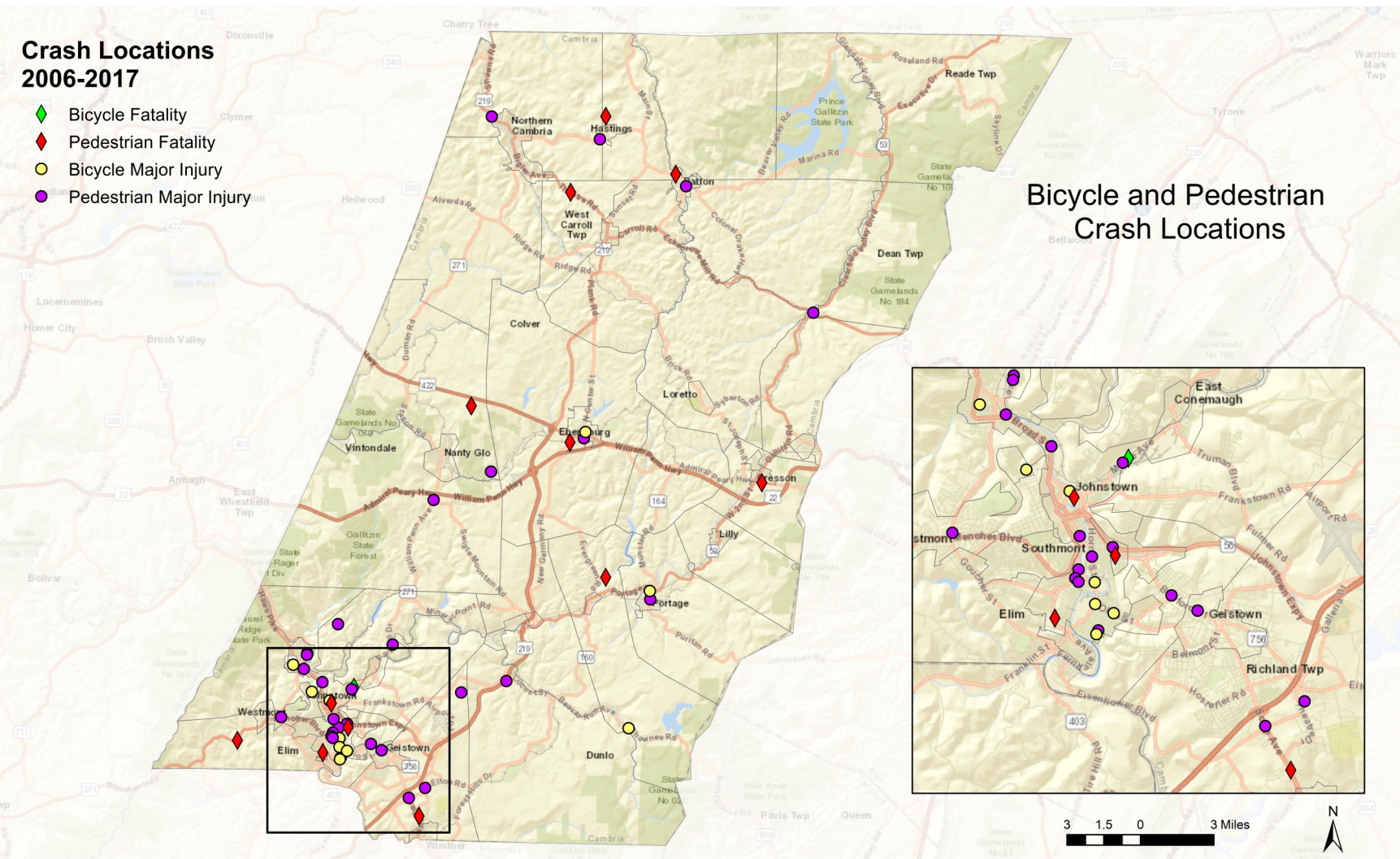
3 1.5 0 3 Miles





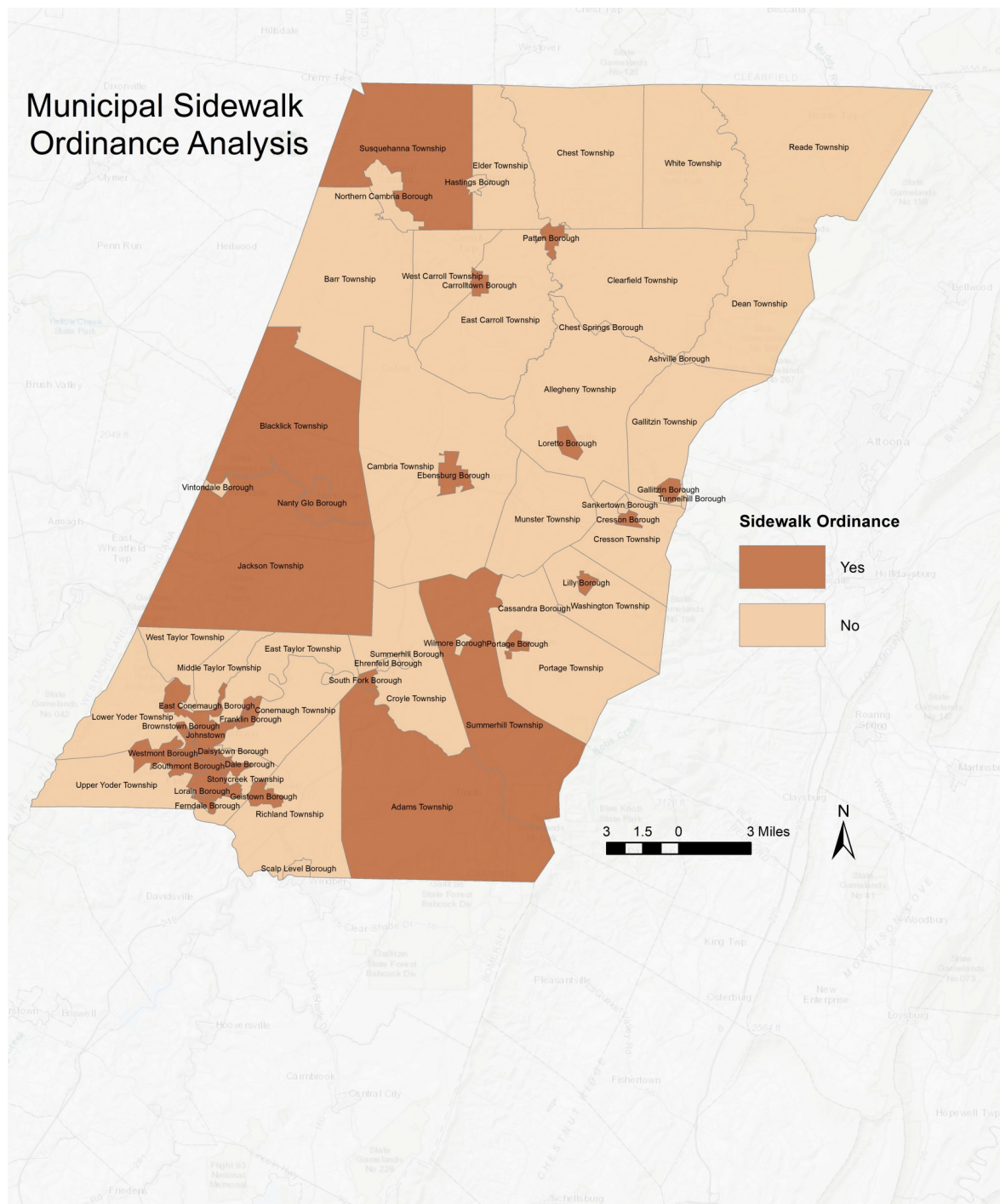
The analysis of bicycle and pedestrian crash data is crucial in determining areas where safer bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure is needed. We obtained crash data from PennDOT for the years 2006-2017 to conclude where the most bicycle and pedestrian reported crashes have occurred throughout the county. Within that time period, there was **1 bicycle fatality and 13 pedestrian fatalities**. Twenty-nine pedestrians received major injuries and ten cyclists received major injuries.

The highest concentration of the reported crashes occurred within the greater Johnstown region, with **nearly half of them located in the southern part of the City of Johnstown** where the neighborhoods of Moxham, Hornerstown and Roxbury are located. The proximity of the Conemaugh Memorial Medical Center campus and Greater Johnstown High School could be contributing to the frequency in these locations and should be considered when determining where to place enhanced bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.



During the planning process, the CCPC surveyed all 63 municipalities to inquire whether they have an adopted sidewalk ordinance. Of those 63 municipalities, **25 (39%) have some type of sidewalk regulations in place.** These municipalities are predominately in the greater Johnstown area and the more populous township and boroughs with neighborhood settings. Many of the municipalities without sidewalk regulations are small boroughs and rural townships that do not have sidewalks located within the municipality. The adoption and enforcement of a sidewalk ordinance often provides safer and better maintained pedestrian infrastructure for those travelling in the more urban and populous areas.

Municipal Sidewalk Ordinance Analysis



An Education on Access

A noticeable missing link from previous County bike/ped plans, is a concentration on **access** and **accessibility**. Conversations around bicycle and pedestrian activity in Cambria have typically been overshadowed by the concepts of recreation and healthy living. While these are worthy areas of focus, the CCPC and Steering Committee felt it necessary to look beyond user *preference* and take a deeper dive into bike/ped infrastructure based on user *need*, as pedestrian and bicycle modes represent some of the most basic and original forms of human travel.

In August 2018, the CCPC had the distinct pleasure of interviewing **Ms. Wheelchair Pennsylvania 2018, Barb Zabltony**. Not only is Ms. Zabltony local to the region, but she has extensive experience navigating pedestrian infrastructure and evaluating mobility and accessibility within Somerset and Cambria counties. The CCPC learned that simply incorporating elements that assist with mobility into projects often times is not enough to achieve infrastructure built to actual ADA standards.



For example, not all accessibility ramps or curb cuts are created equal; without proper sloping, width, and room for adequate turning radius, navigating this infrastructure using a wheelchair or mobility device can be immensely challenging, if not altogether impossible without additional assistance.

Other notable accessibility components discussed with Ms. Zabltony included the placement of pedestrian call buttons at crosswalk locations, as well as the placement of street parking meters, and the improper use of access aisles adjacent to ADA parking stalls within parking garages and large parking lots. To gain some first-hand experience in this arena, the CCPC, along with Cambria County Commissioner Tom Chernisky, City of Johnstown Mayor Frank Janakovic, and PennDOT District 9 staff participated in an **Accessibility Day** by navigating pedestrian infrastructure within Downtown Johnstown via wheelchair. Led by Ms. Zabltony, participants traversed popular routes to and from public spaces within the City, taking note of concerns and challenges along the way.

Achieving independence for all users requires thoughtful planning and adequate financial resources to complete projects. When it comes to planning for pedestrian infrastructure in Cambria, incorporating accessibility standards should be a *forethought*, rather than an afterthought.



Where Do We Want To Be?

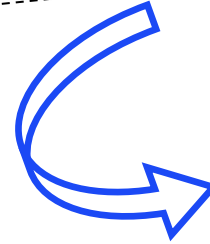
Consistent participation from a dynamic group of stakeholders representing different pockets of communities, abilities, interests, and needs is essential to successfully steering the direction of any planning process, but in particular, one that maintains a keen focus on equity and accessibility. The CCPC was grateful to be joined by a committed group of diverse voices throughout the 2018 update process. This group of stakeholders represented users of varying levels and abilities; those with convenient access to multimodal assets and resources, as well as those who are limited to/by private transportation; those who are very familiar with the County's existing trail assets and bicycle/pedestrian infrastructure, as well as those who are newer to these modes of transport; those from Cambria's densely-populated urban areas, and those from the County's more rural communities. The diversity of this group was immensely valuable to the inclusive direction of this planning process.

In addition to regularly-scheduled meetings, the Steering Committee also participated in "homework assignments" that were designed to engage members beyond our formal meeting setting and extend outreach efforts to friends, neighbors, colleagues and family members. Contributions from Steering Committee members and their extended networks of personal and professional peers influenced the ultimate direction of Connecting Cambria, and **where we want to be** when it comes to our collective aspirations for the future of walking, wheeling, and cycling in Cambria County.

Committee Homework Assignment #2:
Now that we have a preliminary understanding of active transportation infrastructure needs in Cambria, let's talk specifically about **pedestrian facilities**...

Provide a list of **3** areas (point-to-point, intersections, etc.) you feel are **most** in need of **pedestrian retrofit**. Give a short description of the area and some brief reasoning as to why you are prioritizing the particular location (i.e. safety concerns, economic development implications, coordination w/ an existing project/agency, etc.).

*Email your thoughts/response to Katie at kkinka@co.cambria.pa.us by **October 13th**. We will review results/responses collectively at the November meeting.



Committee Homework Assignment #4:
Now that we have discussed pedestrian needs as a committee, it's time to take the conversation to the kitchen table...

Using the **guided questions below** (**next page**), choose 1-3 individuals to have a "kitchen table conversation" with. Record responses for each interviewee.

*Email your statement to Katie at kkinka@co.cambria.pa.us by **February 28th**. We will review results/responses collectively at the March meeting.



After completing "Homework Assignment #2", the Steering Committee gathers for a site visit in Carrolltown Borough as Transportation Planner, Chris Allison, recaps pedestrian improvements of the Main Street/Rt. 219 project.

A Vision for the Future

The early work of the Steering Committee involved a great deal of location-specific analysis of existing conditions, and the identification of potential areas that would be well served by pedestrian/bicycle retrofit improvements. The input and contributions of the Committee and their peers ultimately led to an exercise of **visioning**. At this stage in the planning process, CCPC staff asked the Steering Committee to take a step back, and consider our collective vision for the future of multimodal transport in Cambria. This exercise shed new light on commonly-held values- like accessibility, community health, and physical connectivity, and also validated key concepts and areas of importance that the CCPC and partner agencies had already been consistently planning for- like economic growth, tourism, and safety. Rather than documenting a singular, comprehensive, static vision statement, the Committee decided to break these shared sentiments down into concrete, achievable, action & goal-oriented concepts to act on and work from.



What do we aspire to? The CCPC was fortunate enough to visit the **National Institute for Transportation and Communities** at Portland State University, during the 2018 *Transportation & Communities Conference*. Staff observed the many progressive facets of PDX's bike/ped-friendly landscape. It quickly became clear why Portland is so frequently touted as a national leader in active transportation; neighborhood greenways, miles of dedicated and protected bike lanes, cautious motor vehicle behavior and awareness, and a comprehensive bike share program are all effective components that comprise Portland's well-integrated and comprehensive transportation network.

A multi-directional, protected bike lane.



Enhanced neighborhood bicycle infrastructure.



One of several docking stations for PDX's premiere Bike Share System, BIKETOWN.



A dedicated bike lane, clearly demarcated exclusively for cyclists in center of street.



Learn more about the NITC by visiting



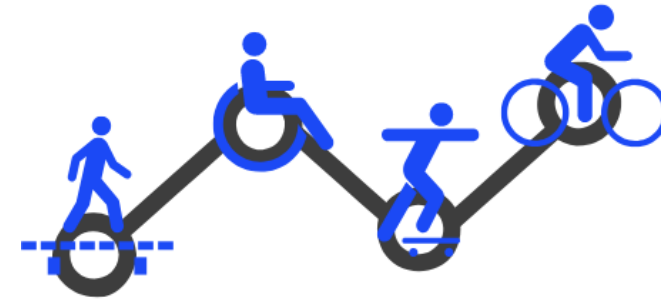
Core Concepts to Achieve



In the world of urban planning, the use and development of “goals” has become overgeneralized. Rather than developing a list of vague and far-reaching aspirations that help to realize a static vision, the Steering Committee has devised a grouping of ‘**core concepts to achieve**’ when planning for the future of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in Cambria County.

These core concepts represent the aggregation of values expressed and established by the Steering Committee and CCPC staff during many meeting discussions and “homework assignments” throughout this planning process.

Common threads that consistently wove these discussions together included: **Safety, accessibility, connectivity, sustainability & healthy living, and recreation & economic development**. The Steering Committee plans to utilize these concepts as a way to prioritize projects, but also in order to hold ourselves accountable to how we wish to shape the future of multimodal infrastructure in Cambria.



Enhancing bicycle & pedestrian conditions for **safety** of our communities



Increasing and improving **accessibility** to and on bicycle & pedestrian infrastructure



Closing gaps in **connectivity** to existing bicycle & pedestrian infrastructure, and land uses of interest



Creating new multimodal infrastructure & programs as **sustainable & healthy alternatives** to auto-dependent areas



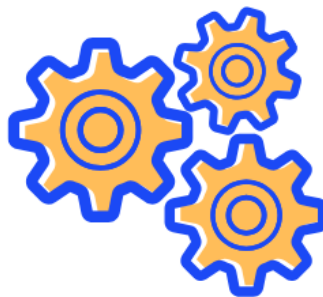
Developing new, and improving existing bicycle & pedestrian infrastructure as a means of promoting **recreation, tourism, & economic development**

How Will We Get There?

Arguably, the most fundamental component to any implementable plan is the implementation framework/structure; the core strategy for ensuring that we move the needle on the critical components that comprise our collective future vision.

In order to achieve the impact we are seeking over the 10-year horizon of the **Connecting Cambria** plan, the Steering Committee has developed a priority project decision-making framework, complete with evaluation criteria specific to the needs of Cambria— a tool that had not yet been created/utilized when making multimodal investment decisions within the County. This framework also includes the identification of additional action items (programs, initiatives, etc.) that will assist with shifting the culture of Cambria to that of a more bicycle and pedestrian friendly county. When coupled with the priority projects, these activities will more effectively and strategically shape the future direction of walking, wheeling, and cycling in both our urban and rural communities.

We recognize that we can't '**get there**' without **all hands on-deck**. Too often, individual local organizations are seeking and applying for state & federal funding for alternative transportation improvements without broad consensus, or a coordinated support effort. With this plan, and the integration of other related and ongoing initiatives, the CCPC anticipates better success when implementing key countywide projects.



All Hands On-Deck!

Making meaningful progress takes meaningful coordination and cooperation (shout out to the Cambria County Action plan in **ALLEGHENIES AHEAD** !) An important actionable outcome of this update, is consistent communication between all transportation planning agencies (CCPC, PennDOT, CCCRA, CamTran, etc.) that maintain an active role & voice when it comes to prioritizing new multimodal investments in the County. While the CCPC recognized the need for better coordinated communication channels so that we can collectively speak with one voice and advocate for the most important projects, this action item is also a direct outgrowth of the **PennDOT Connects process**.

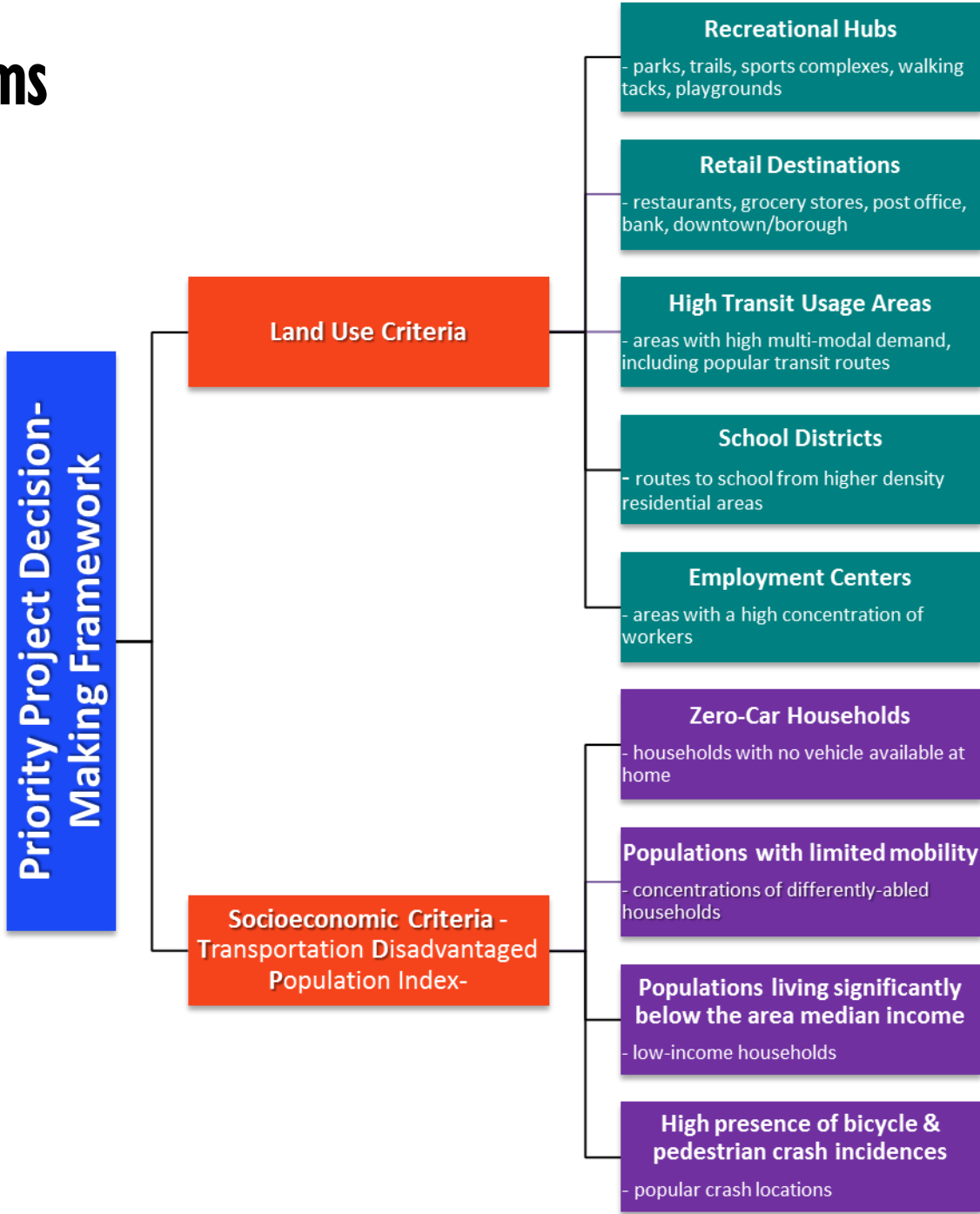


Prioritizing Future Projects & Action Items

A major objective of this plan was to create a project prioritization framework, so that potential bicycle and pedestrian projects could be evaluated fairly and consistently, and so that the region could be in a position to move quickly on a project if an opportunity for funding should present itself.

An outline of the framework is shown in the adjacent graphic. A potential project will not be required to meet all of the criteria, however, projects meeting more criteria will be considered to be more implementable and valuable, and thus receive higher priority. Additional factors determining a project’s suitability for implementation are as follows:

- 1. Project has been identified and developed through a substantial stakeholder and public involvement process
- 2. Project has identifiable sources of funding for both design and construction
- 3. Project has the support of the residents and Municipal officials of the area in which it is located
- 4. Project has a sponsor with the capacity to see the project through to its completion
- 5. Project can be completed in a reasonable timeframe



Implementable Projects of Priority

Greater Johnstown



Cambria City Foot Bridge

- Trail & sidewalk improvements for access /connections from Path of the Flood Trail to Cambria City

D Street Ball Field

- Sidewalk connecting residential areas with existing park/ballfield

Intersection near Stackhouse Park/Lower Yoder Trailhead

- 'Share the Road' signage for safety of cyclists in this area

Pediatric Care Center Access along Eisenhower Blvd.

- Sidewalk/crosswalk amenities for transit users/pedestrians accessing healthcare facility

Richland Town Center

- Sidewalks along Eisenhower Blvd. to Theatre Drive, connecting to Richland Town Center

Roxbury Park

- Bike lane connecting the park with Southmont Blvd.



Jim Mayer Trail Bridge Street Crossing

- Designated crosswalk connecting original trail section to new 1.7 mile extension that traverses behind North American Hoganas

Implementable Projects of Priority cont...

Central Cambria

New Germany Road, Cambria Township

- Sidewalks (and possibly traffic calming measures) connecting residential area of Crestwood neighborhood to commercial area of Ebensburg Borough

Ebensburg Pool

- Sidewalk connecting Rowena Drive to Ebensburg Pool



Eastern Ghost Town Trail Connection

- Designated crosswalk from GTT across Rowena Drive to new GTT extension near Tanner Street



Nanty Glo /Chestnut Street Crossing along Ghost Town Trail

- Designated crosswalk from GTT across Chestnut Street to continue along GTT

Implementable Projects of Priority cont...

Northern Cambria

“Ditter’s Curve”, Rt. 219/40th Street/Crawford Avenue

- Safety retrofits to accommodate pedestrians and cyclists traveling to and from commercial area of Northern Cambria.



Carrolltown to Patton Trail

- New off-road trail to connect Carrolltown Borough to Patton Borough



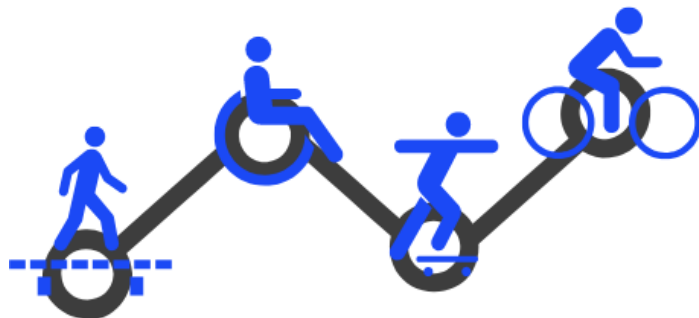
Duman Lake Connector Trail

- New trail connection from GTT to Duman Lake

Taking Additional Action

Advancing the core concepts contained within this plan involves more than simply identifying physical infrastructure projects. The development of a recreational culture entails extensive coordination and forethought to facilitate the acceptance of these initiatives. Recreational culture and alternative transportation cannot be supported without a foundation of local engagement and participation. As such, it is important to prioritize action items around educational initiatives, flexibility in local design, mapping, and having the necessary regulatory framework in place.

Accordingly, the Cambria County Planning Commission prioritized a list of **additional action items** needed to nurture culture change and activate a county-wide atmosphere that is favorable to the development of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. These items will be equally important to the implementation of the plan. With these efforts, we hope to advance the core concepts in the plan and expand the importance and presence of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.



- Recommend that all municipalities adopt a sidewalk ordinance
 - CCPC targets densely-populated municipalities with stable housing markets and the need for sidewalk infrastructure to gauge interest in adopting a sidewalk ordinance.
- Maintain an up-to-date, digital, comprehensive assets map for use by public agencies as well as public at-large
 - CCPC converts existing map to online, AGOL map and updates at least twice a year.
- Continue to prioritize trail connections and expansion opportunities in the northern portion of the County, including Prince Gallitzin & Duman Lake
 - CCPC, CCCRA, NCCDC combine efforts & capacity to develop projects that enhance connectivity & economic development opportunities from Central Cambria to Northern Cambria.
- Adopt more flexible & innovative design solutions that better accommodate the pedestrian & bicycle experience during the project planning process
 - CCPC, CCCRA, PennDOT create adaptive design guidelines to better accommodate Cambria County sidewalk-user's needs, especially those who use wheelchairs and other mobility aids & devices.
- Continue to serve as a liaison between PennDOT District 09 & recreation organizations/volunteer groups to coordinate future projects and plans
 - CCPC maintains regular, consistent communication with District 09 staff regarding multimodal implications for ongoing plans and projects throughout the County.



An often overlooked element of planning for active recreational communities is the municipal sidewalk. Many county municipalities do not have an ordinance to direct **if, where, or how** sidewalks should be constructed. As a result, municipal sidewalk networks are often fragmented, deteriorated and/or underutilized. Municipalities without a **sidewalk ordinance** are also ineligible for many state and federal funding programs. There are examples of municipalities taking the lead on this issue, such as the Borough of Ebensburg, but most county municipalities ignore and/or do not prioritize such projects. Since sidewalks are the most practical mode of pedestrian travel, and the benefits of sidewalks are well documented (safety, accessibility, health, property value enhancement), it is important for all county municipalities to have a uniform approach to sidewalks.



Likewise, there is a need for consistent but **flexible design standards** for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. Too often innovative bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure that is built in one part of the state, or within a particular PennDOT District, cannot be built in another. PennDOT must be involved to guarantee more rural parts of the state have equal access and flexibility when it comes to the development of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. The Cambria County Planning Commission will continue to work with PennDOT to lead innovative efforts, including the potential creation of a local design standards manual that more effectively suits the needs of Cambria's current and landscape.

Comprehensive Mapping

Maintain an up-to-date, digital, comprehensive assets map.

*Convert existing comprehensive assets map to online AGOL map and update twice a year.

A **consistent and current map** of *all existing* bicycle and pedestrian resources in Cambria County was not available prior to this initiative. The plan contains several maps produced during the planning process, including a countywide map of available trails, and those planned for the near future. Another outcome of this project to be published in the coming months is a level of service map for cyclists. The purpose of this map is to direct new and visiting cyclists to safe and appropriate on-road cycling routes based on skill and comfort level.

Northern Connections

Prioritize trail connections & expansions in the northern portion of the County.

*CCPC, CCCRA, NCCDC coordinate to develop projects that enhance connectivity & economic development opportunities into northern Cambria County.

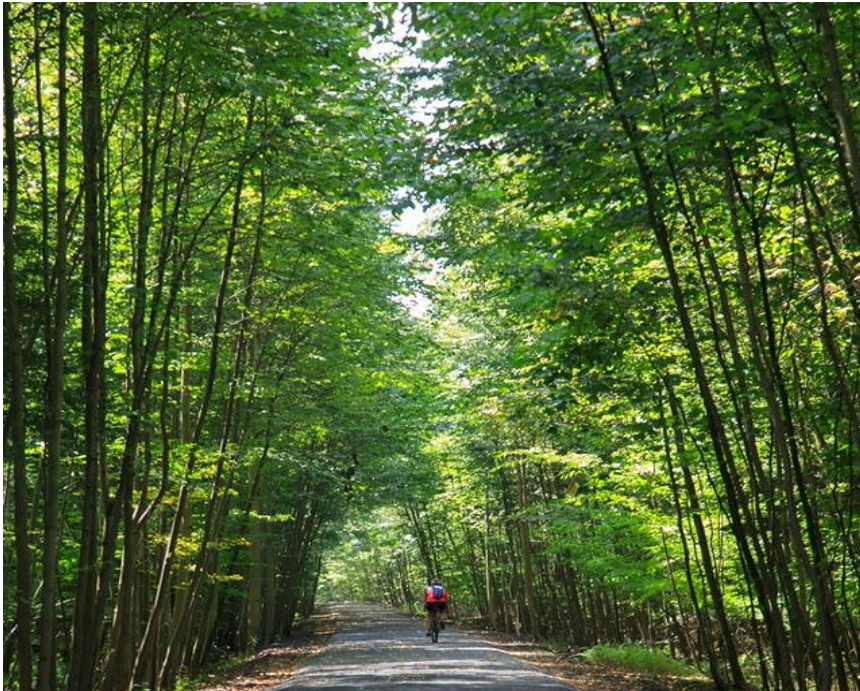
During several recent planning initiatives, we've heard consistent feedback from members of northern Cambria County communities; *"You need to be doing more when it comes to creating new, and connecting existing, bicycle and pedestrian assets in the north."* This feedback typically includes the need to better promote, and capitalize on what northern Cambria communities currently have to offer as well. In response, the CCPC and Steering Committee has prioritized the assessment of gaps in connectivity across the county, especially from central Cambria to northern Cambria. Using the comprehensive assets map, the CCPC, CCCRA, and NCCDC plan to identify infrastructure gaps, and develop **essential projects that link existing assets** together, and provide new economic development opportunities for these unique trail towns.

Consistent Communication

Be a liaison between PennDOT District 09 & recreation orgs to coordinate future projects and plans

*CCPC maintains regular contact w/ District 09 regarding multimodal implications for ongoing plans & projects throughout the County.

Throughout the progression of these work items, the Cambria County Planning Commission will continue to serve as a liaison to county municipalities, recreation organizations, volunteer project groups, and PennDOT District 9-0 for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure needs. Cambria County, particularly the City of Johnstown, has experienced a surge in volunteerism over approximately the last five years, with the implementation of initiatives such as Vision 2025. Because of this, many grassroots groups have formed around support and advocacy for key areas of interest, including recreation, and the fostering of life sustaining landscapes. The CCPC will continue to serve as a liaison to **coordinate communication** and project momentum across existing interest groups and PennDOT.



In addition to investing in future projects that achieve the **core concepts** and are vetted against the **decision-making framework**, the CCPC is committed to revisiting **Connecting Cambria** again in 2020 to measure the plan's progress and reevaluate prioritization criteria as well as priority projects, if needed. Until that time, the CCPC will continue to coordinate with partner agencies to ensure that implementation of **Connecting Cambria** is efficient, effective, and successful.

The plan was adopted by the Cambria County Planning Commission in January 2019.



The Cambria County Planning Commission

401 Candlelight Drive

Ebensburg, PA 15931

www.cambriapanning.org



www.facebook.com/cambriapanning/

Cambria County
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