



CREATING A BIKE/WALK COMMUNITY

CONNECTING PEOPLE AND PLACES

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ACTIVE

SOUTHERN WEST VIRGINIA



ACTIVE SWV BIKE / WALK

2018
EDITION

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3 MISSION STATEMENT

4 INTRODUCTION

5 GUIDELINES AND RESOURCES

6 THE LEAGUE OF AMERICAN BYCICLISTS

11 GETTING STARTED

12 PLACES

15 PEOPLE

16 PLANNERS

18 USERS

21 TECHNIQUES & APPROACHES

22 MOUNT HOPE, WEST VIRGINIA: A CASE FOR COMPARISON

23 LANDMARKS, ATTRACTIONS, AND UNIQUE FEATURES

24 MAKING MOUNT HOPE A BIKE/WALK COMMUNITY

26 LOCAL, STATE, AND NATIONAL RESOURCES



Mission Statement

ActiveSWV develops activities and programs to create a culture of exercise and physical activity in southern West Virginia. Transforming southern West Virginia into a more physically active community is our main purpose.

A happy and healthy community will attract visitors, new businesses, and jobs. Active SWV seeks to improve the health of all southern West Virginians by providing opportunities for active lifestyles. This goal will help diversify our region's economic development by attracting businesses looking for a community where living a healthy, active lifestyle is a priority.

This mission is achieved through community volunteers who lead regular physical activities around the four-county New River Gorge region. These community captains are seeking healthier lifestyles themselves and experience accountability in leading groups. These volunteers are provided training and certifications to facilitate quality programs while also creating the opportunity for community captains to obtain resume-building qualifications.



This manual is designed to provide our volunteers with a clear understanding of what is needed to create a bike/walk community and the resources to help make this community a reality. Suggestions, additions, and elaborations are welcomed.



BRINGING TOGETHER PEOPLE & PLACES

Introduction

Marketing your community as being “bicycle friendly” can be an effective way to strengthen the local economy by attracting businesses and professionals who value a higher quality of life and the ability to choose how they transport themselves. Making incremental changes to the way your community operates with a focus on bicycle and pedestrian safety can change the overall experience people have within your town. Nationwide, communities of all sizes are realizing the value in becoming bicycle-friendly and beginning to invest in that potential by including these considerations in all future planning. Cities of different shapes and sizes face different challenges in their pursuit, but they all share the goal of connecting people with places.

In southern West Virginia, our communities face some very distinct challenges, some of which are unique to the area. People who live here are very aware of the physical constraints of living in the mountains. Many of the distinguishing characteristics that make southern West Virginia such a beautiful place to live



(narrow roads, limited light pollution, and seasonal weather) can also make it difficult to navigate from place to place. Unlike many of the other areas of our country that expanded in the mid-20th century to accommodate growing families and automobile traffic, much of southern West Virginia's rapid development occurred in the late 19th and early 20th centuries as families immigrated in to work in the timber and coal industries. This growth happened before the advent of automobile traffic. When cars arrived, communities modernized by widening roads. The rapid growth of that era has waned and has left many of the area's communities connected by roads only fit for automobile traffic. It is worth considering how our communities can best be served by roads that are safe for all modes of transportation.

Although the reduction of population and traffic in many of southern West Virginia's communities is usually considered a bad thing, it provides a unique opportunity to repurpose these places as havens for people-powered activities! When combined with supplementary plans for urban renewal, bicycle and pedestrian planning has proven to be an effective approach for revitalization.

Not every community is the same. Geographic features and existing infrastructure can act as hurdles in the approach to becoming bicycle and pedestrian-friendly. But these features are often what makes a town interesting by shaping the culture and protocols of town life. There are many factors in considering how to make a community more bicycle and pedestrian-friendly. One of the first steps is to identify what the community already possesses in the way of culture, recreation, and leisure and how they can further incorporate bicycle and pedestrian use. Southern West Virginia has a long and storied history that helped shape the story of our country. Sharing our heritage and history and making it more accessible is an easy way to keep the stories of southern West Virginia alive and invite people to become part of the experience.

Guidelines and Resources

The United States Department of Transportation has recognized these issues and worked to create a comprehensive approach to making communities more accommodating for bicyclists and pedestrians. Throughout the 1990's and 2000's, pilot programs were launched in cities that identified a need for reduced vehicle traffic. This helped launch a movement that has now reached areas across the entire country, but many of the studies and publications pertained to more urban environments where wider streets are more pervasive. As a result of these studies, new approaches were developed and tested in urban centers. Modifications to roadways, such as bike lanes, transitioned from being considered oddities to being expectations in the country's large cities. Reductions in traffic accidents involving cyclists and pedestrians corresponded with increased patronage to downtown businesses. But the approaches that found success in these population centers did not prove to translate to the needs of more rural places.

Only in recent years have smaller towns and rural areas been the focus of study and assessment. One of the most comprehensive publications on the subject is ***Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks***, published by the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration in December 2016. It includes current terminology and up-to-date design approaches that are being implemented in small towns and cities nationwide. The Active Southern West Virginia "Creating a Bike/Walk Community" manual has been developed to further focus these techniques for local implementation.

Many advocacy groups have been created to further study this topic and serve as a voice for people who want bicycle and pedestrian accommodations to be on the forefront of political decisions and discourse. Some have developed into nationwide organizations and some are specifically focused on policy and practices within state or municipal borders. People for Bikes, The League of American Bicyclists, Alliance for Biking and Walking, Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, and the International Mountain Bike Association are some of the groups on the leading edge of advocacy, innovation, training, and fundraising for making places more bicycle-friendly. Their respective websites and accessible materials serve as great supplementary resources for information and updates. West Virginia Connecting Communities is a statewide non-profit dedicated to improving resources for bicycle and pedestrian accommodations, and Active Southern West Virginia focuses on these issues in Fayette, Nicholas, Raleigh, and Summers Counties. The New River Gorge Trail Alliance is working to build more trails in the region and connect those that already exist, and the New River Bike Union is a local bike club that plans riding events, service projects and raises money for bicycle improvements.



THE LEAGUE OF AMERICAN BICYCLISTS - BICYCLE FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES PROGRAM

The League of American Bicyclists, a bicycle advocacy organization formed in 1880, has created a helpful approach for making your community bicycle friendly. It uses the 5 E's (Engineering, Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, and Evaluation & Planning) as a framework for community transformation. Each of the E's are adaptable and can be applied to the specifics of any community.

When considering how you can apply the 5 E's to your community, consider setting short term and long-term goals. Some of the examples below will require more time and effort than others. And some of the examples are best done in stages, over an extended period. You may want to go through the lists and mark each goal with a priority and a projected time-frame.

The goals in each category are some of the most common among bicycle friendly communities. There is no limit to the ways that your community can be more accessible for pedestrians and cyclists.



- ▶ Implementing a Complete Streets Policy
- ▶ Meeting standards for bicycle facility design and implementation
- ▶ Providing training opportunities on best practices
- ▶ Funding bicycle projects
- ▶ Matching bicycle facilities with the context of density, automobile speeds and congestion
- ▶ Maintaining on and off street bicycle facilities to ensure usability and safety
- ▶ Providing a convenient medium through which the public can comment on bicycle-related issues
- ▶ Parking for bikes near destinations throughout the community
- ▶ Combining bike and public transportation



EDUCATION

- ▶ Creating a Safe Routes to School program
- ▶ Planning bicycle education events for children outside of school
- ▶ Public awareness campaigns that use Public Service Announcements
- ▶ Opportunities for adults to develop bicycle skills through free videos and/or in-person training
- ▶ Help schools identify funding opportunities that can support physical activity and healthy living choices

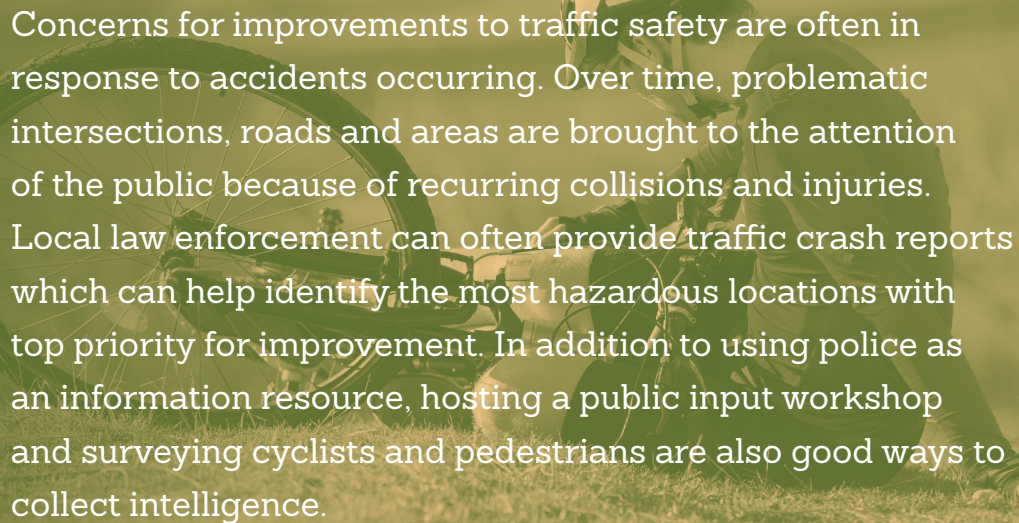


ENCOURAGEMENT

- ▶ Presence of a local bicycle club and/or advocacy group
- ▶ Observance of Bike Month, Bike to Work Day, Bike to School Day or other designated times for advocating bicycle safety and rights
- ▶ Local bike challenges used to engage individuals
- ▶ Participation from local leadership
- ▶ Regular rides sponsored by local bike club that are open to the public
- ▶ Planning an Open Streets, Cyclovia or Better Block type of event where a street or section of town is blocked off from traffic to offer a space for cyclists and pedestrians to gather, advocate and celebrate
- ▶ Local tourism organizations promote bicycling in the area
- ▶ Local businesses promote and support employees biking to work
- ▶ There are local businesses that sell and repair bicycles and may offer to rent bikes or offer test rides to potential buyers
- ▶ There are maps of trails in the area available to the public



PUBLIC AWARENESS



Concerns for improvements to traffic safety are often in response to accidents occurring. Over time, problematic intersections, roads and areas are brought to the attention of the public because of recurring collisions and injuries. Local law enforcement can often provide traffic crash reports which can help identify the most hazardous locations with top priority for improvement. In addition to using police as an information resource, hosting a public input workshop and surveying cyclists and pedestrians are also good ways to collect intelligence.



ENFORCEMENT

- ▶ Law requiring a safe passing distance
- ▶ Penalties for harassing, injuring or killing pedestrians/cyclists
- ▶ Speed limits in residential areas and near schools
- ▶ Distracted driving is a punishable offense
- ▶ Police bike patrol and designated law enforcement point person to interact with the bike community
- ▶ Law enforcement is aware of the rights and responsibilities of cyclists and pedestrians is up to date on traffic law as it relates to such matters
- ▶ Law enforcement use targeted enforcement and information sharing to encourage motorists and cyclists to share the road safely
- ▶ Volunteer trail patrols help ensure safety of more remote trails



ENFORCEMENT (CONT.)

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Another way law enforcement can strengthen the biking and walking environment of a community is through bicycle patrols. Bike patrols offer an array of benefits to a police force and its community

- ▶ Bikes are less threatening than patrol vehicles
- ▶ A stronger sense of camaraderie with other cyclists
- ▶ More opportunity for contact and communication with the public
- ▶ Ability to access areas limited to patrol vehicles (crowds or obstacles)
- ▶ A more direct connection to the community environment allowing use of all senses for awareness
- ▶ Cost savings (fuel, maintenance, parking)
- ▶ Reduced impact on environment and infrastructure
- ▶ Less space required for storage and parking
- ▶ Increased strength and cardiovascular exercise for officers





EVALUATION/PLANNING

- ▶ Creating a Comprehensive Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan
 - ▶ Focuses on a bicycle network that includes accessibility for short trips and multi-modal trips. A pedestrian/bike friendly community has multiple destinations close to each other.
 - ▶ Forms guidelines for Education, Encouragement and Enforcement programs within the community
 - ▶ Considers current amount of bicycle usage and plans for future growth
- ▶ Dedicated Funding
- ▶ Appointment of a Bicycle Program Coordinator
- ▶ Formation of a Bicycle Advisory Committee

Applying for this designation is free, but there is no guarantee that it will be received. If a city does receive the designation it must submit an annual review to the League of American Bicyclists to maintain its level of recognition or to ascend to a higher level. Currently, Morgantown, WV is the only city in West Virginia that has received the designation, having earned the Bronze Level. Typically, cities with an institution of higher education stand a greater chance of receiving the designation as their campuses sustain residential populations and are built to accommodate mostly pedestrian and bicycle traffic. Additionally, the campuses have dedicated staff to improve and maintain the conditions of the grounds. It should be considered that the receipt of this designation alone is not a guarantee for a city's continued success for bicycle and pedestrian accommodation and safety improvement. Like other designations that a city may receive, it only serves to bring attention to the features that a community possesses and the issues it prioritizes. Becoming a bicycle friendly community is not an effort to measure your town against others; it is a way to include your community within a network of places that want to support healthy growth and welcome sustainable development, now and in the future.

Bike/Walk Southern West Virginia seeks to help the communities of southern West Virginia reach their fullest potential in providing opportunities for people to be physically active. Communities are made up of people and communities should be accessible to people by all modes of movement! Active Southern West Virginia can offer support to the communities of southern West Virginia that seek to become more bicycle friendly. Our Bike/Walk program and its staff will work alongside members of your community to assess the best ways to plan the transition.



Getting Started

Although advocacy, policy, and research groups have done plenty to develop approaches and tactics that can work anywhere, finding the right plan for your community will be a unique journey! You're likely to be inspired by strategies, ideas, projects, and campaigns in other communities, but no two projects are alike. You may have seen something that has been accomplished in another place that seemed like a great idea.



Let's start by listing some ideas that you would like to see in your hometown.	
Bike/Walk idea you have seen somewhere else	Location of existing implementation

Identifying problems is another important step to take. It can help you focus your initial efforts and include the techniques and approaches that will most effectively help you prioritize your plan to move you forward.

List some issues you already encounter and those that you think may surface later.	
Bike/Walk Problem in your town	How might this problem be fixed?

Another good way to get started is by taking inventory of what makes your community a special place. A bicycle friendly community works to be user-friendly to its residents and visitors. Keeping this in mind will help create a comprehensive plan for making your bicycle friendly community the best it can be. First, we will identify all the places that people should be able to visit. Then we will identify the people that you want to be able to visit those places (users), and identify the people that can best contribute to the planning (planners).



A place can be big or small, commercial or recreational, permanent or temporary. Think of all the places in your community that a person might need to go on a normal day and all the places a person might want to go on special occasions. Making your community bicycle and pedestrian friendly means that all users will be able to get where they want to go conveniently and safely. Special considerations should be made for places that have multiple uses and variable amounts of traffic.



EVENTS AND FESTIVALS Are there specific dates and/or periods during which groups of people are likely to be present in your community?

- ▶ Is the event limited to a particular place or does it lack boundaries?
- ▶ Does the event require regular traffic to be altered or rerouted?
- ▶ Is the event staffed by people who need efficient ingress/egress?



TRADITIONS Is there something unique that occurs in your community? Is it growing in popularity? Would you like it to grow?



LANDMARKS

- ▶ Natural features (rivers, overlooks, lakes, and ponds, geologic features, waterfalls)
- ▶ Man-made features (statues, playgrounds, fountains, murals)
- ▶ Historical locations (courthouses, memorials, interpretive plaques, battlefields)



PARKS Are these places underused or do they need to be expanded to accommodate more use? Could renovating the space for more bicycle access solve a parking problem?



CEMETERIES These are quiet places with very little traffic congestion. Many have historical significance and are landscaped to provide pleasant scenery. Can they be included in your community's bike and pedestrian accessible places? Make sure to seek guidance from the groundskeeper and/or superintendent.



GROCERY STORES Everyone needs to buy food, and many people would like to support locally owned businesses. But if it is necessary to drive to buy groceries, many people will opt for the larger stores that may be further away from home. Can stores be accessed by customers who do not drive?



RESTAURANTS Like grocery stores, many people would opt for locally owned eateries if they were more easily accessible. Are locations accessible to patrons who prefer to walk or ride a bike?



SHOPS AND OTHER RETAIL Is there ample parking for customers who arrive on bicycles? Are shopping centers connected by sidewalks and/or bike lanes?



POST OFFICE Post Offices are usually located in central areas where people tend to run errands. Are there accommodations for people to ride a bicycle? Can they park there for an extended period?



CINEMAS AND THEATERS Do the venues have enough nearby parking for residents and visitors to conveniently attend? Are there sidewalks leading to the venue?



SCHOOLS Are there safe routes for students to walk or ride a bike to and from school? Are they marked and highly visible? Are there neighborhood watch groups or other organized efforts to assure security of children?



Chances are, if you are reading this, you are planning to be a part of making your community a more bicycle and pedestrian friendly place. This will be a much easier process if you can work with others who are also interested in community improvements. Finding the right leaders to champion the cause can make all the difference. No one can guarantee immediate success, but there are tactics that have been successful in cities across the country. Assembling people to form a **Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee** is a common approach to making progress which allies community members with local authorities to assess conditions and create plans for improvement. These plans can then be submitted for adoption by government.



Planners

There is no need to start from scratch when assembling a group of people to lead the effort. Your community likely has an assortment of groups that meet on a regular basis and have a mission to fulfill. Partnering with organizations is a valuable way to reach new audiences and to attract people to help with your cause. Figuring out an approach that can be mutually beneficial to each organization is the best way to create sustainable relationships in your community and recruit members of other groups to get involved with your Bike/Walk programs.



CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS In addition to already having a cohesive membership and leadership, civic organizations are often already focused on community betterment.

- ▶ Kiwanis
- ▶ Rotary
- ▶ Lions Club
- ▶ Civitan
- ▶ Red Hat Society
- ▶ Religious groups and churches – many churches own property and host regular events that could incorporate bicycle and pedestrian safety education and/or encourage attendees to walk or ride a bicycle as transportation.
- ▶ Non-profit organizations – all non-profit organizations possess a mission. Assisting with bicycle and pedestrian improvements may very well be in line with the mission.



SCHOOLS

- ▶ Board of Education
- ▶ School Staff
- ▶ PTA
- ▶ Student Groups and Clubs



PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

- ▶ Chamber of Commerce
- ▶ Health Professionals
- ▶ Legal Professionals
- ▶ Education Professionals



LOCAL GOVERNMENT

- ▶ Mayor's Office
- ▶ City Manager
- ▶ City Planner
- ▶ Zoning Board
- ▶ Police Department
- ▶ County Commission
- ▶ Regional Planning and Development Authorities
- ▶ Metropolitan Planning Organizations



POSSIBLE CONTRIBUTORS		
List people who could make valuable contributions to bike/walk planning in your community.		
Person's Name	Title	Affiliated Organization

Users

These people will be strongly tied to the places you identify. They are the people that desire greater and safer access to the places in your community as well as the people that you desire to attract to your community. Users are most commonly grouped into two main categories: residents and visitors. An individual can fit into multiple categories depending on their habits and activities. Many of the activities may be done by both residents and visitors.

RESIDENTS



Children

- ▶ Home
 - ▶ Are residential areas safe for children to play near streets?
 - ▶ Can neighborhood trails offer alternative areas for recreation?
- ▶ School
 - ▶ Are there safe routes for children to walk or ride a bike to school marked with signs?
 - ▶ Are crosswalks visible and/or staffed with crossing guards?

Teens/Adults

- ▶ Not all teens drive and many teens are involved with extracurricular activities. Are streets equipped with bicycle facilities? Are local gathering places connected (churches, civic centers, theaters, recreation centers)?
- ▶ Are there ample sidewalks to allow and encourage walking to local gathering places?
- ▶ Are adults able to commute to work via walking and biking?
- ▶ Is multi-modal transportation an option?
- ▶ Is there access to parks and other areas designated for exercise and leisure?



ABILITY

- ▶ Are places in your city accessible to people with physical disabilities?
- ▶ Are recreational amenities geared toward users of different skill levels, including beginners?



ACTIVITY

- ▶ Getting to work
- ▶ Running errands
- ▶ Shopping
- ▶ Dining
- ▶ Exercising
- ▶ Recreation & Leisure (biking, running, birding, photography, historical tours, etc.)



VISITORS



AGE

- ▶ Children/Teens - Does your community offer opportunities for biking and walking? If so, is information easily accessible to visitors?
 - ▶ Camps, field trips, or groups just stopping through while traveling
- ▶ Adults - Tourism contributes to the economy of many cities. Communities that are more accessible to pedestrians are more likely to attract outside business. Does your community prioritize attracting visitors? Can your community accommodate large numbers of people en masse?



ACTIVITIES

1. Festivals and Street parties
 - ▶ Seasonal celebrations (Rhododendron Festival in Beckley, Mardi Gras Celebration, Christmas Parade, 4th of July, Oktoberfest)
 - ▶ Open Streets and/or Better Blocks events



ACTIVITIES (CONT.)

2. Physical activity based events and activities - Promoting your community as a destination for adventure or simply a good central location can be attractive.
 - ▶ Fundraiser 5K's, triathlons, marathons or half-marathons—these are all good opportunities to showcase natural beauty and unique attractions by strategically routing the course and to promote local businesses with sponsorships and advertising.
 - ▶ Cycling events
 - ▶ Can begin and/or end in town
 - ▶ Can simply pass through town
 - ▶ Lodging accommodations can sponsor events
 - ▶ Water trails and whitewater boating
 - ▶ Nearby river access can bring lots of traffic
 - ▶ Bike/Pedestrian crossover is common among boaters
3. Natural and Historical Interpretation
 - ▶ Unique and endangered species can entice birders and nature enthusiasts to visit. Providing non-motorized access to the areas can also create an opportunity to raise funds for the protection of habitat.
 - ▶ Local history and historical relics can be the focus of trails and interpretive tours. Signs and literature can augment the experience.
 - ▶ Providing pedestrian and bicycle access to sites encourages longer visit

Techniques and Approaches

The size of your community, its population density and the categories of traffic that can be expected within its boundaries are major determinants in how bicycle and pedestrian improvements can and should be approached. There are many techniques being used by cities and communities to improve bicycle and pedestrian connectivity, not all of them will be appropriate in every community.

TECHNIQUES

ON-ROAD ACCOMMODATIONS

- ▶ Bike lanes
- ▶ Shared lane markings (Sharrows)
- ▶ Advisory shoulders
- ▶ Paved shoulders
- ▶ Safety signage

OFF-ROAD ACCOMMODATIONS

- ▶ Shared use paths
- ▶ Side paths
- ▶ Sidewalks
- ▶ Separated bike lanes

AUXILIARY ACCOMMODATIONS

- ▶ Bicycle parking
- ▶ Public bicycle repair station
- ▶ Public tire pump
- ▶ Bikeshare program





BICYCLE FRIENDLY BUSINESSES

- ▶ Businesses that offer bicycle parking help reduce parking and traffic congestion
- ▶ Patrons tend to notice more when moving at slower speeds
- ▶ Bicycle friendly businesses often find an increase in the happiness and productivity of their employees

BICYCLE FRIENDLY SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITIES

- ▶ Traffic and parking can be drastically reduced by increasing bike/walk use
- ▶ An effective way to encourage more physical activity among students and faculty

APPROACHES

Active Southern West Virginia would like to train you to become a leader in the transformation of your community into a more bike/walk friendly place. You can become a Bike/Walk Community Captain and work with our staff to determine the best ways to approach improvements to the safety and accessibility of physical activity opportunities in your community.

Mount Hope, West Virginia: A Case for Comparison

At the turn of the 20th century, Mount Hope was a bustling city. Within its current borders were three active coal mines and the hundreds of families supported by the industry. In 1910 much of the city burned down, but the thriving coal companies paid to have the city rebuilt, bigger and grander than before. The city's Main Street was lined with brick and stone buildings that could survive if another fire were to catch. These buildings, which included schools, two theaters, a large YMCA, Masonic Lodge, bank and a municipal stadium were remarkably impressive features for southern West Virginia. The coal industry allowed Mount Hope to prosper during the times when the rest of the country was suffering through the Great Depression. However, beginning mid-century, demand for coal declined and the city's population began to shrink.

Throughout the rest of the 20th century and into the 21st, the continued decline in demand for labor in the coal mines shrank the population of Mount Hope to just over 1,000. Main Street is now lined with those same sturdy buildings, but a lack of occupancy and maintenance has allowed them to deteriorate and degrade. Mount Hope High School and Middle School closed their doors, leaving only Mount Hope Elementary School with students and teachers.

Mount Hope created a Comprehensive Plan in 2013 that outlined possible plans for how to attract business and revitalize the city. It identified its resources and how they could be utilized to support people and industry. A unique attribute of Mount Hope is its inclusion in the first ever federal voluntary floodplain buyout program, initiated to address the damage caused by the recurring flooding of Dunloup Creek, which runs through the entirety of town. The two main phases of this program are the relocation of those people who resided in the floodplain of the stream and the restoration of a more natural streambed to mitigate damage from further flooding events. The first phase of the project was carried out and resulted in the removal of many homes and structures along the creek, as well as the unfavorable consequence of eliminating much of the city's tax base. The second phase of the program, restoration of a more natural stream flow, is set to begin in 2017.

In addition to traditional industries that are most communities of southern West Virginia can support, such as manufacturing, mining and retail, Mount Hope identified Agriculture and Adventure Tourism as possible successes. The voluntary floodplain buyout program opened large areas of green space that may be used for the cultivation of industrial and food crops and the reestablishment of a natural stream corridor is expected to create more opportunities for recreation and leisure for residents and visitors throughout the city. The city partnered with the Coal Heritage Area Authority to recruit AmeriCorps VISTA members to make use of the city's resources and focus on building those programs.



LANDMARKS, ATTRACTIONS, AND UNIQUE FEATURES

EVENTS AND FESTIVALS

- ▶ Jubilee Festival – The Jubilee Festival occurs in September of each year and serves as a homecoming celebration for people who have lived and attended school in Mount Hope. The closing of Mount Hope High School ended the tradition of a homecoming game on that Friday night. And although the Main Street parade features participants from nearby schools and clubs, there is a void of local support in the planning and participation.
- ▶ Boy Scouts National Jamboree at Summit Bechtel Reserve – The newly built camp is the permanent host of this event which occurs every four years. The camp is self-contained and accessing the premises does not require attendees to pass through Mount Hope.

LANDMARKS

- ▶ Coal Heritage Discovery Center - Mount Hope plans to leverage its former industrial activity as an historical attraction. The headquarters of the Coal Heritage Area Authority is set to be relocated in Mount Hope and feature offices in addition to a museum dedicated to the history of coal mining in the region. This organization provides historical interpretation and materials pertaining to the many communities in southern West Virginia and eastern Kentucky that were supported by coal mining in the late 19th and 20th centuries. In addition to providing local jobs, the Coal Heritage Discovery Center will attract visitors traveling along the Coal Heritage Highway system, which passes through Mount Hope.
- ▶ Coal Seam Display
- ▶ Princess Theater/ Playhouse
- ▶ Community Center/Former YMCA
- ▶ Stadium Terrace Apartments
- ▶ Municipal Stadium
- ▶ New River Company Store
- ▶ Post Office Mural
- ▶ Mountaineer Hotel
- ▶ DuBois on Main Museum
- ▶ Dunloup Creek
- ▶ Mount Hope Fitness Trail
- ▶ Giuseppe's Restaurant
- ▶ Mount Hope Elementary School
- ▶ Nearby attractions to connect include the New River Gorge, the Summit Bechtel Reserve and the Regional Trail network being developed by the New River Gorge Trail Alliance

MAKING MOUNT HOPE A BIKE/WALK COMMUNITY

Mount Hope identified **three main goals** for improving bicycle and pedestrian accommodations that can increase safe access to places and attract visitors from out of town. Beginning in 2016 Active Southern West Virginia began working with the City to accomplish these goals.

- ▶ The Mount Hope Rail Trail will approach the New River Gorge National River area from the city of Mount Hope along Mill Creek, a tributary of Dunloup Creek. The trail will connect to Garden Ground Mountain where a stacked loop series of mountain bike trails is being developed within the park's boundaries and provide low-impact recreational opportunities.
- ▶ The Safe Streets Campaign to designate walking routes and connect points of interest throughout town.
- ▶ Creation of a designated Fitness Loop Trail will provide a circuit for users to walk, run, or ride and assist in establishing an exercise routine. This newly designated trail will tie into the safe streets routes as well as the Mount Hope Rail Trail.

The Active SWV Bike/Walk program worked with the Mayor, City Manager, City Treasurer, Police Department, City Works Department, civic organizations, and local business to make progress toward their stated goals.

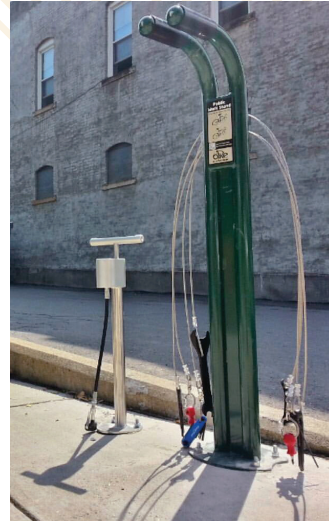
MOUNT HOPE FITNESS TRAIL

1. Identify a location for a 1-mile outdoor fitness trail within floodplain buyout area
 - ▶ Connect to existing walking routes
 - ▶ Low-traffic area due to drastic reduction in houses
2. Add trail to the City's walking routes and add wayfinding improvements



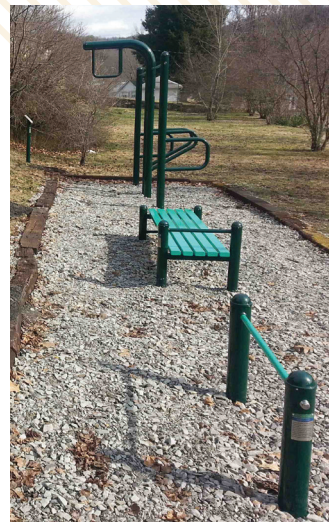
BICYCLE REPAIR STATION

- ▶ Identify a location that will be highly visible and easily accessible
- ▶ Received a Try This WV mini-grant to purchase the equipment
- ▶ City works crew installed the station and will maintain the equipment



OUTDOOR EXERCISE STATIONS

- ▶ Identify location for equipment adjacent to the Fitness Trail
- ▶ Secure Funding for equipment
- ▶ Secure old crossties from The Summit to use as edging
- ▶ Equipment, crosstie edges, and gravel bed installed by city works



SHARE THE ROAD SIGNS

- ▶ Identify best strategic locations for signs
- ▶ Contact WVDOH to inform them of desired locations
- ▶ Signs installed by WVDOH within a month of request



PUBLIC BIKE RACKS

- ▶ Identify strategic locations for bike racks to be installed and prioritize
- ▶ Secure funding along with funding for outdoor exercise equipment
- ▶ Racks installed by city works



COMPLETE STREETS POLICY

- ▶ Research policies and use others as basis for drafting a policy
- ▶ Received unanimous approval from City Council and was signed by Mayor

MOUNT HOPE RAIL TRAIL

- ▶ Research property owners through the County Tax Assessor's Office
- ▶ Contact all property owners and convene Stakeholder's Meetings to discuss trail plans
- ▶ Apply for grant funding to cover property acquisition, environmental testing, planning and construction
- ▶ Connect rail trail into the city's network of walking paths and trails

DOWNTOWN WALKING TOUR

- ▶ Research walking tours in other towns for ideas (Thomas, WV and Lewisburg, WV)
- ▶ Assemble a team to attend the ARC Gateway Communities Initiative Workshop
- ▶ Apply for and receive grant funding to develop the walking tour
- ▶ Work with team members to see through the plan and create walking tour



Welcome to Mount Hope - A Bike/Walk Community

The Phoenix Fitness Trail - is an outdoor double-loop trail with exercise stations located nearby, designed to improve muscular development, breathing, flexibility and agility. The Phoenix Fitness Trail is open to the public for pedestrian and bicycle use. The inner loop (0.4 mile) and outer loop (0.6 mile) are 1 mile in length when completed in succession.

It is recommended that a physician be consulted prior to use, as a person's physical fitness, condition and training experience play a decisive role in how much to train. As a guide, the signs at each fitness station indicate the proper technique for exercising. Determining the number of repetitions and the order in which you use the stations should be based on your abilities.

Before participating in exercise or using the outdoor fitness stations it is recommended that you engage in 10 minutes of cardiovascular and general stretching movements.

The Phoenix Trail is connected to a network of paths throughout Mount Hope that vary in length and difficulty. The distance and difficulty of each is included on the map. Users should be aware of the rules and the characteristics of their chosen paths when planning to exercise.

Park Rules

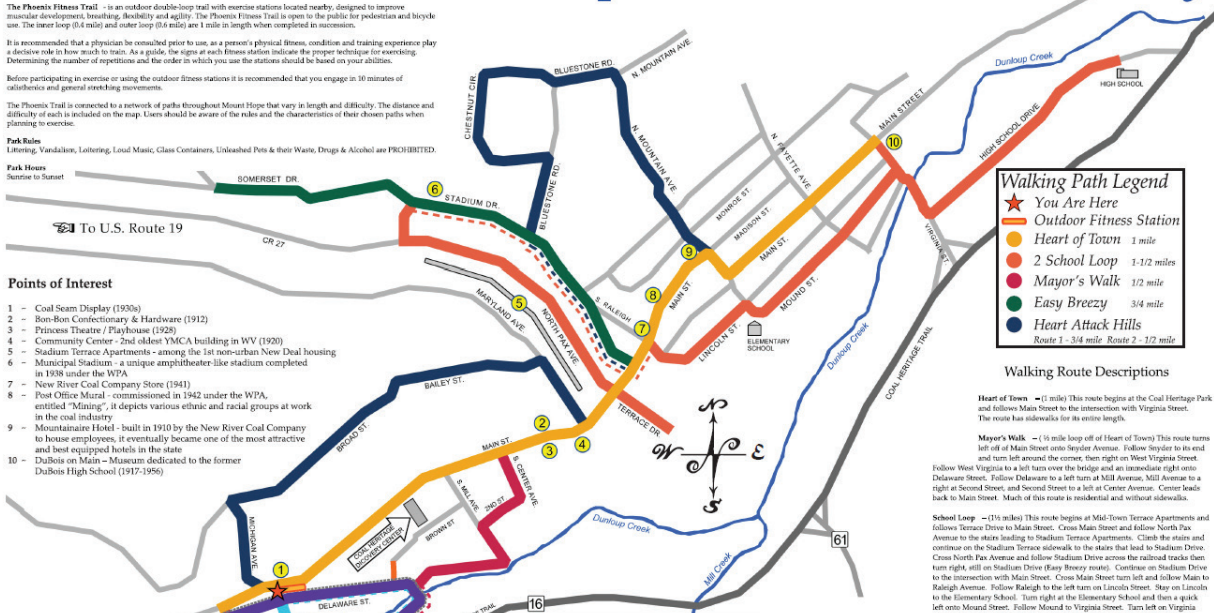
Littering, Vandalism, Loitering, Loud Music, Glass Containers, Unleashed Pets & their Waste, Drugs & Alcohol are PROHIBITED.

Park Hours

Sunrise to Sunset

Points of Interest

- 1 - Coal Seam Display (1930s)
- 2 - Bon-Bon Confectionary & Hardware (1912)
- 3 - Princess Theatre / Playhouse (1928)
- 4 - Community Center - 2nd oldest YMCA building in WV (1920)
- 5 - Stadium Terrace Apartments - among the 1st non-urban New Deal housing
- 6 - Municipal Stadium - a unique amphitheater-like stadium completed in 1938 under the WPA
- 7 - New River Coal Company Store (1941)
- 8 - Post Office Mural - commissioned in 1942 under the WPA, entitled "Mining", it depicts various ethnic and racial groups at work in the coal industry
- 9 - Mountaineer Hotel - built in 1910 by the New River Coal Company to house employees, it eventually became one of the most attractive and best equipped hotels in the state
- 10 - DuBois on Main - Museum dedicated to the former DuBois High School (1917-1956)



Walking Path Legend	
★	You Are Here
○	Outdoor Fitness Station
○	Heart of Town 1 mile
○	School Loop 1-1/2 miles
○	Mayor's Walk 1/2 mile
○	Easy Breezy 3/4 mile
○	Heart Attack Hills
	Route 1 - 3/4 mile Route 2 - 1/2 mile

Walking Route Descriptions

Heart of Town - (1 mile) This route begins at the Coal Heritage Park and follows Main Street to the intersection with Virginia Street. The route has sidewalks for its entire length.

Mayor's Walk - (1/2 mile) This route begins at the intersection of Main Street and Stadium Drive. Follow Stadium Drive to its end and turn left around the corner, then right on West Virginia Street. Follow West Virginia to a left turn over the bridge and an immediate right onto Delaware Street. Follow Delaware to a left turn at Mill Avenue, Mill Avenue to a right at Second Street and Second Street to a left at Center Avenue. Center leads back to Main Street. Much of this route is residential and without sidewalks.

School Loop - (1 1/2 miles) This route begins at Mid-Town Terrace Apartments and follows Terrace Drive to Main Street. Cross Main Street and follow North Pax Avenue to the stairs leading to Stadium Terrace Apartments. Climb the stairs and continue on the Stadium Terrace sidewalk to the stairs that lead to Stadium Drive. Cross North Pax Avenue and follow Stadium Drive across the railroad tracks then turn right, still on Stadium Drive (Easy Breezy route). Continue on Stadium Drive to the intersection with Main Street. Cross Main Street turn left and follow Main to Raleigh Avenue. Follow Raleigh to the left turn on Lincoln Street. Stay on Lincoln to the Elementary School. Turn right at the Elementary School and then a quick left onto Mound Street. Follow Mound to Virginia Street. Turn left on Virginia back to Main Street (Heart of Town route). The route can continue to the High School by turning right at the intersection of Mound and Virginia. Follow Virginia across the railroad tracks and make a left onto the High School Drive. Follow the High School Drive to the high school. The majority of this route has sidewalks but there are parts of the route without sidewalks.

Easy Breezy - (3/4 mile) This route begins at the intersection of Main Street and Stadium Drive. Follow Stadium Drive to where it runs into Somerset Drive. Continue on Somerset to where the road begins to climb. Stadium Drive has a sidewalk and Somerset is a quiet lane along a small creek without a sidewalk.

Heart Attack Hills 1 & 2 - (0.4 mile) This route begins at the intersection of Main Street and Stadium Drive (Easy Breezy route). Follow Stadium Drive to Bluestone Road. Turn right on Bluestone Road. Climb the hill. Turn left on Chestnut Circle and follow the Circle to where it intersects again with Bluestone Road. Continue straight ahead on Bluestone to where it intersects with North Mountain Avenue. Bear to the right on North Mountain and follow North Mountain back to Main Street (Heart of Town route). There are some sidewalks but this route is mostly residential without sidewalks.

(1.2 mile) This route begins at the intersection of Main Street (Heart of Town route) and Michigan Avenue, beside the Coal Seam Display. Turn right off of Main Street onto Michigan Avenue. Climb Michigan Avenue to Broad Street. Turn right on Broad Street and continue climbing to Bailey Street. Follow Bailey to Maryland Avenue. Turn right on Maryland Avenue for a steep walk back down to Main Street.

Phoenix Fitness Trail

1. The Inner Phoenix Loop starting at the ★ is 0.4 miles.
2. The Outer Phoenix Loop starting at the ★ is 0.6 miles.

(Trail 1 + Trail 2 = ONE MILE) Both Circuit Loops form a Singular Loop of 1.0 mile. The two are connected continuously and are joined by a path and footbridge over the Dunlap Creek.



This project is an ongoing collaboration between the City of Mount Hope and these partnering organizations.



LOCAL

Active Southern West Virginia

www.activeswv.com

Coal Heritage Area Authority

www.coalheritage.org

New River Gorge Trail Alliance

www.facebook.com/NRGTA

www.nrgta.org

New River Bicycle Union

www.newriverbicycleunion.org



West Virginia Connecting Communities

www.wvconnectingcommunities.com

Try This West Virginia

www.trythiswv.com

West Virginia Department of Transportation

www.transportation.wv.gov

West Virginia Community Development Hub

www.wvhub.org



League of American Bicyclists

www.bikeleague.org

Federal Highway Administration

www.fhwa.gov

People for Bikes

www.peopleforbikes.org

Alliance for Biking and Walking

www.BikeWalkAlliance.org

www.facebook.com/bikewalkalliance

Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

www.railstotrails.org

International Mountain Bicycling Association

www.imba.com

Smart Growth America

www.smartgrowthamerica.org

State Smart Transportation Initiative

www.ssti.us



ACTIVE

SOUTHERN WEST VIRGINIA

Active Southern West Virginia

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

New River Gorge Regional Development Authority

West Virginia Physical Activity Plan

The New River Gorge National River

Army Corps of Engineers at Summersville Lake

SUPPORTED BY

Nicholas County Community Foundation

Beckley Area Foundation

Hinton Area Foundation

Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation

Active RVA

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