

Phase 1

Regional Path Study

Bay, Midland and Saginaw Counties



March, 2008

Phase 1 Regional Path Study Bay, Midland and Saginaw Counties

Introduction

Trails are corridors that connect residential areas with retail areas, neighborhoods with schools and homes with work. Trails positively impact individuals and improve communities by providing not only recreation and transportation alternatives, but also by influencing economic and community development. Some of the many trail benefits include:



Bay Area Riverwalk/Railtrail



Saginaw Valley Rail Trail

- making communities better places to live by preserving and creating open spaces,
- encouraging physical fitness and healthy lifestyles,
- Creating new opportunities for outdoor recreation and non-motorized transportation, strengthening local economies, protecting the environment, and preserving culturally and historically valuable areas.

Background & Goals

Community leaders in the tri-county area were interested in developing a plan that defined the potential connections for non-motorized paths linking Bay, Midland and Saginaw Counties. The project was broken into two phases, with Phase 1 of the study looking at the big picture or potential routes to connect each community and Phase 2 taking a more detailed look at these routes, their potential issues and sharing them with other community leaders. Funding for both phases was requested from the Dow Chemical Company. Funding, at this point, has only been received for Phase I.



Pere Marquette Trail, Midland

The main goal of this project is to develop a plan showing the potential non-motorized path connections between the three counties. Doing so will provide alternative transportation methods, safe routes of travel for a number of non-motorized uses, recreational opportunities, health and physical fitness opportunities. The path will connect with traffic generators throughout the three counties such as smaller communities such as Freeland, Zilwaukee and Auburn, schools, parks, business centers, shopping centers, restaurants, and other points of interest.

Process

This plan for the tri-county area was developed over a four month period, from November to February 2008. Spicer Group (“We”) began the project by meeting with Saginaw County officials to identify the potential committee members from each community. Saginaw County Parks and Recreation sent out letters to each potential member inviting them to the first meeting in early November. The committee included staff from Bay, Midland and Saginaw Counties, as well as members from volunteer groups for existing trails in each of the three areas. The members of this committee included:



Bay Area Riverwalk/Railtrail

BAY COUNTY:

Dave Engelhardt, Bay County
Cathy Washabaugh, BACF Riverwalk /Railtrail
Dirk Westbury, Bay County

SAGINAW COUNTY:

Gary Brown, Saginaw County Parks & Recreation Commission
Michelle Goist, Saginaw County Parks & Recreation Commission
John Schumde, Saginaw County Parks & Recreation Commission

MIDLAND COUNTY:

Kim Haller, Midland County
Craig Kendziorski, Friends of the Pere Marquette
Joe Malan, Friends of the Pere Marquette
Dave Waite, Friends of the Pere Marquette

OTHERS:

Dan Hoffman, Saginaw Area GIS Authority
Michael Kelly, JCF/WIN
Jeff Martin, Dow
Jay Reithel, MDOT, Bay Region
Rob Eggers, Spicer Group
Tanya Moore, Spicer Group

The committee
came to a
consensus on
preferred
routes

Prior to the first meeting, we collected data from existing plans and trail studies in the tri-county area. One study of particular interest was the plan entitled, ‘A Vision of Green’, which completed a preliminary study of potential greenway and trail routes through and linking the three counties of Bay, Midland and Saginaw. The information from each plan was reviewed and included on a map.

This plan built on the existing plans of individual municipalities throughout each county as well as current activities taken on by each for development of trail systems within their communities. Throughout the process we utilized

the information from these existing plans and also developed some new potential routes for connection. Four meetings were held with the committee throughout the process. In the end, the committee came to a consensus on preferred routes for connection between each county and the existing non-motorized paths.

The first meeting focused on getting the committee members together, discussing Phase 1 and 2 of the project and initially discuss potential routes for connection between the three counties. Following this meeting, we drove each potential route and took photographs. We then developed the first draft of the



Saginaw Valley Rail Trail

map indicating potential trail routes connecting Bay, Midland and Saginaw Counties and their existing non-motorized paths.

The second meeting focused on defining the potential routes. Each county was given an allotted amount of time during the meeting to define potential routes from their knowledge, experience and availability.

Following this meeting, we drove the potential routes again and took more photographs. These potential routes were placed on the map in different colors to distinguish them from one another.

The third meeting focused on refining the map of the potential routes even further to define one *preferred route* between each county. The routes can be found on the map in Appendix A.

The fourth and final meeting for Phase 1 of the study presented the final documents to the committee. The final documents included a map indicating all of the potential routes, preferred, alternate and other linkages, this report and preliminary cost for the development of these potential routes.

Finally, preliminary cost estimates were developed for each of the routes. These estimates can be found in Appendix B.

Findings

Existing Paths & Development Plans

A number of communities throughout the region already have some developed trails as well as plans for future development of trails in their communities. The future development plans were studied and incorporated into the map within this study. The existing paths in each community are as follows:

Saginaw County

- Kochville Township Multi-Use Path
- Saginaw Valley Rail Trail
- Zilwaukee Pathway
- City of Saginaw Riverwalk
- Saginaw Township George Olson Pathway

Midland County

- Pere Marquette Rail Trail
- Chippewa Nature Center Trail
- City Loop Trail

Bay County

- Bay Area Riverwalk/Railtrail
- Bay City/Hampton Rail Trail

- Bangor Trail
- Portsmouth Township Trail
- Hampton Township Nature Trail



The Tridge, Midland

Potential Non-Motorized Path Routes

After all the existing information was collected and mapped, it gave the committee a clear picture of where each community throughout the tri-county area had existing trails. From this mapped information, the committee could look at potential future trail alignments to link each community. The committee was able to look at this information and add the potential routes to connect the three counties. The following

criteria were utilized in determining the best potential routes to connect the three counties with a non-motorized path:

- A route that could connect or have the potential to connect to other pathways
- A route that was located close to The population centers of each community
- A route that could connect traffic generators
- Scenic features of the route, and
- The possibility of acquiring the property for the intended use

- A route that could connect or have the potential to connect to other pathways
- A route that was located close to the population centers of each community
- A route that could connect traffic generators such as schools, retail centers, business and parks
- Scenic features of the route
- The possibility of acquiring the property for the intended use

The biggest challenge was to identify routes that might be obtainable for trail use that are also located in areas where people want to walk, hike or bike. In outlying areas between each community much of the land is used for agriculture. All of the potential routes are identified on the map in Appendix A.

Non-Motorized Path Routes

An analysis of the potential routes connecting each community was examined by the committee. Based on the analysis, a preferred option was chosen by consensus of the committee. The committee opted to have all potential routes left on the map so that options would be available if for some reason, the preferred options became impracticable. Those routes that are not preferred were further defined as either alternate routes or linkages. The preferred routes are as follows:

Saginaw County to Bay County

The preferred route for the link from Saginaw County to Bay County is an abandoned rail right-of-way (ROW) running on the west side of, and parallel to, the Saginaw River. Bay County committee members have been working with the Land Conservancy to acquire this property for connection to their existing paths and have been approved to write and submit a grant to connect their existing trail to this rail property.



Looking west from Melbourne Rd. at the Rail ROW

Alternate routes for the connection between Saginaw and Bay Counties include:

- An abandoned rail Right-of-Way (the “inner-urban”) which runs north-south between Kochville Rd. and Melbourne.
- M-84 from Saginaw Valley State University (SVSU) to Salzburg Road and the existing Bay City/Hampton Riverwalk/Railtrail at the river.



Looking west at the Rail line at I-75

Bay County to Midland County

The preferred route for the Bay County to Midland County connection is an active rail line that exists connecting Bay County to Midland County. This route was chosen because it offers the most direct route. The railroad (RR) right-of-way varies in width from 100-200 feet and contains some utility easements for overhead lines and underground pipelines. Placing a trail next to the rail will require discussions and approval, in the form of an agreement, from the rail company and utility companies. Connection points on either end of this route will need to be further discussed in Phase 2 of the study.

Trails in active railroad ROW have been implemented in many communities throughout the United States. There are case studies and other reference materials available to aid communities through this process with the railroad companies.

Alternate routes for the connection between Bay and Midland Counties include:

- Road ROW along Townline 14 Road from Mackinaw/Chip Road to just south of US-10.
- Road ROW along Chip Road from Townline 14/9 Mile Road to Bay City State Park.
- Consumers Energy ROW (north-south) from Townline 14 to N. Union/Patrick.
- Gas pipeline ROW from the RR ROW (preferred route) to Euclid (M247).



Consumers Energy Easement extending East-West from Kochville Township To Midland Road

Midland County to Saginaw County

The preferred route for the path from Midland County to Saginaw County would start at the existing trail at Patrick and Waldo Roads in Midland and head south within the road ROW on Waldo to Saginaw Street (Midland Rd.). The preferred route would then head southeast generally following Saginaw St (Midland Rd.) and the Tittabawassee River to connect with the Tittabawassee Township Park. From the park the preferred route would follow the river to Freeland Road, head east to the railroad ROW in Freeland, then head southeast within the railroad ROW to the Consumers Energy (CE) Easement between Kochville and Tittabawassee Roads. The path would then continue eastward to connect with the Kochville Path. This route would

require property negotiations with the railroad company and Consumers Energy.

Alternate routes for the connection between Midland and Saginaw Counties include:

- Road ROW along Freeland/River Roads to the RR ROW (preferred route).
- Tittabawassee Township Park to Freeland Road.
- CE ROW (north-south) from the existing path along Patrick south to the CE ROW (east-west)
- CE ROW (east-west) from the CE ROW (north-south) to Bay Road (M-84).
- Saginaw Road to Dow along the road ROW of Gordonville and Poseyville Roads.

Other Path Linkages

This path study also took into consideration other active efforts by other communities that linked destination points to the preferred or alternate routes. This purpose of this study was not to look at all of the possible linkages and therefore there may be other communities or destination points that could potentially be connected to this path in the future. These linkages include:

- Saginaw Charter Township (SCT) Path along the CE ROW from Shattuck to the Saginaw Valley Rail Trail (SVRT).
- Road ROW along Center to connect the SCT Path to the SVRT.
- CE ROW (north-south) from McCarty Road to the CE ROW (east-west) connecting to the existing Kochville Path at Elmer Lange Park.
- CE ROW (east-west) connecting the preferred route from Bay to Saginaw County to SVSU.
- Path (planned) to connect SVSU to Delta College.
- Paths (planned) by the City of Midland to connect the Pere Marquette (existing path) at Dublin/Saginaw Roads north and eastward generally following US-10 back



Saginaw Township Path, at McCarty Road

- to the existing path along Patrick Road.
- Hampton Township Nature Trail (planned) to connect to the Bay City Railtrail at Scheurmann Road and head north through CE ROW north to the Saginaw Bay and the existing Hampton Township Nature Trail.
 - Harger Trail (planned) to extend eastward from Buena Vista (north of M-46) to M-15.

Conclusion

The information provided in this report gives a general view of the future Tri-County Trail system. This plan (Phase 1) creates the vision, or the big picture, for connecting Bay, Midland and Saginaw Counties with a non-motorized transportation system. The committee was able to identify potential routes and prioritize the routes into preferred, alternate or linkages to connect the three counties, Bay, Midland and Saginaw. Through the process of defining the paths, some of the routes also connect smaller communities, such as Freeland, Zilwaukee and Auburn. A map and preliminary cost estimates were developed that will need to be further development and refinement in Phase 2 of the study. Phase 2 will study these areas in more detail and identify potential issues with the proposed routes. Once Phase 2 of the study is completed, each community will have plan in place to guide the future development of their trail linkages with the adjacent counties of Bay, Midland or Saginaw.

Appendix A

Appendix B

Preliminary Estimate of Cost
REGIONAL PATH STUDY, Phase 1
 Bay, Midland & Saginaw Counties

Item No.	Estimated Quantity	Unit	Description	Unit Price	Amount
SAGINAW COUNTY to BAY COUNTY					
Preferred Route:					
1.	1.0	Lump Sum	Acquisition of abandoned RR ROW	\$350,000.00	\$350,000.00
2.	7.9	Miles	RR row, Bay City path to Zilwaukee path	\$300,000.00	\$2,370,000.00
				Subtotal	\$2,720,000.00
				Contingencies	\$272,000.00
				Engineering	\$272,000.00
			TOTAL PRELIMINARY ESTIMATE OF COST		\$3,264,000.00

Alternate Routes:

Alternate routes may only encompass a portion of the route to connect from each county and therefore can not be substituted for the entire portion of the preferred route. Please see the map in Appendix A for a complete picture of each alternate route.

3.	1.0	Lump Sum	Acquisition of Inner-urban ROW	\$250,000.00	\$250,000.00
4.	3.0	Miles	Inner-urban row, Kochville Rd. to Melbourne	\$300,000.00	\$900,000.00
				Subtotal	\$900,000.00
				Contingencies	\$90,000.00
				Engineering	\$90,000.00
			TOTAL PRELIMINARY ESTIMATE OF COST		\$1,080,000.00

Preliminary Estimate of Cost
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Item No.	Estimated Quantity	Unit	Description	Unit Price	Amount
BAY COUNTY to MIDLAND COUNTY					
Preferred Route:					
1.	1.0	Lump Sum	Acquisition of RR ROW	\$500,000.00	\$500,000.00
2.	14.0	Miles	RR ROW (east-west)	\$300,000.00	\$4,200,000.00
			Subtotal		\$4,200,000.00
			Contingencies		\$420,000.00
			Engineering		\$420,000.00
TOTAL PRELIMINARY ESTIMATE OF COST					\$5,040,000.00

Alternate Routes:

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3.	11.7	Miles	Townline 14 Road, Chip to US-10	\$300,000.00	\$3,510,000.00
4.	9.5	Miles	Chip Rd., Townline 14 / 9 mile to State Park	\$300,000.00	\$2,850,000.00
5.	1.0	Lump Sum	Acquisition of CE ROW	\$150,000.00	\$150,000.00
6.	3.0	Miles	CE ROW (N-S), Townline 14 to Patrick / Union	\$300,000.00	\$900,000.00
7.	1.0	Lump Sum	Acquisition of Gase Pipeline/RR ROW	\$350,000.00	\$350,000.00
8.	6.5	Miles	Gas Pipeline, RR ROW to Euclid (M-247)	\$300,000.00	\$1,950,000.00
			Subtotal		\$9,710,000.00
			Contingencies		\$971,000.00
			Engineering		\$971,000.00
TOTAL PRELIMINARY ESTIMATE OF COST					\$11,652,000.00

Preliminary Estimate of Cost
REGIONAL PATH STUDY, Phase 1
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Item No.	Estimated Quantity	Unit	Description	Unit Price	Amount
MIDLAND COUNTY to SAGINAW COUNTY					
Preferred Route:					
1.	1.0	Lump Sum	Acquisition of RR row	\$350,000.00	\$350,000.00
2.	1.0	Lump Sum	Acquisition of CE row	\$150,000.00	\$150,000.00
3.	14.0	Miles	Patrick (at ex. Path) to Kochville Path	\$300,000.00	\$4,200,000.00
			Subtotal		\$4,200,000.00
			Contingencies		\$420,000.00
			Engineering		\$420,000.00
TOTAL PRELIMINARY ESTIMATE OF COST					\$5,040,000.00

Alternate Routes:

Alternate routes may only encompass a portion of the route to connect from each county and therefore can not be substituted for the entire portion of the preferred route. Please see the map in Appendix A for a complete picture of each alternate route.

4.	3.0	Miles	Road row along Freeland/River Rd to RR row	\$300,000.00	\$900,000.00
5.	1.5	Miles	Midland Rd row, Tittabaw. Twp Pk -Freeland Rd	\$300,000.00	\$450,000.00
6.	1.0	Lump Sum	Acquisition of CE row	\$150,000.00	\$150,000.00
7.	3.8	Miles	CE row (n-s), ex. path at Patrick to CE row (e-w)	\$300,000.00	\$1,125,000.00
8.	11.0	Miles	CE row (e-w), CE row (n-s) to Bay Road (M-84)	\$300,000.00	\$3,300,000.00
9.	4.0	Miles	Saginaw Rd to Dow, along Gordonville/Poseyville	\$300,000.00	\$1,200,000.00
			Subtotal		\$7,125,000.00
			Contingencies		\$712,500.00
			Engineering		\$712,500.00
TOTAL PRELIMINARY ESTIMATE OF COST					\$8,550,000.00