

2017 Statewide Trails Conference

Active Transportation Track

Friday April 21st, BP Energy Center - Anchorage



Breakout Sessions: (Full Session details below)

- 9:00 AM – 10:15 AM: Where Do I Belong?
Guidance for Multimodal Transportation Networks in Rural Communities
- 10:30 AM – 11:45 AM: Economic and Health Benefits of Trails
- 1:00 PM – 2:15 PM: Heart & Sole: Linking Community Health and Walkability
- 2:30 PM – 3:45 PM: Measuring Trail Use and Assessing Trail Conditions

KEYNOTE – FRIDAY APRIL 21ST – 4:00-5:00pm

Trail Oriented Development

- Rory Renfro, Senior Associate, Alta Planning + Design

The numbers don't lie. A University of Minnesota study found that in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area, for every 1,312 feet closer a median-priced home is to an off-street trail, its value increases by \$510.

In 2013, REMAX Realty found that homes near the 33-mile Atlanta BeltLine (a transit and trail loop around the city) were selling within 24 hours whereas before the project began, homes in the same area typically stayed on the market for 60 to 90 days. And, National Association of Realtors surveys concluded that trails consistently rank among the top five amenities in making real estate purchasing decisions.

Trail-oriented development clearly makes economic sense while deriving many other benefits including transportation (more diverse travel options), public health (encouraging physical activity while reducing greenhouse gas emissions), tourism, community branding, and attracting those on a low- or no-car diet.

But trail-oriented development doesn't "just happen." This keynote session will discuss the key ingredients needed to transform an active transportation-oriented vision into reality. From higher-level regional planning and multi-jurisdictional consensus building, to detailed bicycle/pedestrian network design and land use connections, all links in the chain must seamlessly work together to keep the wheel moving. The conversation will showcase successful TODs throughout North America, describe lessons learned in planning and implementation, and provide concrete evidence to help make the case for trail-oriented development.

Breakout Session – Friday, April 21st, 9:00 AM – 10:15 AM

Title: *Where Do I Belong? Guidance for Multimodal Transportation Networks in Rural Communities*

Presenters: *Nathan P. Belz, Ph.D. - Assistant Professor, University of Alaska Fairbanks*
Fred Young, Principal, Alta Planning + Design

Description: When an individual does not own or operate a personal automobile, loses or lacks the need for a driver's license, or is affected by certain environmental constraints, travel using less-conventional modes of transportation becomes a necessity. All-terrain vehicles, snow machines, and dogsleds are often the only travel option and fulfill basic mobility needs for many communities in Alaska. However, the nature of travel on roads and trails then becomes highly mixed and places varying modes of travel that have disparate capabilities and performance in close proximity to each other. Presented here are results from a transportation survey administered by the University of Alaska Fairbanks in 2016 on travel behavior and safety perceptions of users in these mixed-use environments.

With the release of a new publication by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks (STAR) Guide focuses on design guidelines that aim to improve bicycling and walking in communities seeking solutions more tailored to their small town needs. This session will provide a first look into this idea book for smaller communities, with visualizations and guidance for contemporary walking and biking facilities. Based in FHWA and AASHTO guidance, the STAR guide applies a flexible design approach to creating more comfortable places for walking and biking. In addition to a preview of this guide, this session will include real world examples of work.

Breakout Session – Friday, April 21st, 10:30 AM – 11:45 AM

Title: *Economic and Health Benefits of Trails*

Presenter: *Fred Young – Principal, ALTA Planning + Design*
Maya Kocian – Senior Economist and Program Director, Earth Economics
Don Kostelec – Senior Associate, ALTA Planning + Design

Description: Earth Economics has extensive experience assessing the economic contribution of outdoor recreation and ecosystem services to human well-being at state and local levels. This value can be immense: in 2014, \$21.6 billion was spent on trips and equipment in Washington state, and employed nearly 200,000. Moreover, every dollar spent by out-of-state visitors creates \$1.36 in economic activity, as that income is spent and re-spent by companies and employees. Outdoor recreation is one of the most-effective means of moving income and employment from urban to rural areas.

Alta Planning + Design uses sound, defensible methodology to determine the quantitative economic and health benefits for trails. This presentation will show examples from completed projects and provide a summary of how this type of analysis has been used to win support and funding for trail projects.

Breakout Sessions – Friday, April 21st, 1:00 PM – 2:15 PM

Title: Heart & Sole: Linking Community Health and Walkability

Presenter: Jessica Smith – Planner, Mat-Su Borough

Don Kostelec – Senior Planning Associate, ALTA Planning + Design

Terry Snyder – AARP Alaska

Description: Walking is not alternative transportation. It is original transportation. The automotive age has been in existence for less than a century but has greatly impacted how we plan for, design and build our transportation networks. In some places designing exclusively for the automobile has greatly compromised the basic needs for people who walk. How do we get back to original transportation and improve public health at the same time? This session will address how agencies such as AARP, the Mat-Su Borough, and walkability experts are evaluating quality of life, health, and the needs of people through the lens of walkability. AARP Alaska's Terry Snyder will kickoff the session by highlighting AARP's Livable Communities efforts and how trails relate to these livability goals. Don Kostelec of Alta Planning + Design will lead an interactive exercise with participants on the technical specification of the human being and what it means to design for those unique needs. The Mat-Su Borough's Jessica Smith will then address how the Borough is tying these two themes together with its upcoming walkability training and walk audits. The session will conclude with a facilitated discussion among participants on what this means for their communities and how they can tie their trails efforts to broader themes of walkability.

Breakout Sessions – Friday, April 21st, 2:30 PM – 3:45 PM

Title: Measuring Trail Use and Assessing Trail Conditions

Presenters: Paul Twardock – Professor, Alaska Pacific University

Fred Young – Principal, ALTA Planning + Design

Tim Jacques – Alaska Pacific University

Description: This session focuses on examples of inventorying trail conditions and trail use. Topics include measuring trail conditions in the context of design planning, crowdsource trail use measurement, and specific examples of changes in trail properties over six years, and a study of recreational use at Kincaid Park, Anchorage, Alaska.

Fred Young will discuss techniques for inventorying trail conditions that allows data collection in the field to be seamlessly integrated with the wide range of ArcGIS online and desktop tools. He will show examples from a city-wide trail master plan as well as a mountain bike trail network planning project. Fred will also discuss how inventory and trail count data can be used to prioritize projects in a trail network.

Professor Paul Twardock will discuss the Alaska Recreational Use Database, an online shared database aiming to collect trail use data. He will also share results of how one segment of the Kincaid Park single track mountain bike trails have changed since 2010.

Tim Jacques, an APU Outdoor Studies senior, will share the results of his senior project "A Study of Recreational use at Kincaid Park, Anchorage, Alaska."

