

Friends Of The Border To Border Trail

Summer 2013 Newsletter

www.bordertoborder.org

“Timeline” Disclaimer – Please note that dates of construction are often mentioned in the news items below. It should be taken in account that these dates often change due to design changes, construction delays and other situations.

Dexter Border To Border Trail Update

In February 2013 work began on a Border To Border Trail segment between Dexter’s Warrior Park (just west of downtown) and Hudson Mills Metropark. This link goes through areas of wetland meaning that wooden boardwalks will make up sections of the path. Construction is expected to be completed by the end of summer/early fall at which time you will be able to ride all the way from Dexter to Hudson Mills Metropark using the new trail on the west side of the Huron River up to Territorial Road, then east into the main part of the park.

At the east side of Dexter, the Border To Border Trail is missing a small (1/8 mile) segment to connect the Village to Dexter-Huron Metropark with construction on this gap hoped for by the end of summer.

A few photos from late July of the construction on the Hudson Mills segment are below.



Ypsilanti Segment

The City of Ypsilanti has two B to B projects in the works, both funded in large part by the State of Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Trust Fund grants with major assistance from the Washtenaw County Parks & Recreation Commission and the Ypsilanti Downtown Development Authority.

The first project is a new bridge from Riverside Park south to the eastern end of the Michigan Avenue bridge across the Huron River. There then would be a surface crossing of Michigan Avenue with Trail users aided in their crossing with signaling.

The second Ypsilanti project is a permanent, hard-surfaced Border To Border Trail segment along the north shore of the Huron River from Michigan Avenue south to Grove Road. This permanent trail would replace an existing temporary trail that exists now. Besides being a recreational and non-motorized transportation improvement, this Trail segment could also make the Water Street development area more attractive to developers. For a map of the proposed trail, [click here](#).

Construction on the Ypsilanti B to B bridge is expected to begin in the late summer/fall of 2013 and completed in 2014. The Water Street segment is expected to be constructed in 2014. The DNR Land Trust grant funds come from oil and gas leases on state-owned land in Michigan and by law can only be used for recreational projects and land acquisitions. For more on the program visit http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,1607,7-153-39002_16791-39513--,00.html.

Argo Dam B to B Segment Done

The new routing for the Border To Border Trail along the Argo Dam mill race in Ann Arbor is complete and a vast improvement the old “trail” there, which was unpaved and very narrow. For a map of the mill race improvement area, [click here](#). It should be also noted that a number of new B to B directional signs have been placed in the Argo and Bandemeer Park area as in the past this was a very confusing area to navigate through.

Ann Arbor B to B Improvements

The Border To Border Trail from Maiden Lane east into Riverside Park in Ann Arbor is in rather poor shape, as well as hard to tell where the Trail ends and Wall Street begins. This Trail section

(about 200 feet long) had been planned for repaving but now has been postponed until spring 2014 as DTE plans to do some underground utility work in the area and it would not make sense to repave and then have it torn up again.

In Gallup Park, the B to B “spur” path is going to be separated from the service drive at the entry at Gallup and Fuller to the livery building to increase safety and to make it barrier free. That also is not very long, but should have a positive impact on pedestrians and bicyclists for safety and accessibility.

Also, both the Friends of the Border To Border Trail and the Washtenaw Bicycling & Walking Coalition (www.wbwc.org) continue to push for other improvements on the Trail in Ann Arbor, such as a new off-road segment near the University of Michigan Hospital and a western extension from Bandemeer Park. To this extent, WBWC Board member Larry Deck will be addressing the Ann Arbor Park Advisory Commission on Tuesday, August 20th, 4pm at the Ann Arbor City Hall 2nd floor City Council chambers (the meeting is open to the public).

Ypsilanti Township B To B Reconstruction

Earlier in 2013 it was announced that Ypsilanti Township received a \$763,000 grant from the new federal Transportation Alternatives Program being distributed by the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments. The grant will fund reconstruction of a portion of the current off-road Grove Road Border To Border Trail as well as new construction. If officials are able to gain the necessary easements from nearby property owners, the current Grove Road trail from Georgina Street to Woodale Avenue will be widened to 10 feet, which is required by the grant. Most of the trail is currently between 4 and 8 feet wide.

During design work for this section of the B to B, was learned that in order to have the off-road path be 10 feet wide, it was necessary to revamp the project. The new design will incorporate the crossing of Grove Road and utilize the sidewalks on the north side of Grove as it is impossible to get 10' paths where the path runs up along Ford Lake in certain sections. The Grove Road B to B repaving project was re-applied/ appropriated by the Washtenaw County Road Commission for construction to start in 2014.

Michigan “Support Trails” License Plate?

Maybe you have seen them in traveling through other states, license plates with a “support trails” message that people purchase with a part of the proceeds going to a states trail development program.

Here in Michigan, a resolution was introduced earlier this year in the State Senate establishing a “support trails” auto license plate. The legislation, know as Senate Bill 555, would create a “Michigan Trails and Greenways” license plate. The legislation was approved by the Senate Committee on Transportation and now is waiting action by the full Michigan Senate (for updates, click on this link - [SB 555](#)).

It is a little known fact that Michigan is first in the nation for the number of miles of rail-trails. When combined with other linear multi-use trails, Michigan has well over 3,000 miles. However, despite the number of miles, Michigan has much work to do to continue to connect trails together and incorporate the types of improvements, which make them inviting and user-friendlier.

In addition to the dedicated license plate, SB 555 would create a Michigan Trails and Greenways Fund within the Michigan Department of Treasury to receive specialty license plate revenue from the Secretary of State. From there, the State Treasurer would provide Michigan Trails and Greenways Alliance the funding on a quarterly basis to further trail work in a variety of ways, including awarding small grants to communities for local trail projects.

The Michigan Trails and Greenways license plate would generate awareness of the vast trails network that our state has to offer and provides a much needed source of revenue to continue the mission of developing an interconnected network of trails and greenways across our state

Michigan Trails & Greenway Alliance Membership Donation

A sincere thanks goes out to Jan Stegemann who for the past few years has been renewing the membership of the Friends of the Border To Border Trail in the Michigan Trails and Greenway Alliance. The Alliance is dedicated to adding, improving and promoting non-motorized trails in Michigan and has offices in Lansing and Detroit. For more information on the Alliance, including information about trails you can use, visit <http://www.michigantrails.org>.

Wayne County Connection

Plans are for the Washtenaw County Border To Border Trail to “end” (or begin) at Rawsonville Road at the eastern County border, very near the intersection of Rawsonville and Textile Roads. At that intersection, Wayne County’s Huron River Drive continues east along the south side of Ford Lake and the Huron River for approximately six miles where at Haggerty Road and Huron River Drive is the north entrance for Lower Huron Metropark.

Over the years, low-level conversations have been held with officials in Belleville and Van Buren Township to make the Washtenaw County to Lower Huron Metropark link along Huron River Drive more bike-friendly. While most of this segment currently has wider shoulders (with the exception of Belleville), dedicated bike lanes, and better yet, an off-road non-motorized trail, would be great.

Quite frankly, the main reason that no real work has been done to make Wayne County’s Huron River Drive more non-motorized friendly is a lack of “boosters” (i.e. volunteers, especially from Belleville/Van Buren Township) willing to help work on this project. If you would like to see Wayne County’s Huron River Drive have bike lanes/paths and would like to help out with this project (an hour or two a month), please contact Bob Krzewinski at wolverbob@gmail.com.

Interested In Becoming A Board Member?

One goal of the Friends of the Border To Border Trail is to become on Federal 501(c)3 non-profit group. To do so, one requirement is for a group to have a Board of Directors as well as by-laws. If in the future you might be interested in becoming a Friends of The Border To Border Trail Board member, please contact Bob Krzewinski at wolverbob@gmail.com. Duties would be to attend quarterly Board meetings and a general desire to see the Border To Border Trail completed and enhanced.

Please “Like” Us On Facebook

The Friends of the Border To Border Trail has a page on Facebook and it would be appreciated if individuals could not only “Like” us, but also encourage others to do the same. To visit the Facebook Friends page, [click here](#).

Join The Friends of the Border To Border Trail Discussion Group

If you want to sign up for the Friends of the Border To Border Trail email discussion group, visit <http://groups.google.com/group/border-to-border>. Please note that to keep out spammers, we ask one question before you can be on the list, that being what Michigan County the Trail is in.

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