



Friends Of The Border To Border Trail

Summer 2016 Newsletter

www.bordertoborder.org

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"Timeline" Disclaimer – Please note that dates of construction are often mentioned in the news items below. These dates often change due to design changes, construction delays and other situations.

Friends Of The Border To Border Trail Now A 501c3 Non-Profit Group

Word was received from the Internal Revenue Service in mid-April that the Friends of the Border To Border Trail is now a federal 501c3 tax-exempt non-profit organization. This means that all membership dues and donations to the Friends are now tax deductible. A big thank you to the Friends of the B2B Treasurer Tom Leone for his work to make this happen.

Gallup Park Border To Border Trail Section Closed For Reconstruction



On Tuesday, July 5, a one-mile portion of the Border-to-Border (B2B) trail, between the Geddes Dam and Gallup Park picnic shelter areas, was closed for reconstruction. This section of the B2B trail will be completely closed to park visitors during the entire duration of the project, which is expected to be completed by the end of September.

As far as a detour between Ann Arbor & Ypsilanti during the closure, the City of Ann Arbor in the full press release about the closure (<http://www.a2gov.org/news/pages/article.aspx?i=274>) recommends coming from Ypsilanti, at the Dixboro Road bridge, "to continue north on Dixboro, west on Geddes, north on Earhart and west on Glacier Way." For a Google map of this

alternative visit <http://www.gmap-pedometer.com/?r=6900113>. It should be noted that there are non-motorized paths on the west side of Dixboro Road and south side of Geddes Road (from Dixboro west to the Geddes/Earhart traffic circle).

Friends Of The B2B Endorses Road Commission Road & Non-Motorized Proposed Millage

In early July, the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners placed on the November ball a proposal by the Washtenaw County Road Commission for a four-year tax millage in the County that would not only fund road repairs, but also fund non-motorized projects. Specifically, 20% of the funds collected would be forwarded to the Washtenaw County Parks & Recreation Commission (estimated to be \$1.5 million per year) to fund improvements to County-wide non-motorized path improvements such as the Border To Border Trail, bike lanes and a second round of the County Parks Connecting Communities program (<http://tinyurl.com/hhh9dcu>).

The drive for this road/non-motorized millage issue was started by the Washtenaw County Road Commission after the Michigan state legislature came up with a road funding plan that will not be fully funded (on paper, that is) until 2022. The average cost of the millage would be \$35 per year for homeowners.

In early April, the Friends of the B2B Board of Directors voted unanimously to support the Road Commission ballot issue, approving this resolution which was forwarded to the Road Commission...

Whereas, the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners is considering placing a four year, .5 mil ballot question before the voters to perform needed road maintenance and repairs in 2017-20; and

Whereas, revenue generated by this ballot issue is needed as funds provided by the State of Michigan to the Washtenaw County Road Commission have fallen short of those needed in the County; and

Whereas, 20% of the funds collected from the ballot issue would be forwarded to the Washtenaw County Parks & Recreation Commission (estimated to be \$1.5 million per year) to fund improvements to County-wide non-motorized path improvements such as the Border To Border Trail, bike lanes and the Connecting Communities program.

Therefore Be It Resolved that the Friends of the Border To Border Trail supports the Washtenaw County Road Commission's placing a four-year .5 mil ballot question before the voters; and

Be It Further Resolved that the Friends of the Border To Border Trail urges voters, especially pedestrians, the disabled and bicyclists, to vote in favor of the proposed road millage ballot question proposal.

To view the Road Commission press release on the road millage, visit <http://www.wcroads.org/article/four-year-road-non-motorized-path-millage-appear-november-8-ballot>. For a Road Commission Funding Solution Fact Sheet visit

http://wcroads.org/sites/default/files/Washtenaw%20Road%20Funding%20Solution%20Fact%20Sheet_7.14.pdf. Updates on this issue will also be placed on the Friends of the B2B web and Facebook pages.

No More Kalamazoo's – LMB Pushes For Safe Cyclist Legislation (And A Way For You To Help)

While the long term goal is to have the Border To Border Trail completely off road for it's entire length, such an achievement is still years away. Until that time, much of the B2B is routed on area roads meaning cyclist interactions with motorists. With that in mind, along with the June tragedy near Kalamazoo where five cyclists were killed, there is a continuing urgency in Michigan for legislation protecting cyclists. The following is a letter from the League of Michigan Bicyclists (www.lmb.org) that focuses on cyclist legislation and a simple way for individuals to show that support...

On Tuesday, June 7, 2016, an inexplicable tragedy struck the Kalamazoo region. An out-of-control driver horrifically mowed down nine experienced bicyclists. This senseless tragedy struck a chord of heartbreak, devastation, and anger that has spread across Michigan and the entire country. The cycling community is grieving for the families and friends of the victims. At the same time, we are calling for immediate action. Bicycle injuries and fatalities are far too common in our state, and while no law can prevent someone from willfully causing harm to others, it is important to craft policies that protect public safety.

Michigan lags behind other states in protecting bicyclists, pedestrians, and wheelchair users and is one of only eleven states without a law specifically requiring motorists to pass bicyclists safely. In 2014 bicycle fatalities in Michigan increased 57%. Sadly, 2015 is looking to be even more tragic. In the wake of the horrific events in Kalamazoo, and on behalf of all the bicyclists and pedestrians who have lost their lives needlessly, Michigan CAN and MUST do better at protecting our most vulnerable roadway users.

Please [join bicyclists throughout Michigan urging their legislators and Governor to fast track legislation](#) that will provide enhanced legal protection for vulnerable road users including bicyclists, pedestrians, and wheelchair users. We are asking for a 5-foot passing law and vulnerable roadway user protections that ensure drivers who injure or kill bicyclists and pedestrians are held accountable.

We have a very narrow window of opportunity to advance these bills this fall when the legislature returns from summer recess, so it's essential that we all take action and rally additional support. In tragedy emerges opportunity. This is our opportunity to create significant progress for bicycling in Michigan. These bills are an important first step.

Add your name to the action alert by clicking <http://bikeleague.org/TakeAction?vsrc=/campaigns/46978/respond>

John Lindenmayer, League of Michigan Bicyclists Executive Director
www.LMB.org, <https://twitter.com/#%21/MIbicyclists>, <https://www.facebook.com/LeagueofMichiganBicyclists>

Friends Of The B2B Trail Awards Completion Grant To The City Of Ypsilanti

When the new Ypsilanti Water Street area B2B segment was constructed in 2015 near Grove Road, left out was a curb cut (ramp) to that road (the new trail ended at the sidewalk parallel to Grove Road). In June 2016, the City of Ypsilanti, with the aid of a \$750 grant from the Friends Of The Border To Border Trail, installed a curb cut so bikes don't have to jump the curb transitioning from the Trail to Grove Road. Below are "before" and "after" photos. As noted elsewhere in this newsletter, as of late July the City was securing funds for contamination remediation work with a goal of officially re-opening the Water Street B2B segment during October.



WBWC Pushes For B2B And Campus-To-Campus Projects

The Washtenaw Bicycling and Walking Coalition is proposing the construction in Ann Arbor of the Campus-to-Campus (C2C) Bikeway and the filling of two gaps in the Border-to-Border (B2B) Trail, together with short adjoining connector trails. Most of these B2B segments have long been in the City Of Ann Arbor's Non-motorized Transportation Plan and Parks & Recreation Open Space Plan. These plans recognize the trail's benefits for health, sustainability, safety, park accessibility, non-motorized travel, and quality of life. The C2C Bikeway will use parts of the B2B system and a short cycle track to create a needed way to bike safely and efficiently between the U-M North Campus and Central Campus. For more on the WBWC Ann Arbor Campus-to-Campus Bikeway & Border-to-Border Trail projects please visit the WBWC web page at www.wbwc.org or a direct link to the story at <http://tinyurl.com/hp9rspg>.

Hudson Mills B2B Northern Extension

The Huron Clinton Metropark Authority, Washtenaw County Parks & Recreation Commission and government officials from Livingston County are continuing coordination efforts to construct a non-motorized pathway from the north end of Hudson Mills Metropark to the east-west Lakeland Trail. Two possible options are being explored with research taking in account costs, rights-of-way and other factors.

Dexter To Ann Arbor B2B Update

The Washtenaw County Parks & Recreation Commission has approved a master plan for this segment (a big "thank you" to those who gave input at public meetings and online!) and is now concentrating on engineering studies and construction planning for a one-mile segment from Dexter-Huron Metropark east to roughly Zeeb Road. The Commission has also been awarded a State of Michigan Iron Belle Trail (<http://tinyurl.com/hakxsw8>) grant of \$30,000 for trail planning on the Dexter to Ann Arbor segment with the Commission also having applied for a federal Transportation Alternatives Program grant and a State of Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grant.

Ypsilanti Area B2B Updates

- Michigan Avenue Trail Crossing – The contract for construction of this project has been approved by the Michigan Department of Transportation and plans are now to have this signaled (red light) crossing of Michigan Avenue completed by late summer or early fall of 2016. Once completed, the crossing will safely connect the new Riverside Park bridge over the Huron River to the new Water Street B2B segment using a **High-Intensity Activated crossWalk** beacon (HAWK). The crossing completion will also allow for an official off-road B2B routing through Water Street, Riverside Park and Frog Island. For a short video on how HAWK lights function, visit https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/89/HAWK_Optimized.gif.

- Water Street Trail Closure – On April 8th the City of Ypsilanti announced that the “B2B segment located on the Water Street Redevelopment Project is temporarily closed, effective immediately. The City is taking precautionary measures because of preliminary environmental test results received today. The new test results indicate an elevated level of PCBs (Polychlorinated Biphenyls) in locations near the trail site. Although PCBs are not a direct danger to humans and pets by occasional contact, long-term and prolonged contact can have harmful effects. The City is taking proactive measures to protect the health and safety of our residents and needs additional time to complete the full study, assess the level of risk, and create an appropriate containment and remediation plan to provide a safe recreational trail for the community. More information will be shared when it becomes available.” As of late July the City was securing funds for remediation work with a goal of officially re-opening the Water Street B2B segment during October. The Friends of the B2B will place any new updates about this temporary closure on its web and Facebook pages.
- Ypsilanti B2B Reroute - Effective Monday July 18, 2016, Park Street was closed permanently at the intersection of where the railroad tracks cross the street, north of Michigan Avenue. At the present time the Border To Border Trail uses Park Street as an on-street route.

Effective July 18th the B2B Trail will be rerouted the following ways...

- Northbound – North on Park Street, left (west) on North Street, right (north) on River Street, left (west) on Cross Street
- Southbound – East on Cross Street, right (south) on River Street, left (east) on North Street, right (south) on Park Street.

For a Google map of the reroute visit <http://www.gmap-pedometer.com/?r=6825082>. New B2B signage on this route will be installed soon. The street closings were one of the conditions required by the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) in order to support passenger rail service in Ypsilanti. The cost to the City to perform this work will be covered by a grant from the MDOT rail safety program.

- Ypsilanti B2B Completion - The Friends of the B2B also understands that navigating the B2B through Ypsilanti can be very frustrating and is striving to locate the Trail completely off-road in the City. To this end the Friends of the B2B is continuing to work with the City and the Washtenaw County Parks & Recreation Commission to see the path located off-road, especially for segments from Frog Island Park northwest to Eastern Michigan University and also along Grove Road into Ypsilanti Township.

B2B Trail Directional Pavement Stencils

The Friends Of The B2B plan to start placing B2B pavement markings that will have a “B2B” marking along with a directional arrow informing users to turn or go straight are planned for placement along the Trail starting in late August. These markings will be in addition to B2B directional signs already in place. Such directional symbols are commonly used on large bicycle ride events, such as the Ann Arbor Bicycle Touring Society “One Helluva Ride” and should help navigation where the B2B intersects or runs along roads.

Board Minutes

Just a reminder that to find out even more what is going on with the Friends of the B2B, Board of Directors meeting minutes are posted on the Friends web page at <http://www.bordertoborder.org> under the “Board of Directors” link at the top of the page. Board meetings are held bi-monthly in rotating meeting locations along the B2B route.

Friends Of The B2B Outreach

In 2016, the Friends of the B2B Trail intend to have a number of outreach efforts to inform the public about the Trail and gather public input on what improvements are needed. Besides having an information table at Washtenaw Community College’s Earth Day Festival on April 7th, the Friends were also at the Ann Arbor Green Fair in June where volunteers were non-stop busy talking “Trail” and answering questions. Look for future Friends of the B2B outreach information tables in September and October at Dexter’s Warrior Creek Park, Argo Cascades in Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti’s Water Street area.

Bike Map Reprint

The 2015 revision of the Washtenaw County (which shows the Border To Border Trail route) has been a huge success with the initial printing of 5000 almost depleted. A second printing is being planned for the mid to late summer with updates to the map being done before the print run. In the meantime, the map is also available online at this link to the City of Ann Arbor's bicycling web page - <http://tinyurl.com/zsjn8sn>

Border To Border Trail Bike Rides

The Ann Arbor Bicycle Touring Society (www.aabts.org) holds throughout the year bicycle rides taking in the B2B Trail. The rides are free and you do not need to be a club member to take part. Riders, however, are required to wear a helmet, obey all traffic regulations and for night rides, have a working front and rear light. Upcoming rides include...

August 18th and September 15th - Moonshadow Ride

Celebrate the almost full moon with a car free ride along the Huron, on the Border to Border trail from Dexter's Mill Creek Park to Hudson Mills Metropark. 10-15 mile ride leaving at 9pm. Meet at the parking lot behind the fire station at Mill Creek Park in Dexter (<https://goo.gl/maps/n6fEUbhjV7s>). For more information contact Jim & Jennifer Bryson at 734-424-2802.

September 18th - Border to Border Ride

Ride the newest segments of the Border to Border Trail, created for the protection and enjoyment of the Huron River Greenway. 20-25 mile ride with some road riding. Meet at 10am at Dexter Mill Creek Park (<https://goo.gl/maps/n6fEUbhjV7s>). For more information contact Terri Keppler at 734-645-5696 or tlk1972@gmail.com.

Become A Friends Of The B2B Trail Member

Individuals, families, organizations and businesses now can support the Friends of the Border To Border Trail by becoming a member. Memberships begin at \$10/year for individual memberships (\$25 for a family membership) with those joining receiving discounts at select area bike and outdoor activity merchants. In addition, the Friends are a federal 501c3 group so all memberships/donations are tax-deductible. Members can also nominate and vote for the Friends of the B2B Trail Board of Directors every November. For more membership information, including a list of merchants offering discounts to Friends members, visit www.bordertoborder.org and click on the "Join" link at the top of the page.

Quick Updates...

- Dexter-Huron Metropark To Dexter Segment – Paving of this very short segment from the west end of the Dexter-Huron Metropark path to Central Avenue in Dexter (about 2/10's of a mile) was completed this spring and is now open. Signage using Dexter streets between where the B2B intercepts Central Avenue and the B2B Trail in Dexter's Mill Creek Park should be in place by late August.
- Dixboro Shared Use Pathway – In late July, the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments announced that it awarded a Federal Transportation Alternatives Program (www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation_alternatives/) funding grant of \$726,229 to the Dixboro Road Shared Use Pathway. Construction of this north-south hard surface trail starting from Parker Mill County Park (on Geddes Road just east of US 23) and going to the University of Michigan Matthaei Botanical Gardens is on track for construction to start in early 2017. Through existing non-motorized path connections, this new path would connect to the B2B Trail.

Volunteers Needed For Adopt-A-Trail Segments

A big "thank you" to the volunteers who have signed on to "adopt" an off-road segment of the Border To Border Trail! All off-road segments of the B2B are "adopted" through the end of 2016.

These volunteers routinely (2-4 times a month) check "their" segment and perform such duties as...

- Picking up trash (although for the most part, the B to B stays remarkably trash-free).
- Reporting serious problems (potholes, major downed branches, missing direction signs, etc.).
- During the "green" months, trimming back (with hand-tools) vegetation tending to obstruct the trail.

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](#). The Friends B2B Facebook page is updated weekly with news about the Trail.

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: what Michigan County the Trail is in.

Friends of the Border To Border Trail

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