

Dear Friends:

I recently attended **TrailLink 2007**, a conference hosted by Rails to Trails Conservancy (RTC). For those of you who may not know about Rails to Trails, it is a nonprofit organization working with communities to preserve unused rail corridors by transforming them into trails. These efforts enhance the health of America's environment, economy, neighborhoods, and people.

TrailLink 2007 was a key first step toward advancing communities as leaders in the 2010 Campaign for Active Transportation. The conference was designed to empower local proponents to elevate active transportation in their communities and to engage policy-makers in supporting their efforts.

TrailLink 2007 brought experts on mobility, public health, economic development, climate, mobility, and community benefits of biking and walking together for initial strategic planning. Cutting edge research and experiences were shared in order to shape strategies for advancing the active transportation movement in preparation for the next transportation enhancement funding reauthorization in 2009.

The following statistics and sound bites from the conference have been compiled to provide each of you with the latest information available to support capacity building and to provide examples of success stories that can be shared with your community leaders and decision makers. Only through education and awareness can we provide the tools necessary to modify the built environment in ways that will make our citizenry healthier – economically, environmentally, and physically.

Use these bits of information as you see fit. Those of us with a lifetime involvement with trails development see how much the last 20 years have changed the perception of the importance of trails. Our collective good works have created success stories necessary to fuel changes in policy and leadership that will provide the resources necessary to make permanent changes in the way Americans live for the next 100 years.

I left the conference armed with a new sound bite. . . . **Burn calories, not carbon.** I, for one, am doing just that.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Terry Eastin".

Terry Eastin
Executive Director, Mississippi River Trail, Inc.
Co-Chair, 2008 National Trails Symposium
Little Rock, Arkansas

MAKE YOUR CASE
QUOTES AND SOUND BITES

Economic • Environmental • Health

Benefits
of
Trails & Greenways

from

TrailLink 2007

2010 Campaign for Active Transportation Kick-Off
Portland Oregon
August 2007

ECONOMIC IMPACTS

- ◆ Community leaders and planners, buoyed by sophisticated new economic studies, have once again begun to use greenways, urban parks and trails as economic engines for community revitalization (MetroGreen: Connecting Open Space in North America (2006))
- ◆ In Dallas, developers report that there is a 25% premium on properties adjacent to the Katy Trail (*Dallas Morning News*, 2006)
- ◆ In Austin, property values associated with a single greenway were estimated to result in \$13.64 million of new property tax revenue. (Neil and Crompton, 2005)
- ◆ A 2003 study found that the amenity value of trails was associated with over \$140 million dollars in increase property values in Indianapolis. (Lindsey et al, 2003)
- ◆ Developers in Shepherd's Vineyard housing development in Apex, North Carolina added \$5,000 to the price of 40 homes adjacent to the regional greenway. Those homes were the first to sell. (Hopey, 1999)
- ◆ Trails are the No. 1 amenity potential homeowners cite when asked what they would like to see in a new community, ahead of public parks and outdoor pools. Trails were cited by 57 percent of prospective buyers in a 2004 survey by the association. (National Association of Home Builders)
- ◆ In 1999, 2 million bicycle tourists spent an estimated \$36.3 million – the equivalent of 1,200 full-time jobs is attributed to bicycle tourism.
- ◆ In September 2006, U.S. Steel announced that the cost of healthcare for its workers exceeded the cost of raw materials to make steel.
- ◆ Over the last decade, community leaders and planners, have begun to use greenways, urban parks and trails as economic engines for community revitalization. Trails shape urban growth, contribute to critical environmental values, and create economic development and neighborhood revitalization. (MetroGreen: Connecting Open Space in North America (2006))

HEALTH IMPACTS

- ◆ Nearly two-thirds of the American population is overweight or obese. Today, there are nearly twice as many overweight children and almost three times as many overweight adolescents as there were in 1980 (Active Living Network, 2000)
- ◆ **Every year, nearly 400,000 people die from conditions associated with overweight and inactive lifestyles.** Deaths from obesity-related illness will soon eclipse tobacco as the No. 1 preventable cause of death. (Dolesh 2004)
- ◆ Fifty-five percent of Americans would like to walk more during the day for both transportation needs and exercise. Sixty-three percent would like to walk more to do errands (STPP (Surface Transportation Policy Partnership) 2003a)
- ◆ The U.S. Surgeon General estimates that the economic costs associated with obesity reached \$117 billion in 2000. (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 2001)
- ◆ According to the trends for overweight and obese Americans, the current generation of youth is the first that's predicted not to outlive their parents. (National Institute on Aging 2005)
- ◆ According to the CDC-funded study, trails can be beneficial in promoting physical activity among those groups traditionally at highest risk for inactivity, especially women and individuals in lower socioeconomic groups (Brownson et. al, 2000)
- ◆ In the age of expensive indoor gyms and health clubs, trails and greenways offer cost – effective places to exercise.
- ◆ They physical environment has a substantial impact on the activity level of communities. (Active Living Network, 2007)
- ◆ Trails connect people with places, enabling them to walk or cycle to run errands or commute to work. Trails also provide natural, scenic areas that cause people to actually want to be outside and be physically active.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

- ◆ In 2003, 27 percent of greenhouse gas emissions in the U.S. were from the transportation sector. Almost two-thirds of transportation emissions are from personal transport – passenger cars, light duty trucks, and motorcycles.
- ◆ Cars are used for 75 percent of all short trips, under one mile. Trips under one mile represent 28% of all trips made in the U.S. Nearly half of all trips in the U.S. are under 3 miles. (Blomberg, et. al, 2004)
- ◆ Transportation is responsible for one-third of U.S. carbon emissions and is the fastest growing source in the U.S. economy. Further, private automobiles are responsible for 62 percent of transportation-related carbon emissions. (EPA 2006)
- ◆ Improving fuel economy and technology of passenger vehicles can significantly help reduce emissions, but, they alone will not provide the 80 percent reduction that scientists claim we need to reach by 2050. (CCAP 2007)
- ◆ Study after study shows we cannot build our way out of congestion with increased road capacity. (STPP 1999).
- ◆ The status quo practice of expanding roadway capacity is a recipe for gridlock. Communities with good walking and biking conditions can expect a five to fifteen percent reduction in overall vehicle miles traveled. (Litman 2007)
- ◆ Current transportation statistics undercount walking and biking trips by focusing almost exclusively on work trips that account for only 15 percent of all trips. (Bureau of Transportation Statistics 2002)
- ◆ Twenty-one to twenty seven percent of local traffic results from parents driving their children to school (Safe Routes to School, 2007)

EXAMPLES OF COMMUNITY SUCCESSES

- ◆ *"In the last 12 months, we've had more tourists than in the last 30 years. Before, there wasn't anything to bring them here."* Jere Wood, Mayor of Rockmart, Georgia (Atlanta-Constitution May 6, 2002). The 37+-mile Silver Comet Trail funnels recreational tourists into the rural town from Atlanta, over 35 miles away.
- ◆ *The revival of the city is driven in part by the trail,"* says Mayor Lee Fiedler (Cumberland, Missouri) *"No one thought people with bikes would spend money, but they were wrong. Business is spreading back from the trail."*
- ◆ A study by the University of Minnesota indicates that walking and biking accomplish 20 percent of all trips in the city. Adding in transit use brings the figure to 28 percent. (University of Minnesota 2007)
- ◆ Portland, Oregon has constructed over 100 miles of bike lanes and pathways since 2001. This and earlier investments infrastructure and programming have resulted in a quintupling of bike miles traveled over the last 15 years (City of Portland, 2005).