

## LANCASTER TRAIL & BIKE WAY COALITION

### Who Are We?

The Lancaster Trail & Bike Way Coalition (LTBC) was formed in 2013 with the mission of enriching the lives of residents by advancing the development, and ensuring the maintenance, of a diverse system of trails and bike ways, all in a manner that protects the ecologically-sensitive environment.

### Our Goals and Core Values

The LTBC seeks trails and bike ways that promote:

- *Accessibility* – an infrastructure of trails and bike ways that are a part of everyday life and accessible to all people of varying abilities, ages and backgrounds
- *Healthy Lifestyles* – improved fitness, health and well-being for all people through trails and bike ways that offer opportunities for physical activity, recreation, rejuvenation and preventative health care
- *Economic Vitality* – a trail system that contributes to the financial strength and attractiveness of the community by enhancing business opportunities, tourism and property values
- *Sustainable Development* – a trail system that offers alternative transportation opportunities, contributes to the health and vitality of the community, and connects people to nature
- *Best Practices* – innovative, sustainable, and technically sound guidelines that are understood and applied by decision makers in the planning, design, development and construction of high-quality trail systems
- *Experiences in the Outdoors* – responsible and enjoyable opportunities that are afforded to all trail users and enthusiasts
- *Appreciation for the Outdoors* – inspiring trail experiences that cultivate an appreciation for our natural and cultural heritage
- *Learning in the Outdoors* – formal and informal educational and interpretive opportunities that promote understanding of our sense of place
- *Connectivity* – trail systems that link natural and cultural resources within the Town and with surrounding communities

This newly-formed group of trails and bike path enthusiasts will develop a town-wide vision and implementation plan for recreational trails and bike paths throughout Lancaster, and to connect these trails and paths in with other community's trail and path systems.

### Our Charter

The following is an initial charter for the Coalition:

- Assemble team to study and plan for trail and bike path systems throughout Lancaster and in the Region.
- Work with the Montachusett Regional Trails Coalition to connect Lancaster's trails and bike paths with other community's trails/paths.
- Work to connect Lancaster's trails and bike paths with open space parcels, conservation areas, recreational areas and wildlife corridors.
- Develop a trails/bike path inventory and update the Lancaster Trails map accordingly.
- Plan for new trails and bike paths and determine methods and funding sources for their creation and maintenance.
- Promote the Lancaster trails and bike path systems throughout the community and region.

The membership of the Coalition includes representatives from:

- Community Development and Planning
- Conservation Commission
- Open Space and Recreation Committee
- Lancaster Land Trust
- Recreation Committee
- Thayer Memorial Park Committee
- Friends of the Cook Conservation Area
- Friends of the Nashua River
- Town Forest Committee
- Board of Health
- Commission on Disability
- Public Works

It became evident that Lancaster's trails are mostly informal trails or paths that have never been officially documented or mapped. It also became clear that there are many different

groups within Lancaster that are currently working on trail creation and maintenance. It would make sense for these individual groups to team together to try and link these trails and provide connectivity to all of the natural resources in this community, including conservation areas, recreation areas, water bodies, and even cultural and historical sites. This trail plan or vision can also encompass trails for different modalities, including walking/hiking, biking, horseback, dirt bikes/ATVs, snowmobiles, showshoeing, skiing, etc. We are looking to connect these trails so that we have a seamless network of trails and bike paths throughout Lancaster and into surrounding towns.

### Our Work Plan

A three-year work plan is in place to act as the “blueprint” for the Coalition’s work. Pieces of the plan include:

- Assemble team to study and plan for trail and bike path systems throughout Lancaster and in the Region.
- Work with the Montachusett Region Trails Coalition to connect Lancaster’s trails and bike paths with other community’s trails/paths.
- Work with the Open Space and Recreation Committee to connect Lancaster’s trails and bike paths with open space parcels, conservation areas, recreational areas and wildlife corridors.
- Develop a trails/bike path inventory and update the Lancaster Trails map accordingly.
- Plan for new trails and bike paths and determine methods and funding sources for their creation and maintenance.
- Promote the Lancaster trails and bike paths throughout the community and region.

### ***In its second year, the LTBC has accomplished the following:***

- Solicited public input for new trails and trail connection routes
- Identified all open space parcels, conservation areas, recreational areas, water bodies, wildlife corridors, cultural sites, historical sites, other points of interest
- Established connection routes between existing trails and these points of interest
- Establish connection routes between Lancaster trails/bike ways and surrounding town’s networks
- Established funding sources for new trail/bike way development

- Continued to develop and attend trail-related events
- Continued to develop trail useful information, such as local and regional trail maps, an LTBC brochure, and updates to our web page
- Commissioned a Complete Streets study to determine the best streets for bike and pedestrian movement, and to recommend street improvements for these routes

### Come Join Us!

We meet the second Wednesday every other month, at 6:30 PM, at the Lancaster Town Hall. If interested in joining, contact Noreen Piazza at [npiazza@lancasterma.net](mailto:npiazza@lancasterma.net) or call 978-365-3326 x1311. Also check our out web page at [www.ci.lancaster.ma.us](http://www.ci.lancaster.ma.us).

***Happy Trails!***