

Staff Update on Working with Trail Groups



Trail Project Approval Process



**Mayor and City Council Work Session
November 14, 2016**

Trail Groups

- ❑ **Muddy Branch Alliance**

Primary focus is to relocate trails to improve the watershed quality



- ❑ **Mid Atlantic Off Road Enthusiasts**

Primary focus is to add trails for connectivity purposes



Collaboration

Key to developing a sustainable trails system throughout the City of Gaithersburg and providing a greater connectivity network



Legacy Trails

- ❑ A trail system connecting communities
- ❑ Formed through natural processes and often unimproved (deer trails)
- ❑ Not the same as the planned Shared-Use path network



Project Submission Process

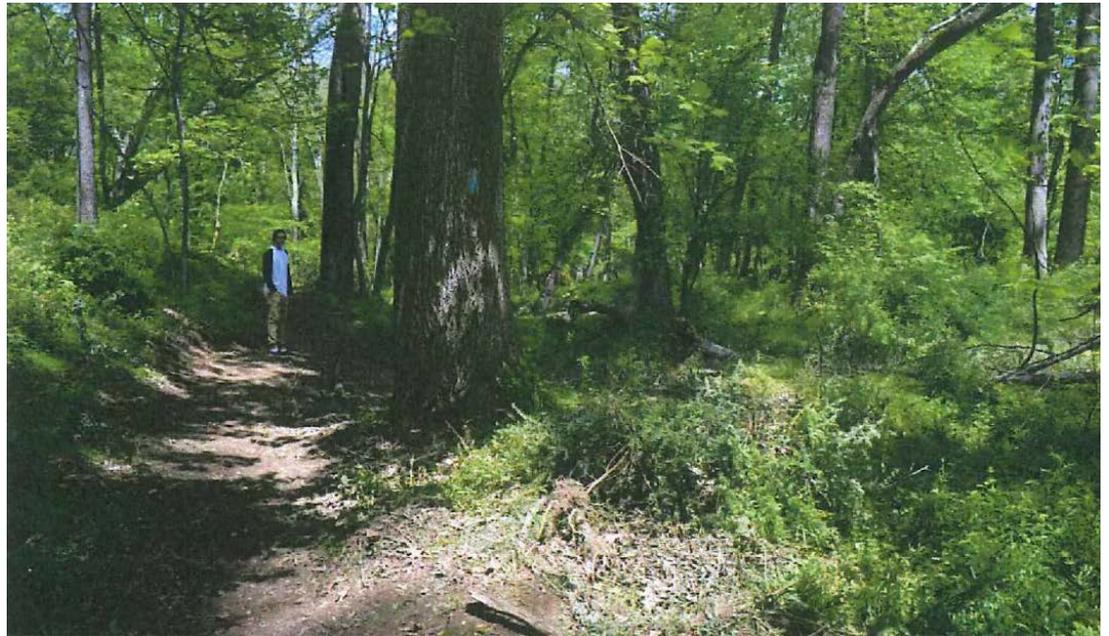
- An internal staff committee will review the request(s). The committee will be comprised of representation from:
 - Planning & Code Administration
 - City Manager's Office
 - Public Works
 - Department of Parks, Recreation and Culture

Project Submission Process

- ❑ The Department of Parks, Recreation and Culture will receive requests
- ❑ Staff proposes an annual project submission deadline of May 15 to allow for the evaluation phase to occur during the growing season in order to observe established floodplains, etc.
- ❑ Final decisions on which projects can proceed will be made each fall to ensure that any necessary funding is included for the upcoming fiscal year budget

Staff Review - Key Considerations

- ❑ Linkage(s)/Trail Connectivity
- ❑ Conservation Area(s)
- ❑ Benefits
- ❑ Impacts
- ❑ Cost/Funding



Staff Review - Key Considerations

Field Assessment will:

- ❑ Allow identification of sensitive natural resources
- ❑ Enable staff to conduct an environmental maintenance assessment
- ❑ Allow the committee to modify the request(s), as needed, by providing guidance to the requestor which incorporates staff recommendations into the final proposal
- ❑ Ensure the final formal proposal is clear in scope and scale, which will result in a successful project

City Oversight/Responsibility

- ❑ Provide guidance on scope/design
- ❑ Provide guidance on invasive plant removal
- ❑ Provide guidance on how to address any back-fill of abandoned trails



City Oversight/Responsibility

- ❑ Provide a list of appropriate tree species, caliper size, and quantity (trees/sq. ft.)
- ❑ Provide guidance on appropriate signage
- ❑ Create a tool kit to assist volunteer organizations



Possible Funding Sources

- ❑ Nonprofit organizations
- ❑ Federal resources – Recreational Trails Program
 - \$84M in 2016
 - Develop and maintain trails and trail-related facilities
- ❑ State grants
- ❑ City’s operating budget



Trail Group Responsibilities

- ❑ Provide adequate application materials
- ❑ Provide Volunteers
- ❑ Supervise Volunteers
- ❑ Coordinate actual construction project with City staff
- ❑ Look for outside funding
- ❑ Commit to helping with maintenance

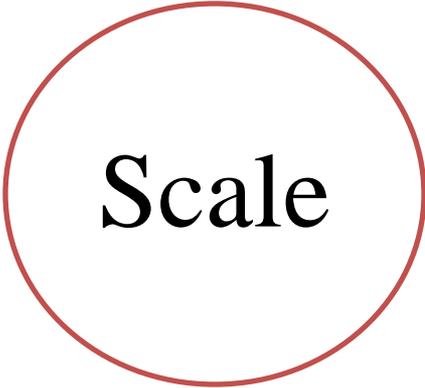


Public Notification Process

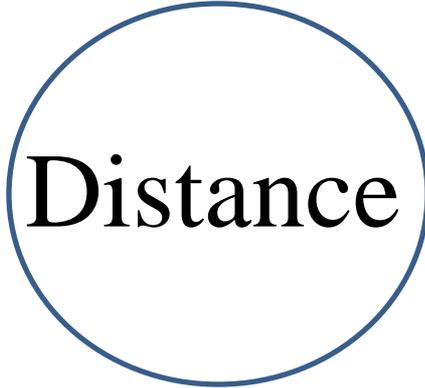
The following items will be considered in determining the appropriate level of public notification and process:



Scope



Scale



Distance

Trail Maintenance

- ❑ Every trail needs minimal maintenance, even a well designed and sustainable trail due to:
 - Natural erosion
 - Litter
 - Fallen trees
 - Flooded creeks



Hartwood Acres Trail Maintenance, Pittsburgh—November 5, 2006

Division of Trail Maintenance Responsibilities for New Trail

City:

- ❑ Major tree removal
- ❑ Addressing major erosion issues if they occur
- ❑ Maintaining permanent sign demarcations



Division of Trail Maintenance Responsibilities for New Trail



Trail Groups:

- ❑ Keeping the trail clear of vegetation, trash, etc.
- ❑ Addressing minor erosion issues
- ❑ Maintaining painted/ribbon sign demarcations

GIS Base Trail Map Database



Impact on City Resources

- ❑ Will require reallocation of staff resources to coordinate and review applications
- ❑ Will require reallocation of staff resources to maintain any new trails constructed
- ❑ Will require budget resources to create a GIS base trail map (special project)
- ❑ Will likely require additional budget resources for some specific projects

Staff Guidance

Should the City move forward with this program?

