

Urban Cooperation Agreements

Case Example

Name: Paint Creek Trail
Location: Oakland County
Population: 1,083,592

Paint Creek Trail consists of 10.5 miles of former Penn Central railroad right-of-way extending from the southern boundary of the Village of Lake Orion through Orion Township, Oakland Township, Rochester, and Rochester Hills to the Oakland-Macomb County line. There is a connection of approximately one mile through Rochester using city bikeway routes. The Penn Central right-of-way was acquired as a public recreational trail in 1983. Funds for acquisition were obtained from the Michigan Land Trust Fund, and from the member communities.

The primary purpose of the Paint Creek Trail is to provide bicyclists, equestrians, hikers, joggers, and cross-country skiers a safe and scenic recreational trail in a highly populated area of southeast Michigan. Local governments have constructed or planned bike paths which will provide access to the trail, the countryside, and outlying recreation areas by residents of local communities. Suburban and intracity bicycle needs can be met by the route. Parking for regional users is already available at each of the state recreation areas.

The Paint Creek Trail links two major regional parks, the Bald Mountain State Recreation area at the north end and the Rochester-Utica State Recreation Area at the south end. If the Paint Creek Trail can be connected to trails in the state recreation areas, the full northwest to southeast extent from west of M-24 in Orion Township to Utica could be approximately 22 miles. A loop trail off the Paint Creek Trail using local bikeways and trails to connect to the northern part of Bald Mountain, Addison Oaks County Park, and Huron Clinton Metropolitan Authority's Stoney Creek Park would add another 8 miles and access to any trails developed within these parks.

The Paint Creek Trail is owned by a Trailways Commission formed under the Urban Cooperation Act, P.A. 7 of 1967. The Commission was established through an intergovernmental Trailways Agreement between the four communities of Rochester Hills, and Oakland and Orion townships. Each of the member communities has two seats on the Trailways Commission; the voting procedures of the Commission provide veto power to each member unit. In addition to owning the trail, the Trailways Commission may:

- Build, maintain, and operate public trails, access sites, and appropriate structures;
- Hire a director and necessary personnel;
- Establish policies or rules governing use of the trail or facilities;
- Recommend local ordinance provisions to member units;
- Apply for state or federal aid to carry out Commission functions.

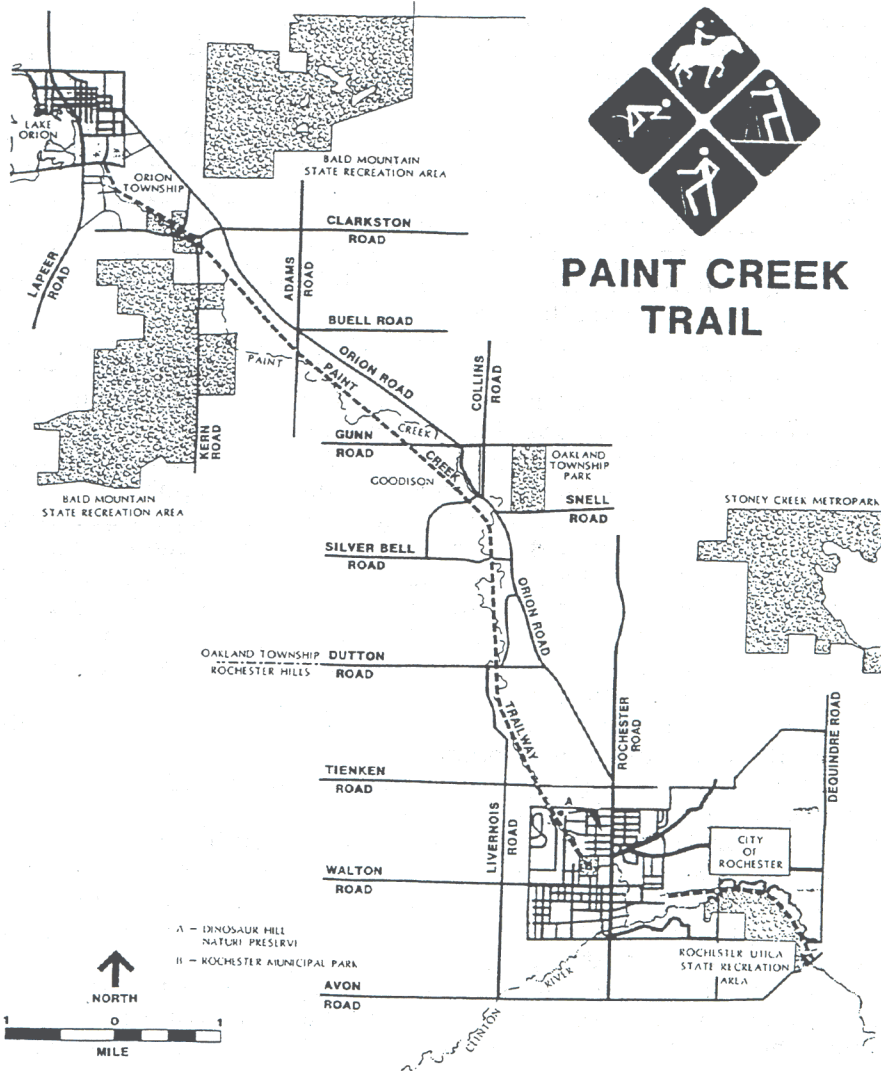
As provided by the Urban Cooperation Act, the Trailways Commission has no power to levy any tax or issue any bonds. The Trailways Agreement requires each member unit to pay a prorated share of the annual operating budget, which covers only costs for meetings, office supplies, and auditing. Local funding for any other purposes, including personnel and development or maintenance costs, may only be obtained through submitting a project budget request to the member units. Attorney services on retainer are currently paid for through a project budget.

In-kind contribution of assistance by municipal staff is made available when requested by the Commission and approved by a member unit. Services by municipal engineers and attorneys have been provided in this fashion. In addition, the part time staff work of a trailways coordinator is provided as an in-kind contribution by Oakland Township. An MSPO Honor Award was presented in 1986 for this effort.

For more information contact:
Peggy Johnson
Clinton River Watershed Council
8215 Hall Rd.
Utica, MI 48087
(313)739-1122



PAINT CREEK TRAIL



Map of Paint Creek Trail showing route from Rochester/Utica State Recreation Area To Lake Orion.
Trail: _____

Source: Paint Creek Trailways Commission