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**GVLT and Gallatin County Partnering on Triangle Area Trail Plan**

Trails move our community safely to work, school, and play. After 30 years, the ambitious vision to connect Main Street to the Mountains in Bozeman is complete. However, the work is not done. Our valley’s rapid growth is reaching beyond the Bozeman city limits, developing west and north toward the neighboring communities of Belgrade and Four Corners. Great trail systems don’t happen by accident and require an inspiring vision, thoughtful planning, community input and a collaborative spirit. Access to trails and the outdoors is consistently listed as a priority for Gallatin Valley residents. Everyone in our growing county deserves the benefits of trails.

The Gallatin Valley Land Trust and Gallatin County are proud to announce a collaborative effort to create a Triangle Area Trail Plan. During the Planning Coordinating Committee’s process to develop and adopt the Triangle Community Plan, it was clear that there were opportunities to expand the connected trail system into the ‘Triangle’ area of Gallatin County to support the plan’s vision. The Triangle is a rapidly developing area that will link the three communities, but has no active guide or requirement for trail development. Without a guide, trails develop in fragments that are challenging, costly or virtually impossible to connect in the future.  Now is the time to prevent a fragmented system and create a vision for a trail system in the Triangle Area.

Imagine, the year is 2040 and development has continued at breakneck pace. How do we want people to move through our community? Where do people want to play? How are kids getting to school? What outdoor spaces bring our community together west of town?  GVLT, Gallatin County and engaged leaders from Belgrade, Bozeman, and Four Corners, hope to create an inspiring and thoughtful 20-year vision for the non-motorized pedestrian and bicycle recreation and transportation infrastructure in the Triangle Area. The plan will serve as an extension of the City of Bozeman Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Trails Plan, and Belgrade’s newly adopted Parks and Trails Master Plan.

Sanderson Stewart, a local engineering firm with extensive knowledge of trails planning and the Triangle Area, will lead this public process. They will start this summer by studying the existing trails, pathways and public spaces in the Triangle Area. This fall, we will look for input from the community to help determine the future of trails and connectivity in the area. Homeowners, landowners, and developers will benefit from a clear and predictable vision for trail, pathway, and linear park system. Visit the website for more information and soon to be posted public engagement opportunities, <http://www.triangletrailplan.com>.

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