



Sidewalk? Hardly?

(July 19, 2012) Recently a comment was made that the Greenway is just a sidewalk. Nothing could be further from the truth!

The Greenway, as we call it, is a pedestrian and bicycle path that is 10 feet wide and built mostly of asphalt. The asphalt construction takes less of a toll on knees and backs for citizens who choose to walk or run on this surface.

Not only can the path be used by pedestrians but it can also be used by those who wish to bike. The City of Gallatin has had a statute in the Municipal Code since 1979 that prevents bicycles from being on sidewalks. This asphalt path gives our children a safe place to ride their bikes. Just this past week I saw a group of young boys riding along the greenway on their bikes obviously headed to our parks. How great to have that freedom to ride without the worry of automobile traffic.

Motorized wheelchairs also can access our trail and ride all the way to our Parks. These folks can accompany their children or grandchildren on an outing or to go to a sporting event in the park.

This bicycle and pedestrian path has a tunnel that runs under Nashville Pike (31E) again to keep citizens from having to cross a very busy highway. This tunnel provides for connectivity of residential areas to our wonderful parks system. There are lights and cameras in the tunnel for the safety of our citizens. The cameras are monitored by the Gallatin Police Department.

This path also has two bridges as part of the trail. One bridge is at Bentley Circle and there is a parking area for citizens to leave their vehicles and access the trail. This bridge is a high water bridge constructed of concrete and steel and allows citizens to cross the creek even when there is a large volume of water. There is a low water bridge where the trail crosses the creek and heads up to Perrolee Street. This bridge has been designed so that water can flow over the concrete and not erode the bridge. Many times I have been on the trail and seen folks of all ages on this bridge watching fish, turtles, and birds in the creek.

The money that is paying for this trail is from a designated fund that can be used only for alternative means of transportation. This money cannot be used to build more roads or other infrastructure. The money is designated for projects that encourage folks to get out of their cars and off their couch. As people get out of their cars, it lessens our dependence on oil. As people get off their couch it improves their lives by making them healthier.

Our City also must meet federal mandates related to storm water runoff. If we don't meet these mandates, we could incur significant monetary penalties. Improvements to Town Creek including the Greenway and other projects count toward meeting these federal mandates and avoiding penalties. The Greenway specifically helps meet the requirement of public education and outreach.

Communities all over America are building trails in their towns and neighborhoods. They are enjoying a safe place to walk, run, or ride a bike. There are even skateboarders and roller bladders taking advantage of these trails. It is no wonder our citizens ranked these trails as their second highest priority for projects in Gallatin.

The next time someone tells you it is just a sidewalk – Invite them to join you on the trail!