

Work Group: Rails with Trails Workgroup (RTWG)
Staff Liaison: Tom Laws

Purpose:

The purpose of the Rails with Trails Workgroup is to develop a unified strategy among member agencies for the development of a continuous rails with trails system within the Union Pacific corridor to be adopted by the COMPASS Board into *Communities in Motion 2040 2.0* (CIM 2040 2.0).

Tasks:

1. Research and summary of best practices for rails with trails across the United States in the following areas: liability, safety, and implementation steps; location of trails; maintenance practices, agreements, and costs; funding sources; how agreements were put in place; implementation strategies used.
2. Creation of best route analysis with definition of end points, spur rails into a map layer, including options where available, existing easements and right of way, street crossings, land uses, and connections to other pedestrian and bicycle networks.
3. Build consensus around vision for the rail with trails project, incorporate into CIM 2040 2.0.
4. Development of cross section options, identifying a typical cross section, including fencing, landscaping, and lighting options for the corridor based upon mapping effort in task 2; identification of constraints for cross section by geographical areas or land use classification.
5. Analysis of the rail corridor as identified in task 2 for freight conflicts. Identification and mapping of existing and planned land uses along the corridor, ownership identification, and business and key contact identification with a focus on those using the rail for business uses or on spur lines, quantification of freight (both in tonnage and value) currently being accessed from the rail corridor and a projection of the freight that could be accessed from the rail corridor with land use zoning. Analysis will identify conflicts with rails with trails project and recommend mitigation options.
6. Creation of estimate of probable costs for design, land (providing range for fee simple acquisition, easements, or other options), pathway construction and development, and ongoing maintenance.
7. Creation of funding strategy and options including phasing plan.
8. Creation of timeline.
9. Stakeholder and public outreach strategy including creation of visual materials to aid in presentation to interested parties, member agencies, stakeholders, and public.
10. Wayfinding strategy.
11. Provide updates to the COMPASS Board on the effort and deliverables.

The Rails with Trails Workgroup is anticipated to meet six times in FY2017.

Deliverables, Schedule:

1. Summary document of best practices and implementation strategies (May-August 2016)
2. Map (May-August 2016)

3. Narrative and Storyboards for section in Pedestrian/Bicycle Chapter in CIM 2040 2.0 describing Rails with Trails Plan/Vision (May 2016- October 2018).
4. Cross section options, with preferred sections by geography due to applicable constraints. Include options and preferred section for roadway and water crossings as applicable. (September 2016-May 2017).
5. a. Technical memorandum, maps and summary plan of rail corridor freight interaction and conflict assessment with rails with trails project (Oct 2016-September 2017).
b. Identification list of adjacent property owners, business owners, and their overall use on the system with a focus on current users of the rail line (Oct 2016-September 2017).
6. Technical summary of opinion of probable cost with phasing options (completion by October 2018).
7. Technical document of funding strategy with phasing options (completion by Oct 2018).
8. Timeline for implementation (completion by October 2018)
9. Visual materials to be used covering above tasks (October 2017-May 2018).
10. Narrative and storyboards for wayfinding strategy including phasing and implementation strategy (2018).
11. Updates to the COMPASS Board at key milestones.

Membership:

Membership in the regional RTWG will be drawn from: member agencies interested in rails with trails efforts including but not limited to City of Meridian, City of Boise, City of Nampa, City of Caldwell, Ada County, Canyon County, and ACHD. Membership will also include a member of the COMPASS Active Transportation Workgroup and a member representing the Foundation for Ada and Canyon Trails System (FACTS), ITD, irrigation/canal companies, members of the business community, and user or advocacy groups. Other members may include the cities of Wilder, Greenleaf, Middleton, Parma, Notus, and Kuna pending examination of spur routes and ultimate desired regional system.

Charter recommended by Executive Committee: July 12, 2016

Charter approved by COMPASS Board: August 15, 2016

Next planned review of charter by Executive Committee: June 2017

All decisions and recommendations of COMPASS workgroups are reached through consensus and there are no quorum requirements for workgroups. All workgroup meetings are open to anyone interested in attending. Individuals interested in attending should contact the staff liaison to obtain the scheduled meeting dates and planned agendas.