

SMART 160 Trail and Animas River Trail Connection
Summary of Public Comments

From: Larry Redman [mailto:lredman@lpea.coop]

Sent: Wednesday, June 24, 2015 2:02 PM

To: Hall, Kevin

Cc: Blake, Amber

Subject: Comments on Animas River Trail extension

As a resident of Three Springs, I am very interested in seeing the remaining section of the River Trail built to join the Smart 160 Trail in Grandview. I found your presentation map very enlightening as to possible options for completion of the trail. The setting at Carver's was enjoyable.

I favor the railroad corridor alternative. I visited the River Road/Hwy 160 intersection on by bike earlier in the day of your presentation. This intersection already has crosswalks and push buttons to stop the flow of traffic which would allow bicycles and pedestrians to cross the highway. I know that an overpass is a much safer method to cross, but is also quite expensive to construct. The greater priority, speaking for myself, is construction of the trail ASAP. If an overpass is not built, perhaps this allows for those monies to go towards building the trail extension sooner.

The old rail bed seems like an obvious path for the trail. Those using the trail are at a higher elevation above the highway. At this height, the noise level from traffic may be greater than were the trail on a lower route, but I believe the separation from the highway corridor would make for a more pleasant experience.

My hope is that this extension is designed and built in the very near future.

Larry Redman

312 Oxbow Circle

Durango, CO 81301

From: Casey Lynch [mailto:casey@caseylynchcpa.com]

Sent: Tuesday, July 07, 2015 8:54 AM

To: Hall, Kevin

Subject: Smart 160 trail

Kevin,

I just heard about the meeting on the radio. I will be out of town and will not be able to attend.

Please cast my vote for an overpass 100 yards west of Farmington hill 550 turn off.

Thanks for your work on this.

Casey

Casey Lynch

Casey@CaseyLynchCPA.com

970-749-1388

Sent: Thursday, July 09, 2015 10:33 AM

To: Rec

Subject: FW: River trail

I missed the meeting but read the Herald article. I commute from town (near library) to the hospital frequently on either road bike or mountain. I have different routes depending on my mindset, how much time I have available and weather. My vote would be for an overpass vs. a road crossing for safety reasons. Super busy highway and it's not infrequent that there is an accident between cars at traffic lights in this corridor. Pedestrian vs. vehicle is always a worse outcome. But also it is a much more enjoyable experience to not have to deal with cars on a trail commute. Even though I greatly appreciate the crossing light at Back Country on 550 in town, it is a bit of a pucker-up situation.

I like the idea of school commuters from Three Springs being able to safely get to Escalante. Once completed it will be a heavily used corridor for Mercy employees and Three Springs residents. Can't wait!

Jim Lanier P.T.

Manager Inpatient Rehabilitation

Mercy Regional Medical Center/Centura Health

Durango, Co

Ph: (970) 764-3302

e-mail: Jimlanier@centura.org

From: jack davis [mailto:jack.c.davis20@gmail.com]

Sent: Thursday, July 09, 2015 1:36 PM

To: Rec

Subject: ART to SMART160 Trail Connection

My wife and I live near the bottom end of the River Trail, and use it nearly every day. That smooth (mostly), protected, beautiful trail is one of the many reasons we moved to Durango. Our strong preference for the ART to SMART connection is the Animas River/Wilson Gulch -- blue -- alternative.

Two reasons:

1. Safety. It seems obviously safer to use an overpass rather than having people cross 550/160 at grade. If, as is to be expected/hoped, children will be riding from Three Springs to the middle school, the overpass would give them a far more secure route.
2. Perhaps in the future people will want to build another branch of the ART to follow the river southward. A simple "Y" down below the bridge would be the simplest way to facilitate that growth. The "blue" alternative anticipates growth.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Jack Davis

20 Villa Escalante Court

From: micksouder@yahoo.com [mailto:micksouder@yahoo.com]

Sent: Friday, July 10, 2015 9:15 AM

To: Rec

Subject: Animas Trail/Smart 160 Extension Feedback

Greetings:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the extension of the Animas Trail along US 160 between the River Road Bridge and US 160/Wilson Gulch overpass complex. As someone who often bicycles between Three Springs and the rest of Durango on US 160, I am very interested in this trail being developed sooner rather than later. To me it is both a safety issue and a connection issue as Durango integrates the fast growing Three Springs area with the rest of the community.

Based on a picture provided by Sherry O'Toole (copied on this note) of Three Springs, I most strongly support the River Road path, crossing with the River Road light and connecting to the historic railroad corridor. This has several advantages.

1. We can use the existing pathway that was created to help trains with gentle climbs and descents.
2. We don't have to wait for the \$2 million overpass to use it.

If the overpass at River Road is built, great. If not, folks will need to use the light.

Part of my attraction to the railroad corridor was based on my trip to Minnesota last week. On two occasions I used an old railroad corridor for 20 miles along US 61 among several towns north of St. Paul. Having to cross at several stop lights did not lessen my enjoyment of the rides. I lamented that we did

not preserve the rights of way for trail use when we ripped up the tracks east, west and south of Durango.

Thanks again for this opportunity to offer input.

Mick Souder

266 River Birch Street

Durango

micksouder@yahoo.com

From: Timothy Cain [mailto:caint5@gmail.com]

Sent: Sunday, July 12, 2015 6:10 PM

To: Rec

Cc: O'Toole, Sherry

Subject: 3 spg to river road extension

Dear Durango Parks and Recreation and Multi-Mode Advisory Board,

My wife and I have been residents of Three Springs for 5 years and we are anxiously awaiting the extension of the River trail to our neighborhood. Sherry O'Toole has shared the proposed routes with us and we would like to put in our two cents. Whichever route is chosen we think an overpass will be critical for safety reasons. We like the historic railroad route (yellow line on map shared by Sherry) that connects with Sale Barn or the overpass connection just past the 550 intersection (dark blue line on map provided by Sherry). We do not like the route option that goes between the frontage road and 160. The Sale Barn connection would probably offer the best views on the trail (my wife's vote). Although the dark blue route would bypass the home depot traffic so might make for faster commuting (my vote).

Thanks for considering our opinion on the matter.

Sincerely,

Tim Cain

From: Robin [mailto:rockin1030@gmail.com]

Sent: Monday, July 20, 2015 4:34 PM

To: Rec

Subject: ART to SMART 160 Trail Connection

This commentary is in part to inform everyone about our rural, County subdivision "Trestle Lane" that most people don't know exists because we are in an isolated area on the southern edge of town and will be greatly affected by one of the proposed trail alternatives.

The "Animas River/Farm Hill Overpass ART Alternative" does not have our support.

The "Hwy 160 Overpass/Historic RR Corridor Alternative" does have our support as after living in this area "Trestle Lane" for many years it seems to be the most logical as it takes advantage of the already existing ART trail, crosswalks, lights and railroad corridor. We also feel that our "Trestle Lane" subdivision will be adversely affected by the trail running along our property lines and across our unmaintained, private gravel road that has no lights, signage or proper drainage. We do not have any streets lights and are totally under the beautiful, dark, starry-night skies. Our area is also a major route for the deer, bear, raccoons & skunks and the only people we see around here is our neighbors.

The proposed trail from River Road south does run parallel with the river but you do not see the river, it runs behind LP County road yards and Basin Co-op's propane storage tanks (which have leaked in the past and greatly affected several neighbors) and then right through our isolated, rural subdivision.

Being biased, our property is one of the most affected as it runs the entire length of our backyard (@245 ft.) and would be only 5-10 ft. away and in full view. Our view of that area right now is filled with trees, brush, wildlife (this is their route) and sometimes the neighbor's roofs. It is quiet, peaceful and serene.

Our entire subdivision consists of private properties that are from 1/3 acre to several acres in size that are mostly serviced by private wells, propane tanks and our private road. We all live a very quiet, rural, country lifestyle in which a "City Trail" for everyone to wander through our neighborhood is not conducive to our area.

We do love the ART system, use it often and think that it is a wonderful thing that the City has done and although it would be convenient access for us there are too many negatives that will affect our neighborhood, so as the saying goes "Not in Our Backyard".

Sincerely,

Robin Purdom

Jesse Purdom

72 Trestle Lane

From: Sarah Kelly [mailto:sarahkelly60@gmail.com]

Sent: Friday, July 24, 2015 7:25 AM

To: McClain, Scott; Rec

Subject: Comment: Animas River Trail to SMART 160 Trail alternatives

Dear Mr. McClain,

Thank you for posting the materials on the alternatives for this project on the website. I wasn't able to make the public meeting, but I definitely want to be informed about this project and appreciate the opportunity to comment on the alternatives.

I live in downtown Durango and work in Three Springs. I am not an avid road cyclist, but have always enjoyed commuting by bike. The Highway 160 shoulder, however, looks completely unappealing to me. I don't enjoy riding so close to cars going so fast, and the shoulder often has gravel and debris on it. I look forward to having a developed trail which will allow me a pleasant route to bike to work.

Having looked at the alternatives, I most strongly support the Animas River/Wilson Gulch Overpass. While it is one of the more expensive alternatives and may take longer to build and plan for, I believe it is the best alternative. The efficient and direct route will be easier and quicker for commuting. Having the design meet trail standards and accessibility requirements will make the ride a little less onerous for those who are fit and will be very important to having the trail be an attractive ride or walk for a broader group of people. I have a friend who is confined to a motorized wheelchair. He says being able to ride along the current Animas River Trail is one of the few opportunities he has for independent travel around town. His story highlighted for me the importance of having our local paved trails be accessible by the disabled and those who for whatever reason have less energy for steeper and longer climbs. I also believe that by staying further from the roads and closer to the river this alternative has the best trail experience.

In the event that adequate funds can't be found to take the Animas River/Wilson Gulch Overpass alternative, I would support either the Highway 160 Overpass or At Grade Crossing/ Historic RR Corridor options.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment.

Sarah Kelly

1145 E. 3rd Ave

Durango, CO 81301

(970) 749-8181

From: Bryan Duff [mailto:bfd@frontier.net]

Sent: Sunday, July 26, 2015 8:53 AM

To: McClain, Scott

Subject: FW: ART Farmington Hill Crossing

Greetings to you (Scott) and to Kevin- I am sorry I missed your meeting on the future extension of the ART into the Grandview area. Joan and I are in the process of having a place built in Three Springs, so now I am keenly interested in the 160 Crossing for a project which has been near to my heart for the last few years as Kevin knows.

I would like to put my vote for the Farmington Hill overpass option, as it appears to be the one with minimal disruption to the existing land uses. I would suggest tying the 'northern' leg of the overpass into the Railroad grade 'higher' up on the hill instead of having the trail along the existing highway if at all possible. This would minimize conflicts and get the trail up to where you would want it to be as it continues to the east. In addition, I would confirm with CDOT where they would like to see the overpass occur.

Please let me know when you are to have the next meeting, as I would enjoy being there. Also, I would like to come down and look at your 'big pictures' and see what you have in mind.

Bryan Duff,

970.259.2179 home

bfd@frontier.net

From: Mary Parnell [mailto:mep@bresnan.net]

Sent: Tuesday, August 18, 2015 10:14 AM

To: 'Robin'; 'Billy Dent'; 'Bud Smith SDSA'; 'Carol McLaughlin'; 'David roybal'; 'Dee Campbell'; 'Don Piccoli'; Hall, Kevin; jec.clancy@gmail.com; 'Jim Nelson'; 'Larkin Dent'; 'Mike and Kristi Zimmerman'; 'Mike Lynas-Rivers Edge Apts'; 'Travis Kimmel and Caitlin Dent'

Subject: RE: Trestle Lane Meeting

Charlie has replied to you that he will be there but I'll be out of town. But I want all to know that I am against the trail coming down the edge of our property. As was mentioned, it can bring undesirables to our area. I am all in favor of a good trail, I enjoy it on a regular basis, and I see areas where homeless like to hang out and I fear that the back side of our property could be just such a place. The constant traffic on the trail would certainly be disruptive for our animals. We have over 600 feet on the back side of our property that would be difficult for us to monitor on a regular basis. We have a small vegetable garden behind our yard fence which could be very inviting to a hungry person, or someone just wanting to cause a problem. A fence around our property would prove extremely difficult and cost prohibitive.

Mary Parnell

From: lawlady87-info@yahoo.com [mailto:lawlady87-info@yahoo.com]

Sent: Tuesday, September 08, 2015 12:00 AM

To: Hall, Kevin

Subject: Public Comment on Smart 160 trail Alternatives

Dear Kevin,

I am writing to oppose the Animas River/Wilson Gulch alternative to the Animas River Trail. I am asking that you include this letter in the public comment section of the website and in the packets presented to the 2 boards involved. I understand that there is a joint meeting if the two boards this upcoming Wednesday evening and that discussion of the potential routes to link the trail between the City and Three Springs is to take place. I am currently out of town and will not be able to attend the meeting.

As a resident of Trestle Lane, I am extremely concerned about the Animas River/Wilson Gulch Alternative. The proposed route will run through rural private residential property and cross a private gravel road. The private property is very rural and sometimes secluded and not open smaller lots like other residential areas the trail currently runs through in the City. The seclusion from town creates a high potential for security issues for the neighboring residents. If trail users decide to leave the trail onto Trestle Lane, they are no longer on City property, but on private road in the County. If any issues arise, it will not be the City of Durango or the police department dealing with the trespassing, it will be the Sheriff's Department. Since the road is not a City or a County Road, if something happens to a trail user on Trestle Lane the various homeowners will be potentially liable for any injuries or harm. In addition, the proposed Animas River/Wilson Gulch Alternative would run just at the top of a steep gravel hill and at the bottom of another hill on Trestle Lane. In winter or when the road is really wet, the residents that live below the hill have to build momentum and traction in order to get up the hill. Once cresting the initial hill, you can not stop. If you do, there is a high likelihood that you will slide back down the hill and possibly over the edge into Wilson Gulch. The proposed placement of the trail over Trestle Lane would likely cause a driver in these weather conditions to have to stop for bikers and pedestrians and then slide back down the hill not being able to regain traction. Additionally, the hill is a blind hill and you can not see what is on the other side until you get there. This applies both ways--to persons on the trail as well as to drivers on Trestle Lane. Also, the proposed trail curves just before straightening out to cross Trestle Lane again, causing visibility issues for both drivers and trail users. it is clearly dangerous to all concerned.

The residents of Trestle Lane are people that moved into this rural area to maintain livestock and enjoy the countryside, the dark sky at night, the wildlife and the privacy that such an area can provide. Trestle Lane is an isolated area that most people do not even know exists and we wish to keep it that way. Allowing the trail to proceed through this area is a more expensive and dangerous option and I am asking that it not be recommended or adopted for use.

Thank you,

Jennifer Nelson

P.O. Box 2721

Durango, CO 91302

From: Jim Nelson [mailto:sundogdurango@yahoo.com]

Sent: Monday, September 07, 2015 10:53 PM

To: Brad Blake; Julie Westendorff; Gwen Lachelt

Cc: David Roybal; lark.sed@gmail.com; jec.clancy@gmail.com; mzimmerman111@hotmail.com; Debbie Roybal (droybal@cltinfo.com); Robin; Billy Dent; Bud Smith SDSD; troy Neighbors Mclaughlin; Don Piccoli; lawlady87-info@yahoo.com; Jon & Dee Campbell; mikelynas@outlook.com; wracp@bresnan.net; Travis Kimmel and Caitlin Dent; McClain, Scott; Metz, Cathy; Hall, Kevin

Subject: Re: 8/20/15 meeting @Trestle Lane

Dear La Plata County Commissioners

I am writing to inform you of one of the City of Durango Bike Trail Routes which would go thru our neighborhood down on Trestle Lane between La Posta road bridge and Three Springs. One route would cross Trestle Lane and reading of city of Durango maps it would cross Trestle Lane before Trestle lane crests while traveling North on Trestle Lane. With enough snow or ice it could create a substantial risks for people whom live down on Trestle Lane and any users of the Trail. On both sides of this trail crossing is private road/property which could greatly increase the liability for those land owners.

Other neighbors would have the trail cross right next to their homes, some without fences. I will not addresses those issues with you, but ask that you reach out to these property owners regarding their concerns.

What I am asking is that you the La Plata County Commissioners be involved in this process. Living in the County we do not have an opportunity to vote for the City of Durango Commissioners and thus no voice thru the election process. No matter what route the City chooses between these two points it will go thru County property owned by the people whom live down here.

Can you ask the City to delay their meeting (which is for Wednesday Sept 9th) of the Parks and Recreation board regarding this issue until you are brought up to speed of their proposed routes? With the City already having the old railroad right of way purchased it looks like they are leaning heavily on this route down and across Trestle Lane.

Issues of private property rights, security, safety, privacy, liability are issues that need to be addressed before picking a route and the City will sort out the rest later.

As a resident of the County could you please be involved in this matter?

Thank you

Jim Nelson

158 Trestle Lane

Durango, CO 81303

From: Charlie Parnell [mailto:wracp@bresnan.net]

Sent: Tuesday, September 08, 2015 3:36 PM

To: Jim Nelson; Brad Blake; Julie Westendorff; Gwen Lachelt

Cc: David Roybal; lark.sed@gmail.com; jec.clancy@gmail.com; mzimmerman111@hotmail.com; droybal@cltinfo.com; Robin; Billy Dent; Bud Smith SDSA; troy Neighbors Mclaughlin; Don Piccoli; lawlady87-info@yahoo.com; Jon & Dee Campbell; mikelynas@outlook.com; Travis Kimmel and Caitlin Dent; McClain, Scott; Metz, Cathy; Hall, Kevin; mary Parnell

Subject: Re: 8/20/15 meeting @Trestle Lane

Dear la Plata County Commissioners,

I am writing in response to Jim Nelson's email below. My wife and I concur with his positions 100 percent and urge you to get involved in this process. We are one of the homeowners Jim mentioned that would have the trail come right next to their house. In fact the River Trail Route as proposed would pass within a few feet of the northeast corner of our house. I will also mention the dangerous situation that would be created by this route passing right next to the large propane tank owned by Basin Coop, and we know first hand that Basin Coop doesn't exactly have a stellar safety record as we were out of our home for 10 months in 2002 due to a Basin Coop gasoline spill of 8000 gallons. So please get involved in this process before its too late. Thank you.

Charlie and Mary Parnell

94 Trestle Lane

Durango, CO 81303

From: Barbara Gormally [mailto:bg2connect@gobrainstorm.net]

Sent: Friday, October 02, 2015 4:01 PM

To: Rec

Subject: Animas River Trail - 160 crossing

Cathy, Scott, and Kevin:

Thank you for meeting, on-site, with residents from River Oaks and Escalante Ct. I want compliment the three of you for your commendable people skills you displayed during the meeting. I certainly hope the on-foot field trip revealed the severe amount of challenges that would occur if the path were to come to the south end of Escalante school and above our homes. As one neighbor pointed out, at no place on the trail system does direct bike path traffic look down into homes. While it seems like the design for lighting on the trail for the development just to the south of us has worked, you would not have that opportunity on this proposed route since our homes are below the trail.

Also, I know you received new news from 9-R earlier in the day regarding the Escalante School property. If the school property and adjacent properties are developed into residential property in the future, this

proposed segment of trail is absolutely in the “wrong” spot. Residents of the potential later developments should be able to access the trail from the east side of the school property.

One of you mentioned it will be very important the new crossing is convenient or people won't use it due to the very nature of humans preferring short cuts. This proposed route on the far south side of the school will take people out of their way, so safe crossing or not they will still use other areas of 550 to cross. If I may suggest, if the team has not already done so, go sit for a while on a weekday and weekend day in various areas east of 550 from Carbon Junction to Sailbarn and observe vehicle traffic and mt. bike traffic (road bikes will still most likely not use whatever you build). It seems that a more northerly crossing will minimize short cuts because the majority of the traffic is going to be from DRO. For those who love to mt. bike their way to and from Three Springs they would still be able to access various mt. bike trails from a more northerly crossing to get their fix! For those using only the manmade trail from DRO, the sooner they can cross the less likely they will feel like they need to short cut. Another point to consider is that the further south the crossing is whether an under or overpass the less populated it is and human to human safety could become an issue where as in a more populated location some human to human issues may not occur.

I respectfully request you eliminate the option that runs above the homes on River Oaks and the townhome my husband and I own on Escalante Ct.

Lastly, thank you for all the mindful work that has been done over the many years to make our trail system be safe, scenic, and fun. I use it and I absolutely enjoy it. I'm sure you've had some difficult people, easement, and engineering issues to navigate all these years.

Barbara Gormally, MA | CDCP

Founder, Studio Me Unlimited x9, LLC

Distinctive Personal & Professional Self-mastery Coaching

From: Mike Gormally [mailto:mrg2fly@earthlink.net]

Sent: Friday, October 16, 2015 12:05 PM

To: Metz, Cathy

Subject: Smart 160

Cathy, Scott and Kevin,

I am writing to give my input to the proposed bike trail extension to Three Springs.

I live at 31 Villa Escalante Ct. I am sorry I missed your recent visit to our subdivision due to work, but you did meet with my wife Barbara and several others who live here. I received a good amount of feedback that the meeting was informative, productive and well conducted. Thanks for that.

I am viewing the 9/9/15 Smart 160 map from the website for reference.

I am against the schoolyard route, because it will change the privacy for us and our neighbors and disrupt the animal route that exists.

I am against any route that puts trail users into the congested area between Wal Mart and Home Depot on Hwy 160. This is a dangerous piece of road and I think it exposes trail users to a distraction from the beauty and serenity of the trail as experienced elsewhere.

I am for continuing the trail from where it ends at the river road bridge. I think the route that shows the crossing further SE makes the most sense given the conditions I have stated above.

Barbara mentioned another alternative route which is not depicted. To make a Hwy 3 crossing and parallel Hwy 160 on the East side of Hwy 160. This would seem to be a more direct route without the expensive crossings that will be encountered with crossing 160. Have you considered this route?

Thank you for considering my input

Michael R. Gormally

31 Villa Escalante Ct

970-749-3363

From: Jim Abbey [mailto:jabbey@bresnan.net]

Sent: Wednesday, October 14, 2015 7:51 PM

To: Rec

Subject: Animas River Trail Extension to Smart 160- We are against the Escalante/Home Depot Trail Alignment

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and Multi-Modal Advisory Board,

The Animas River Trail is a wonderful asset for the City of Durango and a great benefit to those who use it. Our home is located on southern most end of the existing trail system and our front door faces the trail access off of River Oaks Dr Cull-de-Sac. My wife and I deal with the negative trail impacts weekly. The proposed Escalante/Home Depot trail alignment would run few feet from our back yard property line. We are against this alignment for those same negative impacts we see with the existing trail only a few feet from our front door. Please don't double our river trail problems. Our neighbors who live near Trestle Lane have the same issues so we can't with a clear conscious support the Animas River/Farmington alignment in their backyard.

After surveying the area around Baker Lane and Escalante Middle School I encourage the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and Multi-Modal Advisory Board to consider another alignment which minimizes impacts to existing residents. On Sept 30th the River Oaks area residents met with Kathy Mets, Kevin Hall, and Scott. They were in agreement to explore our suggested new alignment using a combination public streets starting at Baker Lane, then along to the yet to be constructed Escalante Dr and the Frontage Rd to gain access to the propose Hwy 550 underpass to Sale Barn. We believe this to be a better alignment and a good solution. The City needs to be flexible with current Animas River Trail

standards, which will free individual Board members to support alignments without meeting current standards. I would point out that this will be a common problem. Trail standard allowances will need to be made as the City expands the trail system beyond the river corridor into other areas such as Santa Rita to Horse Gulch or west on Hwy 160 to Twin Buttes. All future trail connectors and trail expansions from the existing Animas River Trail will face the issues of crossing intersections, streets and driveways at grade. We expect the same compromise as other connectors such the existing 32nd street crossing. Please look into an alternate trail alignment that would impact the least amount of existing homes by using existing public streets.

Jim Abbey

137 River Oaks Dr

Durango, CO 81303
