



Helena Citizens' Council
316 N. Park Avenue, Room 320
Helena, MT 59623
Phone: 406.447.8493
hcc@helenamt.gov
www.helenacitizenscouncil.com

28 October 2020

TO: Mayor Collins, the Helena City Commission

FROM: The Helena Citizens' Council

RE: Convert the Upper and Lower DeFord Trail to an ADA compliant trail.

Meg Bishop, Secretary

The HCC recommends the conversion of the Upper and Lower DeFord Trail to an ADA compliant trail that would accommodate wheelchairs. Given the low-gradient nature of what is called the "wood-chip trail," the Lower DeFord trail is perfectly suited to expanding the accessibility of open-space trails to persons with disabilities and/or mobility issues (whether temporary or permanent). It is currently often used by a many multi-generational families with varying ability levels. Adding access to the Upper DeFord Trail would extend options for those who wish to challenge themselves. The total distance for this trail would be approximately 1.5 miles. We are hoping this project serves as the start of a broader effort to enhance the livability of our community for everyone.

Discussions identified the opportunities for use by other users such as families, those of advanced age, and other types of slow users.

A vote was taken at the October 28th meeting of HCC: 19 Yea and 1 Nay
The recommendation is approved.

Meg Bishop (HCC Secretary) has discussed this proposal with various representatives of groups advocating for persons with disabilities and/or mobility issues and they are quite excited and are interested in being involved in some way, including a focus on creation of a project area. Those include:

- 1) Jacqueline Isaly, Community Health Promotion Division Administrator
- 2) Joel Peden, MILP Advocacy Coordinator
- 3) Charles Alvarez, MILP IL Specialist I
- 4) Meg Traci, Research Associate Professor at the University of Montana Rural Institute for Inclusive Communities.