

Bike paths planned for Ohio River Greenway Trail

By KATHERINE SCHAEFFER (kschaeffer@tribweb.com), Tribe LIVE

June 20, 2015 GLEN OSBORNE, PA - The Ohio River Trail Council is moving forward with the first two phases of its Ohio River Greenway Trail, planning to begin construction in 2016 and seeking feedback on conceptual plans for phase two.

If approved, the Ohio River Greenway Trail will have paved, well-marked bike lanes along low-speed, low-traffic roads to give cyclists a safer alternative to heavily traveled Pennsylvania Bike Route A, running along state Route 51, said Robert Genter, director of Mackin Engineering Co., which is conducting feasibility studies.

“The goal is safety for people using on-road bike routes,” he said.

Phase one of the bike route would extend the Montour Trail through Coraopolis, to the Sewickley Bridge in Moon. The plan calls for improving signage on Bike Route A, and branching the trail onto secondary streets, said Bill Sweterlitsch, a trail council board member and Coraopolis business owner. “Particularly for families, give them an alternate route,” he said.

The trail council is awaiting approval from PennDOT to use federal grant money, Sweterlitsch said. Phase one could cost about \$1.5 million, he said.

Phase two, a route from the Sewickley Bridge to the Beaver County Jail trailhead in Center, would take cyclists on municipal roads, allowing them to access Glen Osborne, Aliquippa and Baden, said Jack Manning, the trail council's director.

John Orndorff, a trail council director and Glen Osborne councilman, said he has been visiting each municipality to present the preliminary route.

“We're just asking, ‘How do you feel about this?’ and ‘Would you endorse it?’ ” he said.

In some municipalities, narrow roads and limited parking pose a challenge, Orndorff said. In Leetsdale, the trail council is considering rerouting part of the bike path because community feedback revealed it would take sidewalk parking away from a church that lacks a parking lot. Ambridge council is excited about the route bringing customers to businesses. Members want to ensure its path will direct traffic to Merchant Street, the borough's commercial hub, borough manager Joe Kauer said.

The proposal shows the route running along Duss Road, a wider street running parallel to Merchant. The borough wants signs on Duss directing cyclists to Merchant's amenities, Kauer said.

Municipalities on the route donated \$200 to \$2,000 toward hiring Mackin Engineering to conduct feasibility studies, trail council president Vincent Troia said. The council received two \$200,000 grants from PennDOT for the studies, he said.

Source: <http://triblive.com/news/alleghey/8507637-74/trail-route-council#ixzz3ILR0e9pd>