

The GPTN Newsletter is published quarterly and is distributed to GPTN members and other interested parties.



## Great Plains Trails Network

5000 North 7th · Lincoln, NE 68521

For more information, contact: Elaine Hammer, 402-477-0242, or www.gptn.org

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# Great Plains Trails Network

Winter 2015

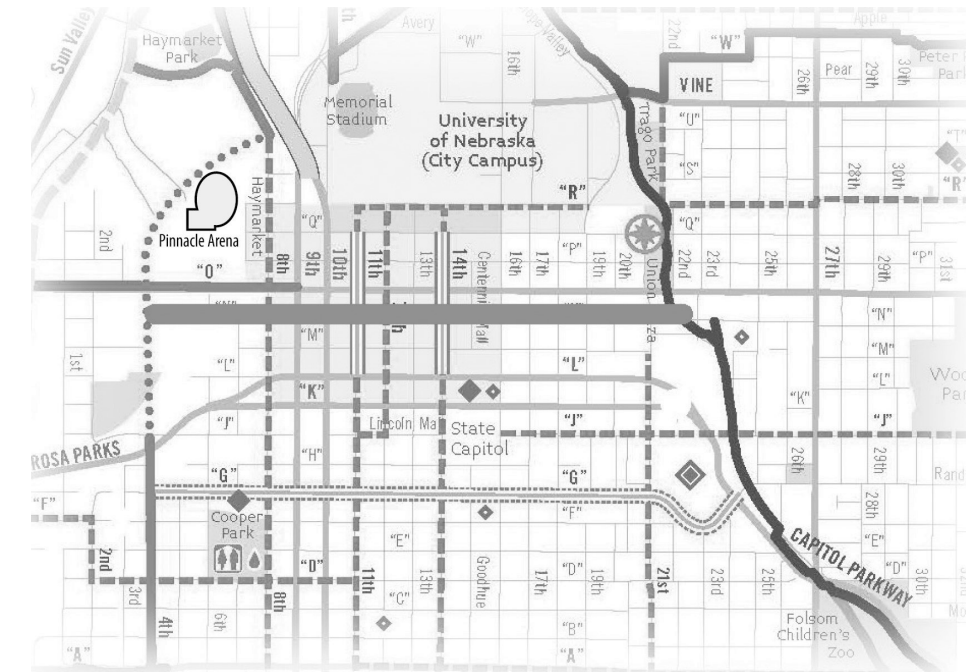
Issue 118

## GPTN ANNUAL MEETING—FEBRUARY 22!

The Great Plains Trails Network Annual Meeting will be held this year on February 22 at 1 pm. Please note the new venue for the meeting this year. It will be held at the CHI Health NE Heart Medical Office located at 7440 South 91st. Presenters include Brent Davis from the Nebraska Bicycle Alliance who will speak on bicycle safety bills introduce in Nebraska legislature and Krista Dittman who will present concepts for the new café in the Jayne Snyder Trails Center.

The City of Lincoln will also provide updates on trail projects including progress on the long anticipated N Street Protected Bikeway (see article in newsletter for more information).

See you there!



Construction on the N Street Protected Bikeway will begin in 2015.

### Put Lincoln on the Map!

*The N Street Protected Bike Lane will provide a two-way protected bike lane on N Street. It links the Jamaica North trail at 4th and J Street with the Antelope Valley Trail.*

*The connection will offer easy, safe access to downtown businesses and the Haymarket district. GPTN is raising \$340,000 to support this once in a life time opportunity. Let's continue the Great Place legacy!*

**Make contributions payable to:  
Nebraska Trails Foundation**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Designated Project: \_\_\_\_\_



**Mail to: GPTN  
5000 North 7th St.  
Lincoln, NE 68521**

### Great Plains Trails Network Annual Meeting

Sunday, February 22, 2015 at 1:00 p.m.

CHI Health NE Heart Medical Office

7440 South 91st  
Lincoln, Nebraska

Trail Project Presentations

Awards Ceremony

Election of GPTN's 2015 Board of Directors

Refreshments Provided

### 2015 PROPOSED BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- |                 |                 |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| Dale Arp        | Karen Griffin   |
| Brett Baker     | Jordan Messerer |
| Gary Bentrup    | Dena Noe        |
| Jim Carveth     | Ann Ringlein    |
| Ron Case        | Greg Rosenboom  |
| Parks Coble     | David Scoby     |
| Carolyn Collier | John Skretta    |
| Katie Dolan     | Kris Sonderup   |
| Steve Dunbar    | Ray Stevens     |
| Marynelle Green | Beth Thacker    |
| Elaine Hammer   | Mary Torell     |
| Chris Heinrich  | Bob Torell      |
| Damon Hershey   | Joyce Vannier   |
| Roger Hirsch    | Jamie Warren    |
| Corey Godfrey   | Bill Wehrbein   |



# Great Plains Trails Network

since 1988

*dedicated to the goal of developing a network of commuter and recreational trails within Lincoln and Lancaster County*

2015

**PRESIDENT** Karen Griffin  
**VICE PRESIDENT** Corey Godfrey  
**SECRETARY** Bill Wehrbein  
**TREASURER** Jamie Warren

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Katie Dolan	Ray Stevens
Steve Dunbar	Beth Thacker
Marynelle Greene	Mary Torell
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WWW.GPTN.ORG

Newsletter comments, questions, corrections  
gbentrup68@gmail.com

## A Note from the President



For the last two years I have had the honor of representing this amazing organization and if you haven't noticed, there is a lot going on in the trails community! There is a complete listing on page 8 but just to name a few, look at what is in the works right now: the N Street Protected Bikeway, the repairs on the Billy Wolff at 27<sup>th</sup> Street, the replacement bridge at Wilderness Park and many more. It is all thanks to GPTN's membership (that is now over 800 strong) and a very dedicated group of GPTN board

members that meet, plan and engage the community promoting and supporting so many projects. We have a lot to be proud of and it truly has been a pleasure getting to know so many of you through these projects and GPTN.

As president of GPTN, I have had the opportunity to testify in support of the N Street protected bikeway project at City Council meetings and if you haven't heard, with a 5 to 1 vote on January 26, 2015, the City of Lincoln will have the first protected bikeway in the State of Nebraska. This project will transform downtown Lincoln into "the 21<sup>st</sup> century city that it is" as stated by City Councilwoman Leirion Gaylord Baird in support of this project.

I also testified in support of two bills introduced at the State Legislature this year by Senator Kolowski of Omaha. The common sense information in LB39 strengthens the rights of pedestrians and cyclists, clarifies a motorist's responsibilities, and assists law enforcement in their ability to enforce the laws that apply when cyclists, pedestrians and motorist share the road. LB38 would Increase penalties for motor vehicle homicide, provide penalties for causing serious bodily injury to vulnerable road users, and defines vulnerable road users. Please consider writing to your senators in support of these important bills that will help clarify and strengthen the rules needed to keep cyclists and other vulnerable road users safe.

Thank you all for your continued support of GPTN and I hope to see you at the annual meeting on February 22th and out on the trails again soon,

## GPTN NEW AND RENEWING MEMBERS

Late October 2014 through January 25, 2015

Welcome to New Members: Kimberly & Preston Afrank, Bob & Donna DiPaolo, Dan & Dixie Ernst, Nancy Hersen, Kylie Lowe, Doug & Jody Martin, Patrick & Tiffany O'Neill, Beth Whitaker.

Thank you to renewing members: David Anderson, Travis & Lisa Anderson, Max Antoine, Ardith Barber, Jim Barger, Peg O'Connor & Al Bartek, Betty Beam, Ann Beurivage, Dale & Sandra Benham, Pam & Mike Bjerrum, Bob & Stacie Bleicher, John Boye, Pat Bracken, Kent Brady, Neal Brickner, Don & Trudy Burge, Chris Calkins, Jim & Rosalind Carr, Jim & Kim Carveth, Stephen & Beth Carveth, Christi & Doc Chaves, Frank Chavira, Sheryl Chisholm, Paul Claus III, Tom & Mary Jo Cherry, Patrick Clare, Parks Coble, Mary Commers, Kath & Mike Conroy, James & Valerie Crook, Joe & Jenny Dauer, Don DeMars, Joan & Kirk Dietrich, Bill & Terri Dimon, Sue & Rad Dobson, Opal & Eric Doerr, Richard Draper, Charles Duerschner & Sarah Gauger, Charlene & Steven Dunbar, Earl Dyer, JR., Todd & Kriston Eggerling, Tim Einspahr, Marty & John Eischeid, Robert Elwood, Michael Eppel, Katherine Evans, Deb & Dean Fisher, Tim Fisher, Jack Flanagan, Peggy Forcier, Bruce & Lisa Forbes, Barb & Chuck Francis, Howard Feldman, Bob & Sue Ferguson, Bud & Georgeanne Gerhart, David Giesele, Joyce Gleason, Jane Goertzen, Robert & Vanesa Gorman, Dennis & Hayley Grabast, Steve & Nancy Green, Patrick & Mary Grewe, Priscilla Handy, Doyle Haney, Nancy Harr, Matt & Amy Harris, Paul Harrison, Carol Rogers & Ed Harvey, Garland Headrick, Mary & Greg Heidrick, Richard & JoAnn Hekl, Phyllis & Gary Hergenrader, Randy & Eloise Hiatt, Dennis & Rosemary Hicks, Brian & Gail Hinkley, Roger Hirsch, Lee Hitt, Randy Holcomb, Michael Hopkins, W.F.Hoppe, Philip & Ann Hovis, Betty Howe, and Sarah Howell, Wayne & Judy Jensen, Caroline Jezierski, Con & Barbara Keating, Kirk & Jo Kinberg, Jim & Mary King, Chris & Mary Kingery, Randy Kinney, Paul Konig, John Kopischke,

Dan Kounovsky, Steave & Diane Kraus, Kent Imig & Lori Kreimer, Don Knop, Lynn & Marci Knuth, Ted & Mary LaGrange Phyllis Larsen, Joe Laughlin, Sherry Lawton, Scott Leigh, Kelf Linder, Pam Lionberger, Richard Littrell, Mary Jo Livingston, Nancy Loftis, Steve Loftis, Cynthia Loope, Tim & Lisa Losake, Roger Lott, Love Family, Warren & Mary Luckner, Bernie Lyons, Bill & Susan Macy, Jay & Julie Marshall, Chris & Erin Masada, Kent & Shelley Mattson, David & Jan McChesney, Robert McCollough, Mike Melbye, Steve Miers, Jon & Carol Morgenson, Burke Morrow, Jim Muggy, Paul & Molly Nance, Robert & Phyllis Narveson, James Nau, Jim Nora, Melvin Northrup, Dennis Nuernberger, Ronald & Susann Ogden, Rich & Barb Ollenburg, Tonn & Holly Ostergard, Dave Palm, Bruce Paitz, Karl Schlitt & Rosina Paolini, Ann & Ted Pardy, Jim & Denise Peter, Sheri Pfeil, Glenda Pierce, Curt & Betty Pkschus, Dan & Cathy Pudenz, Kathie Putensen, Rose Quackenbush, Ann Quinlan, Richard & Georgia Raecke, Alvin Raef, Daryoush Razavian, Greg & Ann Reicks, Roger Renken, Jeff & Kathy Richner, Fred & Margaret Rickers, Ray & Ann Ringlein, Sandra Roche, Robert & Nancy Rohe, Linda Roos, James & Janet Rose, Steve Russelll, Marie Rustermeier, Larry & Pat Ruth. R & J Sand, Cathy & Chris Sayre, Scott & Marata Shaw, Dennis & Vicki Scheer, Joyce Schiermann, Curtis & Pat Schneider, Rebecca & Sharad Seth, Frank Sidles, Robert Shanahan, Laurel Shoemaker, Nadine SKupa, Bert & Karalene Smith, Hal Smith, Linda Smith, Randall Smith, Robert & Nancy Sorensen, Brad & Jackie Southwick, Kate Speck, Bill & Sandy Spielman, Daria & Michael Springer, Nancy & Dennis Stara, Ray & Karen Stevens, Tani & Dave Stempson, Margaret & Tom Stine, Clayton Streich, Glen Moss & Nancy Sutton-Moss, Tedde Taeye, Eric & Lynette Teegerstrom, Denise Terry, Dan Lynn & Beth Thacker, Ralph & Melanie Thompson, Margene Timm, Mr. & Mrs. Robert Timme, Bob & Karen Truba, Bill & Rosemarie Utle, Dave & Sue Van Horn, Jim & Nancy VanKirk, Dennis & Wanda Vodehnal, Ken & Peggy Volker, Bobbie & Kevin Wickham, Alan Wickman, Margaret Williams, Mark Butler & Ann Willet, Dayle Williamson, Mike & Sue Wilkins, Mark Wilson, Amy Windle, Rich & Susie Windle, Randle Winter, & Kevin Wright.

*Thank you from the 2014 GPTN Board of Directors. Your memberships are crucial to GPTN.*



Consider joining our friends!

# Lincoln Track Club Membership Application

The Lincoln Track Club, Inc. was established in 1975 by an eager group of track enthusiasts. Although our title contains the reference to track, we have become a distance oriented club. Our membership includes some of the nation's finest road racers as well as a great number of fun runners.

In essence, our club is a nonprofit community service organization, established to promote running throughout this area and provide educational assistance for its runners. Our quarterly newsletter has become an informational running publication for local runners. The LTC is a member club of both the Road Runners Club of America (RRCA) and USA Track and Field.

The Lincoln Track Club is not just about running. It's also about volunteering. This is the one ingredient that makes LTC work. The whole organization is made up of volunteers and we can always use more. Please consider joining one of Nebraska's finest volunteer-run organizations.

LTC members receive entry forms for all LTC races, *FastTimes* (our newsletter, which is e-mailed quarterly), an invitation to our annual meeting, a one dollar (\$1.00) discount off the entry fee of each LTC road race. All memberships expire at the end of the calendar year (December 31).

## 2014 LTC Calendar

3/29	State Farm (10M/5K/1M)
4/12	Novartis (10K/2M)
5/3	Mayor's Run (1M)
5/4	Marathon/Half-Marathon
6/7	Havelock (10K/3K)
7/13	Lincoln Mile
7/20	Uplifting Athletes Run (5K/1M)
8/9	Thunder/KFOR (5K/1M)
9/7	Buffalo (5M)
10/19	Governors (15K/5K/1M)
12/7	Holiday Run (5K)

### Type of Membership:

Student/Senior: **\$10**  
(under 22 or over 62)

Single: **\$12**

Family: **\$16**

Patron: **\$35**

The Century Club: **\$100**

Check if NEW member:

### Make checks payable to LTC and mail to:

Michelle Bivens  
5841 Box Canyon Circle  
Lincoln NE 68516

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Birthdate: \_\_\_\_\_ Sex: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Family Members (for Family level memberships or above)

Name	Birthdate	Sex	Email

### Club Membership Application Waiver:

I know that running and volunteering to work in club races are potentially hazardous activities. I should not enter and run in club activities unless I am medically able and properly trained. I agree to abide by any decision of a race official relative to my ability to safely complete the run. I assume all risks associated with running and volunteering to work in club races including, but not limited to, falls, contact with other participants, the effects of the weather, including high heat and/or humidity, the conditions of the road and traffic on the course, such risks being known and appreciated by me. Having read this waiver and knowing these facts, and in consideration of your acceptance of my application for membership, I, for myself and anyone entitled to act on my behalf, waive and release the Road Runners Club of America, the Lincoln Track Club and all sponsors, their representatives and successors from all claims or liabilities of any kind of arising out of my participation in these club activities even though that liability may arise out of negligence or carelessness on the part of the persons named in this waiver. I understand that bicycles, skateboards, baby joggers, roller skates or blades, animals, and radio headsets will not be allowed in LTC races and I will abide by this guideline.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Signature (if under 18): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## JAYNE SNYDER TRAILS CENTER TO FEATURE CAFÉ

By Roger Hirsch



The café features an outdoor patio where patrons will be able to enjoy food and drink while overlooking the Antelope Valley trail system.

Cyclists touring Lincoln's award-winning trails through Antelope Valley this coming summer will have even more reason to make the Jayne Snyder Trails Center in Union Plaza a place to stop and "cool their wheels".

Doug and Krista Dittman have purchased the 2,100 square foot area on north side of the center at 21<sup>st</sup> and Q St., and will turn it into a cafe featuring locally grown produce and dairy products. The couple acquired the property from the City of Lincoln at a purchase price of \$150,000.

The Dittmans own a 240-acre organic-certified farm northwest of Lincoln, and plan on using organically grown products from the farm and other locally raised food products in the cafe.

The acquisition means the Jayne Snyder Trails Center is finally full. The Community Health Endowment occupies the second floor unit. GPTN conducts its monthly meetings in a publically available meeting area on the south side of the building, and the overall center—we call it "Jayne's Place"—is a popular gathering point for biking excursions, and serves as a hub for area cyclists. It is a major SAG stop during the annual Trail Trek family biking outing, this year scheduled for June 22.

The Dittmans are busily planning their new cafe and looking for someone to run it. In the meantime, add the new cafe at Lincoln's biking "hub" to your list of places to visit on the trails in the summer.

GPTN's newsletter will feature an article about the new cafe later this year.



The refreshing fountains at the Jayne Snyder Trails Center.

# BICYCLING LINCOLN™

BicycLincoln is a community group that supports and promotes bicycling in the city of Lincoln. Our mission is to provide information and a unified voice for bicycle advocacy in an effort to make cycling in Lincoln more friendly, safe, easy, accepted, and "so that more people bike and bike more often."

Check them out at <http://bicyclincoln.org/>



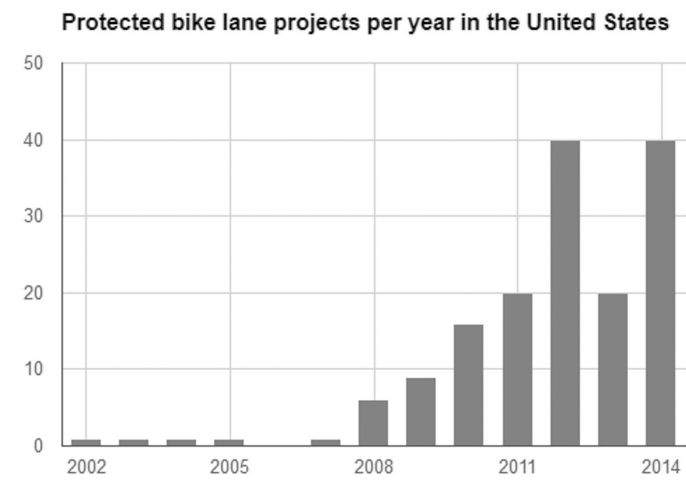
## NEW GPTN MEMBERSHIP RATES

The GPTN Membership Committee recently convened and determined an update to the Membership Rates was prudent. The new rates go into effect on March 1st, 2015 and are listed below. Memberships are the main source of revenue for GPTN which is a volunteer based non-profit.

The membership fees help GPTN raise additional funds for trail development, expansion and improvements as well as help pay for the Lincoln and Lancaster County Trails Map and many more projects that support the trails of Lincoln and the surrounding communities. We appreciate your continued support!

### New GPTN Membership Rates

- \* Standard Membership \$10
- \* Associate Membership \$20
- \* Trail Sustainer Membership \$50
- \* Trail Patron Membership \$100
- \* Trail Benefactor Membership \$250



Cities across the United States are recognizing the important role protected bike lanes can play in their transportation infrastructure. Lincoln soon will be joining this list.

Source: PeopleforBikes—Green Lane Project Inventory

**WILDERNESS**  
**RUN FOR THE BRIDGES**  
 PRESENTED BY: FRIENDS OF WILDERNESS PARK

**March 14th 2015**

**Marathon  
 Half Marathon  
 10K  
 1.8 Mile Kids Run**

**All races start at 8:30am  
 Register at  
[getmeregistered.com](http://getmeregistered.com)**

**Register before March 7th for free tshirt**



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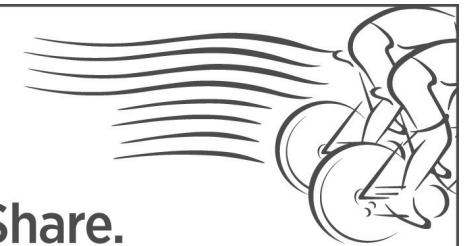
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- HOURS:** Monday: 10 AM – 7 PM  
 Tuesday: CLOSED  
 Wednesday: CLOSED  
 Thursday: 10 AM – 7 PM  
 Friday: 10 AM – 7 PM  
 Saturday: 10 AM – 6 PM  
 Sunday: 12 PM – 6 PM



## Ride. Share.

That's what the Great Plains Bike Club is all about. We actively promote bicycling with rides for all levels of riders in and around Southeastern Nebraska.

- Weekly rides with a leader
- Show 'n go rides
- Ice cream & coffee shop rides
- Moon-lit rides
- Hammering training rides
- Trail rides

We sponsor the Spring Fling ride in April and Heatstroke 100 in August. We also promote bicycling safety through community-sponsored events. For more information and an on-line application to join the club, go to [greatplainsbikeclub.org](http://greatplainsbikeclub.org).



The Nebraska Bicycling Alliance is a nonprofit corporation primarily supported by public donations, memberships and grants. Our mission is to promote health and safety for all who ride bicycles in Nebraska.

The vision of the Nebraska Bicycling Alliance does not compete with existing clubs or organized bicycling groups, but rather enhances and supports all of these groups, bike shops, health and safety groups, city planners, policy makers and NDOR. We plan to promote bicycling in Nebraska when needed at the State and local levels in any way we can with project design, seeking federal funding, promoting safe routes for kids, and public education.

Learn more at: <http://www.nebike.org/>

## TRAIL UPDATES!

- Construction of the north bridge in Wilderness Park is being completed as this newsletter went to print. The trusses were placed on January 26 and the bridge should be open in three weeks.
- An extension of the Salt Levee Trail will open this spring between the Bob Devaney Sports Center and the old Charleston Street Bridge at Haymarket Park. The trail is being constructed along the top of the NRD's Salt Creek Levee and will complete a trail connection to Wilderness Park.
- The short stretch of the Billy Wolff Trail from where it emerges from the underpass at 27th and Capitol Parkway on the north side up to the new pedestrian bridge over the Antelope Creek will be replaced starting in late spring. This will include rebuilding the retaining wall along the path up from the tunnel and will take a few weeks.
- The Rock Island Trail near the Sheridan underpass will be closed beginning early March for most of 2015 in order to replace the Sheridan bridges known as the "penny bridges".
- The final phase of the North Jamaica Trail will be open this spring. This stretch completes the last portion of the Jamaica North Trail from A Street south to Calvert where it connects with the Salt Creek Levee Trail. From A Street the existing trail continues on the 4th Street Corridor to the south part of the Haymarket area. Southward continues to the Homestead Trail and on to Beatrice.

## N ST BIKEWAY & BIKE-SHARE

*Continued from page 7*

heavily endorsed included Pinnacle Bank Arena, 11<sup>th</sup> and N St., and the Student Union at 14<sup>th</sup> and R St. Outside the downtown area, hospitals and shopping centers are also potentials for docking stations, along with the UNL East Campus.

And the bikes themselves? They are in their third generation now, as manufacturers continue to make improvements. Mostly three-speed bicycles used mainly for short-ride trips, each bike sports a sturdy basket which tends to make them slightly front-end weighted. Wires for gears and brakes are buried inside the frames. Riders use debit, credit or fee-based membership cards to unlock a bicycle from a docking station, and then ride it. Charges are based on the time a cyclist has the bike in use. When no longer needed, the bike is re-parked in any dock, which tolls the time of use and thus the charges.

Pricing structures vary widely across the U.S. and sponsorships are heavily counted upon to subsidize operational expenses. Some pricing structures call for the first 30-60 minutes of bike use to be free. Businesses, insurance companies, health-related entities, non-profit organizations and other community groups are the usual sponsors in current bike-share communities.

Couple the proposed bike-share project with the "schedule-the-ground-breaking-ceremony-now" N Street Protected Bikeway and you have two converging biking projects that will leave a transportation and cultural impact on Lincoln for years, maybe decades.

The stars are in alignment.



*A bike-share rental station in Washington DC. Source: Wikipedia Creative Commons—Bill Schumin*

## FORT COLLINS' VOLUNTEER RANGER PROGRAM: AN IDEA FOR LINCOLN?

*by Carol Rogers*

"Hi, my name is Carol and I am a Volunteer Ranger Assistant with the City of Fort Collins/Larimer County. Are you looking for a place to view the Bald Eagles? This trail is blocked from public access at this time because the Eagles are nesting and should not be disturbed; however, there is an excellent spot for viewing the Eagles just down this trail. I have a map of the trail system if you would like to take a map with you." This is a typical encounter with visitors along the trails and in natural areas when volunteering as a Volunteer Ranger Assistant with the City of Fort Collins/Larimer County.

I have been a Volunteer Ranger Assistant for a year and enjoy hiking and biking the trails in the city of Fort Collins, CO and in Larimer County, CO. My experience as a Volunteer Ranger Assistant has been rewarding since I have contact with the public whenever I am volunteering and can provide outreach to visitors regarding the trail system in the community. Encounters with trail visitors can be as simple as a casual "hello" or the volunteer experience could involve stopping to talk with a visitor on a trail whose dog is not leashed. Dogs must be leashed at all times on trails and in natural areas. Other encounters could also involve safety issues and asking trail visitors to use an alternate trail if there is snow melt when hiking and biking could be a potential danger or perhaps damage plants and wildlife along a trail usually in Spring months. These are just a few examples of my experience as a Volunteer Ranger Assistant.

Here is some background information about The Volunteer Ranger Assistant Program in Fort Collins/Larimer County: The Volunteer Ranger Assistant Program in Fort Collins/Larimer County was created in 2008 as a partnership to integrate volunteers within the community to promote visitor safety therefore making a visitor's outdoor experience more enjoyable along the trails and in natural areas. Volunteer Ranger Assistants are volunteers of all ages (the minimum age of 18 years old) who complete training which prepares volunteers to encourage visitor safety and awareness on trails and in natural areas.

The Volunteer Ranger Assistants respond to questions from a variety of outdoor enthusiasts including hikers, cyclists, and horseback riders with whom the volunteers may encounter along trails. Volunteer Ranger Assistants also monitor trails and natural areas for safety. Activities that Volunteer Ranger Assistants are involved with include hosting at a trailhead, special events or monitoring trails by hiking, biking, rollerblading, or by wheelchair or horseback. All volunteer activities are offered on a year-round basis.

The training program for Volunteer Ranger Assistants consists of fourteen (14) hours of training in areas such as learning the value of natural areas and open lands, elementary ecology, how to manage visitor use, outdoor safety, conflict management and response to emergency situations. Continuing education is offered annually and may take the

form of CPR/First Aid, search and rescue incident reporting, land based navigation, and community-based natural resource education. First aid training is not a requirement to be a Volunteer Ranger Assistant, however, it is highly recommended. Training to be a Volunteer Ranger Assistant is offered once a year and usually held in the Winter months so that trained Volunteer Ranger Assistants can be out on the trails and natural areas during Spring, Summer and Fall, the busiest months for visitors using trails and natural areas.

Volunteers complete a telephone interview with City of Fort Collins/Larimer County employees and are required to successfully complete a background check before beginning the training program. The volunteer agreement for a Volunteer Ranger Assistant is to complete a minimum of twenty (20) hours of volunteer service throughout a calendar year although many Volunteer Ranger Assistants volunteer for more than twenty hours a year. Volunteers track their volunteer hours on a website that is administered by the City of Fort Collins/Larimer County. Volunteer Ranger Assistants are also given a t-shirt, ball cap and name badge identifying the volunteer as a Volunteer Ranger Assistant with the City of Fort Collins/Larimer County.

Similar to the trail system in Lincoln, NE, there are many trails in Fort Collins/Larimer County, CO that are connected making the hiking and biking experience very enjoyable for recreation and commuting and a great place to explore the outdoors and view wildlife. A program similar to the Volunteer Ranger Assistant Program may be beneficial to the Lincoln community as the program could be educational and provide outreach about trails as well as promote trail safety to residents, the public and visitors to Lincoln about the wonderful trail system in the community of Lincoln. Happy Trails!



*Photo by Ed Harvey*

*Carol Rogers is an avid hiker, cyclist, dog-lover, amateur photographer and a former Great Plains Trails Network Board Member who recently relocated to Colorado with her husband and two dogs. She has enjoyed being a Volunteer Ranger Assistant with the City of Fort Collins/Larimer County for one year.*

## N ST BIKEWAY & BIKE-SHARE WILL REMAKE DOWNTOWN TRANSPORTATION

by Roger Hirsch

Two major downtown biking developments are converging, and the stars appear to be in alignment to make them happen. The result in bike-happy Lincoln will be to, well, make bikers a lot happier....and some city planners too.

Thanks to some creative financing, and an increase in financial support from our own GPTN membership, the two-way protected bikeway on N Street is going to be built. And if the stars remain in alignment it won't be long after construction that the protected bikeway will become a major corridor for citizens opting to use new "bike-share" bicycles to get around downtown, to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's two campuses, and to the rest of Lincoln's award-winning 131-mile trails network.

First things first—N Street.

The 2.2 mile protected bikeway is scheduled to be started this spring and completed in about four months at a cost of about \$3.347 million, once design and construction administration costs are factored into the project. Ernie Castillo of the Lincoln Urban Development Department told the GPTN Board of Directors at its January board meeting that there were 18 different funding sources for the entire project.

Originally projected at \$1.7 million in construction costs, the project was sidetracked in the spring of 2014, when a single bid came in at \$4.4 million—enough to drop some jaws at City Hall and raise some eyebrows about the viability of the project.

But the N Street protected bikeway has been in community master plans for some time, and has been in the dreams of city planners and bikers for several years. It was a planned companion to the beautification project on P Street, and no one was about to peddle away from it. After all, the bikeway was already on GPTN's bike map!

A second round of bidding late in 2014 resulted in five bids, with the low-bidder coming in at a revised estimate of \$2.4 million for construction costs. An Omaha-based construction company, Meco-Henne—which is doing the work on Centennial Mall—is the low-bidder.

In order to construct the N Street protected bikeway with available funds, the City of Lincoln needed to eliminate some features from the project. In January, the GPTN Board of Directors decided to raise our commitment to \$340,000 in order to complete the project as originally designed.

The Aspen Heights Redevelopment Project—a student housing project scheduled to start this Spring in the 18<sup>th</sup> and P St. area—became the source of about \$650,000 in tax increment financing (TIF) as a portion of its overall TIF-aided project. Lincoln Urban Development Director David Landis said in mid-December that the TIF financing was “a piece of the puzzle” that allowed the city to accept Meco-Henne's bid and complete the entire N Street project.

Once completed, the N Street Protected Bikeway will extend from 23<sup>rd</sup> St. west to Arena Drive near Canopy Street. Design features include landscaping, raised curbs and a “bioswale”—a landscaped swale designed to filter pollutants and convey runoff water. The bioswale will extend from 11<sup>th</sup> St. to 15<sup>th</sup> St. The bike traffic lane will be segregated from motor vehicle lanes, and design features will identify it as a pathway for bicycles only. Colored permeable pavers will be used as the surface.

The protected bikeway will be an east-west link to the all-important north-south Billy Wolff and Jamaica North trails. A short, as yet unconstructed segment of the Jamaica

North Trail will link the existing trail from its current 4<sup>th</sup> and J St. terminus to the N Street Protected Bikeway at some point in the future. Terry Genrich of the Lincoln Parks and Recreation Department told the GPTN board in January that the short segment is waiting for area redevelopment plans to firm up before the exact location of the segment can be finally identified. That short segment of unconstructed trail is likely to be within a green parkway area, he said. Once that short segment is built, there will be a direct connection between the N Street Protected Bikeway and Jamaica North Trail.

The N Street Protected Bikeway will also link the redeveloped Haymarket area with the Union Square-Jayne Snyder Trails Center-Antelope Valley area. Both areas define the eastern and western edges of downtown Lincoln.

Downtown businesses and restaurants are likely to benefit, as will the expanding residential options downtown, including the aforementioned redevelopment project and the student housing project currently underway at 11<sup>th</sup> and N. Other residential options are also in the planning and design stages.

The expanding UNL campuses are experiencing an increase in bike use by students and faculty. Campus-based cyclists will have easier access to residential, classroom and activity needs with the arrival of the N Street bikeway.

And you say you don't currently have access to a bike? Well then, on to “bike-share”...

If the City of Lincoln's application to the Nebraska Department of Roads for Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds from the Federal Highway Administration bears fruit, you just may find yourself in the seat of a brand-new Lincoln Bike Share bicycle, say, sometime during the summer of 2016....and tooling down the N Street Protected Bikeway on a short errand, or to Pinnacle Bank Arena for a concert, or to the open-this-summer Hub Cafe in the Jayne Snyder Trails Center (see nearby article).

The CMAQ application seeks \$600,000, and if awarded, will require a \$150,000 match to fully fund the \$750,000 project. Mayor Chris Beutler and UN-L are strong supporters of bike-share. If successful, the city's eventual contracted operator will make 100 “bike-share” bicycles available through 15 docking stations conveniently situated around the downtown area and the UN-L campuses. Outlying areas are also a possibility. Each docking station with 10 bikes costs about \$50,000. Annual operational costs are about \$200,000. Operations are funded through user fees and sponsorships.

The City is submitting a separate application, but is cooperating and coordinating with the Metropolitan Area Planning Agency (Omaha area), which is also seeking CMAQ funding to expand its existing Heartland B-Cycle program. Lincoln officials are examining Heartland B-Cycle as a prototype and possible operator for Lincoln's system,

should funding fall into place.

At press time, the City had hoped to have the application filed by the end of January. City officials hope to know this summer whether CMAQ funding is available. If not, the city will examine other funding possibilities, and the ideal launch date of summer, 2016 will probably be delayed.

The bike-share movement is fairly new, and has witnessed strong development since about 2010 in the United States. Bike-sharing has a long history in Europe, especially in Paris, but is fairly new in the U.S. Today some 30 U.S. communities provide a bike-share system. In September, 2014 the City of Lincoln sponsored a meeting of interested community groups to test the waters of support for a bike-share system and identify possible locations for bike-share docks.

Consultants in September said that Lincoln has very good demographics for a bike-share system—especially so, due to the proximity of UN-L's campuses and residential areas with the downtown area. In September, participants identified numerous areas in downtown Lincoln that might benefit from a docking station. The favored locations were as far north as the University's Innovation Campus, the Capitol on the south, the Mopac trailhead near 23<sup>rd</sup> and R on the east, and Haymarket Park on the west. Potential locations that were

### NEWS FLASH: GPTN Now Raising \$340K for N St Bikeway

In order to construct the N Street protected bikeway with available funds, the City of Lincoln needed to eliminate some features from the project. The GPTN Board of Directors decided to raise our commitment to \$340,000 in order to complete the project as originally designed. Please consider donating to this project that will continue Lincoln's legacy as a great place.



A rendering of the N St. Protected Bikeway with planted bioswales for stormwater management & aesthetics. Source: Alta Planning and Design