



TO: Mayor and City Council  
FROM: Howard S. Lazarus, City Administrator  
DATE: February 1, 2019  
SUBJECT: Treeline Trail Status Update

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The accompanying document provides a status update on one of the more transformative project efforts currently underway – the Treeline Trail. Following Council’s December 2017 adoption of the Allen Creek/Treeline Trail Master Plan, the City has worked in partnership with the Treeline Conservancy and the Downtown Development Authority to establish the trace for the initial segments. The ***Treeline Activities Summary 2018*** describes the accomplishments of the past year and lays out the path forward.

At the February 19 Council Meeting, Council will be presented with a Cooperative Agreement (“Agreement”) for approval. The purpose of the Agreement is to establish a general framework for the creation of a public/private partnership between the City and the Conservancy. It will assist in defining the relationship between the Parties to ensure that the goals of each are accomplished and driven by a shared desire to guide and advance the implementation of the Treeline Allen Creek Urban Trail Master Plan. The execution of the Agreement will also support the partnership’s effort to obtain and leverage non-governmental sources of funding.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or if I can be of further assistance.

1 Attachment



THE TREELINE  
ACTIVITIES  
SUMMARY  
2018





# GETTING THE BAND TOGETHER

Once the Plan was adopted, it was vital for key players to coalesce and begin detailing a shared implementation strategy.

## TREELINE TEAM

### CITY OF ANN ARBOR

Kayla Coleman  
Derek Delacourt  
Chris Frost  
Sally Hart Petersen  
Raymond Hess, AICP  
Howard Lazarus  
Kevin McDonald  
Marti Praschan  
Heather Seyfarth, AICP, MSW (facilitator)  
Missy Stults  
Cresson Slotten, PE

### TREELINE CONSERVANCY

Norman Herbert  
Roy Muir  
Joe O'Neal

### DDA

Amber Miller, AICP  
Susan Pollay

### EDC

Larry Eiler  
Peter Long

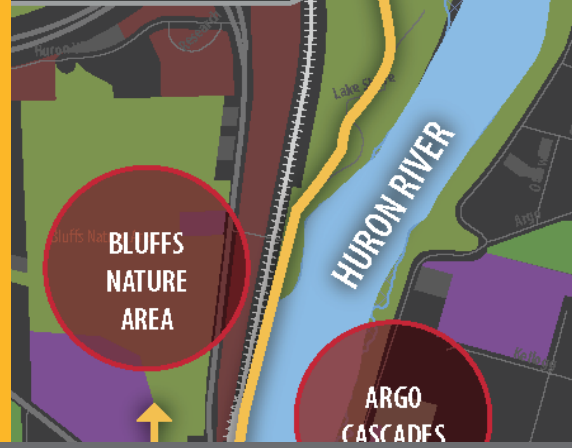
As a public/private endeavor, the success of the Treeline requires thoughtful and effective cooperation among implementing parties. With this in mind, the Treeline Team was formed to determine exactly how to collaboratively advance this exciting and ambitious project.

The Treeline Team includes representatives from various City departments, the Treeline Conservancy (Conservancy), Downtown Development Authority (DDA), and the Ann Arbor Economic Development Corporation (EDC). Individual members of the Team are listed to the left. City staff facilitates the work of the Treeline Team.

Working from the recommendations in the *Treeline Business Plan*, a document that was developed by the Conservancy and the City's Economic Policy Advisor, the Treeline Team spent 2018 exploring options for

structuring a formal relationship between the parties, as well as exploring which funding opportunities would be the most viable. As part of this exploration, the Team met with a number of local experts, such as County staff, to discuss brownfield opportunities, and Washtenaw Area Transportation Study staff to discuss transportation funding options. In short, the Treeline Team spend time learning together and making decisions together so the Team could move forward as one and be highly strategic, coordinated, and impactful. The result of this work is a jointly developed Implementation Plan that outlines tasks, responsible parties, and priority actions for the coming year.

Going into 2019, the Treeline Team will be executing their Implementation Plan. Much of this work will be focused on securing funds for first phase design engineering and continuing to refine roles so the Team is supporting and strengthening one another.



## TREELINE TEAM VISION

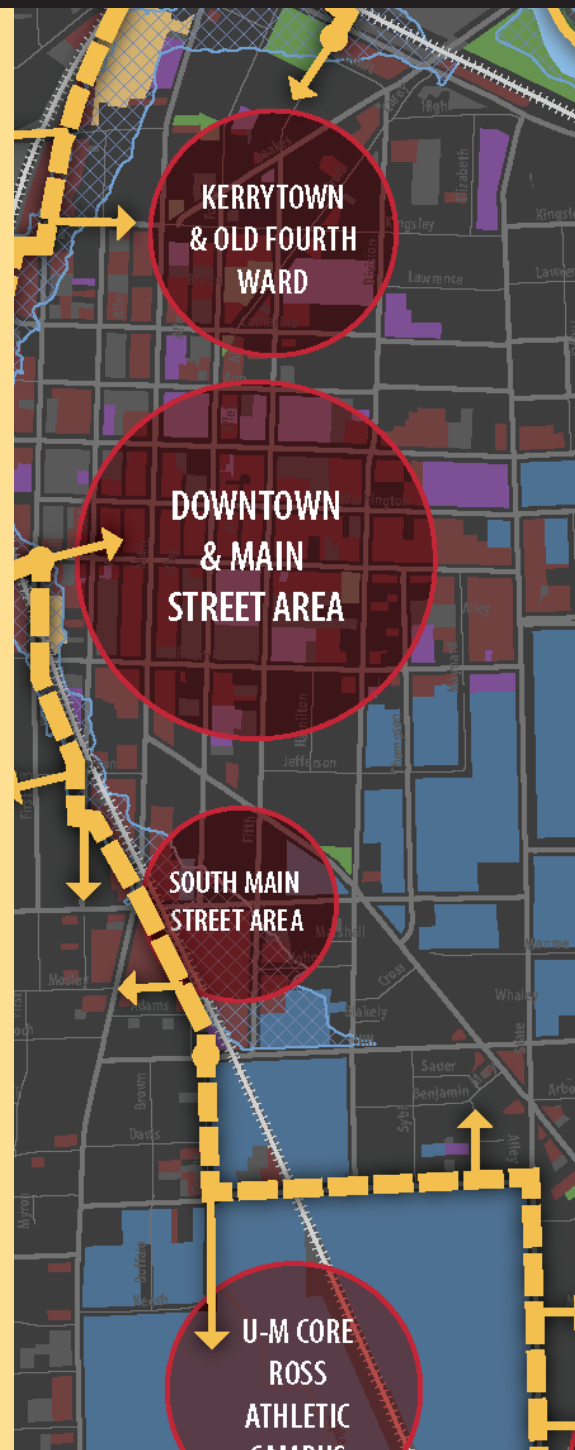
It is 2024. The Treeline Urban Trail is an amenity that Ann Arbor residents are proud to have created.

The Treeline and neighboring parks buzz with activity most hours of the day. Bicyclists and pedestrians on the Border-to-Border Trail use the Treeline to reach destinations in downtown Ann Arbor. It provides a comfortable and safe place for residents and visitors of all ages and abilities to connect with each other and to their surroundings. On football Saturdays, thousands of fans use the Treeline to walk safely between the Stadium and downtown.

Natural and community-created amenities along the Treeline provide different ways to experience and learn about the community's history, arts-scene and environmental ecosystem. The Treeline has positively impacted storm water quality in the Allen Creek valley.

The Treeline also serves as a model for the rest of Michigan as a premier non-motorized transportation facility, helping non-vehicle travelers safely move through the City.

The Treeline Urban Trail has become part of Ann Arbor's identity, enjoyed by residents and visitors alike. It is impossible to image Ann Arbor without the Treeline.





# MAKING IT HAPPEN

Even in this fledgling stage, the Treeline Team is making significant strides.



## GREEN FAIR

Treeline Conservancy members, Roy Muir and Janine Easter connecting with the community at the 2018 Mayor's Green Fair.

## OUTREACH

### *Continued Community Connection*

Members of the Treeline Team engaged with the community during the 2018 Mayor's Green Fair. During this event, the Treeline Team shared information and continued to generate support for the project. Visitors to the Treeline Green Fair booth expressed excitement about how it will help them get to work, exercise, bike safely, and enjoy local businesses.

The City's Treeline Project Manager also meets with interested parties and residents on an ongoing basis to answer questions and explore ideas.

### *Promotional Video*

The Conservancy raised \$35,000 to develop a promotional video, which will be used to help raise additional money. The video is now complete and can be viewed at: <https://vimeo.com/305045904> (password: treeline).

## COMPANION PROJECTS

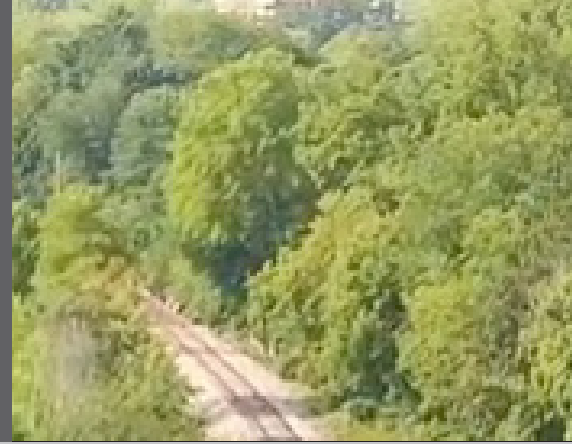
### *First Street Protected Bike Lane*

The DDA is currently in the process of developing designs to restore First Street to a two-way street. As part of this project, a protected bike lane will be installed, which will connect to the Treeline's main spine and serve as a major contribution to Ann Arbor's growing network of safe, non-motorized mobility options.

### *415 Washington*

This City-owned property is a key property along the proposed Treeline trail. The potential for this blighted property has been studied for years and action is now taking place to remove the site's buildings. This action allows great opportunity for the Treeline and other land uses that will benefit the community.





## PROPERTY ACQUISITION

### *410 Miller*

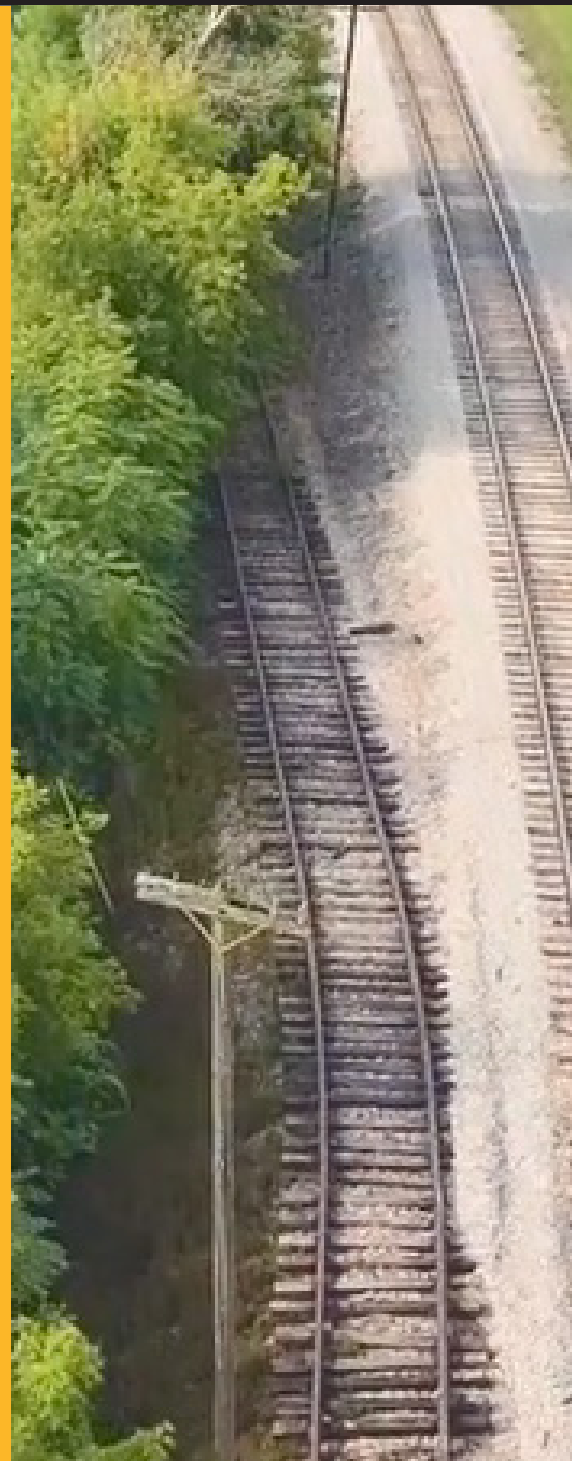
Through an anonymous donation, the Conservancy was able to purchase the stretch of property along the railroad from Felch to Miller. This is a key link between north and south Main. This property also included 410 Miller, a small dilapidated building that had a dangerous and unsightly presence in the City for many years. Since the purchase of the property, the Conservancy has removed the blighted structure, which serves the City's larger interest of providing a safe and beautiful community in addition to making way for the Treeline.



410 Miller demolition



Conceptual pedestrian bridge over Miller



# TOWARDS 2019: A LOOK AHEAD

In the coming year, members of the Treeline Team intend to enter into collaborative agreements and work on actions outlined in the Implementation Plan. Key steps include:



During 2019 the Conservancy is prepared to significantly increase and focus fundraising activities to strengthen its leadership role for the Treeline with the City. Toward this goal, the Conservancy will solicit support from individual donors and from local foundations. In addition, the Conservancy will be developing partnerships with other regional trail advocacy organizations. A primary goal moving forward will be to seek funding for design engineering for the Treeline from Argo Pond to Miller Street.

The Master Plan formalized the concept of the Treeline through extensive public engagement and skilled urban design work. However, the Team must take the project to the next technical level to move it forward. This requires design engineering, which is necessary to determine exactly how the project will be built (that is, making it “shovel ready.”) Once the project is “shovel ready” other funding opportunities become available for capital and maintenance costs. The funding that we will request from leading foundations to support the design engineering will therefore catalyze the project and open up other funding possibilities



Researching and securing additional funding for construction and maintenance. Funding for the Treeline will need to come from a variety of sources and requires a true public/private partnership where funding is facilitated by both the City and partners. City facilitated funding includes legislatively enabled tools that a municipality can use for financing in addition to federal, state and local funding programs geared towards local government. Other funding opportunities include money made available by foundations for use by non-profits along with private donations. Funding sources that will be explored include, but are not limited to, brownfield programs, federal and state transportation funds (the Treeline is now in regional Long Range Transportation Plans, which makes it eligible), Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund, the Connecting Communities program, donations, and sponsorship.



Continuing to build support and generate excitement for the project. The Treeline offers many potential benefits and the Team wants to raise community pride and rally all those who want to help Ann Arbor be a leader in:

- Providing protected walking and biking facilities that allow all residents, including the most vulnerable, to safely move from one end of the City to the other.
- Increasing access to natural areas and green spaces so community members have ample opportunity to experience nature.
- Offering mobility options for communities while providing a network of recreational trails that are connected citywide, countywide, and statewide.
- Creating quality public spaces for the enjoyment of residents and to help attract and retain investment by employers and workers in the new economy.
- Improving stormwater management which will improve neighborhood flooding issues.
- Serving as a model for other communities.