

Hello Erie to Pittsburgh Advocates!

Sections of the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail continue to improve and EPTA continues to accumulate more questions than answers. This is not a bad thing. Individual acts of trail improvement are difficult. When the different acts are combined into the Big Picture, success becomes more apparent.

I am a believer in every action there is a reaction. Connecting two points with a trail establishes responsibilities to maintain that section of trail and will stimulate reactions and questions such as

When will the trail be extended? Why did you spend money on this trail? When will signage improve? Why do you waste money on signs? How can local businesses be helped? How do I get to a nearby trail by public roads? Why is the trail the best maintained local travel way? Why not spend less money on trails and more on roads? Where are the restrooms? Why not more restrooms? Why not better maintained restrooms? Why waste money on restrooms? Why do you not have cell service on the whole trail? And on and on

Answering individual questions is exhausting. Rather than always answering individual questions, I believe in working towards a Strategic Plan that will provide direction to goals and a means to obtain answers. Developing a Strategic Plan is far from a cure all, but as we move forward defining the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail and the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail Alliance we will need to prioritize who we are and what we do. I encourage all to look at the big picture of the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail.

An example is the Northwest PASSages that EPTA is a participant, funder, and submits articles for the monthly publication. EPTA Board decided one of the best ways to promote EPTA in this magazine is to have different organizations write a short article on how the EPTA has helped their trail/organization. This guideline has been followed by most, but there has been some instances where the writers have gone off task and attempt to have the primary subject describing their individual trail/organization with little or no mention of the benefits of EPTA.

As we establish goals and priorities let's also work as a team for the betterment of EPTA. Sometimes this means that your individual trail/organization may seem to be secondary to the big picture, but it is the Big Picture that sets the stage for the individual acts.

Ron Steffey