

Reviewed December 2011

Trails Tools Website

The Trails Toolbox website is associated with the Governor's Olympic Legacy for Trails in Utah Initiative, created in response to Utahns' desire for more and better trails. With all their attributes and varieties of usage, trails and pathways are high priorities for Utah's citizens. Use of trails is perceived as providing opportunities for outdoor recreation, health and fitness, economic benefit to local communities, and quality of life for all. Trails provide access to Utah's outstanding public and private lands for a wide variety of activities including enjoyment of the great outdoors, wildlife, and healthy social interaction in our communities. Nearly half of Utah's citizens use trails regularly, and thus, trails are a significant part of recreational activity, tourism, and lifestyle in Utah.

The State Division of Parks and Recreation and its partners are working to assist in the development and improvement of both motorized and non-motorized trails and pathways throughout the state. The overall objective is to improve the quality of life in Utah through a quality system of trails. Such a system will not only benefit Utah's residents and visiting

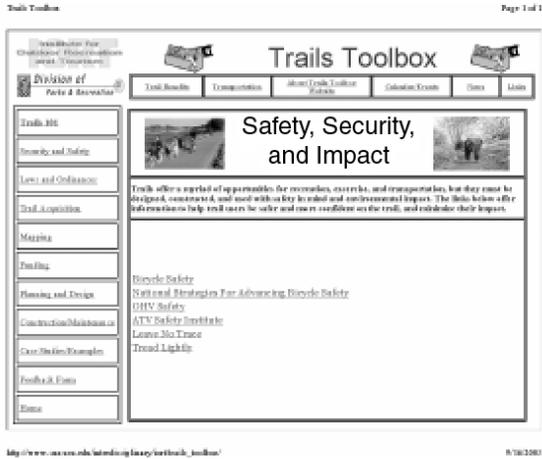
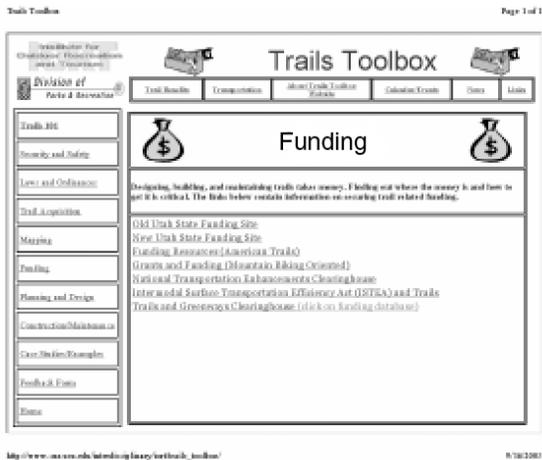
tourists, but also potentially attract professionals, companies, and corporations from outside the state to boost Utah's economic momentum over the long term. The Trails Toolbox Website is part of this effort.

The Steering Committee of the Governor's Olympic Legacy for Trails in Utah Initiative approved a proposal by Utah State University's Institute for Outdoor Recreation and Tourism to develop a web-based Trails Toolbox. The Steering Committee identified the development and provision of a "dynamic trails toolbox" as an important step in establishing an Olympic Legacy for Trails in Utah.

This Trails Toolbox is designed to provide a variety of information and resources related to trails, including such topics as planning, design, construction, funding, social benefits, and much more, in order to

provide useful and relevant information to communities and trails advocates as they plan, design, construct, and maintain trails. "Trails 101," created by the Mountainland Association of Governments, guides trail planners through the planning process from beginning to end. The website also provides valuable information on how to gain community support, find funding, handle legal issues, and acquire new lands for trails. Once such preparations are complete, the website also offers information on construction techniques, use of materials, and how to maintain trails.

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Trails Toolbox website. At the top, it features the logo for the Institute for Outdoor Recreation and Tourism and the Division of Parks & Recreation. The main heading is "Trails Toolbox". Below the heading are navigation tabs for "Trail Benefits", "Transportation", "About Trails Toolbox Website", "Calendar/Events", "News", and "Links". On the left side, there is a vertical menu with links to "Trails 101", "Security and Safety", "Laws and Ordinances", "Trail Acquisition", "Mapping", "Funding", "Planning and Design", "Construction/Maintenance", "Case Studies/Examples", "Feedback Form", and "Home". The main content area includes three images: a forest path, a person carrying a toolbox, and a paved trail. Below these images is the text: "About the Trails Toolbox Website" and "Trails can benefit both individuals and communities by providing recreation, transportation, and opportunities for improving community and economic development. This site was developed to help individuals and communities find the information needed to plan, construct, and enjoy the many benefits of trails."



One of the goals of the website is to provide trail advocates and sponsors with the most accurate and up-to-date information available. We've extensively searched for this information, but also need to rely on feedback from trail planners, developers, and others who can let us know what works and what does not, and direct us to the most current and accurate information available. To obtain feedback, a section on the website requests users to offer their suggestions and comments. These suggestions and comments will help the website be truly dynamic in nature, and change and adapt as needed.

Most of Utah's citizens realize the benefits of trails. The Governor's Olympic Legacy for Trails Initiative is designed to bring those benefits closer to home. As communities begin the trail planning process, information will be needed. Building a quality trail system that serves today's citizens, as well as tomorrow's, can be challenging. The Trails Toolbox is designed to provide information that will help communities meet this challenge.

The Trails Toolbox website is accessible on-line through:

- 1) USU's Institute for Outdoor Recreation and Tourism at www.cnr.usu.edu/iort under "Web-Based Resources"
- 2) Utah State Parks and Recreation at www.stateparks.utah.gov under "Trails"

**Institute for
Outdoor Recreation and Tourism,
Utah State University
5220 Old Main Hill
Logan, Utah 84322-5220**

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