



CITY OF HELENA OPEN LANDS DEPARTMENT

316 North Park Avenue, Room 405

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**Environmental Analysis Form
City of Helena Open Lands Department**

**1. Proposed Project Name:
Easy Rider Trail Relocation Project**

**2. Division:
Open Lands**

**3. Date:
11-28-2022**

PART I – PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION

**1. Type of Proposed Action:
Trail Construction**

2. Department Contact:

Name: Brad Langsather, Open Lands Manager

Address: 316 North Park Avenue, Helena, MT 59623

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Email Address: blangsather@helenamt.gov

3. Anticipated Schedule: (change as necessary):

Estimated Project Commencement Date: 04-01-2023

Estimated Completion Date: 05-31-2023

Current Status of Project Design (% complete): 0%

Summarize precisely when (what time of year) project phases will be completed:

Winter/Early Spring 2023 – Field Location

Spring/Early Summer 2023 – Construction

A property line survey has determined that a portion of the Easy Rider Trail located within Mount Ascension Natural Park is currently located on privately owned property. As a remedy for the Easy Rider Trail encroachment situation, City staff proposes to relocate the trail just north of its existing geographic position to ensure it resides fully on property owned by the City of Helena. To accomplish this task, City staff proposes to machine construct approximately 750 feet of new trail that will be around 10 feet in width.

4. Location affected by proposed action. Include a map. If your project will take place on specific trails, ensure they are clearly identified here by name as well as on your map:

The new trail construction route will be located just north of the private encroachment portion of the Easy Rider Trail which currently consists of a native surfaced road route capable of facilitating vehicular traffic. Due to the fact that the new trail will depart from a road segment with an approximate width of 12 feet, travel approximately 750 feet and rejoin a functional road segment with a width of 12 feet, the new trail segment will be constructed to achieve a width of 10 feet. Please reference EXHIBIT A, Easy Rider Trail Relocation Project Map.

Latitude 46.572605

Longitude -112.025201

5. Project Size: Estimate the number of acres that would be directly affected that are currently:

a. DEVELOPED

Residential: NA

Industrial (existing shop area): NA

b. OPEN SPACE/WOODLANDS/RECREATION

Open Space /Woodlands/Recreation: Approximately 750 feet in length x 10 feet in width.

c. WETLANDS/RIPARIAN AREA

Wetlands/Riparian Area: NA

d. FLOODPLAIN

Floodplain: NA

e. PRODUCTIVE: IRRIGATED CROPLAND

Productive Irrigated Cropland: NA

f. DRY CROPLAND

Forestry: NA

Rangeland: NA

Other:

6. Permits, Funding, and Overlapping Jurisdiction

a. PERMITS

Agency Name: NA

Permits:

Agency Name:

Permits:

Agency Name:

Permits:

b. FUNDING

Agency Name: NA

Funding Amount:

Agency Name:

Funding Amount:

Agency Name:

Funding Amount:

c. OTHER OVERLAPPING OR ADDITIONAL JURISDICTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Agency Name: NA

Type of Responsibility:

Agency Name:

Type of Responsibility:

7. Narrative summary of the proposed action (include reasons why this project is necessary and the benefits of the project:

The Easy Rider Trail is an extremely popular recreational trail located within Mount Ascension Natural Park which is owned and managed by the City of Helena. Recently, a property survey requested by City open lands Division staff revealed the fact that a portion of the trail approximately 750 feet in length is located on adjacent privately owned property. The owners of the adjacent property have formally requested that the City of Helena move the trespass portion of the Easy Rider Trail to a location where it resides entirely on City ownership. Therefore, City staff proposes to construct a new trail route approximately 750 feet in length and 10 feet in width.

8. Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives:

Alternative A: No Action

In the event that no action is taken with regards to the proposed Easy Rider trail relocation project, City staff will be legally obligated to close and gate that portion of the Easy Rider Trail that resides on private ownership. Closure of the existing trail will undoubtedly result in the creation of a user created route that bypasses the closed segment.

Alternative B: Proposed Action

Implementation of the proposed reroute of an approximate 750 foot portion of the Easy Rider Trail will allow a popular recreational route to remain in service. Construction activities would be organized to allow for uninterrupted use by ensuring that the new route is serviceable when the old route is gated off.

Other Alternatives:

NA

9. Evaluation and listing of mitigation, stipulation, or other control measures enforceable by the agency or another governmental agency (note any agreements or contracts that would provide control measures of define responsibilities here):

The City of Helena Parks Department would be fully responsible for locating and constructing the aforementioned relocation segment of the Easy Rider Trail.

PART II – ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CHECKLIST - Please include a statement either here or under “no action and other alternatives” to describe the impacts of those actions. The checklist typically only illuminates the Proposed Action Impacts.

Evaluation of the impacts of the Proposed Action including secondary and cumulative impacts on the Physical and Human Environment Tables.

a. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Will the proposed action result in potential impacts to:	Unknown	Potentially Significant	Minor	None	Can be Mitigated	COMMENTS PROVIDED
1. Geology and soil quality, stability and moisture			✓		✓	Grass seed cut/fill slopes, out slope, establish drainage
2. Air quality or objectionable odors				✓		
3. Water quality, quantity and distribution (surface or groundwater)			✓		✓	Out slope the trail prism and install drainage features where appropriate.
4. Existing water right or reservation				✓		
5. Vegetation cover, quantity and quality			✓		✓	Grass seed cut/fill slopes following the completion of construction activities.
6. Unique, endangered, or fragile vegetative species	✓				✓	Conduct a sensitive plant survey prior to the implementation of trail construction activities.
7. Unique, endangered, or fragile wildlife or fisheries species				✓		
8. The nesting or movement of migratory bird species	✓				✓	Conduct a nest search within the impacted area prior to the onset of trail construction activities.
9. Introduction of new species into an area				✓		
10. Changes to abundance or movement of species				✓		

Evaluation of the impacts of the Proposed Action including secondary and cumulative impacts on the Physical and Human Environment Tables.

PART III – NARRATIVE EVALUATION AND COMMENT

1. Summarize the impacts of the proposed action and address any cumulative impacts:

The identified impacts of implementing the Easy Rider Relocation project are either nonexistent or minor in nature.

PART IV – PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

1. Public Involvement: Describe how the public is/will be notified to comment on this current EA, the proposed action, and alternatives. If your project work might affect neighboring landowners, have they been contacted?

- Major trailheads posting and/or project site, email to stakeholder list maintained by the City, posting on City website, brief news release, and City social media.
- At least one on-site, or in-neighborhood meeting with stakeholders by City staff, if requested and if deemed appropriate.
- Public notice of the draft, revised draft, and final project analysis on the City’s web page and social media sites. All project analysis documents will be made available to the public on the City of Helena web page.
- A maximum of three public meetings (per public involvement process for HOL Recreation Major projects)

2. Comment Period: Have you provided a formal, 30-day public comment period for this project? If so, when was the comment period and how were comments solicited? What was the outcome of the comments?

Ongoing

3. This level of public notice and participation is appropriate for a project of this scope having limited impact, many of which can be mitigated. Is this a true statement for your project? YES NO