

WHITEFISH RIVER TRAIL

Working to close trail gaps to provide a continuous, accessible, car-free 5-mile trail and park network so that kids, families, seniors and people of all abilities can safely move along the Whitefish River, from City Beach to Highway 40.



Safe Trails Whitefish is leading a community-driven effort to complete the Whitefish River Trail network. For more than 40 years, the Whitefish community has envisioned a safe, continuous, non-motorized trail along the Whitefish River serving as the backbone of a trail system that connects City Beach to neighborhoods throughout our community. While almost 3 miles of the 5-mile trail have been completed, the remaining segments—perhaps the most challenging—still need to be planned, designed, and built. The portions that remain are spread out over four key critical gaps that force users onto busy streets, highways, and informal routes across private property.

As Whitefish grows, closing these gaps becomes more expensive, difficult, and more dangerous to leave unaddressed. The time to complete this trail is now. Safe Trails Whitefish is working closely with City staff, council, committees, the community and landowners to be the ‘boots-on-the-ground’ effort to close the gaps and complete the River Trail.

JOIN US: We invite you to be a part of completing one of Whitefish’s most important community assets. We can’t do this without your support. Every dollar helps move us from concept to construction. Together, we can move this project from vision to reality, segment by segment. *100% of the donations will go to Outdoor Community Partners to support the Safe Trails Whitefish initiative.*



SCAN TO DONATE

Reach out to learn more about opportunities for legacy contributions, recognition, and naming.

DONATE ONLINE

safetrailswhitefish.com/support

Outdoor Community Partners
c/o Safe Trails Initiative
PO Box 4585, Whitefish, MT 59937
Organization EIN: 92-2417749
406-730-7379

PROJECT TIMELINE

- + **Winter 2025/2026:** Perform due diligence and research on the properties the trail is planned to cross, and assess the status of development.
- + **Spring 2026:** Capture the LiDAR data and imagery needed to route the missing trail gap segments.
- + **Summer 2026:** Begin designing trail gap segments and working parcel-by-parcel to negotiate final easements and designs.
- + **Next Phases:** As each segment’s design is finalized, plans will move into engineering, permitting and construction phases.

CORE PROJECT TEAM



Diane Conradi

Executive Director of Outdoor Community Partners

Project-lead, administrative, strategy, policy, legal, fundraising



Rachel Schmidt

Public outreach, City liaison, community meetings



Bruce Boody

Landscape architect, trail and park design, River Trail historian



Jen Saucier

Design, promotion, data sourcing, planning, project management




Andy Evensen

Civil Engineer

STAY INFORMED

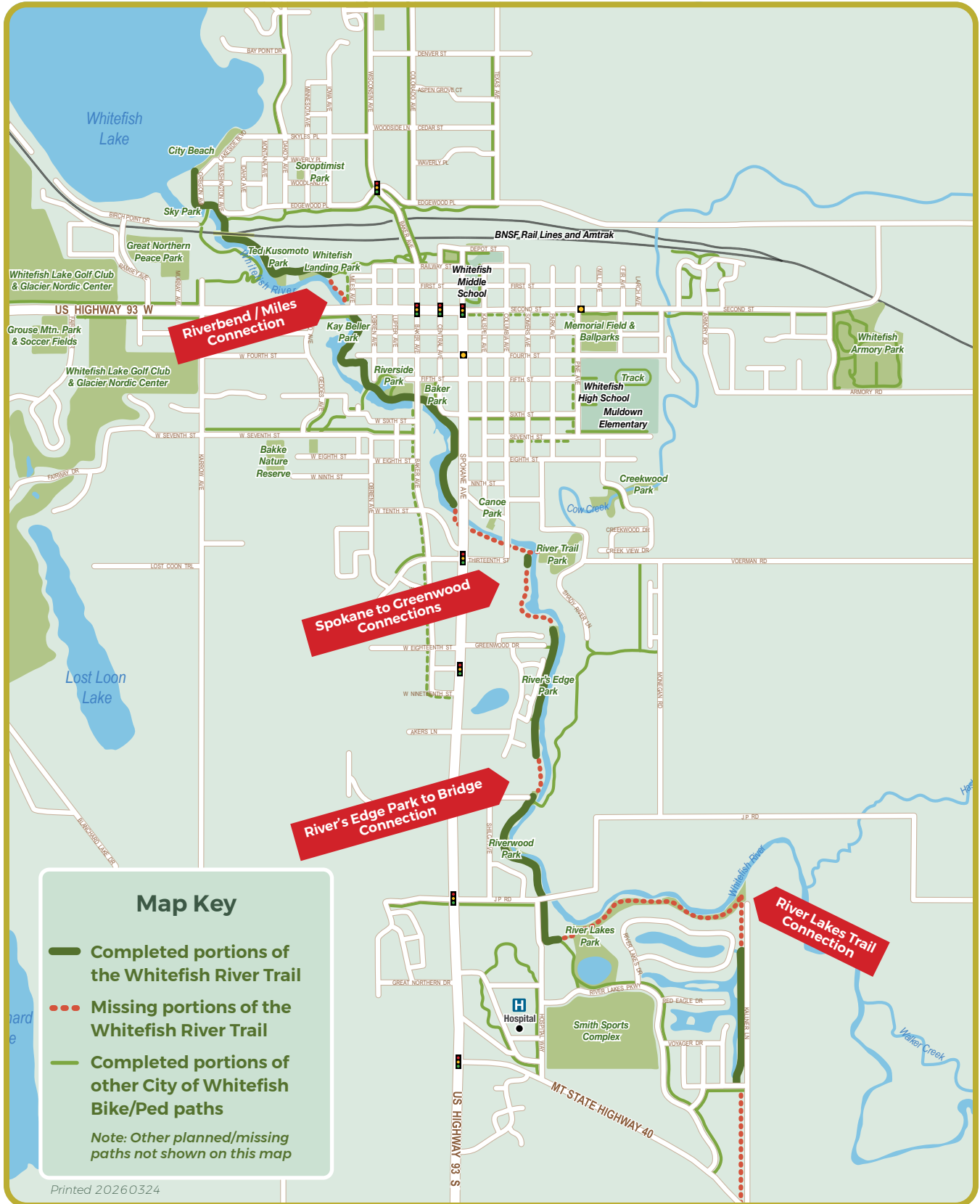
 Follow us on Instagram and Facebook @[safetrailswhitefish](https://www.facebook.com/safetrailswhitefish)

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Whitefish Photos © Drew Silvers

CLOSING THE GAPS ON THE WHITEFISH RIVER TRAIL

Completing a 40+ year community vision for a safe, accessible, non-motorized trail



RIVER LAKES CITY PARK

Safe Trails Whitefish is leading a multi-phase, multi-year project to design and build-out **River Lakes City Park**, which includes a key Whitefish River Trail segment. This park sits adjacent to The Springs assisted living and memory care facility and near Logan Health, Smith Fields, North Valley Music School, and growing neighborhoods. Springs residents currently rely on a nearby car-free path for daily walking and mobility, but proposed changes would introduce multiple vehicle crossings. This project will help protect and enhance safe outdoor access by planning a senior-friendly park and trail environment that improves quality of life for vulnerable residents while expanding recreational opportunities for the broader community.

This project will deliver lasting community and economic benefits by expanding access to safe, inclusive, and connected outdoor recreation in Whitefish. The park and trail will provide a car-free route for youth and families traveling to and from sports facilities, improving safety while encouraging active transportation. It will preserve the only remaining vehicle-free area adjacent to The Springs, which is essential for residents who are hypersensitive to traffic and rely on calm, pedestrian-only environments. By linking City Beach, Smith Fields, and nearby neighborhoods, the project strengthens connections to the Whitefish Trail and future regional trail systems, advancing long-standing community goals.

Thoughtful park design will create a welcoming outdoor space that supports physical activity, emotional well-being, and social connection for older adults, young families, and people living with physical or cognitive impairments.

PROJECT TIMELINE

PHASE I - PLANNING & ADOPTION

+ **Winter 2025/2026:** Community engagement, meetings with City Staff and Mayor, presentation to Bike/Ped committee, public comment to Park Board.

+ **Spring 2026:** Capture the LiDAR data and imagery needed to plan the park, route the trail, and design enhanced road crossings.

+ **Summer 2026:** Finalize concept plan

+ **Fall 2026:** Submit River Lakes Area Park and Trails Concept Plan to Park Board for adoption.

PHASE II - BUILD-OUT

+ After adoption by the City's Park Board, Safe Trails Whitefish will foster the concept plan through into a River Lakes Park Master Plan, where it can then be bid out for construction and completion.

PROJECT BUDGET

PHASE I - **Approximately \$70,000**

PHASE II - **TBD**

WE NEED YOUR HELP

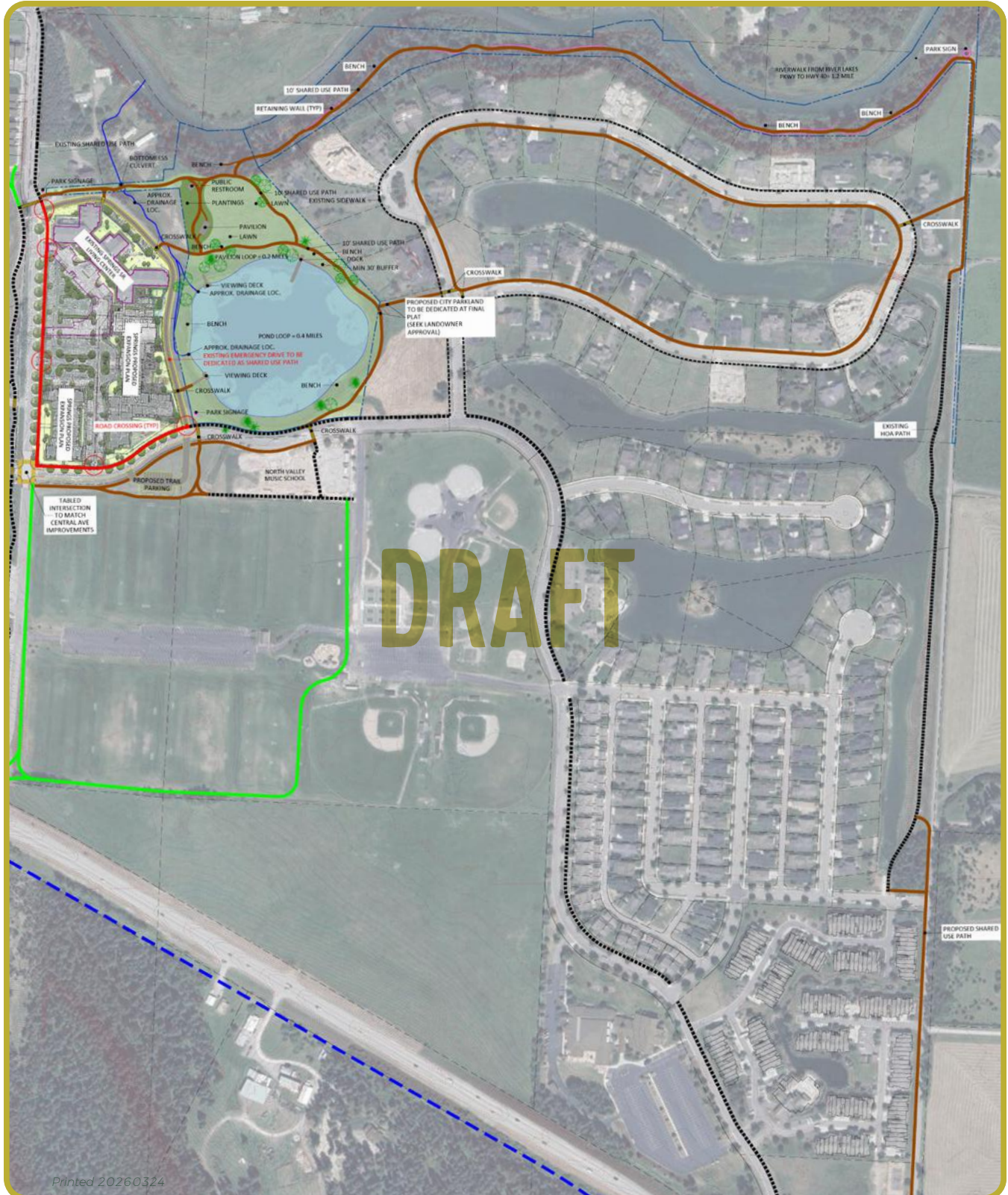
Safe Trails Whitefish is raising funds for multiple projects, including the completion of the Whitefish River Trail. Every dollar helps! Donate online at safetrailswhitefish.com/donate



All donations go to Outdoor Community Partners to support the Safe Trails Whitefish initiative.

RIVER LAKES PARK AREA & TRAILS CONCEPT PLAN

Creating a safe, connected, nature-based park for youth, families, and seniors in the River Lakes neighborhood.





This trail is not just for recreation—for a resident at The Springs, it is daily independence; for a child biking to Smith Fields or City Beach, it is safety; for families, it is connection.



SAFE TRAILS WHITEFISH

Safe Trails Whitefish is a community partnership dedicated to completing a safe, connected multi-use park, trail and path system for all ages and abilities. We will support our paths and trails through community engagement, education, advocacy, technical assistance, and leadership. Safe Trails Whitefish is an initiative of Outdoor Community Partners, a Montana non-profit 501(c)(3) organization based in Whitefish.

SAFE TRAILS WHITEFISH ADVISORS

Bruce Boody	Casey Malmquist	Rachel Schmidt
Diane Conradi	Kate McMahon	Julie Tickle
Michael Fitzgerald	John Repke	
Richard Hildner	Jen Saucier	

SCAN TO DONATE



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