

Billings TrailNet Strategic Plan 2024-2026

Introduction

This planning document outlines the history of the organization, its mission, vision, and the guiding strategic priorities as identified by the Board of Directors for the next two years. The purpose of strategic planning process and the priorities developed from the process is to create a guiding document for focusing the organization on goals and allows board and staff to develop plans that will work toward meeting those goals.

A strategic plan is an evolving document that is reviewed and revised on a regular basis. It serves as a guide for future focus of the organization and allows the organization to be proactive instead of engaging in tasks randomly. The strategic plan directs the allocation of organizational resources toward achieving those priorities. Creating, maintaining, and revising the strategic plan also enables the organization to measure its progress and success. It is recommended that the plan be reviewed annually to assure priorities continue to be in alignment. Every two years, the board and staff should conduct a more in-depth planning session to evaluate the priorities and determine shifts needed in organizational priorities.

Executive Summary

On March 9, 2024, Billings TrailNet's Board and staff met to consider the direction of the organization over the next two years. Billings TrailNet has been a driving force in the promotion and development of a multiuse trail system in the Billings area. The lists of accomplishments offered by board and staff prior to the session were comprehensive and remarkable. The list of additional desired objectives was just as impressive. In short, this is an organization with extraordinary accomplishments and grand plans – exactly the type of people needed to tackle such an important mission.

This session was an initial step toward clarifying primary strategic priorities for Billings TrailNet to work toward over the next couple of years and determine what this organization wants to do; how will it accomplish the goals; and how will it measure progress.

Billings TrailNet has done a lot, continues to do a lot, and wants to do more. The purpose of this plan is to refine the focus on chosen goals – not to ignore the rest, but elevate these goals to provide better focus and direction.

The process used to develop the priorities included looking at the organization's current mission and vision. An exercise was conducted to identify community partner organizations and recognize their efforts that support their work, determine how best to collaborate effectively and to promote working relationship to enhance their efforts.

Board and staff reviewed the roles and responsibilities of the board, board committees, and staff.

The plan generally starts with strategic statements, and an organization's **vision and mission**.

5 Steps of the Strategic Planning Process

1. Determine the organization's strategic mission/vision.
2. Prioritize the organization's objectives.
3. Develop the strategic plan.
4. Adopt, execute and manage the plan.
5. Review and revise the plan yearly.

Strategic plans are not inflexible documents. Rather, they are living documents. Internal and external environments change and circumstances can be unforeseen. Revisiting, modifying, and updating will always be necessary.

Benefits of use in grant writing, fundraising, friend-raising, sponsorships, education

- **Grant writing:** Funders look to see if the organization has a sound strategic plan that aligns well with the funder's mission. It gives the funder assurance that the organization has a sound operating guide.
- **Fundraising:** Donors look to support organizations that are well-thought out and have a strong board of directors. Showing the organization is doing thoughtful work give them confidence in the organization's ability to carry out the mission and projects.
- **Friend-raising:** Individuals will seek out organizations that match their values. It's a marketing tool to show the organization's intentions. By providing a strategic plan with a mission, vision and priorities the organization will attract additional supporters, volunteers, and advocates.
- **Sponsorships:** Corporations may ask for the organization's strategic plan as part of their review process. An up to date, well developed plan will earn higher considerations for giving.
- **Education:** The strategic plan functions as an education piece that conveys the purpose and background of the organization to educate the public. It also serves as marketing tool.

A survey conducted prior to strategic planning provided a starting point to address key themes. Utilizing SMART goals the board groups were asked to discuss the big themes and their relationship to the organization's mission and vision.

SMART Goals

Specific

Measurable

Achievable

Realistic

Timely

Organization Description/history

Since 1996, The City of Billings has been developing multiuse trails. The trail system has grown steadily with the help of Billings TrailNet, and within 20 years, had built more than 50 miles of shared use paths.

- **1994** The City of Billings created a trail plan and called it the "BikeNet Plan," and shortly thereafter, the nonprofit BikeNet was created to help with funding.
- **1996** The first trail to be built from the BikeNet plan was the Kiwanis Trail using federal grant money plus local donations.
- The Federal Community Transportation Enhancement Program was the major source of funding the City of Billings used to develop trails.
- **1999** Voters passed a General Obligation Bond which gave \$600,00 to trails and \$1M for parks.
- **2000** After a few big trails were built with the bond money, Ales for Trails was created to raise more local money.
 - The first Ales for Trails was a bikes-and-brewns fundraiser, and committee member Mike Tuss came up with the name, "Ales for Trails." It started under Skypoint with a few hundred people and a few thousand dollars raised
- **2003** BikeNet gave its first donation of \$5,000 to help build the Descro Park Trail.
- **By 2008** Billings had 35 miles of trails
- Bike/ped interest and trails make big advances in **2009**:
 - The Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) was established to advise local elected officials about issues related to walking biking and rolling; and the BikeNet plan was updated and renamed the Heritage Trail Plan.
 - Billings Public Works developed a multiuse path along Zimmerman Trail as it enhanced the road.
 - Trail use counters were placed on trails to gather valuable data. There was an average 102 trail users per day.
 - Billings Chamber of Commerce championed trails and came up with the concept of The Marathon Loop. The Chamber made "Trails" a strategic priority and established the Chamber Trails Committee.
- **2010** Ales for Trails grew large enough to hire a coordinator to run the event. The board of directors hired grad student, Kristi Drake to run the event. She moved Ales from The Depot to Dehler Park. That year, Ales for Trails raised \$49,000.
- **2011** New bike/ped policies were enacted in the city.
 - The Complete Streets Policy advised the city to add nonmotorized transportation facilities when feasible during road construction or reconstruction.
 - The Heritage Trail Plan was also updated again and renamed Billings Area Bikeway and Trail Master Plan.

- **2012** BikeNet hired its first Executive Director. She was to manage Ales for Trails and start a membership program. (Popup graphic: Ales for Trails raised \$58,000)
- **2013** BikeNet hired a second full time employee to promote active transportation: AmeriCorps member, Elyse Monat.
 - Membership income jumped from \$10 for the year to \$12,000 when the membership program was introduced.
 - BikeNet formed a Trail Development Committee to identify which trails their members wanted to develop, and BikeNet also initiated the Commuter Challenge in partnership with City County Planning and Healthy by Design.
- **2014** BikeNet partnered with Public Works to encourage safe & friendly biking/driving interactions. Members were featured in the ads.
- **2015** BikeNet changed its name to Billings TrailNet to be more representative of the organization's mission.
- **2016** Billings TrailNet devised a plan to build the Skyline Trail.
 - Ales for Trails raised \$82,000.
 - Outside Magazine declared Billings as the Best Town in America!
 - Billings TrailNet created a second event with the intention of encouraging bike riding, especially to women. The event is called the Tour de Fleur and is produced every spring.
- **2017** Billings TrailNet hired a second employee to coordinate Ales for Trails, the membership program and volunteers
 - BTN also paid for the engineering of the Skyline Trail.
 - Ales for Trails raised \$91,000
- **2018** Billings TrailNet installed a restroom at Zimmerman Park.
- **2019** The first section of the Skyline Trail at Zimmerman Park was paved; a pedestrian underpass was built under Zimmerman Trail and an interpretive sign was installed.
 - A big gift from a donor, Dick Charbonneau, provided groundbreaking trail progress and another section of the Skyline Trail was built. Billings TrailNet also pursued public funding for trails and safe routes to school.
 - The Covid pandemic had a major effect on trails. While the city's trail network had grown to 50 miles, it also saw double the trail use.
- **2020** Billings counted 127 trail users per day on the trails and Billings TrailNet hosted a virtual Ales for Trails.
- **2021** Billings was awarded a \$23 million grant to build a Skyline Trail and Inner Belt Loop. Billings TrailNet celebrated its 20th Ales for Trails and began visioning the next big trail.
- **2022** Through generous donations by individuals and our fundraisers like Ales for Trails, Billings TrailNet has contributed more than \$750,000 to the City of Billings for trails and trail amenities. Billings TrailNet was awarded a \$100K Recreational Trails Program Grant

to repair and repave the Lillis Park Trail (AKA Arnold Drain Trail). This project is a partnership between City Parks and Recreation and Billings TrailNet.

- **2023** Billings was awarded a \$4.7 million grant to build the Stagecoach Trail. The city must come up with \$800K match to be eligible to receive the funds, and Billings TrailNet pledged \$100K to help with this. The city was also awarded \$100K from the Trail Stewardship Grant Program to help with the matching funds. It is hoped City Council will approve \$600K in their FY 2025 budget for the rest of the match. The Skyline Trail was officially opened for the public to use in fall 2023.
- **2024** Billings TrailNet was awarded a \$84K Recreational Trails Program Grant to extend the Big Ditch Trail. This project is also a partnership between City Parks and Recreation and Billings TrailNet.

Trail Facts

- Most trails in Billings were built prior to 2012, by federal transportation funding designated for non-motorized transportation. The program was called CTEP: (Community Transportation Enhancement Program)
- Billings TrailNet operates like a foundation by raising funds and giving them to the City of Billings to support funding gaps or required matching dollars for trail building
- Trails now are funded by:
 - federal grants
 - some trails paid by property taxes during street maintenance and development
- The trail system is called the Heritage Trail System
- Billings TrailNet does not own the trails or the land the trails are on. Most are on public right-of-way or in parks.
- Billings TrailNet does not physically build trails with volunteers. The City of Billings does the trail building.
- Billings TrailNet does not decide where the trails go; the City of Billings plans where trails go.
- There is a trail plan called The Billings Area Bikeway and Trails Master Plan. It can be accessed by the public on the city of Billings' website at <https://ci.billings.mt.us/DocumentCenter/View/34091/Billings-Bikeway-and-Trails-Master-Plan>
- The Marathon Loop is a 26.2 mile loop around the city which will be about 80% complete as soon as the Skyline Trail is constructed. The Marathon Loop includes the Shiloh Trail on the west end, the Swords Park Trail on the north end, the Jim Dutcher Trail on the east side, and Riverfront Park on the south side.
- The Skyline Trail extends the Swords Park trail all the way to Zimmerman Trail.
- The next big trail in our radar is the Stagecoach Trail, which would get people from Rimrock Road to Highway 3, so they can enjoy Zimmerman Park and the entire beautify of the rims.

- Connecting the Marathon Loop around the city will provide great access to the trail system all over the city
- We must have amenities to attract and retain residents

Billings TrailNet, (formerly BikeNet) is a non-profit, 501c3, grass-roots organization that supports urban trails in and around the Billings community. The organization advocates to enhance the existing trail network and to expand that network to provide better connections throughout Billings – increasing recreational opportunities and transportation options. Billings TrailNet is a source of consistent messaging to federal, state, and local leaders on the importance of multimodal trails for health and safety, the economy, the environment, and the overall quality of life. Through public campaigns and with events like Ales for Trails and the Tour de Fleur, Billings TrailNet increases awareness and encourages use of the trails in our community and raises money to use as matching funds for trail planning and development.

Billings TrailNet is managed by 12 Board of Directors and two staff members.

Mission

To promote a complete, community-wide trail system.

Vision

The Billings area is a premier community for healthy lifestyles, where active transportation and recreation are safe and integral parts of everyday activity.

There is no local public funding dedicated to building trails. Unlike streets and sidewalks which are simply built into a city, most trails in Billings are not provided by taxpayer dollars. If we don't have money for trails, we don't get connections to neighborhoods, parks, or businesses. Since 2002, Billings TrailNet has raised more than \$1M to promote trails in Billings and has given the city more than \$945,000 for trails.

Most 10 foot-wide multiuse paved trails cost approximately \$450,000 per mile to build. But the Skyline and Stagecoach Trail are significantly more due to unique topographical features.

Billings TrailNet seeks to:

- Increase the amount and connectivity of trails and bikeways.
- Influence community's views about trails so they see trails as necessary to everyday life and considered a primary part of infrastructure.
- Promote the increased use of trails and an active lifestyle.
- Develop and encourage community collaboration on active transportation.

- Support the maintenance of trails system.
- Grow Billings TrailNet's identity.
- Develop and expand the organization.

SWOT Analysis

Billings TrailNet completed a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats analysis for the organization and below are the results.

STRENGTHS

1. The people
 - a. Board and staff are a strong team committed to the mission
 - b. Credibility, personal connections, leverage, and reputation
2. Fundraising
 - a. Ales for Trails and other successful member events
 - b. Generous members and corporate sponsors.
3. Partners
 - a. Well-connected and diverse partner organizations and individuals
4. Advocacy
5. Trails System as it currently exists
6. Good product, non-controversial
7. Policies that favor trails in subdivisions and along arterials (ie, Complete Streets Policy)

WEAKNESSES

1. Education of the general public
 - a. Who Billings TrailNet is
 - b. How Trail Funding Works
 - c. How Trails are built
2. Elected officials are not always educated nor bought in to trail issues
3. Committees are not integrated and are unfocused
4. Limited staff bandwidth

OPPORTUNITIES

1. Can expand community partnerships, corporate partnerships & key community influencers
2. Can capitalize on existing grant funding, private and public funding opportunities
3. Can increase membership and involvement of members
4. Can increase youth involvement
5. Can increase public awareness, advocacy and PR opportunities
6. Can explore additional revenue sources
7. Can change public leadership

THREATS

1. People don't know who we are
2. Funding- no permanent source of funding for trails – reliant on Grants and Fundraising
3. Developments without sidewalks and trails – difficult to add back after development is complete
4. Affordable Housing Movement can be in opposition of trails as part of development

Strategic Priorities

1. Pursue trail development

a. Ensure Stagecoach Trail is built (Task Force)

- Develop a task force which will develop public awareness, education, plan to attend city council.

b. Complete priority list of trail projects (Future Projects Committee?)

- Identify list of potential projects, issue surveys, meeting to review surveys, analyze costs, compare with CIP and county planning, categorize projects based on that information.

2. Activate, engage & empower the community to support trail development (Kristi)

a. Develop a plan to activate and engage community support, including:

- Increase public awareness of trail funding
- Inform public about Billings TrailNet's projects- past and future
- Implement training meetings for advocacy: how to write a letter, speak to city council, starter kit. More interactive website. Starter kit with link to template, link to YouTube video.
- Host quarterly membership meetings/Educate and engage members through consistent membership meetings
- Add involvement in other organizations' events (Library's bike corral, piggy backing on other events)
- Celebrate successes large and small
- Make a 12-month marketing plan
- Review communication efficiency- target certain groups for content? Are we sending too much information to people?
- Spotlight individual members in electronic media
- Increase youth involvement through:
 - YBGR
 - High schools
 - Parent groups
- Use Stagecoach and Skyline Trails as opportunities to publicize our wins

3. Stabilize funding for BTN operation and trail development (Fundraising Committee?)

a. Develop and implement a plan to raise funding for trail development and internal operations, including:

- Develop clearly defined membership growth goals
- Advocate for sustainable trail development funding at the city, county and state
- Find economic data and details
- Grow partnerships with other organizations in different communities
- Develop, implement and maintain fundraising for trail development
- Continue investment strategies
- Continue hosting financially successful events

b. Explore additional revenue sources. Some ideas:

- Sales of services
- Workshops
- Tours

4. **Influence policies to fund trail development in Billings (Advocacy Committee?)**
 - a. Increase public awareness of who Billings TrailNet is
 - b. Engage and activate our members
 - c. **Foster personal relationships with government and elected officials**
 - d. **State Level**
 - i. Change State Trails Advisory Committee – educate & correct bias
 - ii. Change state statutes in favor of trails:
 - identify state statutes affecting trails
 - develop proposed state statutes
 - find out when and how to implement changed statutes
 - engage state partners, members, corporate partners and public
 - advocate letters, PSA, PR, marketing, events
 - e. **City/County**
 - i. Change city/county codes/ordinances/policies to favor/include trails
 - be on government advisory boards
 - identify codes and policies affecting trails
 - develop proposed changes
 - find out when and how to implement code and policy changes
 - engage community partners, members, corporate partners and public
 - collectively advocate: letters, PSA, PR, marketing, events
 - Change the codes to eliminate developments without sidewalks and trails
 - Work with County Commissioners who are not typically supportive of trails
 - Policy opportunities
 - Zoning, county laws- change code, statutory requirements for trail to be built
 - Land use- what should be required in land use
 - When they update the zoning code, we need to advocate (Morgan)
 - add trail- cost is spread throughout the homes
 - put a trail in; increase density by x% (incentives)
 - f. **Influence elected officials/staff**
 - identify which officials promote trail development
 - affect officials to promote trail development
5. **Improve board direction and coordination between committees**
 - a. Strategic Plan should inform committees’ work with board oversight
 - b. Have measurable goals for each committee
 - c. Facilitate collaboration between committees to achieve strategic goals
 - d. Have accountability for the goals

Strategic Partners

Big Sky Economic Development
 City of Billings
 Mayor and Council
 Planning

Parks and Recreation
 Public Works
 Bicycle and Pedestrian
 Advisory Committee

Billings Chamber
VisitBillings
Downtown Billings Alliance
Yellowstone River Parks Association
YMCA
Healthcare
 Billings Clinic
 Saint Vincent Healthcare
 RiverStone Health
Business Community
 Billings Area Realtors
 Architects & Engineers
 Hospitality
Healthy by Design
Friends of Billings Dog Parks
Pedal United
Living Independently for Today &
Tomorrow (LIFTT)

Eagle Mount
Yellowstone RimRunners
State of Montana
 Dept of Transportation
 Fish, Wildlife, and Parks
Billings Schools
Bureau of Land Management
Yellowstone County
 County Commissioners
 MetraPark
 County Parks Department
Montana Legislature
Partners for Parks Foundation
St. John's
Adult Resource Alliance
AARP
Bike Walk Montana

Roles and Responsibilities

Board Member Responsibilities:

Board Members set the direction, vision, mission and strategic priorities of the organization while being fiscally responsible with organizational resources. Each member is responsible to oversee the overall operations, health and wellbeing of the organization.

Specifically, each board member is expected to:

1. Assure that resources and structures are in place to accomplish Billings TrailNet's mission and goals. This includes making operational policies, supporting planning and goal setting efforts, setting and monitoring a realistic budget, consistently attending Board and Committee meetings, etc.
2. Assist the Board in carrying out its fiduciary responsibilities with utmost integrity.
3. Support and articulate Billings TrailNet's mission accurately and effectively. This includes staying informed about Billings TrailNet's programs and keeping up to date on community transportation and trails issues.
4. Volunteer on at least one of Billings TrailNet's program committees (Events, Fundraising, Future Projects or Advocacy)

In addition, each board member agrees to:

- Hold Billings TrailNet accountable by listening to constituents and sharing their views back to the Board.
- Pay annual membership dues and make an additional personally meaningful financial contribution to Billings TrailNet.

- Attend regularly scheduled board meetings, special meetings, the Annual Meeting, and any scheduled Board training sessions.
- Keep confidential information confidential.
- Exercise authority as a Board member only when acting in a meeting with the full Board or as the Board delegates.

Board members serve on the board for a two-year term.

Appendix- Board of Directors

Kolten Knatterud- President, Future Projects Committee Chair

Kolten Knatterud is a dynamic Professional Engineer and Partner with IMEG Corp, an engineering design firm that offers comprehensive technical expertise and collaborative partnerships.

Kolten enjoys working on issues that impact the community, both from a private and government perspective, taking great pride in being part of the solution. Kolten is a dedicated team member and community contributor who participates on the Billings Home Builders Board of Directors, Montana Building Industry Association Board of Directors, and Billings TrailNet Board of Directors.

Kolten assisted with the grant funding applications for Clark's Crossing and the Western Sugar Easement to enhance the trail system along the Yellowstone River. In addition to this work, he has participated on the Billings Chamber Trails Committee and was a previous Billings Chamber Board Director.

Steve Neary- Vice President

Growing up in Montana, Steve Neary's appreciation for active outdoor living was born in Butte, America where a day biking and hiking around the mines with friends lasted from dawn until dusk. While those long outdoor days now include skiing, rafting and golfing with his wife Tracy, adult children PJ & Victoria and teenage daughter, Addison, a bad day outside is still almost better than the best days inside for him.

Steve taught all three of his kids how to ride a bicycle on Billings streets and trails which he says have improved dramatically over time. Steve describes his passions as his family and riding (MTB & Road) and says he's grateful for the work Billings TrailNet has done creating a foundation of healthy living by integrating trails into our community. He is excited for the opportunity to serve our community through the work of Billings TrailNet.

On the professional front, Steve graduated from MSU-Billings with a Bachelor of Science in Information Systems in 1993 and began his professional career at Computers Unlimited before transitioning to the healthcare environment at St. Vincent Healthcare in 2005. He currently works as an Integration Developer with Intermountain Healthcare.

Morgan Tuss- Secretary

Morgan Tuss was born in Billings, Montana. She finished her undergraduate degrees at Montana State University Billings, and she completed her law degree at the University of North Dakota School of Law.

Morgan works for the law firm of Patten, Peterman, Bekkedahl & Green, P.L.L.C., doing transactional and estate work.

She grew up in a historic neighborhood of Billings and now lives on a small plot of land in west Billings where she enjoys her horses, dogs, and cats!

Morgan enjoys the mountains and the rivers and also local breweries, dining, and concerts. Having grown up in Billings and beginning her career here, Morgan has a strong understanding of the needs of our community and is excited about fostering and encouraging the safety and recreation of our trails as Billings continues to grow.

Joe Womack- Treasurer

Joe Womack is Billings TrailNet's treasurer, and is the owner of Womack & Associates, a law firm in Billings specializing in bankruptcy and debt.

Joe and his family enjoy outdoor activities and also support the trail system as a corporate member of Billings TrailNet.

John Hanson- Fundraising Chair

Dr. John V. Hanson is a retired Diagnostic Radiologist who worked for Eastern Radiological Associates at St Vincent's HealthCare for 33 years. John retired in 2014. John and his family have lived in Billings since 1981. John is a life-long runner who has run numerous 5Ks, 10Ks, ½ Marathons, and 10 Marathons. John sees the development of biking, walking, and running trails as a very important aspect of a healthy life style and an important asset to our Billings community.

Kevin Odenthal- Events Chair

Kevin Odenthal has been on the Billings TrailNet board of Directors since 2014. He has been the event coordinator for our biggest fundraiser, Ales for Trails; works with the City/County Planning and Engineering Departments to get more bicycle parking in the City of Billings, and has installed many of the bike staples downtown at Metra Park. Kevin is also on the City of Billings Parking Advisory Board, is on the ad hoc Kids In Motion Bike Repair Trailer advisory board, and has helped to provide volunteers for the repair clinics that are put on by the Kids In Motion program. Kevin works at Northwest Scientific and is a former co-owner of the Mustard Seed, a popular restaurant we all miss very much! Kevin moved to Billings in the early 2000s, has two grown children and enjoys hiking, biking, backpacking and fishing.

Elizabeth Ciemins- Grants Chair

Since moving to Billings in 2008 with her husband and two kids, Dr. Elizabeth Ciemins has worked to improve the health and health care of Montanans and all Americans. For ten years, Elizabeth led the Center for Clinical Translational Research at Billings Clinic, served on the School Health Advisory Committee, and was an active partner on the Healthy by Design task force.

Currently, Elizabeth is a Research Scientist and works for the American Medical Group Association in Washington, DC, broadening her reach to all Americans. As an active lifestyle is an essential part of the formula for good health, she is interested in improving the built environment to facilitate regular physical activity, and that includes trails.

In her personal life, Elizabeth uses Billings' trails on a daily basis as an active road, gravel, and mountain biker, skier, and hiker, often accompanied by her Labrador Retrievers, Ben & Will. Elizabeth is very excited about the potential for 100% connectivity of trails in Billings from Rimrocks to River!

Andy Beach- member

Andy Beach was involved with a board of directors for a multi-use bicycle trail in Wisconsin that raised money and built a trail connecting two communities. A portion of the trail was a multi-use trail that traversed a section of unused railway right of way with a large portion of funding coming from state and federal grants including a DOT grant and a rails to trails grant. Andy is passionate and social proponent of community involvement, multi-use trails, and bicycling. I have an interest in seeing projects like the Billings trail system grow.

Jim Downs- member

Jim Downs is a graduate of EMC with a degree in biology, spent two years in the US Army before moving back to Billings and opened The Spoke Shop in 1973. After retiring in 2011, Jim became one of Billings TrailNet's Board of Directors in 2012. Jim is an active cyclist in Billings and elsewhere with children in Missoula, Denmark and one splitting time between Billings and Southeast Asia.

Emily Bruyere- member

Emily Bruyere has a passion for immersing herself in the beauty of nature and exploring the scenic trails in Billings. For nearly two decades, Emily has been running on Billings' trails and has a deep appreciation for their significance. As a dedicated marathon runner, she appreciates the value of a well-maintained trail system.

Jim Nichols

Jim Nichols has had a life long passion for biking and the outdoors . He believes the trails around Billings allow us the freedom of outdoor fitness. As a retired family physician, Jim realizes we can improve our community health by advancing our trails to every part of our wonderful city.

Amanda Jungles

Amanda Jungles spent most of her childhood biking around her 4x2 mile southernmost island town of Key West. She graduated with a degree in Communications from Florida State University in 2009 and made her way to Montana in 2017.

Amanda works for Cushing Terrell as their Regional Director of Business Development. She is focused on market positioning and recognition for the firm's headquarters and beyond.

Amanda currently serves on the Downtown Billings Alliance's Association Board, the Billings TrailNet Board, and the MSU-B College of Business Advisory Council. She is also contributing to the community via the Billings Chamber of Commerce Trails Committee, 100 Strong Billings, and the Yellowstone Art Museum Development Committee. She is excited for the opportunity to serve the community through the work of Billings TrailNet.

Staff

Kristi Drake, Executive Director

Bio: Kristi Drake was appointed as Billings TrailNet's first executive director in November 2012. Kristi has enjoyed commuting on her bike to work for years, and has enjoyed the active lifestyle the Billings trails and terrain have to offer since she moved here with her family in 2008. Kristi is a certified as a cycling instructor with the League of American Bicyclists. She serves on Billings' Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee, the State Trails Advisory Committee, is past chair of the Billings Chamber of Commerce Trails Committee and is a member of Billings Downtown Rotary.

Kristi served on Billings TrailNet's board of directors from 2009-2011 and coordinated Ales for Trails for many years. Kristi has a master's degree in public relations and also enjoys hiking, backpacking and international travel.

Executive Director Responsibilities:

Reports to the Board of Directors, has overall strategic and operational responsibility for Billings TrailNet's staff, programs, expansion, and execution of its mission.

The ED also ensures ongoing programmatic excellence, program evaluation, and consistent quality of finance and administration, fundraising, communications, and systems; recommend timelines and resources needed to achieve the strategic goals.

Develops, maintains, and support a strong Board of Directors; serves as ex-officio of each committee; seeks and builds board involvement with strategic direction for operations.

Fundraising & Communications:

Expands revenue generating and fundraising activities to support existing program and operations.

Deepens and refines all aspects of communications—from web presence to external relations with the goal of creating a stronger brand.

Uses external presence and relationships to garner new opportunities.

Kristy Halderman, Development and Marketing Manager

Kristy Halderman has a dynamic background in business development, marketing, and entrepreneurship brings a fresh perspective to Billings TrailNet. Kristy joins us with a wealth of experience, particularly notable for her impactful contributions in the oat milk industry and her adeptness in crafting effective marketing strategies.

As Development and Marketing Manager, Kristy is in charge of our marketing, member relations and oversees our events.

Development and Marketing Manager Responsibilities:

- cultivating and stewarding community and donor relationships
- coordinating, implementing and managing fundraising activity
- promoting corporate and individual giving
- informing the public about Billings TrailNet's activities and trail developments
- organizing and promoting Billings TrailNet's events

Brandie Stordahl, Events Manager

Prior to becoming a Real Estate Broker in 2014, Brandie was in Healthcare for 20 years. She serves the community as Chair of the Education Committee for the Billings Association of Realtors. Brandie believes that taking advantage of the outdoors is a gift and feels lucky to live where there is easy access to nature. Brandie has been a Billings resident for roughly 30 years and is married with two sons.

Events Manager Responsibilities:

- promoting Billings TrailNet through organizing, hosting and promoting events
- representing our organization to the greater community through these events
- maintaining relationships with guests, event planning committees, volunteers and event venue personnel
- leading a team of volunteers to plan, implement and host events; especially Ales for Trails
- ensuring volunteers are trained and have clear, attainable tasks
- meeting BTN's environmental policy standards by reducing waste, conserving energy, and implementing eco-friendly practices at events and in daily operations