

Appendix C: Public Outreach Process Detail

Part 3. Stakeholder Roundtables

Purpose:

The purpose of holding several stakeholder roundtables was to gather input regarding the needs and concerns of specific groups within the community who have a vested interest in parks and trails infrastructure. The purpose of holding focused listening sessions was to learn about the needs and concerns of experts in each stakeholder group. The following stakeholders were identified by the Gallatin County Parks and Trails Committee: Transportation Managers, Health and Safety Advocates, Land Use Managers, Businesses, Tourism, Developers & Realtors, User Groups, and Agricultural Landowners. Each group was asked the same four questions; What is working, What is not, What are solutions, and Who should be responsible.

Research Design:

The Stakeholder Roundtables were designed to solicit candid feedback from as many perspectives of invested individuals as possible. Each roundtable was limited to approximately 30 people and was facilitated by a professional facilitator, with members of the Gallatin County Parks and Trails Committee taking notes. All identities were kept confidential. Responses to the four questions asked (what's working, what's not, what are solutions, and who is responsible) were recorded in two formats; (1) Participants were asked to provide their input prior to the meeting through feedback forms, which were summarized and presented to the attendees at each roundtable, and (2) the stakeholders' feedback was also recorded on flipcharts during each roundtable and verbatim through a note taker. Participants were asked to correct and add to the information being recorded. Each meeting was followed by a summarized report sent by email to the attendees. The stakeholder roundtable feedback was consolidated into a single spreadsheet with every comment made summarized and a tally of how many of the stakeholder groups mentioned each item. One point was awarded to each item mentioned by a stakeholder roundtable. If the item was mentioned by two or more stakeholders it was included in the final spreadsheet. The items mentioned by all 8 roundtables were tallied and the top three for each question established.

Sampling:

A concerted effort was made to develop specific, well-rounded stakeholder roundtables. In order to achieve this goal, the Gallatin County Parks and Trails Committee worked with various community members with expert knowledge of each stakeholder groups targeted. Invitation lists were generated with the goal of representing as wide a spectrum of interests as possible. Two weeks prior to the meeting, each invitee was sent both an email and a hard copy invitation. The invitees were also contacted by phone to ensure communication was successful. While interest in attending the roundtables varied from group to group, the overall participation was well-rounded. Scheduling, venue location, and time commitment were mentioned as reasons for not attending. The Agricultural Landowners roundtable was canceled due to lack of attendance. In order to gather their input, staff posed the same four questions and took notes on responses at the annual Beef Producers Meeting.

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Participant Demographics:

Stakeholder Participants Invited vs. Attended:

Stakeholder Group	Invited	Attended
Transportation Managers	18	18
Land Use Managers	14	10
Health and Safety Advocates	41	25
Businesses	29	5
User Groups	81	36
Developers	29	6
Tourism Managers	30	23
Rural Landowners	26	20

Limitations:

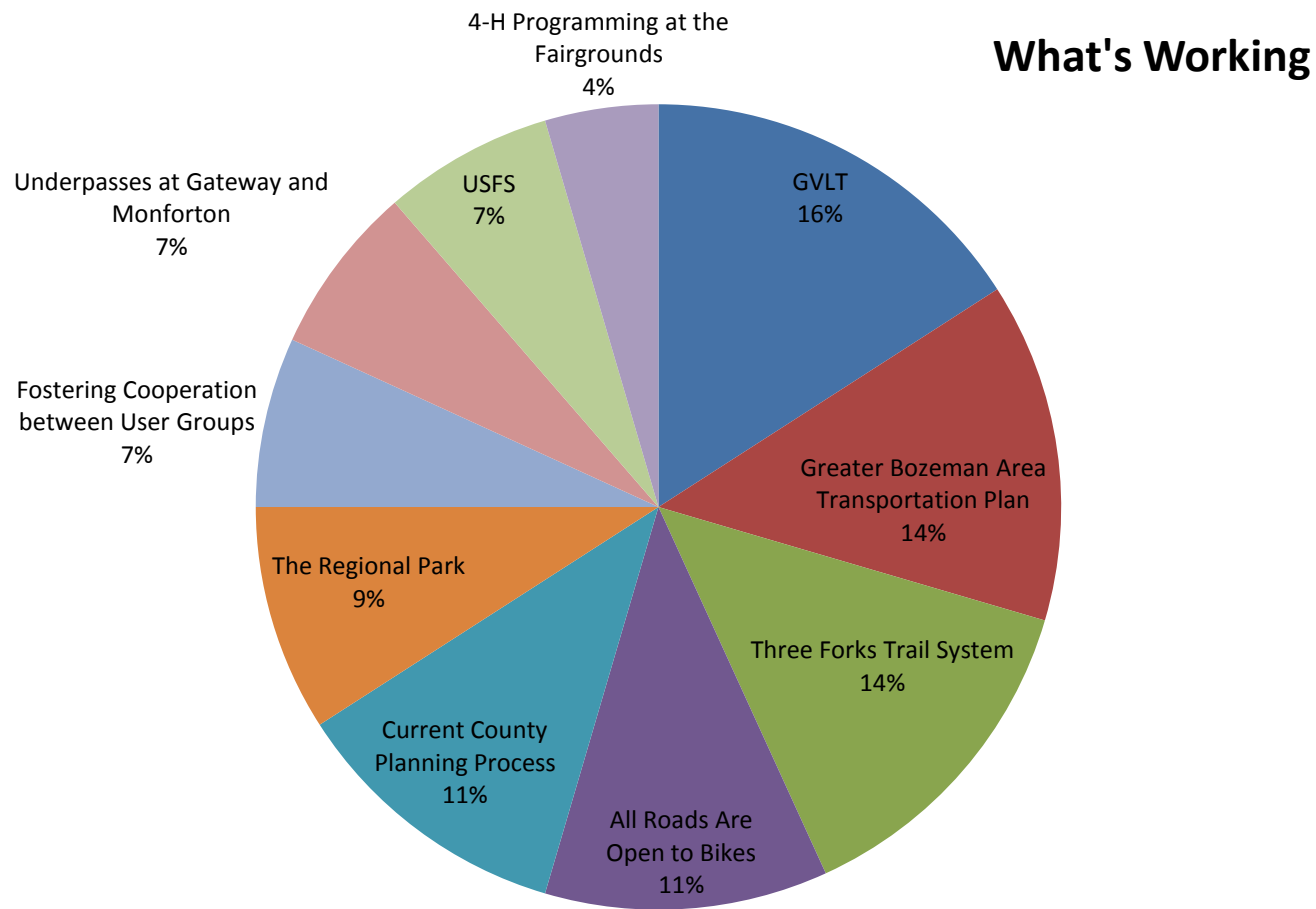
The Stakeholder Roundtables were limited by the number of attendees, what people were comfortable sharing, the level of attendance and the breadth of views represented by those who did attend. Staff attempted to illicit information missing from the discussions by approaching those who could not join the discussions afterwards on an individual basis to gain their input as well. The resulting data collected represents a broad range of perspectives, though some were collected in a more organized, uniform manner than others.

Findings:

The following charts show the total number of responses for all the answers given that were shared by two or more of the stakeholders to each question. The top three are then listed followed by supporting quotes from each roundtable.

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What's Working:



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1. GVLТ

“GVLТ’s “Main Street to the Mountains” has been highly successful, and as a result attitudes towards trails are changing” - Land Use Managers Roundtable

“GVLТ’s work to create a cohesive trail system in coordination with Bogert Park and Pete’s Hill also benefits local businesses, because it connects so well into the Bozeman Downtown. Having park/trail proximity to businesses, particularly restaurants and shopping areas, increases their accessibility and visibility” - Businesses Roundtable

2. Greater Bozeman Area Transportation Plan

“Implementation of the Greater Bozeman Area Transportation Plan will improve many of the unsafe and inconvenient situations now faced by citizens.” - Transportation Managers Roundtable

“The City of Bozeman and Gallatin County need to implement the recently updated Greater Bozeman Area Transportation Plan.” -User Group Roundtable

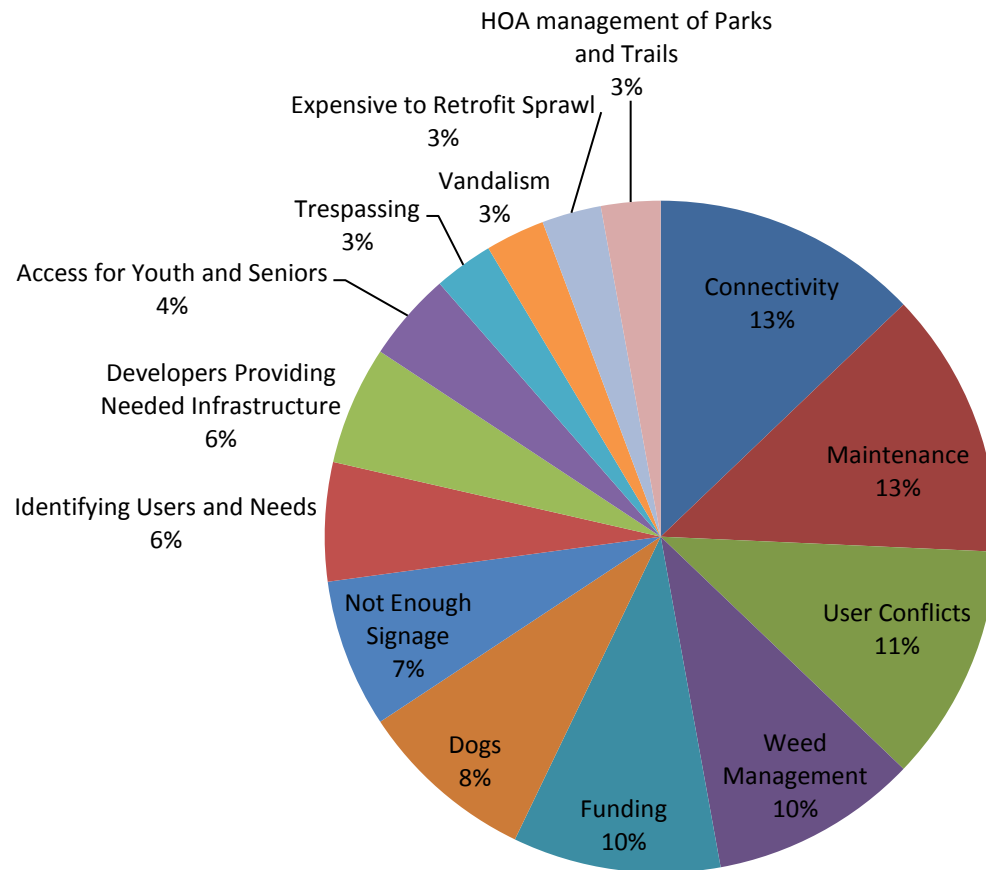
3. Three Forks Trail System

“Three Forks has had a successful public process with potential fixes being considered such as park monies going for trails and flexibility in rural right-of-way brought by stat ‘works.’ In addition handicap issues are being looked at to improve the Three Forks trail system.” - Transportation Managers Roundtable

“The Three Forks Trail System out to the Headwaters State Park and its overall good connectivity is a success for both health and safety reasons.” - Health and Safety Advocates Roundtable

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What's Not Working:



What's Not Working

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1. Fragmented Parks and Trails

"The provision of parks through the subdivision process in the county has created pockets of underutilized park land. The different standards for development between jurisdictions is also not working well in regards to coordinating parks, trails and transit." -Transportation Managers Roundtable

"All sections of trail need to be safe from start to finish, which is made difficult by funding constraints. Recommend more bus routes with service to assist elderly, handicapped, and those with low levels of income." - Health and Safety Advocates Roundtable

"A key issue is the lack of trail connectivity between destinations, be they residential or business-oriented. The Four Corners area is a place with a lot of commercial activity that should be better accommodated by recreational access coupled with business access. The lack of a complete trail paralleling Main Street through the City of Bozeman and along Huffine west to Four Corners is not good. In addition to providing trail access in general, more river access, a countywide bus system with access to parks and trailheads, and more bike parking would be beneficial to businesses. The pattern of segregated residential housing from business areas was also seen as a negative. Retrofit areas that lack connectivity, in particular the interior of Big Sky and "The Triangle" (the area between Belgrade, Bozeman and Four Corners). Provide better connections through the "old cores" of the towns in the Valley." - Businesses Roundtable

2. Maintenance

"Gallatin County is approaching capacity at many of its popular recreation destinations and inter-agency communication is imperative. It is clear, however, that currently budgets do not match aspirations and there is a need for more money to fund parks and trails and their proper maintenance. Noxious weeds, in particular, need to be better addressed." - Land Use Managers Roundtable

"Create a system to address maintenance needs dictated by season weather." - Health and Safety Advocates Roundtable

"Partnerships with businesses may be a way to solve some of the maintenance issues currently experienced in both the Gallatin Valley's cities as well as in the valley." - Businesses Roundtable

"Creating a funding mechanism for maintenance, in addition to training volunteer groups, and starting adopt-a-trail programs are an important need." –Tourism Managers Roundtable

"Creative solutions for vandalism, poop, and general maintenance and clean-up need to be developed. Maintenance is a critical issue." – User Groups Roundtable

"Long-term maintenance, consistent funding, weed control, and Homeowner Association managed parks and trails are all not working well." – Developers Roundtable

"Both the state and the county should establish funding to allow for proper management and enforcement provisions for existing recreation uses." - Agricultural Landowners Roundtable

"Trails and parks can improve a development and make it more marketable, but when they aren't properly cared for they can also devalue a property." – Developers Roundtable

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3. User Group Conflicts and Lack of Education

“Establishing a system of educating people about any new policies will need to be a top priority. Better outreach and education, better signage and winter access, better management of wildlife and winter usage, establishing a means for mediating user group conflicts, creating more connectivity between communities and recreation areas through trails and public transit, and maintaining working relationships among all agencies involved should all be long-term goals.” - Land Use Managers Roundtable

“Education about location of trail heads and the importance of healthy lifestyles is lacking.” - Health and Safety Advocates Roundtable

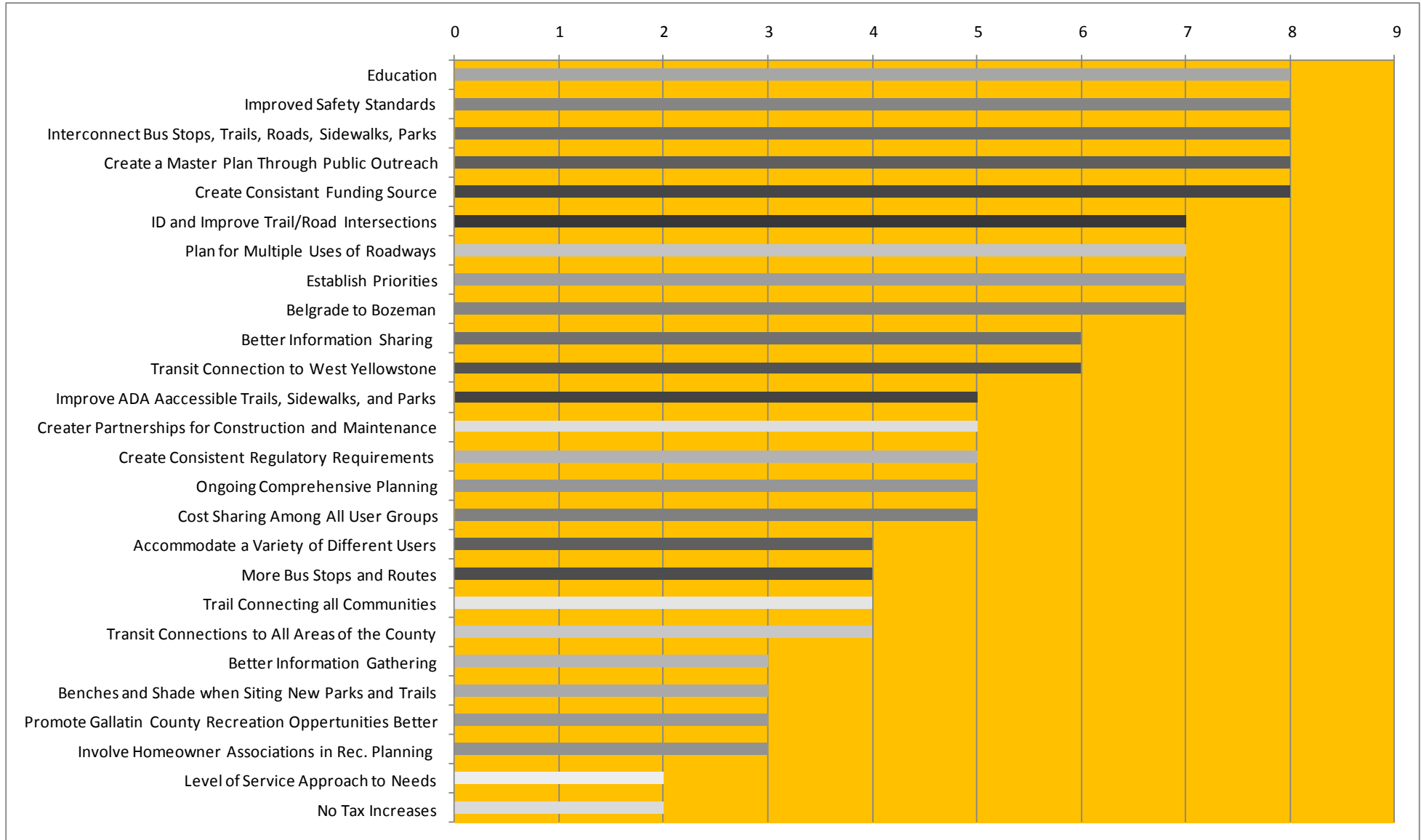
“The misuse of parks and trails needs to be addressed with proper education, enforcement and an increase in personal responsibility.” - User Groups Roundtable

“Education of public is needed to better facilitate the discussion of future connections, user group conflicts, maintenance, trespass, and vandalism among other issues.” - Developers Roundtable

“A better understanding of the culture, pride, effort and involvement of an agriculturally based life needs to be communicated to recreation enthusiasts. The experience of the landscape through recreation affects the livelihood of agricultural producers. Entering into the private domain needs to be coupled with training in respect for agricultural production.” –Agricultural Landowner Roundtable

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Solutions:



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1. Education

"Find funding to provide education about the importance of a pedestrian accessible built environment and then build it. Get children outdoors. Create a culture of doing things with your kids. Look for ways to make parks more "active" and trails more pleasurable and interesting to use." - Health and Safety Advocates Roundtable

"Create more education about good neighbor policies and rural/agricultural production in schools and adult education classes." – Agricultural Landowners Roundtable

2. Improved Safety Standards

"Provide safe connections between trails and parks and if needed along roads. In addition, bike and pedestrian safety education, as well as education about shared use, should be part of county, municipality, and local organization and school programming. Signage of unsafe roads, or "Black Diamond" roads is recommended in addition to the provision of emergency phones along remote or poorly lit routes. Obtain money to build safe trails." - Health and Safety Advocates Roundtable

"In certain areas, suburban sprawl has created unsafe situations where portions of trails have been built, but they lead to unsafe corridors such as country roads where traffic is fast and shoulders are narrow." - Transportation Managers Roundtable

3. Integrate all transportation elements together- Bus stops, trails, roads, sidewalks, parks

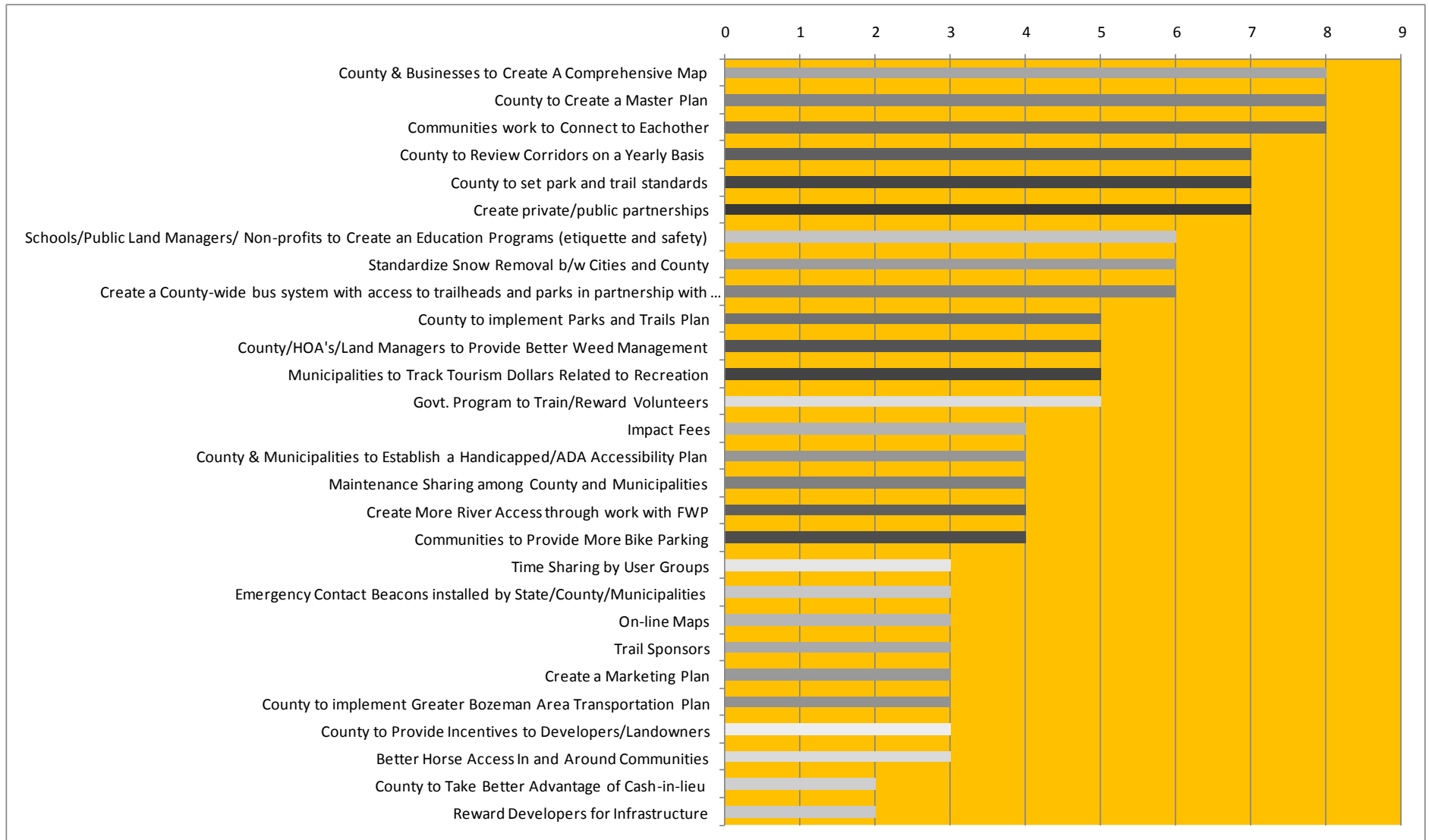
"Set the goal of linking infrastructure throughout the county through public transit, trails, and park land by prioritizing routes for pedestrians vs. roads for car travel. Follow the "Complete Streets" standards. Create the regulatory authority to allow integrated alternative transportation at all levels." - Transportation Managers Roundtable

"The number one goal is improving the connectivity of the County's parks and trails and surrounding USFS trailheads." - Health and Safety Advocates Roundtable

"Having park/trail proximity to businesses, particularly restaurants and shopping areas, increases their accessibility and visibility." - Businesses Roundtable

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Who Is Responsible:



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1. County to create a Comprehensive Master Plan & Map

“Plan for parks and trails in accordance with user needs and set use standards to address a variety of user groups. Work with design consultants and engineers to address transportation and safety early on in the planning process, which could be used to inform government guidelines for development and improve predictability. Reinstate collecting impact fees. Set standards for sidewalks and pedestrian facilities based on net density of development, deciding where parks, trails and transit should connect and what kinds of paths are required, and establishing a policy that all infrastructure connects.” - Transportation Managers Roundtable

“A plan is needed to show where links to recreation through development and along road infrastructure should go. The current system of reactive and opportunistic park and trail establishment is short-sighted.

From the Businesses Roundtable: The number one goal was to get recreationalists from outside towns into the Central Business Districts, which would require integrating trails with public transit, establishing partnerships between the county and the municipalities, and working with existing subdivisions to get trail connections through their areas. The connector trails that would be needed to accommodate this goal should be viewed as critical infrastructure and treated with the same scrutiny and forethought as current auto transportation systems.” - Land Use Managers Roundtable

2. Communities to work together to provide connectivity between each other.

“Form a county-wide non-profit of all user groups and hold a yearly summit of representatives from all the communities, user groups, and invested agencies to share ideas and information.” - Land Use Managers Roundtable

“Municipal and county governments should work together to create policies that enable decision makers to connect and address identified areas of concern. Ultimately, their collaboration should provide a trail system that seeks to link Three Forks, Manhattan, Belgrade, Bozeman, Four Corners, and Gallatin Gateway. A partnership with local transit should also be made in order to connect with Big Sky and West Yellowstone.” - Health and Safety Advocates Roundtable

3. Yearly review of corridors, ongoing planning

“Set trails construction standards based on state regs. and pay attention to Average Daily Trips (ADT).” - Transportation Managers Roundtable

“Proactive planning, support for planning and instilling a passion for proper implementation of existing plans.” - Health and Safety Advocates Roundtable

“The subdivision review process should include canvassing and inquiry into what an area needs and wants for recreation and connectivity.” - Businesses Roundtable

“The county’s efforts to engage in more public outreach to inform their planning process for the creation of a parks and trails plan as something that is working.” - User Groups Roundtables