



A Resource for Businesses along the Great Allegheny Passage

The Progress Fund • 425 West Pittsburgh Street • Greensburg, PA 15601
(724) 216-9160 • www.trailtowns.org

Connellsville Business Opportunities As of August 2011

The Trail Town Program® aims to identify trail user needs and to fill service gaps in trail communities by providing help in the form of market information, technical assistance, or financing to existing and potential businesses. This document identifies existing conditions related to trail services and what we see as opportunities. Those considering either an expansion or a new business should conduct their own market research and complete a business plan.

Existing Trail-Serving Businesses

Lodging:

- One B&B and one guest house in town
- Two B&Bs a few miles out of town
- A motor lodge out of in nearby Connellsville Township
- A campground three miles north on the GAP
- Adirondack shelters along the GAP in Connellsville

Food and Drink:

- A number bars and eateries are located in town, some within walking and biking distance from the GAP. Most are family-style eateries or bar / restaurants. Unique offerings include Pizza Louie's (near the trail and by-the-slice) and El Canelo Mexican Restaurant (one of three trail-wide).

Retail:

- A full service bike shop (on the market for sale)
- Retail shops exist and are within walking and biking distance. Of particular interest might be ArtWorks (carries local arts and crafts), La Boheme Glass, and Jay Lyn's Collectibles (along the trail).
- An antique shop on West Crawford Avenue near the trail and Connellsville B&B.

Potential Opportunities

- **Lodging:**
 - The in-town B&B and guest house have seven rooms combined, precluding large groups from finding indoor lodging in Connellsville. The nearest easily accessible (from the GAP) modern hotels are in Homestead (52 miles away) and Cumberland (91 miles away), making modern hotel lodging a trail-wide opportunity and positioning Connellsville as a possible overnight option near the center of the trail.
 - Another lodging opportunity exists in the form of hostels. There is only one hostel on the GAP in Rockwood, 47 miles away.

- Food and Drink:
 - Trail users would likely frequent an **informal café** with or without wait service, and preferably with outdoor seating. Fresh and healthy menu items that include vegetarian options; packed lunches for trail-side consumption; and locally grown and raised food items would be of particular interest. The **farm-to-table** movement provides tremendous potential along the GAP. Another extreme of informal but specialized foods might be a gourmet burger, hot dog, or ice cream shop, or even a **bike- or trail-themed** café similar to The Trailside in West Newton, Over-the-Bar Bicycle Café in Pittsburgh., or the Purple Fiddle in Thomas, WV (Purple Fiddle incorporates local foods, live music, and an attached hostel property).
 - A **microbrew, wine bar**, or simply a bar / restaurant that serves **craft beers** and imports would likely be frequented by trail users. The few restaurants along the GAP that serve such drinks are presently in a unique market position. If there was one microbrew (or wine bar) along the GAP it would be highly likely that it would become a must-stop destination for many cyclists. A town with a population as large as Connellsville is more likely to support the venture year-round than are some of the smaller towns along the trail.
 - There are no **coffee shops** in Connellsville. Several other Trail Towns, including nearby West Newton, also lack a full-service coffee shop. Such a venture may prove successful if positioned near the trail, B&B, and Crawford Avenue shops.
 - There is no **upscale dining** in Connellsville. Such a restaurant may benefit from the farm-to-table movement and / or a bike-themed venture so long as it is affordable enough to attract local residents to help support the business in the winter months.
 - There is no **light breakfast** as would be offered by a coffee shop or café within biking distance of the trail. This demonstrates an opportunity, again accessing an audience that is seeking fresh and / or local foods as part of their trail journey.
 - There are no stand-alone **ice cream** or **candy shops** (although both are carried at other locations). There is no bakery.

Connellsville is located just 15 miles from Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater and 17 trail miles from Ohiopyle, the trail's single busiest location. For a listing of available properties visit <http://trailtowns.org/available-properties.aspx>.



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Desired services and spending by type along the Great Allegheny Passage

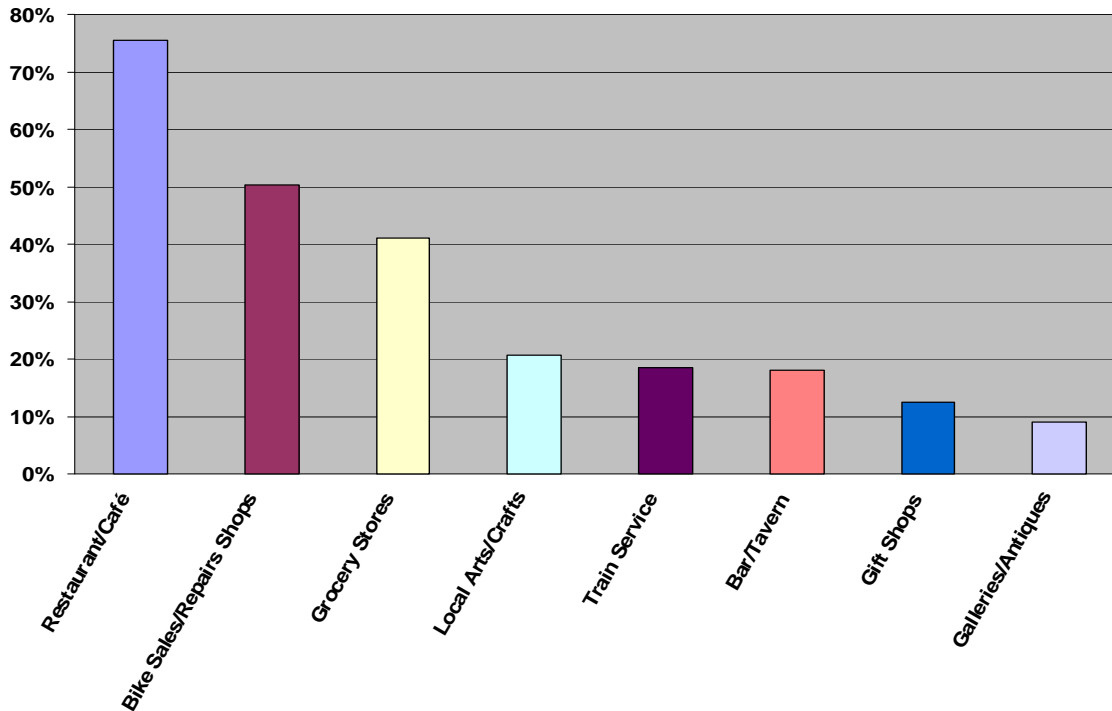
The most desired services as identified by 266 trail users during a 2006 intercept survey are depicted in the graph below. While this graph represents the most desired services, a 2008 survey revealed that the services on which trail users *spend the most* are (in order):

- Lodging (\$64 person / day)
- Transportation and Shuttling (\$51)
- Clothing (\$22)
- Daily Equipment Rental (\$21)
- Restaurants (\$20)

Less than \$15 on average is spent daily on each of the following:

- Souvenirs
- Candy and Snacks
- Beverages
- Ice cream

Table 3.1
Services Wanted



*The Trail Town Program® is an initiative of The Progress Fund.
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