



## Creating Opportunities Along the Nation's Trails

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### **Boston & McKeesport Business Opportunities As of June 2016**

The Trail Town Program® aims to identify trail user needs and to fill service gaps in trail communities by providing 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

- There is currently only lodging available in Boston with one bed & breakfast and one vacation rental.
- There is a B&B located outside of Boston, associated with a golf course.
- A small hostel is in the works near the McKeesport Marina.

##### Recreational

- There is a Stand Up Paddleboard outfitter in Boston and the trailside B&B offers some bike rentals.
- There is a full service bike shop with sales and repair is next to the Loop trail.
- There is a large marina and motor boat storage area in McKeesport.
- There is a small sporting equipment store two blocks from the trail in McKeesport.

##### Food and Drink

- There is one bar with food service located next to the trailhead in Boston.
- There is a limited number of family style restaurants along the GAP and the Loop.
- There is a seasonal ice cream shop on Walnut Street along the Loop.
- Nearby shopping plazas include dining and grocery store options along the Loop.
- Downtown McKeesport dining has limited options including sandwich shops, local diner style restaurant, a bakery, a Chinese restaurant, and pizza shops.

##### Retail

- There is gift shop with local vendors, hardware store, general store, and antique store all located within a few blocks of each other in Boston.
- Nearby shopping plazas and chain drugstores are within close distance along the Loop.

##### Other Amenities

- Gas stations and convenience stores offer simple take away food as an option in both Boston and McKeesport.
- There are 24 hour ATMs located in McKeesport.
- UPMC McKeesport is located near the trail for emergency services.

##### Nearby Attractions:

- Between McKeesport and Boston, there are several other attractions drawing visitors beyond the trail. Some of these include nearby golf courses, event centers, and Dead Man's Hollow Nature Preserve as well as other popular parks such as Round Hill Exhibit Farm and the Rose Garden at Renziehausen Park.

## Potential Opportunities

### Lodging

- Although both Boston and McKeesport are within close proximity to Homestead and Pittsburgh, additional lodging such as a **B&B, guest houses, or hostels** could fill the need for larger groups or the other outdoor recreation visitors.

### Food and Drink

- While limited dining options are available in either community, trail users would likely frequent an eatery that had **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. Other informal but specialized foods might be a gourmet burger, hot dog, or ice cream shop, or even a **bike-themed or trail-oriented café**.
- There also could be potential for more **ethnic food options**, and higher end options, such as white linen dining.
- Many restaurants are closed during the evening, weekends, or have limited hours. There is an **opportunity to adjust hours** to accommodate visitor traffic or be open when many other restaurants are closed.
- There are no **coffee shops** in this area. Several other Trail Towns, including nearby West Newton, also lack a full service coffee shop.

### Retail

- Unique retail such as **specialty, artisan, or other gift shops**, could appeal to both trail users and locals alike.
- Many retail locations are closed or have limited hours during the weekends and evenings. There is an **opportunity to adjust hours** to accommodate visitor traffic or be open when many other shops are closed.

### Amenities

- In the region there is a need for **shuttle service** for people, bike, luggage, and equipment.