



Planning to be a Trail Town

Strategies and Pitfalls

Two Perspectives on Trails



What's the reality?

"That trail costs us more than it brings in."

OR

"This trail is the best thing that's ever happened to this town!"



Session Topics

- What it means to be a trail town and how the trail town model has been implemented throughout the U.S.
- Key aspects of a successful trail town
- The pros and cons of becoming an outdoor recreation destination - and how to avoid some of the pitfalls
- Finding common ground among stakeholders



Trail Town Definition

A Trail Town is a community through which a trail passes that supports trail users with services, promotes the trail to its residents, and embraces the trail as a resource to be protected and celebrated.

--North Country Trail Coalition (adapted)



Image: Allegany County, Maryland



“To be a Trail Town is to make the decision to pay attention to trails.”



First “Trail Town” Program, Est. 2007



A project of The Progress Fund developed in conjunction with the Great Allegheny Passage Conservancy

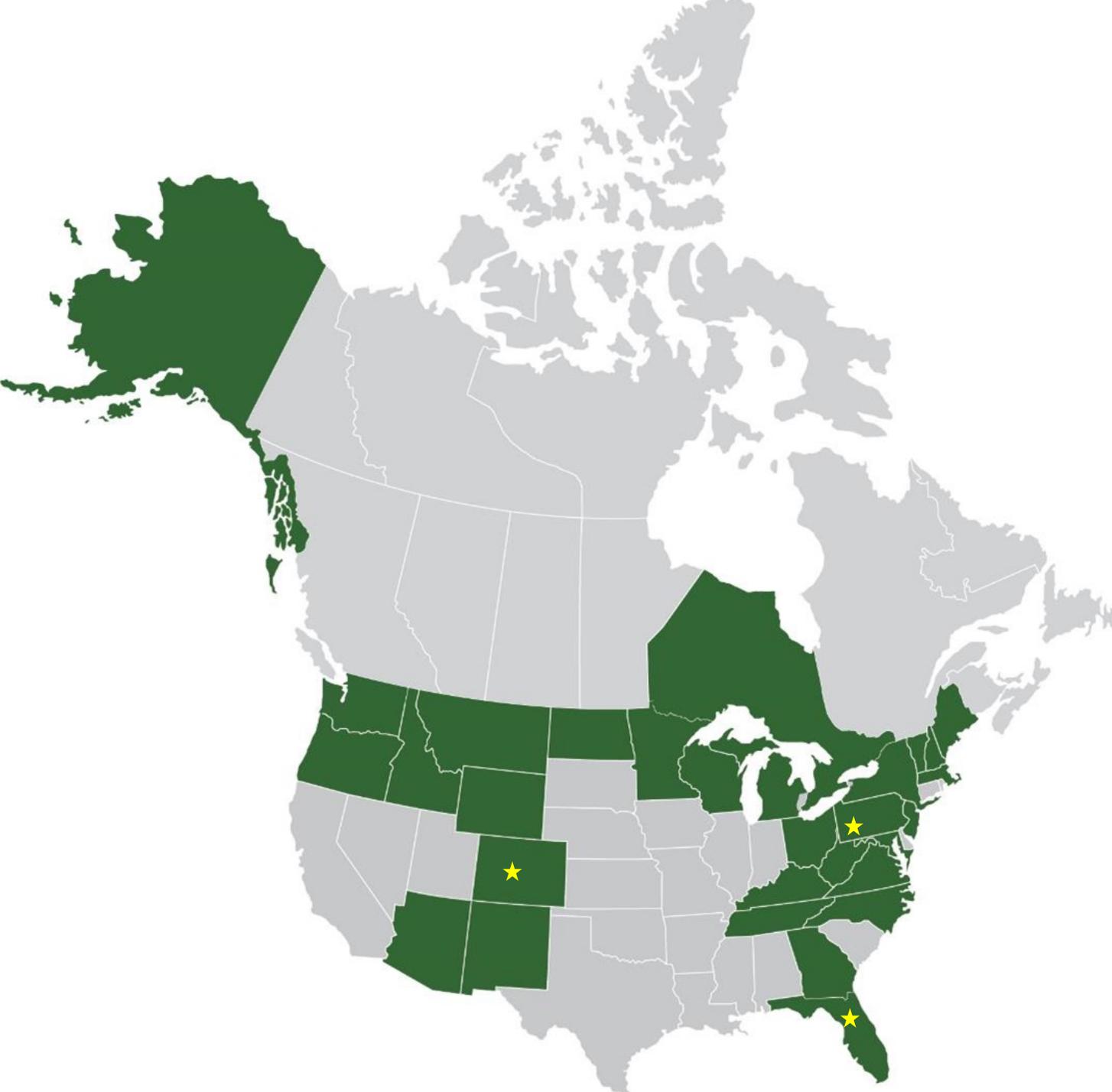


Inspired by the Main Street Program



A regional approach to rural economic development





**A presence in
at least 28
states as well
as Ontario**

- 1. Trail-specific programs**
- 2. Statewide programs**



Setting Context

- The terms “trail town” and “gateway community” are interchangeable for today’s purposes
- “Becoming a trail town” and “what it means to be a trail town” depends on where you are and what program exists in your area (no agreed upon standard)
- Communities that don’t have a formal trail town initiative in their area can still take steps to be more trail-friendly and prepare for increases in trail use
- The trail town approach is an overwhelmingly positive way to improve communities, but pitfalls exist everywhere in life and it’s best to acknowledge and prepare for them.



**Investing in trails
contributes to more
vibrant, delightful,
visitor-ready
communities**





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