



Mike Stordalen, of the city of Livingston, grades a stretch of new trail in northwest Livingston, Thursday, near the intersection of 13th and Bitterroot streets.

Enterprise photo by Nate Howard

# TRAILS CONNECT

By Enterprise Staff

The city of Livingston is expanding its trail system with a new 2,000-foot section.

The trail will connect the Bozeman Trail, which starts near the Jack Weimer Memorial Park ball field, to the Bitterroot Trail, located east of the National Guard Armory.

A \$20,000 grant issued in 2015 provided by the Montana Department of Fish Wildlife and Parks Recreational Trails program will bring the Bitterroot Trail and Bozeman Trail together at the Northside Park and Soccer Fields in northwest Livingston, an area with residential growth.

Livingston Public Works Director Shannon Holmes said the city is pitching in \$50,000 worth of in-kind contributions toward the project utilizing city staff, labor and equipment

Holmes said he expects the trail to be complete by Oct. 15.



Map courtesy City of Livingston

In this map provided by the city of Livingston, the expansion of the Bozeman Trail, lower left, and Bitterroot Trail, upper right, mapped in yellow, connect at the Northside Park and Soccer Fields.

## Apple Watch slowly becoming a medical device

CUPERTINO, Calif. (AP) — Apple is trying to turn its smartwatch from a niche gadget into a lifeline to better health by slowly evolving it into a medical device.

In its fourth incarnation, called Series 4 and due out later this month, the Apple Watch will add features that allow it to take high-quality heart readings and detect falls. It's part of Apple's long-in-the-making strategy to give people a distinct reason to buy a wrist gadget that largely does things smartphones already do.

Apple CEO Tim Cook has long emphasized the watch's health and fitness-tracking capabilities. The original version featured a heart-rate sensor that fed data into fitness and workout apps so they could suggest new goals and offer digital "rewards" for fitness accomplishments.

Two years later, Apple called its watch "the ultimate device for a healthy life," emphasizing water resistance for swimmers and built-in GPS for tracking runs or cycling workouts. In February, the company

announced that the watch would track skiing and snowboarding runs, including data on speed and vertical descent.

The latest version, unveiled Wednesday, is pushing the health envelope even further — in particular by taking electrocardiograms, or EKGs, a feature given clearance by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, Apple said. The watch will also monitor for irregular heartbeats and can detect when the wearer has fallen, the company said.

EKGs are important tests of heart health and typically require a visit to the doctor. The feature gained an onstage endorsement from Ivor Benjamin, a cardiologist who is president of the American Heart Association. He said such real-time data would change the way doctors work.

Gartner analyst Tuong Nguyen said the feature could turn smartwatches "from something people buy for prestige into something they buy for more practical reasons."

## Housing issue dominates city's future

By Johnathan Hettinger  
Enterprise Staff Writer

With housing prices increasing and a declining availability of homes and apartments, housing is at the forefront of almost every discussion about the future of Livingston.

But what exactly is the problem? And what are the solutions? That's a question that the Affordable Housing Task Force is trying to answer.

On Thursday morning, local government officials and social service providers had a wide-ranging discussion on housing issues at the task force meeting at the office of Montana State Extension in Livingston.

The task force is made up of county government, city government, HRDC, the Montana State Extension, realtors and lenders.

City Manager Michael Kardoes said it's important for the task force to identify the problems Livingston and Park County face.

"Is it a low-income housing problem?" Kardoes said. "Is it a workforce housing problem? Is it a starter family housing problem? Is it a senior living housing problem? Do we have all of those problems? Do we have any? What is the extent of those problems?"

He said the task force could look at a lack of inventory, vacation rentals, a lack of development capacity and a lack of developable land as other potential factors.

Tracy Menuez, community development director for HRDC, said between the different members of the task force, they can likely develop a good sense of what the problems with housing are.

For now, Menuez said they know the problems are wide-ranging.

"Up until we get to a person who has \$400,000 to spend on a house, we're hitting in difficulty in all of those areas," Menuez said.

Marissa Hackett, of HRDC, said as a local service provider, she is glad everyone is interested in discussing these issues, so she can tell clients that solutions are coming.

With development coming, Peter Fox, executive director of the Park County Community Foundation and chairman of the Park County Planning Board, said he sees one of the main complaints from the public is the lack of a growth policy for the city.

The city updated its growth policy last year but got very little public input, while the county went through a months-long update that received quite a bit of feedback.

Kardoes said the growth policy, even if it's updated, would likely disappoint many people because it's not regulatory or binding, it's just an advisory document.

Fox, who oversaw the county's recent growth policy update, said he thinks that an update would help raise more support for growth, even if the policy is non-binding.

He said the important part of the growth policy is building a relationship with the public.

"The process is more important than the product," said County Commission Chairman Steve Caldwell.

Fox, who also serves on the city planning board as the county liaison, said the city's recent growth policy update was a "lick and a promise" to do more.

"We knew it was a lick and a promise," Fox said. "The realization was it is beyond means of city planning board to develop a new growth policy. It has to be a communitywide input effort."

Kardoes said the current policy is legally binding but recognized it's "not a professional product."

"It isn't worth a hoot," Fox said.

ing on new homes west of Highway 10 near Printing For Less is expected by December, Kardoes said. That subdivision would likely have to go before the planning board in the next few months.

The North Town subdivision north of Livingston is doing significant work on the ground near the Northside Park and Soccer Fields, and 13 of the 16 lots have been sold, Fox said. The subdivision will soon consider phases two and three, and may even consider another project for multifamily housing, after an initial attempt to rezone failed, Fox said.

Menuez praised these developments.

"Livingston has a dire enough housing problem that any subdivision that produces housing is a good thing," she said.

### Growth policy

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## Kathleen Williams discusses Medicare on local stop

By Jonathan Hettinger  
Enterprise Staff Writer

For an aging population, figuring out how to navigate Medicare — whether it's evaluating health insurance options, calling in to change enrollment or dealing with potential scams — is a complicated task.

That's what panelists and audience members told Kathleen Williams, the Democratic candidate for the U.S. House of Representatives in Montana, at a panel discussion at the Livingston Park County Public Library on Thursday morning.

The event, which had about 35 people who are largely senior citizens, is part of a three-day push by Williams, where she held discussions on Social Security at the Bozeman Public Library Wednesday and will hold a discussion on health care at the Billings Public Library Friday. Williams is running against Rep. Greg Gianforte in Montana's lone house district.

Williams, who served as modera-

tor in the panel, did not propose changes or policy, but instead asked questions of the five-person panel and audience members.

Becky Bird, who serves as executive director of the Park County

"Medicare and Social Security access to resources is very, very overwhelming for all of us."

— **Becky Bird**, Park County Senior Center executive director

Senior Center and was on the panel, said that one of the main issues facing her clients is their frustration with dealing with Medicare plans and policies.

"Medicare and Social Security

access to resources is very, very overwhelming for all of us," Bird said. "It's particularly overwhelming to an aging population, many of whom are very vulnerable and a lot of whom just give up, missing out on resources and services they're entitled to."

Many other panelists agreed.

"It's confusing for me," said Sarah Skofield, a panelist and an insurance agent with State Farm in Livingston. "Trying to figure out all these dates, options and when you can and cannot enroll in things is really confusing. It is overwhelming for people to go through those problems."

Laurie Bishop, a Democrat who represents Montana House District 60, said that more outreach is needed and asked who is doing that work.

"How do we resource this problem?" Bishop asked. "What is that looking like in our community?"



Enterprise photo by Nate Howard

Kathleen Williams, right, visits with Peggy Tombre a retiree of the State Health and Insurance Assistance program, at the Park County Library on Thursday.