

Hanover to Become Next YCEA Trail Town

Matt Enright - York Dispatch

Hanover is next to become a York County Economic Alliance Trail Town. And the YCEA wants help on deciding its future. A survey available on the YCEA's website until Monday, July 26, asks respondents to give their thoughts on what aspects of outdoor recreation they use in Hanover, as well as what improvements they'd like to see in downtown Hanover and what events they attend or want to see.

"It's an angle to better leverage what's already available," YCEA Economic Initiatives director David Gonzales said Monday. He cited the Hanover Trolley Trail, currently under construction in the area, as well as Codorus State Park, as draws for outdoor activities. "It's great to see the recreational facilities used and people getting outdoors, using all the public amenities that are available, but there's a missed business opportunity there, too," he said. The Trail Towns program helps guide economic development for the communities listed. The YCEA uses the York County Heritage Rail Trail as a platform for economic development to encourage residents and visitors alike to use the businesses along the trail. For example, the YCEA contributed \$25,000 in Bloom Grants to a dozen businesses and nonprofits along the trail in May.

Last year alone, there was a 200% increase of usage on the Heritage Rail Trail, Gonzales said. "If you go onto our trails in York County, they're oversubscribed, but that's a good thing too because people are getting outdoors and using it, but that's a good outdoor economy opportunity as well," he said. The existing amenities of the Hanover Trolley Trail and Codorus State Park were good qualities for a Trail Town, Gonzales said. He also cited that Hanover is the second-largest community in York County, calling it a no-brainer to collaborate on the borough's economic growth.

As of Monday, the survey had more than 300 respondents, Gonzales said. The survey is meant to gauge the perspective of trail users as well as the community at large to find out what makes Hanover special. "That's just helpful data to get an overview of what Hanover really is," he said. It also asks respondents where they take visitors to Hanover, what activities they do on the trail and what outdoor activities they do. Hanover joins the five inaugural Trail Towns: Glen Rock, New Freedom, Railroad, Seven Valleys and York City. "We're really excited about this," Gonzales said. To take the survey or learn more about York County Trail Towns, visit <https://yorkcountyclailtowns.com>.