

RESOLUTION - BERRIEN COUNTY TRAILS MASTER PLAN**RESOLUTION****A RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT THE “BERRIEN COUNTY TRAILS MASTER PLAN”**

At a regular meeting of the St. Joseph City Commission, Berrien County, Michigan, on January 9, 2023.

WHEREAS, the City of St. Joseph is committed to maintaining and enhancing the quality of life for citizens throughout the region and recognizes that a network of trails in Berrien County will contribute greatly to the area’s quality of life by connecting people, communities, and regional assets; and

WHEREAS, the Friends of Berrien County Trails, with its partners and steering committee, has engaged Berrien County municipalities and county residents in the development of a countywide master plan for trails; and

WHEREAS, the “Berrien County Trails Master Plan” presents a county-wide vision and recommends increasing cooperation and collaboration to create a network that will provide transportation, exercise, leisure, safety, accessibility, recreation, and community benefits aimed at enhancing quality of life; and

WHEREAS, many communities, agencies, and trail advocates in the region have taken the lead in planning and/or building local trails, and those efforts can be greatly enhanced by being connected to a more extensive regional network of trails; and

WHEREAS, trails will help improve the quality of the air we breathe by promoting reduced congestion through increasing safer non-motorized transportation options; and

WHEREAS, trails are freely accessible community assets offering opportunities for transportation, recreation, and exercise to everyone, including children, youth, and families, and provide safe places for people to experience a sense of community and create more robust social and family ties; and

WHEREAS, trails have a significant impact on the health and economic viability of the region through encouraging active lifestyles, increased levels of tourism, enhanced property values, added jobs related to the construction of and along the trail, as well as enhanced ability to attract and retain businesses to the region due to improved quality of life; and

WHEREAS, the “Berrien County Trails Master Plan” provides the foundation for a long-term strategy that will continue to grow and evolve and will provide an invaluable resource for generations to come; and

WHEREAS, the City of St. Joseph has identified the provision of trails, paths, and similar forms of nonmotorized transportation infrastructure as a priority in the future planning of Berrien County in order to improve connectivity between communities, places of interest, and

