



# AN OUTDOOR ECONOMY ON THE RISE

How the Ohio to Erie Trail is  
embracing the tourism tipping point

 Camp Chase Trail, Columbus

Tom Bilcze –2023 Miami Valley Cycling Summit





# QUICK FACTS



324.5 miles from the  
Ohio River to Lake Erie



23 connected regional  
trails



289.5 miles of trails  
(89%)



35 miles of streets and  
roads (11%)



27 trail towns to  
discover and explore



Connects Ohio's 3C's

OHIO  
TO ERIE  
TRAIL



Alum Creek Trail, Columbus





# THE TIPPING POINT



90% off-road and on trail



It's what's beyond the trail



Cyclist & hiker friendly



Ohio is not corn and soybeans



Social media awareness



On cyclists' bucket lists

OHIO  
TO ERIE  
TRAIL

Boston Store, CVNP







# MEETING THE DEMAND



Visitor focused website



Focus on planning your visit



Improved mapping & guidance



Growing business directory



Webinars that live on



Embracing trail towns

OHIO  
TO ERIE  
TRAIL

Roebling Suspension Bridge, Cincinnati







# INTERACTIVE MAP

The trail's most accessed webpage is a customizable interactive map introduced in October 2018.

Key layers include trails, trailheads, route alerts, alternate routes, and campgrounds.

Monthly views have grown 340% since 2019.

Year	Views	Per Month	% Growth
2019	100,000	8,333	
2020	145,000	12,083	45%
2021	245,000	20,417	69%
2022	340,000	28,333	39%
2023	170,000	28,333	0% *
Total	1,000,000		



Mustill Store, Akron



\* 6 months trending to pass the 2022 level





# COMMERCIAL TOURS

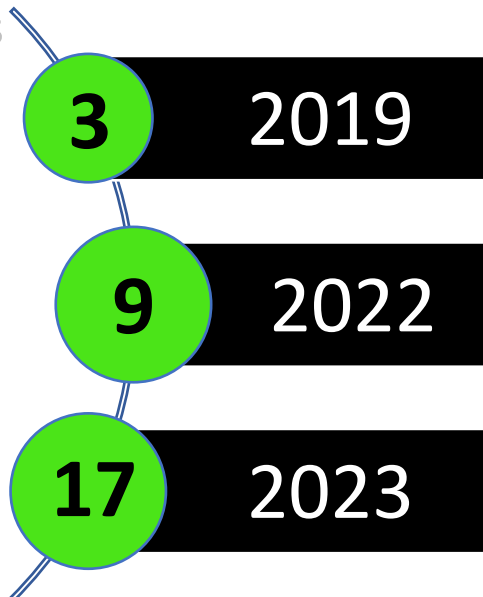
Unknown how many people cycle or hike the trail end-to-end each year.

End-to-end tours offered by commercial operators are growing rapidly.

The average cost of a 2023 tour is \$2,583.

The average number of on-trail days is 6.5.

Tours



OHIO  
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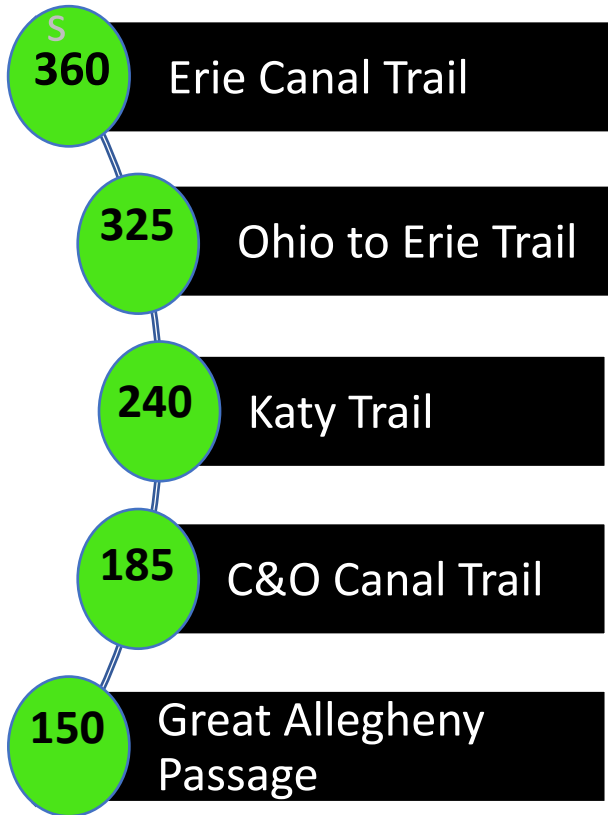
Xenia Station, Xenia



# BUCKET LIST TRAILS

Epic long-distance trails on bicycle tourists' bucket lists

Mile



Scioto Greenway, Columbus







# 7 HEALTHY TRAIL TOWN PRACTICES

“Successful trail towns are places where growth in trail use, economic development, and an ever-growing appreciation for trails are integrated”

– Amy Camp, *Deciding on Trails*

- 1 Have a shared vision
- 2 Connect the trail to town
- 3 Extend the invitation
- 4 Cultivate trail culture
- 5 Know your market
- 6 Share your story
- 7 Commit to quality trails



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Main Street, Mount Vernon







# VISION FOR THE FUTURE

*The Ohio to Erie Trail Fund seeks to promote, develop, and establish a multi-use, non-motorized, network of regional trails and greenways linking Cleveland, Columbus, and Cincinnati from Lake Erie to the Ohio River.*


– Ohio to Erie Trail Fund Mission



2023 board mission retreat



A shared vision for the trail



Healthy trail town practices



Mission-driven grants



Mission-driven partnerships



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St. Helena III, Canal Fulton





# OHIO TO ERIE TRAIL

"The summit is what drives us, but the climb  
itself is what really matters."

Conrad Anker, legendary high alpine climber



Kokosing Gap Trail, Howard



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