

Benefits of Freenotes on Trails

WHAT ARE FREENOTES INSTRUMENTS?

Freenotes Harmony Park Instruments are real pentatonic scale instruments designed for improvisational play to encourage learning music, rhythms and patterns in a way that allows success for every player. They are also designed to be outdoors and can withstand any type of climate or weather.

They can ignite a spark in a person that facilitates interest in taking music lessons through assured success in a spontaneous atmosphere.

Our instruments are ACCESSIBLE, AFFORDABLE and ENGAGING.

"Music is the electrical soil in which the spirit lives, thinks and invents." --Ludwig van Beethoven

Our instruments engage the WHOLE PERSON: the desire for language, the body's urge to move, the brain's attention to patterns, the ear's lead in initiating communication, the voice's response to sounds, as well as the eye-hand coordination associated with playing musical instruments. (www.musikgarten.org)

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF HAVING FREENOTES ON TRAILS

What makes walking trails attractive and accessible? Dr. Jamie Rae Walker, Assistant Professor and Extension Specialist Urban Parks at Texas A&M says results from several studies show that higher rates of walking are associated with the following social and environmental factors:

Buffers from traffic, Walking in groups, Trails close to home, Safety, Connections to desirable sites, and

- Amenities: People like trails and walking routes that include places to rest and escape the heat. Attractive walking routes feature drinking fountains, benches, shade trees, and other amenities.

What better amenity to have while taking a rest; Freenotes Musical Instruments are for all ages to enjoy! There are no wrong notes, just beautiful music.

- Aesthetically Interesting Route: Routes that appeal to all the **senses** encourage more walking. People are much more likely to take advantage of walking routes that feature plentiful trees, wildflowers, wildlife, water features, public art, and historic buildings and landmark.

Freenotes Musical Instrument(s) are very interesting, they activate many senses! The Instruments are interactive and visual works of art!

WHY INSTRUMENTS SHOULD BE PUT IN OUTSIDE AREAS

Naturelearning.org wrote an article called Why Focus on Outdoor Learning Environments?

- Supports creativity and problem solving.
- Enhances cognitive abilities. (Wells, 2000).
- Improves academic performance.
- Reduces Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) symptoms.
- Increases physical activity.
- Improves eyesight. More time spent outdoors is related to reduced rates of nearsightedness, also known as myopia, in children and adolescents (American Academy of Ophthalmology, 2011).
- Improves social relations.(Burdette and Whitaker, 2005).
- Improves self-discipline.
- Reduces stress.

POPULARITY OF TRAILS

Hiking and other trail use is the number one recreational preference, according to a recent survey.

Putting interesting usable amenities on these trails will continue to keep them popular and even increase use.

PARK USAGE

According to an article by Playground Professionals, Park usage varies based on different factors such as age, gender, and socioeconomic status. Poorer communities are less likely to be frequent visitors: In the study, a 10 percentage point increase in local household poverty correlated with a 12 percent decrease in park use. Research also shows that most parks are geared toward youth rather than adults. Nearly all of the parks in the study had outdoor basketball courts and baseball fields, but only a third had a walking loop. When they were present, these loops were the amenity that generated the most activity for adults and seniors. Researchers found that park usage skewed male (57 percent) and young—seniors represented only 4 percent of park visitors. However, seniors make up 20 percent of the general U.S. population; a marked effort at engaging them would increase overall park usage and likely help to make the demographic healthier.

Having outdoor music instruments in parks and on park trails will achieve this goal.

DELIGHT vs. DRUDGERY

Too often, trails are designed in a manner that causes the user to experience unnecessary drudgery with too little delight, thus discouraging repeated use of the trail. Tourists do not travel

to Disneyland to ride the parking tram, they go for the Matterhorn. In many areas, tourism is the life-blood of the community, so if the goal is to increase tourism by creating trails, we must keep in mind that a person considering whether or not to travel and use a trail is forgoing a long list of other interesting options. As trail builders and designers we must seek to make our trails attractive. In an article by **By Randy Martin** President, [Trailscape inc.](#)

Not only are the instruments an attractive feature from a sculptural stand point, but they are also interactive, delighting the senses with something that can be seen, heard and felt.

THE BUFFALO ROTARY MUSIC TRAIL

According to the President of the Buffalo Rotary, Warren Stoltman, “The biggest challenge was to raise the funds necessary to make it real.” Starting with a goal of nine instruments and a \$35,000 budget, the club exceeded its target in half a year’s time. Now eleven instruments are along Buffalo Lake in Sturges Park.

The Music Trail became a community wide effort with contributions from the local government including the City donating the installation of the instruments and approval by the Parks and Recreation Board for the use of Sturges Park along with monetary donations from private citizens. What put the Buffalo Rotary over the top was a substantial contribution from the Minnesota Legacy Fund.



Stoltman, who is an eye doctor in Buffalo, told about a patient whose care attendant couldn't persuade him to get the exercise he needed. But ever since the installation of the musical instruments in the park, “It hasn't been a chore,” he said. “He wants to go play the instruments and has to walk in order to play them.” In a sense, the music of the trail is therapy for him.

TRAILS

- Trails make communities better places to live by preserving and creating open spaces for recreation.
- Trails and greenways provide new opportunities for outdoor recreation and non-motorized transportation.
- Trails also provide a unique facility to serve a diverse population of a community that may otherwise have limited opportunities to access natural areas due to financial or transportation constraints.
- Trails provide affordable exercise and recreational opportunities within the community.

Funding & Resources

National Park Service - Apply for Community Assistance in Conservation and Outdoor Recreation

<https://www.nps.gov/orgs/rtca/apply.htm>

Recreational Trails Program (RTP) - funds are administered by the Federal Highway Administration from Federal fuel tax. Each state receives an apportionment each year and provides grants for recreational trail projects.

<https://www.railstotrails.org/policy/building-active-transportation-systems/obtaining-funding>

http://www.rff.org/files/sharepoint/WorkImages/Download/RFF-BCK-ORRG_DOT.pdf

https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational_trails

American Trails - Ideas and sources of funding from across America; tips on grant writing; opportunities with volunteers and Youth Corps; and a variety of examples of trails and greenways funding programs.

<http://www.americantrails.org/resources/funding>

<http://www.americantrails.org/resources/advocacy/trails101utah.html>

There are ways to work around a lack of funding, largely by leveraging the resources of private companies, nonprofits, and other city agencies. Parks should explore working with community health centers and hospitals to connect “physical spaces with health providers and insurance companies—the entities that are taking care of our health needs, but not on the preventative sides.”