



MCT Trails Master Plan | 2024



mcttrails.com/master_plan



Acknowledgments

Special thanks to the residents of Madison County, to various community stakeholders and to the team at Agency for Community Transit (ACT) and Madison County Transit (MCT). Without their insight, support, and enthusiasm, this project could not have been completed.



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Executive Summary



Executive Summary

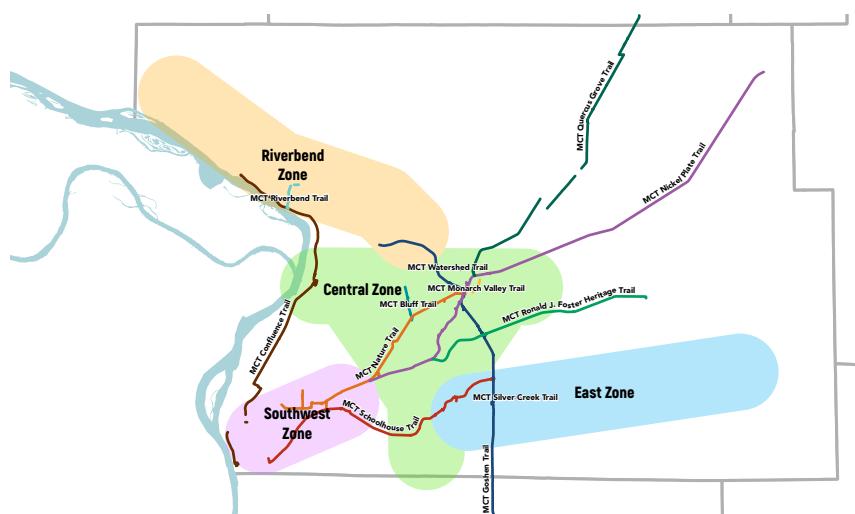
HeartLands Conservancy has prepared this Master Plan for the MCT Trails system in Madison County, Illinois. The Master Plan will serve as the long-term guiding vision for this Class 1 bikeway network serving Madison County residents and visitors. The goals, strategies, and projects recommended in this Master Plan are all focused on helping to achieve the envisioned future for the MCT Trails for all residents and visitors to Madison County.

During the planning process, an online survey of trail users gathered input from over 1,000 trail commuters, pedestrians, dog walkers, runners, and bicyclists with vast knowledge of the MCT Trails. The survey results were supplemented with feedback from hundreds of people who engaged with the Project Team over the course of 4 events. One thing is clear, the trail network is held in high regard by experienced trail users across the St. Louis region, who greatly appreciate the safe, extensive, and well-maintained MCT Trails system.

A key reason for preparing the systemwide Master Plan was to learn firsthand from Madison County's residents and visitors how to better serve their transportation and recreation needs. Much of the plan is focused on pursuing opportunities that overcome the barriers identified through community engagement. Particular attention was paid to the four zones noted below.

Some of the top suggestions raised during the process and addressed in this Master Plan are:

- Extend the MCT Trails system to more communities, neighborhoods, and key destinations;
- Construct more trail-to-trail connections;
- Enhance the safety of trail intersections and railroad crossings;
- Provide more comfort and safety amenities;
- Allocate sufficient resources to maintain the MCT Trails in good condition as the system grows.



Vision Statement

A well-crafted vision statement sets the tone for any planning initiative and guides the overall direction of plan development. It is simply a brief description of the ideal future state of the community or infrastructure being planned. In other words, it is the outcome that is hoped for after the plan is implemented – everything to be achieved.

The vision statement to carry this plan forward is the following:

The MCT Trails system is a safe, accessible, and unique network of Class 1 bikeways that connects Madison County residents and visitors of all ages and abilities to employment, education, shopping, recreation, transit, and other destinations.



Master Plan Goals

Achieving the desired outcomes of a vision statement requires significant work, time, and resources. Goals are written to break down the efforts and investments into smaller, more achievable components. They are categories of action that help move the organization closer to the envisioned future. The goals of this Master Plan targeted as "6P" subject areas of programs, policies, projects, promotions, people, and partnerships.



Goal 1: Programs

Offer programs that enhance the experience of using the MCT Trails and attract new trail users.



Goal 2: Policies

Establish policies that support the development, maintenance, and operation of a safe, accessible, and unique trail system.



Goal 3: Projects

Prioritize capital investments that are cost-effective, expand access to disadvantaged areas and populations, improve safety, and enhance the experience of using the MCT Trails.



Goal 4: Promotions

Engage in communications that foster a positive image of the MCT Trails and effectively promote MCT events, opportunities, projects, and organizational accomplishments.



Goal 5: People

Ensure that all residents and visitors are informed of and have access to the MCT Trails and their benefits.



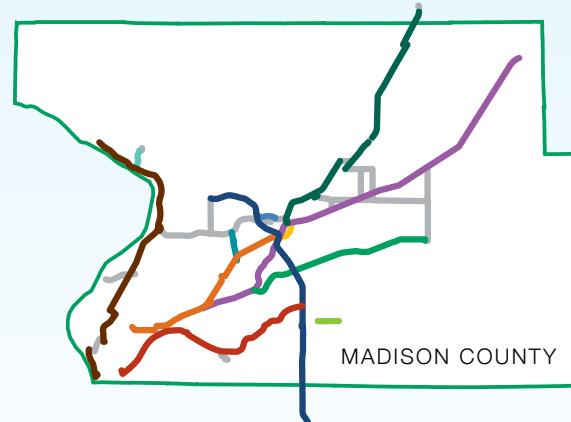
Goal 6: Partnerships

Cultivate mutually beneficial organizational relationships that can be leveraged to support the vision of the MCT Trails.

MCT TRAILS SYSTEM CURRENT EXISTING

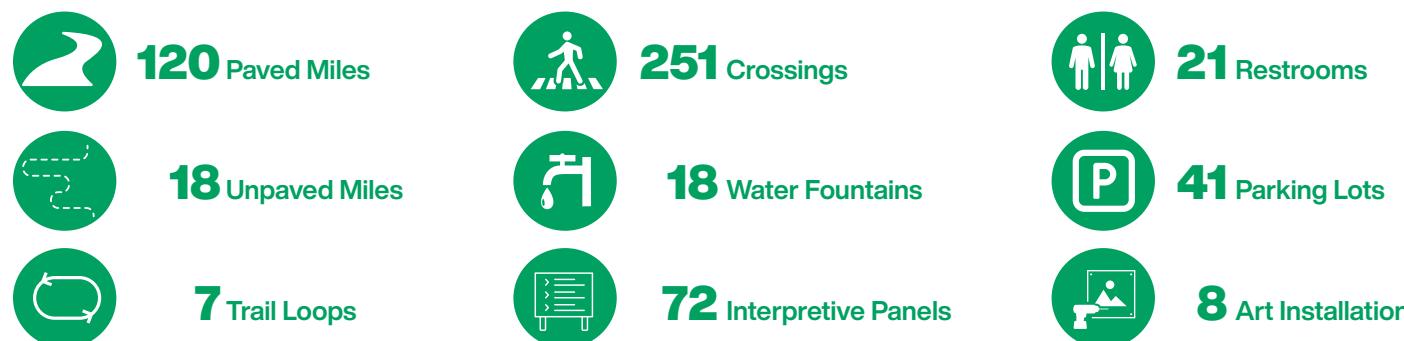
138 Miles

of Class-One Bikeways that pass through or across



21 Communities
12 Trails
49 Bridges
23 Tunnels
1,585 Acres of Greenspace

TRAILS AT A GLANCE



10.0 MILES GOSHEN TRAIL
 HERITAGE TRAIL
 NICKEL PLATE TRAIL

15.3 MILES NATURE TRAIL
 NICKEL PLATE TRAIL

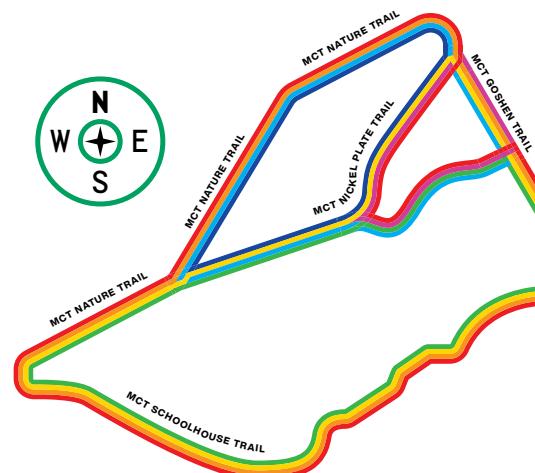
17.6 MILES NATURE TRAIL
 NICKEL PLATE TRAIL
 HERITAGE TRAIL
 GOSHEN TRAIL

22.9 MILES NATURE TRAIL
 NICKEL PLATE TRAIL
 HERITAGE TRAIL
 GOSHEN TRAIL
 SCHOOLHOUSE TRAIL

25.7 MILES NATURE TRAIL
 NICKEL PLATE TRAIL
 GOSHEN TRAIL
 SCHOOLHOUSE TRAIL

26.1 MILES NATURE TRAIL
 GOSHEN TRAIL
 SCHOOLHOUSE TRAIL

31.1 MILES NATURE TRAIL
 NICKEL PLATE TRAIL
 HERITAGE TRAIL
 GOSHEN TRAIL
 SCHOOLHOUSE TRAIL



MCT TRAILS SYSTEM PROPOSED

MCT Trails Master Plan by the Numbers

6 Goals

+2 Grade Separations

17 Capital Projects

+29 Capital Project Trail Miles

17 Long Term & Stakeholder Recommended Projects

+913 Capital Project Acres of Greenspace

99 Strategies

2023 Community Engagement



4

Public Input Meetings



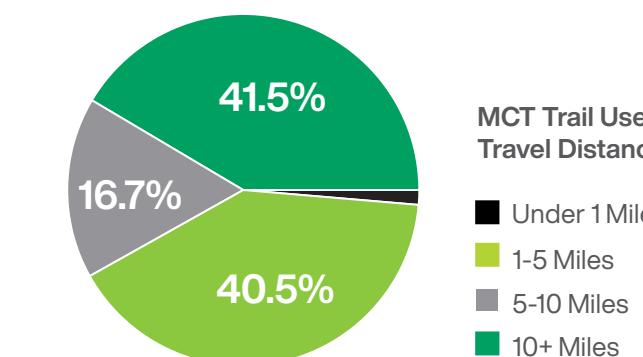
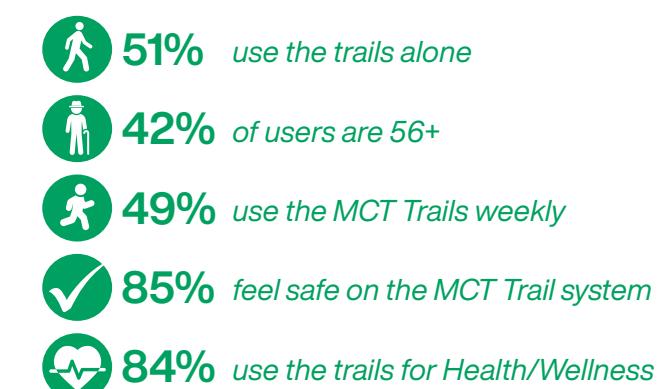
1,000+

Surveys Completed

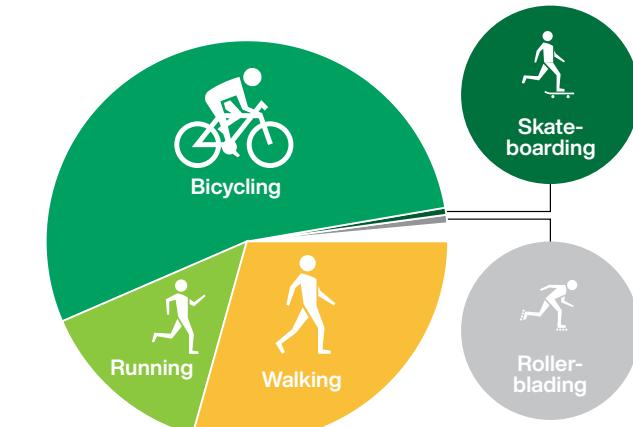


752

Online Amenity Comments



Source: MCT Trails Survey, 2023



System Needs

The system assessment compared community and trail user input against the existing MCT Trails inventory. System needs identified by the evaluation include:

- Specific gaps in system coverage.
- Needed trail extensions to unserved communities.
- Areas in need of high-impact investments to overcome barriers to mobility and safe travel.
- Unpaved trail segments in need of improvement.
- High-priority at-grade intersections recommended for grade separation.

MCT TRAILS SYSTEM RECOMMENDATIONS



New Trails & Extensions



Grade Separations



Paving/
Reconstruction



Art on the
Trails



Trees for
Shade



Trail Amenities



Community members providing insight on needs for MCT Trails Master Plan

MCT Trails System Capital Plan

A Capital Plan consisting of 17 trail projects has been identified through the planning process. The list of projects represents a 10-year program for trail project construction. The Capital Plan Map on the next page is labeled to correspond with the project list on the right. The list does not reflect order of priority. In addition to these projects, continued implementation and expansion of the Art on the Trails initiative is recommended.

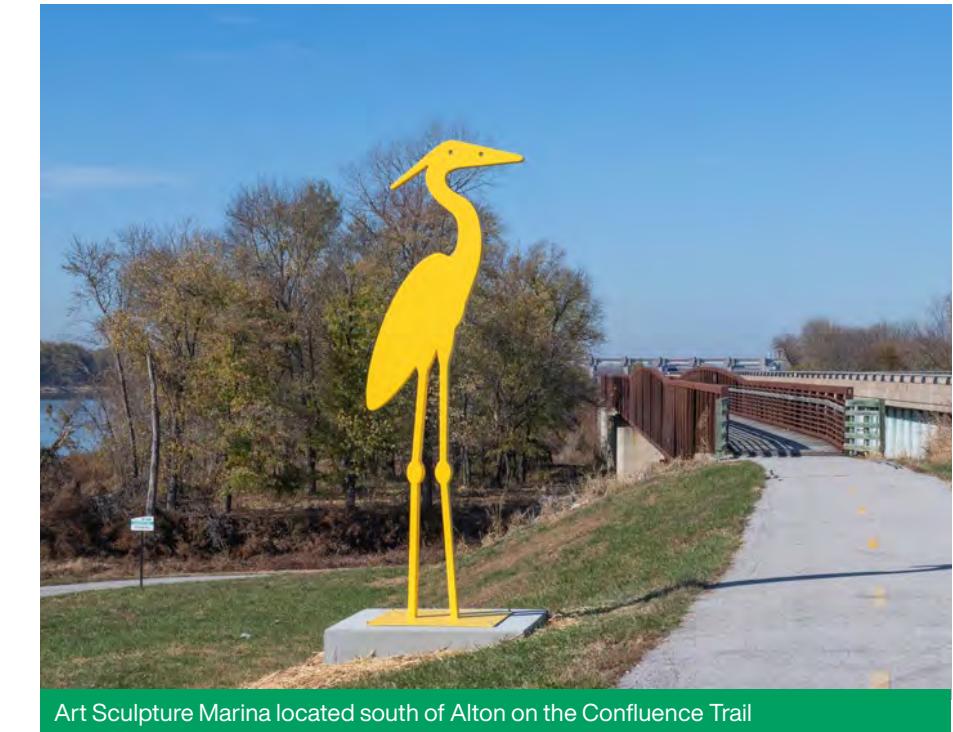
On the map, Capital Plan projects with known alignments are depicted with a solid bright green line. Any project for which the alignment has not been finalized is shown as a project corridor with a dashed line indicating the general area where the trail will be aligned.

MCT Trails Capital Plan Projects

1. Alton Greenway Corridor
2. Godfrey Trail
3. Goshen Trail to Bethalto Phase 1
4. Goshen Trail to Bethalto Phase 2
5. Goshen Trail to Bethalto Phase 3
6. South Roxana Spur
7. Heritage Trail to Goshen Rd Connector
8. IT Trail Phase 2
9. East-West Confluence Trail Connection
10. Schoolhouse Trail Grade Separation @ Pleasant Ridge Rd
11. Schoolhouse Trail Grade Separation @ IL-111 and Horseshoe Lake Rd
12. Confluence Trail to Wilson Park Connection
13. Madison Schoolhouse Trail Extension
14. Venice Bike/Ped Connector
15. Formosa Trail (east and west segments)
16. Silver Creek Trail Phase 4
17. Silver Creek Trail Phase 5

Long-Term and Stakeholder Project Recommendations

Another 17 projects were identified through the needs assessment and engagement with stakeholders and trail users. These projects are recommended for further assessment and implementation as the Capital Plan projects are completed and future capital budgets are developed. These projects are listed and illustrated in Section 6 on pages 58-59 of the Master Plan.



Art Sculpture Marina located south of Alton on the Confluence Trail



Implementation of projects providing safe connections for communities

MCT Trails System Capital Plan Map



Master Plan Implementation

The Master Plan is built around a framework with the vision and goals guiding overall direction. Objectives and strategies complete the framework and set the plan in motion toward implementation. Objectives organize the work efforts into actionable categories. Strategies are the actions and efforts that move the plan forward.

The implementation strategies of the Master Plan are organized by goals and objectives, then prioritized to establish a manageable and realistic plan of action. A total of 99 implementation strategies are prioritized as follows:

Continuous Priorities: 18 strategies that should be initiated as soon as practical, if not underway already, and sustained after initiation.

Immediate Priorities: 17 strategies that should be initiated within **1 year**.

Short Term Priorities: 41 strategies that should be initiated in **1-5 years**.

Mid Term Priorities: 19 strategies that should be initiated in **5-10 years**.

Long Term Priorities: 4 strategies that should be initiated after **10 years**.



Installation of trail amenities often includes trees for shade

Implementation & Funding

Before any project can be constructed, costs must be determined, sources of sufficient funding must be identified and secured, and the project must be programmed in the Capital Plan. Significant resources are invested into the development, maintenance, and operation of a trail network such as the MCT Trails system.

The amount of available funding and the number of funding sources fluctuates continually. This is especially true for governmental and not-for-profit grant programs. Securing project funds through grant programs takes substantial effort. It requires continuous tracking, determining project eligibility, gathering information, completing applications, and writing proposals. In addition, grant programs are extremely competitive and the hard work is often a losing effort. Nevertheless, grants are very much worth pursuing. Organizations that are willing to put forth the effort can be tremendously successful at winning grants to fund projects.

Grants alone cannot fully fund a trail system. Most programs require matching funds from other sources. Public agencies must utilize every funding tool at their disposal – sales taxes, property taxes, user fees, or other mechanism – to leverage sufficient funding for a successful capital program. This is especially true when actively implementing a Master Plan.

The following recommendations are provided to assist in securing adequate funds to complete the recommended MCT Trails projects.



Art on the Trails - Newt Installation

Funding Recommendations

- Investigate grants continually.
- Investigate public/private partnerships.
- Explore low-interest loans or bonds
- Develop a fiscal plan to create an endowment.
- Conduct community fundraising campaigns.
- Seek private donors.
- Develop partnerships to offset costs.
- Develop shovel-ready projects.
- Pursue projects within Special Service Areas and TIF districts.
- Enact equitable increases.
- Review projects for funding opportunities on a regular basis.
- Keep detailed and accurate records of all grants awarded.
- Leverage in-kind work as a grant match.
- Subscribe to grant notification services.



Community Interpretive Panels unveiling by MCT

Introduction



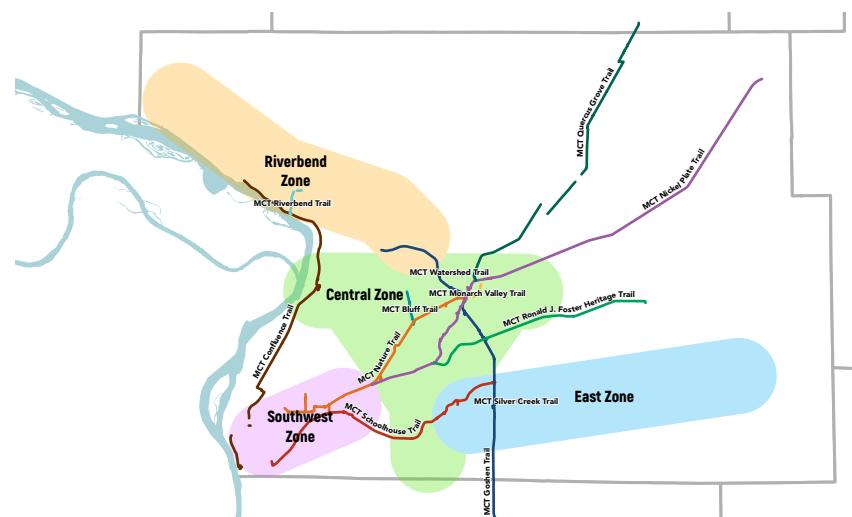
Project Purpose

HeartLands Conservancy was hired as the project consultant to prepare this Master Plan for a county-wide bicycle and pedestrian trail system in Madison County, Illinois known as MCT Trails. This trail system is operated by the Agency for Community Transit (ACT), the private non-profit organization is responsible for operating the Madison County Transit (MCT) public and para-transit bus services, carpool/vanpool program, and the MCT Trails system.

The core function of MCT, as with any transit agency, is to connect people to the places they need to go. Every person traveling by public transit begins and ends each trip with walking, which for the purposes of this plan includes the use of wheelchairs and other mobility aids. Bicycles and electric-powered micro-mobility devices, such as e-bikes and e-scooters, can serve the same role as walking and, generally speaking, may utilize the same facilities. However, walking and biking may also be primary modes of transportation, rather than being secondary to transit. So, through facilitating walking, biking, riding transit, or any combination of the three, the MCT Trails system is a logical extension of MCT's transportation mission.

The development of this Master Plan serves the following main purposes:

- Emphasize the transportation function of the MCT Trails system
- Reinforce the role of the MCT Trails system as the “backbone” that connects a network of fine-grained municipal facilities throughout Madison County
- Review and assess the existing inventory of the MCT Trails and amenities
- Recommend future facility needs of the MCT Trails system;
- Assess the safety of the MCT Trails system
- Recommend design, policy, and programmatic solutions that address safety needs
- Provide context-sensitive facility design and amenity recommendations
- Consider policies and programs that support the mission and vision of MCT Trails
- Recommend policy and programmatic solutions to address non-facility needs
- Provide strategies to fund and implement the Master Plan



Organizational Profile

The Madison County Transit District (MCT) is a public transportation agency that serves 16 townships in Madison County, Illinois. Through the MCT Fixed-Route bus system and the expanding MCT Trails network, Madison County Transit connects people and communities of Madison County.

In partnership with the Agency for Community Transit (ACT), MCT is dedicated to providing public mass transportation within Madison County, Illinois. In addition to managing RideFinders, the St. Louis area ridesharing program, MCT offers the region Runabout Paratransit services that satisfy ADA criteria for the elderly and disabled and the integration of the MCT bikeways with the MCT public bus routes. As part of a network of interconnected regional transportation organizations, MCT serves as a crucial link in the delivery chain.

MCT Trails system is an interconnected network of bikeways that provide a free, kid-friendly network of transportation and recreation for Madison County residents and visitors. The Class 1 bikeways, also known as “bike paths” or “shared-use paths” encompass a range of natural landscapes (prairies, forests, lakes, the bluffline, and the Mississippi River) and span more than 138 miles. Located primarily on former rail corridors, MCT Trails are completely separated from the road and separated from vehicular traffic, offering a safe and stress-free ride for recreation, fitness, commuting, or running errands. MCT Trails system include 12 trails, 50 bridges, 23 tunnels, 1,585 acres of green space, and a few at-grade crossings. The bridges and tunnels are utilized to create a safe and seamless experience for trail users of all ages, skill levels, and abilities. The system also forms a series of 7 trail loops of varying lengths.

At a community and neighborhood level, the MCT Trails system provides an exceptional groundwork for alternative modes of mobility. MCT is one of the only transit systems in the country with a fully integrated bus and bikeway system, creating a seamless connection between trails and transit. The 12 distinct bikeways in the MCT Trails system connect 21 communities and travel near the Edwardsville and Alton downtown areas, museums, local and state parks, schools, historic sites, commercial centers, and various shopping and food destinations.

MCT investments have improved the facilities for cyclists and pedestrians in Madison County for both locals and tourists. Since 2004, MCT has fitted all of its buses with bike racks to allow easy access between the MCT Trails and bus systems. MCT has provided 19 ruggedized police patrol bicycles to 8 different Madison County communities. Partnering police departments patrol the MCT Trails by bicycle.

MCT also started a project called “Art on the Trails” to improve the MCT Trails’ aesthetic, creativity, and playfulness. Eight trail critter sculptures captivate hikers of all ages and enhance the natural setting with a touch of artistic flair.

The Transit District boundaries only encompass the Madison County townships that have elected to join the Transit District, as shown in the “Map 1: Madison County Reference Map” on page 12. This is the area served with public and paratransit bus services. However, the MCT Trails system extends into areas of Madison County outside of the Transit District boundaries.

Discover landscapes, cultural institutions, historical neighborhoods, and unique communities that make Madison County an exceptional place to live and work.

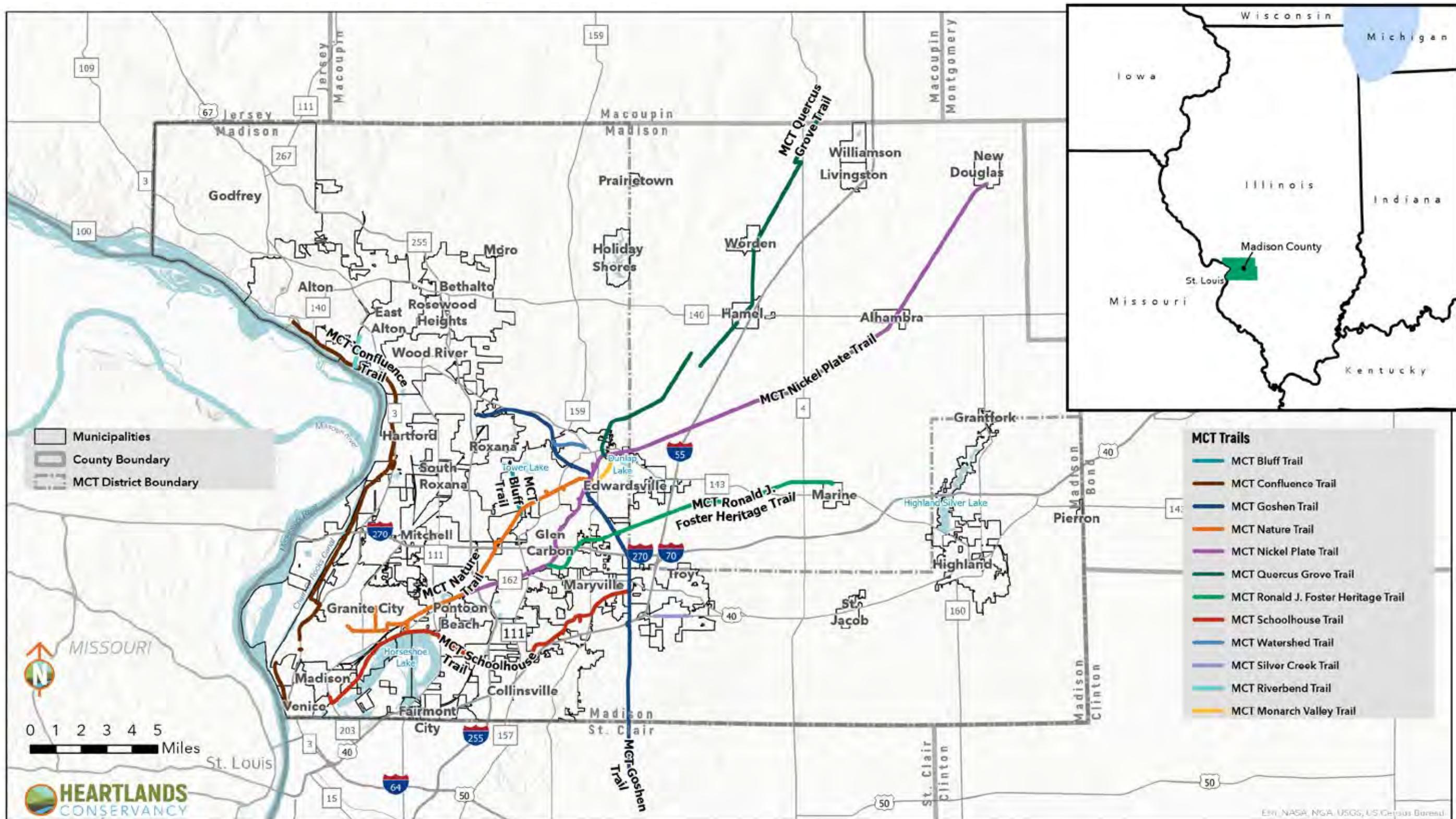
— MCT Board of Trustees

12 Trails
21 Communities
22 Tunnels
49 Bridges
138 Miles
1,585 Acres of Greenspace



Madison County Transit Gateway Sign

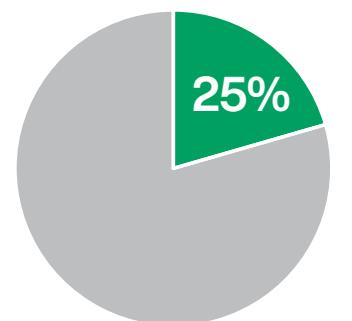
Map 1: Madison County Reference Map



Community Profile

To understand the primary population served by the MCT Trails system, US Census data was examined for Madison County as a whole, and the Census tracts located in the county. Census Tracts were used to assess location-based demographic information because it is the level of geography used for the Justice40 Initiative. This initiative was enacted by the current Biden-Harris US Presidential Administration to pursue a goal of ensuring that at least 40% of overall benefits from federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities. The data analysis breaks information down by disadvantaged census tracts, non-

4001.01	4001.02	4002	4006
4007	4008.02	4010	4011.01
4011.02	4012	4013	4014
4015	4017.01	4019.05	4014
4015	4017.01	4019.05	4021
4022	4023	4024	4025
4026	4040		



*MADISON COUNTY, ILLINOIS,
DISADVANTAGED CENSUS TRACTS
Source: US Census Bureau, 2020

Table 1A summarizes selected demographic characteristics of Madison County that are particularly relevant to the operation, maintenance, and expansion of the MCT Trails system. Map 2 shows the disadvantaged Census tracts that make up what is referred to in this Plan as the High Impact Investment Area. Maps 3 and 4 are additional demographic maps for Madison County. This information is referenced periodically throughout the Plan, as relevant to the discussion.

The High Impact Investment Area skirts the eastern bank of the Mississippi River, which is also the western extents of Madison County. There are several reasons for naming this location the High Impact Investment Area. The area's substantial industrial and shipping/warehousing land uses follow the historic land development pattern that leveraged the Mississippi River as a primary shipping route for goods and resources, such as timber and coal. Heavy industries located in this belt have historically included coal-fired electric plants, oil refineries, and steel mills, which rely heavily on the barge ports, rail yards, and trucking terminals located there.

The demographic characteristics of the population within these disadvantaged Census tracts, as seen in Table 1A, resemble those of industrial communities throughout the U.S. Residents of these areas traditionally deal with low income, high poverty rates, low property values, heavy traffic, along with excessive air, water, noise, and light pollution – the negative impacts of industry.



Total Population
264,403

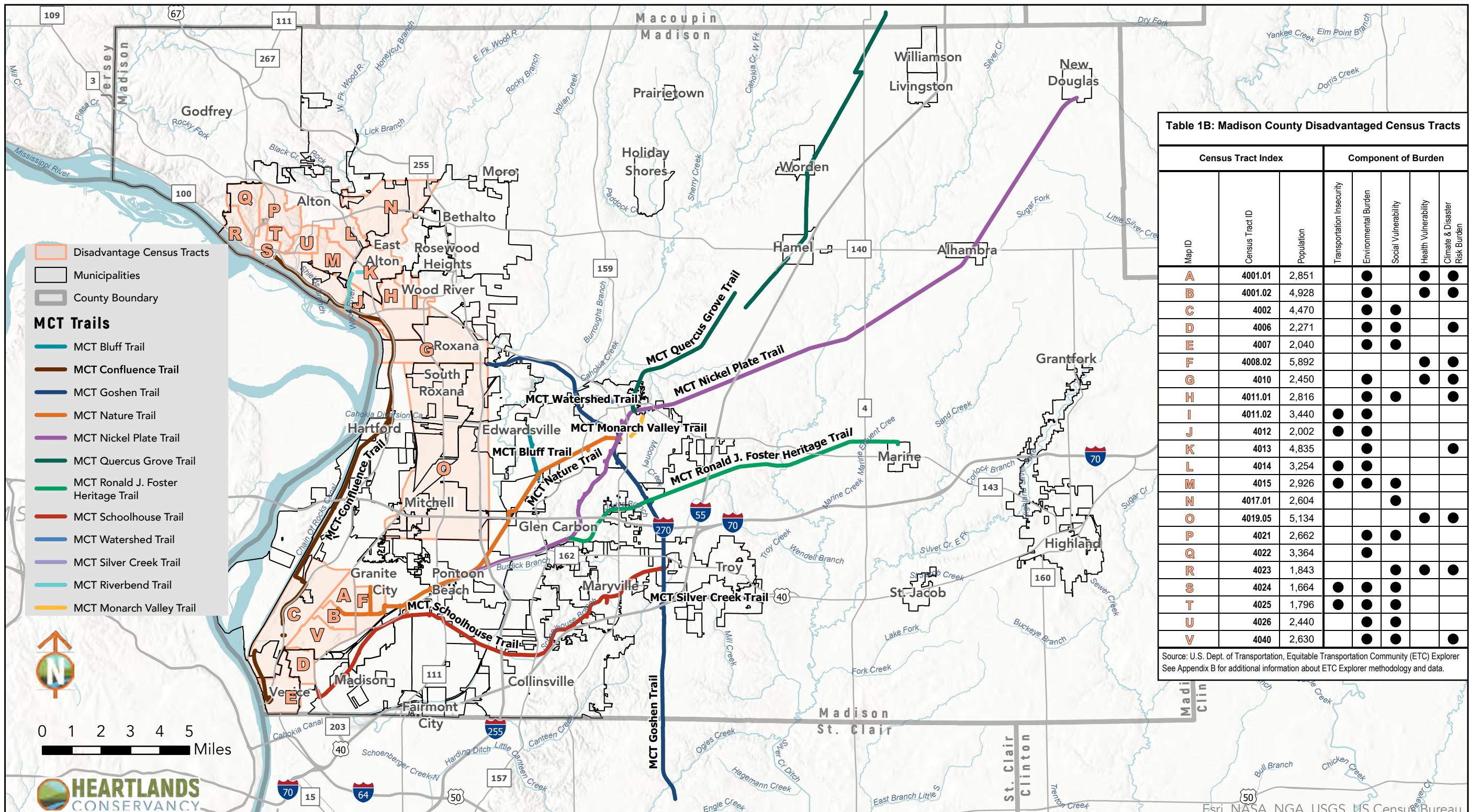
*MADISON COUNTY, ILLINOIS, 2020
POPULATION (ACS, 2020)

Table 1A: Selected Demographic Characteristics - Madison County, Illinois

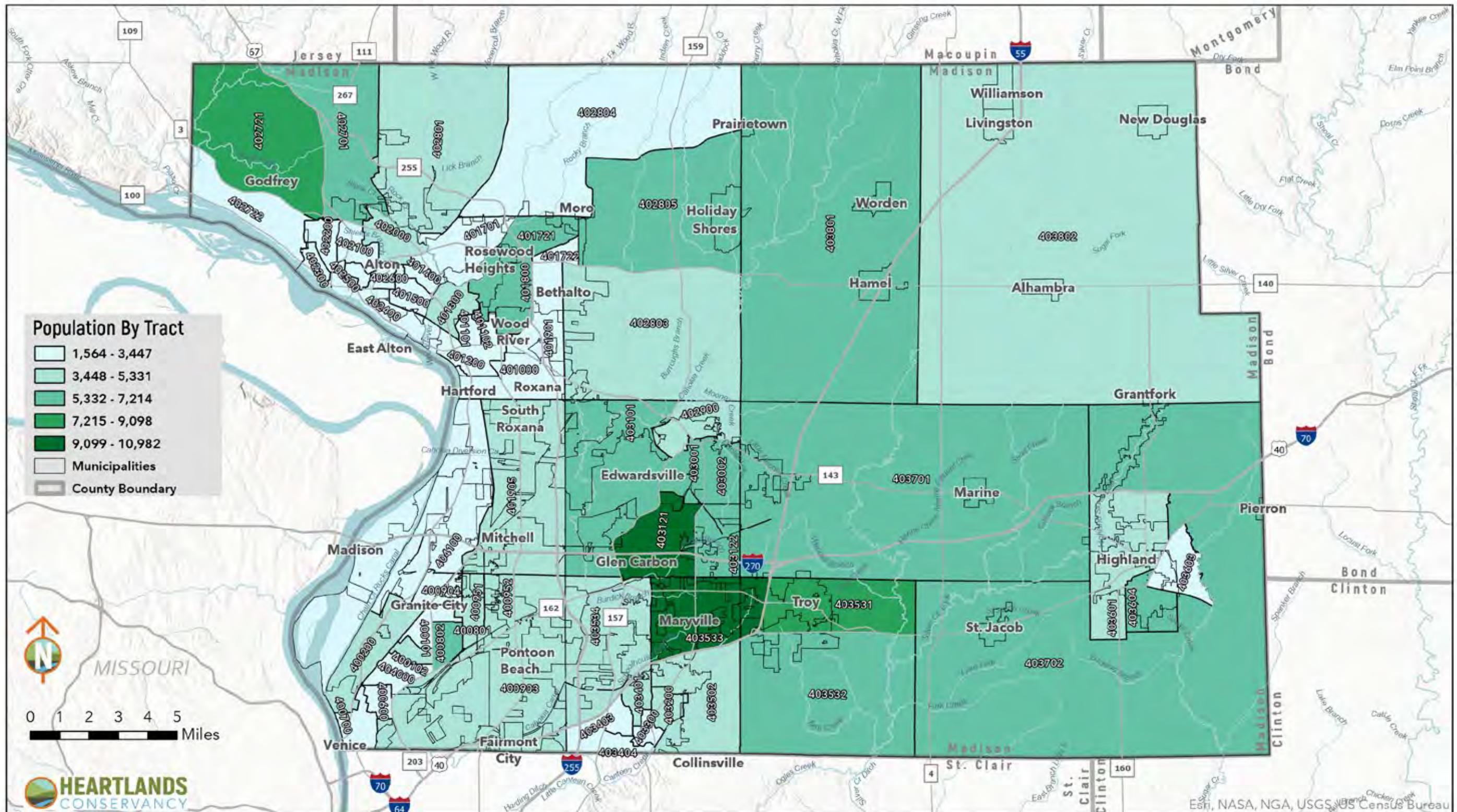
	Disadvantaged Census Tracts		Non-Disadvantaged Census Tracts		Madison County All	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
POPULATION						
Total Population	68,312	(X)	196,091	(X)	264,403	(X)
Male	33,179	48.6%	95,643	48.8%	128,822	48.7%
Female	35,133	51.4%	100,448	51.2%	135,581	51.3%
Under 5 years	3,974	5.8%	11,142	5.7%	15,116	5.7%
Under 18 years	15,634	22.9%	42,103	21.5%	57,737	21.8%
18 years and over	52,678	77.1%	153,988	78.5%	206,666	78.2%
65 years and over	10,716	15.7%	34,912	17.8%	45,628	17.3%
Median age (years)*	39.0	(X)	41.8	(X)	40.3	(X)
RACE						
One race	65,759	96.3%	191,278	97.5%	257,037	97.2%
White	52,850	77.4%	176,323	89.9%	229,173	86.7%
Black/African American	12,061	17.7%	10,926	5.6%	22,987	8.7%
American Indian/Alaska Native	107	0.2%	217	0.1%	324	0.1%
Asian	233	0.3%	2,448	1.2%	2,681	1.0%
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	3	0.004%	24	0.01%	27	0.01%
Some other race	505	0.7%	1,340	0.7%	1,845	0.7%
Two or more races	2,553	3.7%	4,813	2.5%	7,366	2.8%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	2,797	4.1%	6,088	3.1%	8,885	3.4%
HOUSING						
Total housing units	33,960	(X)	85,700	(X)	119,660	(X)
Occupied housing units	29,008	85.4%	79,421	92.7%	108,429	90.6%
Unoccupied housing units	4,952	14.6%	6,279	7.3%	11,231	9.4%
HOUSEHOLDS						
Total households	29,008	(X)	79,421	(X)	108,429	(X)
Avg. household size	2.32	(X)	2.41	(X)	2.39	(X)
FINANCES						
Med. Household Income (\$)*	\$45,188	(X)	\$71,850	(X)	\$64,045	(X)
Med. Monthly Housing Costs (\$)*	\$764	(X)	\$1,014	(X)	\$905	(X)
Population Below Poverty Level	15,630	24.3%	16,522	8.9%	32,152	12.4%
Unemployment Rate (age 16+)	(X)	8.0%	(X)	4.5%	(X)	4.9%
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT						
Population age 25+	47,702	(X)	137,555	(X)	185,257	(X)
Less than HS diploma/equivalency	6,113	12.8%	7,391	5.4%	13,504	7.3%
HS diploma/equivalency	16,916	35.5%	36,555	26.6%	53,471	28.9%
Some college/Associate's degree	18,068	37.9%	48,794	35.5%	66,862	36.1%
Bachelor's degree/higher	6,605	13.8%	44,815	32.6%	51,420	27.8%
MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION TO WORK						
Workers age 16+	30,008	(X)	96,386	(X)	126,394	(X)
Car, truck, or van	27,729	92.4%	88,099	91.4%	106,762	91.1%
Public transportation (excl. taxicab)	543	1.8%	1,186	1.2%	1,717	1.3%
Walked	297	1.0%	1,242	1.3%	1,506	1.2%
Bicycle	11	0.0%	101	0.1%	107	0.1%
Taxicab/motorcycle/other	281	0.9%	461	0.5%	772	0.6%
Worked from home	1,150	3.8%	5,308	5.5%	6,405	5.7%
No vehicle available	888	3.0%	1,225	1.3%	5,056	1.6%

* Calculated as the average median amount for applicable Census Tracts, except countywide total.
Source: US Census Bureau, 2020 5-year American Community Survey

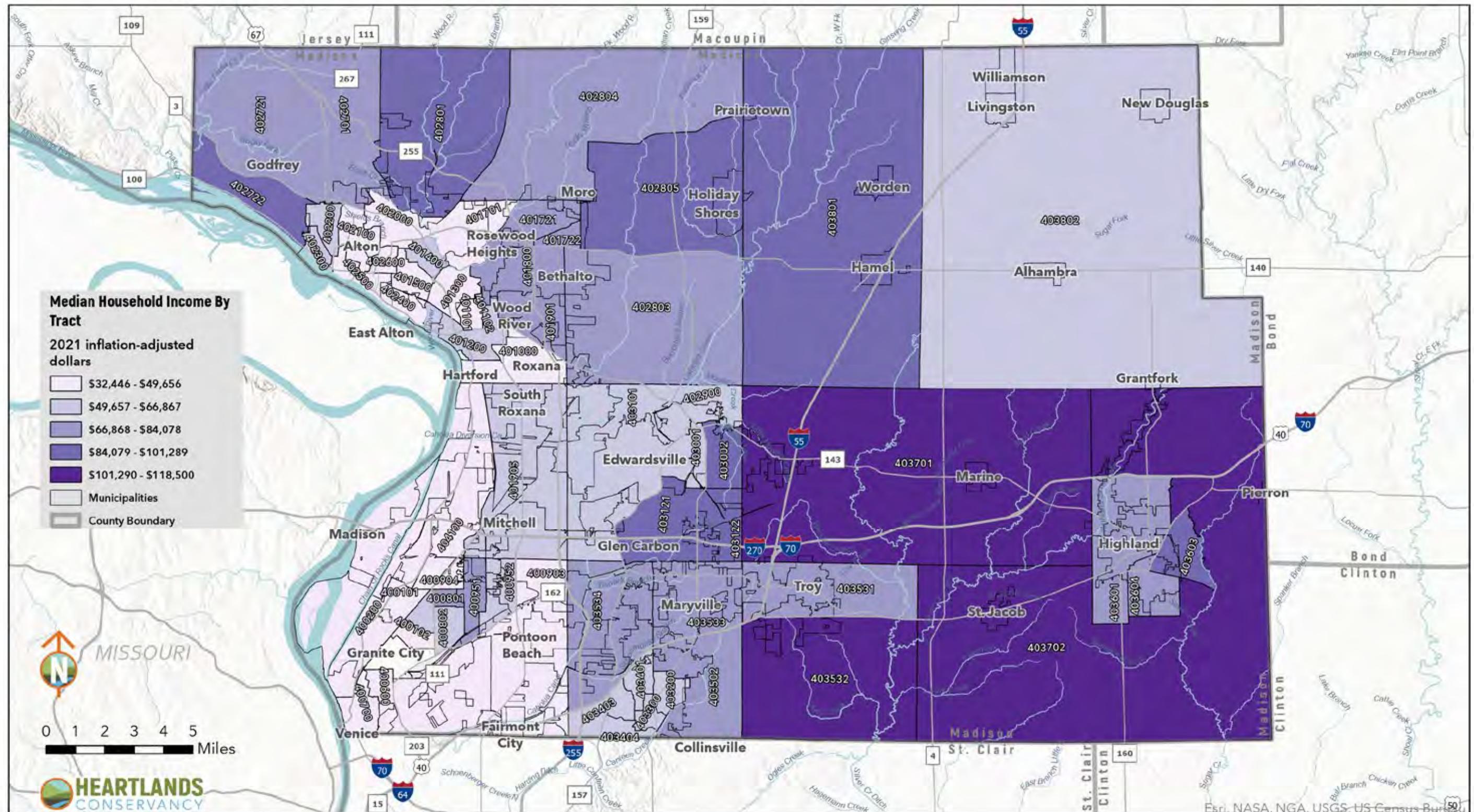
Map 2: High Impact Investment Area Map | (Includes Table 1B: Madison County Disadvantaged Census Tracts)



Map 3: Population By Census Tract



Map 4: Median Household Income By Census Tract



Planning Framework



Planning Framework

This Section outlines the framework around which the Plan was drafted. The framework is comprised of a vision statement, goals, objectives, and strategies.

Vision Statement

A vision statement is a brief, concise summary of the desired future or outcome to be achieved when the Master Plan is fully implemented. It states the guiding principles for preparing the Master Plan content and for operating, maintaining, and growing the MCT Trails system over time. The MCT Trails vision statement is:

The MCT Trails system is a safe, accessible, and, unique network of Class-1 bikeways that connects Madison County residents and visitors of all ages and abilities to employment, education, shopping, recreation, transit, and other destinations.

Goals, Objectives, & Strategies

Goals communicate general organizational or planning expectations as related to specific topics. While topic-specific, goals are reasonably broad statements that, if achieved, move the organization closer to the stated vision. The goals for this Master Plan were developed around a “6P” concept, consisting of the following six categories beginning with the letter P:

Objectives define the elements of each goal to provide direction toward achieving the goals. They clarify the intent and purpose of each goal, breaking them down into more actionable divisions that allow the organization to focus on and address critical issues.

Strategies are action items that implement the vision, goals, objectives, and, ultimately, the Master Plan itself. They are specific enough to direct action, yet broad enough to allow flexibility in how they are accomplished. This allows implementation to move forward in consideration of organizational needs, budgetary/fiscal constraints, and changing circumstances.

This framework of goals, objectives, and strategies is outlined beginning on the next page. For logical organization and identification, goals are assigned a single-digit ID (i.e. 1. Programs Goal), objectives are assigned a two-digit ID with the first digit being the ID for the goal to which it is linked (i.e. Programs Objective 1.1), and strategies are assigned a three-digit ID with the second digit being the ID for the objective to which it is linked (i.e. Programs Strategy 1.1.1).

Please note that some strategies have overlapping impacts and are included under multiple objectives. In addition, the strategies are also found in Section 6, which address the trail system, facilities, safety, and implementation. Where found in later Sections, the strategies may be accompanied by additional discussion and recommendations to help guide implementation.



Programs

GOAL:



Offer programs that enhance the experience of using the MCT Trails and attract new trail users.

Objective 1.1

Offer group activities that attract new trail users, further engage existing trail users, and promote social interactions between participants.

Strategies

- 1.1.1. Sponsor and coordinate group bike rides, fun runs, and similar events for trail users of varying interests, fitness levels, and skill levels.
- 1.1.2. Conduct walking tours that familiarize participants with the MCT Trails system, while introducing them to sites of cultural and historic interest in close proximity to the trails.
- 1.1.3. With all group events, provide opportunities for socialization among participants with similar interests and abilities.

Objective 1.2

Establish an adopt-a-trail program to encourage trail stewardship and beautification, as a complement to the existing Tree & Bench Donation program.

Strategies

- 1.2.1. Research existing adopt-a-trail programs and develop a programmatic framework for the MCT Trails that incorporates the agency's preferred policies and rules of participation.
- 1.2.2. Identify trail segments or locations suitable for adoption by participants of the future MCT adopt-a-trail program.
- 1.2.3. Allocate sufficient funding to establish and operate a successful adopt-a-trail program.
- 1.2.4. Develop marketing materials to recruit participants in the implemented adopt-a-trail program.

Objective 1.3

Explore the feasibility of implementing a bike share program to expand trail access.

Strategies

- 1.3.1. Utilize MCT surveys and other public engagement efforts to gauge the level of interest and support for establishing a bike share program for the MCT Trails system.
- 1.3.2. If justified by local interest in a bike share program, engage a qualified consultant to conduct a feasibility study and provide programmatic recommendations.
- 1.3.3. If determined feasible, implement a bike share program that expands access to the MCT Trails system for Madison County residents and visitors.

Objective 1.4

Enhance safety through education and training for trail users.

Strategies

- 1.4.1. Offer pedestrian and/or bicyclist safety training.
- 1.4.2. Develop educational materials and/or training on MCT Trails rules, the location and use of safety call boxes, trail etiquette, and proper street/intersection crossing practices.
- 1.4.3. Offer bike helmet fittings that also train participants on the proper fitting, wearing, and use of bicycle helmets.
- 1.4.4. Offer training on bicycle maintenance to help riders keep their bicycles in safe operating condition and minimize mechanical issues that could cause injury.
- 1.4.5. Identify organizational partnership opportunities for delivering education and training on topics that enhance the safety of those using the MCT Trails.

Objective 1.5

Establish a program to recognize partner agencies and communities that expand connections to the MCT Trails.

Strategies

- 1.5.1. Identify all local governments, park districts, and other agencies that own and operate trail systems within and adjacent to Madison County; track the trail projects of those agencies that interface or are planned to interface with the MCT Trails system.
- 1.5.2. Develop an award/recognition program for agencies that partner with MCT to improve trail access and enhance mobility within Madison County and adjacent jurisdictions.



MCT Trail users exploring the trails on a hot summer day



Dedicated volunteers removing trash from MCT Trails

Policies



GOAL:

Establish policies that support the development, maintenance, and operation of a safe, enjoyable, and accessible trail system.

Policies Objective 2.1

Elevate safety as an organizational priority.

Strategies

- 2.1.1. Implement the safety-related goals, objectives, and strategies of this Master Plan.
- 2.1.2. Conduct safety reviews on all proposed capital projects. Modify project scopes, designs, and amenities to maximize safety, as deemed feasible and cost-effective.
- 2.1.3. Continuously review safety data, constituent surveys, and public input against MCT programs to identify potential safety education needs that can be addressed with new programmatic solutions or changes to existing programs.
- 2.1.4. Continuously train MCT employees on the current safety rules and best practices applicable to their functional roles.
- 2.1.5. Incentivize good safety practices by recognizing performance at the organizational and departmental/divisional levels.

Policies Objective 2.2

Focus system expansion and functionality on meeting transportation needs of trail users, with recreational use as a secondary benefit.

Strategies

- 2.2.1. Prioritize capital investments that provide demonstrable transportation benefits.
- 2.2.2. Place emphasis on new trail and trail extension projects that fill gaps in system coverage, reach disadvantaged populations, and connect neighborhoods to MCT bus routes, employment nodes, healthcare providers, and shopping districts.
- 2.2.3. Working in partnership with other agencies, pursue projects that connect trails across major physical barriers, such as the Mississippi River and interstate highways.
- 2.2.4. Consider expanding trail access beyond the current dawn to dusk operational hours to facilitate more commuting by bicycle, walking, and transit.

- 2.2.5. Continue to allow the use of electronic micro-mobility devices like e-bikes/ scooters, subject to reasonable rules and policies per Objective 2.6.
- 2.2.6. Provide secure bicycle parking to facilitate additional use of the MCT Trails for commuting, shopping, and combined bus/bike trips.

Policies Objective 2.3

Increase transparency and opportunities for public input in making trail system investments.

Strategies

- 2.3.1. Prioritize Safe Routes to School and multi-modal transit/trail commuter connectivity.
- 2.3.2. Develop and conduct periodic trail user surveys to capture route preferences, desired trail amenities, and geographic information on trip origination, first-mile, and last-mile usage.
- 2.3.3. Integrate multiple public workshops or engagement opportunities into the capital planning process.
- 2.3.4. Consider a web-based engagement tool, such as Engagement HQ or CitizenLab, to expand the effectiveness of community engagement and public information efforts related to capital improvements and facility planning.

Policies Objective 2.4

Ensure that capital investments are distributed equitably across the MCT service area.

Strategies

- 2.4.1. Establish an organizational definition of equity/equitable, as related to capital investments, and develop goals and benchmarks for the equitable distribution of investments.
- 2.4.2. Gather, maintain, and monitor the data needed to implement equitable transportation goals and assess organizational performance against benchmarks.
- 2.4.3. Integrate the equity definition, goals, and benchmarks referenced in Strategy 2.4.1 into the master planning and capital improvement planning processes.

Policies Objective 2.5

Position MCT Trails as the “backbone” system that individual communities will connect to in furtherance of developing a comprehensive fine-grained transportation network.

Strategies

- 2.5.1. Recommend new trail facilities in this Master Plan and future updates to this Master Plan that support the development of a backbone trail system.

- 2.5.2. Coordinate with local governments and park districts in connecting to the backbone MCT Trails system, in order to provide fine-grained bicycle and pedestrian travel options within individual communities.

- 2.5.3. In marketing materials and communications with local government agencies and park districts, emphasize the transportation mission of MCT and the main role of the MCT Trails system being to provide safe, viable options for alternative modes of travel countywide.

Policies Objective 2.6

Establish policies for the accommodation and acceptable use of electric-powered micro-mobility devices such as bicycles, scooters, and skateboards on the MCT Trails.

Strategies

- 2.6.1. Develop and enforce appropriate trail use rules for electric-powered micro-mobility devices.
- 2.6.2. Ensure that standards for facility design and trail amenities adequately account for any use of electric-powered micro-mobility devices that are allowed on the MCT Trails. This should include potential countermeasures that maximize the safety of all trail users, maintain adequate trail system operations, and minimize interference with other users' enjoyment of the trails.
- 2.6.3. Update adopted rules, policies, and guidelines as needed to keep up with changing technologies, emerging trends, and consumer demand for electric-powered micro-mobility devices.
- 2.6.4. Ensure that implemented policies regarding electric-powered micro-mobility devices adequately consider and account for the needs of all disabled trail users and their mobility devices in compliance with applicable guidance and laws.

Policies Objective 2.7

Explore the feasibility of expanding the Transit District jurisdiction into adjacent areas.

Strategies

- 2.7.1. Work with townships adjacent to the current MCT service area to explore the possibility of expanding transit district services and trail facilities for transportation to schools, jobs, destinations, and neighborhoods.
- 2.7.2. Prioritize Safe Routes to School and multi-modal transit/trail commuter connectivity to encourage unserved areas to consider participation in the Transit District.
- 2.7.3. Develop and conduct periodic trail user surveys to: capture geographic information on trip origination, first-mile, and last-mile usage; determine the level of demand for MCT services in areas that lack access to those services.

Projects



GOAL:

Prioritize capital investments that are cost-effective, expand access to disadvantaged areas and populations, improve safety, and enhance the experience of using the MCT Trails.

Objective 3.1

Provide safe options for crossing streets and highways in appropriate locations, particularly in the vicinity of crash hotspots and high-traffic roadways.

Strategies

- 3.1.1. Prioritize street and highway crossings at intersection locations, with stop controlled and signalized intersections being preferred.
- 3.1.2. Avoid mid-block road crossings where feasible. Prioritize trail alignments that utilize roadway intersections, designed in accordance with national guidance, which may include rerouting existing trails to intersections located within a reasonable distance. Where existing mid-block crossings are modified, provide a physical barrier to discourage cut-through bicycle and pedestrian traffic.
- 3.1.3. Consider grade separated crossings in mid-block locations where a bridge, tunnel, or overpass is determined to be a feasible means of improving safety.
- 3.1.4. For mid-block crossings, develop criteria for determining the optimal crossing location and preferred facility type, based on national guidance, site conditions, benefit-cost ratio, available funding, and other relevant factors.
- 3.1.5. Coordinate with the appropriate external agencies, such as IDOT, Madison County, and municipalities, on the precise location and design of all street and highway crossings.

Objective 3.2

Beautify, expand access, and add comfort and safety amenities to the MCT Trails system.

Strategies

- 3.2.1. Adopt context-sensitive design guidelines for determining what amenities/features are required, along with standards for determining preferred installation locations/spacing and quantities.
The costs and organizational capacity to maintain these amenities must also be a consideration. The strategies below offer additional guidance for specific amenities.
- 3.2.2. Provide comfort amenities, such as benches, water fountains, and restrooms in appropriate locations. These amenities are highly desired by trail users.

Benches, trash receptacles, and pet waste stations, if provided, should be more closely spaced along high traffic trails and in urban locations than lower traffic trails and in rural areas. Given the necessary water and sanitary sewer connections for water fountains and restrooms, it is only feasible to provide a few of these amenities in critical high traffic locations with utility access. A factor for consideration is that trash receptacles and pet waste stations must be emptied frequently and restrooms need to be cleaned daily.

- 3.2.3. Continue to beautify the MCT Trails with trees, landscaping, and public art in appropriate locations. Establishing the adopt-a-trail program per Objective 1.2. would potentially reduce concerns related to maintenance costs and capacity. Explore the planting of shade trees along trails in conjunction with bench installations, particularly on isolated trail segments lacking adjacent tree cover.
- 3.2.4. Continue to enhance access to the MCT Trails by providing parking lots, access points/trailheads, wayfinding signage, and secure bicycle parking where appropriate. Consider assigning formal names to access points and include those points on wayfinding signage. Also consider installing street signs at certain crossing locations to aid in access and navigation.
- 3.2.5. Install safety amenities, such as security phones and trail lighting, where feasible. Location standards may need to account for access to electric and telephone utilities, unless reliable solar powered and wireless communication options are available. Where provided, trail lighting installations should be designed to minimize light pollution, particularly in isolated rural locations.

Objective 3.3

Consider facility alignment options other than rail-to-trail and street corridors, where other alternatives are deemed a feasible and effective means of achieving project objectives.

Strategies

- 3.3.1. Identify public works agencies, utility providers, flood control/levee districts, and other organizations that operate infrastructure within linear easements or rights-of-way.
- 3.3.2. Coordinate with infrastructure providers to incorporate standard language in certain easement documents that allows bicycle/pedestrian facilities to be located within said easements, which are otherwise typically limited to the single purpose of the easement grantee.
- 3.3.3. Coordinate with infrastructure providers on the development of a standard agreement that enables MCT bicycle/pedestrian facilities within their easements and rights-of-way. Said agreement would outline the specific responsibilities of each party as related to the construction, maintenance, operations, and public use of the trail facilities.

Objective 3.4

In growing the MCT Trails system, prioritize facilities that connect new destinations and enhance system access for unserved people and places.

Strategies:

- 3.4.1. Implement the system expansion recommendations of this Master Plan and update the Master Plan periodically to add newly identified trail connections. It is recommended to review the Master Plan every 5 years to track progress, identify emerging needs, and complete minor updates. A full review and update of the Master Plan should be considered every 10 years.
- 3.4.2. Identify underserved neighborhoods, disadvantaged populations, and key travel destinations that lack safe options for alternative modes of travel.
- 3.4.3. Coordinate with local governments and park districts to pursue the construction of feasible extensions of the backbone MCT Trails system and local agency connections to the MCT system that will serve the identified underserved people and places.

Objective 3.5

Continue being good stewards of the MCT Trails system by allocating sufficient funding to maintain and repair the trail system as it grows.

Strategies

- 3.5.1. Continue funding maintenance/repairs at or near current budgetary proportions in order to sustain trail quality and condition as the system expands. Over 90% of trail users in a recent survey rated MCT Trail maintenance as good or very good. So, this is an appropriate target level-of-service that leaves some room for change (in either direction).
- 3.5.2. Monitor trail conditions on an ongoing basis to identify and make needed repairs in a timely fashion, perhaps as part of a comprehensive asset management program.



Pedestrians entering MCT Trails tunnel

Promotions



GOAL:

Engage in communications that foster a positive image of MCT Trails and effectively promote MCT events, opportunities, projects, and organizational accomplishments.

Objective 4.1

Increase publicity of events, initiatives, and programs to expand participation and inform the public.

Strategies

- 4.1.1. Consider a web-based engagement tool, such as Engagement HQ or CitizenLab, to expand the functionality and effectiveness of community engagement and public information efforts.
- 4.1.2. Identify and implement strategies to improve communications to disadvantaged populations and neighborhoods.
- 4.1.3. Engage grassroots efforts, local advocacy groups, and current trail users to promote the MCT Trails system.

Objective 4.2

Implement additional means of gathering input from the public.

Strategies

- 4.2.1. Integrate multiple public workshops or engagement opportunities into the capital planning process.
- 4.2.2. Implement a contact form on the MCT Trails website for the public to submit general inquiries, report issues, and comment on plans, budgets, projects, and initiatives.
- 4.2.3. Develop and conduct periodic trail user surveys to stay current on the issues and trends affecting users of the MCT Trails system.

Objective 4.3

Promote trail use as a critical quality of life factor that provides transportation alternatives, benefits the environment, supports active living, and improves health.

Strategies

- 4.3.1. Develop promotional materials targeted toward local chambers of commerce, local planning departments, economic development agencies, and developers that emphasize the health, wellbeing, financial, and environmental benefits of the MCT Trails and their use, at both the individual and community levels.

- 4.3.2. Conduct surveys and research that gather the data and information to be utilized in developing the promotional materials for Strategy 4.3.1.

Objective 4.4

Consider branding/marketing efforts that highlight MCT's transportation mission, promote trips that combine trail/transit, and publicize the good work done by MCT to advance regional alternative transportation needs.

Strategies

Develop and conduct promotional campaigns and contests to promote bicycle commuting on the MCT Trails during National Bike Month (May) and National Bike to Work Day (3rd Friday in May).

- 4.4.1. Utilize booths at community events and festivals to engage and educate the public about the MCT Trails mission, trail system, and programs/events.
- 4.4.2. Conduct promotional campaigns and contests that incentivize job commutes and other short trips on the MCT Trails, by walking, biking, and either of these modes in combination with transit.
- 4.4.3. Conduct promotional campaigns and contests that incentivize job commutes and other short trips on the MCT Trails, by walking, biking, and either of these modes in combination with transit.

Objective 4.5

Conduct campaigns that promote the MCT Trails system as a tourist attraction.

Strategies

- 4.5.1. Provide information about the MCT Trails system to municipal and regional economic development agencies for use in those agencies' tourism marketing efforts.
- 4.5.2. Advertise in the publications of convention and visitors bureaus in the region, perhaps in conjunction with Great Rivers Greenway or other partner organizations, to promote the MCT Trails system and other regional trail systems/facilities.
- 4.5.3. Advertise the MCT Trails system in regional running/walking/biking publications.



Historic Route 66 Kiosk located at the intersection of IL-157 and W. Schwarz St



MCT Monarch Valley Trail in Edwardsville, Illinois

People



GOAL:

Ensure that all residents and visitors are informed of and have access to the MCT Trails and their benefits.

Objective 5.1

Continuously improve website functionality for internet and mobile device users.

Strategies

- 5.1.1. Provide mobile device app functionality for trail users that complements current online system mapping and offers features such as navigation, GPS-based reporting of issues/incidents, and push notifications.
- 5.1.2. Explore the feasibility of integrating an AI chatbot into the MCT Trails website and mobile device app functionality.

Objective 5.2

Continue to connect with local elected officials and community leaders who can speak in support of the MCT Trails, highlight the value of the trail system, and offer valuable community-based feedback to inform MCT's decision-making.

Strategies

- 5.2.1. Participate in events and networking opportunities with groups such as Southwest Illinois Council of Mayors and Southwest Illinois City Management Association to maintain good relationships with leaders of local communities and coordinate on matters of importance to the MCT Trails.
- 5.2.2. Maintain an internal list of talking points for staff members who may coordinate with local officials, to maintain consistent messaging on matters of importance to the MCT Trails.
- 5.2.3. Integrate public officials' forums into public engagement processes conducted by MCT.

Objective 5.3

Extend trail connections to serve a broader population that is diverse in age, income, race, etc.

Strategies

- 5.3.1. Identify routes that connect to neighborhoods, disadvantaged communities and populations, and key travel destinations that lack safe options for alternative modes of travel.
- 5.3.2. As appropriate and feasible, integrate the routes identified in Strategy 5.3.1. into capital improvement plans and future updates of this Master Plan.

Objective 5.4

Ensure that programmatic support and outreach are provided to disadvantaged populations and residents with limited access to the benefits of the MCT Trails system.

Strategies

- 5.4.1. Develop a plan to specifically engage populations that have traditionally been underrepresented in community engagement efforts and initiatives.
- 5.4.2. Prepare a resource library of strategies, media outlets, event venues, tools, etc. that maximize the effectiveness of public engagement with underrepresented, underserved, and disadvantaged populations.

Objective 5.5

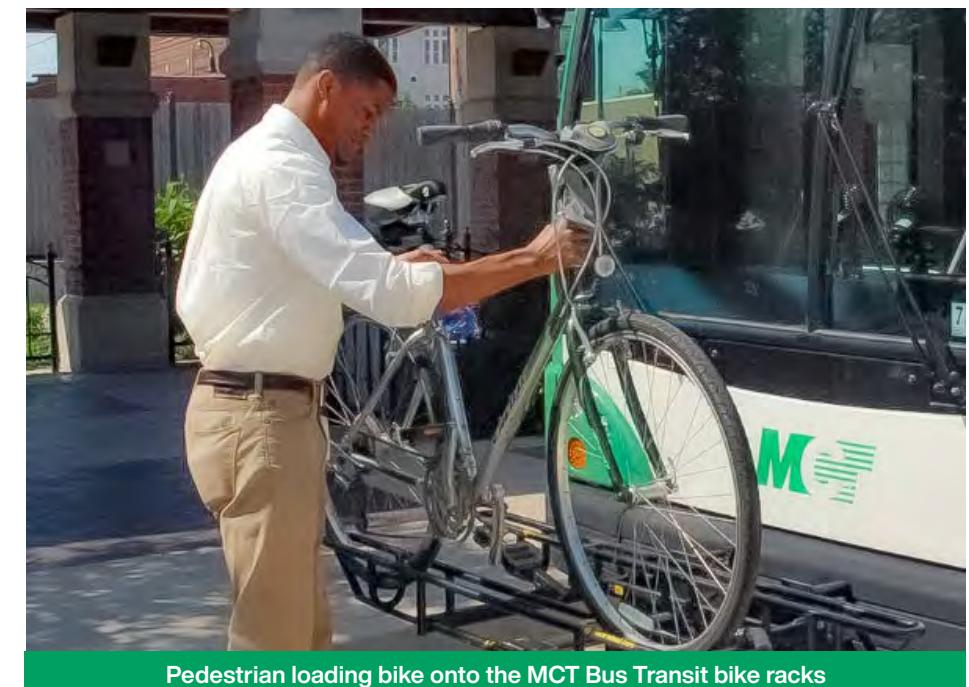
Explore the creation of an internal staff position focused on implementing MCT's alternative transportation projects and initiatives.

Strategies

- 5.5.1. Research similar functional staff positions of other trail/transit agencies and draft a job description tailored to MCT's needs for an "alternative transportation specialist."
- 5.5.2. Work within MCT's administrative processes to create, fund, and fill the alternative transportation specialist position.



Cyclists viewing an interpretive panel on MCT Trails



Pedestrian loading bike onto the MCT Bus Transit bike racks

Partnerships



GOAL:

Cultivate mutually beneficial organizational relationships that can be leveraged to support the vision of the MCT Trails.

Objective 6.1

Foster and leverage relationships that facilitate collaboration with public and private organizations, agencies, entities, and institutions.

Strategies

- 6.1.1. Participate in events and networking opportunities with regional community-based organizations, government agencies, and professional organizations to maintain good relationships with key stakeholders.
- 6.1.2. Establish connections with the information officials and communications personnel of local governments, public and private organizations, agencies, entities, and institutions. Utilize those organizations' resources (websites, event calendars, newsletters, etc.) to disseminate public information about the MCT Trails within their stakeholder groups.

Objective 6.2

Work with communities, developers, and businesses to advocate for and support trail-oriented development.

Strategies

- 6.2.1. Prepare informational materials on best practices and design guidance that support trail-oriented development.
- 6.2.2. Coordinate with economic development agencies, local developers, planning/zoning officials, and real estate professionals to disseminate the information prepared for Strategy 6.2.1.
- 6.2.3. Participate in professional development conferences and panel discussions to promote trail-oriented design guidance and best practices.

Objective 6.3

Leverage relationships with law enforcement agencies to enhance the safety of trail users.

Strategies

- 6.3.1. Prepare a list of non-emergency law enforcement agency contacts and maintain an appropriate channel of communications with each law enforcement agency to coordinate on matters related to trail and traffic safety.
- 6.3.2. Partner with law enforcement agencies on providing bicycle and pedestrian safety training classes.
- 6.3.3. Explore the possibility of establishing a bicycle safety patrol program in areas with high trail traffic volumes, perhaps in conjunction with local law enforcement agencies.

Objective 6.4

Coordinate with adjacent jurisdictions, levee districts, park districts, and MEPRD on trail extensions, system connections, and facility alignments.

Strategies

- 6.4.1. Working in collaboration with utility providers, levee districts, park districts, and MEPRD, maintain a list of trail and linear infrastructure projects for coordinating potential alignments for backbone MCT Trails and connections to finer-grained district and municipal trail systems.
- 6.4.2. Establish and maintain good working relationships with external agency engineers, public works staff, and planners.
- 6.4.3. Continuously coordinate with external agency contacts on system planning, facility design standards, safety countermeasure preferences, trail alignments, engineering concerns, and other matters necessary to facilitate system expansion/connectivity needs.



"Covered Bridge Bike Rental" Bike Shop located in Glen Carbon, Illinois



2022 MCT Trail Summit Event

Community Engagement



Overview

This Master Plan was developed with substantial coordination between the HeartLands Conservancy project team and MCT Project Team, various stakeholders, trail users, and the public-at-large. The input provided during the planning process supplemented the project team's extensive research and professional expertise to inform the drafting of the plan content and recommendations.

In addition to the survey and events that are summarized in this Section, the project team met four times with a Project Committee made up of key ACT Staff members. These meetings were held throughout the planning process to assist with data/information needs, provide context from MCT's perspective, review draft work, and refine the draft work products.

Trail User Survey

ACT staff members conducted an online trails survey to gauge public sentiment on the MCT Trails system and its use. The survey opened to responses on May 1, 2023 and ran through June 15, 2023, concluding with a total of 1,039 respondents. MCT exported a summary of results on June 23, which was provided to the HLC project team for analysis. The results for each question are found in the Appendix D, along with an explanation of how the responses helped the team understand relevant issues and opportunities that influence development of the MCT Trails Master Plan.



Cyclists winning MCT baskets at the 2023 Edwardsville's Bike & Hike to Breakfast.

Engagement Events Summary

A crucial step in the planning process is community engagement. The outcomes of the public participation, along with data analysis, established the foundation for MCT Trails Master Plan.

Primary challenges and opportunities identified during the community engagement and analysis process include:

- Enhance connectivity between trail-to-trail and trail-to-neighborhood connections to connect pedestrians, bicyclists, and mobility to MCT Trails.
- Support barriers that are located on State highways that link to the wider system.
- Boost trail upkeep and maintenance following inclement weather.
- Maintain invasive plant life near trails.
- Utilize bike and pedestrian facilities to connect MCT Trails to destinations.

Public Input

A range of perspectives were gathered from resident populations in Madison County, Illinois between May 2023 and January of 2024. In meeting with community engagement participants, the thoughts, resource needs, and priorities of a diverse group of individuals were captured for inclusion into the Master Plan. Public input took place throughout the county at venues where community members had associations including the Liberty Bank Amphitheater in Alton, Land of Goshen Community Market in downtown Edwardsville, and the Metro East Park and Recreation District Office in Collinsville. A fourth community engagement meeting was held virtually on January 29, 2024. This session presented the highlights of the draft Master Plan and gave participants the chance to comment and ask questions of MCT and HLC. A summary of this review session is included in the Appendix D.

Input was gathered during the 2023 Mississippi Earth Tone Festival and Bike & Hike to Breakfast event. The 2023 Bike & Hike to Breakfast event was held on May 20, 2023. The event gathered 588 attendees. The 2023 Mississippi Earth Tone Festival event was held on September 16, 2023. The event was sponsored by Main Street Alton, Sierra Club Illinois Chapter, and Jacoby Arts Center. The Community Workshop was held on December 16, 2023. Due to unpleasant weather conditions, there were no attendees or input received during the community workshop.

A Visual Preference Survey invited participants to vote on their preference for the features and amenities they would like to see on MCT Trails by placing stickers and comments next to images of specific type of features. Attendees were asked to describe a vision of MCT Trails and identify key issues. In addition, participants were offered to provide feedback on existing MCT Trails or propose their ideas for new routes on a series of maps. Ideas included any route extensions or improvements they desire.

Public Input Outcomes

The following is a summary of the 2 community engagement events held between May 20, 2023 and September 16, 2023. Specific details on responses from participants are included in the Appendix B. Many participants expressed their appreciation and recognized MCT for its great network. Several attendees shared that they moved to the area for the trail system.

Participants were asked "what would you like to have access to on MCT Trails?" It is particularly noted that the top five most popular options are arts on the trails, trail amenities (water stations, air pumps, bike racks, etc.), trail oriented development, trees placed for shade on rural trails, and trail supportive businesses. Nearly 100 participants voted for art on the trails. Residents recommended to include street art on underpasses and to beautify the manmade structures that exist. Many residents supported trail amenities including restrooms, restroom signage, water stations, trash cans, and benches. There was a high concern for a lack of restrooms and trashcans for pets. Trail-oriented development received a significant number of votes. Participants recommended to add bike lanes to connect the trails. Many comments indicated a desire for trees place for shade on rural trails. There were a few comments about the heat and indicated a desire to have a place for shade. Overall, there were a significant number of residents that would like to see trail supportive businesses along the trails. Various residents shared recommendations to keep the trails open 24 hours, offer a bike rental program, designate an area to park bikes, integrate mountain bike trails, and add paved rural trails.

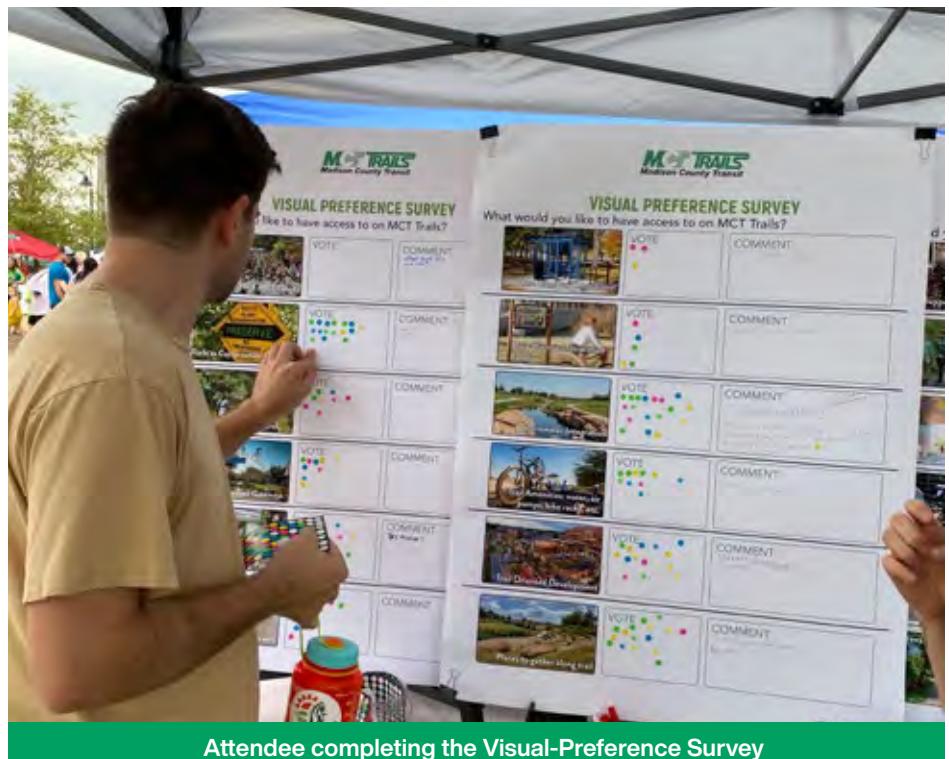
Common themes emerged from participants during community engagement events when they were asked to describe their vision for MCT Trails. Participants showed interest in connectivity, walkability, accessibility, and wild life. There was a general consistency on the participant's challenges and opportunities for MCT Trails. Many participants indicated a higher level of concern over safety, funding resources, and conservation. Residents recommended a safety button, "in-stream" whitewater feature, invasive plant remediation, and safe bike and pedestrian facilities. In the future, residents would like to see more and improved connections to MCT Trails.



Source: MCT Trails Community Survey, 2023



Participants identifying desired trail locations



Attendee completing the Visual-Preference Survey

Community & Stakeholder Input

Opportunities

- Support barriers on State routes connecting to the larger system
- Support workout and water stations
- Connect to municipal greenways, parks, trails, and water access.
- Trail oriented development
- Expand partnering with other agencies
- Expand biking as transportation and education programs
- Improve trail maps on mobile devices
- Connect trails to more transit-dependent populations
- Strive to serve a diverse population of trail users (age, race, income, etc.)
- Evolve policies with technology and long-lasting trends
- Explore e-bike policy & expanded use
- Expand youth & school programs to promote life-long trail users
- Explore additional trail amenities: bike parking, water stations, air pumps, bathrooms (etc.)
- Explore additional trail amenities for pedestrians, resting, and gathering
- Empower community connections
- Grow visibility of grant program
- Workout stations
- Confluence Trail-Alton, Wood River, Marine, Highland
- More water stations
- More signage
- Conservation
- Trees
- Bike Tourism
- Connecting Trails/downtown
- Erosion control

Challenges

- Lack of accessibility features to trails from nearby neighborhoods
- Safety and accessibility concerns along state routes.
- Lack of trail-to-trail connections
- Lack of trail-to-neighborhood connections
- Control invasive species along the trail
- Not enough shade in some areas
- Making enough loops of trails
- Funding for everything, all at once
- On-going maintenance
- Escalating costs
- Vandalism
- Connecting to every rooftop
- Utility availability
- Running out of rail-to-trail opportunities
- Municipal community partners are often underfunded
- Topography of the region
- Railroad crossings
- Perception of Safety
- Wide highways
- Enforcement of trail rules and speed limits
- Future maintenance needs on proposed amenities
- Pollinators VS "Bugs"
- Bentonville: Mountain Bike Trails, Art, Greenways
- Where to get on trails
- Ameren/Closing Trails (Winter)
- Erosion

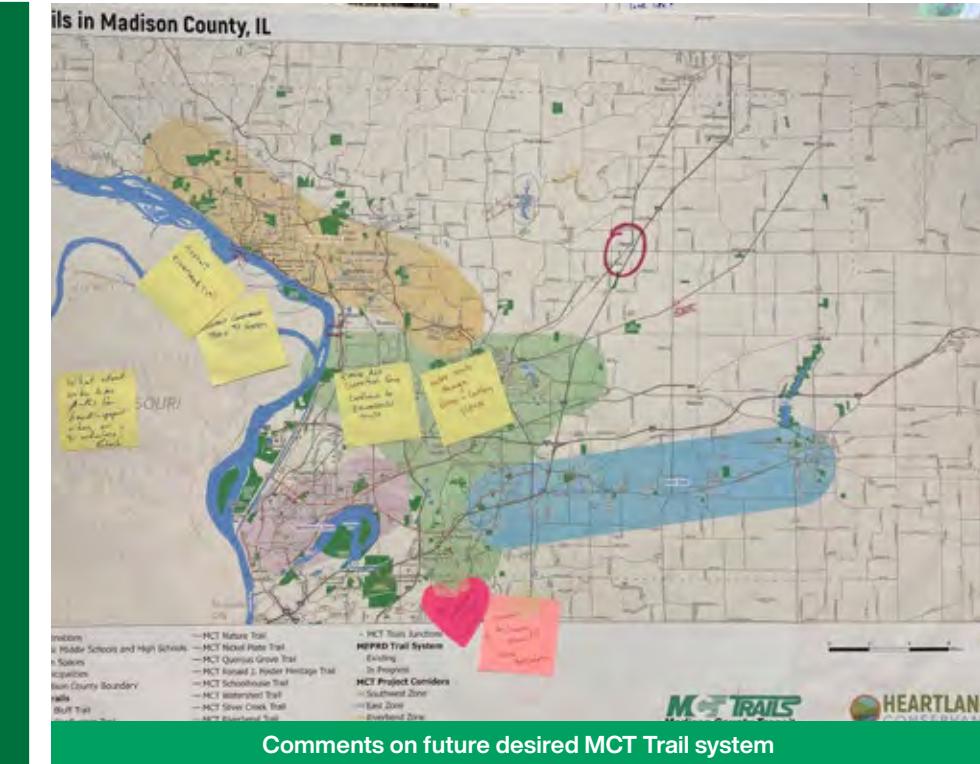
Amenities Preferences Summary

As indicated in the background discussion of the engagement events, participants were shown displays with photos of various amenities and facility enhancements that had been suggested throughout the community outreach. This survey asked to indicate their top preferences. The table below shows the combined results of the events. Shaded boxes are the most popular desired amenities.

FEATURE/AMENITY	VOTE	COMMENT
MCT/ACT Events	28 favor	Trails should be open 24/7, What does this look like? What is ACT?
Trails as Conservation Corridors	70 favor	This is the best idea, there is animals that don't like being bothered
Lighting in city cores	55 favor	
	3 oppose	
Trail Gateways	25 favor	More connections to trails from neighborhoods
Bike Sharing Program	38 favor	
	3 oppose	More renting bikes who can't afford one, Yes please!
Youth Bike Program	38 favor	
Trail Supportive Businesses	72 favor	More of these
	1 oppose	
Trail Rangers	40	We would like to volunteer, keep our trails clean, invasive plant remediation, Safety is a must! Safety buttons/alerts at emergency points
Art on the trails	98 favor	Cool to see art, it can brighten your day, street art on underpasses, ew no! I don't want to see man-made objects in nature! Beautify the manmade structures
	2 oppose	
Bicycle Fix It Stations	39 favor	
Open Rural Trails	33 favor	Integrate MTB trails, more paved trails
Trees for Shade on Rural Trails	85 favor	It can get really hot!
More Bikes/Bus Connections	21 favor	More alternative transit
More Historic Interpretive Panels	23 favor	Maybe, Learning + nature = awesome
Stormwater Integration	57 favor	*A lot of money emoji's*, it looks beautiful! This can include interpretive learning experiences, perhaps consider building an "in-stream" whitewater feature when stormwater is surging
Trail Amenities: Water, Air Pumps, Bike Racks, etc.	82 favor	Better connections to downtown Edwardsville parking, Trash cans for dog doo-doo, potties, bathrooms and water, bathrooms, water, benches, signage for bathrooms, place for pet waste, this is essential, bathrooms too
	3 oppose	
Trail-Oriented Development	89 favor	Stop building B&W buildings! They're ugly. Bring back color! Safe bike & pedestrian access to grocery store, workplace, etc. Area to lock bikes up. Please don't add businesses on trails-the nature is perfect-trails to business would be more ideal, This would be awesome! This would be cool! Bike lanes to connect trails, I would use the trails so much more!
	3 oppose	
Places to gather along trail	69 favor	RV parking, no RV parking
	2 oppose	

Top 8 Most Desired Trail Amenities

- 1 Art on the Trails
- 2 Trail Oriented Development
- 3 Trees for Shade
- 4 Trail Amenities: Water, Air Pumps, Bike Racks, etc.
- 5 Trail Supportive Businesses
- 6 Trails as Conservation Corridors
- 7 Places to gather
- 8 Stormwater Integration: Green Infrastructure



Existing Conditions Analysis



System Inventory & Conditions

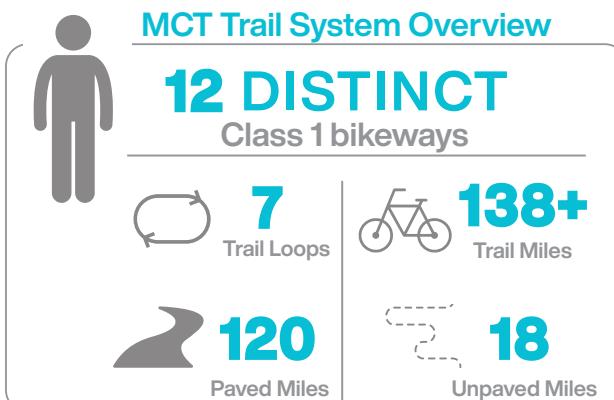
The MCT Trails system is a network almost entirely made up of Class I bike paths. Per the CalTrans manual, "A Guide to Bikeway Classification" (<https://bicycleinfrastructuremanuals.com>), this refers to paved, shared-use paths that are completely separated from roadways and dedicated to bicycle and/or pedestrian use. Table 4A is a summary of the current inventory owned and operated by the MCT Trails system. Currently, the system consists of 12 individual trails with 138 miles of trail, 120 of which are Class I bikeways. Only 18 miles of the system are unpaved.

Map 5 illustrates the MCT Trails system. Generally, the system radiates outward from Edwardsville, the Madison County Seat and most central municipality in the county. This is a reflection of the former railroad corridors that contain most of the MCT Trails network. The following is a description of the MCT Trails in alphabetical order.

Table 4A: MCT Trails System Inventory

MCT Trails System Existing Inventory	
Feature	Count
Trails	12
Trail Mileage	138
Paved Miles	120
Unpaved Miles	18
Bridges	4
Tunnels	22
Parking Lots	41
Restrooms	24
Water Fountains	22
Pet Waste Stations	7
Information Kiosks	72
Art Installations	8

Source: MCT Trails



Bluff Trail:

This is a 1.9-mile paved trail along Stadium Drive in Edwardsville that connects several SIUE athletic facilities.

Confluence Trail:

This is a paved trail running 19.2 miles along the east bank of the Mississippi, connecting between Alton in the north and Venice near the southern Madison County line.

Goshen Trail:

This paved trail extends southward 19.2 miles from Roxana through Edwardsville, Glen Carbon, Maryville, and Troy, connecting to O'Fallon in St. Clair County.

Monarch Valley Trail:

This incomplete 0.8-mile paved trail serves north-central Edwardsville. When completed, it will connect the Nickel Plate Trail to the Nature Trail.

Nature Trail:

This trail is paved and extends 13.3 miles southwest from IL Route 159 in Edwardsville, passing north of Horseshoe Lake State Park, and into Granite City at Wilson Park.

Nickel Plate Trail:

This is the longest trail in the MCT Trails system at 28.7 miles. The trail runs northeast from the Nature Trail near Pontoon Beach, through Glen Carbon and Edwardsville, continuing on to New Douglas. About 18.2 miles are unpaved south of New Douglas.

Quercus Grove Trail:

This trail runs north and east from the Nickel Plate Trail near Schwarz Drive in Edwardsville, through Hamel and Worden, to Staunton in southern Macoupin County. The 17.2-mile trail is discontinuous, requiring trail users to navigate several short on-street and unpaved segments.

Riverbend Trail:

This trail extends north from the Confluence Trail near IL Route 143 in East Alton to the Eastgate Plaza Shopping Center on IL Route 3.

Ronald J. Foster Heritage Trail:

This 12.2-mile paved trail extends from Citizen Park in Glen Carbon east to Heritage Park in Marine.

Schoolhouse Trail:

This paved trail runs east from the community of Madison through Horseshoe Lake State Park, extending 15.3 miles east to the Goshen Trail between Maryville and Troy.

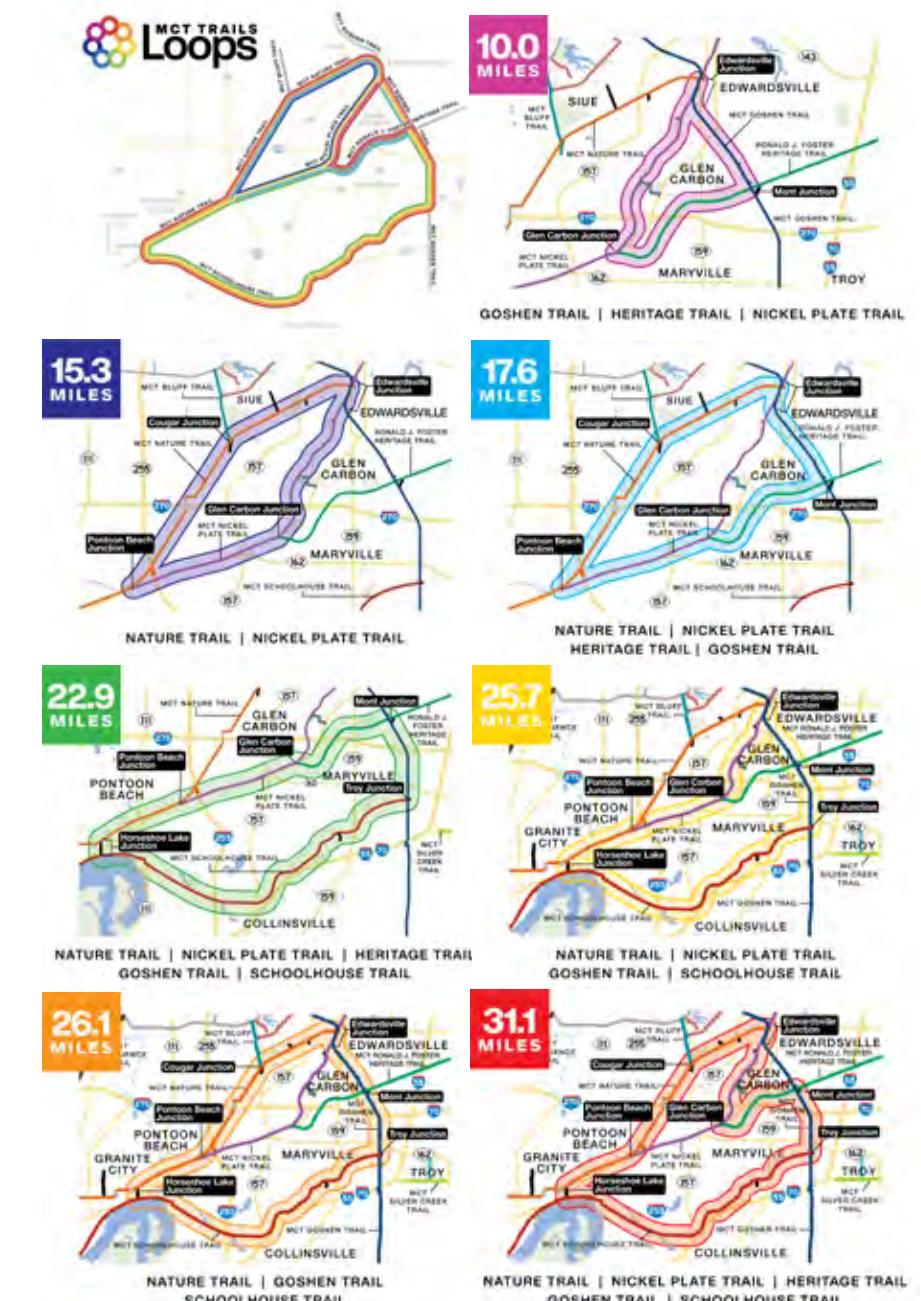
Silver Creek Trail:

This is a 1.4-mile paved trail that runs along the north side of US Highway 40 between the I-55 interchange and Troy city limits.

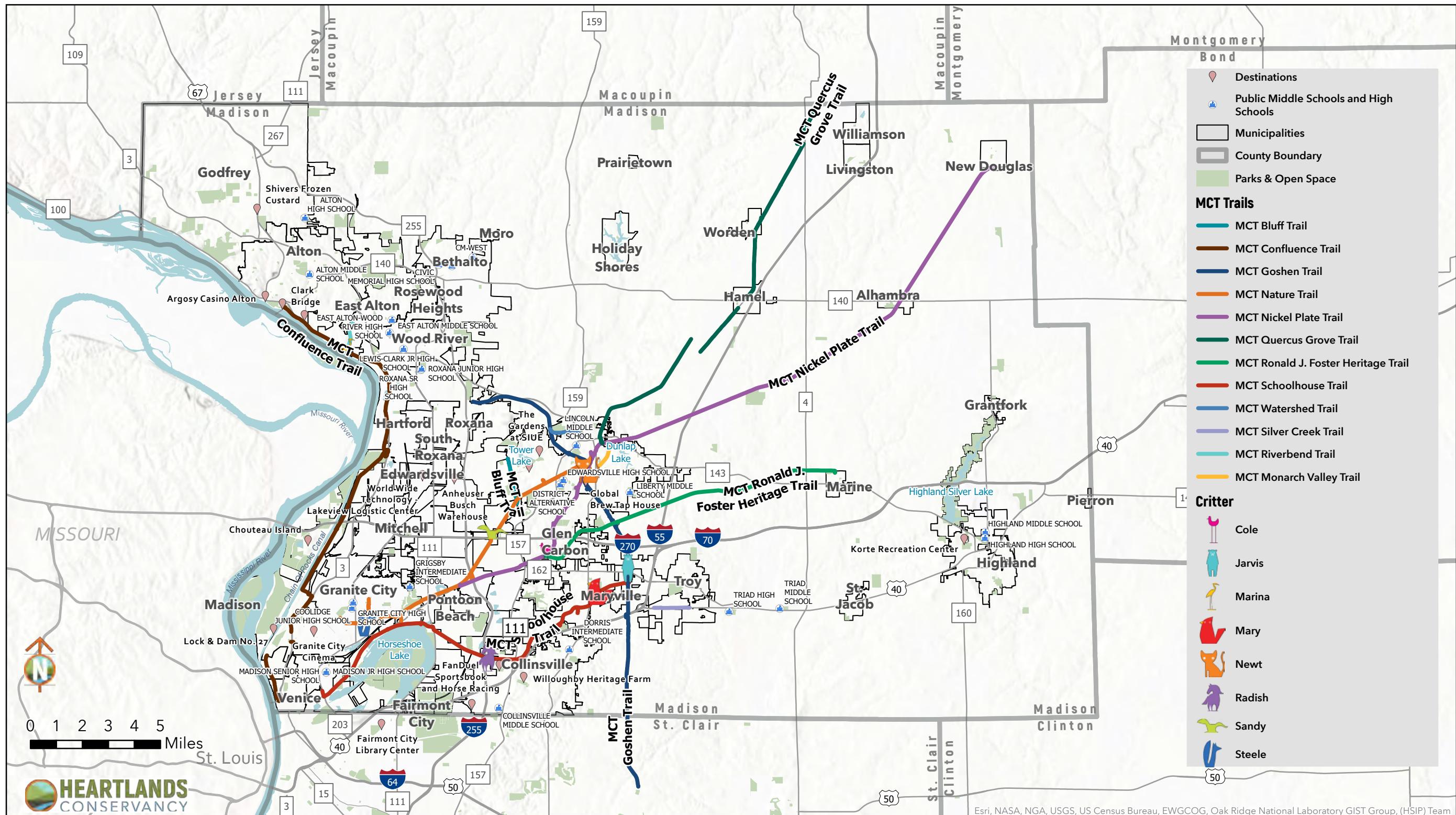
Watershed Trail:

This 1.3-mile paved trail is found within Edwardsville. It connects the Goshen Trail near the Watershed Nature Center to the Madison County Administration Building on N. 2nd Street.

Many of these trails are connected to form loops. The MCT Trails website touts 7 loops, ranging from 10 to 31 miles in length. The loops return trail users to their starting point without backtracking, making them particularly popular among bicyclists and long-distance runners.



Map 5: MCT Trails Existing System Map



In the existing MCT Trails system there are 238 locations where the trail crosses a roadway and 13 locations where a railroad is crossed. Trail crossings are summarized in Table 4B. Of these crossings, 169 are at-grade (5 railroad, 164 roadway). This means the trail and road or railroad cross each other at the same level, requiring trail traffic to cross through the traffic carried by the intersecting facility.

The remaining 82 crossings are grade-separated, meaning that a bridge or tunnel is provided to separate trail traffic from the roadway or rail traffic. Of the grade separated crossings, MCT Trails owns and operates 4 bridges and 22 tunnels. The remainder belong to a separate entity, such as the Illinois Department of Transportation, a municipality, or a railroad. All trail crossing locations are identified on Map 6, which also includes the vehicle and pedestrian crash information discussed in the Safety Assessment section.

There are many safety and comfort amenities provided on the MCT Trails (please reference Table 4A). For example, restrooms and water fountains are found along some trails, primarily in urban locations. Information kiosks display trail maps and rules in 72 locations across the system. The system inventory also includes 41 parking lots to accommodate users who do not have convenient trail access from their residence.

System Needs

By and large, the MCT Trails system is highly regarded among the many walkers, runners, and bicyclists who frequent the MCT Trails. The broad extent and good condition of the system is particularly appreciated. However, many event attendees took the opportunity to note specific locations in need of trail maintenance and comment on overall system needs. Specific needs identified through engagement activities include intersection/crossing safety improvements (addressed in the Safety Assessment), sustaining good trail conditions, reducing vandalism, specific desired trail extensions, trail-to-trail connection preferences, and closing gaps in system coverage. This assessment agrees with and supports the community-identified system, facilities, amenities, and safety needs for the MCT Trails.

The assessment discovered one particular need that was not identified through engagement. Of the 138 miles of trail in the MCT system, only 14 miles, about 10%, serve the High Impact Investment Area. Yet, this area is home to 26% of Madison County's residents. Given the previously mentioned negative impacts of industry and historic disinvestment in the area, new investment is to overcome the inherent barriers and burdens. Specifically related to this Master Plan is the need to facilitate mobility, safe travel, and access to public transit services.

Table 4B: Trail Crossing Inventory

Crossing Type	#	%
Total Crossings	251	-
Trail-Rail Crossings	13	5%
At-grade rail	5	2%
Bridge, rail over	4	2%
Bridge, rail under	4	2%
Trail-Road Crossings	238	95%
At-grade road	164	65%
Bridge, road over	36	14%
Bridge, road under	10	4%
Tunnel, trail under	28	11%

Source: MCT Trails; HeartLands Conservancy

251



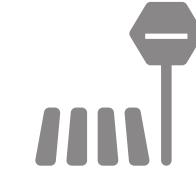
Total Crossings

5%



Trail-Rail Crossings

95%



Trail-Road Crossings



MCT Goshen Trail Bridge over active railroad tracks



MCT Goshen Trail bike/pedestrian bridge over IL-162



Cyclist traveling along Class-One bikeway with an at-grade crossing.

Safety Assessment

A Safety Action Plan was prepared supplemental to this analysis and provided under separate cover as an appendix to this Master Plan. It can be referenced for a more detailed safety assessment and further recommended safety actions.

Motor Vehicle Conflicts

As with most trail networks, the preeminent safety concern for the MCT Trails system is the potential for conflicts and crashes with motor vehicles. It is hard to determine the extent to which motor vehicle conflicts impact MCT Trail users, mainly because the available data are derived from the standardized accident reports from the Illinois State Police and local law enforcement agencies.

These reports are intended to gather information on motor vehicle crashes occurring on public roads and highways. As such, they identify pedestrians and bicyclists as the objects of a collision that occurred on the public road or highway. Little information is reported about the pedestrian or bicyclist, beyond crash severity (i.e. injury or fatality) and the name of the road or highway on which the impact occurred. The reports do not indicate if the impacted pedestrian/bicyclist was using an intersecting trail or bikeway at the time of collision.

Most of the MCT Trails are rail-to-trail shared use paths. This generally limits the location of pedestrian and bicycle crashes to at-grade road and railroad crossings, and system gaps that require bicyclists to ride on-street between established trail segments. While multiple users of the MCT Trails have undoubtedly been struck by a motor vehicle, only one such crash has been positively identified, albeit anecdotally through MCT staff. That was a fatal crash involving a bicyclist using the MCT Schoolhouse Trail who was struck and killed while crossing IL Route 111.

Despite the lack of available information on verifiable crashes involving users of the MCT Trails, there are ample reasons to discuss and address this important safety concern. The first and foremost justification is the severity of crashes. Nearly all crashes involving a pedestrian or bicyclist result in injury or death. Table 4C summarizes these crashes for Madison County in the years 2016-2020, while Map 6 shows their locations. Of the 309 such crashes reported for the analysis period, 302 (98%) resulted in injury or death, with 22 being fatal. Almost 43% of all pedestrian and bicycle crashes were attributed to intersection related causes, but over 52% of bicycle crashes (58 out of 111) were intersection related.

Another important reason for addressing crashes is illustrated by "Map 7: Pedestrian and Bicycle Crash Map" on page 34, which includes a heat map of pedestrian and bicycle crash density. Crash density generally corresponds with population density. So, the hotspots are seen in and around municipalities.

Two high-crash corridors are evident in Madison County. One corresponds with the High Impact Investment Area and contains the two predominant hotspots, which are found in and around Alton and Granite City. This corridor contains a concentration of high-traffic road and rail crossings, significant heavy commercial traffic volumes, along with being some of the more populous Census tracts in Madison County. The other high-crash corridor corresponds with the central population corridor that includes Edwardsville, Glen Carbon, Maryville, Troy, and Collinsville. The MCT Trails in this corridor carry the highest volumes of trail traffic and cross numerous roads, highways, and railroads. These two corridors warrant special consideration in the provision of grade-separated trail crossings and the design of at-grade trail intersections and crossings.

Table 4C: Summary Table of Pedestrian & Bicycle Crashes

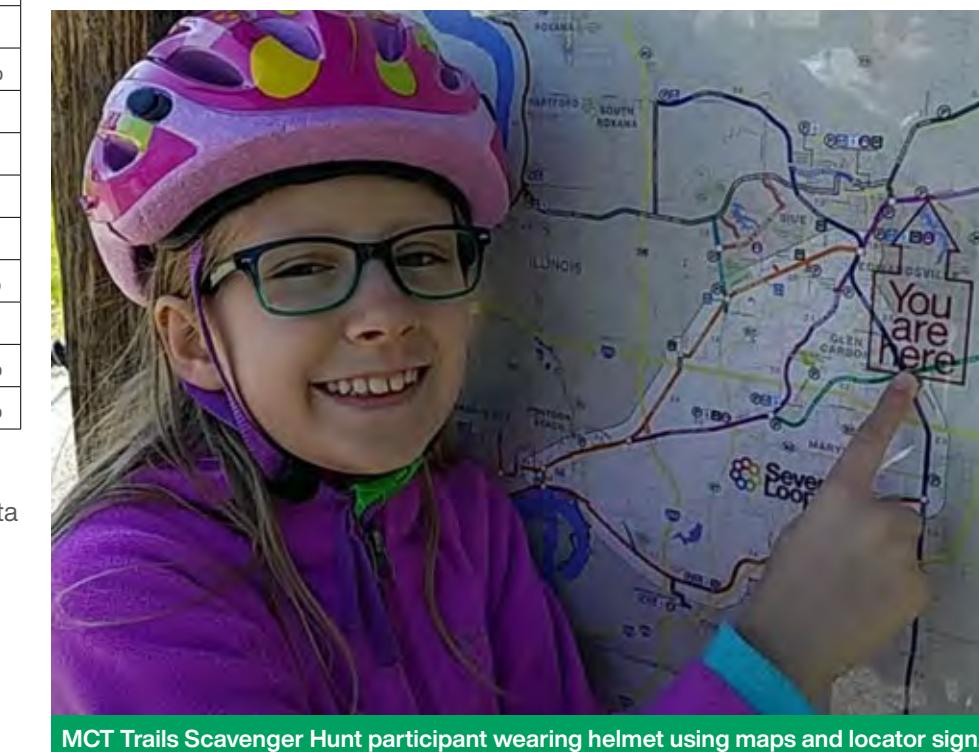
	Pedestrian		Bicycle		Totals	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total Crashes	198	-	111	-	309	-
CRASH SEVERITY	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fatal	19	9.6%	3	2.7%	22	7.1%
Injury	177	89.4%	103	92.8%	280	90.6%
Property Damage Only	2	1.0%	5	4.5%	7	2.3%
Total Fatalities	19	-	3	-	22	-
Total Injuries*	186	-	104	-	290	-
CRASH CAUSE	-	-	-	-	-	-
Intersection Related	74	37.4%	58	52.3%	132	42.7%
Vision Obscured	14	7.1%	7	6.3%	21	6.8%
Failing to Yield Right of Way	45	22.7%	32	28.8%	77	24.9%
Other	65	32.8%	14	12.6%	79	25.6%

* Some reported crashes involved multiple injuries.

Source: Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), Madison County Crash Data 2016-2020

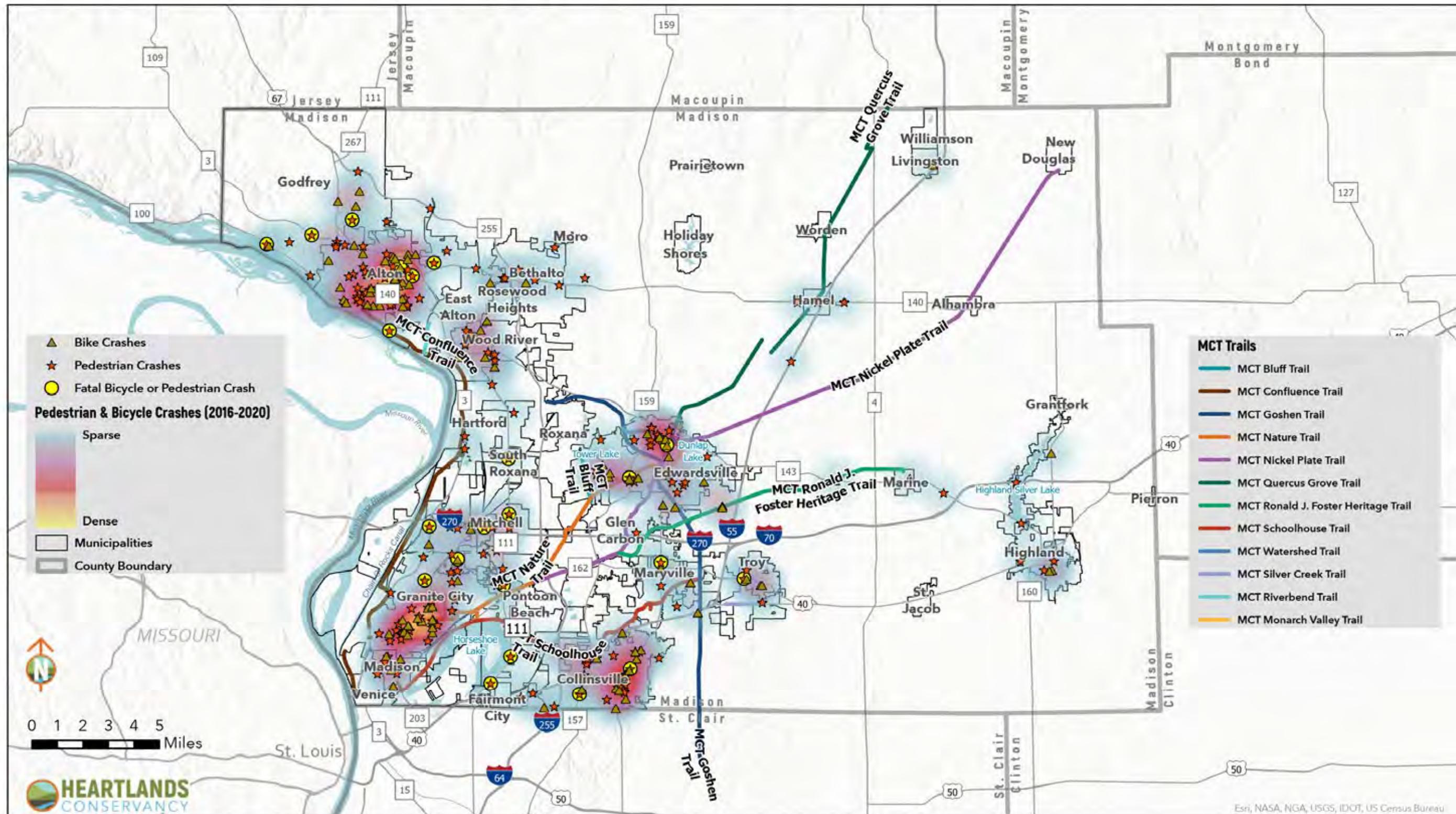


MCT Trails kiosks with rules and speed signage



MCT Trails Scavenger Hunt participant wearing helmet using maps and locator sign.

Map 7: Pedestrian and Bicycle Crash Map



Safety Concerns

Several concerns related to crime and personal safety, or at least perceived crime and safety, were raised during community engagement activities.

MCT Trails does not have a police department or safety patrol to deter crime, enforce trail safety rules, or report potentially unsafe trail conditions. The MCT Trails website (mctrails.org) encourages trail users to be their “eyes and ears when [they] cannot be everywhere at once” by reporting trail maintenance concerns or obstructions, vandalism, and suspicious behavior.

Incidents of vandalism and graffiti can be repaired by MCT Trails when reported. However, there is little the agency can do about in-progress criminal activity, health emergencies, or injuries. So, users are advised to call 911 in the event of emergency. Such calls are routed to the local law enforcement agency or emergency service provider having jurisdiction, based on the caller’s location on the trail and type of incident. MCT Trails would be aware of such an incident only if notified by the emergency response agency.

There is also little that MCT Trails can do to enforce trail rule violations reported by trail users. In most cases, the only recourse and enforcement of trail safety rules would be for MCT Trails personnel to witness a rules violation and intervene while it is ongoing.

Some commenters view the lack of systemwide trail lighting as a safety concern. The lack of visibility at night makes it difficult to see potential obstacles and makes users more vulnerable to crime. These concerns are somewhat diminished by the fact that the MCT Trails are closed from dusk to dawn and there should not be any nighttime trail users. However, the hours of operation are subject to change. Should that happen in the future, lighting standards may need to be reconsidered.

51%

Of survey respondents said that typically, they use the MCT Trails alone.

40%

Of survey respondents said that typically, they use the MCT Trails with one other person

Source: MCT Trails Community Survey, 2023

Many stretches of trail in the MCT Trails system are rural and isolated. These remote trail segments tend to have fewer comfort amenities, with some even lacking hard pavement. If provided, most amenities are found in urban areas where trail traffic is highest. The safety of users on isolated trail segments would benefit from additional shade trees that offer respite from heat, and benches to provide a resting spot during strenuous exercise. Other amenities that could enhance safety are water fountains and safety call boxes, depending on the availability of applicable utility services.

Safety concerns have emerged in recent years with the rise in popularity of electric-powered micro-mobility devices, particularly e-bikes and e-scooters. While these devices have become vital mobility tools, they can be very fast, with some models capable of speeds approaching 60 mph. Not only are trails not designed for such speeds, pedestrians and traditional bicyclists cannot react quickly enough to make evasive maneuvers, if needed to avoid conflict with a fast-moving e-bike.

Most agencies that post trail speed limits set theirs at either 15 or 20 mph. A 20-mph speed limit will accommodate the top speed of Class 1 and Class 2 e-bikes. The MCT Trails have a 15-mph speed limit systemwide. This provides a reasonable and safe maximum speed for the mix of pedestrians, traditional bicyclists, and micro-mobility device users.

To avoid this potential safety conflict, some trail-operating agencies restrict the use of Class 3 e-bikes, which have a top speed of 28 mph, or altogether prohibit electric-powered micro-mobility devices. MCT Trails allows the use of all classes of e-bikes. MCT Trails will need to monitor and revise their micro-mobility device policies as technology evolves and their popularity continues to grow, especially if there is an increase in reported safety conflicts.

Overview of 3-Class System for E-bikes			
	Characteristics		Regulations
Class 1 E-bike	Provides Assistance:	Only when pedaling	Generally treated like a standard bicycle
	Top Assisted Speed:	20 mph	
Class 2 E-bike	Provides Assistance	When pedaling or by throttle	Generally treated like a standard bicycle. May be restricted from shared use paths or trails.
	Top Assisted Speed:	20 mph	
Class 3 E-bike	Provides Assistance:	Only when pedaling	More likely to be restricted from shared use paths or trails. May require use of a helmet, have minimum age requirements, or be subject to other regulation.
	Provides Assistance:	28 mph	

Source: The League of American Bicyclist



Working with community partners to minimize vandalism along the trails.



Ribbon cutting for newest MCT Schoolhouse Trail Tunnel crossing under IL-157

Case Studies Summary

The Madison County Transit Trails (MCT Trails) provides stewardship and vision for a safe, accessible, and unique network of Class I bikeways that connects Madison County residents and visitors of all ages and abilities to employment, education, shopping, recreation, transit, and other destinations. A growing component of the regional transportation system includes the MCT Trails bicycle and pedestrian multi-use paths. These multi-use paths are an amenity that improves quality of life, offers recreational opportunities, and provides an increasingly popular alternative to driving in Madison County, Illinois.

To support this future vision, MCT Trails must have the information and tools they need to plan and organize the development of their trails. Numerous communities have creatively and effectively embarked on partnerships with outside agencies to fund and implement trails and greenway projects as public resources. Shared visions between public and private partners have helped communities use limited resources wisely through phased planning and implementation. This section aims to provide some instances of these successful trails, together with an analysis of their development and lessons learned, so that MCT Trails might learn from them and become more prepared to launch their initiatives.

The team's ultimate goal was to identify programs and resources that can help MCT Trails better connect with the Madison County communities. Trail systems and greenway projects can be used to proactively propose alternative solutions that balance human needs

with ecosystem processes that benefit the communities and the larger region. The following communities have successfully planned, designed, and implemented trails and greenways in different timelines, contexts, and processes. These case studies include a mix of different sponsorship/partnership types including arrangements between public municipalities, county, and state agencies, and not-for-profit groups:

- MCT Trails (included for comparison)
- Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission: Razorback Greenway, Regional Heritage Trail
- Great Rivers Greenway: Brickline Greenway
- Indianapolis Cultural Trail, Inc.: Indianapolis Cultural Trail
- Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission: Bike Miami Valley Trail System
- City of Madison: Madison Bicycle Adventure Network
- Metro Council: Oregon Regional Trail System
- Indian Nations Council of Governments: Tulsa Area Trail Systems
- City of Davis: Davis Bike & Pedestrian Plan

Project Name	Madison County Transit Trails
Location	Madison County, Illinois
Date Planned	Since 1990 (on-going)
Construction Completed	On-going
Estimated Cost	On-going
Size/Length	138 miles
Partnership	Public-Private: Madison County Mass Transit District (MCT), Madison County Board of Trustees, government partners, and Madison and St. Clair Counties
Landscape Architect/Planner	Internal ACT Team & Consultants
Managed By	MCT, ACT
Project Background and History	In the early 1990s, MCT initiated its "Rails to Trails" program to preserve urban rail corridors for future light rail possibilities and interim trail use.
Design, Development, Decision-Making Processes	The project is a result of the concept to preserve vital rail corridors. Madison County Transit (MCT) acquired former railroad rights-of-way for future light rail possibilities and interim trail use.
Program Elements	Series of interconnected separated class one bikeways that connect to neighborhoods, parks, colleges, commercial areas, and other destinations. <i>Ex: Adopt-A-Bench Program, Trail Critter Collection Sculptures, Interpretive Panels</i>
Significance	Preservation of vital transportation corridors. MCT Trails system form one of the largest networks of linear parks in the region. MCT is one of the only transit systems in the country with a fully integrated bus and bikeway system.
Limitations	Connection to all cities in Madison County, need to raise funds for maintenance and improvements.
Future Concerns	Create and support alternative modes of transportation with adequate funding per segment.

Source: Madison County Transit (MCT), MCT Trails, Agency for Community Transit (ACT)

Table 4-1. Razorback Regional Greenway Summary

Project Name	Razorback Regional Greenway
Location	Northwest Arkansas
Date Planned	2000-2018
Construction Completed	Since May 2, 2015 (On-going)
Estimated Cost	\$38 million
Size/Length	40 miles
Partnership	Public-Private: Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission (NWARPC) is a governmental organization in a cooperative agreement between Benton County, Washington County, Bentonville, Fayetteville, Rogers, Siloam Springs, Springdale, the University of Arkansas, and the Walton Family Foundation. The Razorback Greenway Alliance is a nonprofit that includes a representative from each city on the greenway.
Landscape Architect/Planner	Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission (NWARPC)
Managed By	Each municipality along the greenway is responsible for its section of the trail. The cities along the greenway have continued investing in their trail systems and maintained their portion of the greenway. The Razorback Greenway Alliance serves as a facilitator to standardize the trail's maintenance.
Project Background and History	The project is a result of the concept of joining many of Northwest Arkansas's existing trails together to create a seamless recreational and transportation corridor. The NWARC started a committee to develop the master plan for the greenway. The project involved building new trails, connecting them to existing trails, and updating some older trails. The greenway route is comprised of 22 individual trails.
Design, Development, Decision-Making Processes	Northwest Arkansas Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan was adopted by cities, which has since collaboratively maintained and developed trails.
Program Elements	The greenway allows for easy access to the communities of Fayetteville, Johnson, Springdale, Lowell, Rogers, Bentonville, and Bella Vista and hosts a wide range of activities. Trail users encounter parks and streams. Additionally, users have easy access to restaurants, bike shops, and other retail establishments. Ex: Adopt-A-Trail Program, Square2Square Bike Ride
Significance	The Razorback Regional Greenway is the "backbone of Northwest Arkansas" and has been declared a national recreation trail. The greenway links dozens of popular destinations across Washington and Benton counties and connects communities through world-class arts, culture, and recreation.
Limitations	Need to raise funds to maintain the greenway continuously.
Future Concerns	Continued maintenance for connectivity, accessibility, and commutability.

Source: Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission (NWARPC); NWA Razorback Greenway

Razorback Regional Greenway (AR)

The Razorback Regional Greenway project is an example of a long-term incremental strategy successfully embarked on through an innovative collaboration between city governments, the Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission, the University of Arkansas, and the Walton Family Foundation to create a regional greenway. As a reference, Table 4-1 summarizes the Razorback Regional Greenway project.



Photo by: Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission



Razorback Greenway 40-Mile Markers

Current Status

Since the first 5-mile section was completed in 2008, the Razorback Greenway has been extended to 40 miles. Today, Razorback Greenway is considered the "backbone of Northwest Arkansas" and has been declared a national recreation trail. The greenway links dozens of popular destinations across Washington and Benton counties and connects communities from all walks of life through world-class arts, culture, and recreation. Trail users encounter parks, and streams, and have easy access to restaurants, bike shops, and other retail establishments.

In 2022, the Razorback Greenway Alliance launched a new logo where each line represents the seven cities it runs through. The logo is on the 40-mile markers measuring the trail, with colors representing each of the seven cities they're in.

NWA Heritage Trail Plan (AR)

The Northwest Arkansas (NWA) Heritage Trail Plan illustrates a successful regional trail system in partnership between Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission (NWARPC), Northwest Arkansas Heritage Partners, Benton and Washington County, city agencies, and local, state, and national organizations to provide safe pedestrian and bicycle travel and connect residents and visitors of Northwest Arkansas to the historic Butterfield Stagecoach Route, Trail of Tears, and Civil War trails. As a reference, Table 4-2 summarizes the NWA Heritage Trail Plan project.

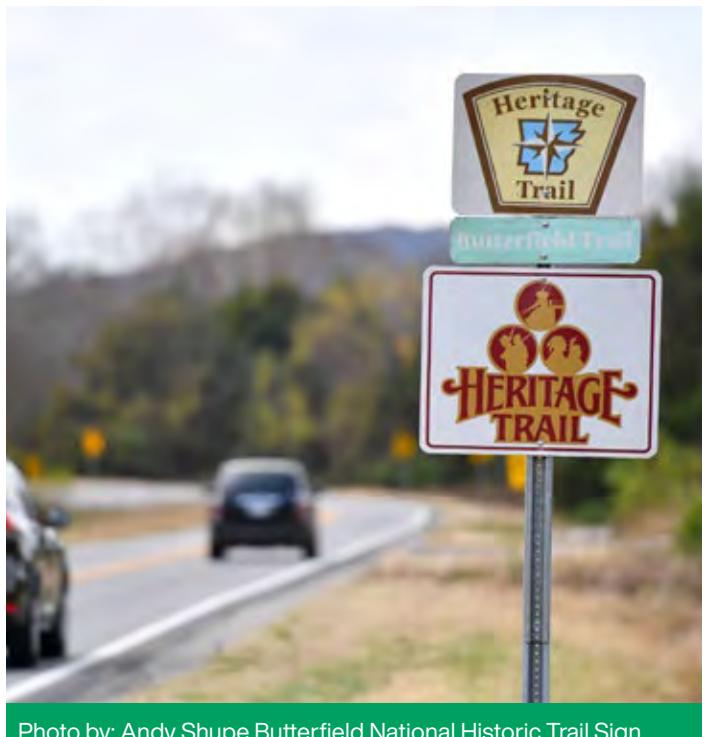


Table 4-2.Northwest Arkansas Heritage Trail/Plan Summary

Project Name	Razorback Regional Greenway
Location	Northwest Arkansas
Date Planned	The Regional Bike & Pedestrian Plan was adopted on October 28, 2002; Version I of the NWA Heritage Trail Plan was adopted to the 2025 Regional Transportation Plan; Version II of the NWA Heritage Trail Plan was adopted in the 2030 Northwest Arkansas Regional Transportation Plan; Version III of the NWA Heritage Trail Plan was adopted in the 2035 Northwest Arkansas Regional Transportation Plan. The Northwest Arkansas Heritage Trail Plan Version IV of the NWA Heritage Trail Plan was a part of the 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP); (Version V) is part of the 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan and the routes are all reflected in the NWA Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.
Construction Completed	Since 2002 (On-going)
Estimated Cost	Not Available. Major operating costs include the salary of maintenance crew and materials for features (benches, signage, interpretive panels, etc.)
Size/Length	2,800+ miles
Partnership	Public-Private: Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission, city and county governments, convention and visitors' bureaus, museums, historic sites, and trail clubs formed Heritage Trail Partners. Heritage Trail Partners is a 501C3 organization in partnership with local, state, and national organizations.
Landscape Architect/Planner	Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission
Managed By	Heritage Trail Partners, Member Cities Bentonville, Fayetteville, Gentry, Rogers, Siloam Springs, Springdale, Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism, and the National Park Service
Project Background and History	The Northwest Arkansas Heritage Trail Plan is a regional trail system of off-road and on-road pedestrian and bike facilities that links Washington and Benton County of Northwest Arkansas's historic roads and trails to a full regional trail network. Heritage Trail Partners was born from a project initiated by the Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission (NWARPC) in the early 2000s to develop a bicycle and pedestrian plan for the region that could link the emerging trail systems of the various communities. The NWA Heritage Trail Plan was adopted by cities in Benton and Washington County, which has since collaboratively maintained and developed trails.
Design, Development, Decision-Making Processes	The Heritage Trail Partners of Northwest Arkansas partner with local, state, and national organizations to preserve and promote historical routes in Northwest Arkansas. The organization includes membership with the City of Bentonville, City of Fayetteville, City of Gentry, City of Rogers, City of Siloam Springs, and City of Springdale.
Program Elements	The regional trail creates safe access to the historical roads and assets of Benton and Washington County. <i>Adopted an Interpretive Panel & Adopt a Heritage Trail Roadway Sign Program Driving Guide to Butterfield Overland Mail Route Brochure</i>
Significance	The NWA Heritage Plan continues to guide communities by providing the historic connections necessary for connectivity between the individual trail plans of the region's cities. Additionally, the Butterfield Overland Route was declared a national historic trail.
Limitations	Need to continuously raise funds to maintain the trail system.
Future Concerns	A need to work with local jurisdictions to promote discussion of new public funding sources to support.

Source: Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission, Northwest Arkansas Heritage Trail Partners

Brickline Greenway (MO)

The Brickline Greenway project is an urban greenway infrastructure model for long-term excellence in ecology and engaging communities in stewarding a healthy, urban environment. Great Rivers Greenway, Great Rivers Greenway Foundation, municipalities, public agencies, and nonprofit organizations successfully created a dynamic network of connecting rivers, parks, and communities. The greenway links people with St. Louis destinations, creates inspiring experiences, and contributes to equitable economic opportunity. As a reference, the Table 4-3 summarizes the Brickline Greenway project.

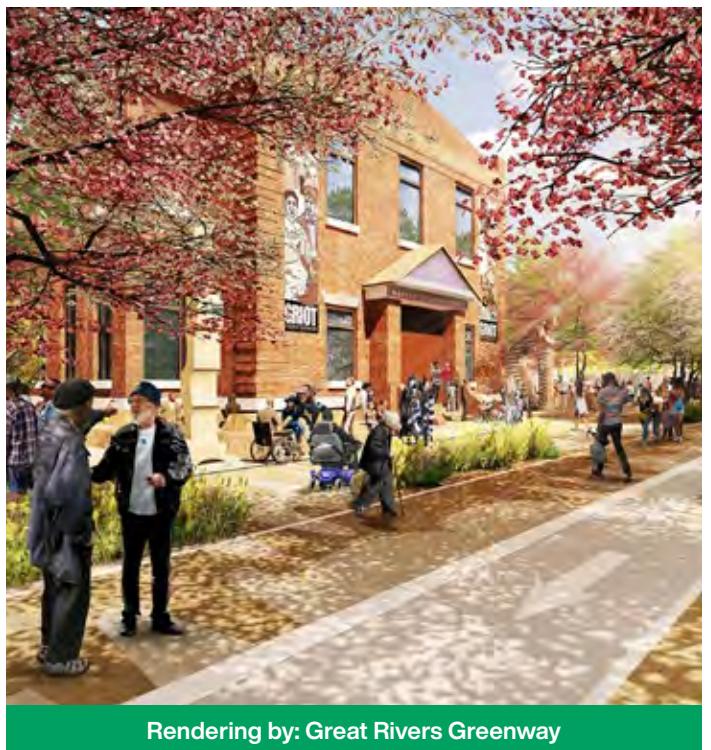


Table 4-3 Brickline Greenway

Project Name	Razorback Regional Greenway
Location	St. Louis City, Missouri
Date Planned	Since 2000 (on-going)
Construction Completed	2017-2030 (on-going)
Estimated Cost	\$245 million
Size/Length	0.27 miles (anticipated 20 miles)
Partnership	Major Private-Public: Great Rivers Greenway is a public agency in partnership with the City of St. Louis, residents, community leaders, small businesses, utilities & railroads, local & state agencies, nonprofit organizations, corporate leaders, philanthropic organizations, church leaders, property owners, public transportation, and service providers.
Landscape Architect/Planner	Great Rivers Greenway
Managed By	Great Rivers Greenway (GRG) is the leading effort. KWAME Building Group serves as the construction manager and program manager for the entire Brickline Greenway project.
Project Background and History	The project is a result of creating a conceptual plan to connect Forest Park to the St. Louis Arch. In the early 2000s, the GRG and its partners launched an international design competition and created a Framework Plan. The Brickline Greenway connects Forest Park to the Gateway Arch and provides connections to Fairgrounds Park and Tower Grove Park
Design, Development, Decision-Making Processes	Great Rivers Greenway developed the Framework Plan. A steering committee and four working groups from 125 institutional partners, neighborhood representatives, private funders, and city staff were assembled to discuss equity, economic development, design, development & construction, and governance. The Arts of Color Council provides guidance to design, promote, and implement art and engagement opportunities within the greenway area.
Program Elements	A series of paved, accessible pathways where community members can safely connect, commute, exercise, and explore. The short segment of the greenway parallels the Metrolink light rail line and provides a connection to the Cortex Innovation Community. The agency provides various civic engagement opportunities. Ex: <i>Green Book on the Greenway, Community Tours: Urban Archaeology, and Brickline Greenway</i>
Significance	The Brickline Greenway was highlighted in a New York Times article as one of the seven great walks in seven great cities. The Brickline Greenway is a transformative project that drives investment, promotes economic growth, and advances several positive social impacts across the St. Louis region.
Limitations	Fluid process in determining how many different projects might be moving forward at any given time.
Future Concerns	Finding innovative solutions to take care of the greenway now and for years to come.

Source: Great Rivers Greenway (GRG), KWAME

Indianapolis Cultural Trail (IN)

The Indianapolis Cultural Trail is a sustainable module of high-quality programming along the Trail and ensures accessible connections in partnership with the Cultural Development Commissioners, Indianapolis Cultural Trail, Central Indiana Community Foundation, and the City of Indianapolis. The Trail is a world-class public space for residents and visitors of Indianapolis that makes the City unique. As a reference, Table 4-4 summarizes the Indianapolis Cultural Trail project.



Photo by: Indianapolis Cultural Trail, Inc. Pacers Bikeshare



"Looking Through Windows" Michael Kuschnir Art Sculpture

Current Status

The Indianapolis Cultural Trail seamlessly connects neighborhoods, cultural districts, and entertainment amenities while serving as the downtown hub for central Indiana's vast greenway system. The Indianapolis Cultural Trail has long served as a canvas for showcasing the city's cultural and artistic spirit. There are currently 9 pieces of public art along the trail.

The Indianapolis Cultural Trail nonprofit organization is leading the current expansion of the Indianapolis Cultural Trail. The major capital project is extending the Cultural Trail in two distinct areas: Indiana Avenue and South Street for a total distance of almost 2 additional miles. The most recent expansion was unveiled on May 9, 2023, and consists of an extra mile of Cultural Trail. The extension includes rain gardens and public art.

Table 4-4: Indianapolis Cultural Trail Summary

Project Name	Razorback Regional Greenway
Location	Downtown Indianapolis, Indiana.
Date Planned	Since 2001 (on-going)
Construction Completed	Since May 2013 (on-going)
Estimated Cost	\$63 million
Size/Length	8 miles
Partnership	Public-Private: The Indianapolis Cultural Trail Inc. is both a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization and a world-class, internationally recognized linear park in partnership with the City of Indianapolis.
Landscape Architect/Planner	Cultural Development Commissioners (CDC) and R.W. Armstrong & Rundell Ernstberger Associates
Managed By	Indianapolis Cultural Trail Inc (ICT Inc)
Project Background and History	The project branched from the idea that cultural districts could be connected by an urban version of the Monon Trail for both pedestrians and bicyclists. The principles of art integration were established during a charrette that took place with the design and management team before the start of the formal design of the Trail. There are currently 9 pieces of public art along the trail. The Indianapolis Cultural Trail, Inc. nonprofit organization was formed at the inception of the Indianapolis Cultural Trail.
Design, Development, Decision-Making Processes	R.W. Armstrong & Rundell Ernstberger Associates were hired as construction managers and lead architecture design teams. The Curatorial Advisory Committee is composed of local curators of contemporary art, local artists, and relevant design professionals who review and recommend public art.
Program Elements	The trail connects 6 cultural districts and features 5 acres of garden beds with plants and trees, 25,000 square feet of rain gardens, and 3 downtown public spaces. Additionally, The Indiana Pacers Bike-share program is an important component of the city's resiliency and enhances the quality of life for Indiana residents and visitors. <i>Ex: Indiana Pacers Bike-Share Program, Adopt-A-Plant Program</i>
Significance	The Indianapolis Cultural Trail: A Legacy of Gene & Marilyn Glick is an 8-mile world-class urban bike and pedestrian path that creates, inspires, and sustains connections and cultural experiences that are accessible to all. The Trail seamlessly connects neighborhoods, cultural districts, and entertainment amenities and serves as a canvas for showcasing the city's cultural and artistic spirit.
Limitations	Indiana Cultural Trails Inc. relies on the 1,000+ volunteers annually to maintain the trails.
Future Concerns	Connect more people and neighborhoods to more cultural experiences and greenways while infusing art and nature along the Trail's newest additions.

Source: Indianapolis Cultural Trail, Inc.

Miami Valley Trails (OH)

Ohio's Miami Valley Trail network is an example of successfully connected multi-use paths along rivers and abandoned railroad beds in partnership between the Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission, agencies, jurisdictions, and private groups. The Miami Valley Bikeways network is the result of over 40 years of work that local individuals and agencies have put into building and maintaining it. As a reference, Table 4-5 summarizes the Miami Valley Trails project.

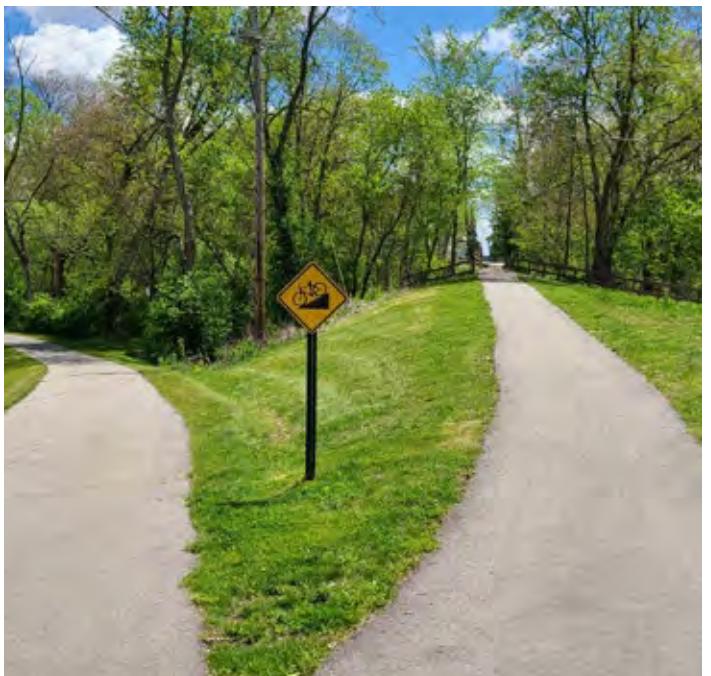


Photo by: Miami Valley Trails, Ohio-to-Indiana Trail



"Into the River" Storybook Kiosk Display

Table 4-5 Miami Valley Trails Trail Summary

Project Name	Razorback Regional Greenway
Location	Ohio
Date Planned	Since 1965
Construction Completed	Since 1976 (on-going)
Estimated Cost	Not Available
Size/Length	350+ miles
Partnership	Public-Private: The Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission (MVRPC) in partnership with city and county government, public agencies, non-profit organizations, and local, state, and federal organizations.
Landscape Architect/Planner	The Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission
Managed By	The Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission (MVRPC) serves as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for Montgomery, Miami, Greene, and Shelby Counties, plus a portion of Northern Warren County.
Project Background and History	The project is a result of the concept to build a bikeway with land along the Great Miami River owned by the Miami Conservancy District. The Miami Valley Regional Bicycle Council adopted the nation's first Regional Bikeway Plan in 1973. The Council established the "Thunder Road Bike-A-Thon" that funded the organization. The MVRPC completed the Miami Valley Regional Bike Plan in 2008. Since then, the Region has seen continuous growth and popularity of the network.
Design, Development, Decision-Making Processes	Ita Planning + Design and Burgess & Niple wrote the Regional Bikeways Plan. The Miami Valley Regional Bike Plan was adopted by cities, which have since collaboratively maintained and developed trails.
Program Elements	A series of paved, multi-use trails that connect over 40 communities and eleven counties that support bicycle-friendly communities and businesses, and safe-to-school travel plans. The individual trails are linked to form a network that is a tremendous resource for recreation, fitness, and commuting for locals, and a unique attraction for many visitors to the region. Ex: <i>Cycling Activities, local programs, on-street network building, Bike-Share Program, Complete Streets Policy, educational programs, bike maps, "Storybook Trail"</i>
Significance	Bike Miami Valley is accredited by the League of American Bicyclists as a Gold Level Bicycle Friendly Business.
Limitations	Access to trails requires riding or crossing over high-stress streets and roads which limits the percentage of the population using the trails.
Future Concerns	A comprehensive network of bike-friendly facilities is still needed throughout the region. Trail users are concerned about connectivity.

Source: Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission, Miami Valley Regional Bicycle Council, Miami Valley Trails

Current Status

The Miami Valley Region boasts the Nation's largest paved trail network, offering many benefits to the people who utilize the trails. In 2008, Bike Miami Valley founded the Miami Valley Cycling Summit, an event held biennially around the region. The most recent record-breaking achievement was bringing on full-time employees and introducing Link, the first bike-share program in southwest Ohio, in May 2015.

In 2021, the 20-year Regional Bike Plan expanded to include walking, biking, and transit access and was the first active transportation plan for the Miami Valley Region. On Friday, October 20, 2023 the Miami Conservancy District and the University of Dayton jointly celebrated the installation of a new "storybook trail" along the Great Miami River Trail in Dayton.

Madison Bicycle Adventure Trail Network (WI)

The Madison Bicycle Adventure Trail (MadBAT) Network is a model for a successful network of natural surfaces and facilities/locations for bike skills development features, bike parks, and bicycle playgrounds in a collaborative partnership between the City of Madison, International Mountain Bicycling Association, and City of Madison Partner agencies, Dane County Parks, and Capital Off Road Pathfinders. As a reference, the Table 4-6 summarizes the Madison Bicycle Adventure Trail project.

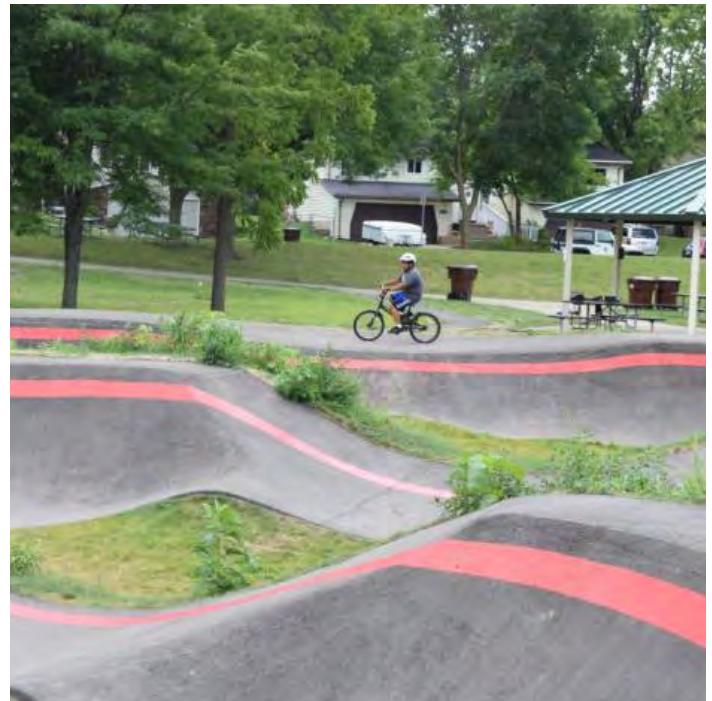


Photo by: City of Madison, Pump Track



Neighborhood Cannonball Single Track in Madison, WI

Table 4-6 Madison Bicycle Adventure Trail Summary

Project Name	Razorback Regional Greenway
Location	Madison, Wisconsin
Date Planned	2018-2021
Construction Completed	Since 2022 (on-going)
Estimated Cost	1/4 Paved Trails \$65,000, 1/2 Paved Trails \$130,000
Size/Length	75+ miles (on-going)
Partnership	Public-Private: City of Madison Parks Division, International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA), Board of Park Commissioners, Dane County Parks, and Capital Off Road Pathfinders.
Landscape Architect/Planner	International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA)
Managed By	Madison Parks Division, adjacent counties and municipalities
Project Background and History	The City of Madison Parks Division engaged the International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA) - Trail Solutions Program to complete a citywide feasibility study and planning exercise. The project is a concept to develop a connected network of natural surfaces and identify locations for bike skills development features, bike parks, and bicycle playgrounds. The final citywide trail planning project was completed, and an online story map was created in 2021. This project provides a "master plan" for where trails are appropriate throughout the city. The Pump Track and Skill Loop at Aldo Leopold Park, and the Cannonball Shred to School Trail projects have been approved and constructed.
Design, Development, Decision-Making Processes	IMBA developed a plan for a citywide system of multi-use, bike-optimized, off-road trails. Other municipalities have successfully developed trail networks. Each trail segment is still treated as its project and is subject to funding being available, public input, and a city project being created.
Program Elements	The narrow trail or "single-track" provides adventures for riders with "shred to school," hills, jumps, decking and berms through woodsy natural, limestone, and chip seal trails.
Significance	Natural surface trail networks are shown to improve community health, create equitable access, increase youth engagement, and drive positive economic impacts
Limitations	There aren't immediate plans or funding allocated to all sites.
Future Concerns	Improve connectivity to enhance access and create a comprehensive system of green space connections.

Source: IMBA Story Map Series, City of Madison (WI), International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA)

Current Status

Currently, the Trails at Quarry Park, Pump Track and Skill Loop at Aldo Leopold Park, and the Cannonball Shred to School Trail projects have been approved. The Aldo Leopold Park Pump Track was completed and opened in 2022. The park became a priority site for off-road bike facilities. The pump tracks provide riding experience and skill. The Cannonball Single Track Trail was completed and opened in 2023. The trail runs on the south side of Cannonball Path on lands owned by City Engineering and City Parks Division. Funding was secured for construction in 2022 in part by the PARC and Ride grant program from Dane County. This project connects to the asphalt pump track and skills loop in Aldo Leopold Park. Each project made improvements and designed connectivity to adjacent counties and municipal properties.

Tulsa Regional Trails (OK)

The Tulsa Area Trails Systems is a successful network of trails that reduces individual and community isolation and improves access to jobs, healthcare, and community life for residents and visitors in the region. The GO Plan includes effective bicycle network recommendations, pedestrian design approaches, and policy and funding recommendations to help communities make walking and cycling safe, comfortable, and convenient. As a reference, the Table 4-7 summarizes the Tulsa Regional Trails system.



Photo by: This Machine, Tulsa Bike Share Midland Valley Trail



Photo by: This Machine, Riverpark Trails

Table 4-7 Tulsa Regional Trails Summary

Project Name	Razorback Regional Greenway
Location	Tulsa, Oklahoma
Date Planned	December 2015
Construction Completed	Ongoing
Estimated Cost	Trail \$888,100/mile; Side Path \$719,000/mile
Size/Length	800-mile system of on-street facilities and routes, 165 miles of side paths, and 408 miles of off-street trails
Partnership	Intermunicipal Public-Private: Indian Nations Council of Governments (INCOG), Transportation Technical Committee & Technical Policy Committee, The Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee, the cities of Tulsa, Skiatook, Sand Springs, Bixby, Broken Arrow, Catoosa, Collinsville, Coweta, Glenpool, Jenks, and Owasso, Tulsa Bike Club, Oklahoma Bicycling Coalition, This Machine, and Bike Club.
Landscape Architect/Planner	Indian Nations Council of Governments
Managed By	INCOG provides a vision for transportation, administers funding programs, and provides member jurisdictions with resources to plan and implement projects at the local level. Trails are maintained by the City of Tulsa Parks Department, Tulsa Public Works Department, River Parks Authority, Broken Arrow Parks, Tulsa County Parks, Jenks Parks Department, the City of Skiatook, and the City of Sand Springs.
Project Background and History	The project is a result of the concept of providing a level of design that makes trail usage safe, comfortable, and convenient for the widest possible range of users. The Tulsa Regional Bike & Pedestrian Plan was adopted in 2015. The Tulsa Area Trails System is an interconnected system of bicycle and pedestrian trails maintained by several different entities
Design, Development, Decision-Making Processes	Eleven regional governments worked together to develop the GO Plan which is a regional pedestrian and bicycle master plan. The GO Plan is a Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan that provides a comprehensive regional plan for pedestrian and bicycle improvements; provides connectivity to the existing regional trail network using on-street treatments; improves pedestrian and bicycle safety; provides a more strategic approach to competing for pedestrian and bicycle funding; and identifies barriers, with solutions, for residents to safely access destinations using walking or bicycling modes within the Tulsa region. Pedestrian improvements are addressed through recommendations in a community-chosen focus area in each jurisdiction and through design approaches to typical pedestrian challenges in the region. The plan includes design guidelines for each mode.
Program Elements	The trail system provides bicycle and pedestrian transportation options to connect to the communities of Bixby, Broken Arrow, Catoosa, Collinsville, Coweta, Glenpool, Jenks, Owasso, Sand Springs, Skiatook, and Tulsa. Additionally, streets include bike lanes to promote bicycles for both recreational and alternative transportation uses. Ex: Machine Bike Share Program, Bike Club After School Program,
Significance	Tulsa is a League of American Bicyclists Bronze Level Bike Friendly Community. The region's large trail system forms the backbone of existing bicycle infrastructure in and around Tulsa.
Limitations	Lack of pedestrian-friendly infrastructure, regional sidewalk gaps
Future Concerns	Continued maintenance of pedestrian and bike facilities

Source: Indian Nations Council of Governments (INCOG), This Machine, Tulsa Bike Share

Oregon Statewide Trails Plan (OR)

The City of Oregon illustrates a successful collaboration between the Oregon Regional Trails Advisory Council, Oregon Parks and Recreation Commission, the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, recreational trail providers, interest groups, and citizens across the state to establish a system of recreation trails to provide trail opportunities and promote access to Oregon's trails and waterways. As a reference, the Table 4-8 summarizes the Oregon Statewide Trails project.

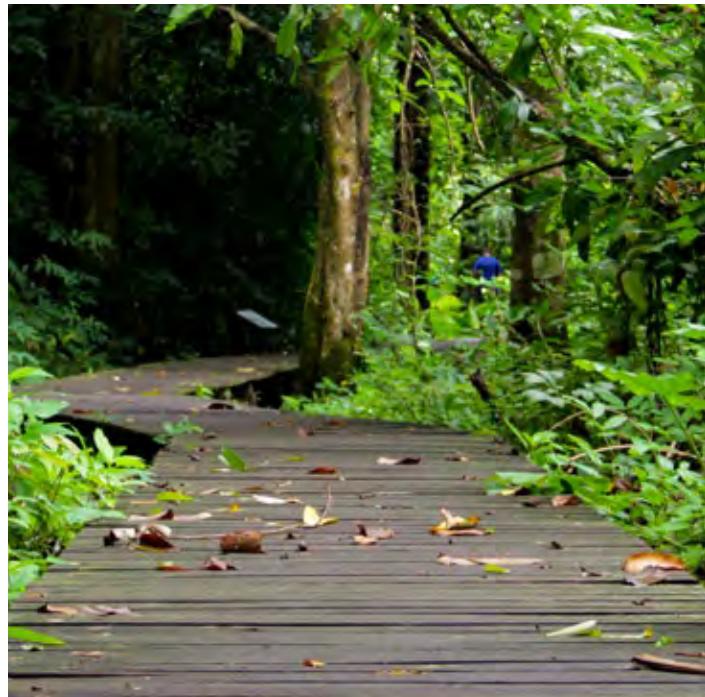


Photo by: Portland Parks & Recreation

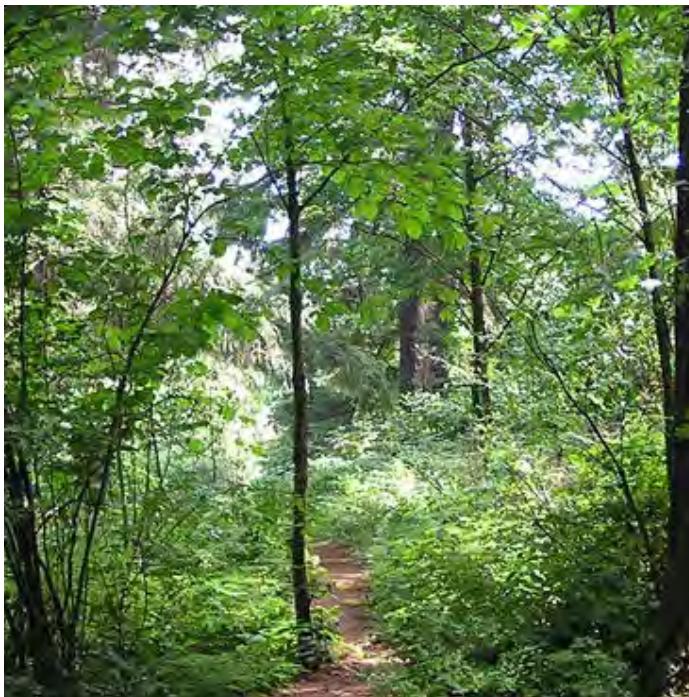


Photo by: Portland Parks & Recreation

Current Status

The last Statewide Trails Plan for Oregon was completed by the OPRD in February 2005 and maintains the state's eligibility to participate in the Recreational Trails Program (RTP). In 2008, Oregon developed a statewide Scenic Bikeway Program. The plan has been used as an information resource as well as a planning tool to guide agencies for the following 10 years. The plan provides background on user needs and current trends affecting motorized (OHV and snowmobile), non-motorized, and water trail opportunities.

The plan's trail expenditure and economic contribution analysis, conducted by Oregon State University, found that statewide, non-motorized boating, non-motorized trail, OHV trail, and snowmobile participation by Oregon residents and out-of-state visitors contribute 26,873 jobs, \$1.36 billion in value-added, and \$826 million in labor income.

Table 4-8 Beyond Platinum Bicycle Action Plan Summary

Project Name	Razorback Regional Greenway
Location	Oregon
Date Planned	1971-2025
Construction Completed	Ongoing
Estimated Cost	Not Available (Operation costs include program funding and maintenance)
Size/Length	152+ miles
Partnership	Public-Private: Oregon Regional Trails Advisory Council, Oregon Parks and Recreation Commission, the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, recreational trail providers, interest groups, and citizens
Landscape Architect/Planner	The Oregon Parks and Recreation Department
Managed By	The Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) oversees the designation process and management of the Scenic Bikeways, Scenic Waterways, and Scenic and Recreational Trail programs.
Project Background and History	The purpose of the Oregon Statewide Trail Plan is to provide guidance for the Recreational Trails Program (RTP), All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) Grant Program, and information and recommendations to guide federal, state, and local units of government, as well as the private sector, in making recreational trail policy and planning decisions. The plan has been used as an information resource as well as a planning tool to guide agencies for the following 10 years
Design, Development, Decision-Making Processes	The Oregon Statewide Trails Plan establishes the framework for statewide comprehensive trail planning and the implementation process. OPRD supports the implementation of key statewide and local planning recommendations through internal and external partnerships and OPRD-administered grant programs.
Program Elements	Regional trails connect recreation sites, schools, and services, provide alternative transportation routes, and also highlight the state's natural beauty. <i>Ex: Scenic & Regional Trail Program</i>
Significance	In 2009, Oregon became the first state to develop a statewide Scenic Bikeway program.
Limitations	Ensure resources are utilized with fiscal, social, and environmental responsibility, building on the past to provide for future generations
Future Concerns	More trails connecting towns/ public places and need for improved trail maintenance

Source: City of Portland, OR, State of Oregon Statewide Recreation Trails Plan (2016-2025)

Trail System Recommendations



Trail Facility Recommendations

The specific facility recommendations listed below are intended to address the identified system needs for the Master Plan. The list represents future trail projects identified by MCT for programming in the MCT Capital Plan and additional project needs identified by stakeholders and trail users during the planning process. The list below is provided in no particular order. Capital Plan projects are prioritized for implementation in Section 6. Opinions of probable cost for these projects are identified in the MCT Capital Plan. Additional long-term projects recommended by stakeholders and trail users are listed in “Section 6” on page 48. Other initiatives are mentioned on the following pages and in the strategies.

Trail Projects

- System extension connecting the Goshen Trail to Highland through Troy.
- System extension of the Confluence Trail north to Piasa Park. Future extension north along the Mississippi River.
- System connections to Alton destinations. Future extension north through Alton connecting to Godfrey.
- System extension connecting Bethalto to the Goshen Trail. Future extension to Alton through Cottage Hills and back to the Riverbend Trail through East Alton.
- Connection between Roxana residential neighborhoods and the Goshen Trail. Future extension west to the Confluence Trail.
- System connection between the Schoolhouse Trail and Confluence Trail through Venice. Future extension west to Madison.
- System connection between the Nature Trail and Confluence Trail through Granite City.
- System extension from the Confluence Trail to the Old Chain of Rocks Bridge.
- System connection between the Bluff Trail and Confluence Trail through South Roxana, Hartford, and Roxana.
- Connection between Troy residential neighborhoods and the Goshen Trail.
- Upgrade unpaved segments of the Nickel Plate Trail to hard paved surface.
- System connection from the Ronald J. Foster Heritage Trail at Marine north to the Nickel Plate Trail.
- System connection between the Nickel Plate Trail and Quercus Grove Trail, connecting Alhambra and Hamel.

Grade Separated Trail Crossings

- Schoolhouse Trail bridge over IL Route 111.
- Schoolhouse Trail bridge over Pleasant Ridge Road.



Trail Amenity Recommendations

Most master plans do not conduct the type of detailed study necessary to identify specific locations for specific amenities. Rather, this is normally done at the engineering and design stage when extensive site-specific data is gathered and analyzed in detail. The guidance below is intended to inform the development of context-sensitive standards to be applied during the design stage to guide the placement and provision of specific amenities.

- **Provide comfort amenities**, such as benches, water fountains, and restrooms in appropriate locations. These amenities are highly desired by trail users. Benches, trash receptacles, and pet waste stations, if provided, should be more closely spaced along high traffic trails and in urban locations than lower traffic trails and in rural areas. Given the necessary water and sanitary sewer connections for water fountains and restrooms, it is only feasible to provide a few of these amenities in critical high traffic locations with utility access. A factor for consideration is that trash receptacles and pet waste stations must be emptied frequently, and restrooms need to be cleaned daily.
- **Continue to beautify the MCT Trails** with trees, landscaping, and public art in appropriate locations. Establishing the Adopt-a-Trail program per Objective 1.2. would potentially reduce concerns related to maintenance costs and capacity. Explore the planting of shade trees along trails in conjunction with bench installations, particularly on isolated trail segments lacking adjacent tree cover.
- **Continue to enhance access to the MCT Trails** by providing parking lots, access points/trailheads, and wayfinding signage where appropriate. Consider assigning formal names to access points and include those points on wayfinding signage. Also consider installing street signs at certain crossing locations to aid in access and navigation.
- **Install safety amenities**, such as emergency call boxes and trail lighting, where feasible. Location standards may need to account for access to electric and telephone utilities, unless reliable solar powered and wireless communication options are available. Where provided, trail lighting installations should be designed to minimize light pollution, particularly in isolated rural locations.
- **Expand the Arts on the MCT Trails** initiative beyond the Trail Critters Collection. This will enhance the MCT Trails system, while offering an interesting attractions that continue to draw trail users and visitors to Madison County and the MCT Trails.

Safety Recommendations

The safety recommendations of the Master Plan are intended to address the perceived needs identified during the planning process during community outreach. The order below does not indicate priority. Rather, specific projects recommended below are integrated into the prioritized facility recommendations found in Section 6.

- **Develop criteria for prioritizing intersection safety improvements** to at-grade trail crossings of roadways and railroads, consistent with applicable national and state guidance and standards.
- **Target the High Impact Investment Area for the construction of grade separated trail crossings** that connect residents to their destinations. Mobility is severely hampered within the area by numerous at-grade crossings of rail corridors and roadways with high heavy commercial traffic volumes.
- **Pursue funding to construct the planned Schoolhouse Trail bridge** over IL Route 111. This is the location of the only known fatal crash involving an active user of the MCT Trails system and, as such, should be considered a high priority safety improvement.
- **Identify preferred trail intersection safety modifications** in coordination with IDOT and local jurisdictions. Options should include grade separation, intersection design configurations, and mid-block crossing treatments, where such can be safely implemented.
- **Prioritize funding to upgrade unpaved trail segments** and eliminate on-street connector segments from existing MCT Trails. This would bring the system closer to the full Class I status espoused by the vision statement and enhance safety on those trails.
- **Continue to fund maintenance at current ratios or greater** as the MCT Trails system expands. Such investments will sustain the current trail conditions, which are highly rated by trail users. Maintaining trails in good condition is critical to maximizing the safety of all trail users.
- **Study the feasibility of establishing a safety patrol** at the agency level, as suggested by public feedback. A safety patrol would offer a dedicated presence along the MCT Trails to assist trail users, enforce trail rules, report trail maintenance needs, and report crimes and vandalism. This would offer peace of mind and a sense of security for trail users.
- **Explore the possibility of offering funds for bicycle police units** in partnership with local law enforcement agencies. Perhaps a local police department or the Sheriff's Department would support a pilot program to explore such a partnership. This could be done in lieu of or supplemental to a safety patrol.
- **Consider the installation of emergency call boxes** in locations where they would enhance safety and deter crime. Placement may depend on the availability of utilities and wireless broadband.
- **Monitor and revise micro-mobility device policies** as technology evolves and the popularity of such devices grows, especially if there is an increase in reported safety conflicts.
- **Determine and implement a feasible means of speed enforcement** as the proportion of micro-mobility device users on the MCT Trails grows. An alternative may be to restrict or limit the use of Class 3 e-bikes if excessive speed becomes a safety concern.



Safe for all ages and abilities. Photo submitted by MCT Scavenger Hunt participants.

Implementation



Implementation Strategy Overview

Implementation of the plan begins with its adoption and consistent use as a living and dynamic document. Understanding the flexibility in opportunity and resources and reflecting on what is relevant and important to the communities that MCT serve at the time of implementation is most critical. This section provides recommendation on phasing, engineering, opinion of probable costs, and funding opportunities.

However, in order to achieve the goals set forth in this document also require a stepped plan of action. Therefore, all projects should be reviewed, developed, and monitored by MCT staff using this plan as a guide. The implementation of the vision set forth will be ongoing from now through 10 to 20 years. It is a stepped plan to fulfill the vision and goals of MCT and the community-at-large. Improvements need to be made in a manner that is responsive to the needs the plan is addressing and that remains relevant to the population served by MCT.

To implement this plan, exploring additional funding opportunities is a necessary and vital step towards success and managing its completion. Funding options will often determine or shift the order of projects purely due to availability of options and mandated restrictions on the funds received. Market fluctuations can increase project costs significantly. It is best to create dedicated sources for funding regular and emergency maintenance and capital projects. The funding for this plan is further outlined in MCT's Capital Plan, which is available under separate cover.

Furthermore, a series of partnerships could be developed and grown to leverage the public funds and also solicit increased participation by community stakeholders in further implementation, building a more interconnected system.

The recommendations in this plan culminated from the results of the community survey, input from the community outreach, events, meetings with the MCT Project Team, and stakeholders.

These projects strategies should be considered a general guide for planning, future acquisition, and future development of the MCT Trails system, with more specific decisions being carried out in the day-to-day operations.

In more detail than goals, strategies generally identify efforts that should always be a part of ongoing work programs and efforts of MCT. However, it should be noted that implementation, project development, and management decisions are often based on opportunity, partnerships, and funding opportunities rather than recorded priority; listed priorities should not be used as justification against pursuing projects not included under this section.

Many of these strategies will benefit from multiple entities coming together and leveraging resources. Partnerships with cooperating agencies, non-governmental organizations, and volunteer organizations can be strengthened and supportive. Where appropriate, initiate discussions to consider working with other public agencies and private organizations to provide services, activities, programming, or facilities that serve local residents and attract visitors from the region or state. All collaborations should be formalized through written memorandums of agreement.

Recommendations for Engineering Support

The recommendations made in this plan should be used as a road map for developing more detailed design-engineering plans during subsequent planning, implementation, and construction.

Specifically, projects to be built by MCT internally or hired out through contractors will be vetted through a planning and engineering review. This includes but is not limited to, the recommended facilities, new alignments for separated shared-use paths, trail-oriented development, rail-to-trail, bridges/tunnels, and new route and corridor development.

The Master Plan was developed to be consistent with the bicycle facility design material and typical sections in the Illinois Department of Transportation's (IDOT's) Bureau of Design and Engineering Manual. It also reflects the guidance presented in the American Association of State & Highway Transportation Official's (AASHTO's) Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities and the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). The National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) have created the Urban Bikeway Design Guide and Urban Street Design Guide for use in cities.

These three documents are the current standard acceptable reference information for developing bicycle facilities. These documents as well as new resources should be consulted in the design-engineering/implementation phase.

The following is a list of recommended engineering tasks to consider to be completed by MCT or consultants as individual projects develop:

- Aiding MCT with assessing and selection of various alignments and routes. This work should consist of site visits, evaluating site based on existing mapping, site accessibility, acquisition potential, and possible environmental conditions (positive or negative).
- Assistance in further evaluation of critical existing facilities and infrastructure for trail corridors. This includes accessibility, road access, parking, water, sanitary sewer, and stormwater drainage.
- Develop topographic surveys for routes.
- Develop schematic plans for alignments.
- Perform alignment studies and intersection studies to more accurately determine design constraints and construction costs.
- Assist in developing updated detailed cost estimations for the capital projects based on schematic plans and the Capital Plan.
- Assist in developing projected estimated annual operations, maintenance cost information, and design costs for new facilities and amenities.
- Determine probable permitting issues with areas selected for pedestrian and bicycle facilities and routes.
- Attend future public meetings if required for additional public input during the project initiation phase.
- Develop construction plans for individual improvements or projects.

- Assist in further developing detailed Opinion of Probable Costs based on construction plans.
- Assist in attaining surveying and permitting.
- Assist in construction engineering services.

Management & Maintenance Recommendations

This plan should be considered a general guide for future corridor acquisition, planning, and development, with more specific decisions being carried out within day-to-day operations of MCT. During the planning process, the need and support of more dedicated trails staff was noted. Additionally, the additional staff support and coordination for the ongoing implementation of this plan would benefit to collaborate with external partnerships to work on policy, shared initiatives, and potential funding.

It is further recommended that MCT continue their excellent maintenance and management of their trails. As maintenance and management responsibilities expands, staff should update detailed plans for the new amenities and facilities as new projects are constructed, or installed, including land management plans for larger right-of-ways and parcels.

Capital Plan Projects & Opinion of Probable Costs

The opinions of probable construction cost in the MCT Capital Plan were developed by identifying major pay items (projects or elements of projects or facilities), to determine a rough order of magnitude cost. Additionally, pay items for specific amenities may have been assigned approximate lump sum price ranges based on the anticipated construction cost at the time of the Capital Plan's creation. It should be noted that planning-level cost opinions often include an approximate 20-30% contingency to cover items that are undefined or are typically unknown early in the planning phase of a project. Pay item price ranges were based on 2021 dollars and were assigned based on historical cost data. It should be noted that these costs may not adequately consider the widely varying costs associated with the current market environment due to availability, seasonality, and inflation. In addition, materials and labor may be unavailable or unpredictable in the post-Covid pandemic era.

Depending on the priority project selected, the cost opinions may or may not include land acquisition costs; easement and right-of-way acquisition; permitting, or construction management; environmental documentation, special site remediation (environmental phase reports, archaeological monitoring, cultural resource review, etc.), cost escalation, and inflation; or the cost for ongoing maintenance. Also inspection, geotech, design and survey may or may not be included in the design fees and construction administration costs and fees. In the Capital Plan, a cost range has been assigned to the items; however, these costs can vary widely depending on the exact details/specifications and nature of the work. Alignment and intersection studies are recommended in order to more accurately determine project construction cost estimates and the appropriate crossing facility. The overall cost opinions are intended to be general and used only for planning purposes.

MCT has no control over the availability of labor, equipment, or materials, market conditions, or the Contractor's method of pricing. The opinions of probable construction costs are generally made on the basis of professional judgment and experience. The consultant makes no guarantee or warranty, expressed or implied, regarding the ultimate bids or negotiated cost of the work. Construction cost will therefore vary based on the ultimate project scope, actual site conditions/constraints, schedule, acquisition strategy, and economic conditions at the time of construction.

As MCT moves forward in developing projects and initiatives, proposed project costs should be re-evaluated with the additional information and requirements available at the time. The proposed projects should also be reviewed for cost-effective and value-added strategies, such as in-house builds, design/build bids, and multiple bids.

As funding allows and as opportunities arise, the highest priority projects should be pursued that best serve and are relevant to the population that MCT serves.

Costs to consider in updating the Capital Plan annually:

- Consider the construction year that generated the dollar amounts per item to make formulaic adjustments;
- It can be typical that there is a 20-30% contingency added or built into the cost;
- Design fees (15-25% or more);
- Construction services (10-15% or more);
- A lump sum value for construction mobilization, traffic control, etc.;
- Temporary or permanent easement acquisition;
- Additional costs for any design studies;
- Environmental phasing or studies
- Cultural Studies;
- Environmental remediation;
- Monitoring that may be necessary to complete the project;
- Permitting;
- Inflation adjustment;
- Material availability or cost increases;
- Labor cost shortages or cost increases; and
- Other factors.

Leveraging Resources

Bicycle and pedestrian improvements can be funded through a variety of federal, local, and private sources. Federal funds are well suited for larger, higher-cost infrastructure projects. Improvements that involve mainly paint, such as shared lane markings, could be implemented through routine maintenance, set-aside funds, or grouped as one federal funding application. MCT should plan for the cost of ongoing maintenance as part of capital improvement planning, as grants for maintenance are rare.

Many grants require local match. It is important to consider where that match is going to come from before applying for grant funding.

Most of the funds are available to governmental/public entities and require a local match in dollars. Often requirements can be adjusted according to the community or population that will be primarily served by the project. Each notice of funding opportunity (NOFO) will outline the eligible entities, requirements, and exceptions. Funding sources and federal/local matches vary depending on the program and the objective of the funding source. It is recommended to use a variety of funders to reduce the local share and to leverage the most dollars possible through either establishing a not-for-profit "friends" group or partnering with an existing nonprofit such as ACT. These funds can only be used for capital projects or components. A few opportunities exist for planning grants for projects that would assist in committing funds to design/engineer a transformative infrastructure project. With rare exceptions, most grant funds are not available for use for routine or deferred maintenance, or for general operating funds and past debts.

Working with partner agencies and other levels of local government entities is also beneficial on all funding options. Clear communication and collaboration are imperative for the success of these efforts. It is beneficial to invite funding partners into the implementation process early. Allow time for each entity and its staff to seek and receive the proper approval according to their individual processes.

If public partners are combined with a not-for-profit, leveraging resources becomes more desirable to funders. Most importantly, in order not to bear the full weight of the costs, MCT is best served by leveraging these partnerships to generate the maximum funds and resources available. A potential list of collaborators and funding opportunities is outlined in the upcoming pages.

Implementation Phasing & Strategies

In addition to the individual projects listed previously, the Master Plan strategies are sorted by goal category and prioritized according to the recommended implementation timeframe. These were determined based on the community support, needs assessment, general level of funding sources available, and the potential for available resources.

The implementation priorities are defined as the following phasing:

- **Continuous (On-going):** Implementation action may be underway or should be initiated as soon as practical. Once initiated, the action should be sustained.
- **Immediate Priorities:** action should be initiated within **1 year**.
- **Short Term Priorities:** action should be initiated in **2-5 years**.
- **Mid Term Priorities:** action should be initiated in **6-10 years**.
- **Long Term Priorities:** action should be initiated after **10 years**.

The listing also notes if implementation action is dependent upon prior initiation or completion of another strategy. In such cases, the strategy number of the action to be completed first is listed. If there are no strategy dependencies, the status is listed as "None."

Overall Continuous/On-going Priorities

- Continuously explore public and grant funding partnership(s).
- Investigate opportunities in cross-programming or cross-promotions, shared facilities and amenities, and resources with local, regional, and state transportation agencies.
- Apply for grants for right-of-way acquisition, detailed planning and engineering, and construction.
- Update Capital Plan and project costs for grant cycles when appropriate.
- Continue public outreach on projects and provide updates.
- Celebrate the successes achieved from the Master Plan in funding and implementation.
- Expand special events in pedestrian-friendly districts, neighborhoods, and continue to encourage bicycling and multi-modal transportation.



Program Strategies

Immediate Priorities

Strategy 1.1.3. With all group events, provide opportunities for socialization among participants with similar interests and abilities.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Short Term Priorities

Strategy 1.1.1. Sponsor and coordinate group bike rides, fun runs, and similar events for trail users of varying interests, fitness levels, and skill levels.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 1.1.2. Conduct walking tours that familiarize participants with the MCT Trails system, while introducing them to sites of cultural and historic interest in close proximity to the trails.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 1.2.1. Research existing adopt-a-trail programs and develop a programmatic framework for the MCT Trails that incorporates the agency's preferred policies and rules of participation.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 1.2.2. Identify trail segments or locations suitable for adoption by participants of the future MCT adopt-a-trail program.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 1.4.2. Develop educational materials and/or training on trail use rules, trail etiquette, proper street/intersection crossing, and safety best practices.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 1.4.5. Identify organizational partnership opportunities for delivering education and training on topics that enhance the safety of those using the MCT Trails.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 1.5.1. Identify all local governments, park districts, and other agencies that own and operate trail systems within and adjacent to Madison County; track the trail projects of those agencies that interface or are planned to interface with the MCT Trails system.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Mid Term Priorities

Strategy 1.2.3. Allocate sufficient funding to establish and operate a successful adopt-a-trail program.

Strategy Dependencies: **1.2.1; 1.2.2**

Strategy 1.2.4. Develop marketing materials to recruit participants in the implemented adopt-a-trail program.

Strategy Dependencies: **1.2.1; 1.2.2; 1.2.3**

Strategy 1.3.1. Utilize MCT surveys and other public engagement efforts to gauge the level of interest and support for establishing a bike share program for the MCT Trails system.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 1.3.2. If justified by local interest in a bike share program, engage a qualified consultant to conduct a feasibility study and provide programmatic recommendations.

Strategy Dependencies: **1.3.1**

Strategy 1.4.1. Offer pedestrian and/or bicyclist safety training.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 1.4.3. Offer bike helmet fittings that also train participants on the proper fitting, wearing, and use of bicycle helmets.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Long Term Priorities

Strategy 1.3.3. If determined feasible, implement a bike share program that expands access to the MCT Trails system for Madison County residents and visitors.

Strategy Dependencies: **1.3.1; 1.3.2**

Strategy 1.4.4. Offer training on bicycle maintenance to help riders keep their bicycles in safe operating condition and minimize mechanical issues that could cause injury.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 1.5.2. Develop an award/recognition program for agencies that partner with MCT to improve trail access and enhance mobility within Madison County and adjacent jurisdictions.

Strategy Dependencies: None



Policy Strategies

Continuous Priorities

Strategy 2.1.1 Implement the safety-related goals, objectives, and strategies of this Master Plan

Strategy 2.1.3 Continuously review safety data, constituent surveys, and public input against MCT programs to identify potential safety education needs that can be addressed with new programmatic solutions or changes to existing programs.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 2.1.4 Continuously train MCT employees on the current safety rules and best practices applicable to their functional roles.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 2.2.1 Prioritize capital investments that provide demonstrable transportation benefits.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 2.2.5 Continue to allow the use of electric-powered micro-mobility devices like e-bikes/scooters, subject to reasonable rules and policies per Objective 2.6. Such devices extend the functional range of trail travel to make it more viable for many people to use the MCT Trails for commuting and other transportation purposes.

Strategy Dependencies: 2.6.1

Strategy 2.2.6 Provide secure bicycle parking to facilitate additional use of the MCT Trails for commuting, shopping, and combined bus/bike trips.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 2.5.2 Coordinate with local governments and park districts in connecting to the backbone MCT Trails system, which will provide fine-grained bicycle and pedestrian travel options within individual communities.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 2.6.3 Update adopted rules, policies, and guidelines as needed to keep up with changing technologies, emerging trends, and consumer demand for electric-powered micro-mobility devices.

Strategy Dependencies: 2.6.1; 2.6.2

Immediate Priorities

Strategy 2.2.2 Place emphasis on new trail and trail extension projects that fill gaps in system coverage, reach disadvantaged populations, and connect neighborhoods to MCT bus routes, employment nodes, healthcare providers, and shopping districts.

Strategy 2.4.1 Establish an organizational definition of equity/equitable, as related to capital projects, and develop goals and benchmarks for the equitable distribution of MCT investments, particularly within the High Impact Investment Area.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 2.4.2 Gather, maintain, and monitor the data needed to implement equitable transportation goals and assess organizational performance against benchmarks.

Strategy Dependencies: 2.4.1

Strategy 2.5.1 Recommend new trail facilities in this Master Plan and future updates to this Master Plan that support the development of a backbone trail system.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Short Term Priorities

Strategy 2.1.2 Conduct safety reviews on all proposed capital projects. Modify project scopes, designs, and amenities to maximize safety, as deemed feasible and cost-effective.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 2.1.5 Incentivize good safety practices by recognizing performance at the organizational and departmental/divisional levels.

Strategy Dependencies: 2.1.4

Strategy 2.3.1 Prioritize Safe Routes to School and multi-modal transit/trail commuter connectivity.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 2.3.2 Develop and conduct periodic trail user surveys to capture route preferences, desired trail amenities, and geographic information on trip origination, first-mile, and last-mile usage.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 2.3.3 Integrate multiple public workshops or engagement opportunities into the capital planning process.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 2.3.4 Consider a web-based engagement tool, such as Engagement HQ or CitizenLab, to expand the effectiveness of community engagement and public information efforts related to capital improvements and facility planning.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 2.4.3 Integrate the equity definition, goals, and benchmarks referenced in **Strategy 2.4.1** into the master planning and capital improvement planning processes.

Strategy Dependencies: 2.4.1; 2.4.2

Strategy 2.5.3 In marketing materials and communications with local government agencies and park districts, emphasize the transportation mission of MCT and the main role of the MCT Trails system being to provide safe, viable options for alternative modes of travel countywide.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 2.6.1 Develop and enforce appropriate trail use rules for electric-powered micro-mobility devices in compliance with state law regarding low-speed electric bicycles.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 2.6.2 Ensure that standards for facility design and trail amenities adequately account for any use of electric-powered micro-mobility devices that are allowed on the MCT Trails. This should include potential countermeasures that maximize the safety of all trail users, maintain adequate trail system operations, and minimize interference with other users' enjoyment of the trails.

Strategy Dependencies: 2.6.1

Strategy 2.6.4 Ensure that implemented policies regarding electric-powered micro-mobility devices adequately consider and account for the needs of all disabled trail users and their mobility devices in compliance with applicable guidance and laws.

Strategy Dependencies: 2.6.1

Strategy 2.7.2 Prioritize Safe Routes to School and multi-modal transit/trail commuter connectivity to encourage unserved areas to consider participation in the Transit District.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 2.7.3 Develop and conduct periodic trail user surveys to: capture geographic information on trip origination, first-mile, and last-mile usage; determine the level of demand for MCT services in areas that lack access to those services.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Mid Term Priorities

Strategy 2.2.3 Working in partnership with other agencies, pursue projects that connect trails across major physical barriers, such as the Mississippi River and interstate highways.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 2.2.4 Consider expanding trail access beyond the current dawn to dusk operational hours to facilitate more commuting by bicycle, walking, and transit. Expanding the hours of operation would improve trail access for those with non-traditional or inconsistent work schedules, particularly lower wage service and hospitality industry employees.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Long Term Priorities

Strategy 2.7.1 Work with townships adjacent to the current MCT service area to explore the possibility of expanding transit district services and trail facilities for transportation to schools, jobs, destinations, and neighborhoods.

Strategy Dependencies: None



Project Strategies

Continuous Priorities

Strategy 3.1.5. Coordinate with the appropriate external agencies, such as IDOT, Madison County, and municipalities, on the precise location and design of all street and highway crossings.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 3.2.3. Continue to beautify the MCT Trails with trees, landscaping, and public art in appropriate locations. Establishing the adopt-a-trail program per Objective 1.2. would potentially reduce concerns related to maintenance costs and capacity. Explore the planting of shade trees along trails in conjunction with bench installations, particularly on isolated trail segments lacking adjacent tree cover.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 3.2.4. Continue to enhance access to the MCT Trails by providing parking lots, access points/trailheads, wayfinding signage, and secure bicycle parking where appropriate. It is recommended to assign formal names to access points and include those points on wayfinding signage. Also consider installing street signs at certain crossing locations to aid in access and navigation. Bicycle racks or lockers should be installed near bus stops, transit stations, business districts, and shopping centers.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 3.4.3. Coordinate with local governments and park districts to pursue the construction of feasible extensions of the backbone MCT Trails system and local agency connections to the MCT system that will serve the identified underserved people and places, with a specific focus on the High Impact Investment Area.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 3.5.1. Continue funding maintenance/repairs at or near current budgetary proportions in order to sustain trail quality and condition as the system expands. Over 90% of trail users in a recent survey rated MCT Trail maintenance as good or very good. So, this is an appropriate target level-of-service that leaves some room for change (in either direction).

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 3.5.2. Monitor trail conditions on an ongoing basis to identify and make needed repairs in a timely fashion, perhaps as part of a comprehensive asset management program.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Immediate Priorities

Strategy 3.1.1. Prioritize street and highway crossings at intersection locations, with stop controlled and signalized intersections being preferred.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 3.1.2. Avoid mid-block road crossings where feasible. Prioritize trail alignments that utilize roadway intersections, designed in accordance with national guidance, which may include rerouting existing trails to intersections located within a reasonable distance. Where existing mid-block crossings are modified, provide a physical barrier to discourage cut-through bicycle and pedestrian traffic.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 3.1.3. Consider grade separated crossings in mid-block locations where a bridge, tunnel, or overpass is determined to be a feasible means of improving safety.

Strategy Dependencies: 3.1.4; 3.1.5

Strategy 3.4.1. Implement the system expansion recommendations of this Master Plan and update the Master Plan periodically to add newly identified trail connections. It is recommended to review the Master Plan every 5 years to track progress, identify emerging needs, and complete minor updates. A full review and update of the Master Plan should be considered every 10 years

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 3.4.2. Identify underserved neighborhoods, disadvantaged populations, and key travel destinations that lack safe options for alternative modes of travel, particularly within the High Impact Investment Area.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Short Term Priorities

Strategy 3.1.4. For mid-block crossings, develop criteria for determining the optimal crossing location and preferred facility type, based on national guidance, site conditions, benefit-cost ratio, available funding, and other relevant factors.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 3.2.1. Adopt context-sensitive design guidelines for determining what amenities/features are required, along with standards for determining preferred installation locations/spacing and quantities. The costs and organizational capacity to maintain these amenities must also be a consideration. The strategies below offer additional guidance for specific amenities.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 3.2.2. Provide comfort amenities, such as benches, water fountains, and restrooms in appropriate locations. These amenities are highly desired by trail users. Benches, trash receptacles, and pet waste stations, if provided, should be more closely spaced along high traffic trails and in urban locations than lower traffic trails and in rural areas. Given the necessary water and sanitary sewer connections for water fountains and restrooms, it is only feasible to provide a few of these amenities in critical high traffic locations with utility access. A factor for consideration is that trash receptacles and pet waste stations must be emptied frequently and restrooms need to be cleaned daily.

Strategy Dependencies: 3.2.1

Mid Term Priorities

Strategy 3.2.5. Install safety amenities, such as security phones and trail lighting, where feasible. Location standards may need to account for access to electric and telephone utilities, unless reliable solar powered and wireless communication options are available. Where provided, trail lighting installations should be designed to minimize light pollution, particularly in isolated rural locations.

Strategy Dependencies: 3.2.1

Strategy 3.3.1. Identify public works agencies, utility providers, flood control/levee districts, and other organizations that operate infrastructure within linear easements or rights-of-way.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 3.3.2. Coordinate with infrastructure providers to incorporate standard language in certain easement documents that allows bicycle/pedestrian facilities to be located within said easements, which are otherwise typically limited to the single purpose of the easement grantee.

Strategy Dependencies: 3.3.1

Strategy 3.3.3. Coordinate with infrastructure providers on the development of a standard agreement that enables MCT bicycle/pedestrian facilities within their easements and rights-of-way. Said agreement would outline the specific responsibilities of each party as related to the construction, maintenance, operations, and public use of the trail facilities.

Strategy Dependencies: 3.3.1; 3.3.2



Promotion Strategies

Immediate Priorities

Strategy 4.1.2. Identify and implement strategies to improve communications to disadvantaged populations, communities of color, and neighborhoods.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 4.3.2. Conduct surveys and research that gather the data and information to be utilized in developing the promotional materials for Strategy 4.3.1.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Short Term Priorities

Strategy 4.1.1. Consider a web-based engagement tool, such as Engagement HQ or CitizenLab, to expand the functionality and effectiveness of community engagement and public information efforts.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 4.1.3. Engage grassroots efforts, local advocacy groups, and current trail users to promote the MCT Trails system.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 4.2.1. Integrate multiple public workshops or engagement opportunities into the capital planning process.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 4.2.2. Implement a contact form on the MCT Trails website for the public to submit general inquiries, report issues, and comment on plans, budgets, projects, and initiatives.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 4.2.3. Develop and conduct periodic trail user surveys to stay current on the issues and trends affecting users of the MCT Trails system.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 4.3.1. Develop promotional materials targeted toward local chambers of commerce, local planning departments, economic development agencies, and developers that emphasize the health, wellbeing, financial, and environmental benefits of the MCT Trails and their use, at both the individual and community levels.

Strategy Dependencies: 4.3.2

Strategy 4.4.1. Develop and conduct promotional campaigns and contests to promote bicycle commuting on the MCT Trails during National Bike Month (May) and National Bike to Work Day (3rd Friday in May).

Strategy Dependencies: 4.3.1; 4.3.2

Strategy 4.4.2. Utilize booths at community events and festivals to engage and educate the public about the MCT Trails mission, trail system, and programs/events.

Strategy Dependencies: 4.3.1; 4.3.2

Strategy 4.5.1. Provide information about the MCT Trails system to municipal and regional economic development agencies for use in those agencies' tourism marketing efforts.

Strategy Dependencies: 4.3.1; 4.3.2

Mid Term Priorities

Strategy 4.4.3. Conduct promotional campaigns and contests that incentivize job commutes and other short trips on the MCT Trails, by walking, biking, and either of these modes in combination with transit.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 4.5.2. Advertise in the publications of convention and visitors bureaus in the region, perhaps in conjunction with Great Rivers Greenway or other partner organizations, to promote the MCT Trails system and other regional trail systems/facilities.

Strategy Dependencies: 4.3.1; 4.3.2

Strategy 4.5.3. Advertise the MCT Trails system in regional running/walking/biking publications.

Strategy Dependencies: 4.3.1; 4.3.2

Strategy 5.3.1. Identify routes that connect to neighborhoods, disadvantaged communities and populations, and key travel destinations that lack safe options for alternative modes of travel, with special focus on projects within the High Impact Investment Area.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 5.3.2. As appropriate and feasible, integrate the routes identified in Strategy 5.3.1. into capital improvement plans and future updates of this Master Plan. It is recommended that the Master Plan be reviewed and minor updates made at least every 5 years, with major updates occurring on a 10-year cycle.

Strategy Dependencies: 5.3.1

Strategy 5.4.1. Develop a plan to specifically engage populations that have traditionally been underrepresented in community engagement efforts and initiatives.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Short Term Priorities

Strategy 5.1.1. Provide mobile device app functionality for trail users that complements current online system mapping and offers features such as navigation, GPS-based reporting of issues/incidents, and push notifications.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 5.2.3. Integrate public officials' forums into public engagement processes conducted by MCT.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 5.4.2. Prepare a resource library of strategies, media outlets, event venues, tools, etc. that maximize the effectiveness of public engagement with underrepresented, underserved, and disadvantaged populations.

Strategy Dependencies: 5.4.1

Strategy 5.5.1. Research similar functional staff positions of other trail/transit agencies and draft a job description tailored to MCT's needs for an "alternative transportation specialist."

Strategy Dependencies: None

Mid Term Priorities

Strategy 5.1.2. Explore the feasibility of integrating an AI chatbot into the MCT Trails website and mobile device app functionality.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 5.5.2. Work within MCT's administrative processes to create, fund, and fill the alternative transportation specialist position.

Strategy Dependencies: 5.5.1



People Strategies

Continuous Priorities

Strategy 5.2.2. Maintain an internal list of talking points for staff members who may coordinate with local officials, to maintain consistent messaging on matters of importance to the MCT Trails.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Immediate Priorities

Strategy 5.2.1. Participate in events and networking opportunities with groups such as Southwest Illinois Council of Mayors and Southwest Illinois City Management Association to maintain good relationships with leaders of local communities and coordinate on matters of importance to the MCT Trails.

Strategy Dependencies: None



Partnership Strategies

Continuous Priorities

Strategy 6.1.1. Participate in events and networking opportunities with regional community-based organizations, government agencies, and professional organizations to maintain good relationships with key stakeholders.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 6.4.2. Establish and maintain good working relationships with external agency engineers, public works staff, and planners.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 6.4.3. Continuously coordinate with external agency contacts on system planning, facility design standards, safety countermeasure preferences, trail alignments, engineering concerns, and other matters necessary to facilitate system expansion/connectivity needs.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Immediate Priorities

Strategy 6.3.1. Prepare a list of non-emergency law enforcement agency contacts and maintain an appropriate channel of communications with each law enforcement agency to coordinate on matters related to trail and traffic safety.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Short Term Priorities

Strategy 6.1.2. Establish connections with the information officials and communications personnel of local governments, public and private organizations, agencies, entities, and institutions. Utilize those organizations' resources (websites, event calendars, newsletters, etc.) to disseminate public information about the MCT Trails within their stakeholder groups.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 6.2.1. Prepare informational materials on best practices and design guidance that support trail-oriented development.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Strategy 6.2.3. Participate in professional development conferences and panel discussions to promote trail-oriented design guidance and best practices.

Strategy Dependencies: 6.2.1

Strategy 6.3.3. Explore the possibility of establishing a bicycle safety patrol program in areas with high trail traffic volumes, perhaps in conjunction with local law enforcement agencies.

Strategy Dependencies: 6.3.1

Strategy 6.4.1. Working in collaboration with utility providers, levee districts, park districts, and MPRD, maintain a list of trail and linear infrastructure projects for coordinating potential alignments for backbone MCT Trails and connections to finer-grained district and municipal trail systems.

Strategy Dependencies: None

Mid Term Priorities

Strategy 6.2.2. Coordinate with economic development agencies, local developers, planning/zoning officials, and real estate professionals to disseminate the information prepared for **Strategy 6.2.1.**

Strategy Dependencies: 6.2.1

Strategy 6.3.2. Partner with law enforcement agencies on providing bicycle and pedestrian safety training classes.

Strategy Dependencies: 6.3.1



Tabling and promoting at partners events.



Connecting and incorporating national destinations into the MCT Trail System.



Promoting the Class-1 MCT Trail System with other national-level partners.

MCT Trails System Capital Plan

Based on the system assessment, identified needs, and system recommendations, a total of 17 trail and grade separation projects are recommended for prioritization and programming in the MCT Capital Plan. These projects are listed and summarized in Table 6B below.

The project numbers listed in Table 6B correspond with the project labels shown Map 8: MCT Trails System Capital Plan Map on the next page. Solid bright green lines on the map represent trail projects with known alignments. Recommended projects for which the alignments have not been determined are illustrated as future trail corridors for planning purposes. The ultimate alignments for those projects will likely be located within the identified project corridors depicted on the map with a dark gray dashed line.



Table 6B: MCT Trails System Capital Plan Projects

	Project Name	Capital Plan Zone	Recommended Facility	Alignment Determined	Approx.Length (Miles)	Current Property Ownership (Per Madison County GIS)
1	Alton Greenway	Riverbend	Shared Use Path	Y	1.11	City of Alton
2	Godfrey Trail	Riverbend	Shared Use Path	Y	2.96	Madison County Transit District, MESD, Private Property, Undetermined*
3	Goshen Trail to Bethalto - Phase 1	Riverbend	Shared Use Path	N	TBD	Unknown
4	Goshen Trail to Bethalto - Phase 2	Riverbend	Shared Use Path	N	TBD	Unknown
5	Goshen Trail to Bethalto - Phase 3	Riverbend	Shared Use Path	N	TBD	Unknown
6	South Roxana Spur	Riverbend	Shared Use Path	Y	1.49	Madison County Transit District, IDOT, Village of South Roxanna, Private Property
7	Heritage Trail to Goshen Road Connector	Central Madison Co.	Shared Use Path	Y	0.93	Village of Glen Carbon, Private Property
8	IT Trail Phase 2 (Irma to Schwarz)	Central Madison Co.	Shared Use Path	Y	0.23	Madison County Transit District, Private Property
9	East - West Confluence Trail Connection (Bluff Trail to Confluence Trail)	Central Madison Co.	Shared Use Path	Y	4.80	City of Edwardsville, Gateway Eastern, Madison County Trustee, Missouri Pacific RailRoad, Norfolk & Western Railway Co., Union Pacific Railroad Co., Madison County, Private Property
10	Schoolhouse Trail Grade Separation @ Pleasant Ridge Rd	Central Madison Co.	Bridge	NA	0.05	Madison County Mass Transit District, Village of Maryville
11	Schoolhouse Trail Grade Separation @ IL-111 & Horseshoe Lake Rd	SW Madison Co.	Bridge	NA	0.46	Madison County Mass Transit District, IDOT
12	Confluence Trail to Wilson Park	SW Madison Co.	Shared Use Path	N	TBD	Unknown
13	Madison Schoolhouse Trail Extension	SW Madison Co.	Shared Use Path	Y	1.00	IDOT, City of Madison, Norfolk & Western Railway Co., Private Property
14	Venice Bike/Ped Connector	SW Madison Co.	Shared Use Path	Y	1.72	City of Venice, Church of the Living God, IDOT, St Louis Merchants Bridge, Venice Park District, Wabash RR, Illinois Central Gulf RR, Norfolk & Wstrn RR Co Lessee, Madison Ill RR & St Louis RR Co, Private Property
15	Formosa Trail (East & West Segments)	East Madison Co.	Shared Use Path	Y	3.27	Private Property
16	Silver Creek Trail Phase 4 (IL-4 to St. Jacob and Bridge into St. Jacob)	East Madison Co.	Shared Use Path	Y	3.76	IDOT
17	Silver Creek Trail Phase 5 (St. Jacob to Highland Park & Ride)	East Madison Co.	Shared Use Path	Y	4.01	IDOT, Private Property

Map 8: MCT Trails System Capital Plan Map



MCT Trails Long-Term & Stakeholder Project Recommendations

Another 17 projects were identified through the needs assessment and engagement with stakeholders and trail users. These projects are recommended for further assessment and implementation as the Capital Plan projects are completed and future capital budgets are developed. These projects are listed in Table 6C to the right and shown on the Long-Term & Stakeholder Project Recommendations map on the next page.

Table 6C is organized by project type, but the order of listing is not prioritized:

- System-to-System Connections:** Trail connections between the MCT Trails system and the adjacent trail networks of other agencies.
- MCT Trail Connections & Extensions:** Projects that extend an existing trail, connect two or more existing or planned trails, or connect a community to the MCT Trails system.
- Improvements to Existing MCT Trails:** Projects that improve the condition or safety of an existing trail, such as paving or grade-separation of a trail crossing.

These projects should be reviewed and prioritized in a manner that supports the vision, goals, objectives, and strategies of this Master Plan. As Capital Plan projects are completed, these projects can then be further detailed, prioritized, budgeted, and programmed in future updates to the MCT Capital Plan.

Table 6C: Long-Term & Stakeholder Recommended Projects

Recommended Future Project Name	
System-to-System Connections	
1	Confluence Trail to Great River Road Trail Connection
2	Confluence Trail to Old Chain of Rocks Bridge Connection
3	Schoolhouse Trail Connection to St. Clair County
MCT Trail Connections & Extensions	
4	Alton to Godfrey Connection via Foster Township
5	Alton to Bethalto Connection
6	Riverbend to Goshen Trail Connection (connects E. Alton-Wood River-Roxana)
7	Goshen to Quercus Grove Trail Connection (connects Bethalto-Holiday Shores-Worden)
8	Quercus Grove to Nickel Plate Trail Connection (connects Livingston-Williamson-New Douglas)
9	Quercus Grove to Nickel Plate to Silver Creek Trail Connection (connects Hamel-Alhambra-Grantfork-Highland)
10	Silver Plate Trail Future Extension (connects Highland-Pierron)
11	Silver Plate to Heritage to Nickel Plate Trail Connection (connects St. Jacob-Marine-Alhambra)
12	Silver Plate Trail Phase 3 Connection (connects Troy-St. Jacob)
13	Schoolhouse to Confluence Trail Connection (along or near Chain of Rocks Rd)
Improvements to Existing MCT Trails	
14	Confluence Trail Improvements South of Lock & Dam
15	Quercus Grove Trail Improvements (Replace on-road segments with trail)
16	Nickel Plate Trail Improvements (Pave existing unpaved trail segments)
17	Nature Trail Improvement (I-255 to Mockingbird Ln to Sand Rd)



Map 9: Long-Term & Stakeholder Project Recommendations Map



Funding Strategy & Resources

Successful implementation of the plan will require strategic targeting and phased implementation of the most critical projects and most urgent improvements balanced with funding. Funding is needed to potentially acquire rights-of-way, easements, corridors, build trails improvements, amenities, facilities, and beautification within the public realm. The funding strategy will serve as a tool for MCT and staff to move forward in the implementation of all these factors.

Funding priorities and opportunities fluctuate over time. Below is a dynamic list of resources. The agencies, organizations, and foundations referenced are frequently affected by policy change, economic shifts, and depletion or change in funding sources. Therefore, it is important to investigate each source of funds, requirements, regulations, and outcomes prior to seeking the funds.

Funding for projects can come from a variety of sources: donations, fundraising, loans, assessments, ordinances, and grants (local, state, and federal agencies), foundations, non-government organizations, environmental organizations, and financial entities.

In support of this plan to connect the regional MCT trails to communities throughout their district with safe and accessible crossings at intersections. Communities are welcome and encouraged to partner to achieve localized and broader connections, especially those leading to parks, recreation facilities, and schools of all levels. The bicycle/mobility amenities and facility improvements, especially those addressing accessibility and connecting students to schools, can be funded through a variety of federal, local, and private sources.

To assist in securing funding, two additional analyses were conducted in supplement to this Master Plan and provided under separate cover as appendices. First, a spreadsheet-based benefit-cost analysis tool was prepared in accordance with national guidance and methodology. The tool was used to analyze and report the project benefits versus the costs of constructing a specific high-priority safety project recommended in the plan. The report is being used for a funding proposal to construct a bridge on the Schoolhouse Trail over IL Route 111, north of Horseshoe Lake.

The second supplemental report is a Safety Action Plan. This report summarizes a more detailed safety assessment, with recommended projects, policies, and actions to enhance the safety of the MCT Trails system.

Funding Recommendations

- **Investigate grants.** This includes grants for infrastructure, capital improvements, programs, best management practices, and amenities. These often require cash expenditures upfront for match; or are reimbursable after work is complete. These take a tremendous amount of effort and are not guaranteed to be successful. Often funds are reallocated in budget shortfalls or emergencies.
- **Investigate public/private partnerships for infrastructure and improvements,** including and relating to maintenance and management. This means municipalities, townships, county, state, NGOs, developers, and others may participate in conjunction per an agreed-upon arrangement yet to be determined.
- **Explore low-interest loans or bonds** offered from other public agencies as well as credit unions, and financial institutions. Often the urgency of capital projects benefit from low-interest loans instead of accruing more deferred maintenance, while collecting monies - risking liability and risk - and potentially a higher final cost.
- **Develop a fiscal plan to create an endowment** towards future maintenance or replacement.
- **Community fundraising campaigns** (big and small) involving network users to promote involvement: social media campaigns, letters, donor signs, etc.
- **Approach private donors.** Consider naming rights, development partnerships, challenge grants, etc.
- **Develop partnerships that may be used or collaborations for offsetting programming costs** for special events, or in a longer partnership through an MOU/MOA outlining mutual benefits.
- **Develop “shovel ready” capital project plans and corresponding marketing materials** to have ready for funding opportunities such as inquiries from funders, donors, or partners, “shovel ready” opportunities. This plan can also be provided as an attachment to most applications.
- **Consider creating prioritizing projects in Special Service Areas (SSA) or TIF districts** to help pay for capital projects or maintenance.
- **Develop an equitable stepped increase in fees for usage** of amenities, facilities, and venues. Consider these as revenue sources in developing a business plan.
- **Review each project for ongoing funding opportunities on a regular basis.**
- **Keep detailed and accurate records** once grants are received for required grant reports.
- **Increase and document work in-kind opportunities for match** within MCT, ACT, and partners.
- **Subscribe to grant notification services** to watch for applicable grants for which to apply and/or partner, such as:
 - Grants.gov <https://www.transportation.gov/bipartisan-infrastructure-law/key-notices-funding-opportunity>
 - <https://idot.illinois.gov/transportation-system/local-transportation-partners/county-engineers-and-local-public-agencies/funding-programs/itep.html>
 - East-West Gateway’s weekly email briefings
 - <https://www.railstotrails.org/policy/funding/tool/> (Use RTC’s funding tool to help determine which federal funding source may be best suited for your project.)

Other Potential Revenue Sources

Capital Improvement Budget Set-Aside

MCT continues to set aside a percentage of capital improvement budgets to fund future bicycle and pedestrian capital projects. These projects could be incorporated into scheduled local or state road work to be stand-alone projects. These funds can then potentially be leveraged as local match to secure federal funds.

Property Taxes

Property taxes can provide a steady stream of financing while broadly distributing the tax burden. In other parts of the country, this mechanism has been popular with voters as long as the increase is restricted to recreation, parks, and open space. Note, other public agencies compete vigorously for these funds, and taxpayers are generally concerned about high property tax rates.

Economic Development Sales Taxes

Cities in the state of Illinois have the option to impose a local sales tax up to 4.75% to be used to fund projects that could include pedestrian & bicycle, stormwater (curb and gutter), and other improvements related to economic development. This can also be increased by expanding the service area.

The Metro-East Mass Transit District (MED) imposes taxes in certain townships in Madison and St. Clair counties at the following rates.

- 0.25 percent sales tax on general merchandise and sales of qualifying food, drugs, and medical appliances* in Madison County.
- 0.75 percent sales tax on general merchandise (excluding items that are titled or registered) and sales of qualifying food, drugs, and medical appliances* in St. Clair County.
- 0.25 percent sales tax on sales of titled or registered property in St. Clair County and Madison County (plus a fee of \$20 or 0.5%, whichever is less, in MED townships in St. Clair County).

Sales Taxes

Metro East Park and Recreation District (MEPRD) is the public body responsible for the development of an interconnected system of parks, greenways, and trails in Madison and St. Clair Counties. MEPRD is partially funded by sales taxes, not property taxes. This program is approved by voters, to collect a 1/10th sales tax for parks, open space, trails, and other conservation programs. Fund divisions are determined by state statute with 50% directed to regional projects and 50% directed to county and local projects. This is an excellent source of funds for corridor protection, trailhead, partner implementation, projects, and construction.

Special Districts - Special Service Area, TIF Districts, or future special fees

As a partner to MCT Trails, municipalities could consider a special assessment to develop amenities benefiting the community. Generally, this is a technique that may have to be put on a ballot and voted by the public. An SSA can also specifically fund the maintenance of the public space or corridors. Future TIF funds could be used as well.

Unique Opportunities

Some immediate or revolving funding sources to investigate for Rebuilding and Reopening Illinois in relation to 2020-22 events:

Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act Release of funds is TBD through multiple U.S. Departments.

Inflation Reduction Act Release of funds is TBD through multiple U.S. Departments.

U.S. Department of Commerce - EDA/Cares Act Recovery Assistance - Releases of grants are ongoing.

Rebuild Illinois Grant Program - Rebuild Illinois will make \$45 billion worth of investments in roads, bridges, railroads, universities, early childhood centers, and state facilities over the next six years, creating and supporting an estimated 540,000 jobs over the life of the plan and revitalizing local economies across the state. Releases of grants are ongoing.

Conservation Easements - Through the federal tax code, charitable gift and estate tax benefits exist for long-term land protection. With a conservation easement, a landowner limits future development opportunities and reduces the value of the property while ensuring long term conservation protection and receiving tax benefits. This program is administered through a local land trust, such as Great Rivers Land Trust or Heartlands Conservancy or a governing entity. These can be implemented on large right-of-ways, adjacent parcels, a portion of large parcel or acreage.

Public Agency Grants

Public improvements, including pedestrian and bicycle amenities and facilities can be funded through a variety of federal, state, local, and public mechanisms. These sources are competitive, and generally require matching funds.

All grants, regardless of source, can fluctuate from year-to-year based on annual budgets and fund availability. The list below has traditionally been valid. However, due to various unforeseen circumstances, all funding sources, information, and grant applications should be reviewed. Projects should be prioritized via timeline or as opportunities of funding present themselves for specific endeavors.

Descriptions of grants and funding opportunities have been provided from the agencies websites. Where possible, links have also been provided.

Federal Programs

Congressional Funding

These funds support local priorities and are requested by members of Congress. This process for funding is referred to as "Congressionally Directed Spending" in the Senate and "Community Project Funding" in the House.

EPA

EPA's Environmental and Climate Justice Community Change Grants program (Community Change Grants) will invest approximately \$2 billion dollars in Inflation Reduction Act funds in environmental and climate justice activities to benefit disadvantaged communities through projects that reduce pollution, increase community climate resilience, and build community capacity to respond to environmental and climate justice challenges. This may include multi-modal transportation alternatives, best management practices, and green infrastructure/nature-based solutions for stormwater and pollution reduction.

FEMA

Building Resilient Infrastructures and Communities (BRIC) grant - This program is for states, local communities, tribes and territories for mitigation activities. BRIC is a FEMA annual hazard mitigation program. The priorities are to: incentivize natural hazard risk reduction activities that mitigate risk to public infrastructure; prioritize benefits to disadvantaged communities; mitigate risk to one or more community lifelines; incorporate nature-based solutions; enhance climate resilience and adaptation; and increase funding to applicants that facilitate the adoption and enforcement of the latest published editions of building codes.

National Endowment for the Arts

This one of the most well-known resources for public art is the National Endowment for the Arts, which operates numerous grant programs.

<https://www.arts.gov/grants>

U.S. Department of Transportation

The USDOT has created a very detailed and comprehensive chart documenting all their pedestrian and bicycle funding sources. This document includes project types and links to funding sources. More information can be found on the following pages on the chart (as of 11/2023) or by following this link: https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/funding/funding_opportunities.pdf

MAP-21, the most recent federal transportation funding law, consolidated a number of bicycle and pedestrian transportation funding programs that were previously available under SAFETEA-LU into a broader program called Transportation Alternatives. This singular program is the largest federal source for trail funding.

Transportation Alternatives Program

The Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-Aside from the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Program provides funding for a variety of generally smaller-scale transportation projects such as pedestrian and bicycle facilities; construction of turnouts, overlooks, and viewing areas; community improvements such as historic preservation and vegetation management; environmental mitigation related to stormwater and habitat connectivity; recreational trails; safe routes to school projects; and vulnerable road user safety assessments.

The Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) Section 1524 requires the U.S. Department of Transportation to encourage States and regional transportation planning agencies to use qualified youth service and conservation corps to perform appropriate transportation-related projects. This section of law remains in effect.

The Rails-to-Trails Conservancy operates the Transportation Alternatives Data Exchange (TrADE).

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

Safe Streets and Roads for All Grants

On February 1, 2023, the U.S. Department of Transportation announced the first round of SS4A awards totaling \$800 million, all of which will go towards projects dedicated to making it safer to bike and walk in the United States.

The program has \$5 billion in total (5 years of funding) for critical safety projects that help people bike and walk in their communities. The next Notice of Funding Opportunity for this program — with up to \$1.1 billion in funding — is expected to be released by USDOT in April.

USDOT's website to receive emails when it goes live:

https://service.govdelivery.com/accounts/USDOT/subscriber/new?topic_id=USDOT_165

RAISE Infrastructure Grant

RAISE discretionary grants help project sponsors, including municipalities, complete critical freight and passenger transportation infrastructure projects. RAISE projects are evaluated on statutory criteria of safety, environmental sustainability, quality of life, mobility and community connectivity, economic competitiveness and opportunity including tourism, state of good repair, partnership and collaboration, and innovation.

The goal of the RAISE program is to fund eligible surface transportation projects that will have a significant local or regional impact that advance the Departmental priorities of safety, equity, climate and sustainability, and workforce development, job quality, and wealth creation, consistent with law.

Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grants

Distributed by USDOT, RAISE grants typically range from \$1 million to \$25 million and are an excellent opportunity to plan and build impactful transportation projects. This program allows applications for either planning, construction, or

engineering and construction within single grant awards. The most recent round of funding applications, with approximately \$2.2 billion in awards expected, closes in February, but communities can start planning ahead of the FY2024 RAISE grant cycle today. Last year, RAISE grants funded numerous bike projects, including trails, bike paths, improved crossings, bike bridges, and protected bike lanes.

USDOT's INFRA, Mega, and Rural Surface Transportation Grants

With more than \$15 billion available over five years, the INFRA, Mega, and Rural Surface Transportation Grant programs support large, complex infrastructure projects, including highways, bridges, freight, port, and passenger rail, as well as public transportation projects that are integral to such projects. Although stand-alone bike projects don't appear to be eligible for these programs, larger multimodal projects that include bike components are. As with their other competitive grant programs, USDOT is expected to announce annual application windows until they distribute the total funding provided for these programs.

https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/bipartisan-infrastructure-law/grant_programs.cfm

Congestion Relief Program

The Congestion Relief Program to provide discretionary grants to eligible entities to advance innovative, integrated, and multimodal solutions to congestion relief in the most congested metropolitan areas of the United States with an urbanized area population greater than 1,000,000. The goals of the program are to reduce highway congestion, reduce economic and environmental costs associated with that congestion, including transportation emissions, and optimize existing highway capacity and usage of highway and transit systems through: (1) improving intermodal integration with highways, highway operations, and highway performance; (2) reducing or shifting highway users to off-peak travel times or to nonhighway travel modes during peak travel times; and (3) pricing of, or based on, as applicable, parking; use of roadways, including in designated geographic zones; or congestion.

Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods (RCN) Program

The Office of the Secretary of Transportation (OST) has released a joint Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the Reconnecting Communities Pilot (RCP) and Neighborhood Access and Equity (NAE) programs, which will combine two major discretionary grants into one NOFO. Together, this combined program will be known as the Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods (RCN) Program. While they remain separate programs for the purposes of award, the programs share many common characteristics, including:

- Prioritizing disadvantaged communities;
- Aiming to improve access to daily needs such as jobs, education, healthcare, food, and recreation;
- Fostering equitable development and restoration;
- Reconnecting communities by removing, retrofitting, or mitigating highways or other transportation facilities that create barriers to community connectivity, including to mobility, access, or economic development.

The RCN NOFO solicits grant applications for the Reconnecting Communities Pilot discretionary grant program, established by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), and for the newly created Neighborhood Access and Equity discretionary grant program, established by the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA).

Under the combined RCN Program, USDOT offers three grant types:

1. *Capital Construction* - To fund both reconnecting-focused projects and smaller projects focused on reducing environmental harm and improving access in disadvantaged communities. Projects may address:
 - A dividing facility
 - Mitigating a “burdening” facility (a source of air pollution, noise, stormwater, or other burden)
 - Improving access and building or improving Complete Streets.
2. *Community Planning* - To provide funds for planning activities to support future construction projects and allow for innovative community planning to address localized transportation challenges. Projects may address:
 - Planning to restore community connectivity
 - Community/public engagement
 - Assessing environmental impacts from transportation in underserved communities (i.e., air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, extreme heat hotspots, gaps in tree canopy coverage, or flood-prone transportation infrastructure)
 - Developing local anti-displacement policies and community benefit agreements
3. *Regional Partnerships Challenge* - To incentivize stronger partnerships between local governments, Tribal governments, MPOs/RPOs, State DOTs, and non-profit, private, and community partners to tackle persistent equitable access and mobility challenges, as well as greenhouse gas emissions reductions. Applicants must consist of a partnership between two or more eligible agencies.

<https://www.transportation.gov/grants/rcnprogram>

Climate Pollution Reduction Grants

The Climate Pollution Reduction Grants (CPRG) program provides \$5 billion in grants to states, local governments, tribes, and territories to develop and implement ambitious plans for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and other harmful air pollution. Authorized under Section 60114 of the Inflation Reduction Act, this two-phase program provides \$250 million for noncompetitive planning grants, and approximately \$4.6 billion for competitive implementation grants.

<https://www.epa.gov/inflation-reduction-act/climate-pollution-reduction-grants>

Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program (ATIIP)

Congress authorized the Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program (ATIIP) as part of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill (BIL), 117 H.R.3684. Funding for the program should be appropriated at \$200 million in FY 2024, the level it was authorized in the BIL, to begin to meet its potential and chip away at growing state and local demand for this investment. This funding will enable a transformation across rural, suburban and urban communities to safely meet the mobility needs of millions of Americans who cannot drive or choose not to for at least some of their trips.

State Programs

Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT)

Illinois Safe Routes to School (SRTS) - Eligible infrastructure projects include sidewalk improvements, traffic calming/speed reduction improvements, traffic control devices, pedestrian and bicycle crossing improvements, on-street bicycle facilities, off-street bicycle facilities, and secure bicycle parking facilities. Eligible non-infrastructure projects include events, equipment, and supplies that help to address areas of Education, Encouragement, and Evaluation.

Illinois Green Streets Initiative - The Illinois Green Streets Initiative is part of the Replanting the Prairie State Initiative to further reduce greenhouse emissions in the state. Project sponsors may receive up to 80 percent reimbursement for project costs. The remaining 20 percent is the responsibility of the project sponsor. Funds for this program can only be used for planting of trees or prairie grasses, and the program is overseen by the Illinois Department of Transportation.

The Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP) - provides funding for community-based projects that expand travel choices and enhance the transportation experience by improving the cultural, historic, aesthetic and environmental aspects of our transportation infrastructure.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Program - Funds cost-effective projects that improve bicycle and pedestrian safety through education and enforcement. May fund projects such as a bicycle and pedestrian plan, development and distribution of maps with safety information, Educational materials, safety equipment, and vehicle feedback signs.

The Surface Transportation Program (STP) - provides funding for all types of transportation projects, including pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Projects are selected through the State Highway Improvement Program.

Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR)

Bike Path Grant Program - This program assists local units of government to acquire, construct, and rehabilitate public, non-motorized bicycle paths and directly related support facilities.

Federal Recreational Trails Program - The IDNR administers RTP funds and stipulates that funds can be utilized for trail construction and rehabilitation;

restoration of areas adjacent to trails damaged by unauthorized trail uses; construction of trail-related support facilities and amenities; and acquisition from willing sellers of trail corridors through easements or fee simple title. The RTP program can provide up to 80 percent federal funding on approved projects and requires a minimum 20 percent non-federal funding match. Eligible applicants include municipalities and counties, schools, and private, non-profit and for-profit businesses.

Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO)

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity maintains a current list of grant programs that are open for application. Grant opportunities may range from funding for public infrastructure projects, programs focused on economic development initiatives, to the Department seeking a partner to administer support services to Illinoisans. Each program's unique eligibility requirements will include opportunities for various types of communities, businesses and/or non-profit organizations.

<https://www2.illinois.gov/dceo/AboutDCEO/GrantOpportunities/Pages/default.aspx>

The Illinois Community Development Assistance - The Office of Community Development supports economic development, community development, and infrastructure improvements in Illinois communities with substantial low-to-moderate-income populations.

The office administers the federally funded Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program that assists low-income populations. In addition, federal aid is provided for disaster recovery and housing rehabilitation in these communities.

<https://www2.illinois.gov/dceo/CommunityDevelopment/Pages/default.aspx>

Regional & Local Programs

ACT Grant - Known as the ACT Community Action Grants Program, this annual funding opportunity is available to cities, cities, townships, park districts, transit districts, airport districts, and 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations based in or providing services within Madison County, Illinois. The ACT Community Action Grants Program will provide an opportunity for entities serving Madison County residents to apply for grant funding to complete projects that will expand or enhance local transportation opportunities. Eligible projects must improve transportation, bicycle safety and/or access, pedestrian safety and/or access, ADA accessibility, and/or related projects. Each eligible entity can apply for as much as \$100,000 per year.

The Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement Program - is part of the Competitive Programs that East-West Gateway Council of Governments (EWG) administers. CMAQ projects, are included in the Transportation Improvement Program that EWG develops for the region. The CMAQ program provides a flexible funding source to State and local governments for transportation projects and programs to help meet the requirements of the Clean

Air Act. Funding is available to reduce congestion and improve air quality for areas, including the St. Louis region, that do not meet the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for ozone, carbon monoxide, or particulate matter (nonattainment areas) and for former non-attainment areas that are now in compliance (maintenance areas). CMAQ funds can be used for projects such as: traffic flow improvements; demand management; shared ride services; bicycle and pedestrian facilities; transit vehicles/facilities; and operating assistance for new transit projects. This program is authorized by the current transportation law the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act.

<http://www.ewgateway.org/trans/TIP/CMAQ/cmaq.htm>

Madison County Resource Management Environmental Grants - This grant program is designed to assist with environmental objectives and projects including solid waste management, air quality initiatives, energy efficiencies, smart growth, and stormwater abatement. The goal of the program is to promote best management practices and case studies of positive environmental projects within Madison County. Examples of funding use include; native landscaping, stormwater BMPs/green infrastructure, and solar initiatives. This is perhaps applicable to the trail corridor amenities and beautification.

Madison County Park Enhancement Program (PEP) Grants - The Madison County Park and Recreation Program is designed to assist municipalities and park and recreation districts within Madison County to develop, enhance or expand park operations and facilities. The grant program, administered by Madison County Community Development is designed to supplement community funding for park operations.

Metro-East Park and Recreation District (MEPRD) MEPRD provides grants to supplement the efforts of local governments, special districts, and other jurisdictions that are already working on the planning, construction, and management of bike, pedestrian, and park facilities to further their mission.

Park and Trail Grant - MEPRD funds projects that would fulfill two primary objectives, i.e. (1) encourage the development of regional trail segments throughout MEPRD's jurisdiction; and (2) increase MEPRD's grant funding for park projects located in currently under-served locations. Provides up \$300,000 for construction, implementation, and acquisition. MEPRD funds must not exceed 40% of the total project cost.

Event Sponsorship Grant - Fund a variety of events include walking, running, and/or biking events hosted by a public agency/department or a nonprofit organization. At least 10% of the event proceeds must go towards funding developments, improvements, or recreational programs to a public park or trail.

Non-Governmental (NGOs) & Not-For-Profit Organizations

The following groups may have programs or funds to help carry out their missions at any given time:

HeartLands Conservancy – Works to protect diverse natural resources and habitats of southern Illinois.

The PeopleForBikes – The not-for-profit Industry Community Grant Program provides funding for projects that make bicycling better in communities across the U.S.

The Sierra Club Illinois Piasa Palisades Group – Supports projects that protect this region from sprawl, unsustainable agriculture, air and water pollution, wetlands destruction, and deforestation.

The Conservation Fund – Conservation loans and green bonds programs offer flexible financing as well as sustained and expert technical assistance to land trusts and other organizations aiming to protect key properties in their communities, increase access to green and open-space, recover natural habitats, provide conservation education programs, and help people connect with nature.

Trees Forever – The Working Watersheds – Buffers and Beyond program provides a 50% cost share (up to a maximum of \$2,000) to implement water quality project/demonstration sites, e.g. riparian buffers.

Non-grant Funding Opportunities

- Community Partnerships
- The Great River Road National Scenic Byway follows the Mississippi River through from northern Minnesota to the Gulf of Mexico. Join communities to jointly fund efforts.
- Corporate/Business Sponsorships
- Local or Crowd-sourced Fundraisers
- Sports Tournaments
- Programs/Events - Diversify programming, events, and rentals to increase revenue from the park in fun and creative ways for the benefit of the community.
- Service Organizations
- Charitable Donations
- Volunteer Work

- AARP
- Alton Memorial Health Services Foundation
- Ameren Corporation Charitable Trust
- American Water Charitable Foundation
- The American Hiking Society awards grants from its National Trails Fund
- American Academy of Dermatology (Shade Structure Program)
- America's Central Port
- Bank of America Charitable Foundation
- Boy Scouts of America
- Building Better Communities Program (NRPA)
- Conservation Alliance
- The Conservation Fund
- Home Depot Foundation
- KaBOOM!
- Lewis & Clark Community College
- Lowe's Charitable and Education Foundation
- National Trails Fund
- National Recreation & Park Association (NRPA)
- National Association of Realtors
- The Nature Institute
- PeopleForBikes Community Grant Program
- REI
- Scotts Miracle-Grow Foundation
- The Trust for Public Land
- U.S. Soccer Foundation
- Walmart Family Foundation

Potential Private Foundations/Companies

Many communities have successfully solicited trail infrastructure funding from private foundations and philanthropic benefactors. Foundations are excellent sources of funding for the acquisition of land for green space, public art siting, interpretation, education, and project-specific purposes. They fund a wide variety of features, including shade structures, tree planting, pollinator gardens, ADA improvements, and educational programs. Additionally, corporations often have separate foundations or grant programs to support environmental missions. Below are some examples of these funding opportunities:



Parking meters on trails are helping to raise funds in Steamboat Springs, Colorado. Photo by the City of Steamboat Springs

Think Outside the Box to Entice Users to Donate

In Steamboat Springs, Colorado the city decided to think about trail funding in a different way. Rather than go through the government or through a private corporation, why not reach trail users directly, while they are on the trail, and therefore the most likely to be thinking about those trail benefits? The city took ten parking meters from their original urban centers and parked them at trailheads, painting them a bright orange color so trail users can't miss them. The visuals of this had the added effect of creating novelty, which creates publicity, which makes people want to be a part of things. Users immediately started donating, swiping their credit cards at the repurposed parking meters with a minimum \$5 donation, and raising thousands within weeks of installation. The city ultimately projects a whopping \$1.5 million by the year 2026 from this program, with all of those funds going into the trails.

Source: American Trails, 2020

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Pedestrian and Bicycle Funding Opportunities: U.S. Department of Transportation Highway, Transit, and Safety Funds

as of November 16, 2023

This table indicates likely eligibility for pedestrian and bicycle activities and projects under U.S. Department of Transportation surface transportation funding programs. Activities and projects need to meet program eligibility requirements. See notes and basic program requirements below, with links to program information. Project sponsors should integrate the safety, accessibility, equity, and convenience of walking and bicycling into surface transportation projects.

Activity or Project Type	Pedestrian and Bicycle Funding Opportunities: Highway, Transit, and Safety Funds																																
	Federal Highway Administration										Federal Lands			OST Grant				OST Loan		FTA		NHTSA											
	ATIIP	BRI	CRP	CMAQ	HSIP	RHCP	NHPP	PROT	STBG	TASA	RTP	SRTS	PLAN	NSBP	FLFTP	ITP	TPSF	NFRA	RAISE	RCN	BS4A	SMART	Thrive	RRIF	TIFIA	FTA	AgPP	TOD	402	405			
Access enhancements to public transportation (benches, bus pads, lighting)	\$	\$	\$			\$	\$	\$	\$	\$				\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	-\$			-\$	-\$	\$								
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) 504 Self Evaluation / Transition Plan	\$	\$								\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	TA				\$	-\$								
Barrier removal for ADA compliance	\$	\$	\$						\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	-\$			-\$	-\$	\$								
Bicycle plans	\$	\$							\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	-\$	\$				\$	\$	-\$							
Bicycle helmets (project or training related)	-\$			\$						\$	SRTS	\$																	\$				
Bicycle helmets (safety promotion)	-\$			\$						\$	SRTS	\$																					
Bicycle lanes on road	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$		\$	\$	\$	\$	-\$	-\$	\$	\$			-\$	-\$	\$							
Bicycle parking (see Bicycle Parking Solutions)	\$	\$	\$						\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	-\$	-\$	\$	-\$			-\$	\$	\$							
Bike racks on transit	\$	\$	\$							\$	\$						\$	\$	-\$	\$	-\$				-\$	\$							
Bicycle repair station (air pump, simple tools, electric outlets)	\$	\$								\$	\$						\$	\$	-\$	\$	-\$			-\$	-\$	\$							
Bicycle share (capital and equipment including charging stations and outlets; not operations)	\$	\$	\$						\$	\$							\$	\$	-\$	\$	-\$			-\$	-\$	\$							
Bicycle storage or service centers (e.g. at transit hubs) including charging stations and outlets; not operations)	\$	\$	\$						\$	\$							\$	\$	-\$	\$	-\$			-\$	-\$	\$							
Bridges / overcrossings for pedestrians and/or bicyclists	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$				\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$			-\$	-\$	\$							
Bus shelters and benches	\$	\$	\$						\$	\$	\$	\$				\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$			-\$	-\$	\$							
Charging stations for electric bicycles and scooters NEW	\$	\$	\$							\$	\$	\$				\$	\$							-\$	-\$								
Coordinator positions: State/local (CMAQ/STBG limited)			\$							\$	SRTS	\$				\$				-\$													
Community Capacity Building (develop organizational skills and processes)	-\$															\$					NAB	-\$		TA						-\$	-\$		
Crosswalks for pedestrians, pedestrian refuge islands (new or retrofit)	\$	\$	-\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$			-\$	-\$	\$							
Curb ramps	\$	\$	\$	-\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$			-\$	-\$	\$							
Counting equipment	\$				\$	\$	\$			\$	\$	\$	\$			\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$			-\$	\$								
Data collection and monitoring for pedestrians and/or bicyclists	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$			\$	\$	\$	\$			\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$			-\$	\$	-\$	-\$						
Emergency and evacuation routes for pedestrians and/or bicyclists	\$	\$							\$	\$	\$	\$				\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$			-\$	\$	-\$	-\$						
Encouragement and education activities related to safe access for bicyclists and pedestrians NEW	-\$		\$	\$						\$	SRTS	\$	\$	\$			\$							-\$	-\$								
Historic preservation (pedestrian, bicycle, transit facilities)	-\$	\$								\$	\$					\$	\$	\$	-\$	-\$	-\$			-\$	-\$	\$							
Landscaping, streetscaping (pedestrian/bicycle route, transit access); related amenities (benches, lighting, shade, trees, water fountains); usually part of larger project	\$	\$						-\$	\$	\$						\$	\$		-\$	-\$	-\$			-\$	-\$	\$							
Lighting (pedestrian and bicyclist scale associated with pedestrian/bicyclist project)	\$	\$	-\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$			-\$	-\$	\$							
Maps (for pedestrians and/or bicyclists) (see Idea Book)	\$	\$	\$							\$	\$		\$	\$	\$		\$																
Micromobility projects, including scooter share (capital and equipment, including charging stations and outlets; not operations)	\$	\$	\$							\$	\$					\$	\$		\$	\$	-\$	-\$		-\$	-\$								
Paved shoulders for pedestrian and/or bicyclist use	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$			-\$	-\$	\$							
Pedestrian plans	\$		\$							\$	\$	\$	\$			\$	\$	\$	-\$	-\$	\$								\$	\$	\$		
Public education and awareness programs to inform motorists and nonmotorized road users on nonmotorized road user safety NEW	-\$			\$						\$	SRTS	\$	\$			\$																\$	\$

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Activity or Project Type	Pedestrian and Bicycle Funding Opportunities: Highway, Transit, and Safety Funds																												
	Federal Highway Administration												Federal Lands			OST Grant				OST Loan		FTA		NHTSA					
	ATIIP	BRI	CRP	CMAQ	HSIP	RHCP	NHPP	PROT	STBG	TASA	RTP	SRTS	PLAN	NSBP	FLTTP	ITP	ITPSF	NFRA	RAISE	RCN	SS4A	SMART	Thrive	RRIF	TIFIA	FTA	AoPP	TOD	402
Rail at-grade crossings	\$	\$		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	-\$			\$	\$				
Recreational trails	\$							\$	\$	\$	\$	\$			\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	-\$				-\$				
Resilience improvements to pedestrian and bicycle facilities or to protect or enhance use. REVISED	\$	-\$	-\$	-\$	-\$			\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	note	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	-\$	-\$			-\$	-\$			
Road Diets (pedestrian and bicycle portions)	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$			-\$	\$				
Road Safety Assessment for pedestrians and bicyclists	\$			\$	\$			\$	\$					\$	\$	\$			\$	\$			TA		-\$		-\$		
Safety education and awareness activities and programs to inform pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists on ped/bike traffic safety laws	-\$			\$				\$	SSRTS		\$	\$			\$										-\$	-\$	\$	\$	
Safety education positions					\$				SSRTS	SSRTS	\$				\$				\$									\$	
Safety enforcement (including police patrols)					\$				SSRTS	SSRTS	\$				\$				\$									\$	\$
Safety program technical assessment (for peds/bicyclists)	-\$			\$				\$	SSRTS	SSRTS	\$	\$			\$	\$			\$	\$			TA					\$	
Separated bicycle lanes	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$			-\$	-\$	\$			
Shared use paths / transportation trails	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$			-\$	-\$	\$			
Sidewalks (new or retrofit)	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$			-\$	-\$	\$			
Signs, signals, signal improvements (incl accessible pedestrian signals) see note	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$			-\$	-\$	\$			
Signing for pedestrian or bicycle routes	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$			\$	\$	\$	\$	\$			\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$			-\$	-\$	\$			
Spot improvement programs (programs of small projects to enhance pedestrian and bicycle use) REVISED	\$	\$	\$	-\$	\$	\$	\$		\$	\$	\$	\$			\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	-\$		-\$	-\$	\$				
Stormwater mitigation related to pedestrian and bicycle project impacts REVISED	\$			\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	note	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	-\$			-\$	-\$	\$	note	note	
Technical Assistance (see Cross-cutting notes) NEW	-\$		-\$	\$				\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	note		\$	\$			-\$	-\$	-\$	TA							
Traffic calming	\$	\$	\$		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$			\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$			-\$	-\$	\$			
Trail bridges	\$	\$	-\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$			\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$			-\$	\$				
Trail construction and maintenance equipment	\$	\$							\$	\$	\$					-\$	-\$	-\$							-\$	-\$			
Trail/highway crossings and intersections	\$	\$	\$	-\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$			-\$	-\$				
Trailside/trailhead facilities (restrooms, water, but not general park amenities)	\$		-\$						\$	\$	\$				\$	\$	\$			-\$					-\$	-\$			
Training	-\$		\$	\$				\$	\$	\$	\$	\$			\$								TA			-\$	-\$	\$	
Training for law enforcement on ped/bicyclist safety laws	-\$		-\$	\$				\$	SSRTS	SSRTS	\$				\$										-\$	-\$	\$	\$	
Tunnels / underpasses for pedestrians and/or bicyclists	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$			\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$			\$	\$	\$			
Vulnerable Road User Safety Assessment	\$			\$				\$	\$	\$	\$	\$			\$	\$			\$				TA			-\$	-\$		

Abbreviations (alphabetical order)

ADA/504: Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 / Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973	PLAN: Statewide Planning and Research (SPR) or Metropolitan Planning funds (FHWA and/or FTA funding)
AoPP: Areas of Persistent Poverty Program	PROTECT: Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost Saving Transportation
ATIIP: Active Transportation Infrastructure Program [web link under development]	RAISE: Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity
BIL: Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Pub. L. 117-58)	RCN: Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant Program (includes Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program (RCP) and Neighborhood Access and Equity programs)
BRI: Bridge Programs, including: BFP : Bridge Formula Program; BIP : Bridge Investment Program; BRR : Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation Program	RHCP: Railway-Highway Crossings (Section 130) Program
CMAQ: Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program	RRIF: Railroad Rehabilitation and Improvement Financing (loans)
CRP: Carbon Reduction Program	RTP: Recreational Trails Program
FLTTP: Federal Lands and Tribal Transportation Programs: Federal Lands Access Program , Federal Lands Transportation Program , Tribal Transportation Program , Federal Lands Planning Program and related programs for Federal and Tribal lands such as the Nationally Significant Federal Lands and Tribal Projects program	SMART: Strengthening Mobility and Revolutionizing Transportation (SMART) Grants Program
FTA: Federal Transit Administration Capital Funds	SRTS: Safe Routes to School Program (and related activities)
	SS4A: Safe Streets and Roads for All
	STBG: Surface Transportation Block Grant Program

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<p>HSIP: Highway Safety Improvement Program</p> <p>IIJA: Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Pub. L. 117-58), also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law</p> <p>INFRA: Infrastructure for Rebuilding America Discretionary Grant Program</p> <p>NAE: Neighborhood Access and Equity Program</p> <p>NHPP: National Highway Performance Program</p> <p>NHTSA 402: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration State and Community Highway Safety Grant Program</p> <p>NHTSA 405(g): National Highway Traffic Safety Administration National Priority Safety Programs (Nonmotorized safety)</p> <p>NSBP: National Scenic Byways Program</p>	<p>TASA: Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (formerly Transportation Alternatives Program, Transportation Enhancements) Thrive: Thriving Communities Initiative (TA: Technical Assistance)</p> <p>TIFIA: Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (loans)</p> <p>TOD: Transit-Oriented Development</p> <p>TTP: Tribal Transportation Program</p> <p>TTPSF: Tribal Transportation Program Safety Fund</p>
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Cross-cutting notes

This table indicates likely eligibility for pedestrian, bicycle, and micromobility activities and projects under U.S. Department of Transportation surface transportation funding programs. Activities and projects must meet program eligibility requirements. See notes and links to program information below. Although the primary focus of this table is stand-alone activities and projects, programs can also fund pedestrian and bicycle facilities as part of larger projects. Project sponsors are encouraged to consider [Complete Streets](#) and Networks that routinely integrate the safety, accessibility, equity, and convenience of walking and bicycling into surface transportation projects. The Federal-aid eligibility of the pedestrian and bicycle elements are considered under the eligibility criteria applicable to the larger highway project. Pedestrian and bicycle activities also may be characterized as environmental mitigation for larger highway projects, especially in response to impacts to a Section 4(f) property or work zone safety, mobility, and accessibility impacts on bicyclists and pedestrians.

- See FHWA's [Policy on Using Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Resources to Build a Better America](#).
- See [FHWA Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning, Program, and Project Development](#) (Guidance), [Publications, Pedestrian and Bicyclist Safety](#), and Bicycle transportation and pedestrian walkways statute at [23 U.S.C. 217](#).
- Bicycle Project Purpose: 23 U.S.C. 217(i) requires that bicycle facilities "be principally for transportation, rather than recreation, purposes". However, 23 U.S.C. 133(b)(7) and 133(h) authorize recreational trails under [STBG](#) and [TASA](#), therefore, 23 U.S.C. 217(i) does not apply to trail projects (including for bicycle use) using [STBG](#) or [TASA](#) funds. Section 217(i) applies to bicycle facilities other than trail-related projects, and section 217(i) applies to bicycle facilities using other programs ([NHPP](#), [HSIP](#), [CMAQ](#)). The transportation requirement under section 217(i) only applies to bicycle projects, not to any other trail use or transportation mode.
- Signs, signals, signal improvements includes ensuring accessibility for persons with disabilities. See [Accessible Pedestrian Signals](#). See also [Proven Safety Countermeasures](#), such as [Crosswalk Visibility Enhancements](#), [Leading Pedestrian Interval signals](#), [Lighting](#), [Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons](#), and [Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons](#).
- Technical Assistance includes assisting local agencies and other potential grantees to identify pedestrian and bicycle safety and infrastructure issues, and to help them develop and implement successful projects. Technical assistance may be authorized under a program or sometimes as a limited portion of a program. See FHWA links to [Technical Assistance and Local Support](#).
- The [DOT Navigator](#) is a resource to help communities understand the best ways to apply for grants, and to plan for and deliver transformative infrastructure projects and services.
- Aspects of DOT initiatives may be eligible as individual projects. Activities above may benefit safe, comfortable, multimodal networks; environmental justice; and equity.
- Occasional DOT or agency incentive grants may be available for specific research or technical assistance purposes.
- Operation costs: In general, ongoing and routine operation costs (such as ongoing costs for bike sharing or scooter sharing) are not eligible unless specified within program legislation. See links to program guidance for more information.

Program-specific notes

DOT funding programs have specific requirements that activities and projects must meet. Eligibility must be determined on a case-by-case basis. See links to program guidance for more information.

[FHWA Programs](#)

- [ATIIP](#) (IIJA § 11529): Subject to appropriations. Projects costing at least \$15,000,000 to develop or complete active transportation networks and spines, or at least \$100,000 to plan or design for active transportation networks and spines.
- [BRI](#): [BFP](#), (IIJA, Div. J, title VIII, para. (1)), [BIP](#) (23 U.S.C. 124), [BRR](#) (Department of Transportation Appropriations Act, 2022): For specific highway bridge projects and highway bridge projects that will replace or rehabilitate a bridge; project must consider pedestrian and bicycle access as part of the project and costs related to their inclusion are eligible under these programs.
- [CRP](#) (23 U.S.C. 175): Projects should support the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions from on-road highway sources.
- [CMAQ](#) (23 U.S.C. 149): Projects must demonstrate emissions reduction and benefit air quality. See the [CMAQ guidance](#) for a list of projects that may be eligible for CMAQ funds. CMAQ funds may be used for shared use paths, but not for trails that are primarily for recreational use.
- [HSIP](#) (23 U.S.C. 148): Projects must be consistent with a State's [Strategic Highway Safety Plan](#) and (1) correct or improve a hazardous road location or feature, or (2) address a highway safety problem. Certain noninfrastructure safety projects can also be funded using HSIP funds as specified safety projects.
- [RHCP](#) (23 U.S.C. 130): Projects at all public railroad crossings including roadways, bike trails, and pedestrian paths.
- [NHPP](#) (23 U.S.C. 119): Projects must benefit National Highway System (NHS) corridors and must be located on land adjacent to any highway on the National Highway System (23 U.S.C. 217(b)).
- [PROTECT](#) (23 U.S.C. 176): Funds can only be used for activities that are primarily for the purpose of resilience or inherently resilience related. With certain exceptions, the focus must be on supporting the incremental cost of making assets more resilient.
- [STBG](#) (23 U.S.C. 133): Broad eligibility for pedestrian, bicycle, and micromobility projects under 23 U.S.C. 206, 208, and 217 (23 U.S.C. 133(b)(7)). Activities marked "\$SRTS" means eligible only as an SRTS project benefiting schools for kindergarten through 12th grade. Nonconstruction projects related to safe access for bicyclists and pedestrians (such as bicycle and pedestrian education) are eligible under STBG (23 U.S.C. 217(a)).

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- [TASA](#) (23 U.S.C. 133(h)): Broad eligibility for pedestrian, bicycle, and micromobility projects. Activities marked “\$SRTS” means eligible only as an SRTS project benefiting schools for kindergarten through 12th grade.
- [RTP](#) (23 U.S.C. 206): Projects for trails and trailside and trailhead facilities for any recreational trail use. RTP projects are eligible under TA Set-Aside and STBG.
- [SRTS](#) (23 U.S.C. 208): Projects for any SRTS activity. FY 2012 was the last year for dedicated - funds, but funds are available until expended. SRTS projects are eligible under TA Set-Aside and STBG.
- [PLAN](#) (23 U.S.C. 134 and 135): Funds must be used for planning purposes, for example: Maps: System maps and GIS; Safety education and awareness: for transportation safety planning; Safety program technical assessment: for transportation safety planning; Training: bicycle and pedestrian system planning training. Transportation planning associated with activities would be eligible, SPR and PL funds are not available for project implementation or construction.
- [NSBP](#) (23 U.S.C. 162): Discretionary program subject to annual appropriations. Projects must directly benefit and be located on or near an eligible designated scenic byway.

[FHWA Federal Lands Programs](#)

- [FLTTP](#) (23 U.S.C. 201-204): Projects must provide access to or within Federal or Tribal lands. Programs include: Federal Lands and Tribal Transportation Programs ([Federal Lands Access Program](#), [Federal Lands Transportation Program](#), [Federal Lands Planning Program](#)) and related programs for Federal and Tribal lands such as the [Nationally Significant Federal Lands and Tribal Projects](#) (NSFLTP) program.
 - [Federal Lands Transportation Program](#) (23 U.S.C. 203): For Federal agencies for projects that provide access within Federal lands.
 - [Federal Lands Access Program](#) (FLAP) (23 U.S.C. 204): For State and local entities for projects that provide access to or within Federal or Tribal lands.
- [TTP](#) (23 U.S.C. 202): For federally recognized Tribal governments for projects within Tribal boundaries and public roads that access Tribal lands.
- [TPSF](#) (23 U.S.C. 202(e)(1) and 23 U.S.C. 148(a)(4)): Grants available to federally recognized Indian Tribes through a competitive, discretionary program to plan and implement transportation safety projects.

[OST Grant Programs](#)

- [INFRA](#) (IIJA § 11110): Funds projects that improve safety, generate economic benefits, reduce congestion, enhance resiliency, and hold the greatest promise to eliminate freight bottlenecks and improve critical freight movements.
- [RAISE](#) (IIJA § 21202): Funds capital and planning grants to help communities build transportation projects that have significant local or regional impact and improve safety and equity.
- [RCN](#): Combines [RCP](#) (IIJA § 11509 and div. J, title VIII, Highway Infrastructure Programs, para. (7)), which provides funds for planning grants and capital construction grants that relate to a transportation facility that creates a barrier to community connectivity and [Neighborhood Access and Equity Grant Program](#), Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) § 60501; enacted as Pub. L. 117-169, 23 U.S.C. 177, which provides funds for projects that improve walkability, safety, and affordable transportation access and funding for planning and capacity building activities in disadvantaged or underserved communities.
- [SMART](#) (IIJA § 25005): Provides grants to eligible public sector agencies to conduct demonstration projects focused on advanced smart community technologies and systems in order to improve transportation efficiency and safety.
- [SS4A](#) (IIJA § 24112): Discretionary program funds regional, local, and Tribal initiatives through grants to prevent roadway deaths and serious injuries. Projects must be identified in a comprehensive safety action plan (§ 24112(a)(3)).
- [Thrive](#) (Department of Transportation Appropriations Act, 2022 (Pub. L. 117-103, div. L, title I): Technical assistance, planning, and capacity-building support in selected communities.

[OST Loan Programs](#)

- [RRIF](#) (Chapter 224 of title 49 U.S.C.): Program offers direct loans and loan guarantees for capital projects related to rail facilities, stations, or crossings. Pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure components of “economic development” projects located within ½-mile of qualifying rail stations may be eligible. May be combined with other grant sources.
- [TIFIA](#) (Chapter 6 of title 23 U.S.C.): Program offers secured loans, loan guarantees, or standby lines of credit for capital projects. Minimum total project size is \$10 million; multiple surface transportation projects may be bundled to meet cost threshold, under the condition that all projects have a common repayment pledge. May be combined with other grant sources, subject to total Federal assistance limitations.

[FTA Programs](#)

- [FTA](#) (49 U.S.C. 5307): Multimodal projects funded with FTA transit funds must provide access to transit. See [Bicycles and Transit, Flex Funding for Transit Access](#), the [FTA Final Policy Statement on the Eligibility of Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvements Under Federal Transit Law](#), and [FTA Program & Bicycle Related Funding Opportunities](#).
 - Bicycle infrastructure plans and projects must be within a 3-mile radius of a transit stop or station. If more than 3 miles, within a distance that people could be expected to safely and conveniently bike to the particular stop or station.
 - Pedestrian infrastructure plans and projects must be within a ½ mile radius of a transit stop or station. If more than ½ mile, within a distance that people could be expected to safely and conveniently walk to the particular stop or station.
 - FTA funds cannot be used to purchase bicycles for bike share systems.
- [FTA AoPP](#) (Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020 (Pub. L. 116-94); Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (Pub. L. 116-260)): Promotes multimodal planning, engineering, and technical studies, or financial planning to improve transit services, facilities, and access in areas experiencing long-term economic distress, not for capital purchases.
- [FTA TOD](#): Provides planning grants to support community efforts to improve safe access to public transportation, services, and facilities, including for pedestrians and cyclists. The grants help organizations plan for transportation projects that connect communities and improve access to transit and affordable housing, not for capital purchases.

[NHTSA Programs](#)

- [NHTSA 402](#) (23 U.S.C. 402): Project activity must be included in the State’s Highway Safety Plan. Contact the [State Highway Safety Office](#) for details.
- [NHTSA 405](#) (23 U.S.C. 405): Funds are subject to eligibility, application, and award. Project activity must be included in the State’s Highway Safety Plan. Contact the [State Highway Safety Office](#) for details. The [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#) expanded the eligible use of funds for a Section 405 Nonmotorized Safety grant beginning in FY 2024. [See 23 U.S.C. 1300.26](#). For prior year grant awards, FAST Act eligible uses remain in place.
- Project agreements involving safety education, or any other positions must specify hours of eligible activity required to perform the project. Project agreements may not be expressed in terms of full or part time positions.

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