



Long Range Development Plan 2011

Madison County & St. Clair County, Illinois

Metro East Park and Recreation District

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The Gateway Geyser at Malcolm W. Martin Memorial Park.

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Executive Summary

Since its inception, by public vote in 2000, the Metro East Park and Recreation District (MEPRD) has become a leading agency for parks, recreation and trail facilities in Madison and St. Clair County, Illinois. MEPRD has developed miles of trails, parkland and recreational opportunities for the citizens of Madison and St. Clair County. Proud of their accomplishments and with more underway, the District believed it was time to update their Long Range Development Plan from 2003. The three primary objectives in doing so included documentation of current conditions, updating and further development of the Greenway Systems Plan, and enhancing the grant funding strategy and application process.

The update of the Long Range Development Plan (LRDP) was an approximate year-long study. The planning process engaged local citizens and agencies for input regarding the existing parks and trails system. Existing trails, parks and open space were documented and analyzed. Future trails and greenways were proposed to expand and enhance the pedestrian, cycling and recreational opportunities for the citizens of Madison and St. Clair Counties. The result of the Long Range Development Plan update process is a comprehensive listing of existing facilities and future development plans. The LRDP will guide the function and operation of the Metro East Park and Recreation District for the next ten years.

Engaging the managing agencies was key in the collection of this information and building MEPRD partnerships for future projects. Agencies were asked to not only provide current conditions but to include Comprehensive Plans, Planned Parks and Trails, and Recreation Plans. Through participation in this process these agencies also were provided an opportunity to submit 1 to 5 of their own projects in the LRDP 2011. The process was structured so that the District could easily request annual updates from the agencies thus keeping the data base current and further expanding the information they need to effectively manage and expand their service to the public.

An integral part of updating the LRDP included public involvement and awareness of MEPRD's proactive efforts to develop a Long Range Plan and encourage the community to offer input into the development of the actual Plan. Public engagement meetings occurred during the Greenway Systems Plan development phase at key milestones – 30% and 90% – held in both Madison and St. Clair Counties. The public was notified in advance through multiple media outlets including the *Belleville News Democrat*, *Alton Telegraph*, *Suburban Journals* and *St. Louis Post-Dispatch – Metro East edition*. Input during the meetings was collected both informally through individual discussion with team members and also formally through public comment sheets. MEPRD values the ideas and input received at these meetings. As an example, a new potential right-of-way for a particular trail was uncovered as a result of a public meeting.

After review of plans and policies, interviews and analysis of potential paths of travel and surveys, a Master Plan of interconnected trails, parks and places of interest for MEPRD and the managing agencies was realized for inclusion in the long-range Greenways System Plan for Madison and St. Clair Counties. The Long Range Development Plan 2011 included 26 trails and corridors inclusive of 10 new priority trails. Projects within the 2003 MEPRD Master Plan were analyzed and 16 will be included in the LRDP. During the development phase of the masterplan the consulting team measured the proposed plans against 14 other regions ranging from the local Madison County Transit (MCT) to the Indy Parks and Greenway Commission, Indianapolis, IN. This analysis ensured the proposed plans adhered to national Best Practices for Trail Standards. Evaluation of each project included significance to regional connectivity, estimated cost, potential sponsors or funding sources and any issues that would influence implementation of the project. The Best Practices study also captured exemplary practices and information of potential use to MEPRD for Planning and Design, Community Support, Funding, and common challenges of like organizations. This will be a strategic resource to MEPRD as its service and greenway system expands.



Trail dedication in Edwardsville Township Park, Edwardsville, IL.

Updating and enhancing the Funding Strategy and Application Process was a key objective in updating the LRDP given that economic conditions have changed since 2003, thus impacting funding sources and the number of grant and sponsorship requests that have steadily increased over the past 10 years as the organization has matured. The primary funding source is the Metro East Park and Recreation District Tax, imposed by the District on all persons engaged in the business of selling tangible personal property at retail within the District's jurisdiction. Once an eligible county has received voter approval to become part of the District and adopts the ordinance, the Metro East Park and Recreation District Tax becomes effective. The tax is imposed at the rate of one-tenth of one percent of eligible sales. This tax is distributed with 50% going to MEPRD and 50% of the collected revenue is returned to the county from which the tax was collected. The disbursing authorities are: Madison County (Madison County Park and Recreation Grant Commission) and St. Clair County (St. Clair County Parks Grant Commission and St. Clair County Property and Recreation Committee). Each county is required to distribute a minimum of 50% of these funds in the form of grants to local park districts, municipal districts or recreational departments within the county. Additional research was conducted to identify additional funding sources through federal, state, and foundations such as Bikes Belong Foundation. Funds were evaluated relative to the amount of effort for return on investment as a central criterion. Sources currently known to MEPRD and the new sources were combined to create a database to capture tracking of funding program lifecycles and capacity to help determine where efforts need to be concentrated therefore improving efficiency. Emphasis continues to be placed on the agency and community's commitment of investment by MERPD's regulation of funding no more than 25% of the total cost of a project.



Monticello Bike Trail, Lewis & Clark Campus, Godfrey, IL.

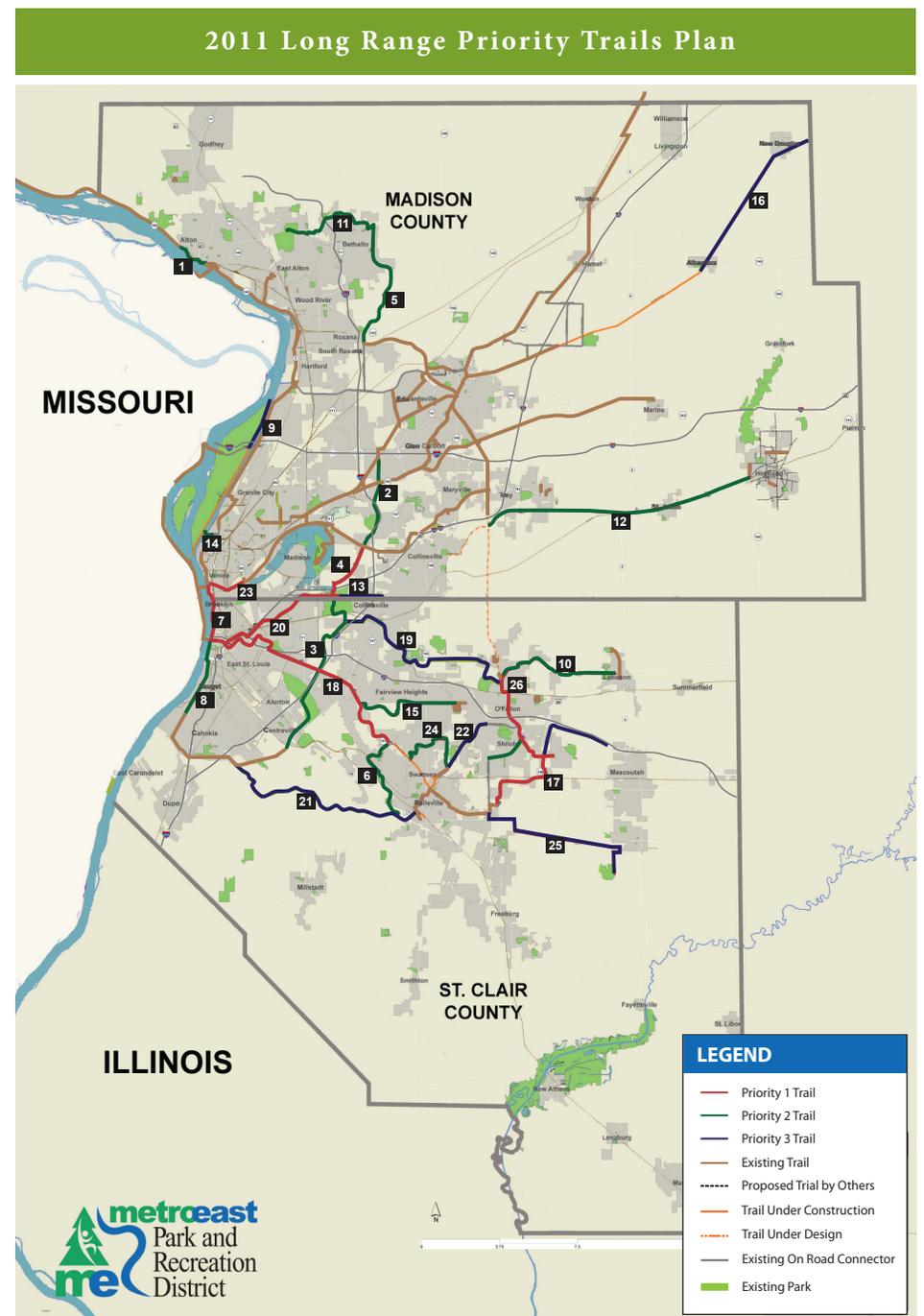


Trail signage on MCT Nature Trail, Wilson Park in Granite City, IL.

The 2011 Long Range Development Plan was an extensive planning process to guide the future direction of the Metro East Park and Recreation District, and was developed around analysis of the existing trail network and existing 2003 Long Range Plan. The plan update also considered and utilized the recommendations from local public agencies and the public. The planning process emphasized regional connectivity to link communities, enhancing the recreational, active lifestyle opportunities for local citizens. The 2011 Long Range Development Plan provides a new vision for parks and trails in Madison and St. Clair County and will guide the Metro East Park and Recreation District in its mission to enhance the recreational opportunities and quality of life for citizens of Madison and St. Clair Counties.

Long Range Plan 2011 Priority Trails Table

Number	Bikeway Name	Total Miles	Priority Ranking
1)	Alton Bike Path	1	2
2)	American Bottoms Trail North	5	2
3)	American Bottoms Trail South	8	2
4)	Arlington/Mounds Connector	3	1
5)	Bethalto Connector	7	2
6)	Bicentennial/Belleview/Memorial Corridor	5	2
7)	Confluence Bikeway North	3	1
8)	Confluence Bikeway South	4	2
9)	Eagle Points Trail	3	3
10)	Engle Creek/College Road Bike Trail	6	2
11)	Gordon Moore Connector	5	2
12)	Highland Connector Trail	13	2
13)	Jaycee Connector Trail	1	3
14)	Lock 27 Trail Crossing	1	2
15)	Longacre Corridor	6	2
16)	MCT Nickel Plate Trail	9	3
17)	MetroLink Bike Trail East	8	1
18)	MetroLink Bike Trail West	11	1
19)	Milburn School Trail	10	3
20)	Mounds Heritage Trail	5	1
21)	Prairie du Pont Trail	10	3
22)	Richland Creek Trail	3	3
23)	Schoolhouse Trail Connector	2	1
24)	Schranz/Old Collinsville/Huntsville Road Trails	4	2
25)	SWIC to Mascoutah Trail	9	3
26)	Scott-Troy Trail South Extension	5	1
	Total Trail Miles	147	



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Metro East Park and Recreation District

The Metro East Park and Recreation District (MEPRD) is a public body responsible for the development of an interconnecting system of parks, trails, and greenways in Madison and St. Clair Counties, Illinois. Both the creation of the Metro East Park and Recreation District (MEPRD) and a one-tenth of one percent Sales Tax were approved by Madison and St. Clair County, Illinois voters in November 2000. The District often supplements the efforts of local governments, special districts, and other jurisdictions who are already engaged in the construction and management of these types of projects.

The park district is the first of its kind in Illinois, serving over half a million residents. Proudly serving Madison and St. Clair Counties in Illinois.

Current figures and statistics:

- 180 miles of finished trail
- 11 miles of trails under design
- 18 miles of trails under construction
- 142 miles of trails proposed
- MEPRD's trailhead provides access to an extensive network of trails
- MEPRD manages and maintains the Malcolm W. Martin Memorial Park

Mission

The Metro East Park and Recreation District shall have as its primary duty the development, operation, and maintenance of a public system of interconnecting trails and parks throughout the counties comprising the District.

How does MEPRD fulfill this mission?

1. Through partnership funding assistance/grants.
2. By following the MEPRD Long Range Development Plan.

History

MEPRD was created as a result of Illinois HB 702 in July 1999 and approved by Madison

and St. Clair County voters in November 2000 through Proposition C: The Clean Water, Safe Parks and Community Trails Initiative. Eligible Counties include Clinton, Jersey, Madison, Macoupin, Monroe and St. Clair. A similar entity, the Great Rivers Greenway District, was simultaneously created in Missouri, although there is no formal link between the two districts.

To date MEPRD has finished over 50 capital projects totaling more than \$39 million of which MEPRD committed \$7 million. A few noteworthy projects that MEPRD has assisted with include:

- McKinley Bridge Bikeway
- Eagle Points Trail Phase I
- MCT Quercus Grove Trail Extension
- MCT Nickel Plate Trail Extension
- Scott Troy Trail Rt. 162 to I-55/I-70
- MetroLink Bike Trail
- Malcolm W. Martin Memorial Park



Malcolm W. Martin Memorial Park, East St. Louis, IL.

Organizational Structure

MEPRD is statutorily authorized to develop, operate and maintain a public system of interconnecting trails and parks in Madison and St. Clair Counties. It is intended to supplement, rather than supplant, the efforts of local governments, special districts or other jurisdictions already engaged in the management of parks and recreation facilities. The District is comprised of four full-time employees and governed by a six-member board, including three members selected by each County Board. Two members are appointed by the majority party and the third by the minority party.

MEPRD is statutorily empowered to:

- Issue bonds, notes, or other obligations for any of the purposes of the District, and to refund the bonds, notes, or obligations.
- Contract, as provided by law, with public and private entities or individuals both within and without the State, and with the United States or any agency thereof in furtherance of the any of the purposes of the District.
- Own, hold, control, lease, purchase from the willing sellers, contract and sell any and all rights in land, buildings, improvements, and any and all other real, personal, or mixed property.
- Receive property, both real and personal, or money that has been granted, donated, devised or bequeathed to the District.
- Establish and collect reasonable charges for the use of the facilities of the District.
- Maintain an office and staff.



Construction of the Mississippi River Overlook at Malcolm W. Martin Memorial Park, East St. Louis, IL.



Park users on Mississippi River Overlook at Malcom W. Martin Memorial Park, East St. Louis, IL.

Update of the Long Range Development Plan

Updating the 2003 Long Range Master Plan

MEPRD's success is measured on meeting the needs and expectations of the region based on its ability to develop, operate and maintain a public system of interconnecting trails and parks in Madison and St. Clair Counties. The 2003 Long Range Development Plan focused on setting the organizational and operational structure of the newly established MEPRD as well as developing a Greenways System Plan and funding strategy. It has served as a steady guide for its accomplishments to date. Our world today is much different than it was in 2003 and as in any organization or business it is important to periodically review, evaluate and update the strategic plan. As the organizational structure, operation and management practices have become more mature, the focus of the 2011 Long Range Development Plan shifts to further develop the Greenways System Plan, broaden the funding strategies and enhance MEPRD visibility across the region.

A key component to gauging regional conditions and needs are the citizens of Madison and St. Clair Counties. It is of the utmost importance that the residents in both counties generally view the Long Range Development Plan as important to their lives and meaningful to their communities. Through the process of updating the Plan, MEPRD's goal was to engage local agencies while developing new, cost effective strategies in further expanding and steering their growth. The approach and process of the planning team described as follows included the local agencies and the public engagement as an integral part of the updating process.

Data/Information Collection from an Inventory of Resources which included local agencies and their future priority projects. Data and information collected tapped into a variety of resources ranging from the local, regional and even the national level to provide the most comprehensive base to gauge the Greenway Systems development, activity, comparable benchmarks, best practices, and agency and public interest in further development of specific projects or areas. Utilizing the Inventory of Resources described in the following pages MEPRD assembled a database of information for current analysis and future use by MEPRD.

Document Baseline Conditions and incorporate all data and information into MEPRD information systems which consists of GIS base maps and databases. The existing conditions were documented as well as future planned projects were added. The result is a database of all the managing agency information and plans.

Host Public Open Houses throughout the process to maintain an open channel of communication with the community, collect additional information and gauge level of interest in specific projects. The Open House meeting structure allowed attendees to interact with the planning team, ask questions and participate firsthand in the development of the long range plan.



Public meetings in January 2011.

Update and Develop a Greenway System Plan of interconnecting parks and trails for recreational use based on review of the current system. Future projects for consideration were selected from the 2003 Long Range Development Plan and projects submitted from participating public agencies. These were weighed against current evaluation criteria including the level of regional significance, feasibility, possible funding sources and community interest. The end result is a plan which would enhance the overall connectivity and serve Madison and St. Clair Counties.

Update and further enhance the **Funding Strategies/Application Process** given the changes in the economy, available funding sources and number of grant applications requested of MEPRD. The expanded criteria will assist the District in prioritizing projects according to their significance to the long range development plan and insure they meet minimum design and maintenance standards. A secondary application process will be developed to standardize requests for event sponsorships.

A **Comprehensive Report of the Long Range Development Plan 2011** will be assembled as a resource to guide future project developments, focus the efforts and investments of the District toward the mission and a reference document available for the public as individuals and communities pursue development of parks, trails and recreational facilities.

Updating the Long Range Development Plan will provide the following outcomes:

- Analysis and documentation of current conditions.
- Identify and Focus on projects of the highest alignment to the MEPRD mission.
- Provide MEPRD enhanced visibility across the region while using the public engagement information from the original plan as a base.
- Engage the Stakeholders and Public Agencies in selecting projects for consideration for inclusion in the 2011 MEPRD LRDP.
- Evaluate Cost, Potential Sponsors and Funding Sources for Key Projects.
- Develop MEPRD Funding Strategy and Application Process.



Dedication of Three Springs Park in Shiloh, IL.



Trail in Glazebrook Park, Godfrey, IL.

Inventory of Resources

Metro East Park and Recreation District & 2003 Long Range Development Plan

MEPRD has in place the foundational resources of information and documentation regarding parks, trails and supporting facilities through its GIS base maps, databases, digital photo files as well as documentation collected since its inception. This provides the basis for documentation of current conditions and assists with directing areas of further exploration. One such document that provides a baseline for the Long Range Development Plan 2011 is the 2003 Long Range Plan. Extensive research during the 2003 study was conducted regarding public expectations, regional statistics and identified centers of growth which formulated the focus for the first Greenways Systems Plan. Much of this research is still valid today and should be considered in updating the Long Range Plan. Many of the identified projects which have yet to be completed have been considered and weighed as to relevancy to the MEPRD mission today, overall connectivity, public interest and feasibility. Of equal value is the knowledge, experience and insight the District staff and Board members have gained over the years of their service to the District.

Elements of a Greenway System

A greenway system is typically comprised of a hierarchy of park and trail elements that vary both in size and function. Each individual element of the system performs a particular function in terms of providing services. The District and other authorities responsible for providing and managing park and recreational systems must apply a rational approach to the facilities they operate.

Existing Parks: Madison County and St. Clair County currently have at least 220 existing parks ranging from small neighborhood parks to 700 acre parks like Gordon Moore Park in Alton. These parks serve a variety of recreational needs. The amenities within the parks vary but may include tennis courts, soccer fields, football fields, basketball courts, open play areas, ball fields and play apparatus for young children and advanced users. Community oriented facilities are typically provided, and may include group picnic shelters, hiking trails and community centers.

Existing Regional Trails: The MEPRD has helped fund 35 miles of regional trails, which provide connections to major recreational resources within Madison County and St. Clair County and supports bicycle and pedestrian mobility. Currently Madison and

St. Clair counties have 180 miles of existing trails, 11 miles of trails under design, and 18 miles of trails under construction.

Proposed Regional Trails/Greenways: The development and implementation of trails and greenways have become increasingly more popular in recent years. This dramatic increase reflects the trend toward healthier lifestyles and fitness-oriented activities while providing a unique network for connecting neighborhoods, parks, schools, and businesses. In addition, these systems enhance the value of open spaces and provide an alternative means of transportation. MEPRD's LRDP includes 142 miles of proposed trails in Madison and St. Clair counties.

On-Street Lanes: An on-street bicycle lane is a portion of the roadway that has been designated by striping, signing and pavement markings for the preferential and exclusive use of bicyclists. Bicyclists have similar access and mobility needs as other users of the transportation system and may use the street system as their primary means of access to jobs, services, and recreational activities. Within Madison County and St. Clair County, there are 34 miles of existing on-street bike lanes. Bicycle lanes are considered when space isn't available for off-street trails and when there is adequate room to delineate road space for preferential use by cyclists. On-street bike lanes are not the preferred trail type of MEPRD.

Trailhead: A trailhead is the point at which a trail begins. Modern trailheads often contain rest rooms, kiosks for informational brochures about the trail and its features, along with parking areas for vehicles. Local examples where MEPRD funded trailhead improvements include:

- Drost Park in Maryville on the MCT Schoolhouse Trail: Funding was provided for a comfort station and pavilion, picnic tables and drinking fountains.
- Hartford Trailhead and Bikeway in Hartford: Funding was provided for construction of a trailhead and bikeway loop connecting the MCT Confluence Bikeway to the Village of Hartford.



Community Park in Sugarloaf Township, St. Clair County, IL.

Managing Agencies

The planning process for the updated Long Range Development Plan included soliciting input from the various agencies and jurisdictions in Madison and St. Clair counties. A survey system was utilized which inquired about the existing parks and trail systems in the various communities of the Metro East Park and Recreation District (MEPRD). The surveys emphasized MEPRD's role of being a regional parks and trails agency which can provide coordination and assistance to the local agencies in Madison and St. Clair counties.

The surveys were in three formats:

- 1: Trails Survey Questionnaire
- 2: Parks Survey Questionnaire
- 3: Proposed Bikeway Priority Questionnaire

The surveys were sent to numerous municipalities, townships, park districts, state and regional agencies. The response rate was approximately 85% for the parks and trails surveys. The Proposed Bikeway Priority Questionnaire had a response rate of 42%.

A brief description of each survey is listed below and samples of the surveys are included in the Appendix of this document.

- 1: Trails Survey Questionnaire: The Trails Survey asked 28 questions regarding the use, ownership and maintenance of the existing trails in each jurisdiction. The survey included questions regarding primary and secondary uses such as cycling for recreation or for transportation; questions regarding trail accessibility and connectivity; and questions regarding trail surfaces and dimensions.
- 2: Parks Survey Questionnaire: The Parks Survey asked 24 questions regarding the use, ownership and maintenance of the existing parks in each jurisdiction. The survey included questions regarding types of parks such as regional, community or neighborhood parks; questions also inquired about park facilities such as athletic fields/courts, walking trails, pools, etc... Questions regarding park size, park hours and connectivity to regional trail systems were also part of the survey.
- 3: Proposed Bikeway Priority Questionnaire: The Bikeway Priority Questionnaire was an opportunity for local municipalities and jurisdictions to submit information regarding various trail projects that are priorities for the respective communities and agencies. The questionnaire allowed these entities to showcase their priority projects whether it was a bikeway already planned, a concept for a bikeway corridor or connecting a local park to the Metro East bikeway network. Each municipality or agency could submit up to 5 priority projects utilizing the questionnaire.

GIS Database

Geographic Information System (GIS) is a common software application used in planning to document and inventory existing conditions of regions regarding land use, zoning, transportation, utilities, parks and open space. GIS can be interfaced with multiple databases to be a very comprehensive and thorough source of information. GIS files can be maintained and updated as communities evolve and change with new developments. The GIS files developed for the MEPRD Long Range Development Plan will be a working database which will provide tremendous amounts of information for the agency and used to create a new online park and trail map.

This online resource will allow citizens to find information about trails, parks, and recreational facilities in Madison and St. Clair Counties. The files will be a working database for recreational enthusiasts in the Metro East.



Dedication of Dr. Tom Amlung Nature Trail at Southwestern Illinois College in Belleville, IL.

Public Involvement

An MEPRD priority of the planning process was to maintain an open channel of communication with the different constituent groups so they remain fully informed every step of the way and therefore invested in the success and fulfillment of the future plan. It also provided an additional forum to gauge regional conditions and needs from the perspective of the individual and constituent groups of Madison and St. Clair Counties and the region at large. The public was invited to participate at two key milestones in the process of updating the Long Range Development Plan. The first series of open houses occurred in January of 2011 when the planning team had completed approximately 30 percent of the process. The second open house series occurred in June of 2011 at the 90 percent milestone. Each time the public was alerted 2 weeks in advance of the meetings through the various media outlets including print, radio, TV and MEPRD's website. Each open house forum consisted of 2 meetings over an extended 2 hour period – one at the MEPRD office in Collinsville (Madison County) and another at the William and Florence Schmidt Art Center at Southwestern Illinois College in Belleville (St. Clair County).

The Open House meeting structure allowed attendees to interact with the planning team, ask questions and participate firsthand in the development of the long term plan. Attendees were encouraged to complete a comment sheet to assist in documenting their input and feedback to the MEPRD planning team. Materials from both sessions were posted on the MEPRD website along with MEPRD contact information so that public input could be collected throughout the entire planning process.

Public Meeting (30% Project Milestone)

The Open House held in January 2011 (30 percent project milestone) focused on introducing the public to the goals and process of updating the Long Range Development Plan and the future projects local agencies had included in their survey responses to MEPRD. These local agency proposed projects were illustrated on a map of Madison and St. Clair Counties. The map also documented existing trails and parks, along with proposed trail and park projects. Connections across the Mississippi River, to Missouri, were shown to illustrate regional connectivity. Detailed information was also on hand to better familiarize the public to the mission of MEPRD and its funding approach. The planning team collected information and areas of interest from informal conversations during the public session as well as the completed comment sheets for consideration in the next steps of the planning process.

Public Meeting (90% Project Milestone)

The second open house occurred in June, 2011(90 percent project milestone) which included the 25 priority projects for the 2011 Long Range Development Plan, Best Greenway Practices, and Funding Strategy and Application Process. The planning team

provided a brief presentation of the 10 new projects selected from local agencies (5 each from Madison and St. Clair Counties) based on their regional connectivity and significance, impact to the environment, feasibility and meeting MEPRD's mission. The agency selected projects as well as the re-evaluated 2003 priority projects (15 in total) were combined into the existing greenway systems plan and documented on a large regional map for the public to view and offer feedback. A sampling of information regarding the development of the Best Greenway Practices informed the public of the purpose, methodology, and example applications of incorporating Best Greenway Practices. Also, the planning team shared their findings regarding funding resources, the developing guidelines for grant funding applications and the new special event sponsor application process. Again, the planning team collected information from conversations with the attendees and comment sheets were available.



Public meeting in January 2011.



Public meeting in June 2011.

Best Greenway Practices

The Best Greenway Practices Report was developed to identify and describe outstanding practices in multi-jurisdictional greenway/trail districts from elsewhere, examining elements and procedures of potential use in the Metro East Park and Recreation District (MEPRD) Long Range Development Plan. This includes planning, operating, maintaining and funding trails and greenways.

A basic list of potential districts was assembled using information gathered by the team as well as by MEPRD staff. The National Parks and Recreation Association (NPRA) was also consulted. The initial listing of agencies for consideration included the following:

- Illinois Department of Natural Resources - IDNR
- Arlington Heights (IL) Park District
- Cedar Falls (MI) – (identify agency for trail with state-of-the-art signage)
- Champaign (IL) Park District
- Champaign County (IL) Forest Preserve District
- Cleveland (OH) MetroParks
- Cobb County (GA) Parks & Recreation
- Fox Valley (IL) Park District
- Great Rivers (MO) Greenway District
- Greensboro (NC) Park & Recreation District
- Indy (IN) Parks/Greenways
- Joliet (IL) Park District
- Lake County (IL) Forest Preserve
- Minneapolis (MN) Parks & Recreation
- Paulding County (GA) Parks & Recreation
- Phoenix (AZ) Parks & Recreation
- Rockford (IL) Park District
- Johnson County (KS) Parks & Recreation
- Schaumburg (IL) Parks District
- St. Charles County (MO) Parks & Recreation
- Westminster (CO) Parks and Recreation
- Wheaton (IL) Park District

Members of the planning team met with District staff to review this information and to discuss and identify agencies that have prominence and are similar in demographics or mission to that of MEPRD's. It was also decided to add entities that could provide information on creative funding strategies and other entities that could either be considered potential funding partners for MEPRD initiatives, or as in the case of the Missouri Foundation for Health, could be a potentially useful model for a similar agency in Illinois. The list was modified and condensed as follows (in alphabetical order):

- Champaign Park District (IL)
- Cleveland MetroParks (OH)
- Fox Valley Park District (IL)
- The Great Rivers Greenway District (MO)
- Illinois Department of Natural Resources
- Illinois Department of Transportation
- Indy Parks and Greenways Foundation (IN)
- Johnson County Parks and Recreation District (KS)
- Madison County Transit (IL)
- Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board (MN)
- Missouri Foundation for Health
- Ozark Greenways-Springfield/Greene County Parks Board (MO)
- St. Charles County Parks and Recreation District (MO)
- Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority

A questionnaire was developed to identify items to be researched (see appendix for questionnaire). The study was conducted by Dan Cross, CPRP, and James Pona, AICP, through early spring, 2011. Fourteen agencies were identified across the United States. Planning team members called each agency and spoke to trail and greenway professionals about the MEPRD planning project and their willingness to participate in sharing their successes and challenges. After speaking to the agency trail planner/administrator or appropriate contact, the survey was e-mailed with a cover letter from MEPRD along with an informational piece on the District and its history.

After approximately one week to review the questionnaire and informational materials, each agency was contacted by phone and interviewed for 30-45 minutes concerning their department.



MCT Heritage Trail in Glen Carbon, IL.

Best Practices

Extensive information was received from trail and greenway organizations during the course of this study, resulting in an abundance of data of potential use to the Metro East Park and Recreation District. The information is summarized below by category and addresses either exemplary practices or other information of potential use to MEPRD needs. The source agency is identified in parentheses.

Planning and Design:

- Hosting periodic (quarterly, semi-annual) “tech” or “partner” committee workshops or informal get-togethers to look at the potential trail routes and connections. Planners, engineers, consultants, community leaders, trail providers, utility companies meet to review where they are on projects, identify potential connections and partnerships. Not only an exchange of information but also a setting where expertise on trail building, maintenance, right of way acquisition can be shared. Stakeholders would be identified and timelines/project updates could take place. (Johnson County and Ozark Greenways)
- Opportunities to connect through brownfields and abandoned warehouse districts could take place now where there may have been roadblocks before. (Cleveland MetroParks)
- Key planning partners could include professional planners/engineers, neighborhood associations, citizens, community leaders, interpretative staff (natural and historic areas), recreation programming staff, utilities, and trail providers. (Virtually all respondents)
- Two key components for successful trails and connections include patience and determination. Interviewed agencies mentioned some key connections requiring over ten years. Champaign Park District worked with 10 local communities to develop a countywide trails master plan. Now it is up to each local community to implement. (GRG, Fox Valley, Champaign and others)
- Two agencies included their trail route ranking criteria and evaluation matrix for help in determining best route options. (Minneapolis and excerpt from Lake Oswego)
- As trails become more popular, there is a need to widen them from 8’ to 10’ to 12’ or more. But trail providers also stressed the need to balance/minimize the impact of cutting a wide swath of a corridor that separates habitat, fragments ecosystems, slashes tree canopies and destroys natural areas. (Cleveland MetroParks and Fox Valley). We need to provide “quality places” and not just trails. (GRG)
- Partnerships with health providers and hospitals seem like a natural fit with trail providers and should be explored more and more. (GRG, MFH)
- Target areas under pressure from real estate development to acquire trail corridors before they are gone or too expensive. (Johnson County)
- Some agencies had separate trail and greenways master plans (IDNR). Most agencies follow AASHTO and MUTCD guidelines. GRG has a “Best Practices” guideline regarding storm water and greenways. Cleveland MetroParks and Champaign are working on or have just completed Design Standards. MCT Trails uses its own customized trail cross-sections to minimize long-term maintenance issues due to unstable soils in the American Bottoms area.
- Connections to activity generators including business districts are considered. (Fox Valley Park District)
- Many agencies complete a five/ten year strategic plan or have a Trails and Greenways component of their park master plan. Ozark Greenways spend a half or full day on a retreat with Board members reviewing policies and planning annually.
- Ozark Greenways reviews new property plats for possible trails and connections for the County. They also offer a “Trail Planning 101” course for smaller communities in their region.
- Minneapolis staff gets away for on-site tours of greenways in other cities including Vancouver, Seattle, Chicago and St. Louis/Metro East.
- Way Finding Signage is incorporated. (Fox Valley Park District)

Community Support:

- Publicizing to tax payers and funders that trails can promote and preserve natural areas, provide fitness and recreation opportunities and provide transportation links-all rolled up into one facility-will be critical in times of tight funding. (See “Have Paths Will Travel” article)
- Minneapolis has 9-20 member citizen advisory committees that along with staff, oversee greenway projects from start to finish.
- Community support was identified by most agencies as the most critical piece in developing trails and making key connections. Many agencies comment they are not seeing as much of the Not in My Backyard (Nimby-ism) they saw earlier with trail development.
- Rangers interview trail users on a regular, seasonal basis at their facilities to gauge how they are doing with maintenance, operations and new trails. (St. Charles County)

Funding:

- Indy Greenways sells license plates and hosts an annual workshop/luncheon for fundraising.
- Funding greenways projects along with storm water improvements seems to benefit both trail and public works chances of securing funding and public support. (Cleveland MetroParks)
- Community Foundations have helped with local agencies on a few projects. (Ozark Greenways)

Challenges:

- Acquiring trail corridor and right of way was the most frequent response. St. Charles County has one staff dedicated to park and trail land acquisition.
- Keeping track of the trail easements and right of way documents is becoming more and more cumbersome. (Cleveland MetroParks)
- Funding. In particular a steady flow of funding for acquisition, development and maintenance of trails. Johnson County used to have its own crew and equipment for trail building. That has been lost due to budget cuts. GRG has dedicated sales tax for greenways but has seen their funding dollars shrink because of the tight economy.
- Grade separations at road crossings have come to be expected in Fox Valley but are more expensive than at-grade crossings.

Maintenance:

- GRG does design for their trails up to about 20% and then has trail operators and maintenance staff look over for suggestions.
- St. Charles County leaves 50% of its parkland and corridors in a natural state to help ease maintenance requirements.
- Some agencies mow just one mower width along the trails to save time and money. (Cleveland MetroParks and Fox Valley)
- High-pressure washers are used to help keep pavements clean and well maintained. (Fox Valley Park District)



Groundbreaking for the O'Fallon Family Sports Park in O'Fallon, IL.



Community outreach event, a bike rodeo, at MEPRD offices in Collinsville, IL.

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2011 Long Range Plan

2011 Project Introduction

The planning process of the MEPRD Long Range Development Plan culminated in the recommendation of ten new trail corridors for Madison and St. Clair counties. The corridors were selected out of numerous potential trail projects submitted by the local public agencies with the Metro East Park and Recreation District. Each project which was submitted by the local agencies and municipalities was evaluated through a process which determined if the project was primarily a benefit of the local community or the benefit of the entire regional trail system. The trail projects were then rated by a set of criteria, developed by the project team, to emphasize trails with a regional benefit.

The criteria for the trail evaluation is listed below:

1. Connectivity to the local neighborhoods and activity centers.
2. Connectivity to the existing regional trail system.
3. Feasibility of constructing the proposed trail.
4. Impact assessment.
5. Environmental/cultural opportunities along the trail route.
6. Available funding.
7. Available maintenance plan.
8. Proximity and connection to population centers.
9. Proximity to an existing trailhead.
10. Regional significance.

The project team evaluated each of the submitted trail projects, with the exception of the criteria #10, Regional Significance, which was evaluated by the MEPRD. Each project received a rating based on fulfilling the criteria. The ratings were used in determining the topped ranked priority in each municipality. For example, Alton turned in 3 responses to the Bikeways Priority Questionnaire, they were each rated and then the totals were compared. The trail with the highest total rating was then chosen as Alton's top priority.

Once the top priorities were determined for each municipality, further evaluation was needed to recommend 5 trails in Madison County and 5 trails in St. Clair County. The ratings were again used in conjunction with the overall map showing the existing trail system, the 2003 LRP existing priorities and the top priority trails from each municipality. The top 5 recommended trails in Madison and St. Clair counties are in alignment with MEPRD's mission of developing a public system of interconnecting trails.

To assist with MEPRD's programming and budgeting, a rating system was developed for each proposed trail project. The rating system evaluated each project for the following key elements:

- Local and regional connectivity
- Regional significance
- Feasibility of construction
- Available funding

The evaluations gave a priority rating to each project. A rating of 1 is an immediate priority; a rating of 2 is a future priority; and a rating of 3 is a long-term priority.

A listing of the ten priority trails from 2011 and sixteen priority trails from 2003, along with their priority ratings are listed below:

2011 Priority Trails

Alton Bike Path – Rating 2
 Arlington/Mounds Connector – Rating 1
 Bethalto Connector – Rating 2
 Bicentennial/Citizens/Bellevue/ Memorial Corridor – Rating 2
 Engle Creek/College Road Bike Trail – Rating 2
 Gordon Moore Connector – Rating 2
 Highland Connector Trail – Rating 2
 Longacre Corridor – Rating 2
 Schranz/Old Collinsville/Huntwood Road Trails – Rating 2
 SWIC to Mascoutah Trail – Rating 3

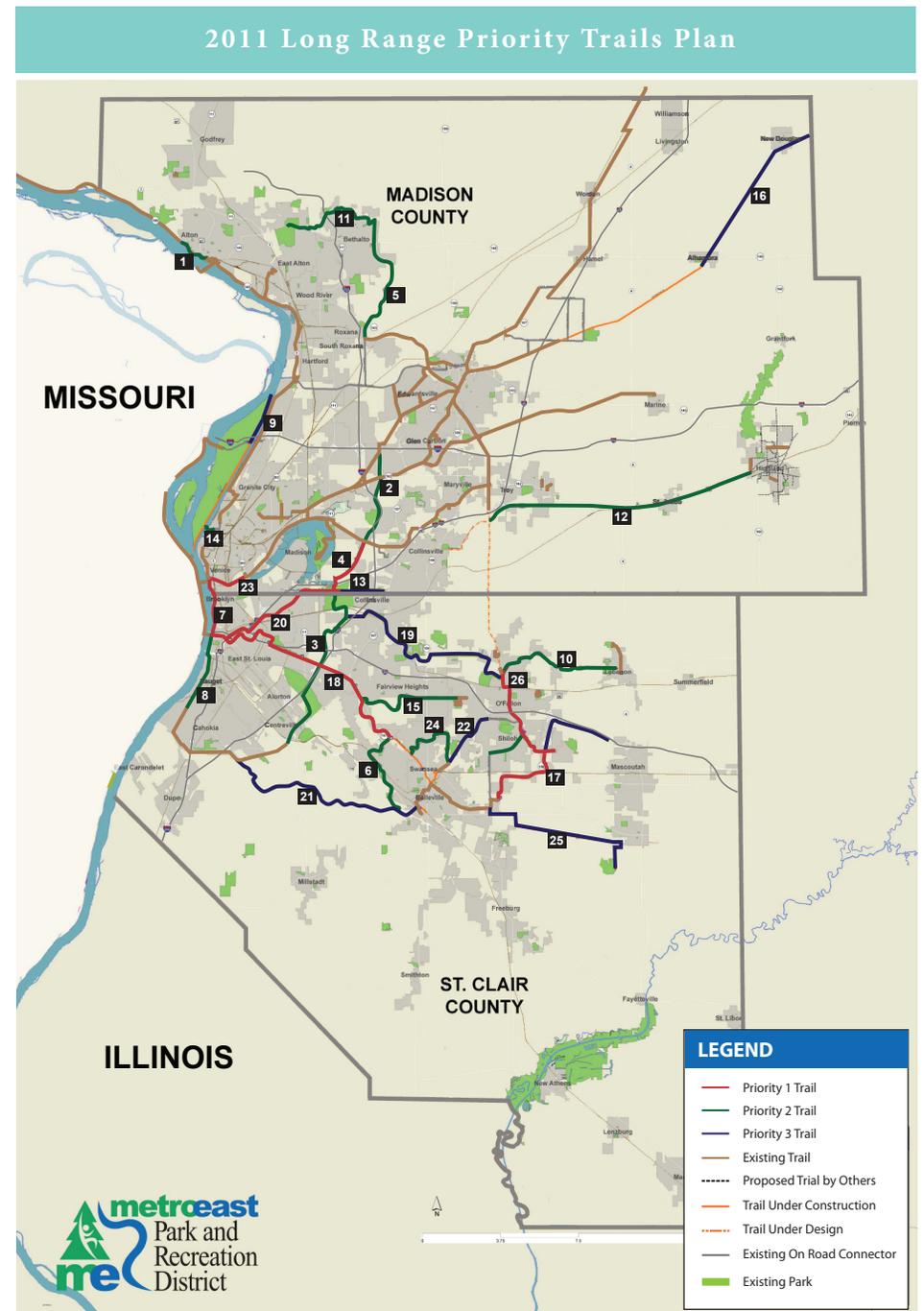
2003 Priority Trails

American Bottoms Trail North – Rating 2
 American Bottoms Trail South – Rating 2
 Confluence Bikeway North – Rating 1
 Confluence Bikeway South – Rating 2
 Eagle Points Trail – Rating 3
 Jaycee Connector Trail – Rating 3
 Lock 27 Trail Crossing – Rating 2
 MCT Nickel Plate Trail – Rating 3
 MetroLink Bike Trail East – Rating 1
 MetroLink Bike Trail West – Rating 1
 Milburn School Trail – Rating 3
 Mounds Heritage Trail – Rating 1
 Prairie du Pont Trail – Rating 3
 Richland Creek Trail – Rating 3
 Schoolhouse Trail Connector – Rating 1
 Scott-Troy Trail South Extension - Rating 1

The following pages describe and illustrate the ten new priority trails of the Long Range Development Plan of 2011. Each of the proposed trail projects has a detailed description, a key map which illustrates the proposed trail in a regional context, and an aerial plan graphic illustrating the trail alignment. Subsequent pages illustrate the 2003 priority trail projects, which were determined in the 2003 Long Range Plan. These fifteen trail projects will continue to be priorities of the Long Range Development Plan of the Metro East Park and Recreation District.

Long Range Plan 2011 Priority Trails Table

Number	Bikeway Name	Total Miles	Priority Ranking
1)	Alton Bike Path	1	2
2)	American Bottoms Trail North	5	2
3)	American Bottoms Trail South	8	2
4)	Arlington/Mounds Connector	3	1
5)	Bethalto Connector	7	2
6)	Bicentennial/Belleview/Memorial Corridor	5	2
7)	Confluence Bikeway North	3	1
8)	Confluence Bikeway South	4	2
9)	Eagle Points Trail	3	3
10)	Engle Creek/College Road Bike Trail	6	2
11)	Gordon Moore Connector	5	2
12)	Highland Connector Trail	13	2
13)	Jaycee Connector Trail	1	3
14)	Lock 27 Trail Crossing	1	2
15)	Longacre Corridor	6	2
16)	MCT Nickel Plate Trail	9	3
17)	MetroLink Bike Trail East	8	1
18)	MetroLink Bike Trail West	11	1
19)	Milburn School Trail	10	3
20)	Mounds Heritage Trail	5	1
21)	Prairie du Pont Trail	10	3
22)	Richland Creek Trail	3	3
23)	Schoolhouse Trail Connector	2	1
24)	Schranz/Old Collinsville/Huntsville Road Trails	4	2
25)	SWIC to Mascoutah Trail	9	3
26)	Scott-Troy Trail South Extension	5	1
	Total Trail Miles	147	

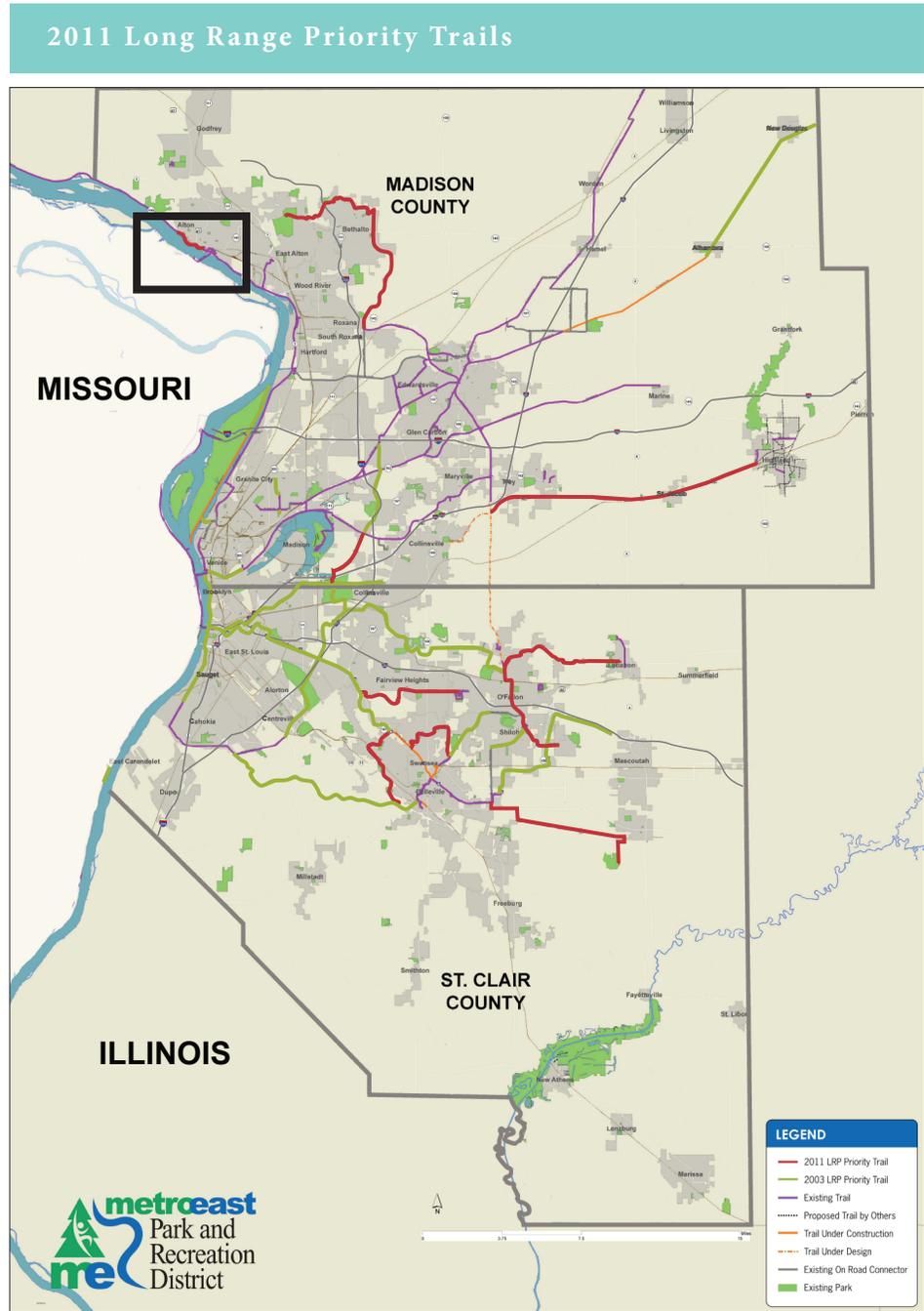


Alton Bike Path

The 1.5 mile trail will connect the MCT Confluence Trail and the Vadalabene Trail at the two existing trail heads, located in Riverfront Park and Piasa Park. Local industry and limited right of way for an off street trail create challenges for the alignment. The characteristics surrounding the trail vary greatly throughout the corridor, and include historic downtown Alton, a riverfront marina, the Mississippi River, palisades wildlife, river traffic, industrial operations, and a train/rail corridor which are all located nearby.

The Alton Bike Path is a highly desirable connection however the challenge of limited right of way for an off street trail will direct the consideration of an on-street bicycle route. While an on street bicycle route, with heavy vehicular traffic, is not the ideal facility, experienced cyclists are used to such facilities. Less experienced cyclists and pedestrians will benefit from trailheads at either end of the Alton Bike Path segment, thus allowing these cyclists to drive the path and park at the trailheads.

The proposed Alton Bike Path would provide a critical connection between the MCT Confluence Bike Trail and the Sam A. Valadebene Great River Road Bike Trail. The MCT Confluence Trail stretches south to the McKinley Bridge with connections to the Chain of Rocks Pedestrian Bridge over the Mississippi River. The Great River Road Trail parallels the river connecting the River Bend destinations of the towns of Elsah and Grafton as well as Pere Marquette State Park. Along the river from Hartford to Pere Marquette State Park is the Meeting of the Great Rivers Scenic Byway, a linear cultural tourism route.

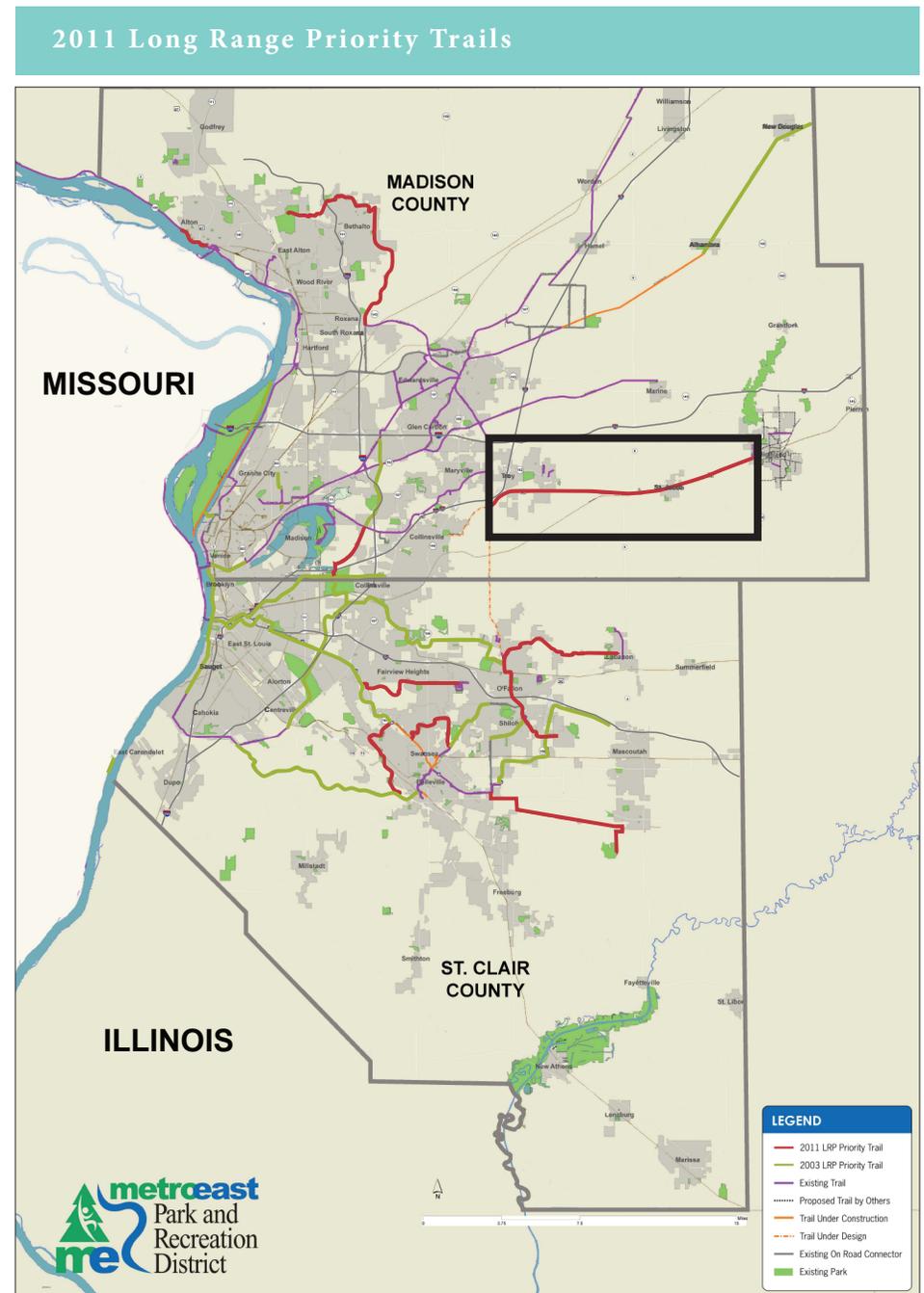




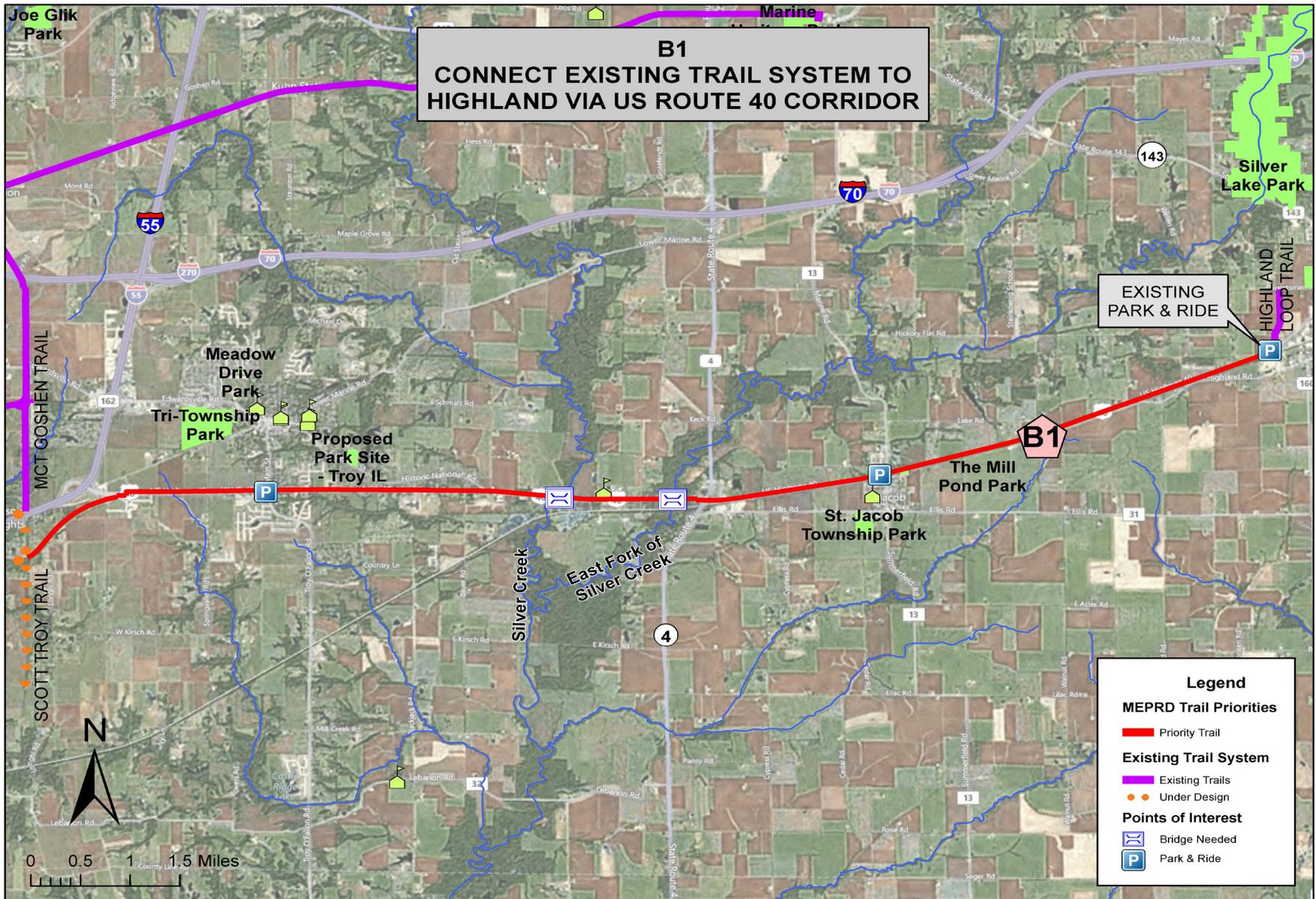
Highland Connector Trail

The thirteen mile trail will connect Highland, Saint Jacob, Troy to the existing Madison County Trail System. This trail follows US Route 40 and parallels a railroad corridor for the majority of the proposed alignment. The trail characteristics include farm terrain, US Route 40 traffic, a rail corridor and the Silver Creek bottoms. The feasibility of this trail is moderate. Although part of the potential alignment is parallel to a railroad, no railroad crossings are anticipated. There are twelve estimated roadway crossings and twelve estimated driveway crossings. In addition to the crossings, two bridges would also be required. Wetlands, potential mitigation and flood zones at Silver Creek and the East Fork of the Silver Creek will need to be addressed during the design phase. Private property acquisition and easements would also be a factor along Route 40.

The proposed Highland Connector Trail will extend the MEPRD trail system into the eastern half of Madison County, along the Highway 40 corridor and bring an opportunity for recreation to a more rural area of Madison County. The Highland Connector Trail will allow cyclists and pedestrian's access to the farmland and open spaces while connecting the more suburban Troy community with the villages of Saint Jacob and Highland.



Highland Connector Trail



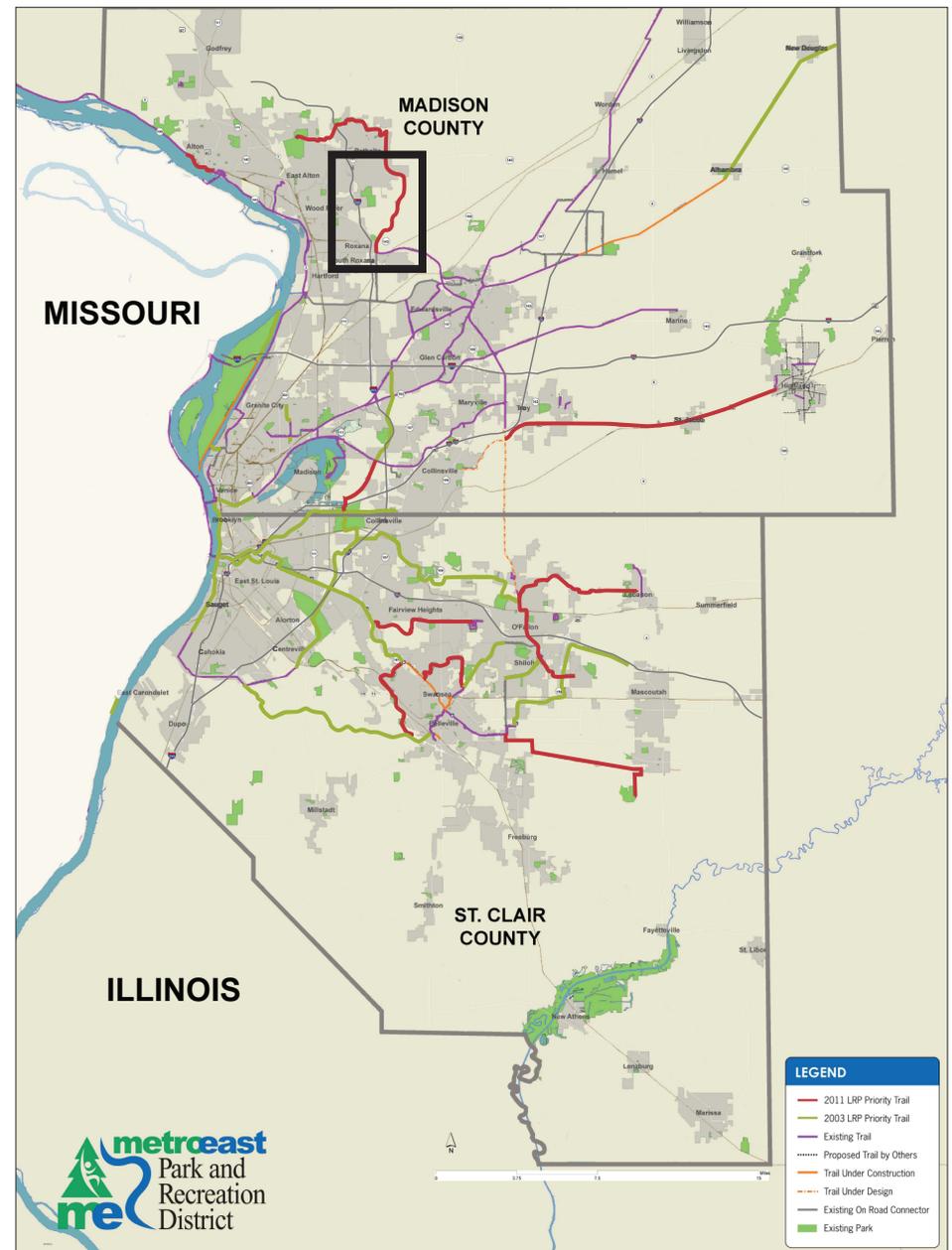
Bethalto Connector

This seven mile trail will connect Bethalto to the existing Madison County Transit (MCT) Watershed Trail. The trail will provide riders with mostly rural farm landscapes along Moreland Road and the potential for viewing airplanes landing and taking off along the eastern edge of St. Louis Regional Airport.

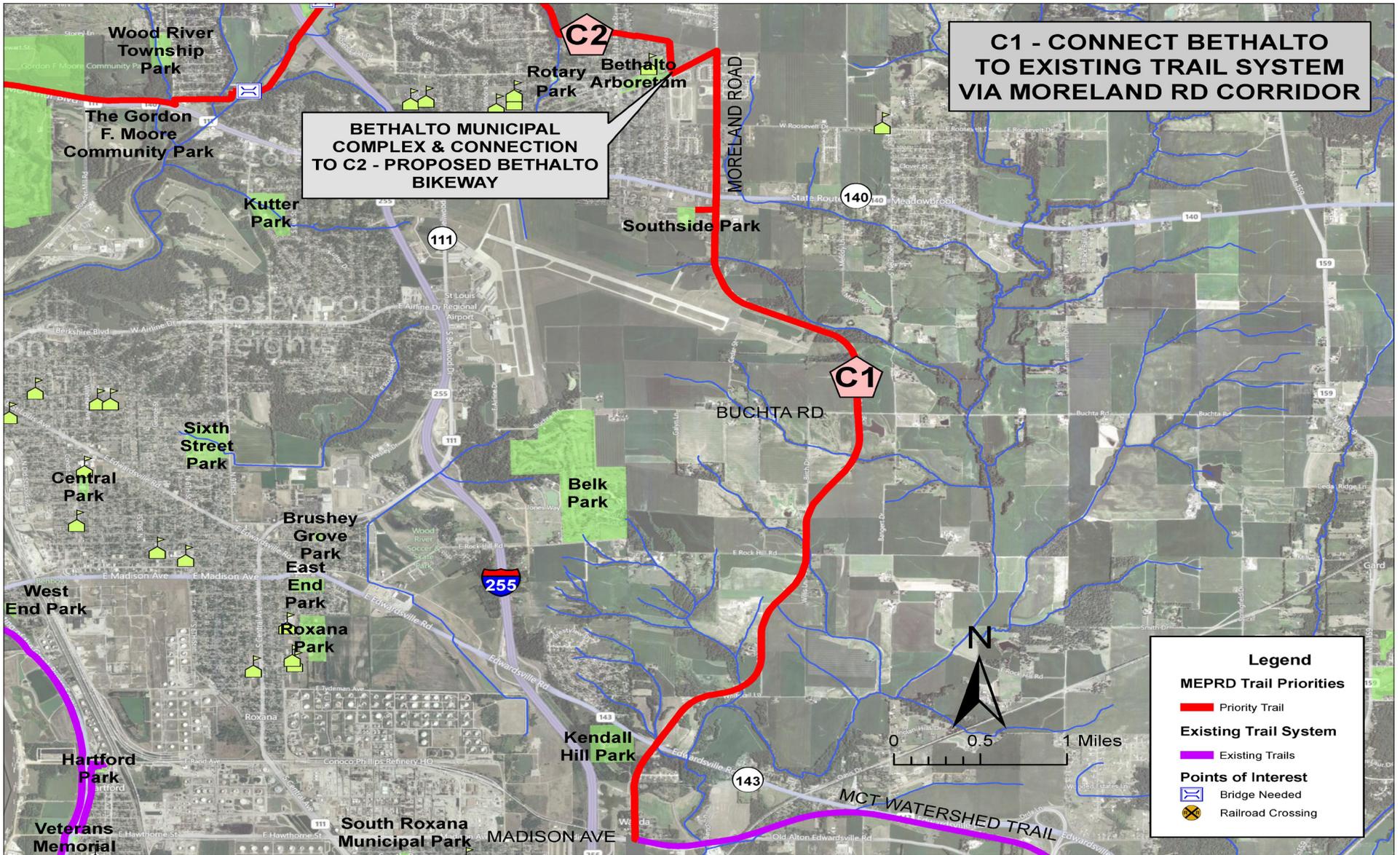
The feasibility of this trail is moderate. At the south end between Madison Ave and IL RT 143, narrow ROW and grade issues may present a difficult but solvable situation. Alternate routes and actual feasibility will require additional study. North of IL RT 143 along Moreland Road, wide shoulders, excess ROW and old road beds provide a corridor that is highly feasible for this trail. Portions of trail may need to utilize existing road shoulders but there are ample opportunities to move off of the roadway through most of the corridor.

The Bethalto Connector Trail is a great opportunity to provide connectivity to parks and existing trail systems in northwest Madison County. The trail will connect to the existing MCT Watershed Trail, will give the citizens access to the extensive trail network in the southern half of Madison County. The Bethalto Connector Trail will also give pedestrians and cyclists the opportunity to take the trail and then on street connections to many local parks including the Bethalto Arboretum, Southside Park, Belk Park and Kendall Hill Park. The connectivity to existing trail systems, open space and parks will add to the active healthy lifestyle opportunities for residents of Bethalto and Madison County.

2011 Long Range Priority Trails



Bethalto Connector

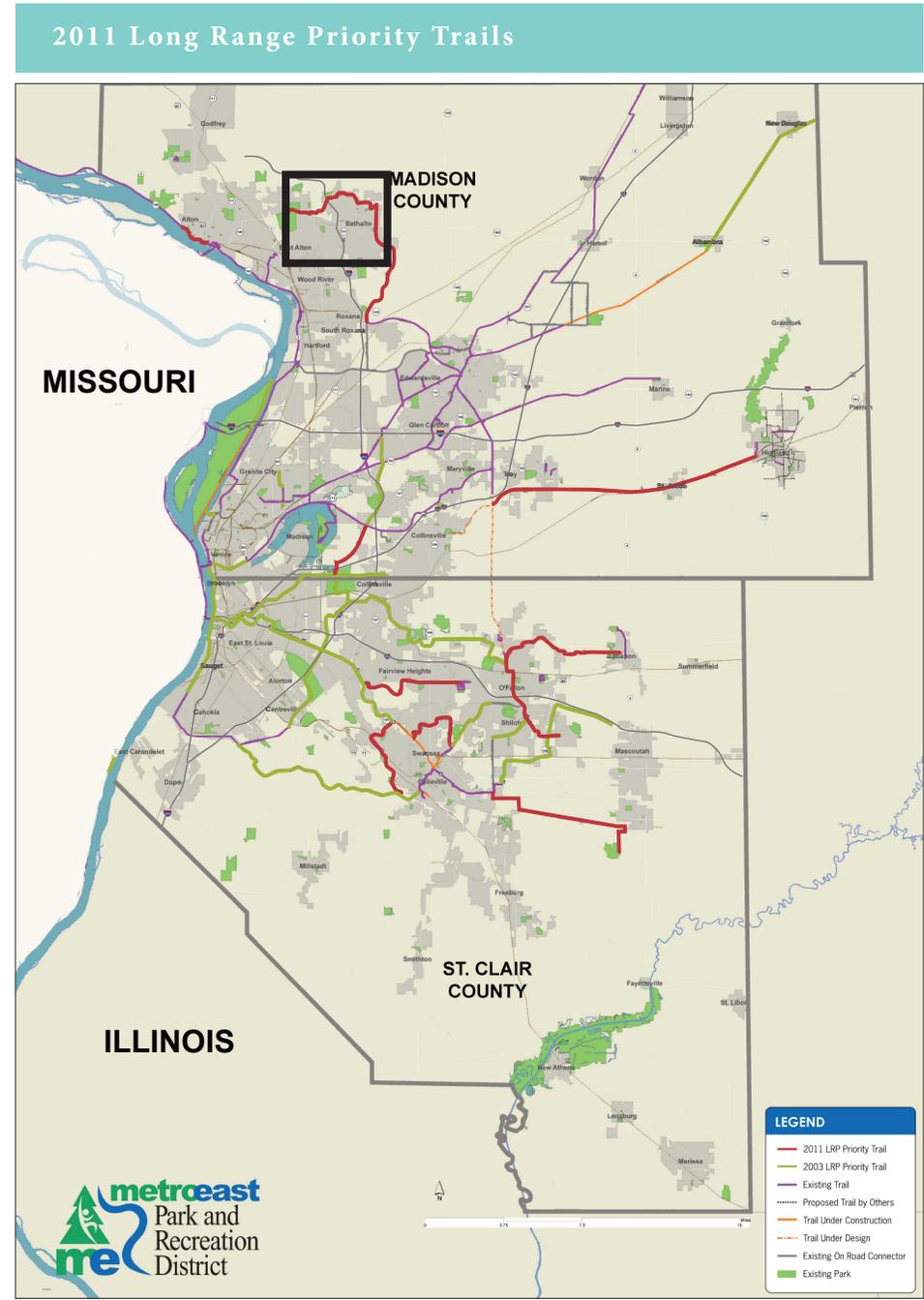


Gordon Moore Connector

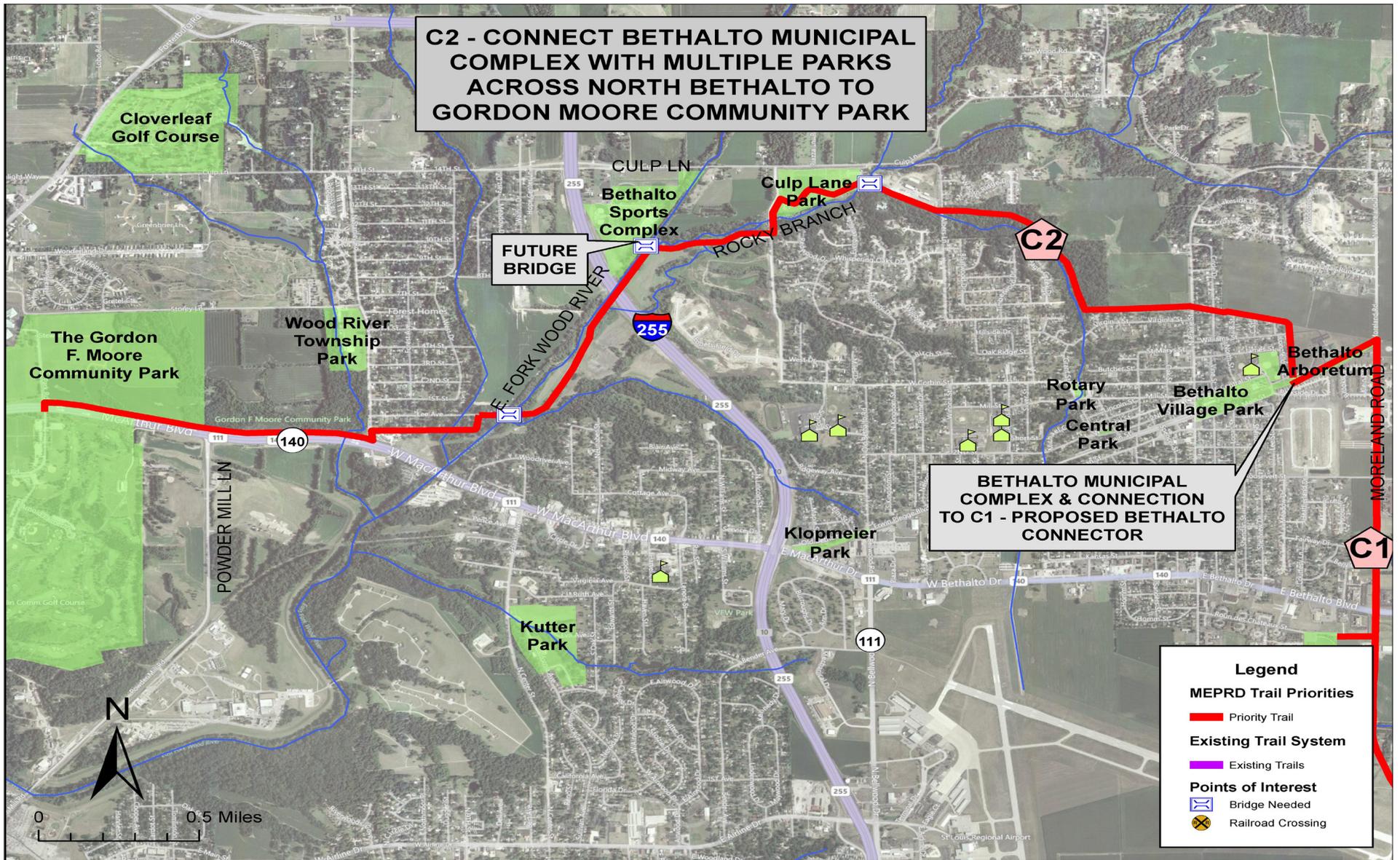
This five mile trail will follow the East Fork of Wood River, Rocky Branch & several smaller tributaries to connect north Bethalto to Gordon Moore Community Park. Utilizing the Bethalto Connector, eventually it will connect to the existing MCT Trail network. It would provide trail users with a variety of experiences including, urban, farmland, creeks, wetlands and woodland areas. The trail would potentially connect four parks with schools, activity centers and residential areas.

In terms of property, this trail is very feasible. The School District and Village of Bethalto property will host the majority of the alignment. The major issues concerning feasibility will include bridges, wetlands, and flood zones. I-255 access is not an issue since Bethalto has the room and access easement for a trail under I-255 at the East Fork of Wood River.

The Gordon Moore Connector will enhance the recreational lifestyles and connections from the communities of Bethalto and Alton to many recreational facilities, including Gordon F. Moore Community Park. While the park is a City of Alton park facility, it functions as a regional park due to its size, facilities, and location. The bikeway trail will give citizens a chance to experience riparian environments along the creeks and the east fork of the Wood River. The trail will also allow local residents the opportunity to walk or cycle to nearby parks including Culp Lane Park and the Bethalto Sports Complex and the regional destination of Gordon Moore Park.



Gordon Moore Connector



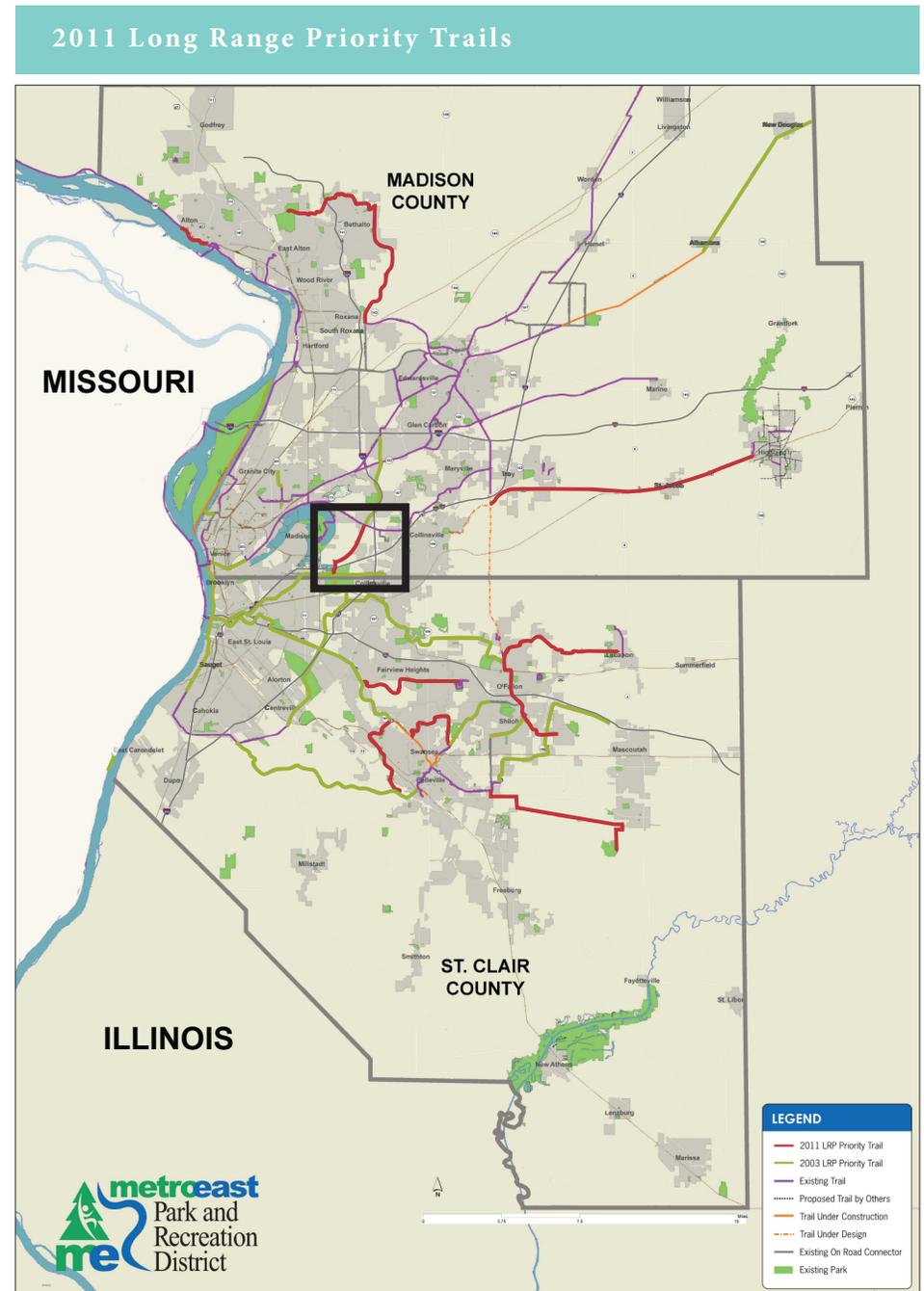
2011 LONG RANGE PLAN

Arlington/Mounds Connector

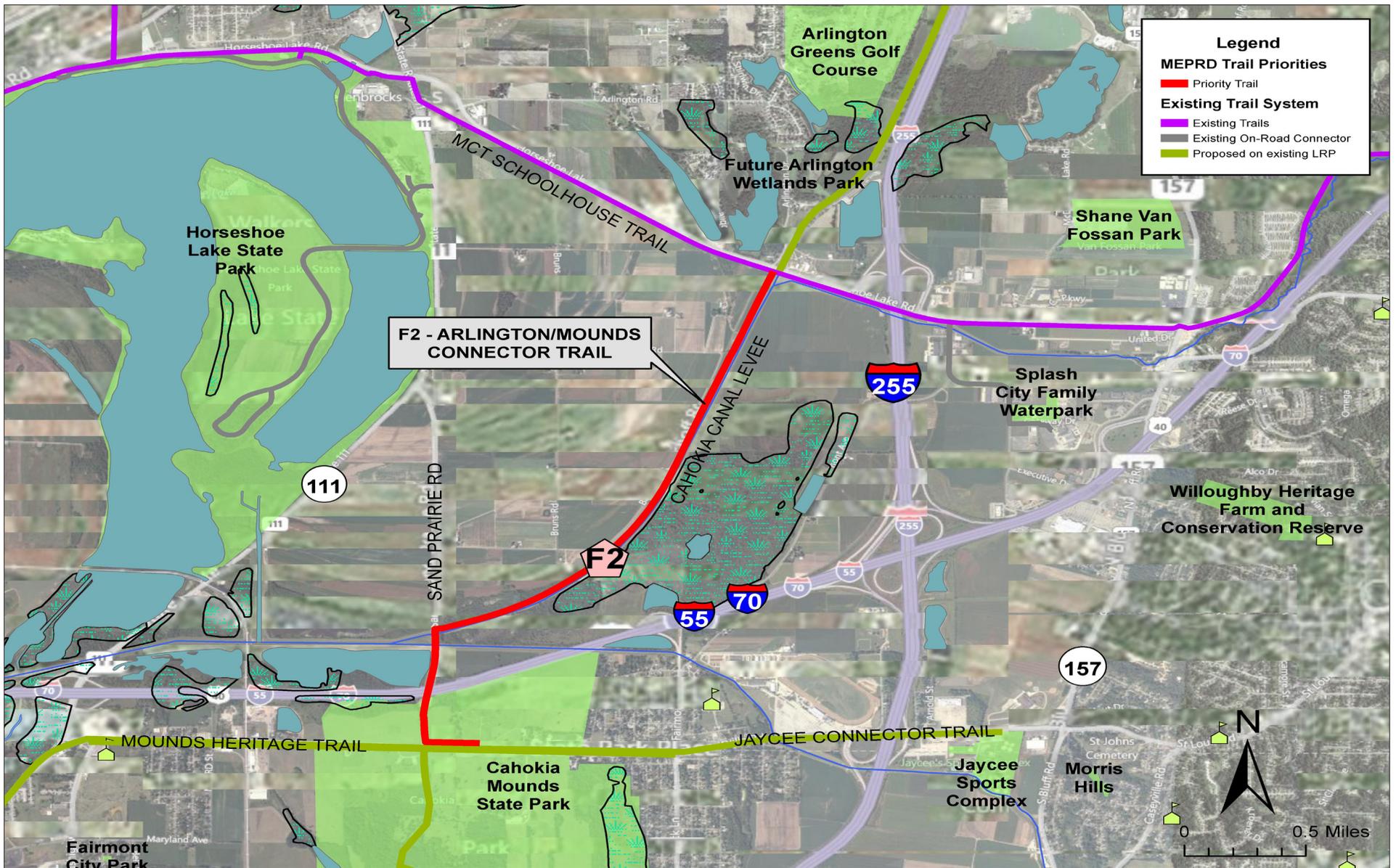
This three mile trail will connect the MCT Schoolhouse Trail, the American Bottoms 2003 LRP priority trail and Cahokia Mounds State Park. This trail would provide riders cultural and natural experiences from the Big Mound at the Cahokia Mounds Historic Site to the large natural wetland areas adjacent to the trail alignment along the Cahokia Creek levee system up to the existing MCT Schoolhouse Trail.

The feasibility is very high for this trail. The majority is on a Metro East Sanitary District (MESD) levee and the remainder is Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) ROW. There will be a short section that will need to be either on-road, one way bike lane on paved shoulder or separated trail adjacent and parallel to Sand Prairie Rd. The existing bridge over I-55/70 is narrow and may be suited for an on-road designation whereas the bridges over Canteen Creek and Cahokia Creek are wider and may accommodate a bike lane on a paved shoulder in each direction.

The Arlington/Mounds Connector is a great opportunity to link the existing trail system to the Cahokia Mounds State Park, a national cultural and historical treasure. The Cahokia Mounds were designated a United States National Historic Landmark by U.S. Department of the Interior and World Heritage Site by the United Nations. Linking the MEPRD trail system to this significant cultural and historical destination is a great educational opportunity for local residents and all who use the local trail network in Madison and St. Clair County. The trail would also be a unique in its function of connecting to such a national and international destination, giving the trail a special identity.



Arlington/Mounds Connector



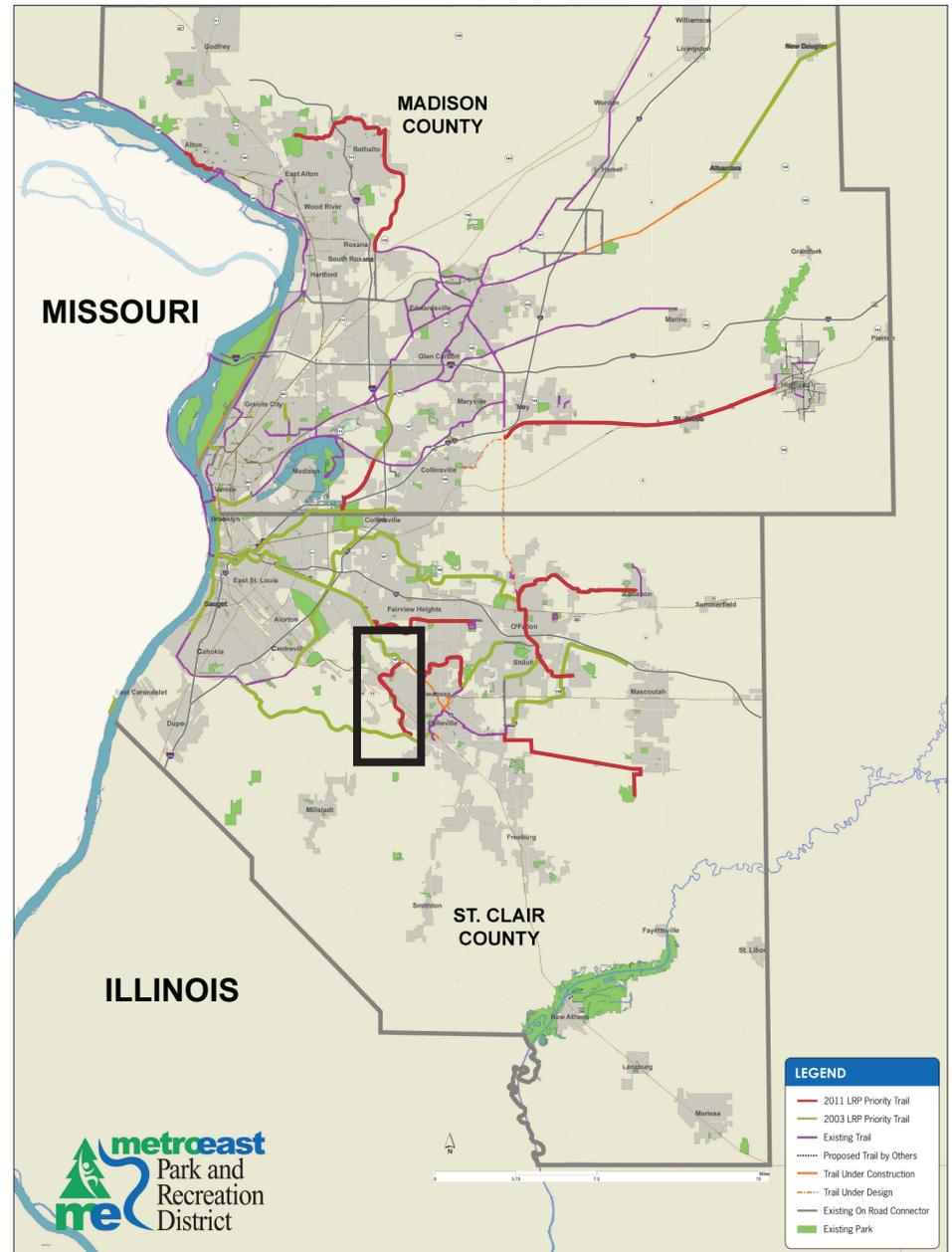
Bicentennial/Citizens/Bellevue/Memorial Corridor

This five mile trail will effectively link Belleville parks, schools, major employers and the trail system through an urban setting. Beginning at Citizens Park, the trail will follow the old railroad right-of-way on the south side of the existing Norfolk Southern Railroad to the northeast. The trail would cross North Belt West at grade and continue on the old RR ROW to 52nd Street where it crosses the tracks. The trail would then cross 52nd Street at grade and continue on the old RR ROW to Frank Scott Parkway, then turn right to follow the eastern ROW of Frank Scott Parkway at its intersection with Main Street. The trail would cross Main Street at grade at the signalized intersection and enter the Althoff Campus. The trail would pass through the western edge of the campus, along the end of the track, and enter the wooded area north east of the campus, passing through the woods to Bellevue Park on the other side. It would then follow the edge of Bellevue Park before turning left along the eastern property line of Hope Church to Dapron Drive. It would then cross Dapron and enter the hospital campus weaving through to the northern edge near Frank Scott Parkway. The final route to MetroLink Bike Trail needs further evaluation, but will likely be along the southeastern side of Frank Scott Parkway crossing Gettysburg Road at grade to the intersection of Frank Scott and Rt. 161. Once there, the trail would simply proceed to the MetroLink station and MetroLink Bike Trail on the southern side of the MetroLink tracks.

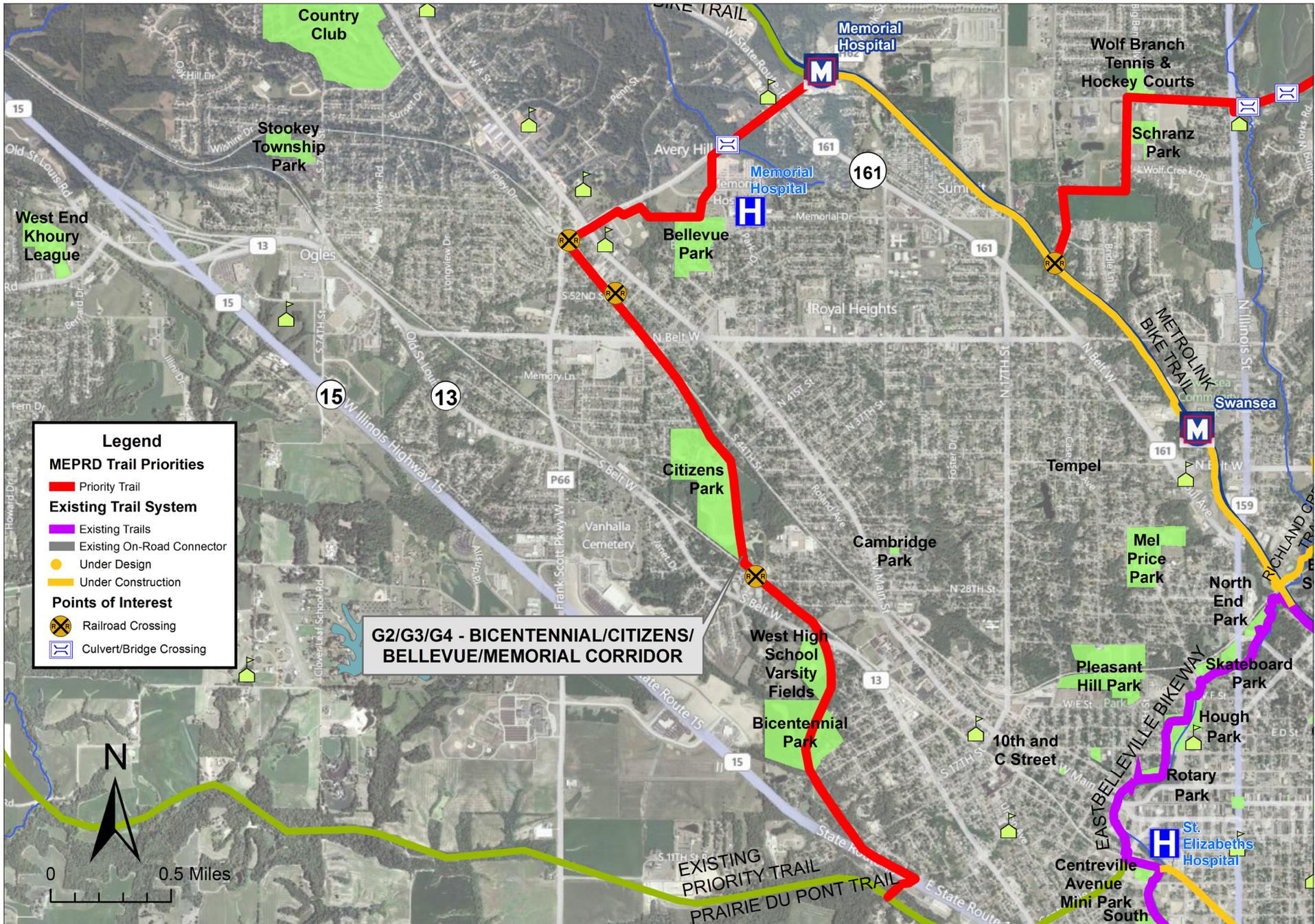
The feasibility for this trail is high. The City of Belleville owns much of the alignment and Althoff High School and Memorial Hospital are institutions which have a good reputation for civic support. The City has some funding in place for the Citizens Park to Memorial Hospital segment, but will need additional funding to connect to the MetroLink Bike Trail.

The Bicentennial/Citizens/Bellevue/Memorial Corridor trails have great potential to connect many facilities, institutions and parks in heart of the Belleville community. The trails will give local residents the opportunity to cycle or walk to the athletic complex of Citizens Park or the more passive setting of beautiful Bellevue Park. The trails will also provide the opportunity for alternative transportation to major destinations such as Memorial Hospital, Althoff High School and the business corridors of Frank Scott Parkway and Main Street. The trails will also allow for multi-modal opportunities of connecting to the MetroLink stations of Memorial Hospital Station and eventually the Swansea Station, via the MetroLink Bike Trail. Connectivity will be a major accomplishment of the trails as the new trail will connect with the proposed MetroLink Bike Trail currently under construction, between the Memorial and Swansea Stations as well as the existing MetroLink Bike Trail to the east. The new trail will also connect to the existing East Belleville Bikeway, connecting numerous parks, neighborhoods and Downtown Belleville. The Bicentennial/Citizens/ Bellevue/ Memorial Corridor trail will be a significant addition to the established trail system of Belleville, providing tremendous opportunities for recreation, alternative transportation, multi-modal connectivity, and community connections.

2011 Long Range Priority Trails



Bicentennial/Citizens/Bellevue/Memorial Corridor

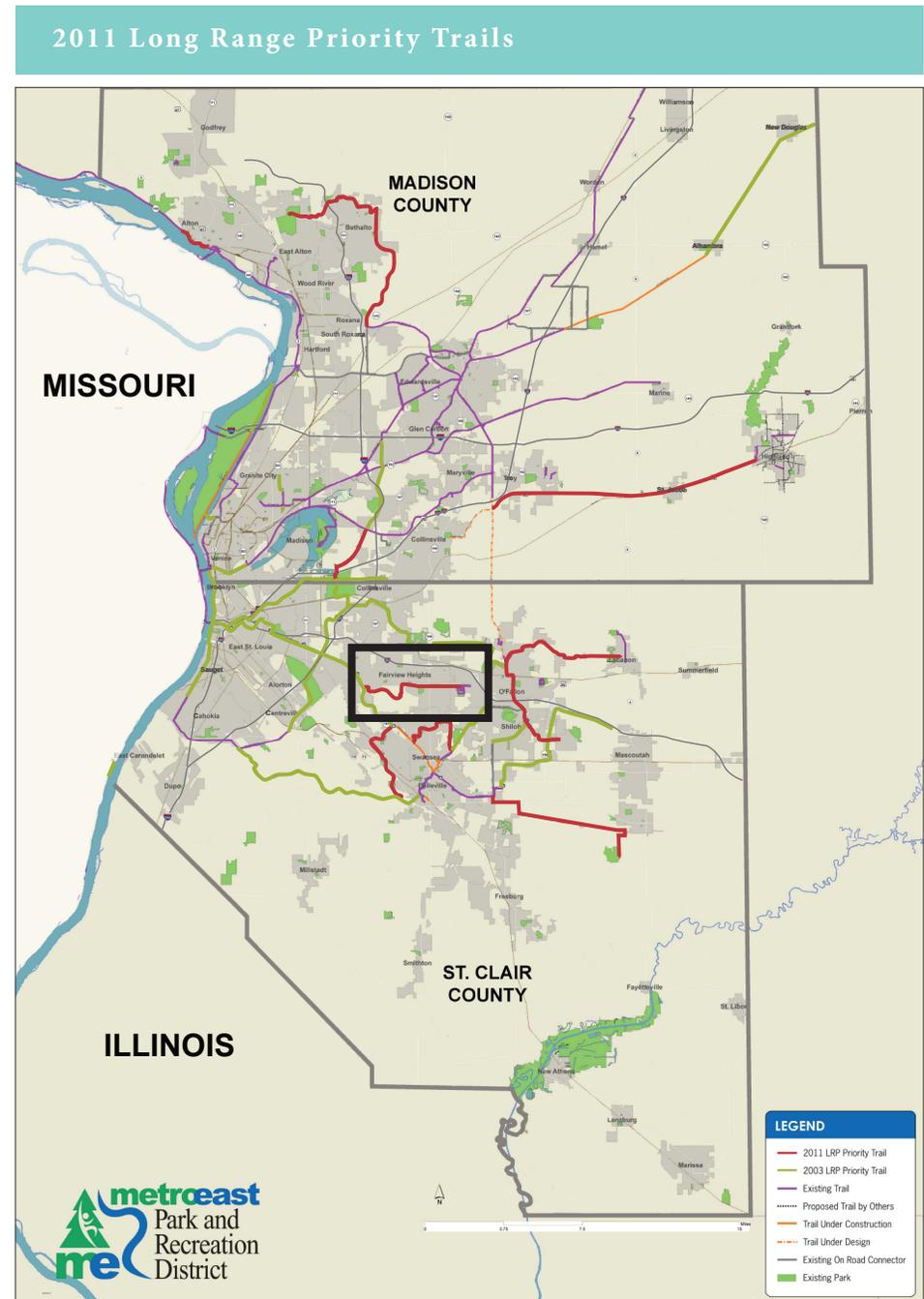


Longacre Corridor

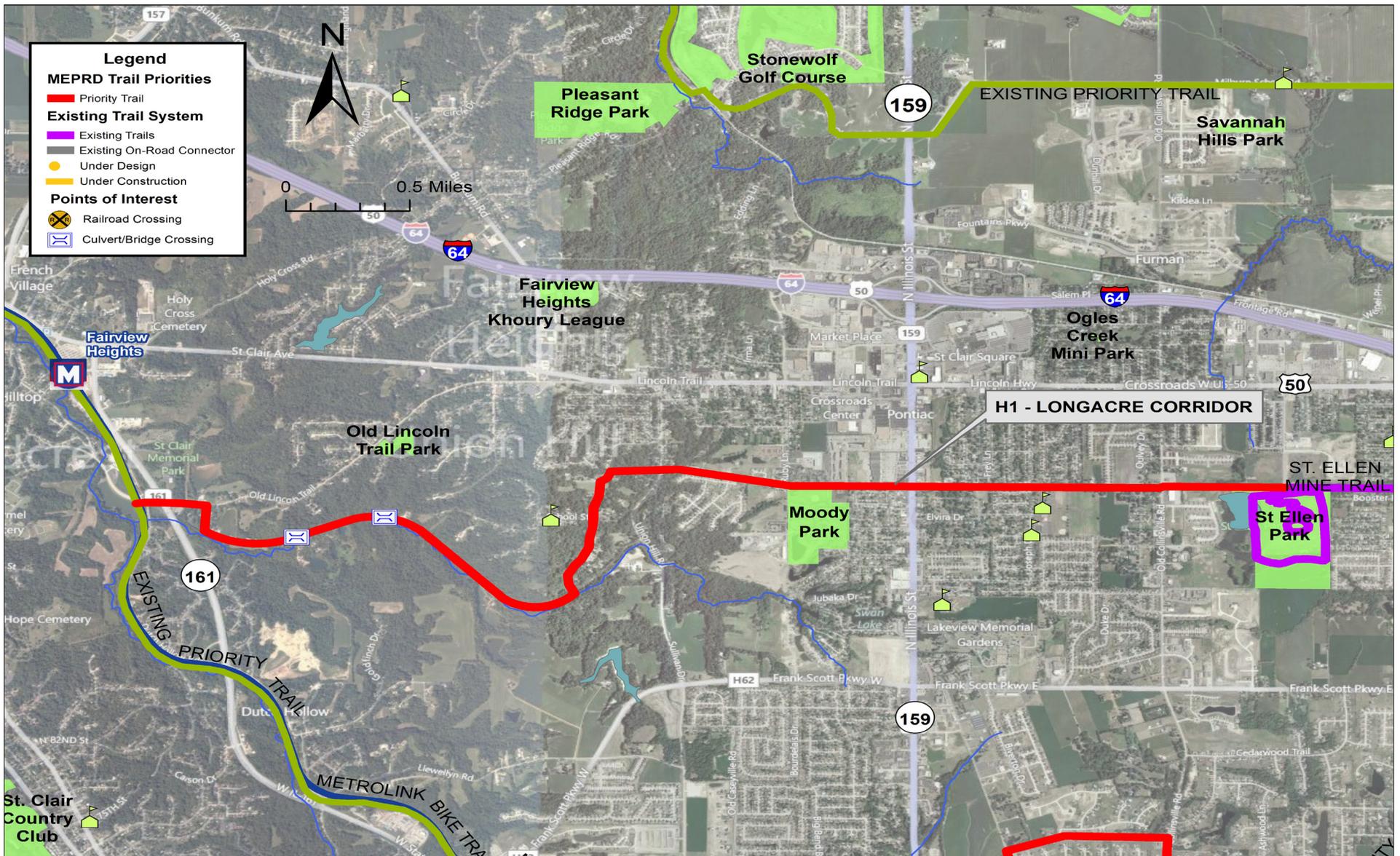
This six mile trail will connect the future MetroLink Bike Trail to Moody Park and St. Ellen Park. The most desirable corridor begins where the MetroLink Bike Trail crosses Lebanon Road near its intersection with IL Rt. 161. It would follow Lebanon Road east to the existing signalized intersection with IL Rt. 161 and cross Rt. 161 with a pedestrian signal. Once past Route 161, the trail will initially have a rural, wooded feel for some distance before coming closer to residential subdivisions. Once it reaches Long Acre Drive, the off-road trail would open up and parallel the roadway to Moody Park and then proceed east to St. Ellen Park.

The trail would require some cooperation from private landowners and Caseyville Township to finalize the alignment, but once done the project itself is very feasible and will connect a significant portion of the Fairview Heights population to the trail system.

The Longacre Corridor trail will connect local neighborhoods in Fairview Heights, Swansea and Belleville to nearby natural areas, riparian corridors, and parks. The trail will provide the chance for active and passive recreation, in a safe off road corridor, between two major roadways, state highways 161 and 159. The trail will also give residents access to the MetroLink system, with the future extension of the MetroLink Bike Trail to the Fairview Heights station. The Longacre Corridor trail will connect with the MetroLink Bike Trail just to the south of the station.



Longacre Corridor



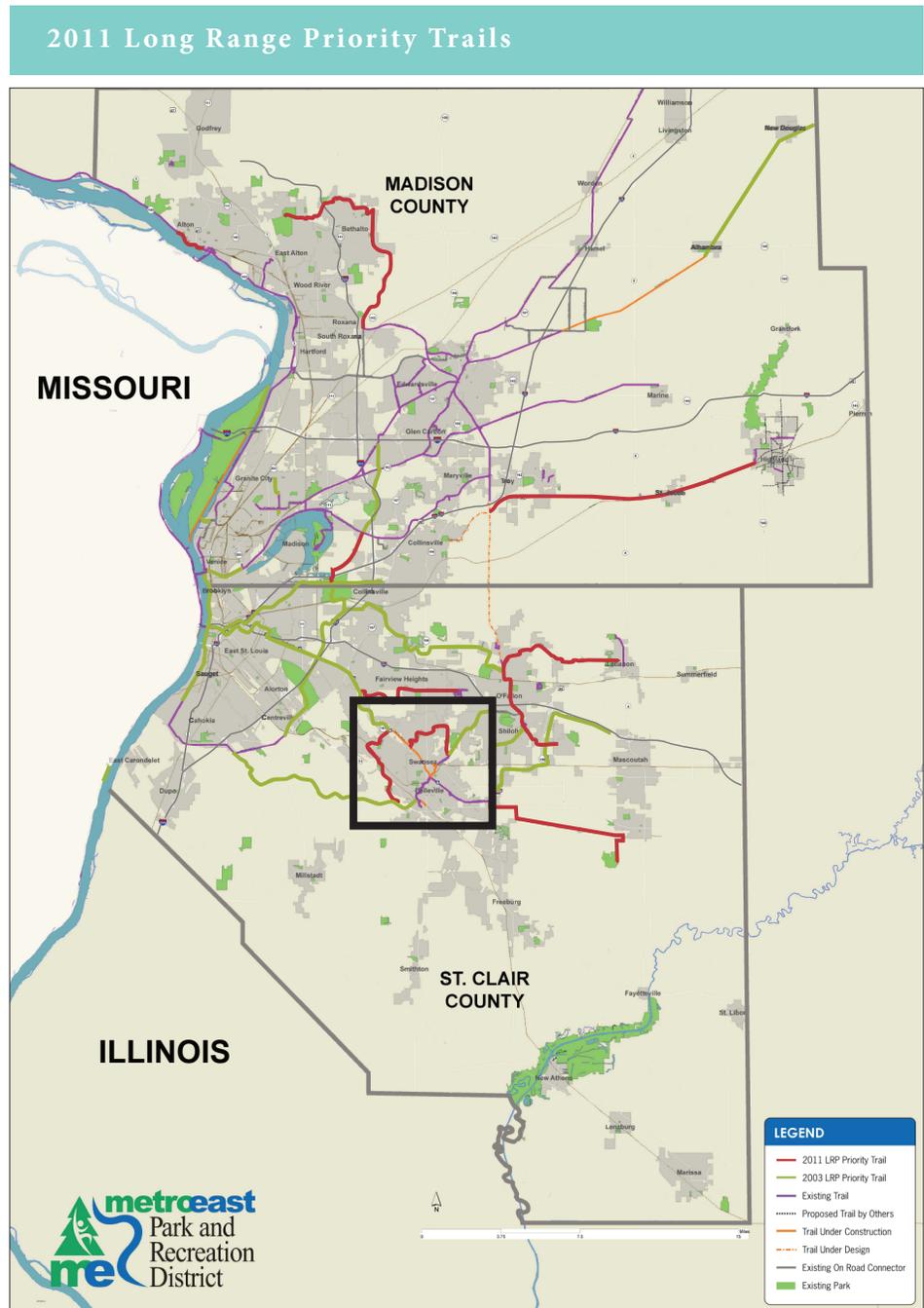
2011 LONG RANGE PLAN

Schranz/Old Collinsville/Huntwood Rd Trails

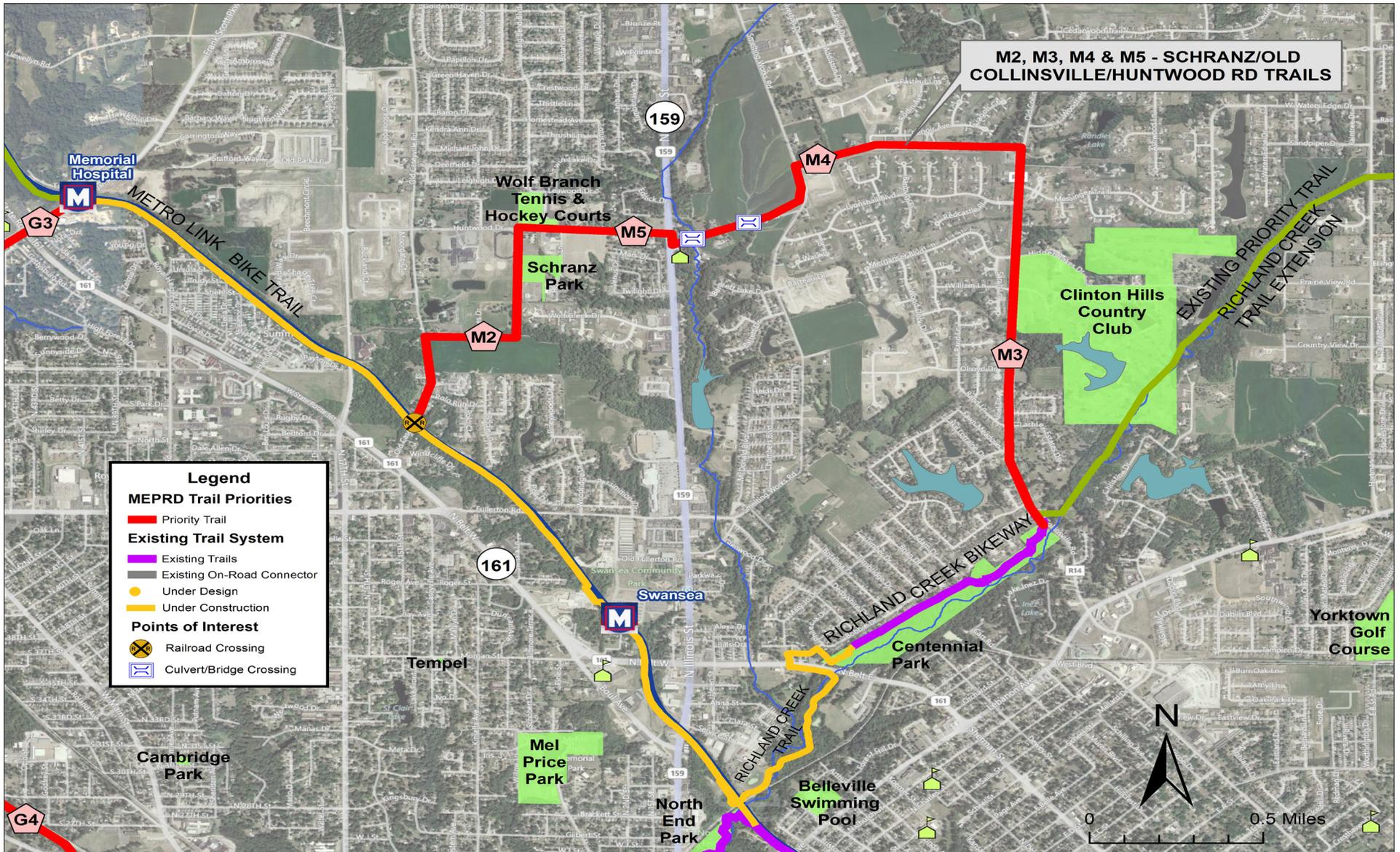
This four mile trail will connect the MetroLink Bike Trail, which is currently under construction, to several parks within Swansea and to the Richland Creek Bikeway. Beginning at MetroLink Bike Trail near Old Caseyville Road, the M2 Segment of the trail would parallel the eastern side of Old Caseyville northward to the north property line of an existing farm, then skirt the northern edge of that property while heading east. The trail would then turn north again along the western side of Wolf Creek subdivision and continue between Wolf Branch Middle School and Schranz Park along the old walking path to Huntwood Road. This would also integrate into the Schranz Park walking trail and to the sidewalks along Huntwood Road. The M3 Segment would then parallel Old Collinsville Road southward to connect with the Richland Creek Bikeway, effectively creating a loop with the MetroLink Bike Trail. M4 would do the same as M5 - basically parallel an extension of Huntwood Road to the east at Smelting Works Road and then along the southern ROW of what is now Munie Lane. M5 would parallel Huntwood Road along the southern ROW by widening the existing walk or replacing the walk with a trail.

If ROW can be secured, the feasibility of this trail is high and construction would be fairly accessible and easily accomplished.

The Schranz/Old Collinsville/Huntwood Road Trail has tremendous potential to link many neighborhoods to parks and existing trails systems. The trails will provide connectivity for citizens in Belleville and Swansea to exercise, recreate and relax along a trail system adjacent to parks, streams and residential neighborhoods. The trails will also provide connections to the existing trail systems of the Richland Creek Bikeway and the MetroLink Bike Trail under construction. Eventually, access to the MetroLink station at Swansea, via the trail system will make the a Schranz/Old Collinsville/Huntwood Road Trail a multi-modal trail.



Schranz/Old Collinsville/Huntwood Rd Trails

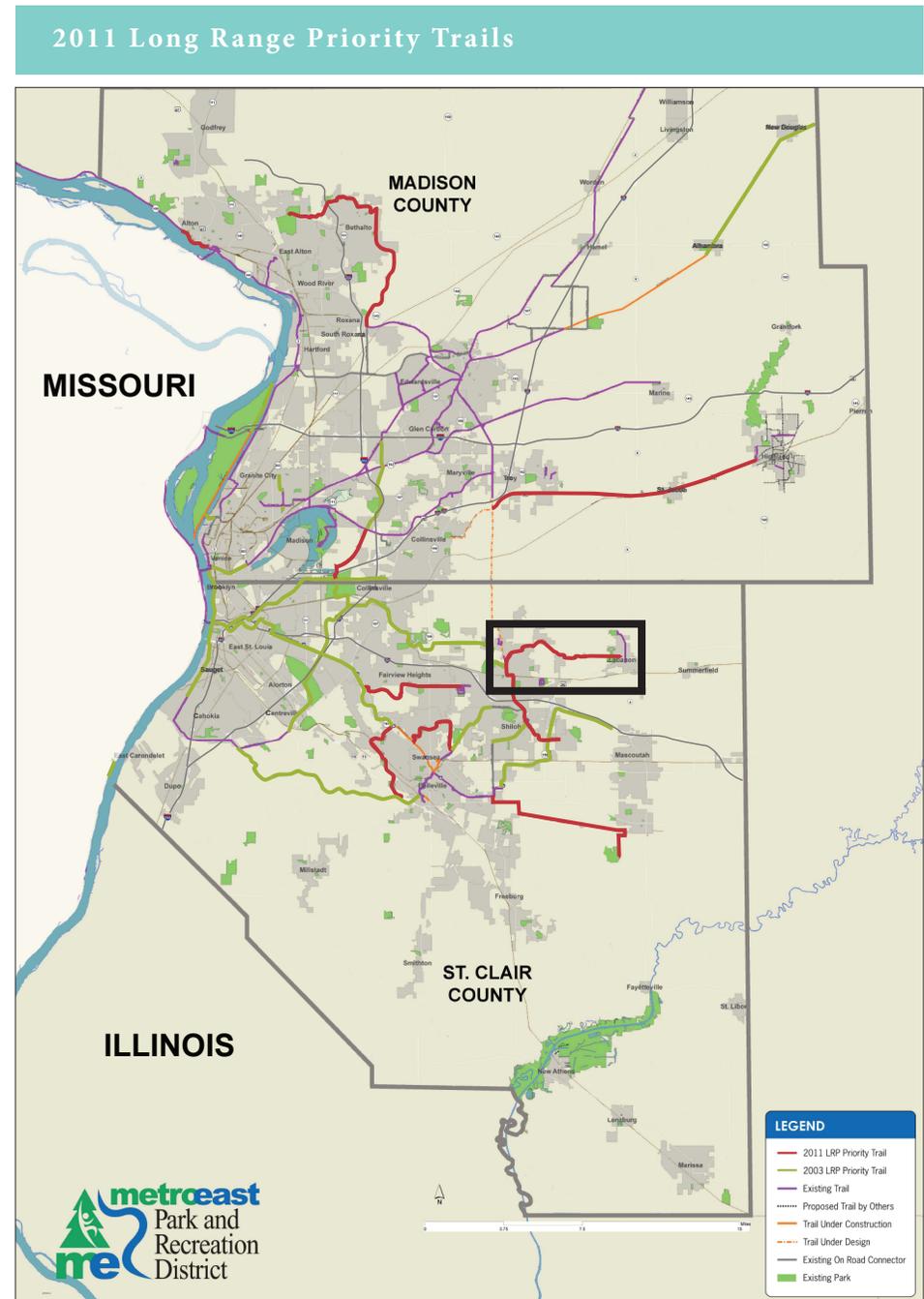


Engle Creek/College Rd. Trail

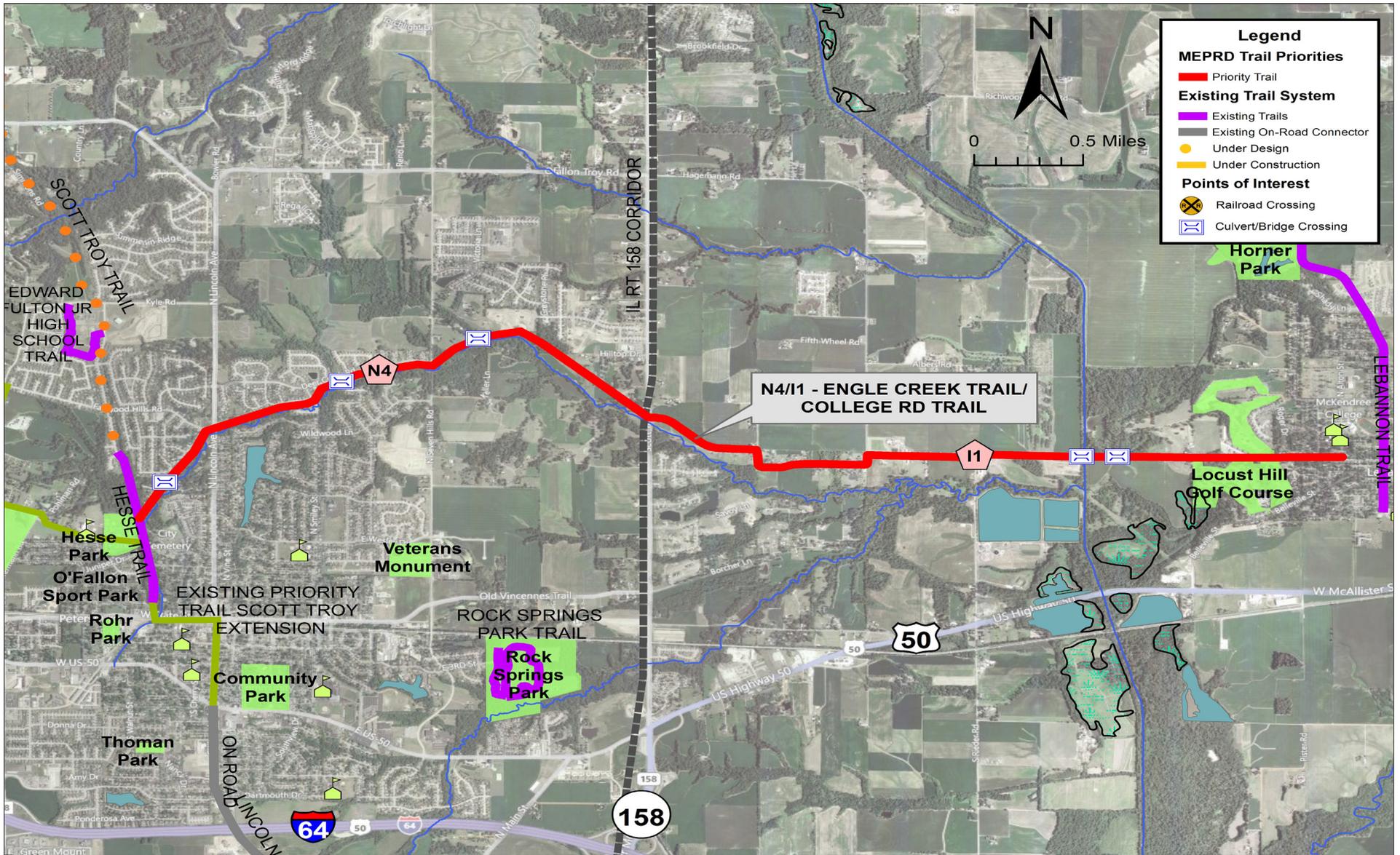
This six mile trail connects the Hesse Trail in the City of O’Fallon to the Town of Lebanon. The trail begins near Hesse Park in O’Fallon and continues east along the north side of Engle Creek until it reaches Oak Hill School Road where it continues easterly and crosses Silver Creek. The trail continues across Locust Hills Country Club to its terminus at Alton Street, just south of the McKendree College Campus in Lebanon. The land along the western portion of the trail adjacent to Engle Creek is forested and adjacent to a significant residential area. As the trail proceeds east, the land becomes semi-forested and agricultural in character. As the trail proceeds easterly, it crosses the Silver Creek flood plain which is primarily forested bottom wetland. As the trail continues to Lebanon, it rises in elevation out of the floodplain and continues into the tree-lined streets of the City of Lebanon.

The feasibility of this trail is moderate. Significant ROW will need to be acquired in the dense residential areas and the Silver Creek Bridges will require Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) and Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) permitting along with significant hydrologic and hydraulic analysis.

The trail of Engle Creek and College Road will provide connectivity between the community of O’Fallon with the town of Lebanon. The connection will give citizens of each community an opportunity for active and passive recreation along a corridor which is predominantly rural in character. The trail will add to the quality of life of each community by providing a recreational and cultural corridor in the Illinois countryside.



Engle Creek/College Rd. Trail

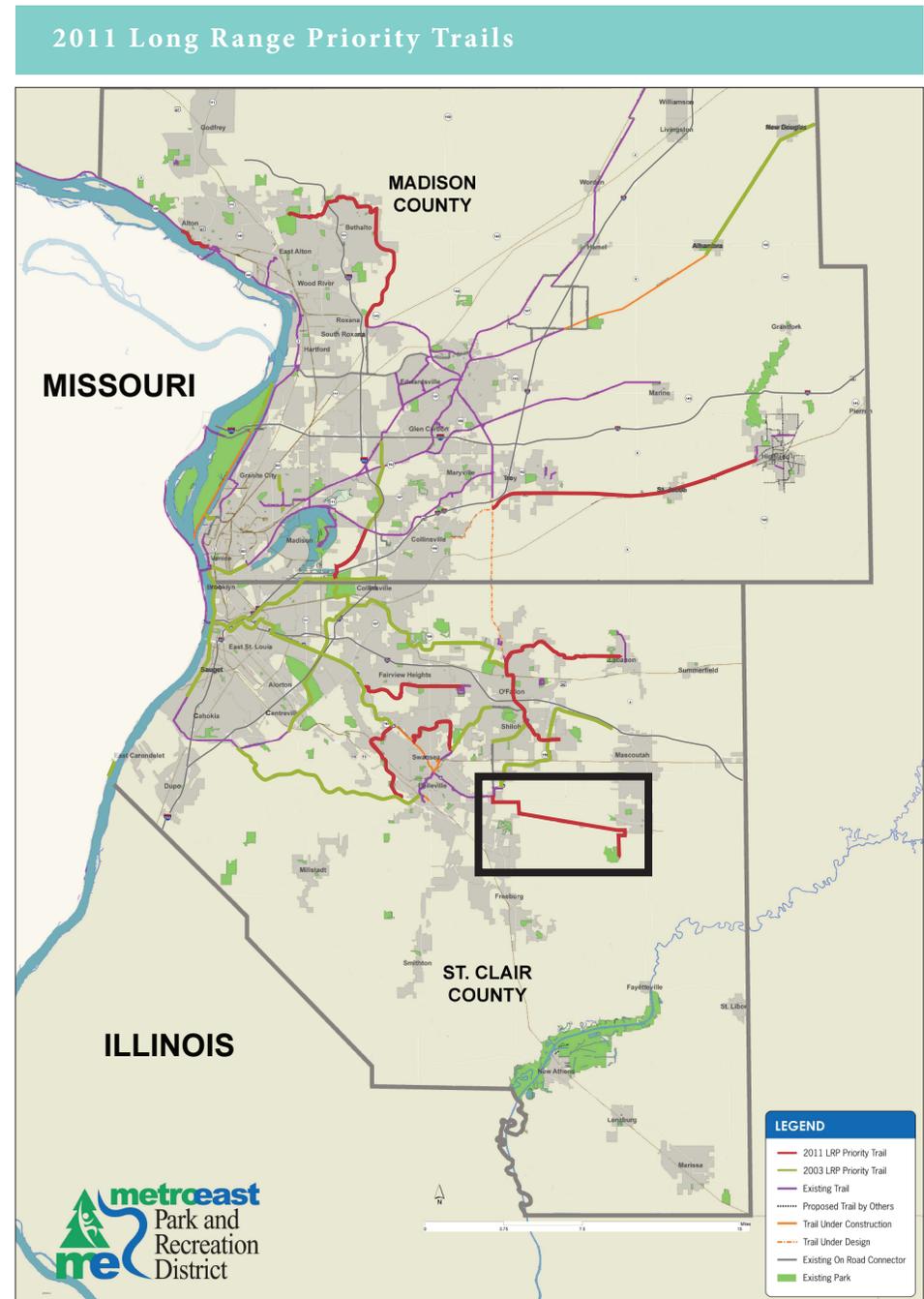


SWIC to Silver Creek – Mascoutah

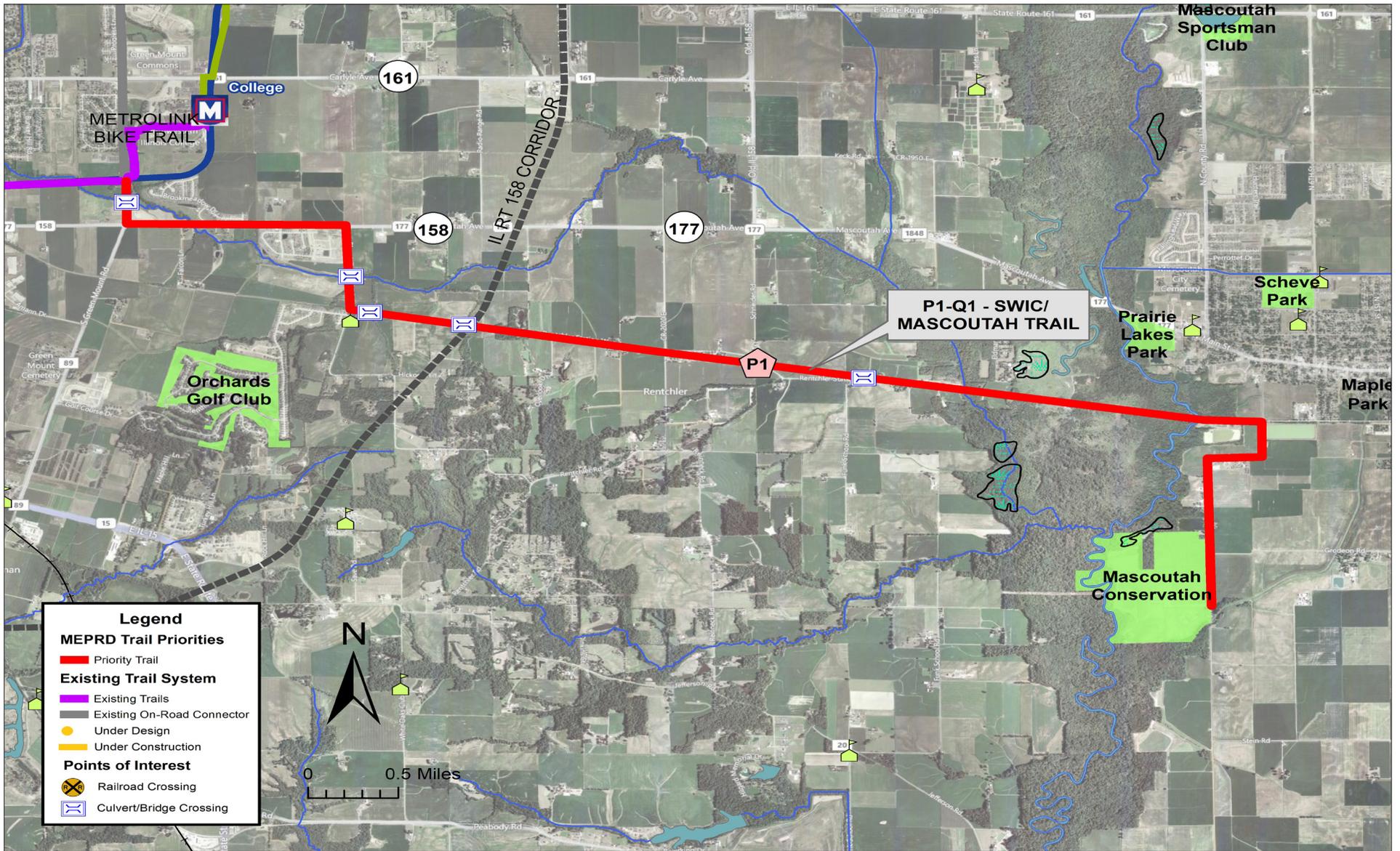
This nine mile trail will connect the MetroLink Bike Trail to Mascoutah. The trail begins at South Western Illinois College (SWIC) bike trail adjacent to S. Greenmount Road, travels south along the road. It heads east along Route 158 then south along Plum Hill Road and ties into the abandoned Louisville and Nashville railroad right-of-way, then travels east to South 10th Street near Mascoutah. The trail then traverses west and south along Brickyard Road in rural Mascoutah. Land use is commercial and urban in character near SWIC and as the trail traverses east it passes some residential subdivisions, then continues through mostly agricultural areas. The trail also passes through forested wetlands in the Silver Creek flood plain area.

The feasibility of this trail is moderate. The acquisition of the abandoned Louisville and Nashville RR right-of-way that has been sold to local property owners would be a major issue in the development of the trail. Also, the condition of the existing Silver Creek railroad bridges will need to be evaluated for the magnitude of potential upgrading required.

The SWIC/Mascoutah Trail will provide a link from the busy campus of Southwestern Illinois College to the south side of Mascoutah, a growing small town just to the south of Scott Air Force Base. The trail will be a facility for active recreation and passive recreation passing through crop fields, prairies and forests. The trail will provide linkage to the MetroLink Bike Trail on the SWIC campus thus potential to access the extensive trail system to the west, in Belleville and Swansea. The trail would also be a multi-modal link to the MetroLink light rail system, with direct access to the College Station on the SWIC campus.



SWIC to Silver Creek – Mascoutah



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2003 Projects Reprioritized

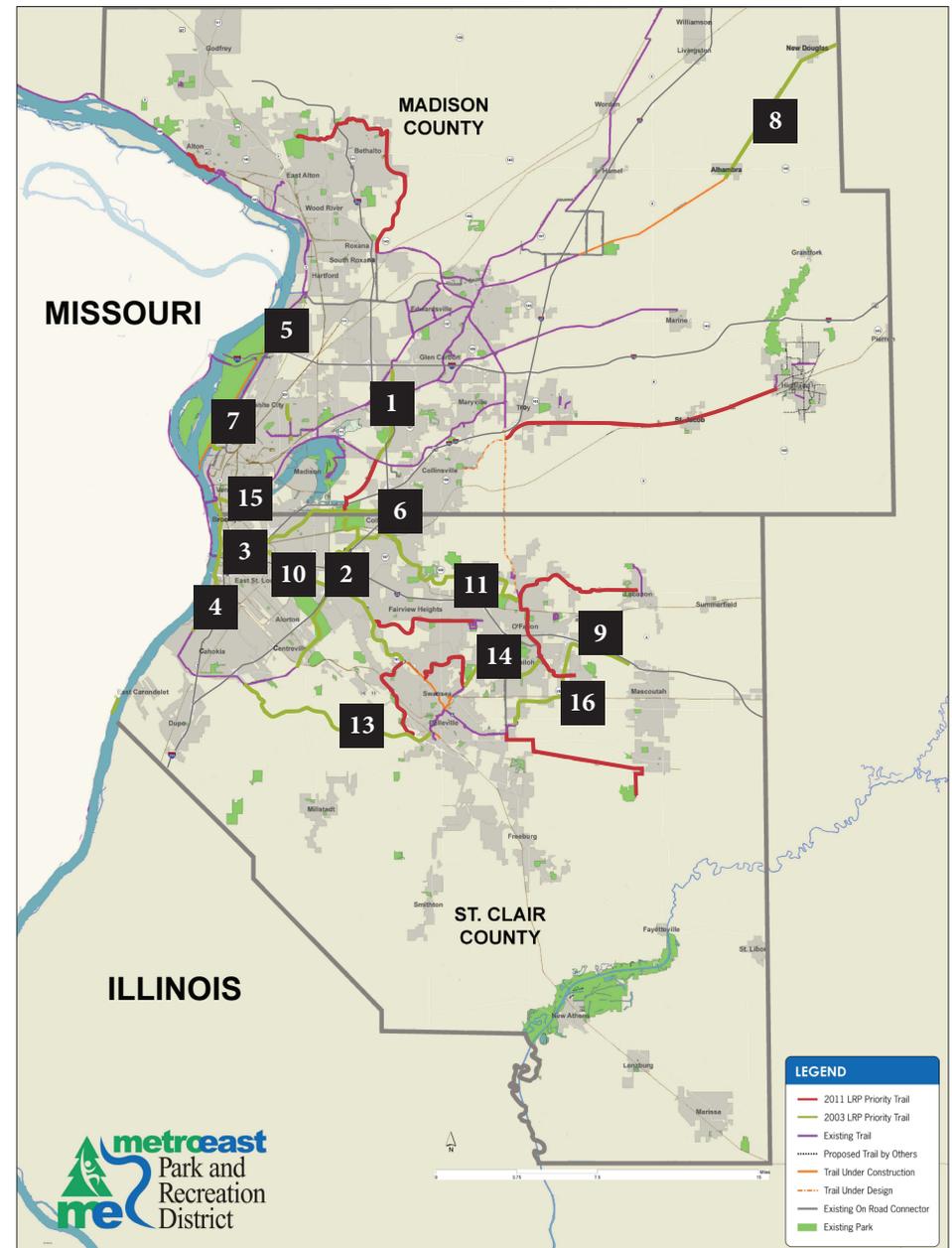
The Long Range Development Plan of 2011 started with an overview of the Long Range Master Plan of 2003. The 2003 plan was the initial plan of the Metro East Park and Recreation District (MEPRD) and guided the districts planning efforts, helping to implement numerous trails and parks within Madison and St. Clair Counties.

The 2003 plan had identified projects as priorities, many of which have been implemented. The planning process for the Long Range Plan update evaluated the remaining projects of the 2003 plan and incorporated these priority projects into the process and recommendations of the 2011 plan.

The projects of the 2003 plan were reprioritized based on community support, feasibility, funding, connectivity and current status. The list of the priority projects from the 2003 Long Range Master Plan, which will be incorporated into the 2011 Long Range Development Plan Update, include the following trails:

- 1: American Bottoms Trail North
- 2: American Bottoms Trail South
- 3: Confluence Bikeway North
- 4: Confluence Bikeway South
- 5: Eagle Points Trail
- 6: Jaycee Connector Trail
- 7: Lock 27 Trail Crossing
- 8: MCT Nickel Plate Trail
- 9: MetroLink Bike Trail East
- 10: MetroLink Bike Trail West
- 11: Milburn School Trail
- 12: Mounds Heritage Trail
- 13: Prairie du Pont Trail
- 14: Richland Creek Trail
- 15: Schoolhouse Trail Connector
- 16: Scott-Troy Trail South Extension

2003 Long Range Priority Trails Reprioritized

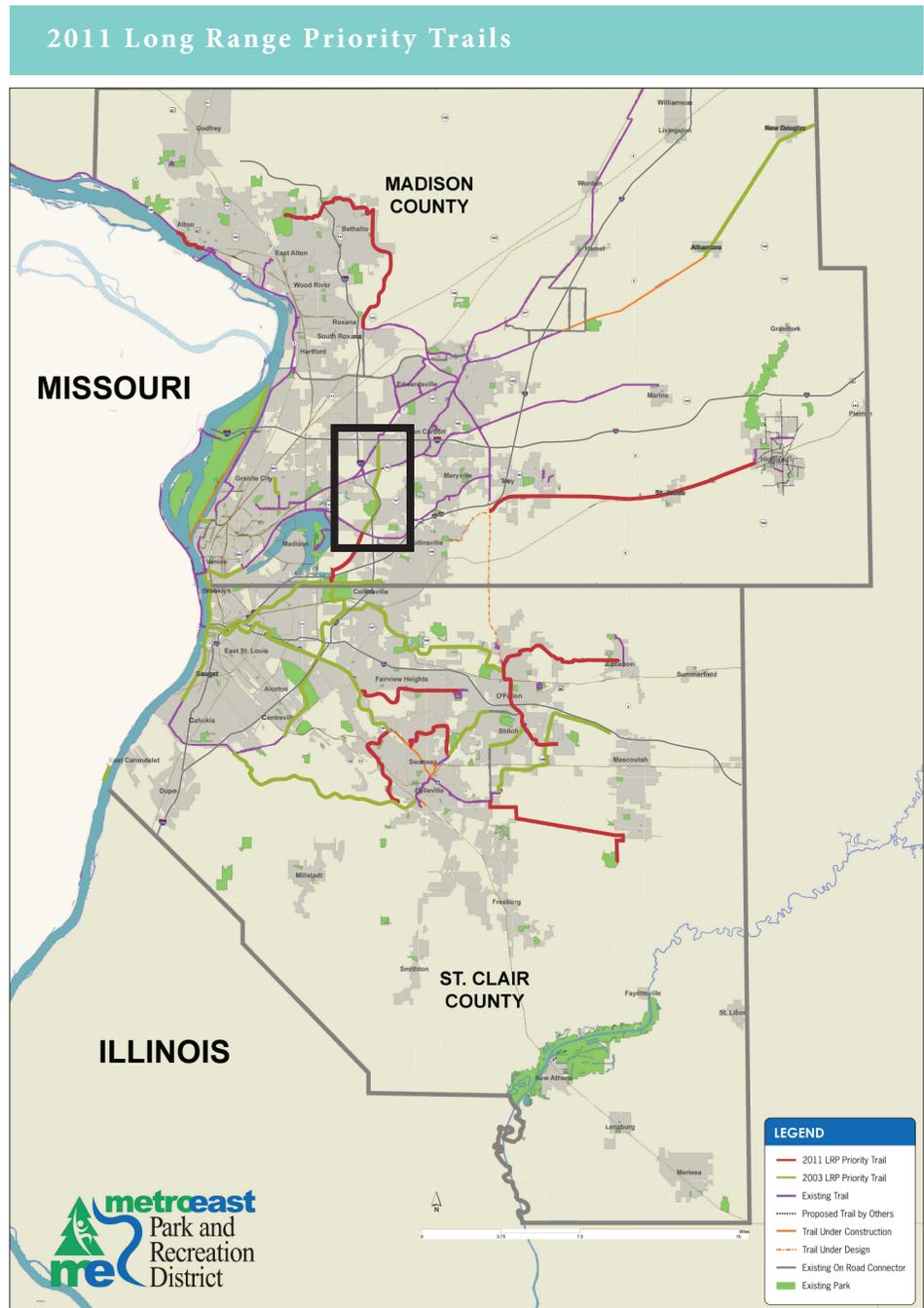


American Bottoms Trail North

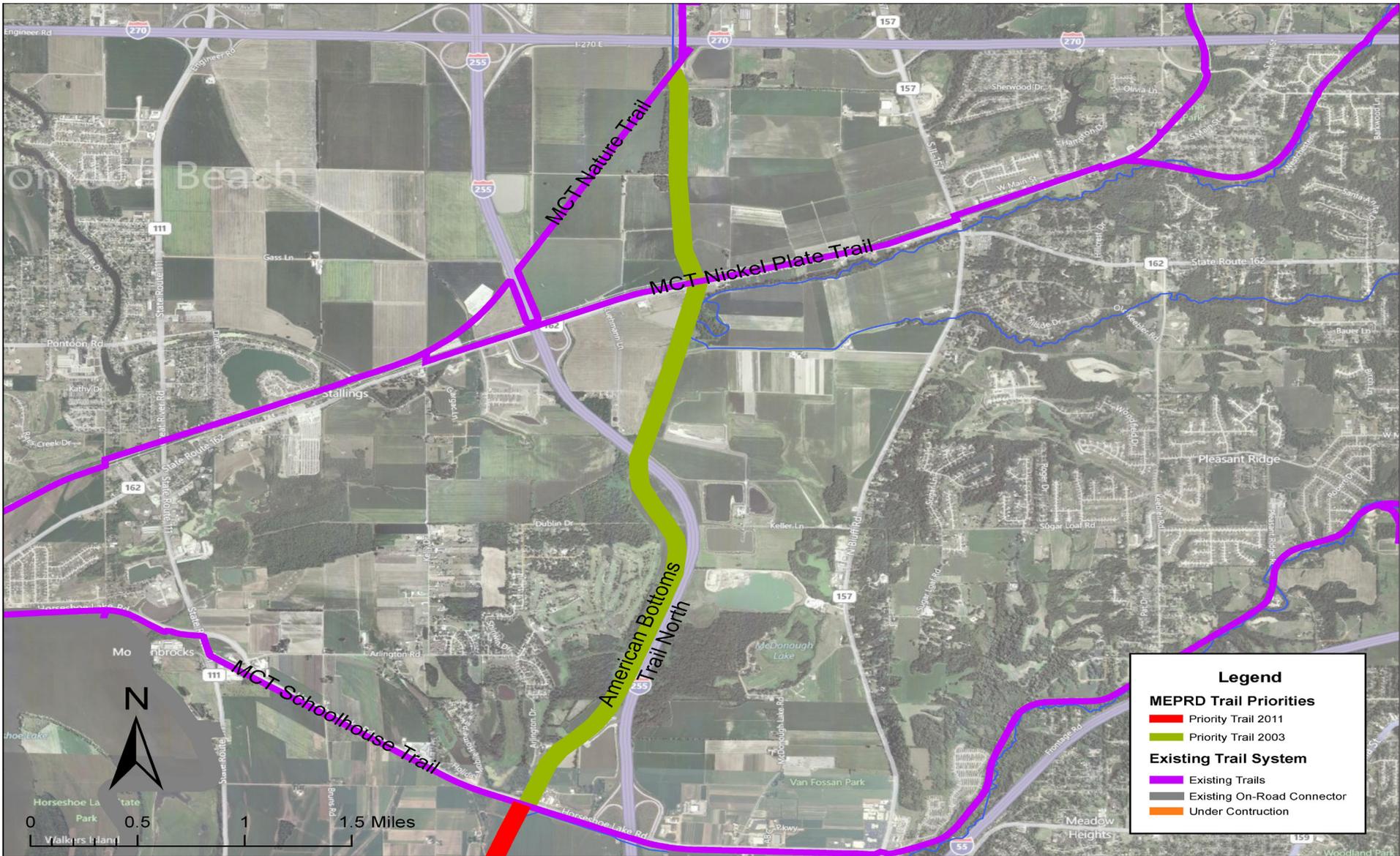
The American Bottoms Trail North is a five mile trail which extends from the existing MCT Nature Trail, on the north in Glen Carbon, along the Cahokia Levee to the future Arlington/Mounds Connector Trail, at Horseshoe Lake Road. The proposed trail would also connect with the existing MCT Schoolhouse Trail at this location. The trail would pass through open space, run parallel along I-255 and connect with three existing trails: MCT Nature Trail, MCT Nickel Plate and MCT Schoolhouse trails.

The proposed trail has a high feasibility due to its potential for connectivity to existing trails and much of its alignment is on levee property. The proposed trail would need to cross underneath I-255.

The American Bottoms Trail North will provide great connectivity for local citizens via connections to existing trails and to eventually to the Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site and Park.



American Bottoms Trail North

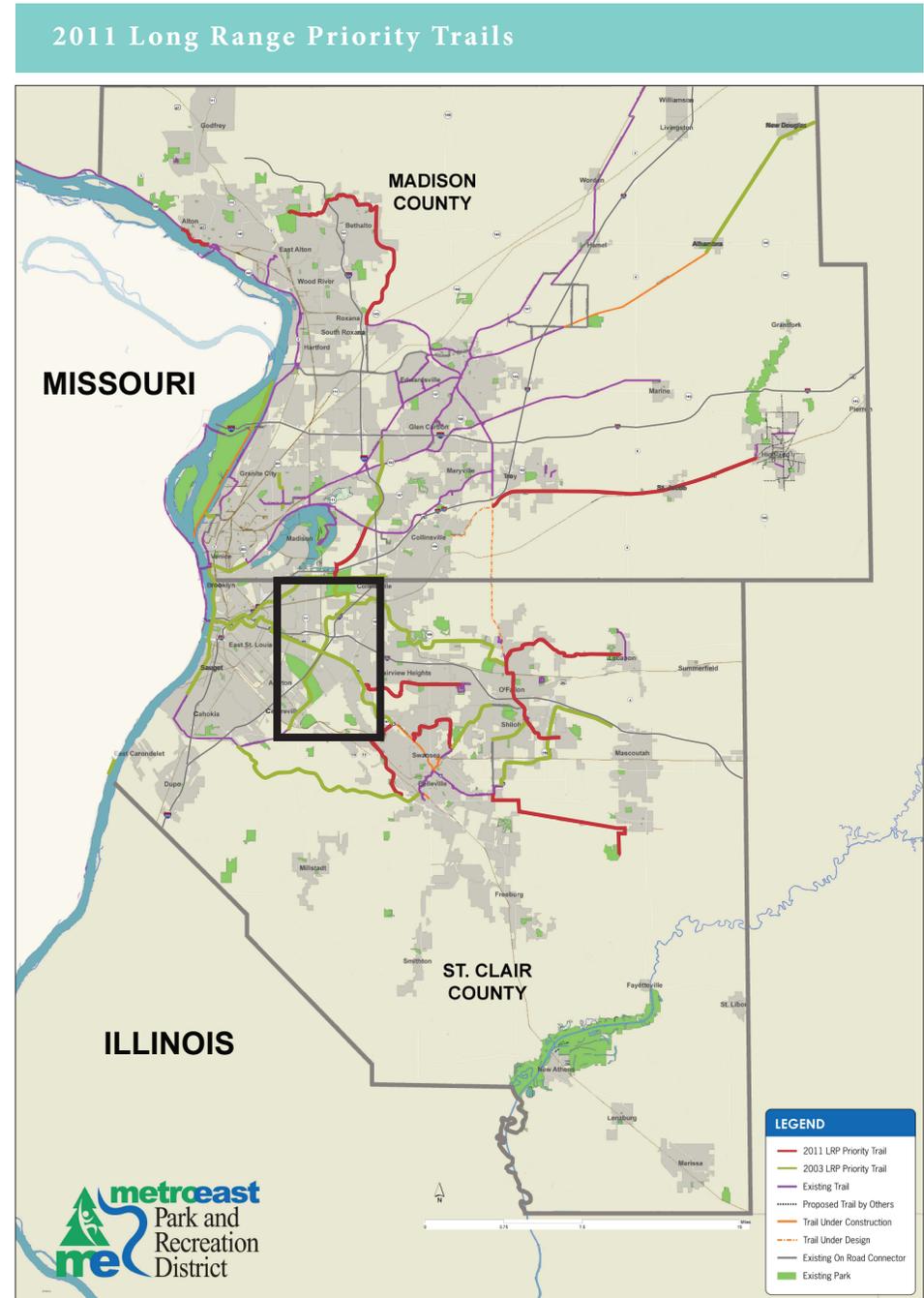


American Bottoms Trail South

The American Bottoms Trail South is an eight mile trail which extends from the Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site to the Metro East Levee Trail, in Centreville. The proposed trail would connect numerous destinations along its route as it passes through open space areas, levees, parks and neighborhoods. The American Bottoms Trail South would proceed south from the Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site and Park, via a former railroad right of way. The proposed trail would connect with the Mounds Heritage Trail, Milburn School Trail, the MetroLink Bike Trail and the Metro East Levee Trail.

The proposed trail has a medium feasibility due to its potential for connectivity to many existing trails, however numerous at grade crossings would need to be addressed.

The American Bottoms Trail South would connect many open space areas including Cahokia Mound State Historic Site and Frank Holten State Park. The proposed trail would provide connectivity to the existing Metro East Levee Trail, which extends into the communities of Dupu and Cahokia to the west.

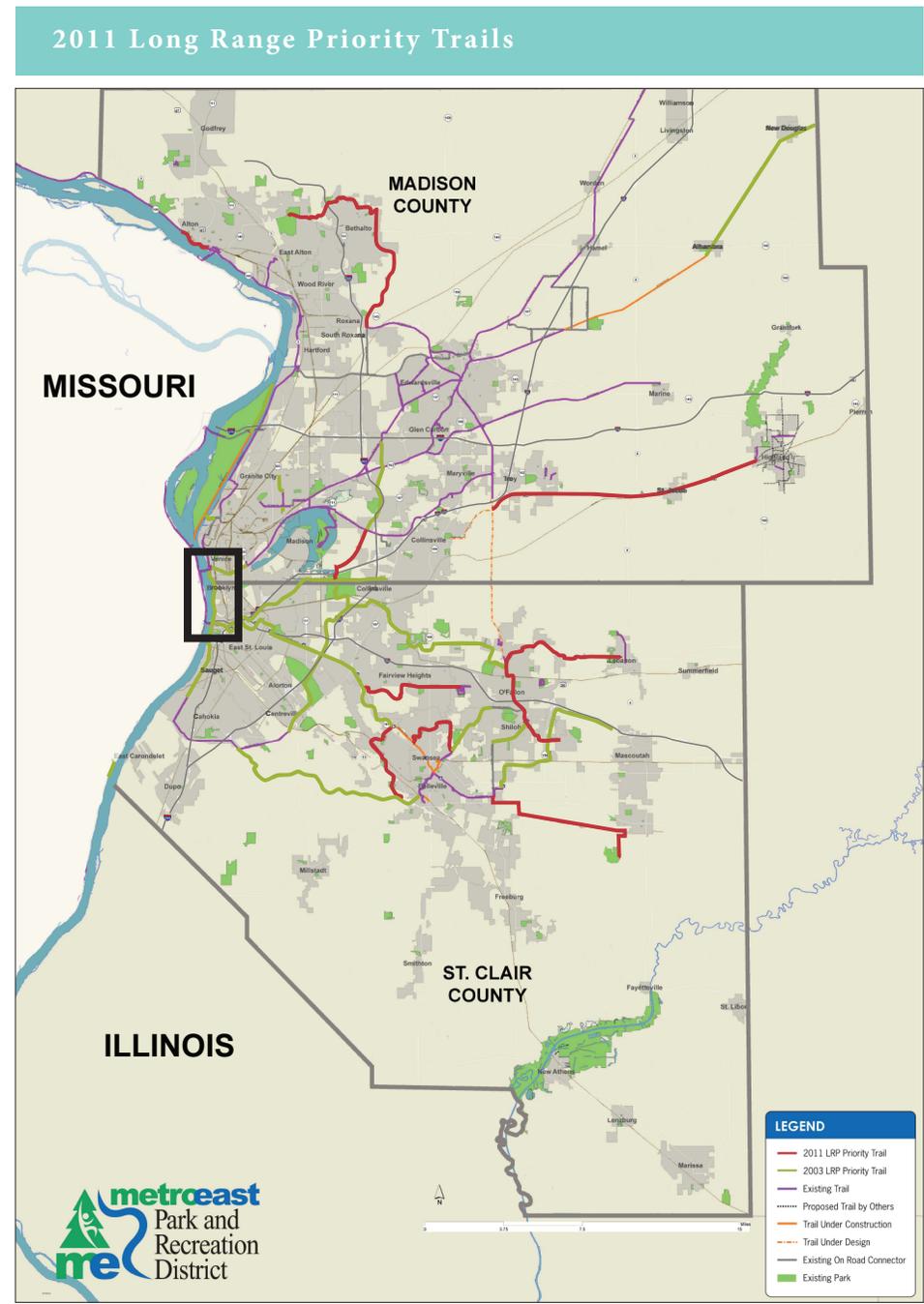


Confluence Bikeway North

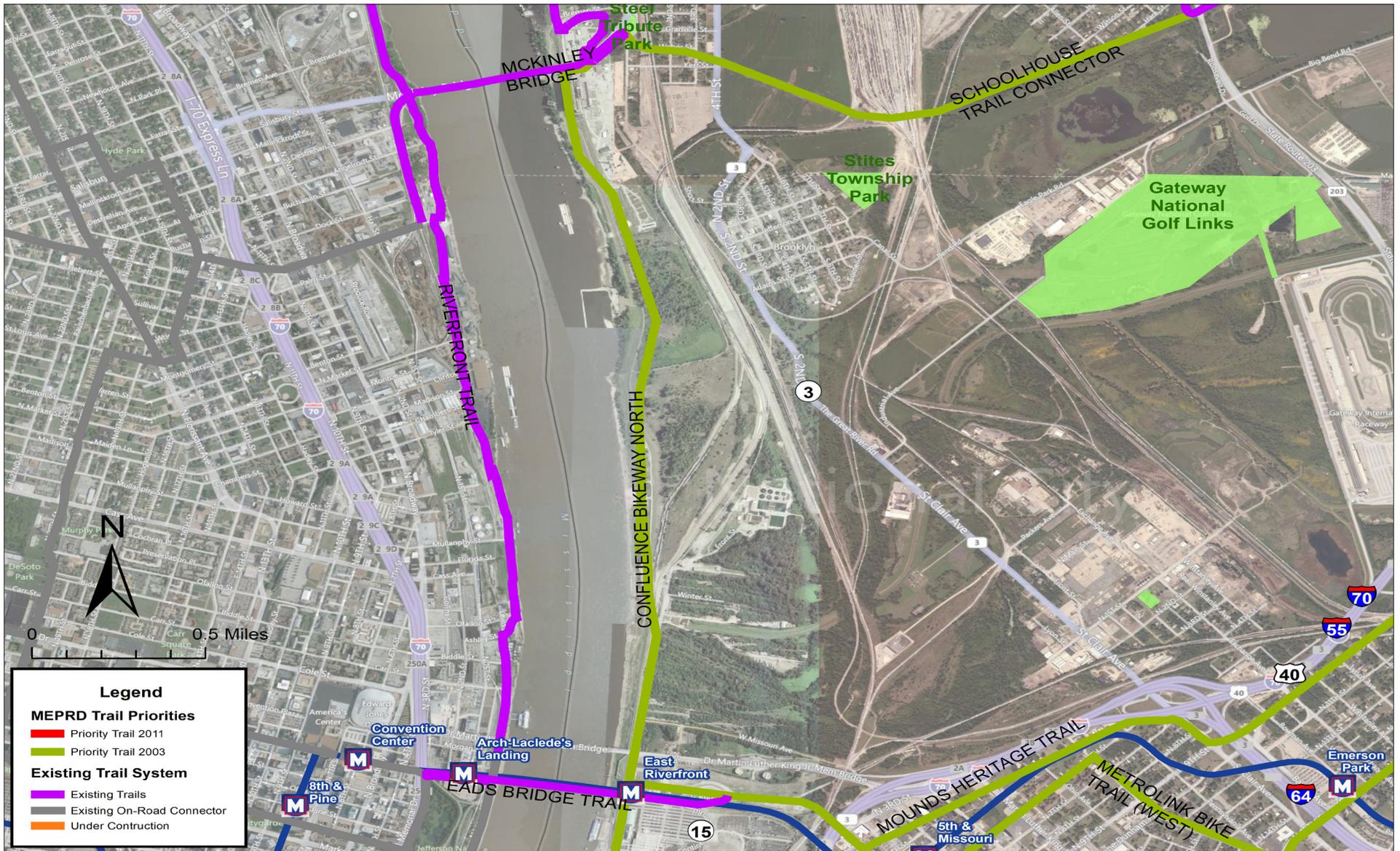
The Confluence Bikeway North Trail is mainly located along the Mississippi River Levee between the McKinley Bridge and the Eads Bridge. This 3 mile trail would provide excellent views of the working riverfront, the Gateway Geyser and the St. Louis skyline. The trail would allow cyclists the opportunity to cross the river on both the McKinley Bridge and Eads Bridge, since each bridge has separated pedestrian decks for cyclists, which connect to the Riverfront Trail on the Missouri side of the river. On the north end, the trail connects with the MCT Confluence Trail at the McKinley Bridge. The south end of the trail will connect with the future Mounds Heritage Trail and the MetroLink Bike Trail West Trail.

The Confluence Bikeway North Trail has a high feasibility of being completed because of its connectivity to existing and future proposed trails. The trail is also predominantly on a levee which may facilitate easier negotiations with the owner.

The Confluence Bikeway North Trail is an important trail connection along the East St. Louis Riverfront. The trail will provide connectivity to numerous existing and future trails. The trail will also provide access from the north to existing and future improvements along the riverfront including the Malcolm W. Martin Memorial Park, The Gateway Geyser and potential future improvements by the National Park Service.



Confluence Bikeway North

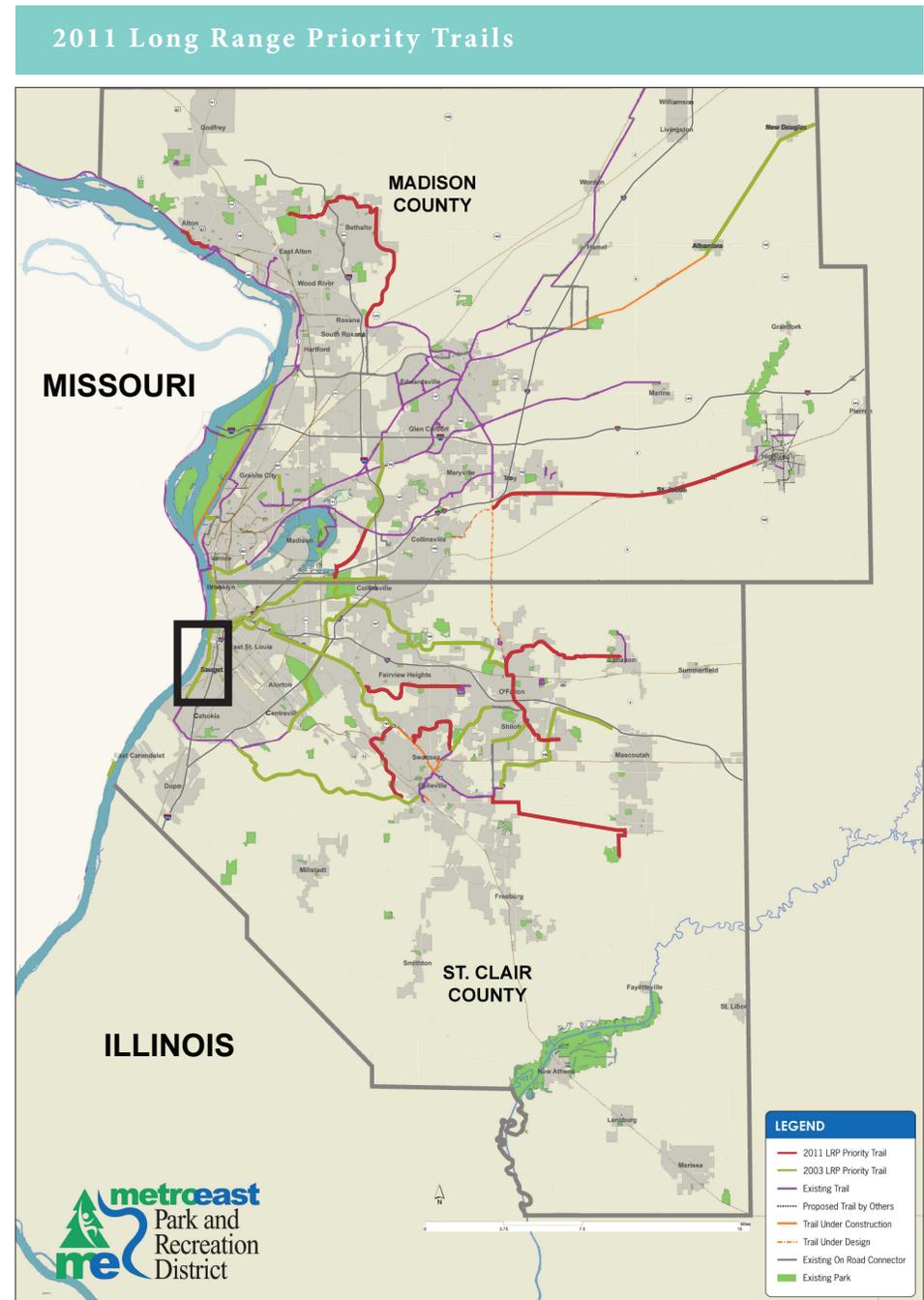


Confluence Bikeway South

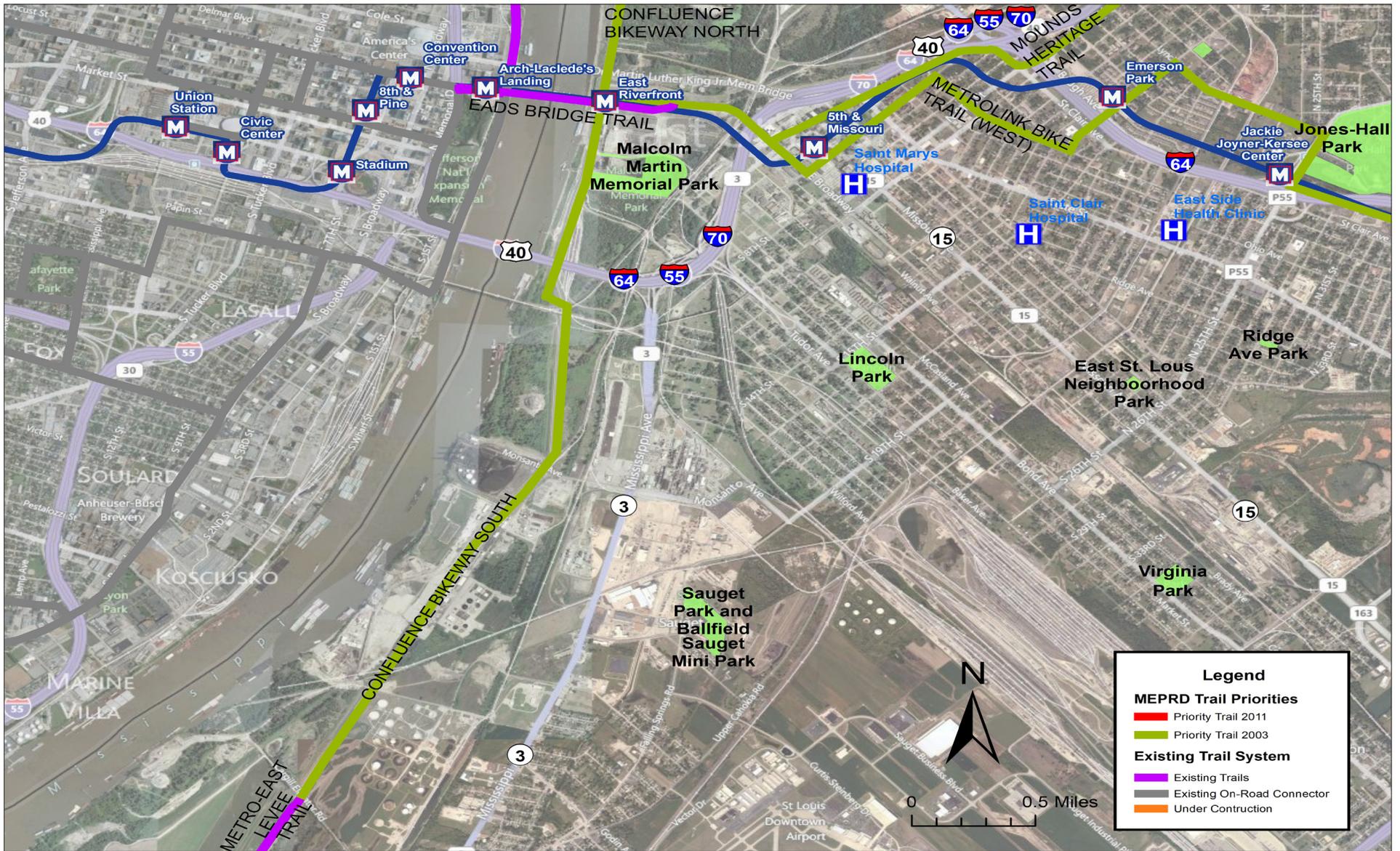
The Confluence Bikeway South Trail is located predominantly on the Mississippi River Levee, starting at the Eads Bridge in East St. Louis and connecting with the Metro East Levee Trail in Cahokia. The proposed trail of four miles will connect with the Eads Bridge, on the north end, which allows cyclists and pedestrians to cross over the Mississippi River to St. Louis. The Confluence Bikeway South Trail will also connect with the existing Metro East Levee Trail on the south end, providing connectivity to the communities of Cahokia, Dupo, Centreville and Belleville.

The Confluence Bikeway South Trail is moderately feasible. At the north end of the proposed trail, there are right of way issues along Front Street near the Casino Queen. The trail may need to be along Front Street or within the street in a shared use alignment.

The trail environment varies extensively from being on the levee, crossing through riparian bottomlands, passing industrial uses and open space areas. The proposed trail will have excellent views of The Gateway Geyser in Malcolm W. Martin Memorial Park, the Gateway Arch and the St. Louis skyline.



Confluence Bikeway South



Eagle Points Trail

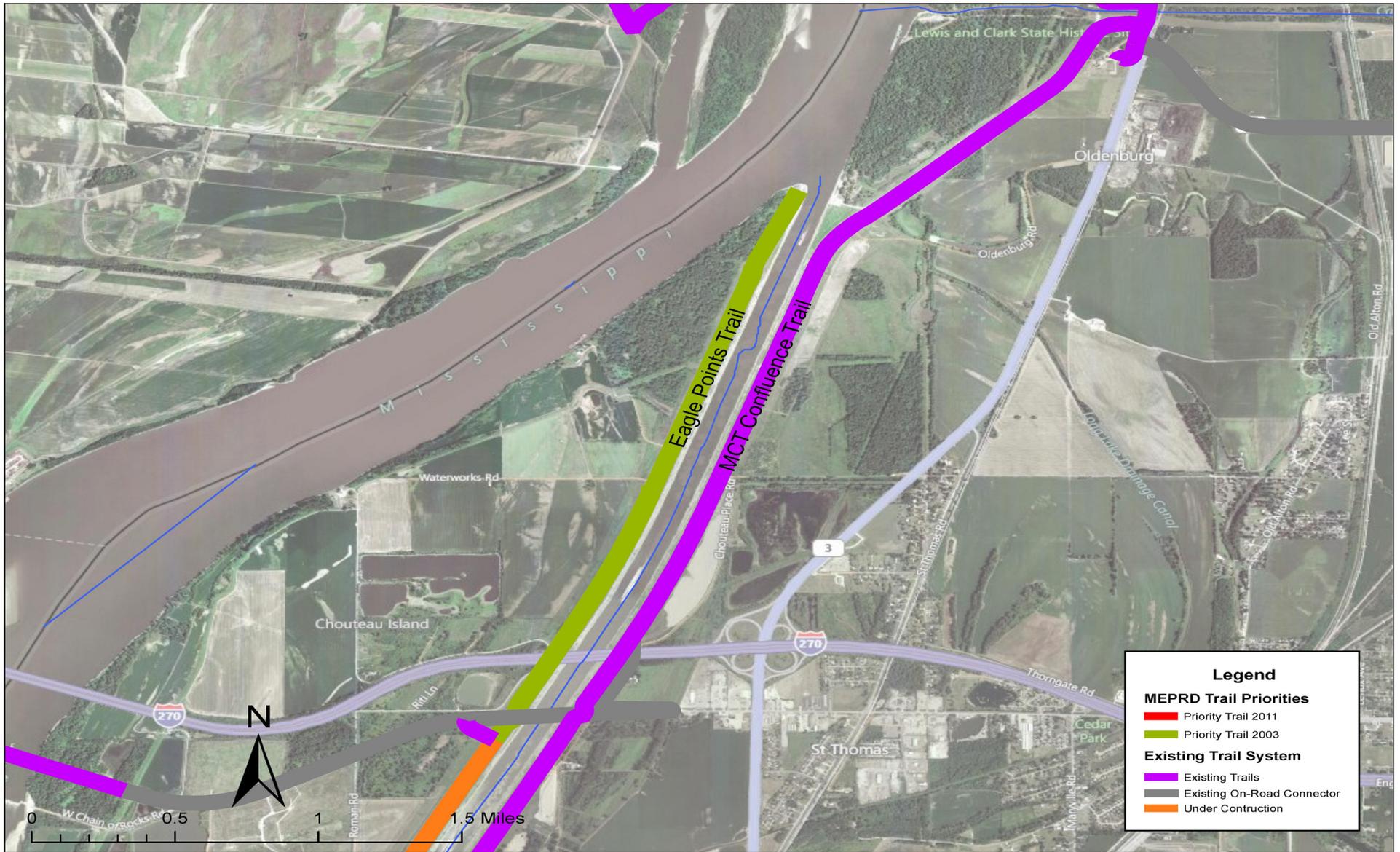
The Eagle Points Trail is a proposed trail which will extend three miles to the northern tip of Chouteau Island in the Mississippi River. The proposed trail will connect with the southern segment of the Eagle Points Trail, just south of the Chain of Rocks Bridge Road. The segment of the trail south of the road is under construction and extends to the south tip of Gabaret Island. When both segments are complete a trail will run parallel on the west side of the Chain of Rocks Canal.

The feasibility of the trail is high since the trail will run along the levee of canal. The proposed trail will cross underneath the Chain of Rocks Road and I-270, allowing for grade separation between the trail and roadways.

The Eagle Points Trail will provide excellent viewing of barges and tug boats in the Chain of Rocks Canal. The trail will have great views of the natural environment on the island and of the river at the trail terminus, giving local citizens the opportunity to experience the power and beauty of the Mississippi River.



Eagle Points Trail

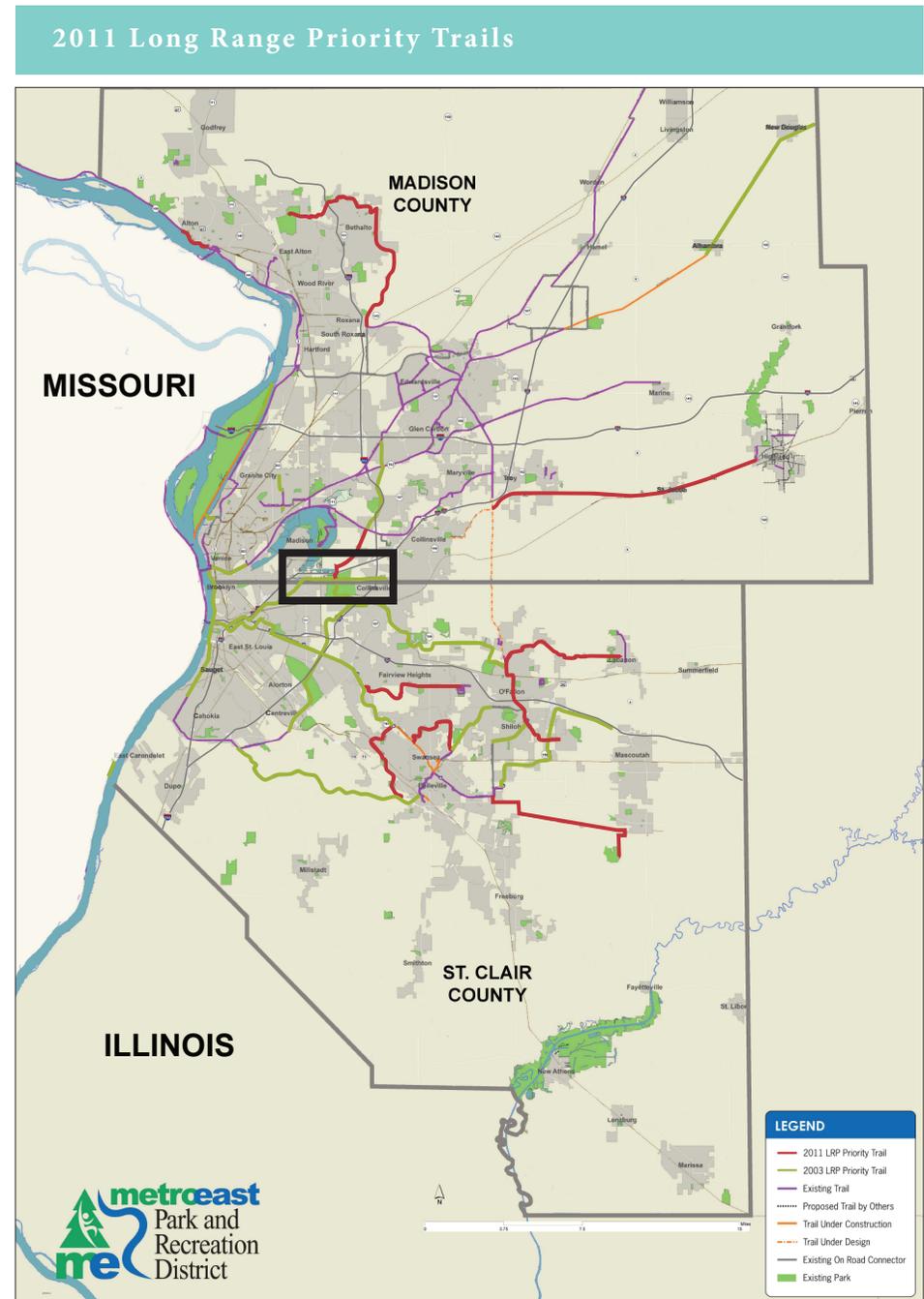


Jaycee Connector Trail

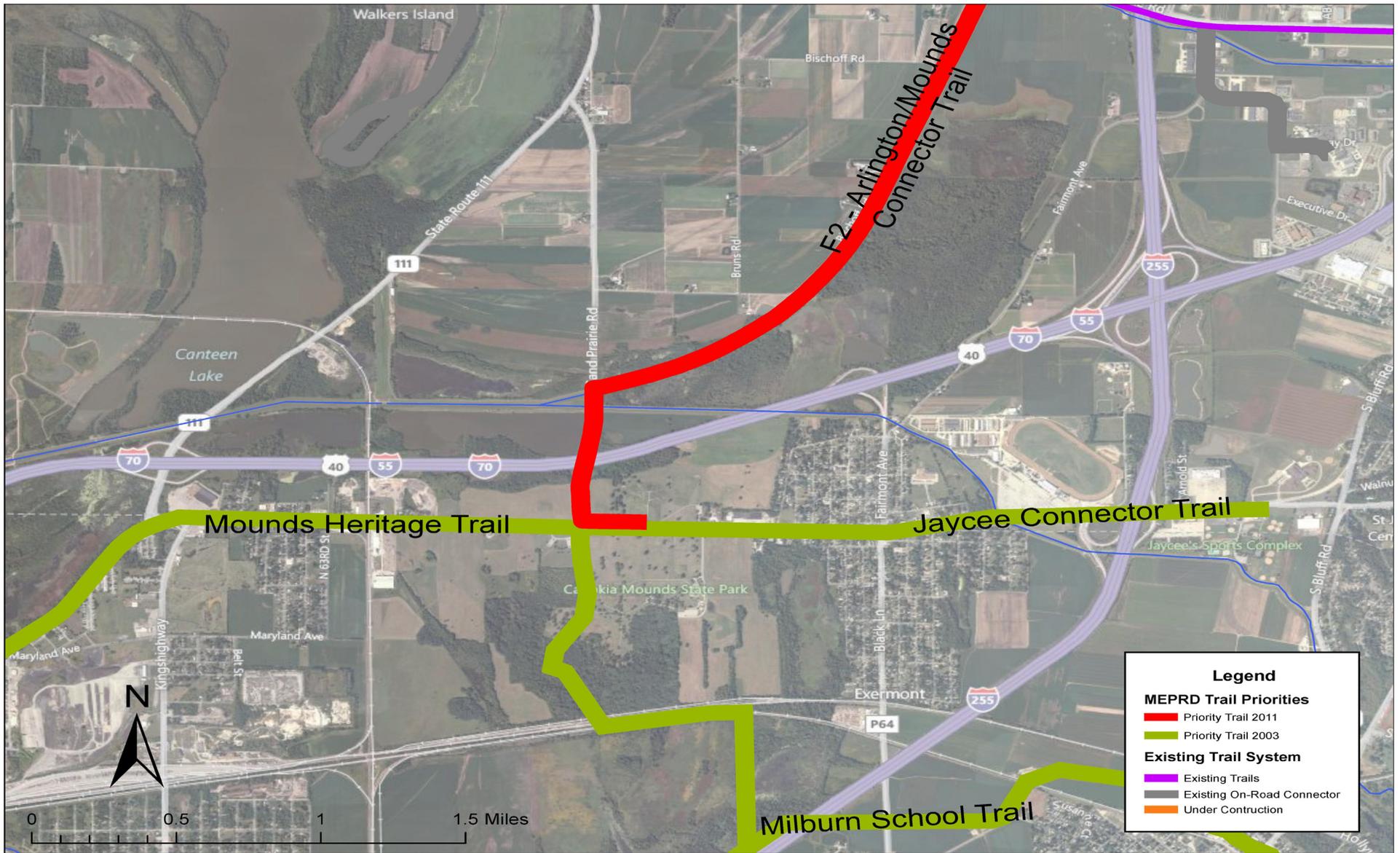
The Jaycee Connector Trail will connect Cahokia Mounds State Park with the Jaycee’s Sports Complex, along Collinsville Road. On the west end of the one mile trail the state park, which is a historical and educational institution with passive recreation trails and exhibits. The Jaycee Connector Trail would connect with the proposed Mounds Heritage Trail and Arlington/Mounds Connector Trail in the park. The east end of the trail is the location of the Jaycee’s Sports Complex, an active recreation complex of athletic fields and facilities. The trail would follow the alignment of Collinsville Road, running through the State Park Place neighborhood and just to the south of the Fairmount Park Race Track. The trail then proceeds to the east through the Collinsville Road and I-255 Interchange, terminating at the Sports Complex. The adjacent environment of the trail would be a mix of open space, residential and commercial land uses. The Jaycee Connector Trail will also be adjacent to Collinsville Road, which is a busy four lane arterial road.

The feasibility of the trail is moderate due to numerous at grade crossing of local streets in the State Park Place neighborhood, the intersection of Collinsville Road and Black Lane, as well as the interchange of I-255 and Collinsville Road. These numerous at grade trail crossings will require review and approval from Madison County and the Illinois Department of Transportation.

The Jaycee Connector Trail has the potential to provide connectivity to local citizens by connecting with Cahokia Mounds State Park and the Jaycee’s Sports Complex. The trail will be an active recreational facility which will give opportunity for cycling, walking and jogging for the citizens of Collinsville and Fairmont City.



Jaycee Connector Trail

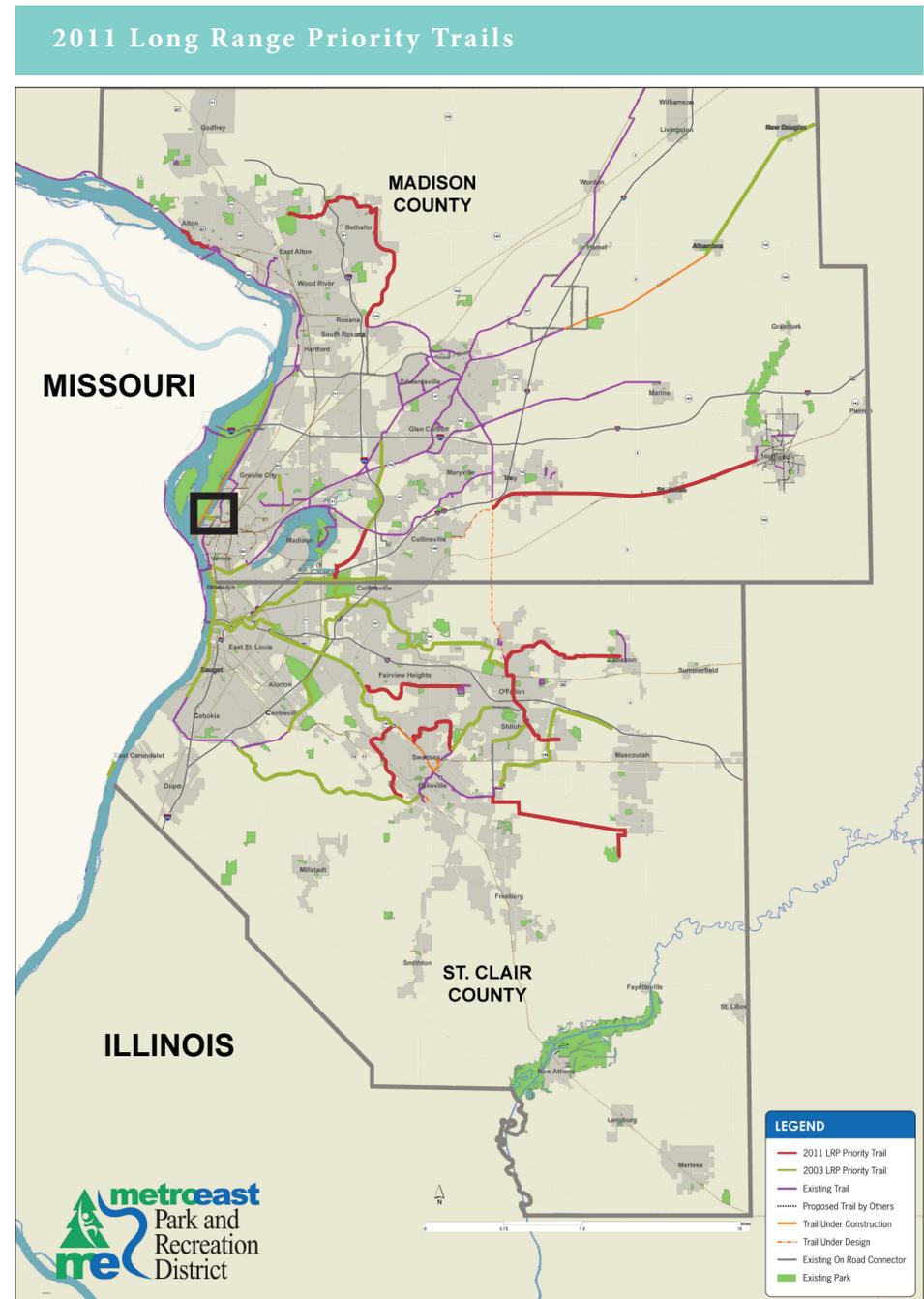


Lock 27 Trail Crossing

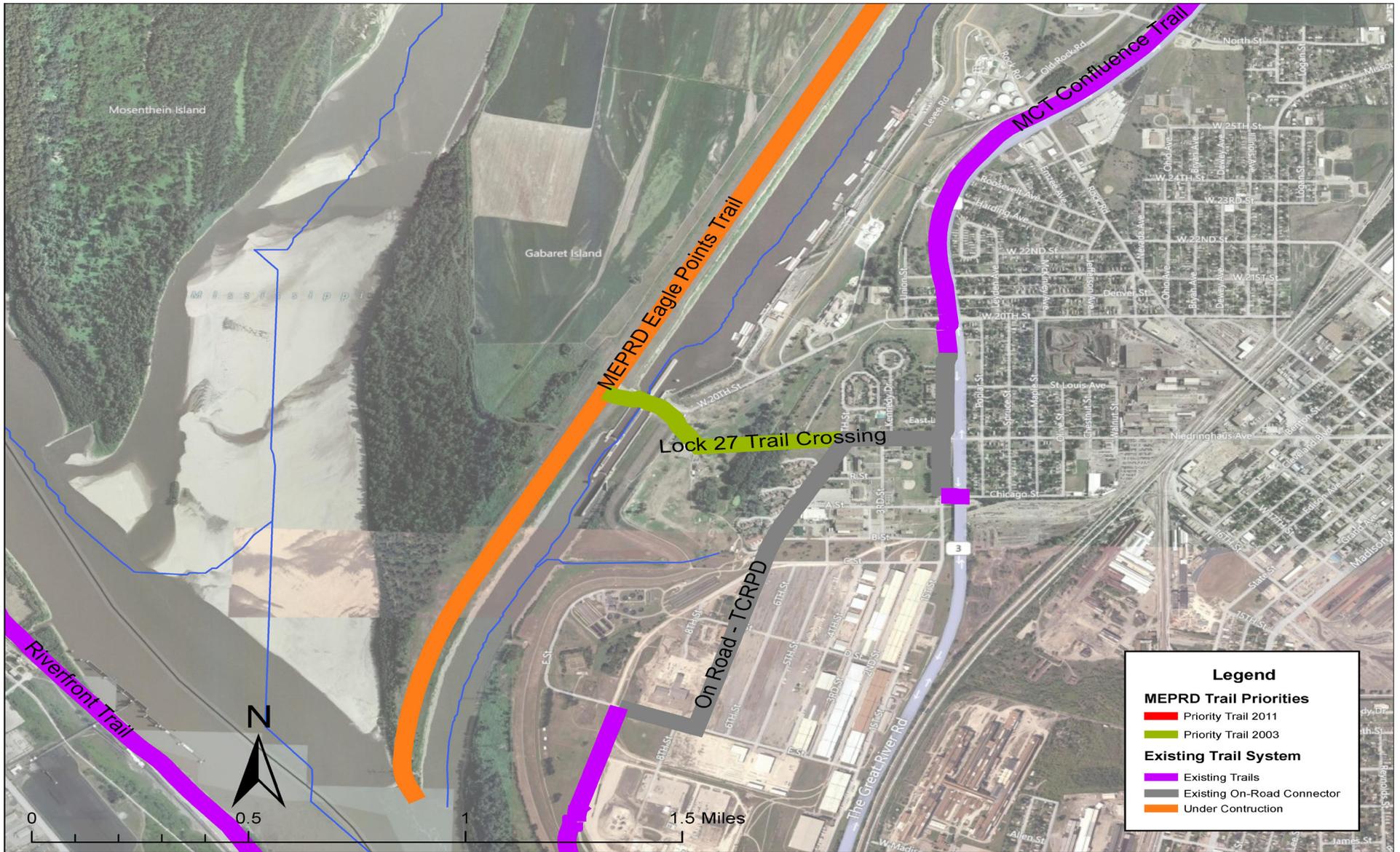
The Lock 27 Trail Crossing is an important link to provide connection to Chouteau and Gabaret Islands. The proposed trail crossing would utilize the structure of Lock and Dam #27, a U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) facility on the Chain of Rocks Canal. The trail crossing would provide connectivity between the MCT Confluence Trail in Granite City, the River's Edge development and the Eagle Points Trail on Gabaret Island.

The feasibility of the trail is moderate since collaboration and approval from the USACE and the Tri City Regional Port District will be required. There is also limited right of way for the trail along Niedringhaus Avenue and an on street connector may need to be evaluated, connecting with Route 3. The on street connector would then connect with the MCT Confluence Trail.

The Lock 27 Trail Crossing is only one mile, however the trail is a unique opportunity for cyclists and pedestrians to view the operations of a lock and dam facility. The crossing would provide a link from Granite City to Gabaret Island, connecting local citizens to the natural beauty of the island and river.



Lock 27 Trail Crossing

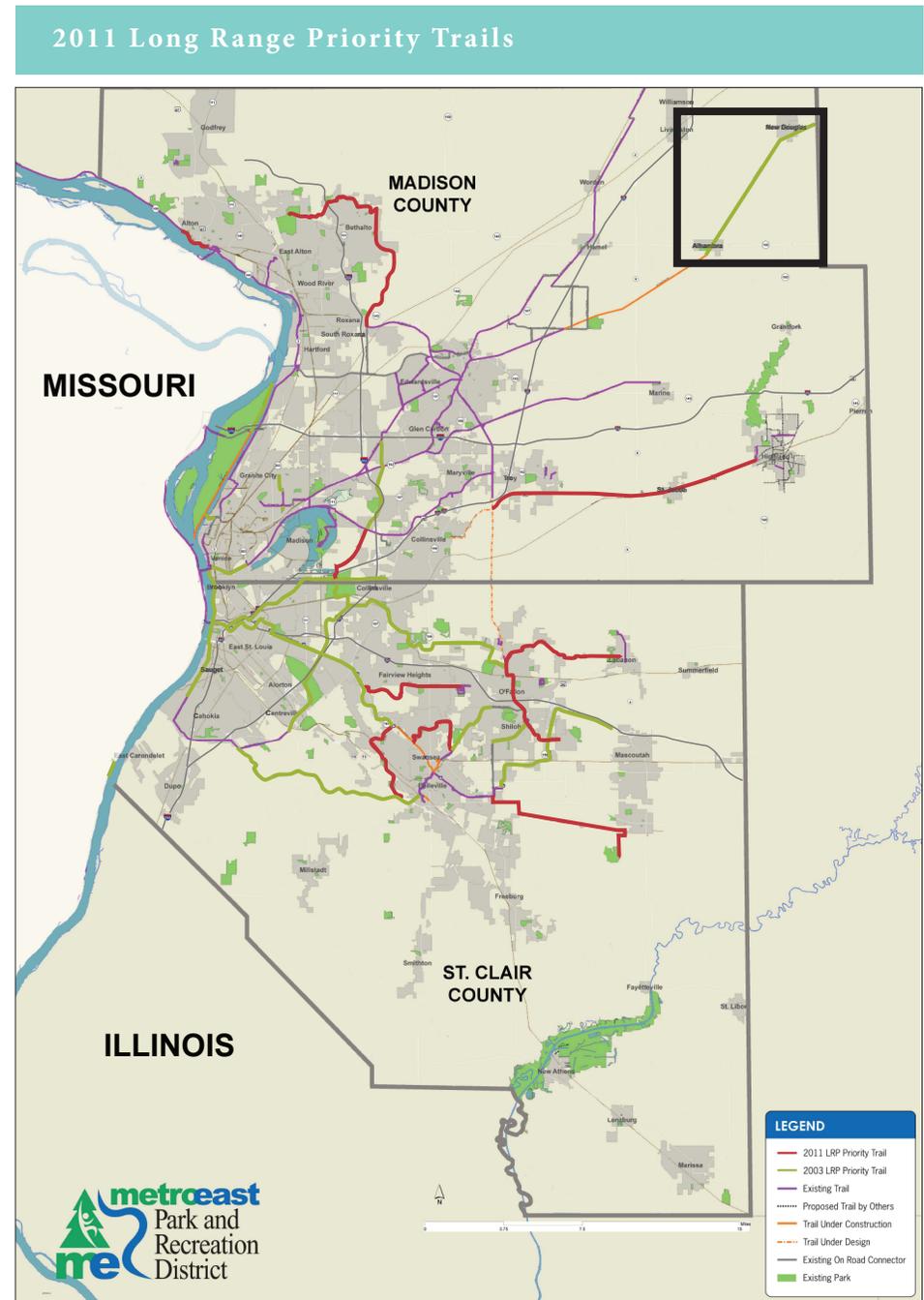


MCT Nickel Plate Trail

The Nickel Plate Trail is a nine mile trail which transects through rural countryside of crop fields and occasional wooded areas along farm roads. The trail is an extension of the existing Nickel Plate Trail. Currently the trail stretches from Pontoon Beach in south Madison County to Edwardsville. A segment of trail from, just northeast of Edwardsville to Alhambra is currently under construction. The next segment of the trail will connect with the newly constructed trail, just to the south of Alhambra and proceed to the northeast along a former railroad right of way, to the town of New Douglas.

The feasibility of the trail is high because of limited obstructions for the trail. While there are numerous at grade crossings of local roads, traffic volume on the roads is limited.

The MCT Nickel Plate Trail will provide connectivity for the citizens in the rural northwest portion of Madison County with the extensive MCT trail network in the central and western areas of the county.



MCT Nickel Plate Trail

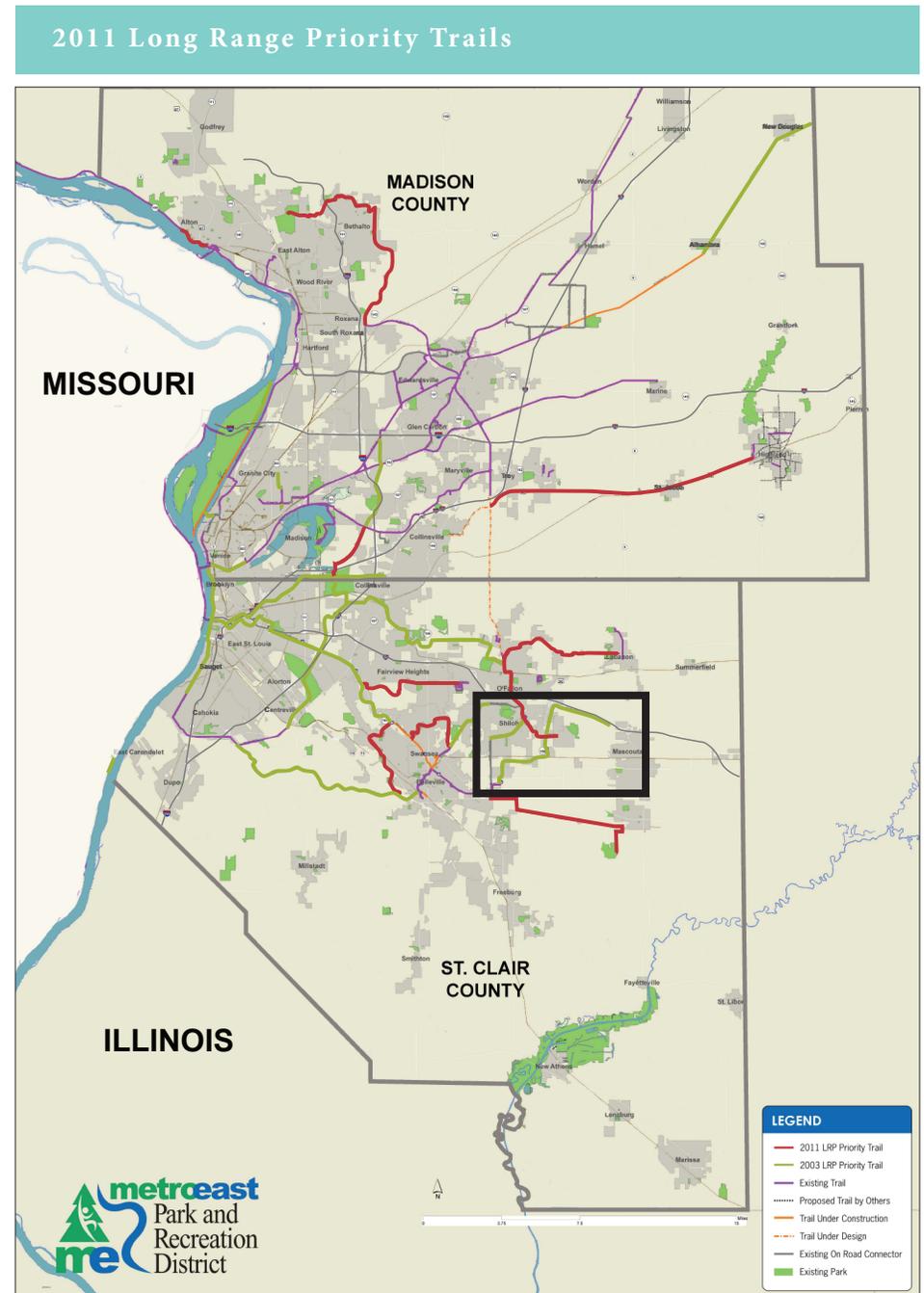


MetroLink Bike Trail East

This trail segment of the MetroLink Bike Trail is planned to run parallel along the light rail line from the College Station at Southwestern Illinois College in Belleville to the Shiloh-Scott Station at Scott Air Force Base. The 3.4 miles of trail would provide an alternative transportation route for local citizens and personnel at the air force base to the community college. An additional segment of this trail alignment would proceed north from the Shiloh-Scott Station to the I-64 corridor, then turn east and terminate at Mid America Airport. This additional segment is 5.2 miles of trail, crossing through prairies, local crop fields and creek bottomland.

The feasibility of this trail is high for the segment between the college and the air force base since the trail would be within the right of way of the MetroLink light rail line and ridership potential is high due to the fact the trail would serve two major institutions and employment centers. The trail would have to cross busy Carlyle Avenue (state highway 161) at grade. The trail would then cross underneath State Highway 158 for access to Scott Air Force Base. Feasibility of the trail segment from Scott Air Force Base to Mid America Airport is moderate, mainly due to the fact that there is limited demand for the trail segment. The physical and technical challenges are few, since the trail is mainly transecting through flat topography and there is only one road crossing.

MetroLink Bike Trail is planned to run along the entire length of the MetroLink light rail line in St. Clair County. The MetroLink Bike Trail East would be an important connection between Southwestern Illinois College and Scott Air Force Base, each institution has a high number of young adults, who may be potential trail users. The trail would serve this demographic group as a recreational facility, an alternative transportation route and a multi-modal transportation opportunity.



MetroLink Bike Trail East

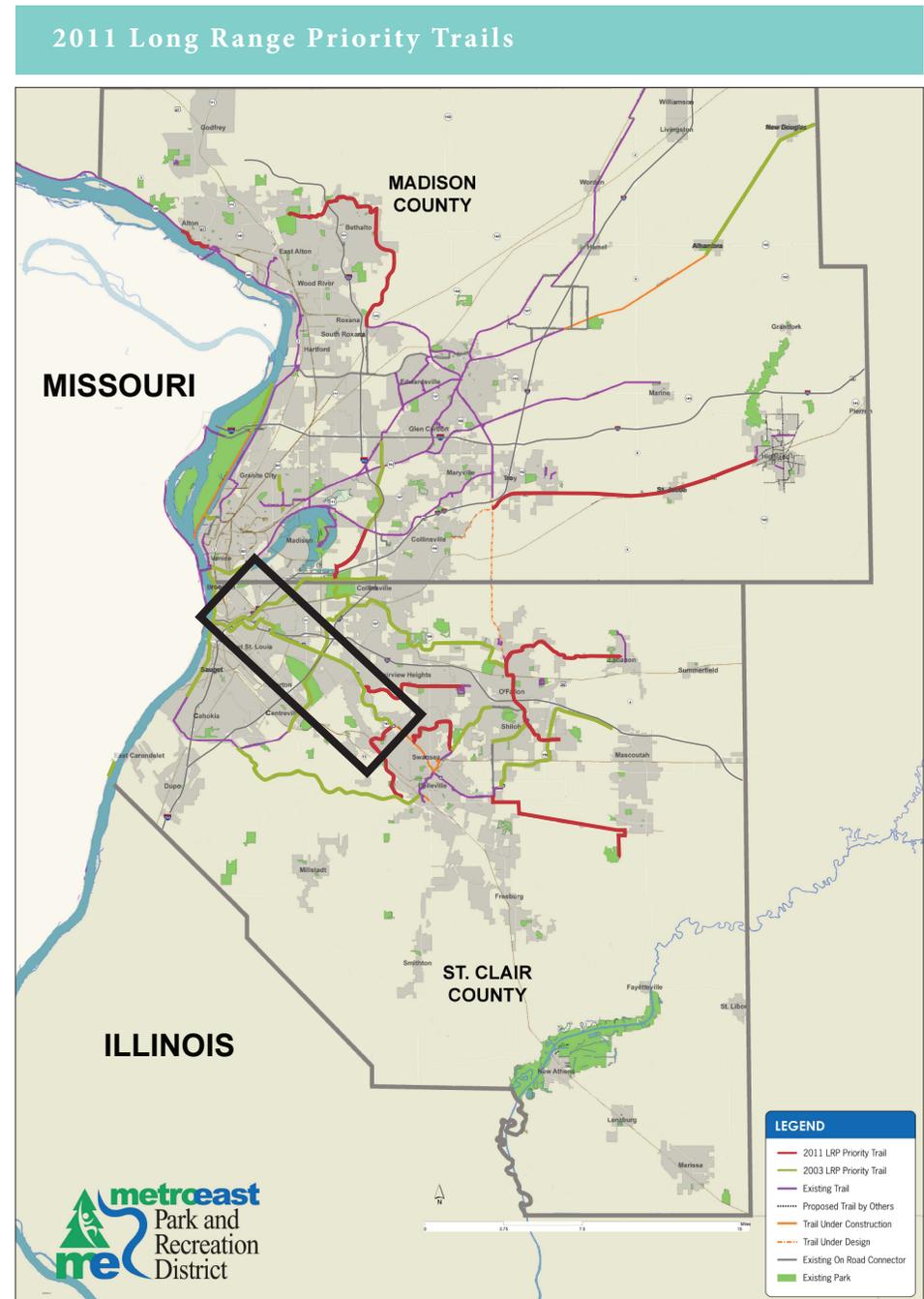


MetroLink Bike Trail West

This trail segment of the MetroLink Bike Trail is planned to run parallel along the light rail line from the Memorial Hospital Station in Belleville to the 5th and Missouri Station in East St. Louis. This 10.5 mile trail segment would connect numerous neighborhoods in Belleville, Washington Park and East St. Louis. The trail would also include a one mile extension from the 5th and Missouri Station to the Eads Bridge as a part of the East St. Louis Heritage Trail.

The feasibility of this trail is high since the trail would be within the right of way of the MetroLink light rail line. Challenges to completing the trail include numerous at grade crossings and providing safe, accessible access to local neighborhoods.

MetroLink Bike Trail is planned to run along the entire length of the MetroLink light rail line in St. Clair County. The bike trail was a long term planning effort, by Metro and other public agencies, to have a bike trail from Downtown East St. Louis to Scott Air Force Base in Mascoutah. The MetroLink Bike Trail East will connect neighborhoods in Belleville, Washington Park and East St. Louis, to parks, schools, business centers and other communities.

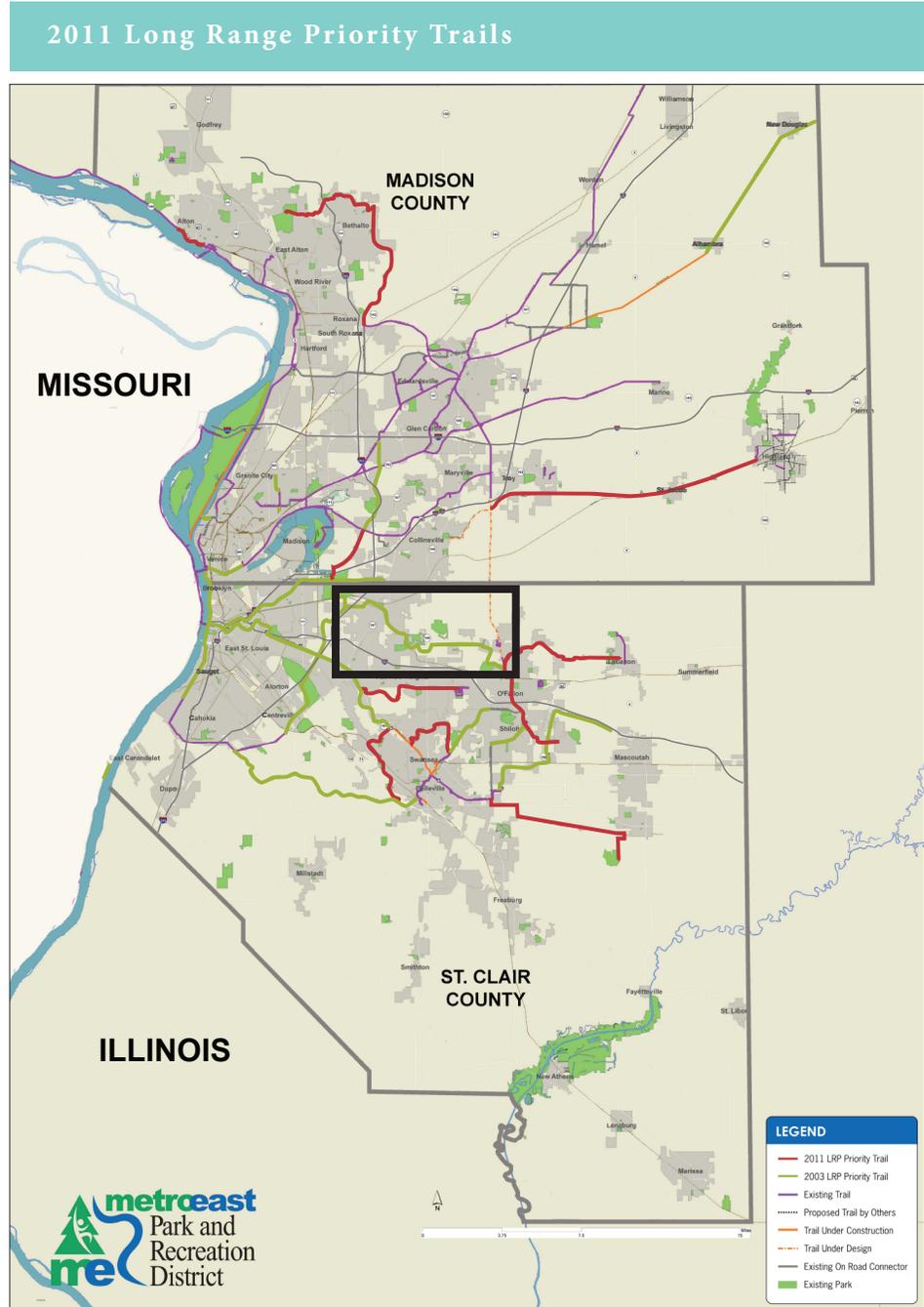


Milburn School Trail

The Milburn School Trail is a ten mile trail which connects the communities of Caseyville, Fairview Heights and O’Fallon. The trail provides connectivity to numerous parks, natural areas and neighborhoods. The trail extends from just south of the Cahokia Mounds State Park, eastward to the north side of Caseyville to State Highway 157. The trail would then proceed east along O’Fallon Drive, through forested areas in Fairview Heights, then crossing State High 159 and intersecting with Milburn School Road. The trail follows Milburn School Road through pastures and open space areas, then south on Simmons Road into the O’Fallon Sports Complex. The proposed trail would connect six parks, extensive open space and numerous neighborhoods. The trail would eventually connect with the future American Bottoms South trail.

The feasibility of this trail is moderate due to the numerous crossings of State Highways 157 and 159 as well as other local roads. The trail also must ascend the grade from Caseyville in the American Bottoms to the higher elevations in Fairview Heights.

The Milburn School Trail has the potential to provide a lengthy trail in the northern section of St. Clair County. The trail will be a recreational facility supporting active, healthy lifestyles. The Milburn School Trail also has the potential to be an alternative transportation route connecting local citizens to parks, athletic complexes, neighborhoods and commercial centers.

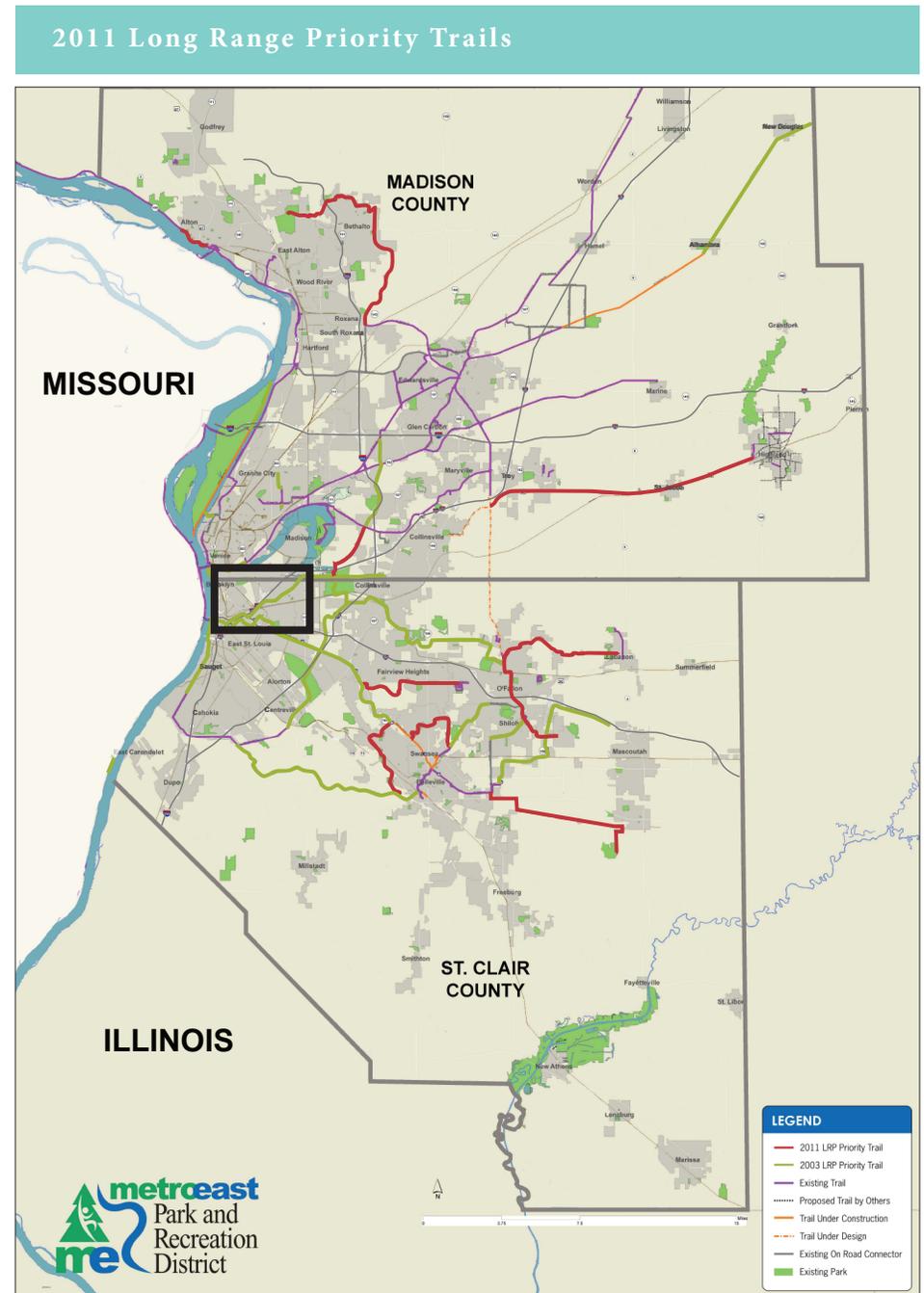


Mounds Heritage Trail

The Mounds Heritage Trail is a five mile trail from Cahokia Mounds State Park on the east end, and Downtown East St. Louis on west end. The trail will connect the state park site, home to the largest prehistoric earthen structures in North America, with additional mound groups around East St. Louis and Fairmont City. The trail will terminate on the west end of the proposed MetroLink Bike Trail at 10th street in East St. Louis. The trail will parallel Collinsville Road from the Cahokia Mounds State Park proceeding west along the north side of Fairmont City into the Emerson Park neighborhood of East St. Louis. The trail will cross over I-64, on the 9th street bridge, into Downtown East St. Louis, connecting to the MetroLink Bike Trail.

The feasibility of the trail is moderate due to numerous at grade crossings along the Collinsville Road corridor and limited right of way along city streets in East St. Louis.

The Mounds Heritage Trail is an opportunity to showcase the Cahokia Mounds State Park and the prehistoric mounds of the ancient Mississippian culture.



Mounds Heritage Trail

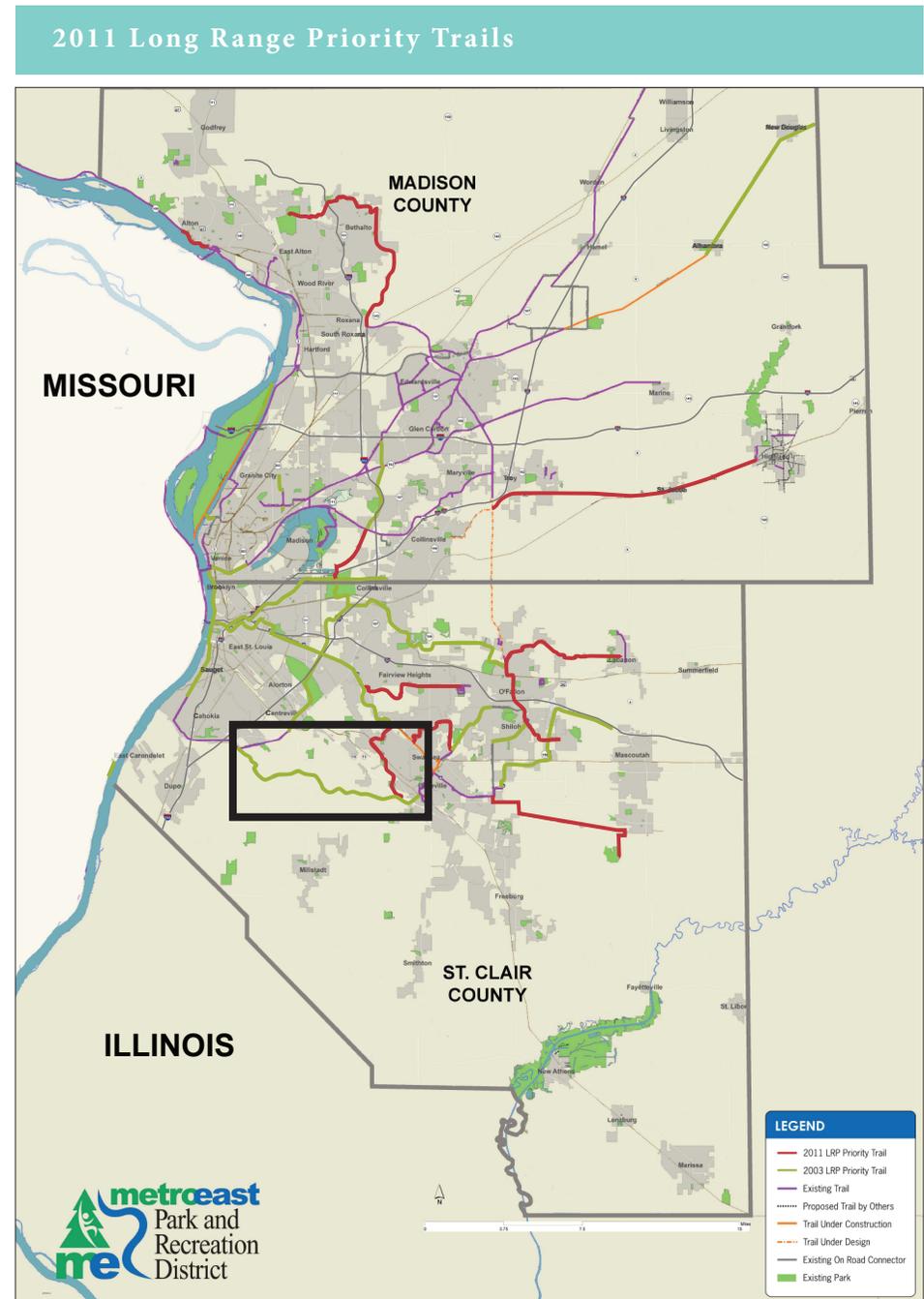


Prairie DuPont Trail

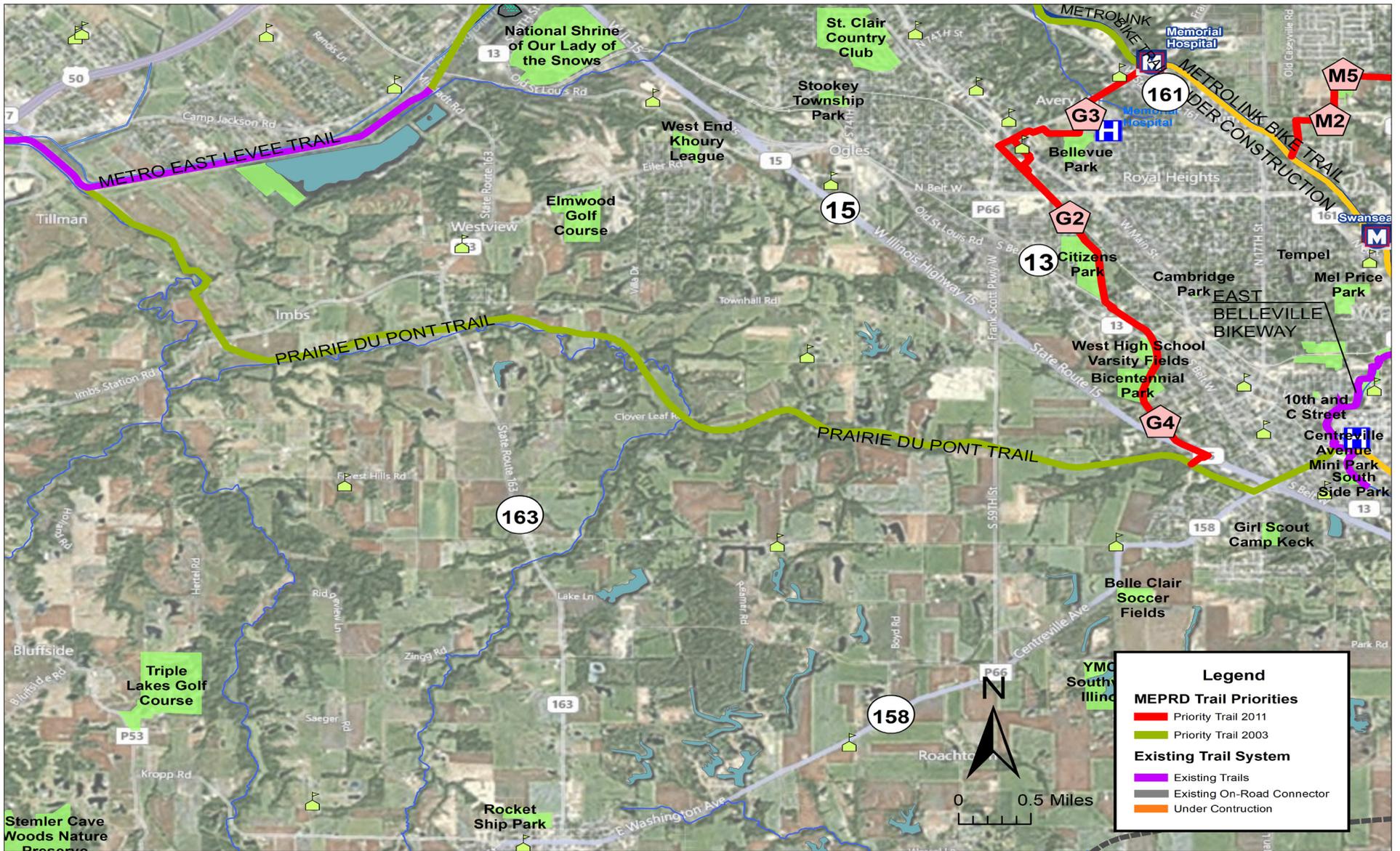
The Prairie du Pont Trail is a 10 mile trail which connects the trail network in Belleville with the Metro East Levee Trail in Cahokia, near the intersection of I-255 and State Highway 157 at Harding Ditch. The proposed trail would start in Belleville at the East Belleville Bikeway at Centreville Avenue, pass underneath State Highway 15 to an abandoned railroad corridor. The trail would then proceed west through forested areas, open space and creek bottoms along the Prairie du Pont Creek. The trail would cross State Highway 163 and terminate at the connection with the existing Metro East Levee Trail in Cahokia.

The feasibility of the trail is moderate due to some at grade crossings and steep slopes along the creek corridor.

The Prairie du Pont Trail will provide an opportunity for local citizens to experience natural areas of open space, forest and riparian environments in St. Clair County.



Prairie DuPont Trail



2011 LONG RANGE PLAN

Richland Creek Trail

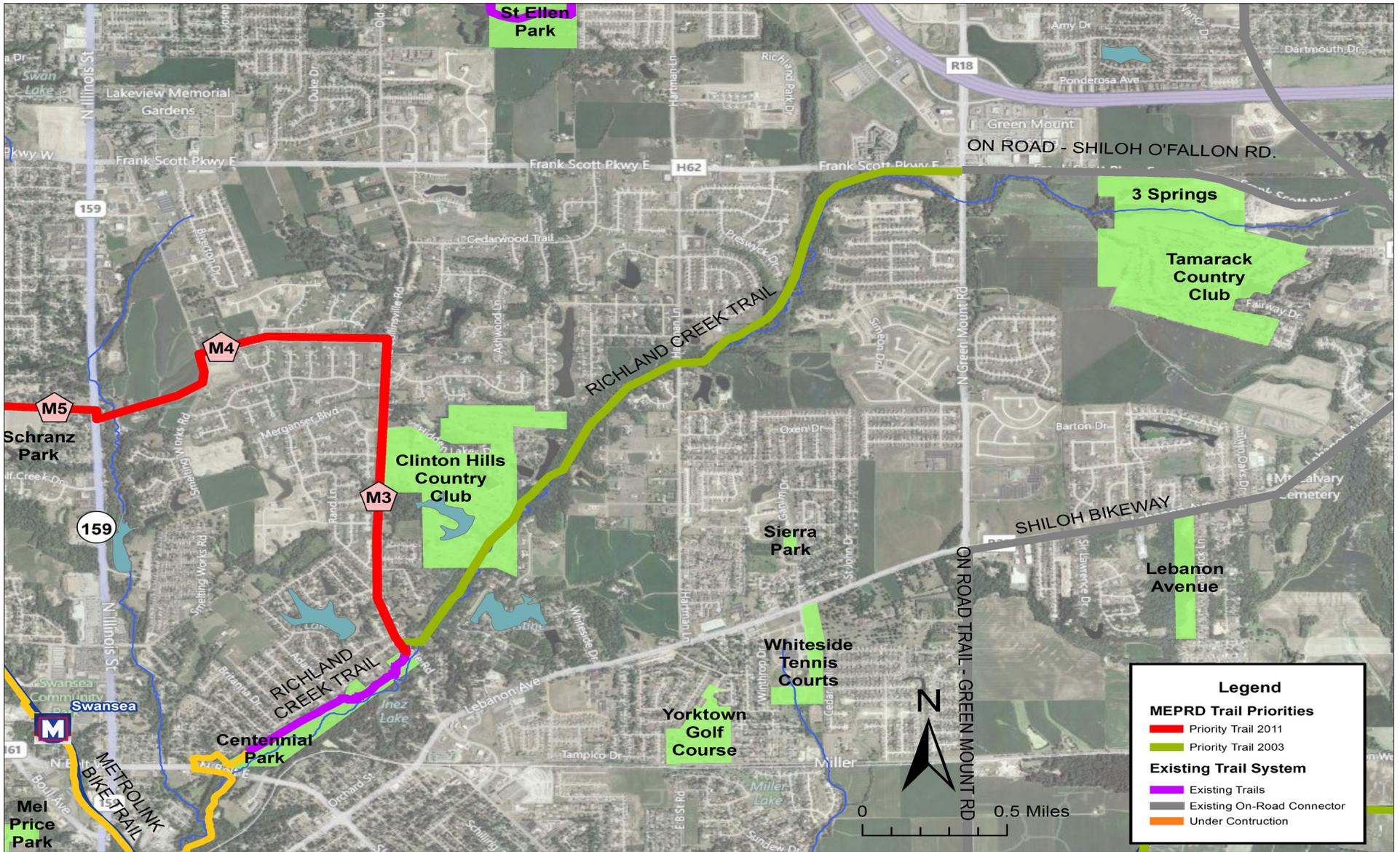
The Richland Creek Trail is a 3 mile trail which connects the neighborhoods and parks of Shiloh, Swansea and the northeast section of Belleville. Starting at the east end of the trail in Three Springs Park in Shiloh, the trail is an on street connector trail to the intersection of Frank Scott Parkway and Greenmount Road. Following Frank Scott Parkway, the trail travels west into the Richland Creek Greenway along the creek. The proposed trail traverses through the creek corridor of wooded slopes, creek bottomland and adjacent residential areas. The trail runs to the southwest connecting with the existing Richland Creek Trail. The proposed trail would provide excellent connectivity to the area by providing access to the existing Richland Creek Trail and the MetroLink Bike Trail under construction near Centennial Park in Belleville.

The feasibility of the trail is moderate with potential accessibility issues of steep slopes within the Richland Creek Greenway. Some easements for the trail will also be required.

The Richland Creek Trail has the potential to provide Shiloh residents an safe, off the road access to the extensive trail network in Belleville and the central section of St. Clair County.



Richland Creek Trail

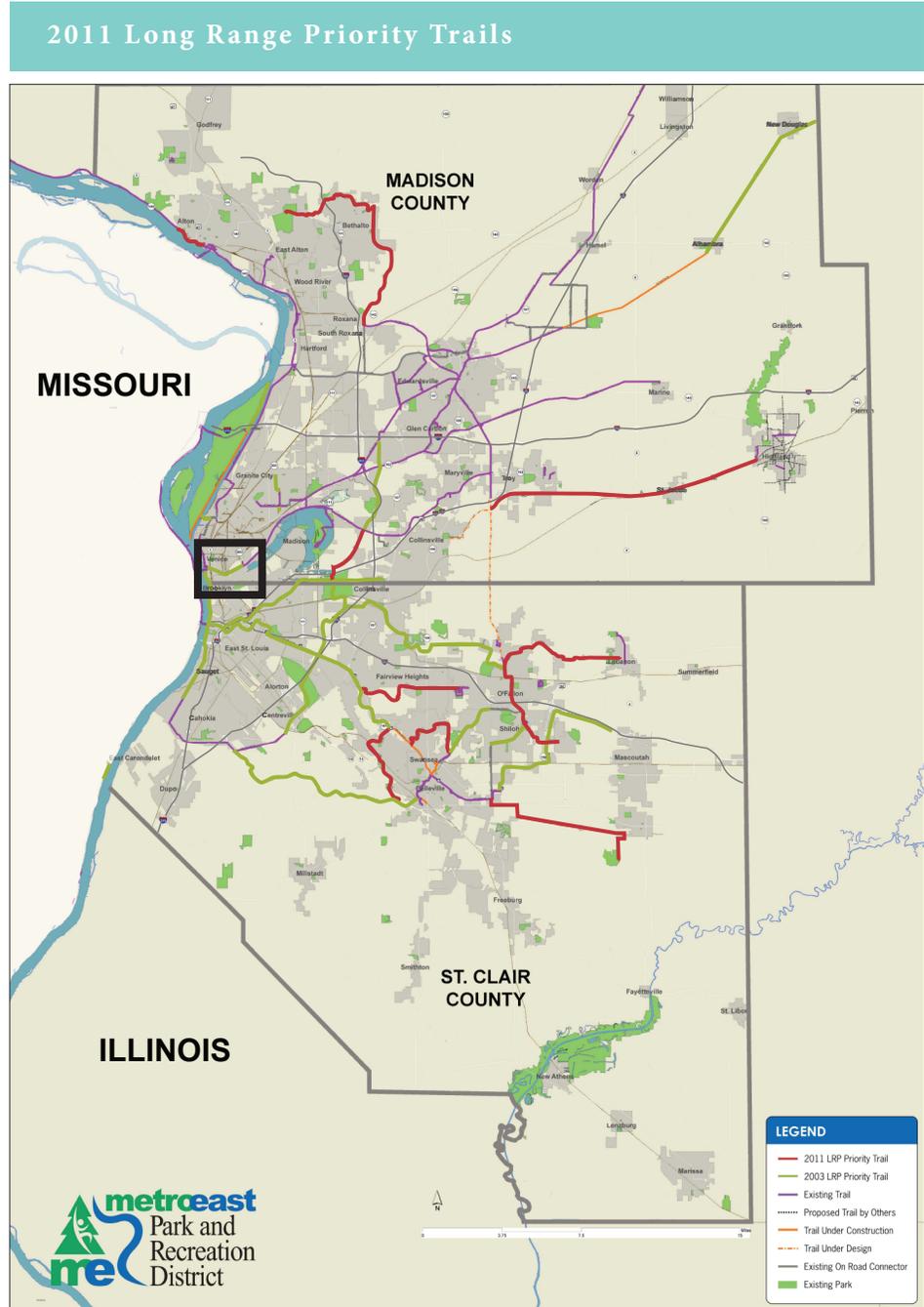


Schoolhouse Connector Trail

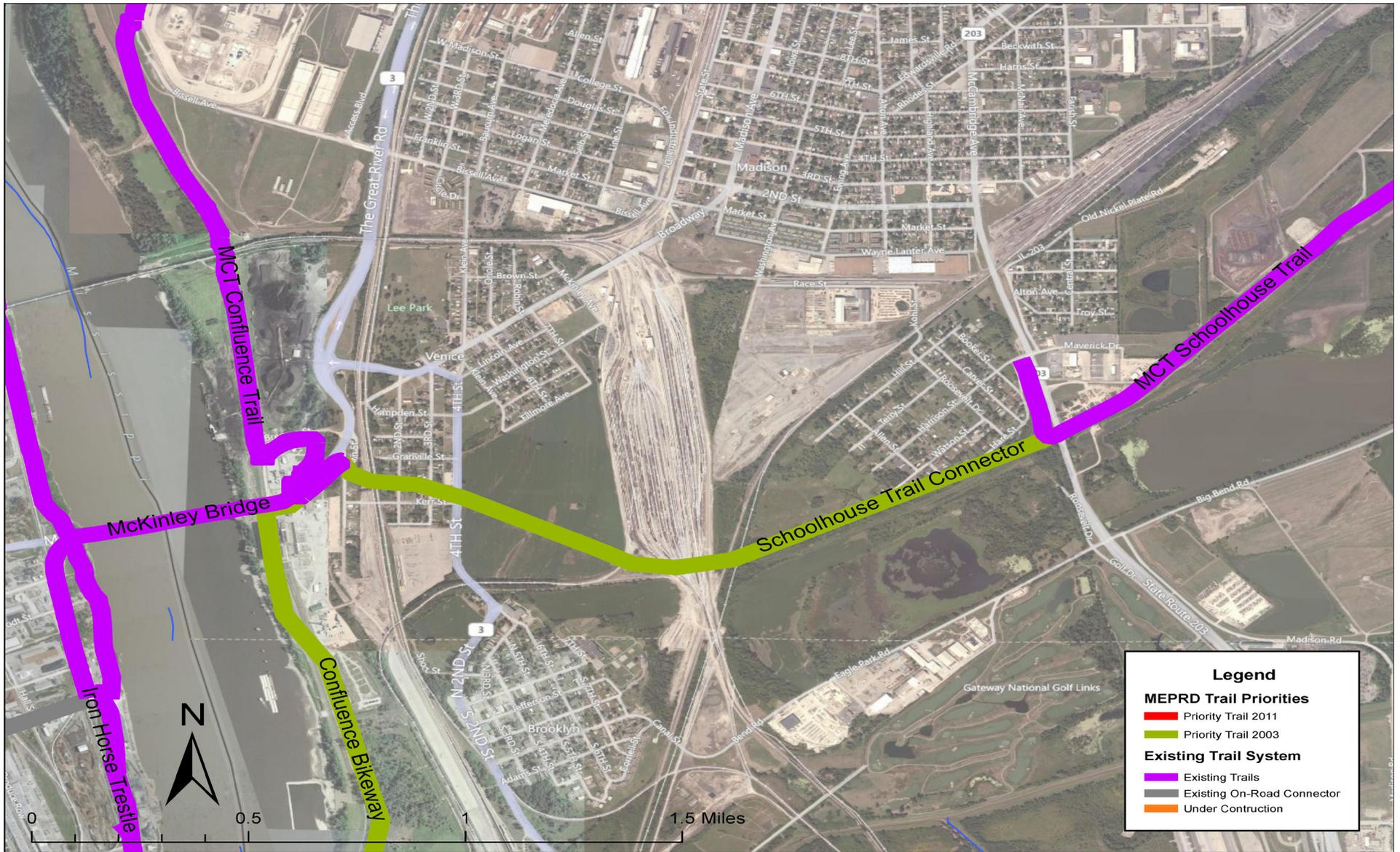
The Schoolhouse Trail Connector would extend the Madison County Transit (MCT) Schoolhouse Trail 2 miles to the west, from Illinois State Highway 203 to the McKinley Bridge across the Mississippi River. The trail extension would utilize the right of way corridor of the former Edwardsville Hyline Electric Train. The trail would pass through open fields, former industrial and railroad areas and into the residential neighborhood of Venice Township.

The Schoolhouse Trail Connector project is very feasible due to the fact it connects many trails and is relatively short, only 2 miles in length. Challenges include the grade separated crossings at State Highway Route 3 and Kerr Street in Venice. Restoration of existing elevated structures and building new elevated structures may also pose access and cost issues.

The Schoolhouse Trail Connector will provide connectivity, for local citizens, to many trails including the MCT Confluence Trail, MCT Nature Trail, and the MCT Schoolhouse Trail. The trail will also connect with the McKinley Bridge Bikeway which allows cyclists and pedestrians to cross the Mississippi River, accessing trails on the Missouri side of the river.



Schoolhouse Connector Trail



Scott-Troy Trail South Extension

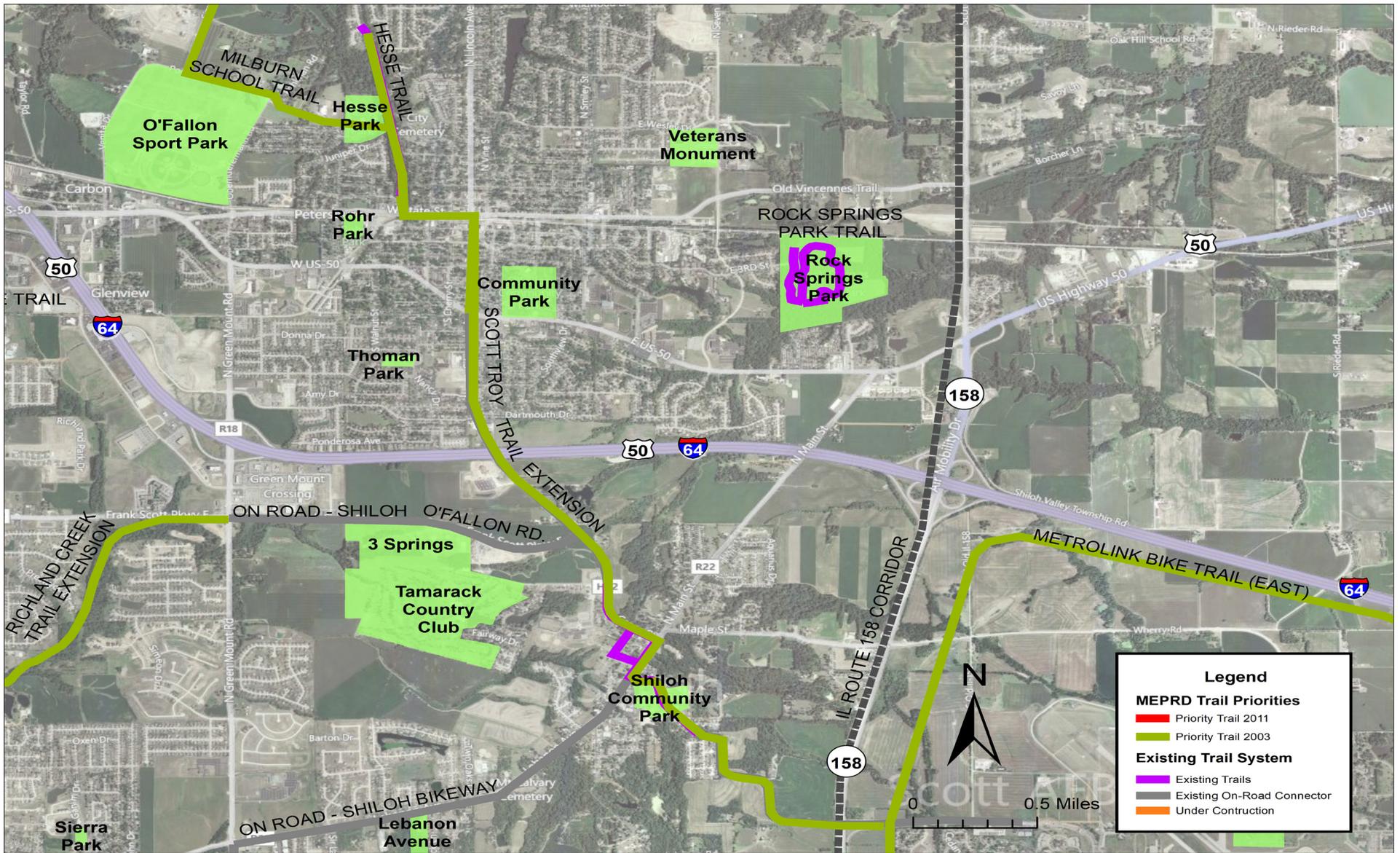
The Scott-Troy Trail South Extension is the southern 1/3 of the longer Scott -Troy Trail which extends north into Madison County to the community of Troy, Illinois. The South Extension would follow the O’Fallon Bike Trail near Hesse Park in the City of O’Fallon. The trail would intersect with Miburn School Trail, and onto State Street in O’Fallon where the trail becomes an on-street bikeway trail. Proceeding east on State Street, then south on Lincoln Avenue/O’Fallon-Shiloh Road to Shiloh. The trail would then go west on Shiloh Road/Main Street, south on Park Road and then east on Seibert Road. The trail provides a key link to Scott Air Force Base (AFB) and the Shiloh/Scott AFB Station and the MetroLink Bike Trail.

The feasibility of this trail is high is due to the fact that some segments of the trail are on the existing O’Fallon Bike Trail and some segments are on-street, which are each very feasible from a cost perspective. There are some challenges of numerous street crossings and cyclists having to negotiate with vehicular traffic. However, with the northern segment of the Scott-Troy Trail currently being implemented, it provides incentive to continue the trail south to Scott Air Force Base.

The Scott-Troy Trail South Extension will provide connectivity to many existing trails including the Schoolhouse Trail in Troy, the Milburn School Trail in O’Fallon and the MetroLink Bike Trail in Shiloh. The trail will also allow for a multi-modal connection to the MetroLink Light Rail System at the Shiloh/Scott AFB Station.



Scott-Troy Trail South Extension



ONLINE RESOURCES FOR INFORMATION ON GRANTS AND FUNDERS

NOZA – Free resource that allows a search by foundation, name and location then generates a list based on your search criteria. www.nozasearch.com

Fundsnet – Free resource. www.fundsnet.com

Seeking Grant Money Today – Lists grant opportunities as they become available. www.thegrantplant.blogspot.com

The Foundation Center – Comprehensive database that provides information on foundation funding priorities and past grants. Subscription also available. www.foundationcenter.org

Foundation Search America – Available for a fee. www.foundationsearch.com

Grant Station – Allows grant seekers to identify potential funding sources for their specific programs or projects. Requires a fee based membership, although some features are free. www.grantstation.com

The Grantsmanship Center - Sources for funding information. www.tgci.com

Community Foundation Locator – Funding sources. www.communityfoundationlocator.org

Center for Civic Partnerships – Funding sources. www.civicpartnerships.org

Funding Strategy and Application Process

MEPRD Funding Strategies and Resources

Innovative funding for trails, trail amenities and parks can come from a variety of sources, but a community-based vision for developments, enhancements and acquisitions is the first step to increasing varied and alternative funding resources. The community will be a better focused and a more committed partner when the vision of developing regional trails and supporting park developments and enhancements are tied to elements that matter to that community, such as economic development, and quality of life improvements.

Flexibility and Efficiency

- Regional trails and parks need to reflect the diversity of the neighborhood or community. Neighborhood and community interests usually reflect its current demographics. This allows people to take ownership of the trails, trail amenities and parks in their areas because they can visualize themselves supporting a trail or a park project that is meaningful to them.
- Take advantage of the most current funding trends while continually weeding out the programs that are no longer being used or are on a downward trend.
- Understand that recreational activities are being impacted by advances in technology and an aging population which changes how people grow in to or out of recreational activities.
- Facilities and events should be changed to reflect how people currently recreate.

Community Outreach Opportunities

- Attract community leaders and support groups to identify park and trail issues allowing them to take ownership that will give them reasons to become involved.
- Identify park staff or trail users that live in a particular neighborhood to be ambassadors to that community. Have them attend local meetings to articulate the park department's case regarding the value of the park or trail enhancements that are being considered because it impacts where they live.
- Work with community leaders and businesses to encourage employees to submit requests for them to fund their favorite local trails or parks.
- Start neighborhood and community involvement on a small scale with spring or fall cleanup projects for trails and parks that might involve local community groups, senior citizen groups, Boy Scout or Girl Scout troops, Church groups or classes from local schools/colleges or universities.

Application Process

The development of a public system of interconnecting parks and trails is integral to the mission of the Metro East Park and Recreation District (MEPRD). The development of the system requires funding, from a variety of sources, and MEPRD has been helping to fund various parks and trails in St. Clair and Madison Counties since 2003. MEPRD currently provides a Park and Trail Grant Matching Program, available to public agencies within the District's boundaries. The intent of the funding program is to help fund parks and trail projects in St. Clair and Madison Counties. MEPRD requires that the local project sponsor partially fund their respective project.

The MEPRD Park and Trail Grant Matching Program Application is an annual application, accepted throughout the fiscal year as defined by MEPRD. The application lists the information, grant process, eligibility and funding requirements. The application is subject to review and revisions per the decision of MEPRD.



Dedication of Piasa Park in Alton, IL.

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Appendix

- i. Complete Public Agency Listing
- ii. Agency Survey Examples
- iii. Best Greenway Practices: A Report on Planning Guidelines and Operations

i. Complete Public Agency Listing

Madison County

Alhambra Township
 City of Alton Parks & Recreation Department
 Chouteau Township
 City of Edwardsville Parks & Recreation Department
 City of Madison
 City of Troy
 City of Venice
 Collinsville Township
 Edwardsville Township
 Foster Township
 City of Godfrey Parks & Recreation Department
 Granite City Park District
 Granite City Township
 City of Highland Parks & Recreation Department
 Illinois Dept. of Natural Resources (Horseshoe Lake State Park)
 Madison County Transit
 Marine Township
 Moro Township
 Nameoki Township
 New Douglas Township
 Olive Township
 Roxana Community Park District
 Saline Township
 St. Jacob Township
 Venice Township
 Village of Alhambra
 Village of Bethalto
 Village of Glen Carbon Parks Department
 Village of Hamel
 Village of Hartford
 Village of Livingston
 Village of Marine
 Village of Maryville
 Village of Pierron
 Village of Pontoon Beach
 Village of South Roxana
 Village of St. Jacob
 Village of Williamson
 Village of Worden
 Wood River Township

St. Clair County

City Belleville Park & Recreation Department
 Belleville Township
 Canteen Township
 Caseyville Township
 Centreville Township
 City of Centreville
 City of East St. Louis
 City of Fairview Heights
 City of Lebanon
 City of Mascoutah
 East Saint Louis Parks District
 East Saint Louis Township
 Engelmann Township
 Fayetteville Township
 Freeburg Park District
 Horner Park District
 Lebanon Township
 Lenzburg Township
 Mascoutah Township
 Millstadt Township
 New Athens Park District
 New Athens Township
 City of O'Fallon Parks & Recreation Department
 O'Fallon Township
 Prairie Du Long Township
 Shiloh Valley Township
 Smithton Township
 St. Clair County Transit District
 St. Clair Township
 Stites Township (fka Village of Brooklyn)
 Stookey Township
 Village of Alorton
 Village of Caseyville
 Village of Dupo
 Village of Fairmont City
 Village of Fayetteville
 Village of Marissa
 Village of Millstadt
 Village of New Athens
 Village of New Baden
 Village of Sauget
 Village of Shiloh
 Village of Smithton

Madison & St. Clair Counties

Collinsville Area Recreation District

ii. Agency Survey Examples



MEPRD - Trails Survey Questionnaire

Instructions:

Please complete the following survey by filling in the blanks and clicking on the appropriate circles. A survey should be completed for each trail your agency owns, operates, or manages. Include proposed trails as well. To input additional trails, open the original email you received from MEPRD and click on the survey link again. This process should be repeated until all trails in your jurisdiction have been submitted. Contact Lisa Deterding at ldeterding@arcturis.com or (314) 206-7136 for questions or help completing the survey.

IMPORTANT NOTE: If you exit in the middle of the survey, the information will be lost. Also, once the survey has been submitted, your information can only be changed by contacting MEPRD.

1 * Required Information

Local Agency Name
Trail of
Example: 1 of 12

2 General Information

If you previously filled out this section, please skip to Question 8.

Local Agency Address
City
State
Zip Code
County
Agency Type

3 Contact Information for Individual Completing the Survey

Contact Person
Title

Phone
Fax
Email
Cell

4 Does your community/jurisdiction have any parks, trails, greenspace or bicycle parking ordinances?

YES NO

5 Does your community/jurisdiction require, per ordinance, new developments to be connected to any nearby existing trails?

YES NO

6 Does your community/jurisdiction have a bicycle/pedestrian master plan?

YES NO

7 What funding sources have been used in the past by your community/jurisdiction for establishing new trails and trail improvements? (please list sources)

8 Trail Status

Existing Trail
 Proposed Trail

9 Trail Information

Trail Name
Address / Location of Trail Starting Point
Address/ Location of Trail Ending Point
Latitude of Starting Point
Longitude of Starting Point

Latitude of Ending Point
 Longitude of Ending Point

To Find Latitude & Longitude:

Right click on this link <http://touchmap.com/latlong.html>. "Open in New Tab", click on "Latitude and Longitude of a..." tab located at top of screen, and type an address or general location. When the marker appears on the Google map, drag it to the start point of the trail and double click on the marker. Coordinates will appear. Copy and paste them in the form by clicking back on "MEPRD - Trails Survey Questionnaire" tab located at top of screen. Repeat for the end point.

NOTE: Latitude will be 38.xxx and Longitude with either be -89.xxx or -90.xxx.

10 Ownership of Trail

- Owned by local agency
- Leased by local agency
- Owned by another agency/entity
- Jointly owned by local agency plus others

11 Primary Trail Use

- Bicycle, Recreation
- Bicycle, Transportation
- Walking/Dog Walking/Rollerblading/Cross-Country Running
- Hiking
- Running/Jogging

12 Secondary Trail Use (check all that apply)

- Bicycle, Recreation
- Bicycle, Transportation
- Walking/Dog Walking/Rollerblading/Cross-Country Running
- Hiking
- Running/Jogging

13 Trail Surface (check all that apply)

- Asphalt
- Concrete
- Limestone Screenings
- Cleared Grass/Dirt Path
- Natural

14 Average Width of Trail

15 Total Length of Trail in Miles (to 2 decimal places - xx.xx)

16 Of that Total, Identify Length of Trail Segments by Type as Outlined Below

Miles, separate/dedicated
 Miles on road, dedicated lane(s)
 Miles on road, shared use

17 Is the trail handicap accessible?

- Yes
- No
- Partially

18 Is this trail linked to any other trails?

YES NO

If yes, provide name(s) of linked trail(s):

19 If no, do you plan to eventually link this trail to any other trails?

YES NO

If yes, provide name(s) of trail(s):

20 Does this trail link to or pass near any public parks?

YES NO

If yes, provide name(s) of public park(s).

21 Does this trail link to or pass near any public or private schools?

YES NO

If yes, provide the name of the public or private school.

22 Does this trail link to or pass near any major employers?

YES NO

If yes, provide name(s) of major employer(s).

23 Does this trail link to or pass near any bus stop, transit plaza or MetroLink stations?

YES NO

If yes, provide if it "links to" or "passes near" any bus stop, transit plaza or MetroLink.

24 Does this trail include any of the following? (check all that apply)

- Crosses major roadways
- Crosses rail at grade
- Crosses rail via bridge(s)
- Crosses streams or rivers via bridge(s)
- Designated trail heads
- Water fountain(s) for trail users
- Trail signage or map kiosk

25 Is trail parking available for this trail?

Yes or No

of Parking Lots Situated Along the Trail

of Handicapped Accessible Parking Spaces

26 Parking Lot Hours

- Dawn to Dusk
- 24 Hours a Day/7 Days a Week
- Other, please specify

27 Does this trail include restroom facilities for trail users?

- Handicapped accessible: running water, flushable toilets
- Non-handicapped accessible: running water, flushable toilets
- Handicapped accessible: pit toilets or "porta potties"
- Non-handicapped accessible: pit toilets or "porta potties"
- No restroom facilities for trail users

28 Additional Comments/Explanation

29

Please take a moment to scroll the survey to make sure all questions are answered. Once completed, click on "Submit & Exit Survey."

Would you like an electronic copy sent to you by email?

YES NO

Submit & Exit Survey

Survey Page 1

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MEPRD - Parks Survey Questionnaire

Instructions:

Please complete the following survey by filling in the blanks and clicking on the appropriate circles. A survey should be completed for each park your agency owns, operates or manages. Include proposed parks as well. To input additional parks, open the original email you received from MEPRD and click on the survey link again. This process should be repeated until all parks in your jurisdiction have been submitted. Contact Lisa Deterding at ldeterding@arcturis.com or (314) 206-7136 for questions or help completing the survey.

IMPORTANT NOTE: If you exit in the middle of the survey, the information will be lost. Also, once the survey has been submitted, your information can only be changed by contacting MEPRD.

1 * Required Information

Local Agency Name

Park _ of _

Example: 1 of 12

2 General Information

If you previously filled out this section, please skip to Question 8.

Local Agency Address

City

State

Zip Code

County

Website

Agency Type

3 Contact Information for Individual Completing the Survey

Contact Person

Title

Phone

Fax

Email

Cell

4 Does your community/jurisdiction have any parks, trails, greenspace or bicycle parking ordinances?

YES NO

Additional Comment

5 Does your community/jurisdiction have a bicycle/pedestrian master plan?

YES NO

Additional Comment

6 Does your community/jurisdiction require, per ordinance, new developments to set aside designated greenspace or park space?

YES NO

7 What funding sources have been used in the past by your community/jurisdiction for establishing new parks and park improvements? (please list sources)

8 Park Status

Existing Park

Proposed Park

Proposed Expansion of Existing Park

9 Park Information

Park Name

Address / Location

Latitude of Point
 Longitude of Point

To Find Latitude & Longitude:

Right click on this link <http://touchmap.com/latlong.html>, "Open in New Tab", click on "Latitude and Longitude of a..." tab located at top of screen, and type an address or general location. When the marker appears on the Google map, drag it to the center of the park and double click on the marker. Coordinates will appear. Copy and paste them in the form by clicking back on "MEPRD - Parks Survey Questionnaire" tab located at top of screen.

NOTE: Latitude will be 38.xxx and Longitude with either be -89.xxx or -90.xxx.

10 Ownership of Park

- Owned by local agency
- Leased by local agency
- Owned by another agency/entity
- Jointly owned by local agency plus others

11 Type of Park

- Regional - drawing visitors from a large area, multiple municipalities/unincorporated areas
- Community – generally drawing visitors from one municipality, but not numerous municipalities
- Neighborhood – generally drawing visitors from the residential areas near the park
- Mini Park – generally serving a specific residential development
- Linear Park/Greenway

12 Size of Park in Acres (to 2 decimal places - xx.xx)

13 Park Hours

14 Is this park linked to or located near the existing regional trail system?

YES NO

If yes, provide name(s) of trail(s).

15 Indicate the number of each of the following that is included in this park:

6 5 4 3 2 1 None
or more

Full size, regulation baseball fields

6 5 4 3 2 1

If lighted, how many?

Full size, regulation softball fields

6 5 4 3 2 1

If lighted, how many?

Youth league regulation sized baseball fields

6 5 4 3 2 1

If lighted, how many?

Youth league regulation sized softball fields

6 5 4 3 2 1

If lighted, how many?

Full size, dedicated soccer fields

6 5 4 3 2 1

If lighted, how many?

Full size, dedicated football fields

6 5 4 3 2 1

If lighted, how many?

Full court, regulation size basketball courts (2 baskets)
6 5 4 3 2 1

If lighted, how many?
[Input field]

Half court, regulation size basketball courts (1 basket)
6 5 4 3 2 1

If lighted, how many?
[Input field]

Handball Courts
6 5 4 3 2 1

If lighted, how many?
[Input field]

Shuffle Board Courts
6 5 4 3 2 1

If lighted, how many?
[Input field]

16 Indicate the number of each of the following that is included in this park: (continued)

6 5 4 3 2 1 None or more

Bocce Ball Courts
6 5 4 3 2 1

If lighted, how many?
[Input field]

Horseshoe Pitches (2 pegs = 1 pitch)
6 5 4 3 2 1

If lighted, how many?
[Input field]

Sand Volleyball Courts
6 5 4 3 2 1

If lighted, how many?
[Input field]

[Input field]

Hard Surface Volleyball Courts
6 5 4 3 2 1

If lighted, how many?
[Input field]

Turf or Clay Tennis Courts
6 5 4 3 2 1

If lighted, how many?
[Input field]

Asphalt or Concrete Tennis Courts
6 5 4 3 2 1

If lighted, how many?
[Input field]

In-Line Skating / Hockey Rinks
6 5 4 3 2 1

If lighted, how many?
[Input field]

Ice Skating / Hockey Rinks
6 5 4 3 2 1

If lighted, how many?
[Input field]

Skate Park
6 5 4 3 2 1

If lighted, how many?
[Input field]

17 Indicate the number of each of the following that is included in this park: (continued)

6 5 4 3 2 1 None or more

Other non-regulation basketball goals (number should be the number of individual baskets)

6 5 4 3 2 1

Other non-regulation baseball / softball fields used for either sport and all ages

6 5 4 3 2 1

18 Indicate the type of trails that are included in this park:

- Walking/Jogging
- Hiking
- Biking
- Mountain Biking
- Equestrian
- Other, please specify

19 Indicate the number of each of the following that is included in this park: (continued)

6 5 4 3 2 1 None or more

Asphalt Trails/Paths

6 5 4 3 2 1

Indicate total length in miles (x.xx) and surface type.

Limestone Screenings Trails/Paths

6 5 4 3 2 1

Indicate total length in miles (x.xx) and surface type.

Hardwood Mulch Trails/Paths

6 5 4 3 2 1

Indicate total length in miles (x.xx) and surface type.

Trails/Paths with other surface materials not listed above.

6 5 4 3 2 1

Indicate total length in miles (x.xx) and surface type.

20 Indicate the number of each of the following that is included in this park: (continued)

6 5 4 3 2 1 None or more

Swimming Pools

6 5 4 3 2 1

Splash Pads

6 5 4 3 2 1

Swimming Beach

6 5 4 3 2 1

Rock Climbing Walls / Boulders

6 5 4 3 2 1

Large Picnic Pavilions

6 5 4 3 2 1

Individual Picnic Shelters (single table)

6 5 4 3 2 1

Bandstands / Band Shells

6 5 4 3 2 1

Playgrounds (generally geared towards ages 5-12)

6 5 4 3 2 1

"Tot Lots" (generally geared towards ages 2-5)

6 5 4 3 2 1

Boat Docks

6 5 4 3 2 1

21 Indicate the number of each of the following that is included in this park: (continued)

6 5 4 3 2 1 None or more

Boat Rental Facilities

6 5 4 3 2 1

Restroom Facilities (running water, flushable toilets)

6 5 4 3 2 1

Restroom Facilities (pit toilets)

6 5 4 3 2 1

Concession Facilities
 6 5 4 3 2 1

Low Ropes Course / Challenge Course
 6 5 4 3 2 1

High Ropes Course / Challenge Course
 6 5 4 3 2 1

22 **Indicate the number of each of the following that is included in this park: (continued)**

6 5 4 3 2 1 None
 or more

Community Centers (indicate total # of square feet x.xx)
 6 5 4 3 2 1

Additional Information

Dog Park Areas (indicate total # of acres x.xx)
 6 5 4 3 2 1

Additional Information

Fishing Lakes (indicate total # of acres x.xx)
 6 5 4 3 2 1

Additional Information

Golf Courses (indicate total # of holes)
 6 5 4 3 2 1

Additional Information

Miniature Golf Courses (indicate total # of holes)
 6 5 4 3 2 1

Additional Information

Disc / Frisbee Golf Courses (indicate total # of holes)
 6 5 4 3 2 1

Additional Information

Overnight Camping Facilities (indicate total # of camp sites)
 6 5 4 3 2 1

Additional Information

Fitness Stations (indicate total # of individual stations)
 6 5 4 3 2 1

Additional Information

23 **Contact name and number for renting pavilions:**

24 **Additional Comments/Explanation**

25 **Please take a moment to scroll the survey to make sure all questions are answered. Once completed, click on "Submit & Exit Survey."**

Would you like an electronic copy sent to you by email?
 YES NO

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Proposed Bikeway Priority Questionnaire



Thank you for taking the time to complete our previous park and trail surveys. The information you provided has been received and is currently being reviewed as part of our long range planning process.

As a follow-up, the Metro East Park and Recreation District (MEPRD) would like to extend the opportunity for you to submit additional information. MEPRD's mission is to partner with local/regional districts to create a regional network of bikeways that will connect to each other and therefore connect communities in the District. MEPRD would also like to see parks or other public facilities of interest connected into the bikeway system.

You can help by providing details on UP TO five projects or potential projects that are of greatest importance to you. That could be a bikeway that you already have planned, the concept for a bikeway corridor that you would like to suggest, or connecting a park or other facility within your community into the bikeway network. Your response to this follow-up questionnaire will provide key details that will assist MEPRD as it develops its long-range plan. We ask that you share your responses with us by Wednesday, November 10.

You can refer to MEPRD's current Long Range Plan, which shows trails that are existing, under construction and proposed in Madison and St. Clair counties by clicking on the link below.

<http://www.meprd.org/MEPRD-Trail-Map.pdf>

Thank you for your time!

Name of your Agency or Municipality

Please check one:

YES, we would like MEPRD to consider a possible corridor for a bikeway and/or we have at least one proposed bikeway planned.

NO, we do not currently have any proposed bikeways planned or any suggestions for bikeway corridors at this time.

If you selected **NO** above, please return this form to us now by pressing the  button at the **top right corner** of this program.

If you selected **YES** above, please continue with the Questionnaire starting on the next page under First Priority Bikeway.

This form allows you to include up to five proposed (planned or possible corridor) bikeways. Please complete the Questionnaire Forms in priority order for the proposed bikeways.

Proposed Bikeway Priority Questionnaire



#1 Priority Bikeway (either a possible corridor OR a planned bikeway)

THIS IS A POSSIBLE CORRIDOR FOR A BIKEWAY.

Please provide as much information as you can regarding the possible corridor in the box below. Please include beginning and ending points and note any connection points into the existing bikeway system.

IMPORTANT: Please e-mail, fax, or mail a map showing the general alignment of the possible corridor project to:

E-Mail: bmiller@jaipc.com | Fax: 618-659-0941

Mail: MEPRD Long Range Plan, c/o Juneau Associates, 100 North Research Drive, Edwardsville, IL 62025

Please continue to #2 Priority Bikeway OR If this is your only Priority Bikeway, return this form to us now by pressing the  button at the **top right corner** of this program.

THIS IS A PLANNED BIKEWAY.

There are 13 questions for EACH proposed bikeway planned. For the most part, each question can be answered with a Yes or No, however, there is space for additional comments below each question, so feel free to expand on the answer if you would like.

Name of Proposed Bikeway

- What class is your proposed bikeway planned to be? (please choose all that apply)

Bikeway Class Descriptions:	Class I
Class I Bikeway (Bike Path) provides a completely separated right of way for the exclusive use of bicycles and pedestrians with crossflow by motorists minimized.	Class II
Class II Bikeway (Bike Lane) provides a striped lane for one-way bike travel on a street or highway.	Class III
Class III Bikeway (Bike Route) provides for shared use with pedestrian or motor vehicle traffic.	
- Does your proposed bikeway conform to AASHTO Standards (i.e. "Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities")? If not, describe why.

Additional Comments:	Yes
	No
- Can your bikeway be described as a linear corridor trail or a connecting trail **not** contained exclusively within the boundary of a park or other facility?

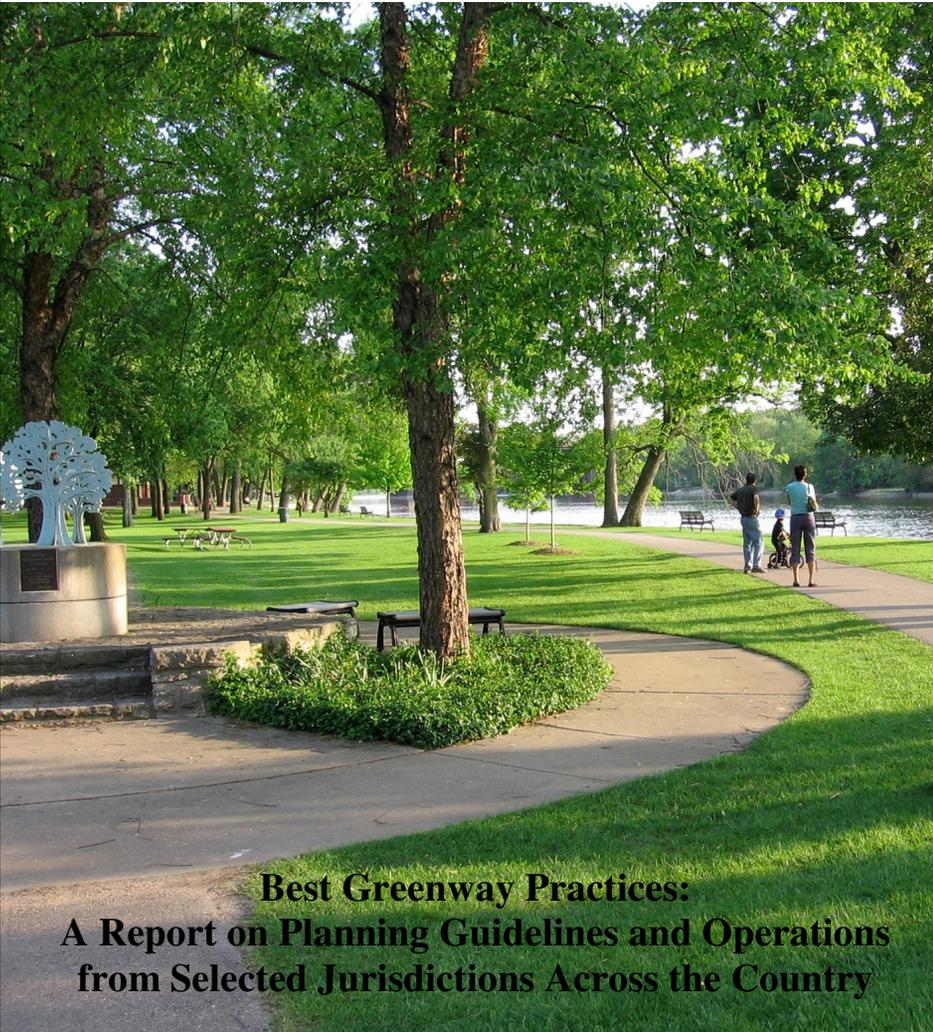
Additional Comments:	Yes
	No

Proposed Bikeway Priority Questionnaire		
#1 Priority Bikeway <i>(continued)</i>		
4. Have you secured right-of-way for your proposed bikeway? If yes, what percentage has been secured?	Yes	
Additional Comments:	No	
5. Is the proposed bikeway near any existing or planned trailhead? If so, what trailhead(s)?	Yes	
Additional Comments:	No	
5A. If you answered Yes to Question 5, are public parking facilities planned?	Yes	
Additional Comments:	No	
6. Does your proposed bikeway connect to any bikeways already shown in MEPRD's existing Long Range Plan? If so, which bikeway?	Yes	
Additional Comments:	No	
6A. If you answered Yes to Question 6, have you coordinated with the bikeway jurisdiction for this connection?	Yes	
Additional Comments:	No	
7. Is your project identified in state, regional or local bikeway plans or comprehensive plans? If so, please name the plan(s).	Yes	
Additional Comments:	No	
8. Have you applied for funding assistance through state or federal programs for this project?	Yes	
Additional Comments:	No	
8A. If you have applied for funding assistance, have you been awarded any funding for this project?	Yes	
Additional Comments:	No	
9. Do you have a governmental resolution in support of your project?	Yes	
Additional Comments:	No	
10. Are there any known adverse environmental or social impacts with regard to your project?	Yes	
Additional Comments:	No	

Proposed Bikeway Priority Questionnaire		
#1 Priority Bikeway <i>(continued)</i>		
11. Will a maintenance plan be established for the future operation and maintenance of your project?	Yes	
Additional Comments:	No	
12. If known, what is the estimated construction cost of your proposed bikeway facility? \$ _____		
Additional Comments:		
13. Have project details been established for your proposed bikeway? (i.e. alignment, plans, pavement types and widths)	Yes	
Additional Comments:	No	
13A. If project details have been established, please provide as much information as you can in the box below?	Yes	
	No	
<p>IMPORTANT: Please e-mail, fax, or mail a map showing the general alignment of your proposed bikeway project to:</p> <p>E-Mail: bmiller@jaipc.com</p> <p>Fax: 618-659-0941</p> <p>Mail: MEPRD Long Range Plan, c/o Juneau Associates, Inc., 100 North Research Drive, Edwardsville, IL 62025</p>		
<p>Please continue to the next page for #2 Priority Bikeway Questionnaire.</p> <p>OR, if this is your only Priority Bikeway, Return this form to us now by pressing the button at the top right corner of this program.</p>		

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iii. Best Greenway Practices: A Report on Planning Guidelines & Operations



**Best Greenway Practices:
A Report on Planning Guidelines and Operations
from Selected Jurisdictions Across the Country**

by James Pona & Associates

Fox River Trail (JPA Photo)

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I. Introduction

This report has been undertaken as a part of the Metro East Park and Recreation District (MEPRD) Greenway Master Plan process being conducted for MEPRD by the Arcturus consultant team.

The study's purpose is to identify and describe outstanding practices in multi-jurisdictional greenway/trail districts from elsewhere, examining elements and procedures of potential use in the MEPRD Greenway Master Plan. This includes planning, operating, maintaining and funding trails and greenways.

A basic list of potential districts was assembled using information gathered by the team as well as by MEPRD staff. The National Park and Recreation Association (NPRRA) was also consulted. The initial listing of agencies for consideration included the following:

- o Illinois Department of Natural Resources - IDNR
- o Arlington Heights (IL) Park District
- o Cedar Falls (MI) – (identify agency for trail w state-of-art signage)
- o Champaign (IL) Park District
- o Champaign County (IL) Forest Preserve District
- o Cleveland (OH) MetroParks
- o Cobb County (GA) Parks & Recreation
- o Fox Valley (IL) Park District
- o Great Rivers (MO) Greenway District
- o Greensboro (NC) Park & Recreation District
- o Indy (IN) Parks/Greenways
- o Joliet (IL) Park District
- o Lake County (IL) Forest Preserve
- o Minneapolis (MN) Parks & Recreation
- o Paulding County (GA) Parks & Recreation
- o Phoenix (AZ) Parks & Recreation
- o Rockford (IL) Park District
- o Johnson County (KS) Parks & Recreation
- o Schaumburg (IL) Parks District
- o St. Charles County (MO) Parks & Recreation
- o Westminster (CO) Parks and Recreation
- o Wheaton (IL) Park District

Members of the planning team met with District staff to review this information and to discuss and identify agencies that have prominence and are similar in demographics or mission to that of MEPRD's. It was also decided to add entities that could provide information on creative funding strategies and other entities that could either be considered potential funding partners for MEPRD initiatives, or as in the case of the Missouri Foundation for Health, could be a potentially useful model for a similar agency in Illinois. The list was modified and condensed as follows (in alphabetical order):

- o Champaign Park District (Illinois)
- o Cleveland MetroParks (Ohio)
- o Fox Valley Park District (Illinois)
- o The Great Rivers Greenway District (Missouri)
- o Illinois Department of Natural Resources
- o Illinois Department of Transportation
- o Indy Parks and Greenways Foundation (Indiana)
- o Johnson County Parks and Recreation District (Kansas)
- o Madison County Transit Trails (Illinois)
- o Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board (Minnesota)
- o Missouri Foundation for Health
- o Ozark Greenways-Springfield/Greene County Parks Board (Missouri)
- o St. Charles County Parks and Recreation District (Missouri)
- o Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority

A questionnaire was developed to identify items to be researched (see appendix, section ii for questionnaire). The study was conducted by Dan Cross, CPRP, and James Pona, AICP, of James Pona & Associates, through early spring, 2011. Fourteen agencies were identified across the United States. Planning team members called each agency and spoke to trail and greenway professionals about the MEPRD planning project and their willingness to participate in sharing their successes and challenges. After speaking to the agency trail planner/administrator or appropriate contact, the survey was e-mailed with a cover letter from MEPRD along with an informational piece on the District and its history.

After approximately a week to review the questionnaire and informational materials, each agency was contacted by phone and interviewed for 30-45 minutes concerning their department. (The interview with the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority was not completed due to scheduling difficulties on the part of its contact person.) Because of time constraints, two agencies opted for short telephone interviews and e-mailing their information back to the planning team. The text of the report follows. Attachments referred to can be found in the appendices.

II. Executive Summary

Extensive information was received from trail and greenway organizations during the course of this study, resulting in an abundance of data of potential use to the Metro East Park and Recreation District. The information is summarized below by category and addresses either exemplary practices or other information of potential use to MEPRD needs. The source agency is identified in parentheses.

Planning and Design:

- Hosting periodic (quarterly, semi-annual) “tech” or “partner” committee workshops or informal get-togethers to look at the potential trail routes and connections. Planners, engineers, consultants, community leaders, trail providers, utility companies meet to review where they are at on projects, identify potential connections and partnerships. Not only an exchange of information but also a setting where expertise on trail building, maintenance, right of way acquisition can be shared. Stakeholders would be identified and timelines/project updates could take place. (Johnson County and Ozark Greenways).
- Opportunities to connect through brownfields and abandoned warehouse districts could take place now where there may have been roadblocks before. (Cleveland MetroParks)
- Key planning partners could include professional planners/engineers, neighborhood associations, citizens, community leaders, interpretative staff (natural and historic areas), recreation programming staff, utilities, and trail providers. (Virtually all respondents.)
- Two key components for successful trails and connections include patience and determination. Interviewed agencies mentioned some key connections requiring over ten years. Champaign Park District worked with 10 local communities to develop a countywide trails master plan. Now it is up to each local community to implement. (GRG, Fox Valley, Champaign and others).
- Two agencies included their trail route ranking criteria and evaluation matrix for help in determining best route options. (Minneapolis and excerpt from Lake Oswego).
- As trails become more popular, there is a need to widen them from 8’ to 10’ to 12’ or more. But trail providers also stressed the need to balance/minimize the impact of cutting a wide swath of a corridor that separates habitat, fragments ecosystems, slashes tree canopies and destroys natural areas. (Cleveland MetroParks and Fox Valley). We need to provide “quality places” and not just trails (GRG).
- Partnerships with health providers and hospitals seem like a natural fit with trail providers and should be explored more and more. (GRG, MFH)
- Target areas under pressure from real estate development to acquire trail corridors before they are gone or too expensive. (Johnson County.)
- Some agencies had separate trail and greenways master plans (IDNR). Most agencies follow AASHTO and MUTCD guidelines. GRG has a “Best Practices” guideline regarding storm water and greenways. Cleveland MetroParks and Champaign are working on or have just completed Design Standards. MCT Trails uses its own customized trail cross-sections to minimize long-term maintenance issues due to unstable soils in the American Bottoms area.
- Connections to activity generators including business districts are considered. (Fox Valley Park District.)
- Many agencies complete a five/ten year strategic plan or have a Trails and Greenways component of their park master plan. Ozark Greenways spend a half or full day on a retreat with Board members reviewing policies and planning annually.
- Ozark Greenways reviews new property plats for possible trails and connections for the County. They also offer a “Trail Planning 101 course for smaller communities in their region.
- Minneapolis staff gets away for on-site tours of greenways in other cities including Vancouver, Seattle, Chicago and St. Louis/Metro East.
- Way Finding Signage is incorporated. (Fox Valley Park District.)

Community Support:

- Publicizing to tax payers and funders that trails can promote and preserve natural areas, provide fitness and recreation opportunities and provide transportation links--all rolled up into one facility--will be critical in times of tight funding. (See “Have Paths Will Travel” article.)

- Minneapolis has 9-20 member citizen advisory committees that along with staff, oversee greenway projects from start to finish.
- Was identified by most agencies as the most critical piece in developing trails and making key connections. Many agencies comment they are not seeing as much of the Not in My Backyard (Nimby-ism) they saw earlier with trail development.
- Rangers interview trail users on a regular, seasonal basis at their facilities to gauge how they are doing with maintenance, operations and new trails. (St. Charles County)

Funding:

- Indy Greenways sells license plates and hosts an annual workshop/luncheon for fundraising.
- Funding greenways projects along with storm water improvements seems to benefit both trail and public works chances of securing funding and public support. (Cleveland MetroParks)
- Community Foundations have helped with local agencies on a few projects. (Ozark Greenways)

Challenges:

- Acquiring trail corridor and right of way was the most frequent response. St. Charles County has one staff dedicated to park and trail land acquisition.
- Keeping track of the trail easements and right of way documents is becoming more and more cumbersome. (Cleveland MetroParks)
- Funding. In particular a steady flow of funding for acquisition, development and maintenance of trails. Johnson County used to have its own crew and equipment for trail building. That has been lost due to budget cuts. GRG has dedicated sales tax for greenways but has seen their funding dollars shrink because of the tight economy.
- Grade separations at road crossings have come to be expected in Fox Valley but are more expensive than at-grade crossings.

Maintenance:

- GRG does design for their trails up to about 20% and then has trail operators and maintenance staff look over for suggestions.
- St. Charles County leaves 50% of its parkland and corridors in a natural state to help ease maintenance requirements.
- Some agencies mow just one mower width along the trails to save time and money. (Cleveland MetroParks and Fox Valley)
- High-pressure washers are used to help keep pavements clean and well maintained. (Fox Valley Park District)

III. Detailed Information from Respondents

Champaign Park District (Illinois)

1. Agency goals & objectives:
 - a. General including any mission statement
 - b. Notes related to goals/objectives

The Park District completed a Strategic Plan in 2005 and each year they focus on specific goals. The Strategic Plan directs them to do further studies. Each year they are doing a study, inventory and/or survey on selected parks and facilities. They are addressing a Best Practices plan right now and completed a Greenways and Trails plan in cooperation with the Regional Planning Commission.

2. Trail project priority criteria:

A public survey was completed in 2003 and they are likely to survey again in the next year or so. Funding is always a high priority. OSLAD and PARC grants have been applied for most recently. The district is working off a master plan from 1993 that provides somewhat of a backbone for projects and for grants.

3. Agency's funding:

The District receives funding for capital projects through taxes and bonds. It also has a foundation that is accumulating funds to assist with capital efforts. The District only provides funding for scholarships for participants that want to join a program and who need assistance. There is also a local community foundation that can assist with projects or acquisition. A summer festival helps to raise funds for the scholarships.

4. Tools, systems and programs that are used to assist your agency from trail project conception through operations and maintenance of the completed facility?

Project management concepts are used but not software. One planner is trained in GIS and AutoCAD for mapping and conceptual planning. They set up links to their website for public input. Banners, email blasts and homeowner association websites are used to get the word out on public meetings. They send out fliers but only about one out of every hundred persons that receives a flier attends the meetings. For example there is a 50' easement along the pipeline that runs north-south through town. Public input collected has indicated support for trails along the pipeline, but now in a few areas people are

having second thoughts. Some areas really embrace the trail. Trails are much easier to develop prior to residential development. New developers now provide funding for the concrete to build trails in new areas. One mile of the Pipeline Trail is complete and another 7-8 miles are proposed. Champaign has about 10 different trails dating back to 1970's development.

5. Briefly describe project successes and challenges-including easement/property acquisition:Champaign County has completed a greenways and trails plan and the ten member agencies/entities work together on completing their portions of the plan. No funding is implied in the plan but the County plan sets the overall direction allowing for each agency to play their part. It includes an on-street portion. Champaign and Urbana have completed their own greenways and trails plan to take the County plan to a higher level of detail and will complete it at their own pace. The County plan also addresses design guidelines for signs (see website link). The District is working closely with farmers for land and easement acquisition. Once the land is acquired by developers it becomes very expensive. There is no land set aside ordinance or requirements for trails. The City of Champaign requires developers to talk to the Park District about their plans and opportunities and at some point the City may require a set aside.

6. Briefly describe the phases of a typical project's 'life' and discuss key areas of attention in each. Is there a typical timeline for each phase?

1) Public notification/input 2) Presentation to District Board 3) Construction/Design Documents 4) Bidding 5) Construction.

7. Key team members and the roles they play throughout the project:

They have two planners on staff and also use their operations department, project managers and maintenance staff, as well as consultants, engineers, and landscape architects. Their staff has done a lot of its own construction but not as much presently. Now all playground construction is contracted out. They also involve recreation staff, sports staff and camp directors in planning.

8. What operations/maintenance keys do you consider during the planning and development of your greenways and trails?

Access is one key - what user types and modes do they want to allow? Shoulders/edges are designed and built to keep their integrity. The district uses concrete on its trail surfaces.

9. Do you have a community wide greenways and trails hierarchy (a classification system)? Does it include on-street components?

Champaign County Trails Plan: 1) Greenways 2) Rail Trails 3) Multi use trails (including on-street) 4) Paths within parks (for their designation trails connect parks/paths are within parks). Adding paths in parks has doubled or tripled the park usage. They use student/interns to monitor park and trail use. Some local cities use traffic counters to monitor.

10. Do you have a written policy for design standards for your trails and greenways? (Describe)

They do have a design policy (see attached)

11. Does your agency match specific projects to specific funding sources or more based on funding opportunities as they develop?

It is a mix. Current projects with flooding or preservation issues, like a historic local theater that is the site for Roger Ebert Film Festival, is at the top of the priority list.

Cleveland MetroParks (Ohio)

1. Agency goals & objectives:

- a. General including any mission statement
- b. Notes related to goals/objectives

Cleveland MetroParks has a greenways & trails plan as part of its overall park master plan. Completed in 1995, it makes broad suggestions about trails and greenways. The Park system is over 100 years old and was developed along creeks and waterways, so the system was intentionally developed with connections and linear parks in mind. There is no Best Practices component to its planning efforts. The Department is dedicated to conservation, education and recreation. The park and trail system is well developed, essentially built out.

2. Trail project priority criteria:

Projects move forward with connectivity being the highest priority. Community support is the next critical criterion. MetroParks would not be able to do anything without community support. They have 3-4 main corridors and many spokes off of the main corridors. They have an aggressive grant writing component to create funding opportunities.

3. Agency's funding:

Metro Parks has been able to secure state Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Storm water Management funds, Coastal NOA Great Lakes Restoration, Natural Resource's Clean Ohio Trail Funds, and the EPA lends funds through the WRSP waste water lending program. They can address watershed and trail issues at the same time. Other funding available in their region includes the Transportation for Livable Communities Program through the Regional Planning Commission.

4. Tools, systems and programs that are used to assist your agency from trail project conception through operations and maintenance of the completed facility?

GIS is used extensively, especially for documenting existing conditions. A Face book page is used to gather information. They use Microsoft "Project" but primarily for schedules/timelines. They use their website to convey information to the public along with newsletters and newspapers. They have a trail checklist they follow for trail planning (see attached).

5. Briefly describe project successes and challenges-including easement/property acquisition:

Acquisition is always the hardest challenge. The district does not use eminent domain. Getting the pieces to connect is difficult; for example, they anticipate having to use an on-street connection along one of their trails until the key parcel is acquired. It could take as long as 10 years to fill in the missing piece, meanwhile, patience is the imperative. Some communities are still not in favor of trails, with fears of bringing crime. Railroads are difficult to deal with. Sometimes staff has to 'camp out in the Railroad's offices' to be heard. The district is sometimes forced into the position of building now and asking for forgiveness later. They have had a number of projects under railways and highways where they have added protection from debris falling on the trail below.

Easement record keeping is becoming a significant staff challenge with easement renewals, licenses, and tax waivers occurring annually. Local not-for-profits have even more difficulty keeping up with the paperwork.

Success is measured by the amount of use the area trails get. Although they don't specifically track usage, there have to be perceived usage, economic and health impacts. They have had challenges monitoring and quantifying this. Trail counters are not used but staff often monitor trailheads to assess usage. They have had some success in developing trails through brownfield areas and adding wetland areas.

6. Briefly describe the phases of a typical project's 'life' and discuss key areas of attention in each. Is there a typical timeline for each phase?

There is no set timeline, the projects take on a life of their own. Some can take 10 years from start to finish; the Tow Path Trail has been in progress for 20 years. Example Phase: 1) Visitor Experience; they are a 100-plus year old park system and trails have always been a part of it. Many of the trails, especially nature trails, were not initially planned but rather were added by accretion over the years. It is difficult to map the trails they have. Many times staff only looks at a small part of the puzzle, kiosks or relocating trails instead of looking at the big picture and addressing all the components at one time, not just trail-by-trail or park-by-park. The general process or phases: 1) Understand the 'Visitor Experience' and who the audience is: Horse trails, long distance hiking, etc; 2) Inventory Facilities and Existing Conditions; 3) Site Evaluation and Site Planning; 4) Fundraising; 5) Conceptual Development and Implementation Strategy; 6) Property Acquisition; 7) Design/Construction Documents.

7. Key team members and the roles they play throughout the project:

Interpretive staff, planners, engineers, maintenance personnel, programmers, community leaders. As much as possible they like the local community to lead but they are comfortable leading, too. Maintaining backwoods trails is a lost art. Hiking trails are not being maintained well and some have turned into roads over the years. They are retraining staff to work on the hiking trails and also realizing how much work needs to be done.

8. What operations/maintenance keys do you consider during the planning and development of your greenways and trails?

The district is looking more closely at ecology. It is also looking at how to create greenways without fragmenting ecosystems by slashing 20-30' wide cuts through the parks. Maintaining canopies over the trails is important too. They are looking at water trails and taking advantage of the waterways in their region. They want to maintain a park like setting. How much mowing should occur? They used to mow a lot more along the trails, now they mow strips along the trail. They plow their trails and blow off the leaves. They are having a discussion on leaving leaves on the trail as it may help protect the trail during the winters. Sight lines and safety are always a priority. There are some concerns about sight lines and users feeling safe. Some users feel if the trail is elevated they feel safer as they are more visible.

9. Do you have a community wide greenways and trails hierarchy (a classification system)? Does it include on-street components?

1) All purpose, paved trails, 8-10' wide now going to 12' wide in some cases. Drainage on both sides. 2) Equestrian trails. 3) Nature trails. No formal hierarchy. Tried to designate trailheads internally, Tier One or Tier Two, depending on facilities, not so much anymore.

10. Do you have a written policy for design standards for your trails and greenways? (Describe)

Working on design standards and policy right now. Should be done next year.

11. Does your agency match specific projects to specific funding sources or more based on funding opportunities as they develop?

They are opportunity-driven. Funding opportunities drive the projects about 95% of the time. They have a National Heritage Corridor that runs 7 miles through an industrial site. The district is wrestling with adding mountain bike trails to the mix.

12. General Notes:

Other thoughts: They are working closely with the Storm/Sewer District to develop greenways along creeks and streams. Hoping that it will open doors to develop trails in the watersheds—much money is being spent on the storm water portion, it seems natural that trails could be a part of the project at the same time. This could help with public support for funds to improve creeks and streams. Cleveland has also lost population and is facing foreclosures in this economy. Parks is looking at stitching together parcels for trails in developed areas where there are vacant properties.

Fox Valley Park District (Illinois)

1. Agency goals & objectives:

- a. General including any mission statement
- b. Notes related to goals/objectives

Enrich our community with fun, diverse and safe park and recreation experiences through environmentally and fiscally responsible actions. The mission statement was crafted with input from about 30 staff members. The district has a strategic plan but it is more recreation/program oriented.

2. Trail project priority criteria:

They have four major trail systems totaling over 41 miles: the Fox River Trail, Illinois Prairie Trail, Gilman Trail, Waubonsie Creek Trail. They are trying to fill in the gaps and make connections to key destinations. (See trail map). They need to make a key connection into part of Aurora. The Gilman Trail is a National Heritage Trail and part of a 1947 referendum to establish the trail. It used to be biking, hiking and equestrian but as the County has become more suburbanized, there is less horseback riding. The Fox River Trail was not as embraced at first. Residents wanted to have access to riverfront property but have come around as the trail serves that purpose for everyone. The agency has a ten-year-old letter from one of the biggest opponents of the trail who is now a big supporter. The Park District and Forest Reserve cooperated to make the river trail a reality. Connections are a big priority, filling in the gaps. Open house-style forums were used in 2008 to present the referendum information, which was passed by 65% of the voters. They produced a lot of the graphics and information in-house to make the public aware of the concepts, trail enhancements, bridges, etc. They also did public surveys.

3. Agency's funding:

A bond referendum was the significant element. The district has also been successful with state & federal grants. They used to build a lot of trails in-house at a cost of about \$100,000 per mile. Now this is contracted-out and the cost is higher. There are also more bridges and culverts.

4. Tools, systems and programs that are used to assist your agency from trail project conception through operations and maintenance of the completed facility?

They use Google maps for general purposes and preliminary plans. They have used project management software for large projects.

5. Briefly describe project successes and challenges-including easement/property acquisition:

Challenges: unwilling landowners. They have a ¾ mile gap in a section of trail that could connect up with 60,000 residents. Providing grade separation, especially where it crosses four lanes. It is expensive but is what the public expects. Improved road crossings. Successes: The Fox River Trail, a collaboration of 12 Park Districts and 2 Forest Preserves. Also, their latest Master Plan, expansion of the greenway towards Chicago has added 300 acres of interconnected trails and wetlands.

6. Briefly describe the phases of a typical project's 'life' and discuss key areas of attention in each. Is there a typical timeline for each phase?

Public Input, Funding, Concepts, Design/Development with more public input, Construction, Maintenance.

7. Key team members and the roles they play throughout the project:

Designers and Operations department (it is important to keep function in mind); full-time ranger and police support. Rangers are out on trails about 9 months of the year, patrolling, interacting with public, and picking up trash.

8. What operations/maintenance keys do you consider during the planning and development of your greenways and trails?

They mow one strip on each side of the trail and leave the rest more natural. They have trail patrons who pick up litter and a lot of early retirees help here. Completed a comprehensive way-finding sign plan. Rangers take care of the graffiti on a timely/diligent basis. Have a trailer with a high- pressure power washer to run up and down the trail. The Rangers know the area homeless people and work with them to keep from becoming a problem. They also have a few Cushman scooters with brooms, tools and other equipment for maintenance and occasional bike repairs.

9. Do you have a community wide greenways and trails hierarchy (a classification system)? Does it include on-street components?

No. They used to build 8' wide trails, then 10' wide now discussing going to 12' wide. They are adding loop trails in their larger parks and they are popular, Connections for

the public benefit are the priority...to business districts, shopping, and assisted living centers.

10. Do you have a written policy for design standards for your trails and greenways? (Describe)

Present standard is 10' wide, 2 layers of asphalt 3" thick, 8" rock.

11. Does your agency match specific projects to specific funding sources or more based on funding opportunities as they develop?

They have identified gaps they would like to connect—willing landowners are the stumbling block at this time.

12. General Notes:

They have lighting on their trail close to downtown area. Other trail operation hours are dawn to dusk. They do not plow snow from the trails and don't salt the trails. They have some commuter use but mostly recreational. They do have center stripes on all the trails and do this for 17 cents a linear foot. Helps to "freshen" up the trail look. Used to install a lot of drop gates and landscape rocks to control vehicle access to trails. They have removed a lot of the rocks and some of the drop gates. Leaving the access more open reduces liability issues resulting from bike collisions with the objects.



Fox River Trail (JPA Photo)

Great Rivers Greenway District (Missouri)

1. Agency goals & objectives:

- a. General including any mission statement
- b. Notes related to goals/objectives

The Great Rivers Greenway District (GRG) has completed extensive planning for St. Louis City, St. Louis County and St. Charles County, Missouri. GRG completes an update to its Master Plan every five years to capture new ideas and citizen viewpoints. The plan is a blueprint but is probably outdated soon after it is completed. For example, now they are focusing on health and how to include area hospital and health care entities in partnering on facilities. GRG is always looking to expand its reach of services by searching for partners/programming. Areas being examined now compared to five or ten years ago include—multimodal transportation and system integration; connecting to nature (invite and make accessible); and making bicycling even more common as transportation and as a community health focus. Its “core” hasn’t changed - completing the river ring of greenways - but how to engage public/private partners and how to engage and invite users to the system and make it more meaningful has changed. It has some best practices when it comes to storm water and greenways. They are working hard with municipalities to accept new concepts, impervious parking lots, etc. ADA issues will be increasingly examined. Trail accessibility has been easier to accomplish. The on-street issues - at every street corner, every sidewalk, every crossing—become a real challenge. Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) may help with providing ADA training opportunities.

2. Trail project priority criteria:

First, it has to fit in the Master Plan. Having a willing partner is the next critical step, someone to operate and take ownership. There has to be an important connection to the system, filling in critical gaps. Phasing is an option but they always need engaged partners.

3. Agency’s funding:

The agency provides project funding and asks partners to operate and maintain. GRG receives a 1/10% sales tax in St. Louis City, St. Louis County and St. Charles County with half of that going to the local counties and half staying with GRG for regional trail development. In past years that has meant \$11-12 million per year but lately it is closer to \$9 million a year given the economy. Enhancement funds were used for

the St. Vincent Greenway, DeBaliviere Multimodal redesign and extending River Des Peres to Germania. Facilities must connect to transportation. Recreational trails and municipal grants are for partner municipalities. Wildwood is a good example of using these to extend funds. GRG helped with St. Louis’s Bronze Bicycle-Friendly Community designation, along with the Missouri Bicycle Federation.

4. Tools, systems and programs that are used to assist your agency from trail project conception through operations and maintenance of the completed facility?

GIS is very helpful for spatial integrity, and to highlight planning and updates. The data base is updated annually to reflect construction development. Green designates a trail and on-street is colored depending on completion or stage of development. Google images can help with preliminary planning. 3D fly-through can help with conceptual planning. GRG relies on their planning partners/experts to bring the tools to the table and piece parcels/utility corridors together. They have done a good job of drafting operation and maintenance agreements early with partners to help with outlining responsibilities and clarification of issues after the project is complete.

5. Briefly describe project successes and challenges-including easement/property acquisition:

Site control is a big challenge. The district has to ‘slog through’ acquisition that may take years and years. It has to take the long term view in dealing with willing sellers. It doesn’t have a ‘big stick’ to hold over people’s head. Transparency is the key policy. Challenges can include dealing with many different landowners. It requires an independent, licensed evaluation/appraisal, and works from the standpoint of being responsible to the taxpayers. It is on the owner to prove more value than the independent appraisal. Some owners get stuck on a number and won’t budge, there has to be some common ground. GRG is frequently told “no” but revisits and examines new/different solutions. It attempts to take into consideration the land owner concerns but the objective is not dropped. “No” is sometimes not a definite answer, and the district can often find ways to work out issues. It sometimes has to work with a neighboring community and then perhaps the next time the trail opportunity comes up, the original community will be more open to partnering. Especially after seeing what their neighbor received in facilities. Individuals are still in a “not in my backyard” frame of mind, whereas communities are much more aware and open to greenways. Many communities don’t want to be the first one, but are happy to be the second one to jump on board. More studies showing benefits would help. Greenways create quality places, not just good projects. River Des Peres Greenway is a good example—plazas, interesting railings,

it fits better into the community. Engage the residents so that the project becomes a meaningful part of the community. Acquisition and long term maintenance/operations are always a challenge for cities or counties. Right now everyone is reluctant to take on maintenance & operations. The new commuter station coming online, City Garden, and the new Arch plan will continue to attract people downtown, and that has been a success.

6. Briefly describe the phases of a typical project's 'life' and discuss key areas of attention in each. Is there a typical timeline for each phase?

A) Project is placed into the Master Plan; B) Community and GRG take hold of that project, citizens get involved; C) Look at project from "30,000 ft level" for seed projects, early action pieces, go over entire greenway; D) Assemble teams and involve stakeholders, bring in 3-4 teams for planning; E) Begin Design & Engineering—get initial buy-in from communities in the team selection process (this has been a good process for GRG and the partners - to select the professionals to help with planning/engineering); F) Refinement Level-break into pieces, the trail may move several times during planning; and G) Begin the engineering.

7. Key team members and the roles they play throughout the project:

Team members include a GRG representative, the community, planning professionals, and others (could be Open Space Council, Missouri Department of Natural Resources, St. Louis County, etc.)

8. What operations/maintenance keys do you consider during the planning and development of your greenways and trails?

The district will design a project up to a certain point – perhaps to about 20% - then bring in the operations & maintenance (O & M) professionals and local community that will operate the trail. It will discuss O & M goal specifics, addressing them early. It uses AASHTO, MUTCD, ADA and builds no trails less than 10' wide at this time. It uses a 12' width for main trails to accommodate future use. Sometimes it will build with 10' wide trail with 1' concrete band on each side for appearance and edge integrity. It advocates an aesthetic transition from trail to landscape. The McKinley Bridge project was developed with a 14' wide trail because it is the only river trail crossing for some distance.

9. Do you have a community wide greenways and trails hierarchy (a classification system)? Does it include on-street components?

River Ring is priority. Major Greenways: Mississippi, Meramec, Missouri, and Confluence. Regional Greenways; Local Greenways and on-street connectors; and feeder trails such as Rock Hollow connector to the Meramec Greenway, Christy and Carondelet connectors to the River Des Peres Greenway.

10. Do you have a written policy for design standards for your trails and greenways? (Describe)

The district will use local communities if they have design standards. See #8 above.

11. Does your agency match specific projects to specific funding sources or more based on funding opportunities as they develop?

The district encourages good projects to be brought forward. From design through the construction phase, flexibility is applied so that projects do not become 'handcuffed' by having too many specific amenities attached early in the process. Careful and accurate cost estimates can help partner communities secure a good relationship with the district. The district also encourages projects in which funds going back into the community through construction, business, and tourism are identified.



GRG's McKinley Bridge Trail



GRG's Missouri Research Park Trail

Illinois Department of Natural Resources

1. Agency goals & objectives:

- a. General including any mission statement
- b. Notes related to goals/objectives

Mission: To manage, protect and sustain Illinois' natural and cultural resources; provide resource-compatible recreational opportunities; and to promote natural resource-related issues for public safety and education. IDNR has a separate greenways and trails plan but it is about 10-15 years old. It has a strategic plan and it can be viewed on its website <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov>.

2. Trail project priority criteria:

Community support is the most critical criterion in order for projects to move to the top of the list for prioritization. Partners, funding opportunities and corridor availability are the next three critical issues for projects. Notes from the Greenways and Trails Community Support program are provided on key issues local agencies need to focus on for successful projects. Funding requests to IDNR are evaluated through a sophisticated system of scoring and ranking to determine projects to be funded. The other critical piece for project prioritization is connections. Many trail efforts are opportunity driven.

3. Agency's funding:

IDNR both funds, and seeks funds for, its projects. It pursues Enhancement, Land and Water Conservation Fund, and other programs for its projects but also distributes Open Space Land Acquisition and Development, and Bike Path program funds. Most of the department's project funding is derived from its general budget but they must compliment it with grants. PARC grants are now available and there is a good amount of funding in this program.

4. Tools, systems and programs that are used to assist your agency from trail project conception through operations and maintenance of the completed facility?

GIS is used extensively. The website is used for public notifications and bidding. Project information is shared through emails, meetings, sharing files electronically. The department has staff available to help coordinate projects.

5. Briefly describe project successes and challenges-including easement/property acquisition:

One success has been the Sangamon Valley Trail, 38 miles of secured corridor that is intended to connect to the Metro East area trails. Open Land Trust funds have helped with significant land acquisition. The first phase will open in Spring/Summer of 2011. IDNR has acquired the corridor and the local partners are helping to develop the trail. The Grand Illinois Trail has taken over ten years to develop but it also is a success. Using trails along canals, local trails in Rockford, Northern Chicago and through the efforts of local communities, it is now possible to bike and hike from Chicago to the Quad Cities area. It is a 500 mile loop that is quite popular. The Greenways and Trails planning program is also a success with over 50% of Illinois 102 counties completing greenway master plans.

Corridor acquisition has been a challenge. It took over 20 years for Peoria to acquire corridor from the railroad to extend the Rock Island Trail. It takes a lot of patience and "a bulldog mentality to hang on and persevere." The department feels frustration when corridor opportunities arise and there is not enough budget or people (local sponsors) to step forward to acquire a corridor. In general, the railroads continue to be a challenge to work with.

6. Briefly describe the phases of a typical project's 'life' and discuss key areas of attention in each. Is there a typical timeline for each phase?

A) Vision, Community support and partnering, B) Planning the best case solution and then looking at compromise and fall back solutions that still work well. C) Identifying connections, loops, destinations (Vienna's connection to the Tunnel Hills Trail is a good example of working together to make a key connect). D) Identify funding; Safe Routes, OSLAD, Bike Paths. E) Conceptual engineering. F) Construction engineering. G) Construction. H) Operations & Maintenance. Sometimes getting consensus from everyone is the biggest challenge.

7. Key team members and the roles they play throughout the project:

Dependent on the particular project and the mix of staff, engineering/planning firms and local community leaders. Strong local leadership is needed to initiate a project and to keep it moving forward.

8. What operations/maintenance keys do you consider during the planning and development of your greenways and trails?

IDNR has over the last few years switched over from crushed limestone trails to

hard surface trails in order to help with maintenance. Crushed rock trails were used especially in non-urban areas but IDNR feels it is worth the extra cost in construction to offset maintenance costs down the road.

9. Do you have a community wide greenways and trails hierarchy (a classification system)? Does it include on-street components?

No. Connections and local communities are what drive segments to be completed.

10. Do you have a written policy for design standards for your trails and greenways? (Describe)

There are guidelines for signage; they follow AASHTO and MUTCD guidelines.

11. Does your agency match specific projects to specific funding sources or more based on funding opportunities as they develop?

Both. Mostly funding driven/opportunity driven. Sometimes have to jump on the opportunity and let a significant segment wait while you take advantage of a funding or corridor opportunity today.



IDNR's Hennepin Canal (NRT Photo)



IDNR's Sam Vadalabene Bike Trail

Illinois Department of Transportation

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) was also contacted for information related to its funding programs and to its standards for trail design, which are a factor in projects assisted with IDOT funds. Because of its time constraints, the agency was not able to provide a person-to-person interview, but did complete the basic questionnaire regarding its Safe Routes to School Program. This information is summarized below (specific responses are highlighted in bold):

Best Practices Questionnaire

Date: 3-9-11 Agency: IDOT – Safe Routes to School
 Name/Title of Individual Contacted: Megan Holt Swanson
 Email: megan.holt-swanson@illinois.gov
 Address: 2300 South Dirksen Parkway Room 330 City: Springfield
 State: IL Zip: 62764
 Tel: 217-785-2932

1. Agency goals & objectives
 - a. General, including any mission statement: **To encourage and enable children, including those with disabilities, to walk and bike to school.**
 - b. Notes related to goals/objectives: **This program is targeted on the Home to School trip. Infrastructure (engineering) projects must be located within 2 miles of an eligible K-8 School.**
2. Trail project priority criteria (rank, w/ 5 being highest)
 - a. Community Support & Input 1 2 3 4 5
 - b. Evaluation criteria/scoring? 1 2 3 4 5
 - c. Planning history as criterion? 1 2 3 4 5
 - d. Notes on criteria, including weighting of each
 - e. What are the ways in which community input is captured and measured?
Please see Public Act 94-493 for the criteria for SRTS projects.
3. Agency's funding
 - a. As clearing house seeking to acquire funding Y N
 - b. Agency provides funding Y N
 - c. Dedicated funding source/tax Y N
 Explain, including sources & uses *SRTS is a federally funded program carried out by state Dept of Transportation*

4. Tools, systems and programs that are used to assist your agency from trail project conception through operations and maintenance of the completed facility?

This program is targeted on the Home to School trip. All participants must complete and receive approval for their Illinois School Travel Plan.

5. Briefly describe project successes and challenges-including easement/property acquisition:

Projects requesting ROW are funded less often than projects with ROW in place. These are meant to be smaller projects that are completed within 3 years.

6. Briefly describe the phases of a typical project's 'life' and discuss key areas of attention in each. Is there a typical timeline for each phase?

Funds sunset 3 years from the date of the first notice to proceed (signed agreement).

7. Key team members and the roles they play throughout the project:

School District and Municipal personnel, other community stakeholders are members of the School Travel Plan team.

8. What operations/maintenance keys do you consider during the planning and development of your greenways and trails?

The agency is responsible for all maintenance.

9. Do you have a community wide greenways and trails hierarchy (a classification system)? Does it include on-street components?

N/A

10. Do you have a written policy for design standards for your trails and greenways? (Describe)

Same as federal standards and those set forth in the BDE or BLRS manuals.

11. Does your agency match specific projects to specific funding sources or more based on funding opportunities as they develop?

No

12. General Notes: ***Trails, due to cost and location, are rarely funded through SRTS.***

(Consultant team note: Beyond IDOT's Safe Routes to School Program, the agency has been the most substantial provider of funds for bicycle trails under successive federal highway programs over the past 25 years having to do with transportation enhancements, including the Intermodal Surface Transportation and Efficiency Act (ISTEA) and SAFETEA-LU. Because enhancement provisions are likely to be continued in future highway funding programs and may well provide partnering opportunities in the funding of MEPRD projects, the study team recommends that MEPRD project plans incorporate IDOT-sanctioned trail design criteria. These criteria appear in study Appendices.)

Indy Parks and Greenways Foundation (Indiana)

1. Agency goals & objectives:
 - a. General including any mission statement
 - b. Notes related to goals/objectives

Indy Parks is a not-for profit entity established in 1991. Recently it has expanded its reach from the Indianapolis region to the entire State of Indiana. Its mission; “Help create linear parks across the length and breadth of Indiana.” The Governor’s goal is to have a trail within 15 minutes of every Hoosier resident.

2. Trail project priority criteria:

Provides assistance to all 92 Indiana counties—primarily in the form of education, publicity and information exchange.

3. Agency’s funding:

Indy Parks and Greenways is selling special trail license plates and hopes to raise \$15,000 this year. They have an annual luncheon featuring a prominent “trail” speaker that also is used as a fundraiser. The organization has raised as much as \$36,000 from various events. Eli Lilly contributed \$5000 and many of the planning and engineering firms also are sponsors. It also receives funds from memberships and donations, and has a car donation program where it receives 65% of the proceeds. The all-volunteer group hopes to provide grants in the future.

4. Tools, systems and programs that are used to assist your agency from trail project conception through operations and maintenance of the completed facility?

It partners with Indianatrails.com and is a statewide clearinghouse for trail information. It also works closely with Indiana DNR and the National Park Service. A key focus is on backbone trails, and the provision of support to related programs including horse trails, “InShape Indiana,” and bike parking services at the State Fair. (The Monon Trail is one of Indiana’s premier facilities. It connects to the fairgrounds and they charge \$1 per bike as a fundraiser.)

Johnson County Parks and Recreation District (Kansas)

1. Agency goals & objectives:
 - a. General including any mission statement
 - b. Notes related to goals/objectives

In 1986 voters passed a ¼ mill levy for funding a “streamway parks system”. Public support was very high, with about a 70% favorable response. At that time it provided \$600,000/year for acquisition, development and maintenance of trails in the stream corridors. A master plan, also completed in 1986, identified 8 major stream corridors where linear parks/trails should be developed. That master plan has held pretty true over the years. In 2006 the City of Mission requested and was granted the addition of one of their stream corridors as a priority. With Johnson County’s help and additional funding through transportation enhancements, 2 phases have been completed. Also, along the Kilcreek alignment, the City of Gardner requested the County focus on the west branch instead of the east, but other than that, the master plan has been closely followed.

Approximately 30% of the potential trail development identified in the ’86 plan has been completed. The County is a suburb of Kansas City and has several large cities within its borders. The County can help provide funding match to local communities that are going after enhancement or other funds. This is derived from the \$600,000 fund. Recently the County stopped maintaining the trails with this funding and also passed bond issues for the acquisition of trail parcels. A master plan for the Park District was completed in 2000. This plan reaffirmed the 1986 plan and updated it. The focus on streamway parks has remained the major emphasis in regards to parks/trails/greenways. Most of the trails are multi-use and hard surface (asphalt) although they do have some equestrian and mountain bike trails. Sections of the multi-use trails that go through floodplains are constructed in concrete to stand up to flooding.

2. Trail project priority criteria:

Projects are driven mostly by where there is sufficient property to make it worthwhile. They also target areas under pressure from future development for park/trail acquisition. Their master planning process includes a large public input piece. In 2008 a Regional Park Master Plan was completed and it included the streamway parks component. An unsuccessful attempt was made to acquire a 40 mile abandoned rail corridor along the Kansas River along with 2 other counties.

3. Agency's funding:

The \$600,000 fund also provides funding for local community projects in addition to district efforts. Many cities have used these funds to match enhancement funds. According to the next 5-year projection, funds will be allocated to the City of Shawnee for its Clear Creek project because it connects to one of the 8 major trail corridors.

4. Tools, systems and programs that are used to assist your agency from trail project conception through operations and maintenance of the completed facility?

The district uses its website to showcase projects and provide updates, as well as to gather comments from the public. Three park plans were completed in 2008 and the website was used successfully to gather input and spread information. They use AutoCAD to design trails, Arc Map/GIS to inventory and use for maintenance. They also maintain a layer of trails for countywide use and sharing. They have used Microsoft Project in the past but no longer.

5. Briefly describe project successes and challenges-including easement/property acquisition:

The district has constructed about 80 miles of trails, some within parks and about 50 miles along stream corridors. The goal is to construct a mile of trail each year and help local communities build through the matching pot of \$600,000. Its budget has been cut so it is a challenge to even start a project because the money has to be there to commit to the project. Five-year plans are difficult when trying to stretch the budget further and further. In the first year of the project they can do design, but then cannot commit enough money to get it under construction. The typical cost for a mile of trail is \$250,000-\$300,000 but can go up 50% by adding bridges/structures. For acquisition of property they have passed two bond issues since 2001. One for \$9 million and one for \$26.6 million. But they are out of acquisition funds for the next two years. Meanwhile, with the bond issue they have secured about 4000 acres for future development or preservation. There are very limited statewide grants - a small amount for Recreational Trails funding that is distributed across the state. The district did complete 1.5 miles of trail through such a grant.

6. Briefly describe the phases of a typical project's 'life' and discuss key areas of attention in each. Is there a typical timeline for each phase?

Project Life: 1) land acquisition with preliminary design showing where the desired

parcels and route will be. They do the initial alignment in-house. 2) Engineering, especially stream crossings. 3) Grants and often the funding mechanism define how to go about design and development. 4) For complex projects it will hire a design/engineering team, but for smaller/less complex projects the County will act as general contractor. The County used to build more of its own trails but equipment is aging and is now used more to repair sections than to build new ones. It will bid projects as lump sum, time and materials and also equipment/labor using a general contractor or acting as their own contractor.

7. Key team members and the roles they play throughout the project:

Team members are staff (landscape architects), engineers, county planners, city planners, park managers and can include representatives from homeowner associations. The district still receives some "not in my backyard" responses on future trails but frequently after the trail becomes operational the same people are the biggest supporters. The projects are well received. The district provides some technical assistance but no longer manages projects - especially for small cities - like they used to.

8. What operations/maintenance keys do you consider during the planning and development of your greenways and trails?

There is a fine line between what is desired and works best for the public, and ease of maintenance. They don't always match up perfectly. They try not to design maintenance headaches and provide good equipment/maintenance vehicle access. They have to remember they are designing for the public first and not for maintenance staff first. They typically go with a Continental type bridge at least 10' wide and 10,000 lb. weight limit to handle maintenance trucks. Emergency access is sometimes limited because of streams cutting off areas and making them a little remote. They do have a four wheel "quad runner" with a trailer to get access to some areas. They have fold-down bollards and the fire departments have keys to the locks but sometimes just wind up cutting the locks which is ok, too. To monitor use, they have a couple spots with sensors that count the people that go through the trail gate. Some trailhead parking lots have pneumatic tubes to record vehicle activity. Sometimes they have people out doing counts and they compare the information for accuracy. Monthly data is provided to the Park Board and comparison for the last three years are provided. They use different formulas/multipliers at different parks or different seasons to come up with an estimate on park use.

9. Do you have a community wide greenways and trails hierarchy (a classification system)? Does it include on-street components?

The eight major stream corridors (regional trails) are the highest priority. Then connections from the various cities to those corridors. Cities provide on-street connections within their jurisdiction. Johnson County provides the overall mapping of the trail layers. This follows their 2020 plan, which outlines the stream corridors as priority.

10. Do you have a written policy for design standards for your trails and greenways? (Describe)

The district follows AASHTO for multi use trails. It also consults the Recreation Trail guidelines for ADA requirements. Not all of its trails are accessible but they do offer a number of recreational experiences for people with disabilities. They grade for ADA where possible—do the best they can when limited by topography. Their trails are more recreational than commuter in nature.

11. Does your agency match specific projects to specific funding sources or more based on funding opportunities as they develop?

When the land and funding come together, that's when it can start a project. It has more projects than it can fund right now. Project schedules also slide because of the number of bridges and other structures. It presently has a \$1.4 million project that is ready to be developed but since that will take 2 ½ years of the funding pot itself—it is on hold.

Notes: The district meets quarterly with local communities to discuss current and future projects. It also meets quarterly to discuss the MetroGreen Projects for the regional Kansas City area. Mid America Planning is the MPO in this region. The MetroGreen Project has a Technical Committee and an Advisory Committee. Cities are very involved and know that trails have a better chance of moving forward if they link to the overall regional system. The Advisory and Technical committees meet on a regular basis, too. They would like to have something like the MEPRD/GRG partnership and are aware of the accomplishments here.

Minneapolis Parks & Recreation Board (Minnesota)

1. Agency goals & objectives:

- a. General including any mission statement
- b. Notes related to goals/objectives

The Grand Round system of parkways/trails was laid out in 1880 when the City was first developed. In the 1930's the last segment went in. In the 70's the emphasis was separating out biking and walking trails. Now the City is going back in and renovating/resurfacing and many cases widening the trails for the increased use. There are 50 miles of parkway, the last three miles (called the missing link)—are under design to complete a system that circles the City. Typical parkways vary from 100-300' wide with 24' needed for separate biking and walking trails. About 95% of the trails have separate facilities for biking and walking.

The Park Board lays out priorities. Most of the trails were paved in the 1970's so they are currently renovating and repaving sections and widening. Trails have gone from 6' to 8' wide pedestrian oriented facilities and 8' to 10' for the bike trails. 75% of the trails are paved in asphalt and about 25% are concrete.

2. Trail project priority criteria:

Community Input is primarily through Citizen Advisory Committees, appointed by the Park Board. Members serve for the duration of the project, and can include business representatives, council members, and citizens. There are often 9-20 members but the smaller the committee, the easier it is to work with.

3. Agency's funding:

The board uses Transportation Enhancement funds matched with other sources including local taxes, State bonds, the Parks in Legacy Program (existing state wide program in Minnesota), and a 3/8 percent existing sales tax. Annual funding totals approximately \$2 million.

4. Tools, systems and programs that are used to assist your agency from trail project conception through operations and maintenance of the completed facility?

A trail inventory is maintained in GIS, and the Board has one GIS staff specialist. The system tracks trails, playgrounds, buildings, square footage and lineal feet of trails, type

of surface and when installed, among other metrics. No project management software is used.

5. Briefly describe project successes and challenges-including easement/property acquisition:

Money is always a challenge. Trails are still a hot item. They don't run into a lot of "not in my backyard" –that is pretty much over and people are very positive when it comes to trails. Minneapolis is working with suburbs to connect the regional trails.

6/7. Briefly describe the phases of a typical project's 'life' and discuss key areas of attention in each. Is there a typical timeline for each phase?

Key team members and the roles they play throughout the project:

The board brings in consultants for some planning. Maintenance staff is brought in to help at the beginning of planning to help point out improvements on the operations and maintenance side. They often bring in consultants to help with Federal grants, in particular the paperwork it takes to process. They have three landscape architects, one GIS specialist and two tech assistants on staff.

8. What operations/maintenance keys do you consider during the planning and development of your greenways and trails?

Best practices: Staff have visited a number of cities: Vancouver, Seattle, St. Louis, and Chicago and also attend NRPA conferences to keep up with trends and latest issues. They used to chip seal their trails but received many complaints from trail users on the mess. They build 6 inches of base and 3 inches of asphalt at least 10' wide and in some places 12" wide.

9. Do you have a community wide greenways and trails hierarchy (a classification system)? Does it include on-street components?

Trails-Regional, Community, Local and Special Use.

Missouri Foundation for Health (MFH)

The following information was provided by the Missouri Foundation for Health (MFH). MFH was created in 2000 following Blue Cross Blue Shield of Missouri's (BCBSMo's) conversion from nonprofit to for-profit status. At that time assets previously earned by BCBSMo were set aside to establish a foundation. MFH is the largest health care foundation in the state of Missouri and is among the largest of its kind in the country.

The MFH mission is to encourage more individual physical activity through changes to the physical environment (trails, sidewalks, bike lanes, etc), community engagement strategies to promote opportunities and local policies to stimulate physical activity. Practices could include elements such as flex work hours so people can bike to work, break time specifically for physical activity, and local government agreements to maintain upgrades for a 30-year period.

The MFH solicits concept papers and then invitations for full proposals, and utilizes a team of staff, evaluators, and contracted reviewers to analyze proposals. It considers the following types of activities and expenses (also refer to files attached):

- Salaries and benefits for staff
- Cost of direct clinical care for the uninsured and underinsured
- Conferences or symposia
- Equipment (see below for details)
- Printing, publications or media projects
- Supplies
- Support of health professional training and workforce development
- Travel
- Indirect expenses (up to a maximum of 15% of salary expense only - see below for details)
- Existing operating costs (Basic Support and General Support for Advocacy grants)
- Support for advocacy activities that are consistent with MFH's mission and tax-exempt status
- Consulting projects to improve capabilities, capacity, efficiency and/or effectiveness

While there is presently no corresponding foundation in Illinois, the MFH mission allows for and provides funding for conferences, symposia, and other activities that can support trail and greenway development when such projects meet foundation objectives. For example, the MFH is funding some activities in partnerships with Missouri trail groups. Given the predominance of obesity and a variety of other diseases that can be

lifestyle related, an Illinois sister organization could provide greatly needed services and could become an important partner in the funding of projects that directly support trails and greenways.

Ozark Greenways-Springfield/Greene County Park Board (Missouri)

1. Agency goals & objectives:
 - a. General including any mission statement
 - b. Notes related to goals/objectives

Ozark Greenways' (OG's) mission statement is preserving and enhancing the Ozark Greenways natural heritage. It is all about exposing people to trails, nature and greenways but it leaves the mission somewhat broad to utilize special opportunities such as becoming a land trust. It completes a strategic plan about every 5 years and it is a board member's responsibility to participate every quarter. A half day retreat is held each year updating and discussing the plan. They monitor progress on a regular basis.

OG and Greene County also completed Vision 2020 in 1995, a comprehensive City/County undertaking that discusses trails, storm water, and economic development. This laid out about 120 miles of greenways/trails of which about 50% are completed or in the works. Also, OG worked with Ozark Transportation Organization, the local MPO for Springfield Greene County, on a bike/ped plan a few years ago. It was an opportunity for OG to build its technical expertise and a second chance to add, update or integrate trails and greenways from the 1995 Vision 2020 plan. OG will be working with Greene County and FHWA on a bicycle destination plan for the area to. It has a very active Technical Committee made up of state highway professionals, storm water staff, local county and city public works, private engineer/planning firms, county roads personnel, parks/maintenance staffers. It is beginning to offer a "Greenways 101" class for smaller to mid size communities in the Greene County area, to help cities get the greenway and trails started and it gives them a chance to advocate for trails.

2. Trail project priority criteria:

It is funding- and opportunity-driven. Vision 2020 is the blueprint, approved by the citizens, city and county. The projects have been "blessed" by the citizens and community leaders. The organization meets with schools and homeowners associations to go after some 'low hanging fruit' projects, connections and gaps in the system. It often uses the grant funder's checklist as part of its project guide. Its Land Trust committee goes out and looks at potential properties and a flow chart is used to evaluate whether criteria are met. OG also completes an owner profile/property profile, and is presently working with the Ozarks Transportation Org to develop bike/ped criteria that relate more to transportation.

3. Agency's funding:

Springfield has a Community Foundation that offered a challenge grant matching dollar for dollar to create a maintenance endowment for the Frisco Highline Trail. A local bike club will raise approx. \$5000 towards OG's share. If OG were left a sizeable estate or donation, it would become a grant-making agency and its Board sees the organization doing this in the future.

4. Tools, systems and programs that are used to assist your agency from trail project conception through operations and maintenance of the completed facility?

The park planners with whom they cooperate use GIS. No project management software is used. It primarily works through committees and local agencies that bring mapping and project expertise to the table, and has access to many resources through its Tech Committee. It has incorporated a local group called START (Sustainable Transportation Advocacy Resource Team) into their planning team. They look at maps at every tech meeting to envision connections and new greenways. This keeps the group excited and motivated.

5. Briefly describe project successes and challenges-including easement/property acquisition:

The organization worked for three years on the Bronze Level Bikeable Communities designation. It will go after Silver in the next two years. The committees are a success/strength. (START, Tech, and Land Trust). The Land Trust has protected 180 acres of farmland next to Wilson's Creek Battlefield, buffering the open space and protecting the view shed around the site. Designation as a Bicycle Friendly Community occurred in 2010. Three trails have received a National Recreation Trail designation from the National Park Service and American Trails: The Frisco Highline Trail; the South Creek Greenway; and the Galloway Creek Greenway.

These distinctions help with credibility at grant writing time, give some local bragging rights and build on OG's good public relations track record. Springfield is a Tree City USA as well. Vision 2020 has been a planning success, with many agencies working together on goals. OG is working itself out of a job. One of the local Public Works Departments sought its own Enhancement Funds. Years ago OG would have submitted the proposal. Storm water engineers are looking for ways to incorporate trails in the creekways. Other communities are looking at funding opportunities instead of looking to OG to write the proposals.

A local community leader said the greenways are becoming institutionalized—it is part of the planning process for many agencies. The Trail of Tears is one example of trails becoming ingrained in the process. The City of Battlefield came to OG with the idea of putting a trail and sewer lines along an abandoned rail corridor that makes up part of the actual Trail of Tears. OG owns the property but working cooperatively to make it work for the community. A gravel base is in place for the future trail. New property plats are reviewed by OG to see if there are trail or connection possibilities. Vision 2020 has identified the properties needed to make the connections and grant an easement to the County.

OG's Director was awarded the Transportation Planner of the year award by Springfield-Greene County for 2010. The organization does not hear about neighborhoods up in arms about any trail project – the comment is more on the order of, “when is a trail going to go in to my neighborhood.”

Challenges: Matching funding and real estate opportunities at the same time is a challenge. It has a few projects where they have the real estate and no funding and one with funding and not the real estate. They need to recoup Administrative fees and are often not able to include them in grant proposals. With the most recent stimulus funding, it was a challenge to have “Shovel ready” projects to submit for funding. And then it becomes a challenge to know when the funding pots will be ready to take proposals and time them correctly so it can be ready with a project. Sometimes the funding agency wants the easements in place before they will consider an application. Their small staff size (two) can be a challenge sometimes but they also didn't have to lay anyone off in this tough economy. “Keeping our name out there with good PR is always a challenge and you don't want it out there where people are getting tired of hearing about you.” There is a void in the Greene County region for pushing Safe Routes to School—OG is looking for the schools to take the lead.

6. Briefly describe the phases of a typical project's 'life' and discuss key areas of attention in each. Is there a typical timeline for each phase?

Advance planning; Pre-planning; Project. The Vision 2020 plan is looking at the project from above at 10,000 feet. Then it gets into the pre-planning at a lower level of altitude. Finally it starts acquiring easements and initiates bids and construction.

7. Key team members and the roles they play throughout the project:

Sometimes the funding source will determine who on the Tech Committee leads on

the project. It could be storm water engineers, highway and road officials, or park supervisors. Where the project is and where the funding is coming from identifies the key leader on the tech team, which could be MoDOT, a Park Planner, or a highway engineer.

8. What operations/maintenance keys do you consider during the planning and development of your greenways and trails?

Maintenance staff sits in on the Technical Committee. It designs with minimum maintenance in mind. Floodplains are a challenge. They design the trails at grade so the water will sheet across. They don't install a lot of piping. But often the groundwater will seep across the trail for a longer period than a trail with drain pipes. It is using fewer bollards so that maintenance people have to move less of them, but are designing access points to be narrow—perhaps 6' wide instead of the normal 10-12' width of the trail. It causes people to slow down when they reach an access point. Occasionally a car will trespass on the trail but this is happening less often.

9. Do you have a community wide greenways and trails hierarchy (a classification system)? Does it include on-street components?

There is no hierarchy. OG juggles many different projects with the help of the local MPO to prioritize them. On their trail project maps, red is built and yellow indicates gaps that need to be built. An important criterion is who has the real estate and is the funding in place? "If a project needs 22 different easements vs. a project with 3—the project with only three usually moves ahead." Projects that have a good likelihood of moving ahead in a reasonable timeframe take priority.

10. Do you have a written policy for design standards for your trails and greenways? (Describe)

OG uses MoDOT and AASHTO standards and uses City of Springfield guidelines for sidewalk and small connections.

11. Does your agency match specific projects to specific funding sources or more based on funding opportunities as they develop?

Answered in above questions.

The OG director also spoke of the City of Fayetteville, Arkansas that has its own trail

building crew and does a good job. That entity is also willing to condemn property for trails, unlike most other agencies. He also recommends attending the American Trails Conference, which has good sessions, exhibits opportunities for useful site visits.

St. Charles County Parks and Recreation (Missouri)

1. Agency goals & objectives:

- a. General including any mission statement
- b. Notes related to goals/objectives

It completed a Master Plan in 1998. New goals are included in their update. It has its mission statement on the agency website www.sccmo.org.

2. Trail project priority criteria:

Community support is very important. This county district has large 100-200 acre parks and greenways are a part of the system. It just received 20 acres along a greenway from a subdivision. It currently does not have a linear system that connects parks. It does work closely with Gateway Off Road Cyclists (GORC) to review proposed mountain bike trails and develop them under their guidelines.

It submits a wish list for funding, including grants. Six trail projects are on the current wish list. Their longest trail is 3 miles in Quail Ridge Park. As it acquires more property it does a master plan for each park and this guides the development. It has hired consulting firms to do the plans but it also now formulates more plans in-house. Each Master Plan has a public input portion and the department also collects public input through online surveys. Rangers go out every season and survey park users at the different facilities. It is much like a state park system; it leaves local municipalities to do the neighborhood parks while it preserves large tracts of land, 50% of which remains in a natural state. It would like to have more connections to the parks. There may be a future connection from the County's Quail Ridge Park to the City of Wentzville's Peruque Creek Park. Working with Great Rivers Greenway, it will connect the Heritage Museum Park to the Katy Trail (about two miles). It did have a group come forward for an astronomy site at one of the parks and that has been very popular. Otherwise, Park staff leads the development and it does not rely on external groups bringing a project forward.

3. Agency's funding:

Funding is received from the Fish and Wildlife Service, Restoration grants, Department of Natural Resources grants, and Forest Releaf. It receives \$1 million per year through the Great Rivers Greenway sales tax initiative and this drives a major portion of its trail efforts.

4. Tools, systems and programs that are used to assist your agency from trail project conception through operations and maintenance of the completed facility?

GIS is used. 2-3 Parks Department staff use it and the County has staff in the Planning Department who are trained in GIS. It also uses GPS to plot trails and facilities. Newsletters and e-blasts to more than 3000 residents go out with quarterly updates, and supervisors meet every two weeks to discuss projects.

5. Briefly describe project successes and challenges-including easement/property acquisition:

One staff person is assigned to acquisition. The Park Director is the public face with the landowners but the acquisition specialist handles the appraisals, due diligence, environmental and detail work behind the scenes. Staff will walk the proposed site to evaluate it for natural resources and potential uses. Parks cannot pay over appraised value and environmental studies can slow down or throw a curveball into the process. It has been successful with full and partial donations of property, including a property valued at \$11,000,000.

6. Briefly describe the phases of a typical project's 'life' and discuss key areas of attention in each. Is there a typical timeline for each phase?

There is no typical timeline on projects. All vary from project to project. The first step is property acquisition. Then the planning phase commences to determine development specifics and cost estimates. This is followed by prioritization and funding commitment. Finally the construction phase commences. The master plan becomes the road map for development. Public input is sought during this process.

7. Key team members and the roles it play throughout the project:

Park Supervisors play an active role through the staff meetings, which are informal and relatively unstructured. Everyone gets a chance to put in his/her ideas for the facility.

8. What operations/maintenance keys do you consider during the planning and development of your greenways and trails?

St. Charles County Parks has a lot of acres of parkland and not a lot of maintenance staff. The facilities have to be low maintenance. Getting rid of fescue areas and replacing

them with prairie or low maintenance ecosystems is a priority. It does not want large areas to mow. It solicits comments about facilities on the website. Two staff members have backgrounds in maintenance and visit the sites before and during acquisition. The department gathers the staff comments on how to keep the areas low maintenance. Each 200-acre park only has 2-3 full time staff devoted to it. Similarly, some of the department's 500-600-acre parks only have 3-4 staff people for each park. It would like to add a mechanic, be able to do more things in house and not have to wait for equipment to get back from repair. It could also use more skilled maintenance staff, tradesmen, heavy equipment operators, and maintenance technicians with many skills. Parks does much of its own construction, even though bids are presently coming in 20-40% lower than anticipated. It is a good time to bid projects and a good time to do projects.

9. Do you have a community wide greenways and trails hierarchy (a classification system)? Does it include on-street components?

The department has looked at the Forest Service's highly detailed system of classifying trails but it does not have anything formal. It keeps its single-track trails as narrow as possible for maintenance and it keeps the nature trails in a simple and minimalistic form. Most are multi use: bikes, horses, hikers but some are for hikers only. There is some on-street treatment at road crossings and near trailheads.

10. Do you have a written policy for design standards for your trails and greenways? (Describe)

No formal policy or design standards.

11. Does your agency match specific projects to specific funding sources or more based on funding opportunities as it develop?

Projects are prioritized. Then funding is designated for the projects or found for the projects. Parks has acquired an 1800's era home that has to be prioritized for preservation, so funding will go to this project. It set asides \$2,000,000 for acquisition opportunities. Often it has to "strike when the iron is hot when people are ready to sell or do a partial donation of property. Parks will often allow donors to stay and live on the property as part of the agreement. Right now it has eight operating parks, one Heritage Park and six to seven properties held on reserve and awaiting master plans and development.

Notes: St. Charles County Parks has enjoyed a good reputation with local citizens. Parks works hard at outreach to civic clubs, through the web, political leaders, farmers and willing donors. It wants to keep a positive approach to working with landowners for further acquisitions. Citizens have also bought into the Departments philosophy that many of the properties will be preserved in natural environments, butterfly gardens, prairies, hiking trails, rather than extensively developed with facilities.

Best Greenway Practices: A Report on Planning Guidelines & Operations

Appendices

- A. Cover Letter to Agencies, Questionnaire, and Contact List
- B. Bikeway Design Standards and Guidelines
- C. Support Material

A. Cover Letter to Agencies, Questionnaire, and Contact List

- Questionnaire Cover Letter
- Questionnaire
- Contact List

(Note: Background information on the M.E.P.R.D. was also provided to the agencies that were contacted, and has been included in the list of support material on file at MEPRD.)



Dear ,

Thank you for your interest in the Metro East Park & Recreation District **Best Practices Study**. The District was established in 2000 to serve the park, recreation and trails needs for citizens in Madison and St. Clair Counties, Illinois. This year the District has undertaken a Long Range Master Plan effort to better serve the community and help in decision making for the next ten years. Please take a few moments to review the following attachments:

- A short background piece on the Metro East Park & Recreation District
- A short survey to review in preparation for the follow up survey phone call

Jim Pona or Dan Cross will contact you for a time and date to discuss your agency survey in more detail. We anticipate the phone survey to take between 15-30 minutes. We would like to focus on the greenway and trails aspect of your organization but we are also interested in funding, operations and planning.

Thanks for your time and interest.

Bryan Werner, Planner
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Best Practices Questionnaire

Date Agency
Name/Title of Individual Contacted E-mail
Address City State Zip
Tel

- 1. Agency goals & objectives
a. General, including any mission statement
b. Notes related to goals/objectives
2. Trail project priority criteria (rank, w/ 5 being highest)
a. Community Support & Input 1 2 3 4 5
b. Evaluation criteria/scoring? 1 2 3 4 5
c. Planning history as criterion? 1 2 3 4 5
d. Notes on criteria, including weighting of each
e. What are the ways in which community input is captured and measured?
3. Agency's funding
a. As clearing house seeking to acquire funding Y N
b. Agency provides funding Y N
c. Dedicated funding source/tax Y N
Explain, including sources & uses

Draft October 12, 2010

(7. Cont'd)
12. General Notes:

- 8. What operations/maintenance keys do you consider during the planning and development of your greenways and trails?
9. Do you have a community wide greenways and trails hierarchy (a classification system)? Does it include on-street components?
10. Do you have a written policy for design standards for your trails and greenways? (Describe)
11. Does your agency match specific projects to specific funding sources or more based on funding opportunities as they develop?

November 12, 2010

Best Practices Agency Contact List

Great Rivers Greenway District

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Illinois Department of Transportation

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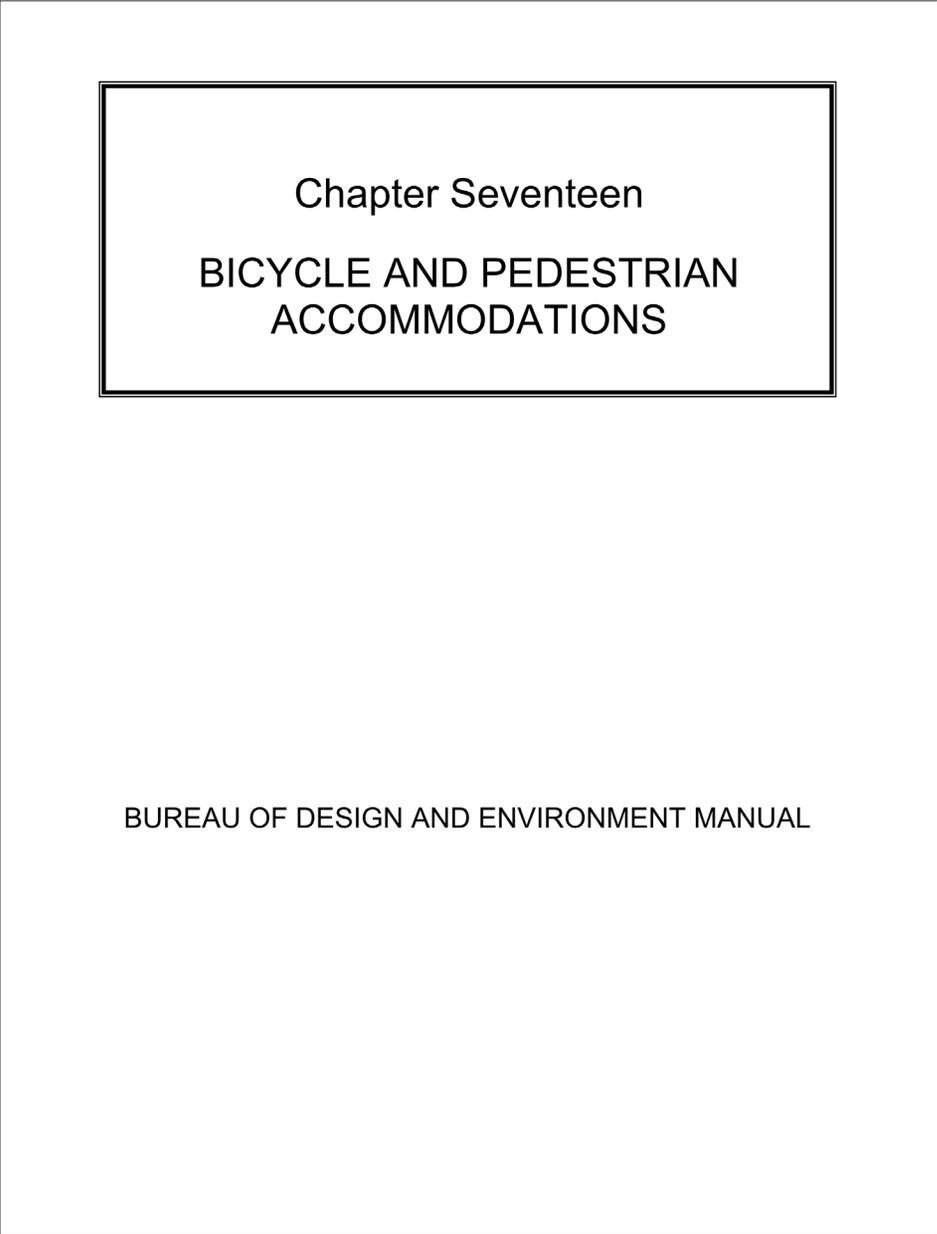
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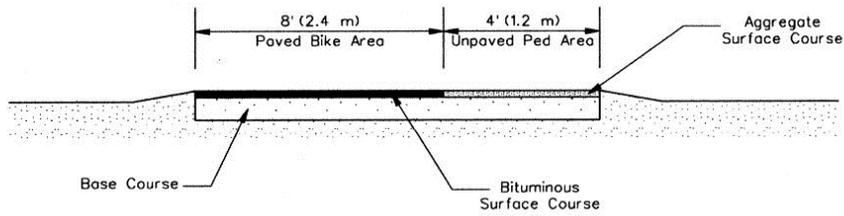
Missouri Foundation for Health

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astringerhessel@mffh.org
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B. Bikeway Design Standards and Guidelines

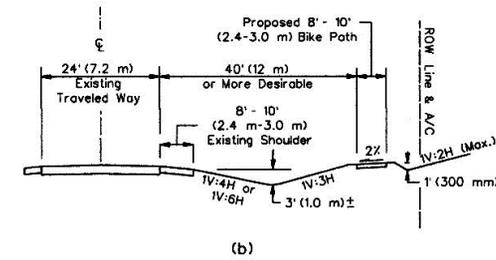
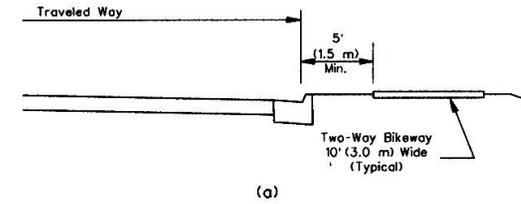
B 1. Excerpts from the Illinois Department of Transportation's (IDOT) Bureau of Design and Environment Manual





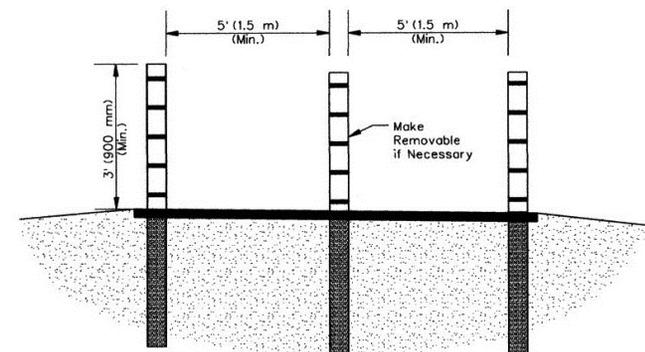
ALTERNATE BIKE PATH CROSS SECTION WITH PARTIAL PAVING

Figure 17-2V



CROSS SECTION OF PATH SEPARATED FROM ADJACENT ROADWAY

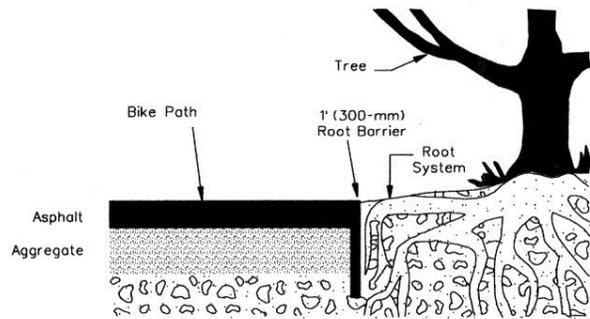
Figure 17-2Z



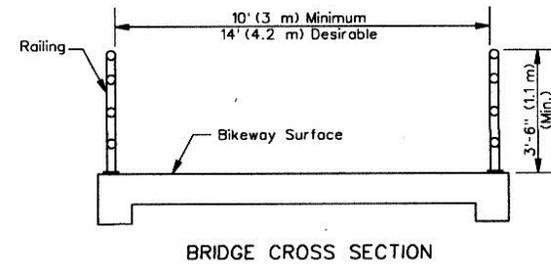
Note: Reflectorize where necessary.

BARRIER POST

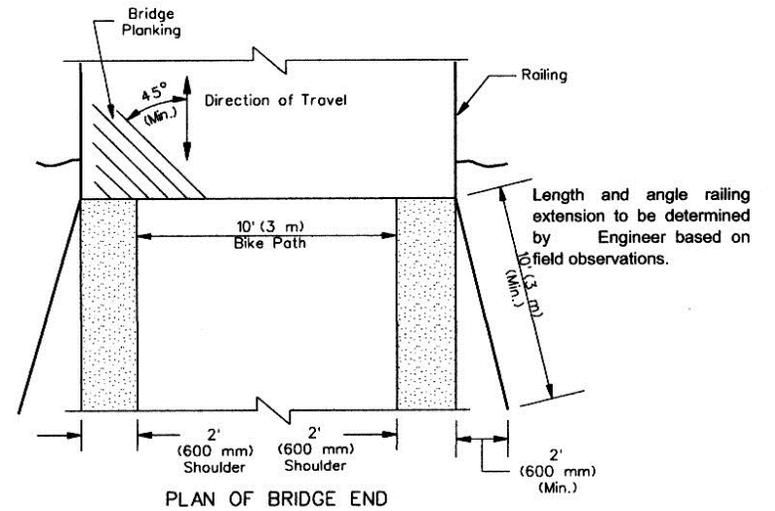
Figure 17-2AQ



SHARED-USE PATH ADJACENT TO TREES
Figure 17-2AS



BRIDGE CROSS SECTION



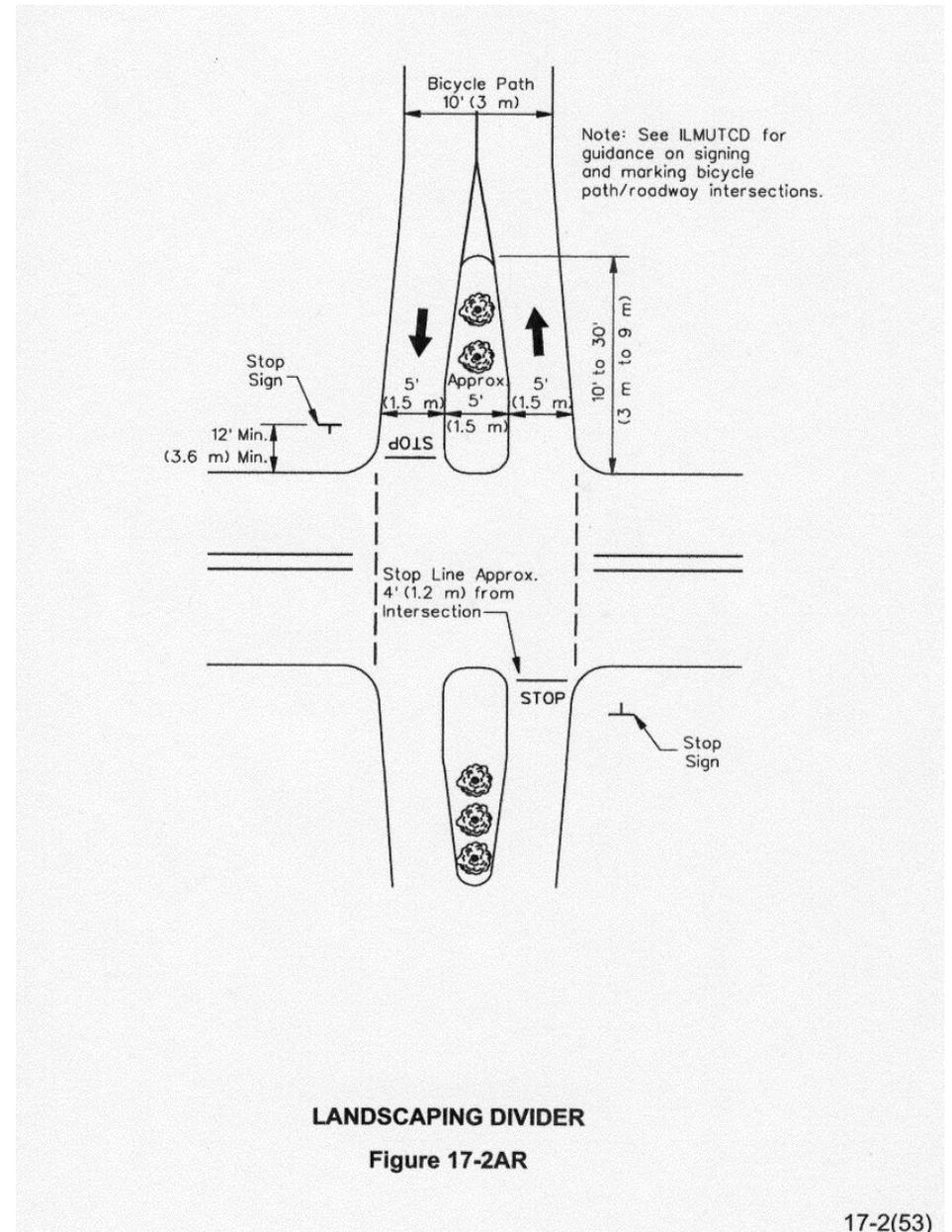
PLAN OF BRIDGE END

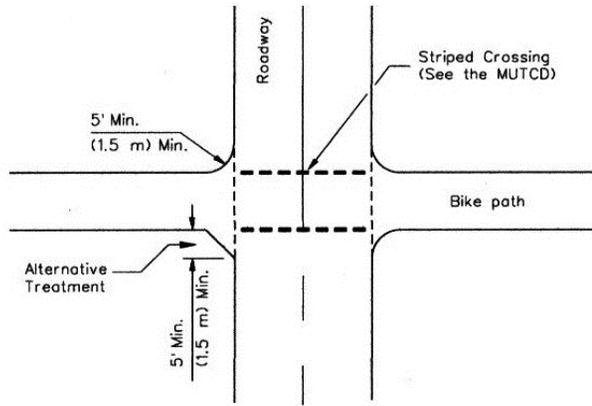
PLAN AND CROSS SECTION OF BIKE PATH BRIDGE WITH RAILING EXTENSION
Figure 17-2AM

17-2(46)



BOX CULVERT INTENDED FOR FUTURE BIKEWAY
Figure 17-2AN





CURB FLARES AT BICYCLE/ROAD INTERSECTIONS

Figure 17-2AJ

SURFACE MATERIAL	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Crushed Aggregate	Soft but firm surface; natural material; moderate cost; rough surface; accomodates some multi-use.	Surface can rut or erode from heavy rainfall; surface softens when set - bike tires, horses will damage surface; regular maintenance to keep consistent surface; replenishing aggregate may be a long-term expense; not for slopes >3%.
Bituminous Surface Treatment (also called Oil & Chip, Chip Seal)	Inexpensive to apply; more stable surface, durable.	Potential for oil bleeding to surface in hot weather, application methods important to minimize loose gravel.
Asphalt	Hard surface; supports most types of use; all weather; does not erode; accomodates most users simultaneously; low maintenance.	Higher installation costs; more costly to repair; not a natural surface; freeze/thaw can crack surface; heavy construction vehicles need access.
Concrete	Hardest surfac; easy to form to site conditions; supports multiple use; lowest maintenance; resists freeze/thaw; best cold weather surface; best for wet conditions.	High installation cost; costly to repair; not a natural looking surface; construction vehicles will need access to the trail corridor.

BIKE PATH/TRAIL SURFACE SYNOPSIS
Figure 17-2AU

B2. Typical Trail Cross Section (AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities

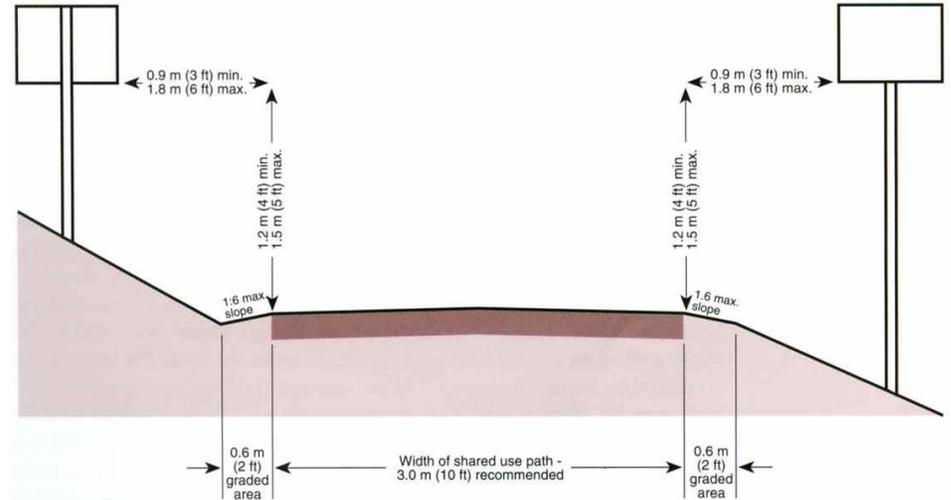


Figure 17. Cross Section of Two-Way Shared Use Path on Separated Right-of-Way

Figure 4.3.1. Horizontal and Vertical Clearance for Multi-Use Trails

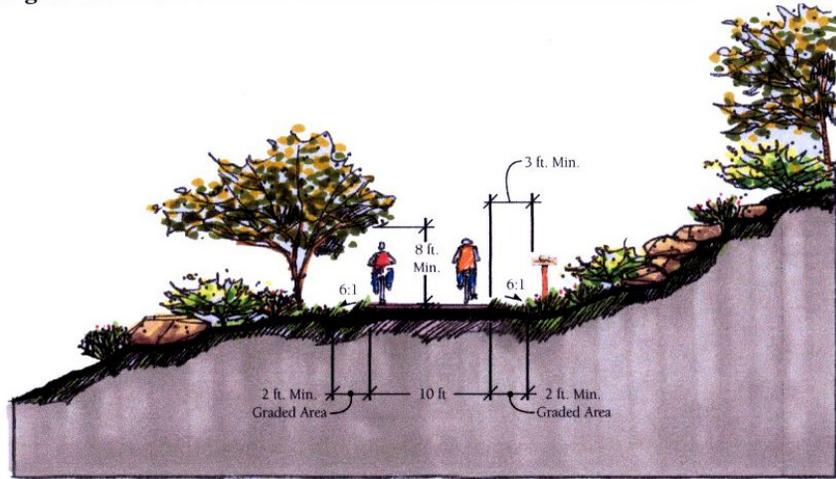


Figure 4.1.1. Typical Connector Trail Cross-Section

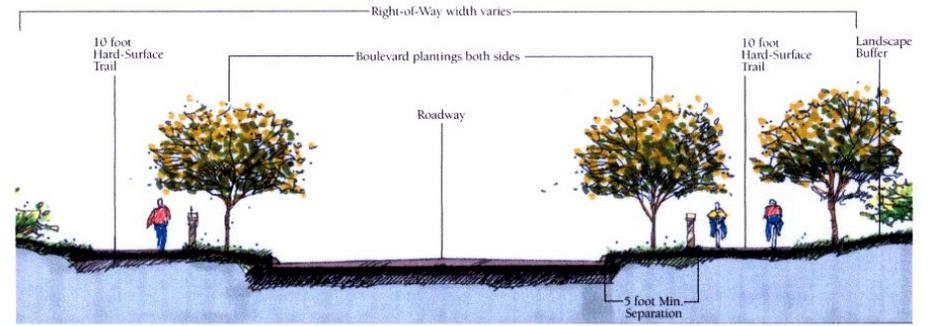


Figure 4.5.1. Typical Hard-Surfacing Cross-Section



B 2. On-Street Treatment Typology (JPA)

On-Street Treatment Typology

Treatment Type	Applicability	Design Treatment
<p>Accommodation on Shared Roadway</p> 	<p>For busier roads with physical limitations that do not allow for widening in conformance with an official bicycle facility (such as a signed bike route or bike lane). Accommodation roadways are intended for use by experienced bicyclists who are comfortable traveling on roadways.</p>	<p>Urban Section: (i.e. with curbs) Wide outside lanes - 14' recommended, not including gutter pan. (A 13' wide outside lane would provide some level of accommodation when the preferred widths are not available) 15' is preferred where extra space is required for maneuvering such as on steep grades or at railroad crossings which are not perpendicular to the direction of travel. Widening can often be accomplished through lane re-striping, and by reducing the width of the inside lane or left turn lane.</p> <p>Rural Section: (i.e. no curbs) A paved shoulder of any width up to 4' is better than none at all; however, if cannot be signed as a bicycle facility. A width greater than 4' is preferred, excluding gutter pans and rumble strips. 5' is recommended for higher bicycle traffic, motor vehicle speeds above 45 mph, and for higher truck/bus traffic.</p> <p>Warning Signage: "Share the Road with Bicycles" signs every 1/4 mile.</p>
<p>Bicycle Lane (Class II Bikeway)</p> 	<p>For busier roads with higher speeds and traffic volumes, including collectors and arterials with an urban or rural section. (Where roads may not be of sufficient width to enable the installation of bicycle lanes, consider reductions in vehicle speeds and/or traffic volumes to accommodate bicycles as per treatment type)</p> <p>"Busier road" is defined as either a road with permitted speeds of up to 35 mph and volumes of 10,000+ vehicles per day, or permitted speeds of 40 mph+ and volumes of 1,200+ vehicles per day.</p>	<p>Urban Section: (i.e. with curbs) Min. 5' shoulders with 5' striped bicycle lanes (5';12';12';5'). Widen shoulder on busier roads to provide more separation between motor vehicle lane and bike lane.</p> <p>4-Lane Rural Section: Min. 8' shoulders with 5' striped bicycle lanes (5';3';12';12';12';3';5'). Widen shoulder to provide more separation between motor vehicle lane and bike lane.</p> <p>2-Lane Urban Section: Min. 5' striped bike lane, excluding gutter pan. With curb parking, add 5' bike lane between parking and motor vehicle lane. (Min. 13' between curb and motor vehicle lane, including gutter pan.)</p>
<p>Bicycle Route - (Signed Shared Roadway)</p> 	<p>Bicycle routes should be so-marked if they are continuous and meet standards identified in the AASHTO publication, "Guide for Development of Bicycle Facilities," and if they are at least one mile long. Shorter bike routes may be marked if they connect with other bike routes.</p>	<p>4-Lane Urban Section: Min. 5' striped bike lane, excluding gutter pan. With curb parking, add 5' for bike lane between parking and motor vehicle lane. (Min. 13' between curb lane and motor vehicle lane, including gutter pan.) 14' outside lanes, "Bicycle Route" and "Share the Road with Bicycles" Sign.</p>

C. Support Material

The categories and titles lists that follow can be used to access the considerable support documentation that was obtained during the course of the Best Practices study. With the exception of the "Additional Material" portion, all of it is in electronic form.

Planning and Design

- Grand Rounds Missing Link Route Evaluation Criteria-Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board
- Grand Rounds Missing Link Study-Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board
- Grand Rounds Evaluation Matrix-Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board
- Grand Rounds Missing Link Route Evaluation-Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board
- Grand Rounds Missing Link Evaluation Matrix-Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board
- Comprehensive Park and Open Space Plan-Champaign Park District
- Fox River Trail Map-Fox Valley Park District
- Prairie Path Map-Fox Valley Park District
- Open Space, Park and Recreation Investment Plan-Fox Valley Park District
- Illinois State Trails Plan-Illinois Department of Natural Resources
- Excerpts from the Lake Oswego Trails and Pathways Master Plan-Lake Oswego Parks and Recreation Department, Lake Oswego, Oregon

Funding

- Concept Paper Review Form-Missouri Foundation for Health
- Summary Form: Promising Strategies-Missouri Foundation for Health
- Request for Concept Papers: Healthy and Active Communities-Missouri Foundation for Health
- Summary Review Form: Healthy and Active Communities-Missouri Foundation for Health
- Request for Applications: Healthy and Active Communities-Missouri Foundation for Health
- Economic Impact of Forest Park-Forest Park Forever

General

- “Have Trail, Will Travel” San Antonio, Texas
- Trail Notes and Guidelines-St. Charles County Parks & Recreation
- Listing of Information Websites-Champaign Park District

Additional Material

The following information was provided in hard copy only:

- About the Grand Rounds-Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board
- Minneapolis Parks Foundation: DONATE-Minneapolis Parks Foundation
- Request for Public Input-Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board
- Bike Development Funds Webpage Information -Illinois Department of Transportation
- Strategic Plan-Champaign Park District
- Mission Statement-Champaign Park District
- Community Survey-Champaign Park District
- Best Practices-Champaign Park District
- Funformation-Champaign Park District
- Indoor Recreation Facility Conditions and Improvement Study-Champaign Park District
- Annual Budget-Champaign Park District