

A C K N O W L E D G E M E N T S

Mid-America Regional Council wishes to extend a special thank you to each of the project participants. This document is the product of the combined effort of interested citizens, local city officials, county and state agency officials, and business representatives. It is rare that a project can bring together individuals from such varied backgrounds toward a common purpose.

It is a credit to the efforts of the Missouri Department of Natural Resources that the Katy Trail is such a common purpose.

We would also like to recognize the William T. Kemper Foundation for their generous financial support. This collaboration would not have been possible without their involvement.

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INTRODUCTION AND PROJECT BACKGROUND

Over the past decade, the Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) has been working with many local agencies and trail advocates to move our community toward a regional system of greenways and multi-use trails. MARC supported this effort to ensure that a key component of our regional system is put in place – a Kansas City Area connection to the Katy Trail.

The abandonment and public acquisition of the old Rock Island rail line was once considered the best possibility for the final leg of the Katy but a full conversion does not look promising in the near term. Interest has recently grown among varied public and private groups to identify all of the available options from the current Katy Trail alignment to our region.

The project focused on opportunities to connect the existing Katy Trail to the Kansas City area. Many local communities within the metro area, including but not limited to Lee's Summit, Jackson County, Kansas City, MO, and Pleasant Hill are actively planning and construct-

ing trails. Once a connection to the Katy Trail is determined and developed, connections into the metro area would be made in cooperation with area local governments and state government agencies.

This effort was a unique approach to finding solutions for this connection. Rather than conduct a traditional corridor study, MARC chose to bring together many interested agencies and communities in a widened study area. Each of the participants brought a distinctive knowledge of the Katy and possible routes into the Kansas City region. It was this deeper understanding of each jurisdiction that was needed. The project proceeded as a series of discussion sessions designed to gain information and momentum on possible trail solutions.

The conclusions in this report are the results of this eight month long effort. Finally, the conclusions and direction drawn from the report are constructed to move forward in similar fashion to the process itself. Participating agencies and individuals have taken ownership of the desired goals to ensure continued success.

PROJECT CONCLUSIONS

The group came to some ultimate conclusions that are best expressed in the following categories. Each goal is followed by specific action items.

Short-term Goals

(Exhibit E – On Road Priorities) A map of road routes should be illustrated and distributed. The Missouri Department



of Natural Resources, bicycling groups and individuals also receive and make requests to complete cross-state trips on the

Katy. This would be an excellent tool for requests from regional users to complete the Katy experience into the Kansas City area.

Action – A small group of volunteers agreed to put together on-road mapping and find a map sponsor.

Responsible Group – Robert Kirkman of the Jackson County Wheelman and Bob Watts with Missouri Bicycle Federation

will be working with Patti Banks Associates to finish production of an on-road map and find a participating sponsor.

Mid-term Goals

(Exhibit B – Rock Island Corridor) The Rock Island railroad extends from Windsor (where the present day Katy is located) through Pleasant Hill into the Kansas City area. This line seems to be a good alternative

for a rail with trail (RWT) facility if the design details and liability issues can be



addressed. The Federal Railroad Administration is in the process of developing shared facility (rail with trail) standards that may be appropriate.

Action – The Missouri Department of Natural Resources met with MARC to share information and discuss opportunities for collaboration. The first element will be to meet with Ameren UE, the owner of the line to Pleasant Hill.

PROJECT CONCLUSIONS (cont.)

Responsible Group – The Department of Natural Resources with any needed assistance from the MARC participants.

(Exhibit D – Final Priorities) A separated facility along Highway 13 provided an excellent southern connection (if the Rock Island is used)

to Clinton. MoDOT is presently planning many improvements to that route.

Action – MARC has opened communication with MoDOT on the planned expansion of Route 13.

Responsible Group – MoDOT has agreed to analyze Highway 13's status and see if such a facility is possible.

Long-term considerations

(Exhibit A-Corridor Maps) A trail route along the Missouri River seems to be a valuable project, although not neces-

sarily as a short or mid-term option for extending the Katy. The greatest potential for such a trail exists with the expansion of the Big Muddy wildlife refuge although ownership and access issues involving local levee districts and Corps of Engineers issues will be substantial challenges.

The Frisco corridor (Exhibit C-Frisco Corridor) may not be

an immediate solution to the Katy Trail connection into the Kansas City area.

Many segments of the corridor have been sold to adjacent land owners, although some continuity still exists near the northern end. Although this option seems to offer significant barriers, there is

interested in continuing to work on this option.

Action – Some participants in the Clinton area and in Cass County are pursuing the ongoing potential for a Frisco corridor.



CORRIDOR MAP



Exhibit A

ROCK ISLAND CORRIDOR



Exhibit B

FRISCO CORRIDOR



Exhibit C

FINAL PRIORITIES



Exhibit D

ON-ROAD PRIORITIES



Exhibit E