metro green

two states • seven counties • one regional greenway system

TWENTY YEARS • 1991-2011
what is

METROGREEN?

• A proposed 1,440-mile interconnected system of public and private open space, greenways and trails

• Connects urban and rural communities

• Protects and preserves natural areas

• Provides health, transportation, and economic benefits
A REGIONAL SYSTEM

Designed to link the seven counties in the Kansas City region

CURRENTLY:

• 85 corridors
• over 200 trail miles completed
• 90,000 acres of protected stream corridors
PLAN HISTORY: 1894

- George Kessler’s vision of a system of parks and boulevards
- Studied with Fredrick Law Olmsted
- “City Beautiful” movement
PLAN HISTORY: 1991

- ASLA Prairie Gateway Chapter enlarged Kessler’s concepts
- Created MetroGreen, a system of trails, open space and parklands
PLAN HISTORY: 2001

• MARC expanded the plan
• Environmental stewardship
• Urban growth management
• Future development strategy
“Hubs and Spokes” system
- Hubs of community destination points
- Spokes of stream corridors, abandoned rails and landscaped parkways
MANY BENEFITS

Transportation

Health, Safety and Welfare

Water Quality and Environmental Education

Economic
TRANSPORTATION

• Environmentally friendly transportation choices
• Unique experiences not possible by automobile
• Alternative for commuting to the places we live, work, and play
Indian Creek Greenway provides connectivity among neighborhoods, Corporate Woods Business Park, shopping centers and public parks.
HEALTH

recreational opportunities

• Encourage physical activity
• Mental relaxation
• Connect people to nature
SAFETY & WELFARE

- Safe off-street access to places
- Increase the visibility in an area (proven method to prevent crime and increase public security)
WATER QUALITY

• Prevent flood damage
• Conserve water quality and remove pollutants in urban stormwater
• Provide stream bank stability
• Provide habitat
ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

- Outdoor classrooms
- Stream Teams
- Individual discovery
- Address “Nature Deficit Disorder”
ECONOMIC BENEFITS

business development

• Attract an innovative, highly educated workforce to our region
• Compete with other urban communities that have an extensive trail system used by residents and visitors
• Create tourism attractions like the Katy Trail in Missouri
ECONOMIC BENEFITS

increased property value

- $10,000 or more in Virginia (Tippett et al., 1999)

- Value of homes increase as far as three blocks from the greenway (Vince Graham, ION Development)

- Property values are 32 percent higher for locations adjacent to a greenbelt buffer in Boulder, Colo. (Correll et al., 1978)
PLATTE COUNTY UPDATE

Brian Nowotny
Director of Parks and Recreation
Platte County, Missouri
NEW PARK PLAN

FOUNDATIONS

- Protect our natural resources
- Improve community health and wellness
- Provide safe places for kids to grow and develop
PLATTE COUNTY: A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE
NEW TRAILS & GREENWAYS

Prairie Creek
Missouri Riverfront
Weston Bluffs
Southern Platte Pass
## Usage of Parks, Trails, Community Centers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PARK / FACILITY</th>
<th>2010 USAGE/PARTICIPATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parks &amp; Sports Complexes</td>
<td><strong>Baseball/Softball/Football/Soccer</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Youth League Participants: 7,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Youth Tournaments: 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adult Tournaments: 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trails &amp; Greenways</td>
<td><strong>Visitors by Trail</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Prairie Creek Greenway 110,613</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Missouri Riverfront 101,592</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Southern Platte Pass 100,733</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Weston Bluffs 57,275</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
on the drawing board:

SOUTH PLATTE COUNTY LOOP TRAIL
on the drawing board:

TRAILS IN PLATTE LANDING PARK

Partners
- Platte County
- City of Parkville
- Army Corps of Engineers
- Others

Amenity Ideas
- Walking & Biking Trail
- Nature Trail
- Water Trails

130-Acre County Parkland

English Landing Expansion
on the drawing board: PRAIRIE CREEK GREENWAY TRAILS
on the drawing board:

WESTON BLUFFS TRAIL EXTENSION TO LEAVENWORTH, KAN.
LINE CREEK

- 1.08 miles
- N. 68th to NW Platte Brooke Drive
LINE CREEK TRAIL
EARTH RIDERS TRAIL ASSOCIATION (ERTA) TRAIL — SWOPE PARK

• +/- 16 miles of planned single track
• 10-year period
• Northern end of the Blue-Swope Connector Trail System
• Old rock quarry grounds
• Very sustainable and fast-drying trails
EARTH RIDERS TRAIL ASSOCIATION (ERTA) TRAIL — SWOPE PARK

- **Wudchuk Run**: 1.5 miles
- **8-pin alley**: 1.8 miles
- **Phase Three**: 2-mile beginner loop, 0.75-mile alternate technical line
EARTH RIDERS TRAIL ASSOCIATION (ERTA) TRAIL — SWOPE PARK

Example of cities/counties partnering with community organizations
EARTH RIDERS TRAIL ASSOCIATION
(ERTA) TRAIL — SWOPE PARK

HIKING

BIKING
INDIAN CREEK

- 3.77 miles
- State Line Road to 103rd St.
- Locust to the Blue River
BRIARCLIFF GREENWAY
BRUSH CREEK

• 2.42 miles
• Roanoke to Troost
• Olive to Agnes
RIVERFRONT HERITAGE TRAIL

• 1 mile
LITTLE BLUE TRACE

- Being extended to entire length of Little Blue Trace Park
- South and west to Lee’s Summit Road
- Adds four miles for total of 14 miles one way
- Crushed-gravel, mainly flat
LITTLE BLUE TRACE

Jackson County, Missouri
BLUE RIVER

- Four miles
- Alex George Lake to I-435
- I-435 to Bannister (Design)
- 63rd St to Swope Park Swimming Pool
BLUE RIVER
SHOAL CREEK

- 1.5 miles
- Hodge Park Trail
- 96th St. to NE Barry Road
FORMER ROCK ISLAND R.R. CORRIDOR

Katy Trail Connector to KC

- Funding to complete final design, acquire land and secure the railroad corridor through rail-banking for public control
- Construct 30 miles of multi-use trail necessary to connect Pleasant Hill, Mo., to Kansas City, Mo.
- Construction of trailheads to allow residents to gain access to and use the trail corridor
FORMER ROCK ISLAND R.R. CORRIDOR

Katy Trail Connector to KC

• Critical link in the MetroGreen regional greenway trails plan
• Links Kansas City to the Missouri KATY Trail
• Important transportation corridor for potential public transit use
FORMER ROCK ISLAND R.R. CORRIDOR

Katy Trail Connector to KC

- Challenges with road and other public improvements due to ownership of the corridor by Union Pacific Railroad
- Residents along this corridor and visitors to the region will benefit from this project
STREAMWAY PARKS SYSTEM
JOHNSON COUNTY, KAN.

Bill Maasen
Johnson County Park & Recreation District
Superintendent of Parks and Golf Courses
On August 5th, Johnson County voters will decide if a County-wide Streamway Park System will be acquired and developed.

Potential Streamway Park System

What is the Issue?
Voters in Johnson County will be asked to approve a one-half mill levy increase for the Johnson County Parks and Recreation District. The levy increase would raise about $560,000 annually, based on the County's current assessed valuation. Bonds will not be issued for this project. Development and acquisition will take place on an annual basis as mill levy monies are made available.

What is a Streamway Park System?
The Streamway Park System will encompass development along the County's natural stream corridors and primarily, 100-year flood plain lands. Linking other existing and potential park facilities, the stream corridor concept, combined with flood plain zoning restrictions, provides a continuity of available open spaces for such leisure pursuits as tubing, jogging, camping, canoeing, horseback riding, picnicking, and nature hiking. At the same time, a primary goal of the park development will be to aid in conserving drainage courses, flood plains and natural areas.

Question 2: Shall the Board of Commissioners of the Johnson County Park and Recreation District be authorized to levy the additional one-half (½) mill authorized by K.S.A. 19-2576?
55.7% VOTER APPROVAL

- All municipalities approved the issue
- Only unincorporated areas rejected the question
STREAMWAY PARKS SYSTEM

Eight major streams:

- Mill Creek
- Indian Creek
- Tomahawk Creek
- Turkey Creek
- Bull Creek
- Cedar Creek
- Kill Creek
- Blue River
1990
Trails 40 miles
Park 6,882 acres
Undeveloped Park 1,568 acres
2000
Trails 120 miles
Park 9,270 acres
Undeveloped Park 2,863 acres
2010
Trails 256 miles
Park 12,404 acres
Undeveloped Park 4,979 acres
Trails are being constructed and maintained by JCPRD, Leawood, Lenexa, Overland Park, Olathe, Merriam, Gardner, Shawnee and Mission

**HISTORY**

**1990**  
Approximately 40 miles of trails, constructed by Overland Park, Leawood and JCPRD

**2000**  
Approximately 120 miles of multi-use trails

**2010**  
Over 256 miles of paved trails, equestrian trails, single track trails and bike lanes

**2011**  
Trails are being constructed and maintained by JCPRD, Leawood, Lenexa, Overland Park, Olathe, Merriam, Gardner, Shawnee and Mission
• The Streamway Parks funds have been shared with Overland Park, Leawood, Lenexa, Gardner, Merriam, Shawnee, Olathe and Mission with the addition of Rock Creek.

• JCPRD Streamway funds have been leveraged with local budgets to share expenses on federal projects constructing enhancement projects in many of these cities.
HOME BUYERS SURVEY

Trails ranked second behind highway access when recent home buyers were asked about the importance of community amenities.

The amenities the homebuyers ranked next in importance were:

1. Sidewalks
2. Parks
3. Playgrounds

RESIDENTS WANT GREEN SPACE

“Green space is the hot product today. Now, you open up the new home guides (in Kansas City) and everyone is talking about green space. There is a sizable portion of the housing market to whom trees and land are important, and they’re willing to pay for it.”

David Gale, Gale Communities
“We are charged with the duty of developing a plan that shall not only meet present, but future wants. To undertake important work in a half-hearted manner is the poorest economy, it is far better to plan comprehensively and broadly and proceed with actual construction leisurely than to attempt economy in original plans.”

- George Kessler, circa 1892
METROGREEN®:
A USER’S PERSPECTIVE

Richard Ballentine and Dr. William Eddy
co-authors,
Hiking Kansas City: The Complete Guide
to More Than 125 Hiking and Walking Trails
in the Kansas City Area
HOW “HIKING KANSAS CITY” CAME INTO BEING

• In 1987 Bill Eddy and I set out to find all the hiking and walking trails within a 50-mile radius of downtown Kansas City.
• There was no single source of information available.
• After a year with help from trail sponsors and others we declared victory.
• We discovered 45 hiking and walking trails!
• In 1989 we published a guide to the trails that became a bestseller.
• There have been five editions — each describing more trails.
“HIKING KANSAS CITY”

Trail numbers grew in each edition

- 1989 — 45
- 1991 — 70
- 1995 — 100
- 2001 — 100+
- 2007 — 125+

Fifth edition
THE KANSAS CITY AREA
a great place to...

HIKE  WALK  and BIKE
WHAT MAKES IT GREAT?

• Variety of:
  o Terrains
  o Surfaces
  o Seasons
  o Wildlife, flora, rural and urban sights

• Exercise outdoors with friends and family

• Safe bicycle pathways for transportation

• Opportunities to explore and experience the metro area
VARIETY OF TERRAINS

HILLY
Larry Mattonen Memorial Trail, Jackson County, Mo.

FLAT
English Landing Park Trail, Parkville, Mo.

ROCKY
Glades Trail, Swope Park
VARIETY OF TRAIL SURFACES

NATURAL

Eddy-Ballentine Trail, Swope Park

CRUSHED ROCK

Little Blue Trace, Jackson County, Mo.
VARIETY OF TRAIL SURFACES

PAVED

Westboro /Canterbury Greenway, Liberty, Mo.

RAILS-TO-TRAILS

Prairie Spirit Rail Trail, Kansas
VARIETY OF SEASONS

SPRING

Blue River North Trail,
Jackson County, Mo.

SUMMER

Little Blue Trace,
Jackson County, Mo.
VARIETY OF SEASONS

FALL

Shawnee Mission Park, Kan.

WINTER

Hollis Renewal Center, Wyandotte County, Kan.
VARIETY OF WILDLIFE
VARIETY OF FLORA
VARIETY OF RURAL AND URBAN EXPERIENCES

Blue River Trace, Jackson County, Mo.

Kaw Point Kansas City, Kan.
VARIETY OF RURAL AND URBAN EXPERIENCES

Kill Creek Park Trail, Johnson County, Kan.

Triangle Trails path, Kansas City, Mo.
VARIETY OF RURAL AND URBAN EXPERIENCES

Prairie Spirit Rail Trail, Kan.

Berkeley Riverfront Park, Kansas City, Mo.
VARIETY OF RURAL AND URBAN EXPERIENCES

Haller Trail, Johnson County, Kan.

Theis Park, Kansas City, Mo.
VARIETY OF RURAL AND URBAN EXPERIENCES

Overland Park Arboretum, Johnson County, Kan.

Brush Creek, Kansas City, Mo.
BENEFITS

EXERCISE & FITNESS

TIME WITH FAMILY & FRIENDS
OFF-ROAD BICYCLE PATHS

RECREATION
OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPLORE THE REGION

FROM THE NORTHEAST...

Smithville Lake

Little Blue Trace
OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPLORE THE REGION

...TO THE SOUTHEAST...

Indian Creek

Blue River
OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPLORE THE REGION

...TO THE SOUTHWEST...

Haller Trail, Johnson County, Kan.

AND THE NORTHWEST

Prairie Creek Greenway,
Platte County, Mo.
OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPLORE THE REGION

ALONG A RIVER…

English Landing Park, Parkville, Mo.
OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPLORE THE REGION

...ON AN URBAN ROUTE...

Trolley Track Trail, Kansas City, Mo.
OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPLORE THE REGION

...AND BEYOND...

Flint Hills annual spring burning

Miola Lake, Paola, Kan.
NUMEROUS TRAIL SPONSORS

• Cities
• Counties
• State of Missouri
• State of Kansas
• Federal:
  o U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Dept. of Fish & Wildlife, National Park Service
• Private organizations:
  o Powell Gardens, Unity Village, Nature Conservancy, others
“Hiking Kansas City”

Goal of the book was to provide essential information:

- Where the trails are
- How to find trailheads

Quadrant maps show location of TRAIL SITES
“HIKING KANSAS CITY”
“HIKING KANSAS CITY”

Trails beyond the metro area
“HIKING KANSAS CITY”

Goal of the book was to provide essential information

• Where the trails are
• How to find trailheads
• Trail length
• Level of difficulty
• Trail surface
• Time it takes to hike the trail
• Water availability
• Handicapped accessibility
• Maps
• Describe the hike
Wherever you live in the metro area or wherever you’d like to explore, there are great trails for hiking, walking and bicycling in Kansas City… and thanks to MetroGreen, more are on the way!
METROGREEN®: A USER’S PERSPECTIVE

Bill and Linda Eddy
(and Chief)

Emily and Dick Ballentine
metro green

two states • seven counties • one regional greenway system

WWW.MARC.ORG/METROGREEN
GREATER KANSAS CITY
NATIONAL TRAILS DAY

SATURDAY, JUNE 4, 2011

Complete list of participating communities, events and an interactive map available at

WWW.MARC.ORG/METROGREEN