

# Explore the Maline Greenway: Bella Fontaine County Park



Follow the Maline Creek and spend a day playing on the playgrounds and ball fields in Bella Fontaine County Park.



## **DISTANCE**

2 miles from Bella Fontaine Shelter to Major Whistler and back

## **TIME**

1 hour walk/20 minute bike

## **LONGER OPTION**

Continue on the trails in Bella Fontaine County Park - Cardinal, Fox Den, Maple Tree, and Maline Creek



**TERRAIN**  
FLAT HILLY

## **TRAIL SURFACE**

Asphalt surface separated from the road

## **RESTROOMS AND WATER**

Restroom and drinking fountain available at the Bella Fontaine Shelter in Bella Fontaine County Park

## **GETTING THERE**

Vehicle parking is available at Bella Fontaine Shelter and the ball fields in Bella Fontaine County Park (9565 Bellefontaine Road, St. Louis, MO 63137) and at Major Whistler Shelter in Bella Fontaine West County Park (9601 Duke Drive, St. Louis, MO 63136). The greenway may be accessed by bus via the #72 route along Lewis and Clark Blvd.

For more info, call Great Rivers Greenway at **314-436-7009**  
or visit [www.GreatRiversGreenway.org](http://www.GreatRiversGreenway.org)

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### WHILE YOU'RE EXPLORING

- » Play a game of tennis, basketball, baseball, horseshoe, or volleyball in Bella Fontaine County Park
- » Look for wildlife in the restored streambanks or prairie in Bella Fontaine County Park
- » Fish in Fountain Lake
- » Follow the greenway to one of the other trails (Cardinal, Fox Den, Maline Creek, or Maple Tree) in Bella Fontaine County Park



### LEARN ABOUT THE AREA

**Many greenways such as the Maline Greenway follow the routes of the rail lines that converged in St. Louis.** A rail line to transport goods throughout the region once ran along Maline Creek in the area that today is Bella Fontaine County Park.

Many modern roads trace the foot paths of Native Americans. Indigenous people portaged across the Missouri River and created the Osage Mississippi River Trail ("Great Trail") that runs along the east side of Bella Fontaine County Park and is known today as Bellefontaine Road. The Great Trail connected Fort Belle Fontaine to St. Louis City.

In the early 1800s, fewer than a dozen homes existed in this area. At that time, enslaved people farmed corn, wheat, cotton, and tobacco in the area. From

the early 1900s until the 1950s when farmland was replaced with housing subdivisions, some farmers drove hours in each direction every day along the former Great Trail into the city to sell their produce.

**Greenways are a refuge for nature, important corridors for wildlife, and a place where native plants can thrive.** The roots of native plants along the edge of Maline Creek grow deep into the soil and help hold it in place. This strengthens the creek bank and reduces erosion which helps keep the water clear so natural vegetation can thrive and support the food chain for small organisms and fish. Plants along the creek also provide shade that keeps the water cooler so aquatic plants and animals can enjoy a healthier habitat. The plants also contribute organic matter that animals in the water use for food and energy.



### GREENWAYS CONNECT US ALL

**Greenways are outdoor spaces connecting people and places.**

Each greenway is unique, reflecting the character of the communities it connects. Greenways can include **trails, conservation projects** such as rain gardens and restored prairies, **amenities** like restrooms and drinking fountains, and **connections** to businesses, neighborhoods, parks, schools, waterways and transit. There are over 125 miles of greenways throughout St. Louis City, St. Louis County and St. Charles County for you to explore and enjoy.

