

# Great Rivers Greenway

## REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY *Summer 2021*

We hope this message finds you and yours safe and in good health. COVID-19 has had an impact on all of us, and through the challenges our team found ways to connect and collaborate through engagement, virtual programs and working from home. What mattered most was what always fuels our work — *you*.

The greenways saw more visitors than ever before and proved to be a valuable resource and escape for residents of the St. Louis region. Our trail counters recorded a 72% increase in traffic from 2019 to 2020, and we estimate that more than 3 million trips were taken on the greenways last year.

Although sales tax revenue, which we rely on for our activities, was down, we continued to work on dozens of greenway projects. We leveraged your investment using federal grants and private funds to keep projects moving forward.

Thank you for your continued input, support, volunteering and visits to the greenways. We're excited to be accessible to you (as things open up) in our new office in City Foundry STL, near transit, free parking and the future Brickline Greenway.

With sincere gratitude,



**Susan K. Trautman**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Great Rivers Greenway



**Bernie DuBray**  
President of the Board  
Great Rivers Greenway

### Evolving Programming to Meet the Times

As CDC guidelines evolved, and with some greenways closed, we went online to create “Conservation at Home” video programming.

We transformed our Life Outside Festival into a “Challenge” — inviting people to complete a variety of outdoor activities with their families or households.

Thanks to flexible partners and volunteers, our annual trash bashes pivoted to weeklong events and still made a tremendous impact, removing tons of trash and other debris from creeks and streams around the region.

*We've missed connecting with you in person and look forward to seeing you on the greenways soon!*



## Thank you!

During the past year, you've told us how invaluable the greenways are as a community resource. Here are a few of the many notes of thanks and appreciation we received. *Thank you for making this resource possible for your neighbors!*

- » “The Missouri Greenway trail in Bridgeton is an absolute lifesaver in this COVID-restricted world. It is the only place I go outside of a senior living facility.”
- » “I'm so thankful for the greenways!! They are my go-to choice for runs and walks...and in the last few weeks, they are the silver lining in my day.”
- » “Please keep doing what you are doing. This is gonna change the St. Louis area for the better. Even my friends from other states are jealous because we already have such a great organization like you. GREAT WORK!”
- » “It may sound silly, but in 2020, life has gotten way too stressful for me. I am seeking cathartic, healthy ways to bring balance into my life. Brickline Greenway is one of the single most important foundations of hope I have for the future of my home, my city and my family.”



# Progress Across the Region

2020

P

B

C

E

2021

P

B

C

E

PLAN

BUILD

CONSERVE

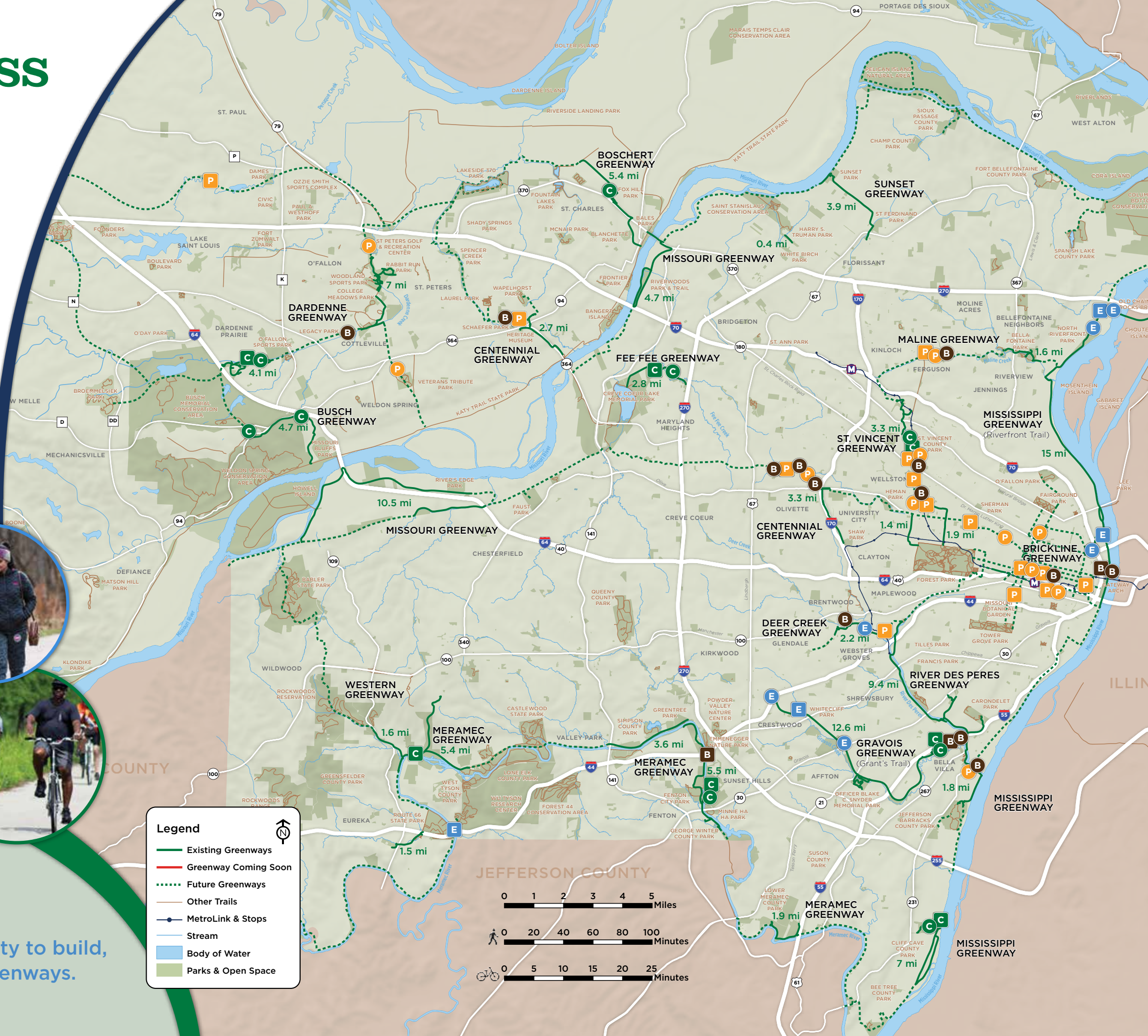
ENHANCE

For the full 2020 Annual Report with project descriptions, photos and all the financials, visit:  
[GreatRiversGreenway.org/Update2020](http://GreatRiversGreenway.org/Update2020)



93¢  
of every dollar

spent in 2020 went back to the community to build, promote and sustain your network of greenways.







Centennial Greenway

# Connecting the Centennial Greenway



## Envisioning the Next 20 Years Together

In December 2020 and January 2021, as part of the strategic planning effort we undertake every five years, we conducted civic engagement activities to make sure we're on track and looking forward to the next 5, 10 and 20 years. **Thank you to the 6,600 people who gave us crucial input!**

Visit [GreenwayPlan.org](https://GreenwayPlan.org) for full results.

Now we're putting this information to work, researching ideas nationwide and drafting the plan with committee input. We'll seek your feedback again when we share our progress later this summer/fall.

We also wrapped up the St. Charles County Greenway Master Plan with partners. See the plan and video at [GreatRiversGreenway.org/stcharlesplan](https://GreatRiversGreenway.org/stcharlesplan).

### OLIVETTE UPDATE

Since 2018, we've been working with the City of Olivette to extend the Centennial Greenway from its current endpoint at the Olive Blvd. and I-170 intersection through Olivette so people can connect on foot, bicycle, stroller and wheelchair to Warson Park, the new Olivette Community Center, Indian Meadows Park and the Olive Blvd. stores and restaurants.

Over the past year, we've asked for additional feedback from community members to help guide the final designs and ensure a great greenway experience.

This extension will be brought to life in multiple phases. Greenway design from Warson Park to Dielman Road and along Olive Blvd. near I-170 is expected to be complete this summer. In the fall, we'll break ground in Warson Park, in coordination with the construction of the new Olivette Community Center. In 2022, construction will continue from Warson Park to Dielman Road and along Olive Blvd. near I-170, in coordination with the Olive Crossing Development. The timeline for the design and construction of the final stretch of greenway from Dielman Road to Olive Blvd. is dependent on the acquisition of the Union Pacific Railroad property. We'll keep you posted on how this process will impact the project schedule.

### ST. CHARLES UPDATE

Community members and our partners at the cities of St. Charles and St. Peters have helped plan the next segment of the Centennial Greenway in St. Charles County. The goal is to extend the greenway (which connects the Katy Trail to the Heritage Museum plus a 0.7-mile walking/biking connection over highways 364 and 94) from its current endpoint at Old Highway 94 to Schaefer Park.

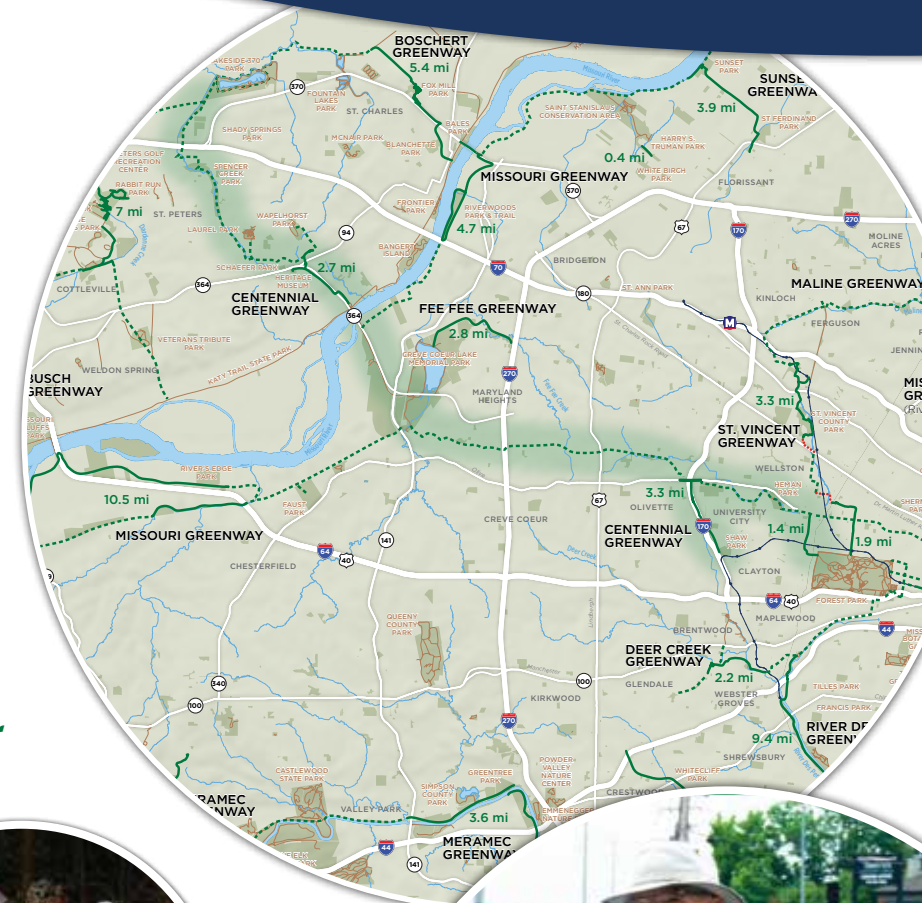
This also sets the stage for future connections that will make it possible to walk or ride a bike on dedicated walking and biking paths all the way from the St. Peters Rec-Plex to the Katy Trail as well as schools, parks and neighborhoods along the way.

Design is almost finished; the project is expected to be bid for construction in 2021-2022. We'll also add wayfinding signs along the planned Centennial Greenway project being constructed by the City of St. Peters, which extends from Hackmann Road to Spencer Creek Trail, adjacent to Harvester Church of the Nazarene.

### UNIVERSITY CITY UPDATE

The Ackert Walkway — part of the Centennial Greenway linking Forest Park, Washington University and the Delmar Loop — extends north from Delmar Blvd. to Vernon Avenue. With the goal of improving the experience for greenway visitors, we worked with operations and maintenance partners on a betterment project in University City, the City of St. Louis and on the Washington University campus. The improvements included new wayfinding signage across the entire length of the greenway, replacement of aging concrete, new lighting, benches and trash cans. This work was wrapped up in early 2020. Future plans call for an extension of this greenway from Vernon Avenue to Heman Park.

***We can't wait to connect this entire greenway across all three counties for you to explore and enjoy!***





# Recent Highlights

## ROUTE 66 BRIDGE

This historic Warren truss bridge structure is a pivotal connection in the Meramec Greenway at Route 66 State Park. We are working with Missouri State Parks, and its Foundation, to develop cost estimates for restoration. Stay tuned for more updates on this partnership.

## HODIAMONT TRACKS PROJECT

Once a streetcar line, this 3.5-mile future greenway will connect Grand Center Arts District and seven city neighborhoods, St. Vincent Greenway and the planned Brickline Greenway. Community members are helping to design a project and process to create an inviting space for everyone to explore and enjoy.

# Conservation Highlights

- » We're restoring 13 acres of prairie and woodland adjacent to Gravois Creek near the Mysun Charitable Foundation Trailhead on Gravois Greenway.
- » Together with St. Louis County Parks and with support from the Great Rivers Greenway Foundation, we're returning 36 acres along the St. Vincent Greenway in St. Vincent County Park to a native woodland, prairie and savanna. Twenty-four acres of invasive species have been removed to date.
- » We've planted 800 willow stakes along the Meramec River in Lower Meramec Park to stabilize the banks and reduce erosion. We're also working to reforest 10 acres of floodplain; replanting will begin in fall 2021 with a goal of 600 native trees on site by 2023.
- » Greenway users, pollinators, birds and wildlife are reaping the benefits of our ongoing conservation project at the site of a former sod farm along the Dardenne Greenway: Bluebird Meadow. The 34-acre native wildflower meadow is now a thriving prairie and natural floodplain for Dardenne Creek. It's our pleasure to repay those pollinators, constantly working hard for our ecosystem!

# Great Rivers Greenway Foundation

In 2020, the Great Rivers Greenway Foundation Board adopted a two-year strategic plan to best position itself to deliver on the community's vision for a vibrant, connected region. Since its inception as a 501(c)3 nonprofit in 2016, the Foundation has received \$12.7 million from individuals, other foundations and businesses to fund greenway projects, conservation efforts and improvements along the greenways, including:

- » Supporting continuing prairie, woodland and wetland restoration efforts that are returning areas to native habitats for humans and wildlife to enjoy
- » Adding amenities such as bike repair stations, trash cans, benches and more to the greenways to enhance user experiences.

# Brickline Greenway Update

Based on community input, we translated the project's mission, key principles and intended outcomes into a brand for the Brickline Greenway (while still being part of the overall Great Rivers Greenway network of greenways). Project progress continues:

- » Market Street from Harris Stowe State University to the St. Louis CITY SC team's new stadium district is in design and includes a major art installation from St. Louis Artist Damon Davis to honor and celebrate the Mill Creek Valley neighborhood and tell the stories of the people who lived there before they were displaced and the neighborhood destroyed.
- » Improvements from Fairground Park south to the Grand MetroLink Station and east to the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency must be driven by community engagement. We're focusing on taking stock of existing conditions and partners, engaging one-on-one with stakeholders and community leaders, and planning for engagement, both for now and when we can connect fully in real life again.
- » From the Cortex MetroLink Station east toward the Grand MetroLink Station, planning and design progress continues in coordination with partners like City Foundry STL and the Armory District.

Learn more at [BricklineGreenway.org](https://BricklineGreenway.org).

# Kiener Plaza & Gateway Arch National Park

Using dedicated CityArchRiver funds, exclusively for this project area, and in partnership with the City of St. Louis and Gateway Arch National Park, we recently broke ground on a new guest services building on Kiener Plaza. It will include retail space for St. Louis-themed gifts, a workspace for on-site security, and a storage and support space for events and maintenance. Construction should be complete in fall 2021. We've also been setting granite pavers along the walkways and around tree beds on the Gateway Arch grounds. When complete, this landscaping will fully realize a long-unfinished element of Eero Saarinen's original design!





Learn more inside!  
CONNECTED REGION.  
FOR A VIBRANT AND  
THE COMMUNITY'S VISION  
CONTINUES TOWARD  
GREAT PROGRESS

Great Rivers Greenway

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# GREENWAY IMPACTS

- A** A new bridge over the River des Peres completed the long-awaited connection between the Gravois Greenway: Grant's Trail and the River des Peres Greenway.
- B** Great Rivers Greenway was selected as the recipient of LaunchCode's Organizational Dreamer Moon Shot Award.
- C** Trojan Park, built as part of the St. Vincent Greenway, was recognized with a global Urban Open Space Award from the Urban Land Institute.
- D** With partners St. Louis County Parks, St. Louis Public Library and Perennial, new storybook walks were installed on Maline and St. Vincent Greenways.

**MORE  
UPDATES  
INSIDE!**