



ENVISION

the next twenty years

REGIONAL PLAN UPDATE 2022



Great Rivers Greenway MAKES THE ST. LOUIS REGION A MORE VIBRANT PLACE BY DEVELOPING A DYNAMIC NETWORK OF GREENWAYS. WE ARE A PUBLIC AGENCY, CREATED BY A PUBLIC VOTE IN NOVEMBER 2000. WE COLLABORATE TO BRING TO LIFE YOUR BOLD VISION OF A THRIVING REGION, CONNECTED WITH GREENWAYS THAT STRENGTHEN OUR QUALITY OF LIFE AND OUR REGION'S CIVIC, SOCIAL, ENVIRONMENTAL, AND ECONOMIC WELL-BEING.



Great Rivers Greenway REGIONAL PLAN UPDATE 2022

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People of the St. Louis Region,

TWENTY-TWO YEARS AGO, OUR REGION CREATED A SHARED VISION.

People voted to invest and continue to show up, collaborate and connect to bring 130 miles of greenways (and counting!) to life.

THIS VISION FUNDAMENTALLY REMAINS THE SAME — BUILD A NETWORK OF GREENWAYS TO CONNECT THE ST. LOUIS AREA TOGETHER.

The work of bringing greenways to life has always included listening to what the community wants, and because of what we've heard, we're redefining the impact greenways can have.

AS WE LOOK BACK, TAKE STOCK AND FORGE AHEAD *to the next five, ten, twenty years, two themes to consider:*

1) PARTNERSHIP IS FUNDAMENTAL. *This work demands and benefits from, quite literally, hundreds of partners. From municipalities to state agencies, from nonprofits to community organizations, from neighbors to corporations — a vision this bold takes all of us. And while we have unique partnership models in place across our agency, it can still be complicated in this region with more than 120 municipalities. Let's establish crystal clear roles and expectations, adapt the model to fit the needs of any given community, explore what it means not just to share the responsibility, but to truly partner in ways where the outcomes are greater than just the sum of parts. We look forward to solidifying a sustainable long-term model to best deliver this network of greenways.*

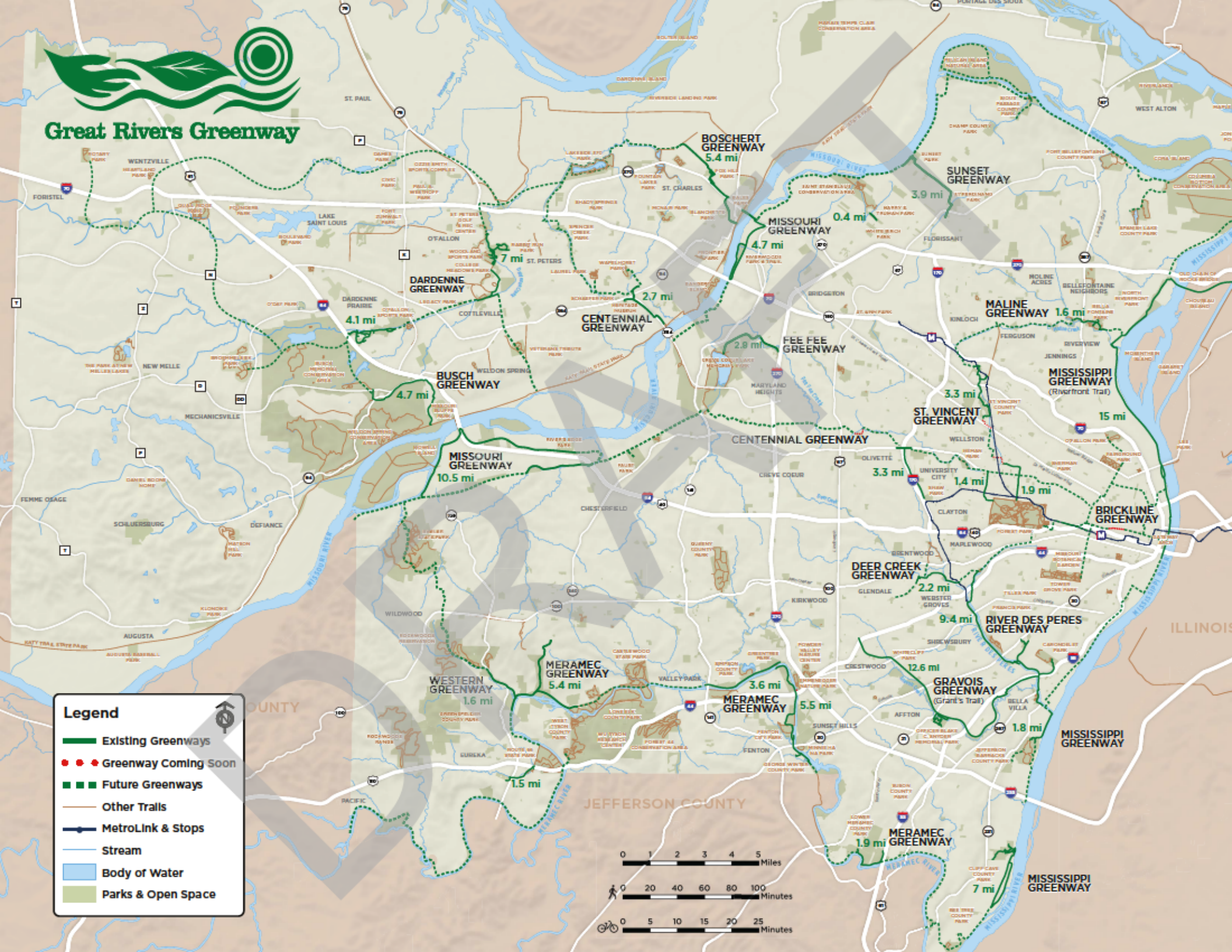
2) THE WORLD IS DIFFERENT *than it was in the late 90s when the idea of Great Rivers Greenway was hatching. Our region's population has shifted geographically and demographically, research and best practices have evolved, we've tested new ideas and honed in on what it takes to bring a greenway to life. We stewarded the public investment in the transformation of the Gateway Arch National Park, Mississippi Riverfront and Kiener Plaza — a unique collaboration that sets our region apart on a national stage and taught us many lessons about big projects.*

AND NOW, AS OUR REGION TACKLES THE NEXT AMBITIOUS PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP, BRICKLINE GREENWAY, WE FIND OURSELVES REIMAGINING WHAT A GREENWAY CAN DO.

Let's think about how the greenway can be a catalyst for opportunities to thrive, such as affordable housing or workforce development programs. Brickline Greenway includes public art and programs that help to interpret the stories of these places. It will bring nature to the city in new ways and re-knit neighborhoods together while providing key connections to hundreds of destinations.

*As we look ahead to more greenways for more people, to the Prop P vote in 2033, to partnerships new and old, we are bolstered by what we hear from you every day — the greenways are important to me and to our region. It feels good to live in a place that invests in this idea, that collaborates to make it happen. **THANK YOU!***

Susan Trautman, Chief Executive Officer, Great Rivers Greenway





20 Years of Greenway Impacts

130

MILES (AND COUNTING!) OF GREENWAYS BUILT TO DATE

3

MILLION VISITS ANNUALLY ON THE GREENWAYS

4

STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATES, GUIDED BY COMMUNITY INPUT

250

PARTNERS COLLABORATING TO BRING THIS VISION TO LIFE

95¢

OF EVERY DOLLAR SPENT GOES BACK TO THE COMMUNITY TO BUILD, PROMOTE AND SUSTAIN YOUR NETWORK OF GREENWAYS

BEYOND THE TRAILS, GREENWAY PROJECTS HAVE DELIVERED:

- ♦ 10,000+ new trees + plants
- ♦ 12K volunteer hours annually to benefit habitats
- ♦ 4,000+ tires removed from waterways
- ♦ Restored prairies + wetlands
- \$ 5% increase in property values near greenways
- \$ Millions of \$\$ to local contractors and vendors
- \$ Jobs, skills trainings
- ✖ New neighbor coalitions
- ✖ Hundreds of events and programs for families
- ✖ Little free libraries and community art projects
- ✖ Boosted civic pride
- 🚶 Free places to exercise
- 🚶 Nature accessible to all
- 🚶 Playgrounds + pumptracks
- 🚶 Water, benches, restrooms
- 🚶 New ways to get around
- 🚶 Countless connections



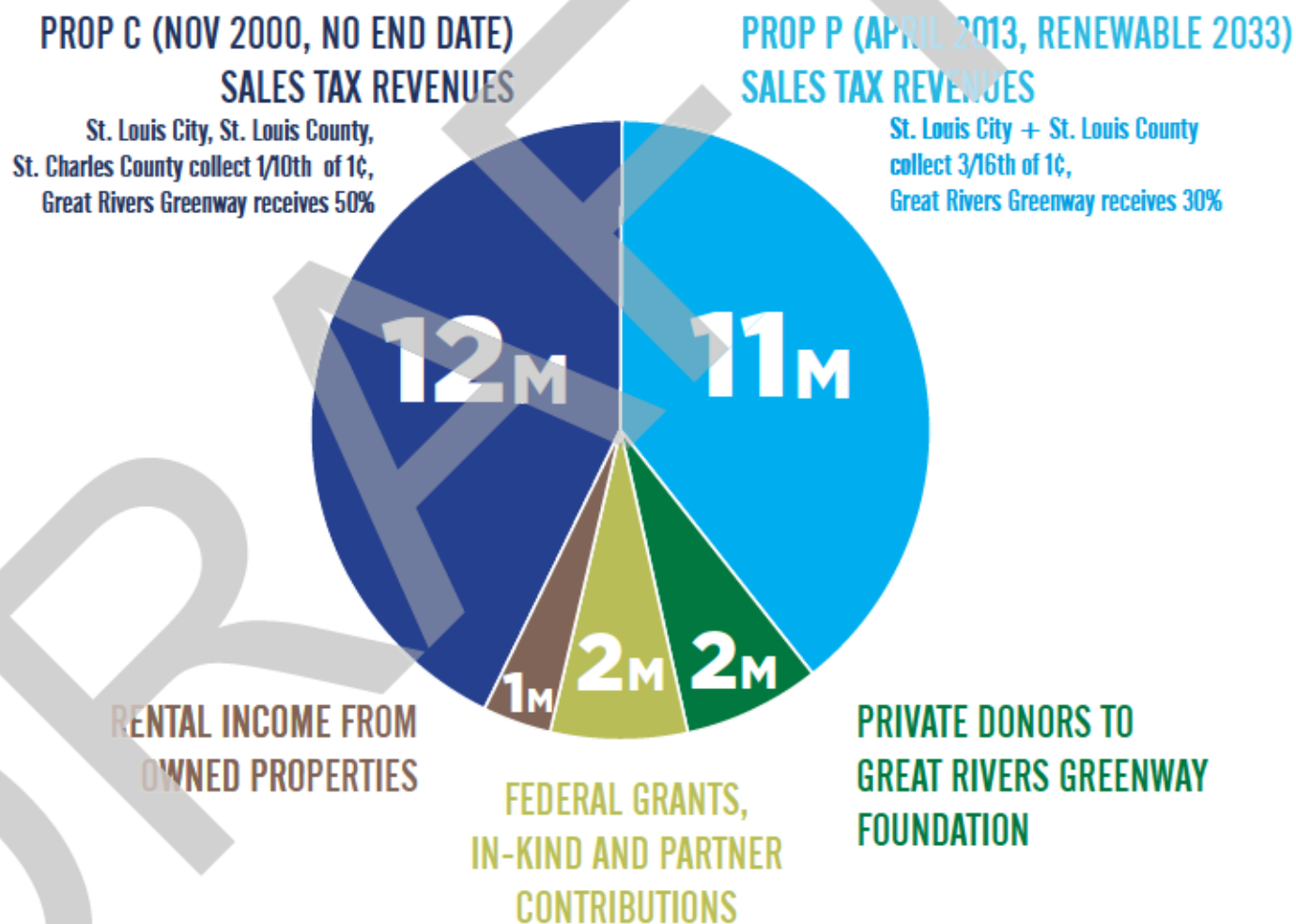
GREAT RIVERS GREENWAY'S FUNDING FUNDAMENTALS:

Greenways usually take **several years of staff, partners and vendors collaboration** on the planning, engagement with the community, design, land or easement negotiations, engineering and partner coordination before they can go into construction.

Once they do, the average cost for the construction of a typical greenway is currently **\$5 million/mile**. In denser areas like city centers, this cost increases greatly to reconfigure roads, relocate utilities, etc.

Private donations and federal grants help to leverage the local sales tax dollars and **increase our impact**.

Leveraging Your Investment:



recent average annual revenue

This Document:

IS A STRATEGIC PLAN.

It does not have all the answers and it's not a fully implementable list of actions. It's a guide that identifies challenges and recommends how we might solve them, in varying levels of detail.

IS JUST SOME OF THE WORK OF THIS AGENCY.

These are just five high priority areas we will focus on in upcoming years.

HAD MANY VOICES GUIDING THE WORK.

From community advisory committees to more than 6,000 responses to a public survey to stakeholder groups. Appendix x (PG X) recognizes those people and partners and includes a recap of their work - Thank you!

BUILDS ON THE WORK IN THE FIRST 3 STRATEGIC PLANS.

In 2004, the community laid out the vision for a network of greenways across the region. In 2011, we heard it was critical to go beyond building the greenways — to also promote and activate them with events and programs, and help sustain them with our partners, vendors and volunteers. In 2016, we made action plans to grow capacity and standardize process in all areas, plus we established the Great Rivers Greenway Foundation.

SINCE LAST TIME:

Since the last plan in 2016, we have used what we've learned to date and best practices around the world to complete plans that we and our partners use every day in the areas of:

GREENWAY DESIGN GUIDELINES
 LEVEL OF CARE GUIDELINES FOR PARTNERS
 PROJECT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM/SOFTWARE
 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN
 INTERPRETATION
 PUBLIC ART
 DIVERSITY, EQUITY + INCLUSION PLAN
 FOUNDATION STRATEGIC PLAN
 SIGNAGE STANDARDS
 GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM ASSET
 INVENTORY DATABASE
 ENVIRONMENTAL GRAPHICS

We've also hired staff, moved offices, pivoted through a pandemic, completed the CityArchRiver Project and began the next major public-private partnership project, Brickline Greenway.



PRO TIP:

Each of these sections will lay out what it is, why it matters, what we heard, what we're doing and where we're going.

For any given next step, we'll use the following symbol to indicate how far along that is in the process.



CHALLENGE, CONTEXT,
AND POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS
IDENTIFIED



SOLUTIONS VETTED, NEED
TO CHOOSE ONE AND
MAKE A PLAN



RECOMMENDED SOLUTION
IDENTIFIED, NEXT STEPS
LOOSELY OUTLINED

These projects will move at different paces and have different priorities, but the symbols show how much they've been vetted and how ready they are to be implemented, when it's time.

Key Questions of This Plan:

PLANNING GREENWAYS

How and where do we plan future greenways to best deliver community benefits and meet people's needs?

VISITOR EXPERIENCE

What is our role in supporting a welcoming, safe and enjoyable greenway experience?

CONSERVATION

What is our role in conservation along the greenways?

OPERATIONS + MAINTENANCE

What's the best model to achieve a consistent level of care among many partners, on all greenways?

EQUITABLE OUTCOMES

How can we ensure we are maximizing our agency's impact in an equitable way?

MEASURES OF SUCCESS:

Each of the five priority areas addressed in this plan will help us deliver on our mission for the St. Louis region. In coming years we will track our progress in a variety of ways.



PLANNING GREENWAYS

How and where do we plan future greenways to best deliver community benefits and meet people's needs?

Much has changed in St. Louis since the original River Ring vision was conceived. The feasibility and practicality of future greenway projects needs a fresh look through the lens of sustainability, equity and impact, understanding community desires and expectations. A network of greenways that serves as many people and ecosystems as possible looks different from the concept of simply following the region's rivers and streams. It's time to evolve the plan.



Why This Matters



The vision at inception was a bold, “build it and they will come” invitation. There’s still a place for that. But growing the network of greenways to intentionally close gaps in service so more people have choices for transportation, exercise and exploration makes for a higher return on investment. Studying not just where and how a greenway could connect but using a data-driven approach to see where it can have the highest impact for all of the goals is a shift in thinking that will increase use, buy-in and deliver long-lasting results.

Greenways have an important role to play in achieving an emerging concept of the “15 minute community”— an aspirational idea that everyone should live within a 15 minute walk to access all of their daily needs— from jobs to education, recreation, shopping and social activities.

What We Heard From You



The COVID-19 pandemic shifted greenways from “nice to have” to “need to have” for many people and highlighted long-existing health disparities in communities with people of color and disinvestment (often the same areas). People shared that the system should continue to be built out, but needs to reach emerging growth areas, underinvested neighborhoods or established residential spots so people can find and access them regularly, integrated into their daily lives.

What We’re Doing

Appendix X shows the full mapping and analysis work done through this plan process, setting up tools for more thorough decision-making and forecasting of cost and impact across multiple greenway segments.



What's Next



RECOMMENDATION: Complete Existing Greenways

We will place an emphasis on completing greenways that are partially completed.

- a. Evaluate and refine greenway master plans when they exist.
- b. Identify major challenges or obstacles preventing greenway plans from being implemented.
- c. Establish priorities for closing gaps between built segments.
- d. Implement interim connections where necessary (i.g. in places where we are stuck, find a way to make short-term connections as a temporary measure until ideal solutions can be completed).
- e. Implement betterment projects for near term projects, trailheads, services (example—full-service trailheads).

LEARN MORE:
APPENDIX X, PAGE X



RECOMMENDATION: Identify Potential Future Greenways

We will use the preliminary route analysis in this plan update (Appendix X) as a point of beginning to define new greenways that were not anticipated in the original River Ring network.

- a. Create engagement and community feedback (through surveys and other comments).
- b. Seek partner initiatives (where local municipalities have ongoing projects, proposals, studies).
- c. Study our staff and board recommendations (using Regional Plan database, mapping and analytic tools, project management software and other resources/inputs).
- d. Collaborate with partners to potentially enhance existing local trails to Great Rivers Greenway standards.

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RECOMMENDATION: Target Engagement Where Necessary

We note from the 2022 survey that people who know us or are recurring greenway users tend to be located near existing greenways.

- a. Locate communities where Great Rivers Greenway awareness, greenway use and access is low.
- b. Accept that some communities have other issues that are higher priority.
- c. Recognize and engage communities that have experienced systematic disinvestment and/or institutional discrimination where trust in public, philanthropic and business organizations is limited.
- d. Conduct targeted engagement in areas before greenway planning begins in order to form relationships.

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RECOMMENDATION: Begin Planning New Greenways

We will begin to plan for new greenway additions as determined by balancing community engagement, our focus on equity, demonstrated need and our projection of the benefits of proposed greenway segments.

- a. Establish potential future greenways.
- b. Apply principles of equity, conservation, public safety, planning and design, operations and maintenance, and measures of impact to evaluate potential projects.
- c. With engagement, develop priorities for implementing greenways in short (5-10 year), mid (10-20 year) and long (20+ year) horizons.
- d. Create broad timelines, budgets and maintenance considerations for current, short and mid-term greenway projects.

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VISITOR EXPERIENCE

What is our role in supporting a welcoming, safe and enjoyable greenway experience?

Great Rivers Greenway and its partners play a critical role in the experience of people using the greenways. Our own activities in planning, design and implementation of greenways are important to minimize physical challenges and provide basic needs. Regional partners, who operate and maintain the greenways, also share a critical role in making the greenways consistently clean, attractive, in good repair and accessible for programs, events or daily use.



Why This Matters



We strive to make every greenway welcoming to all, to create a sense of belonging and safety, and to encourage a wide diversity of people and communities to use the greenways.

If we, as a region, aren't delivering an excellent user experience, consistent among the many municipalities and districts across three counties, then it's not a fully functional or equitable regional system. Many of the benefits that greenways can provide cannot all be fully realized if people aren't truly using them. We have many wins in this area, but we still have work to do to ensure seamless collaboration and consistently high performance. We also want to think critically about what, precisely, does help people to take the step to visit greenways and what barriers, real or perceived, keep people away.

What We Heard From You



Both in day-to-day agency operations and communications, and through the engagement for this plan, we continue to hear that basic amenities like restrooms, drinking water fountains and benches are critical to use and stronger staff presence is desired. We have heard about confusion over rules changing from one mile to the next because they pass through a new jurisdiction or the complication of trying to organize an event or program across multiple operators.

What We're Doing

Great Rivers Greenway supports wayfinding, customer service and collaborates with, supplements and trains operating partners, plus adds "betterment" enhancements to already-built greenways.



What's Next



RECOMMENDATION: **Establish A Greenway Guides Program**

These trained and uniformed, personnel will travel the system to be ambassadors for public information, to remind people of greenway etiquette, and to report unusual conditions or other observations to Great Rivers Greenway. They will not be armed, but will be trained in techniques such as conflict de-escalation and other ways to enhance the user experience.

- Identify partner organization(s) to create and fulfill this program.
- Develop the program with partner(s) and determine resource needs of all parties.
- Determine program needs, scale, location, structure, strategy, funding, scaling.
- Implement the program in pilot or small scale initially.
- Evaluate and scale up incrementally to create a sustainable program across our system.

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RECOMMENDATION: **Reimagine Partner Relationships**

We will place greater emphasis on the importance of the specific roles of Great Rivers Greenway and each partner who maintains a greenway to provide a consistent user experience across our system. We will develop tools and engage in discussions with our partners to better align our mutual understanding and commitment to our roles, not just in basic operations and maintenance, but in how our activities enhance or diminish the visitor experience.

At a basic level, engage early and often with all levels of staff among all partners, to orient, collaborate and come to consensus on success, roles and expectations, best practices and lessons learned.

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RECOMMENDATION: **Enhance, Diversify Greenway Programs**

We will increase our focus on creating programming with our partners or others to expand the number and diversity of people we engage with.

- Evaluate current programming to determine where gaps exist in both demographics of the users and the types of users (bikers, nature observers, commuters).
- Update the Greenway Programming Strategy accordingly. Identify resources including partner support, new partnerships, staff resources and funding sources. Include metrics for measuring success of our programs.
- Implement a trial period or pilot program and measure success to continually improve our outcomes.

LEARN MORE:
APPENDIX X, PAGE X



RECOMMENDATION: **Review Designs and Consider Common Rules**

We will improve consistency and implement current, best practices for greenway design that will promote the safe and comfortable and experiences for all users.

- Review our current design guidelines and audit our existing system to determine where gaps in design exist that would enhance the user experience (i.e. restrooms, adequate benches and shade).
- Determine areas where perceptions of safety could be enhanced by a greater amount of programming, maintenance, site amenities or security.
- Develop inventory or research greenway-related rules, ordinances and laws across all jurisdictions. With partner agencies, develop a universal set of guidelines for greenways and a pathway to adoption by the various jurisdictions in our region.

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CONSERVATION

*What is our role in conservation
along the greenways?*

Great Rivers Greenway is one of many agencies and organizations in the St. Louis region focused on conservation. Since the beginning, we have incorporated conservation practices into our greenway projects and worked in partnership to initiate restoration projects, too. Part of the goal is to engage community members to learn about and care for our natural resources. Our focus is on enhancing the ecosystems surrounding the greenways.



Why This Matters



While our legislative mission is to build a system of greenways, a core value is to do so in an environmentally sound way. We recognize that a changing climate is having local impacts that we must continually adapt to — greenways can provide relief from extreme heat and help to mitigate the effects of increasing storms and flooding events. It's important to apply an equity lens to consider who is being affected and in what ways and proceed accordingly.

Stewarding natural resources not only benefits the plants and animals, but provides direct benefits for a better quality of life for humans. Engaging people in this process leads to increased ownership, buy-in, volunteerism and financial support, as well as possibilities for individuals and partners to continue the work beyond the greenways.

What We Heard From You



Conservation continues to be a highly-valued aspect of our work. Survey data indicated 92% support of our conservation approach and there is increasing interest in volunteerism on the greenways. There is a desire to have us document and promote our strategy more specifically, continue to build partnerships and coalitions and make sure conservation is part of every single greenway project.

What We're Doing

Review our current conservation program, including preservation of green space, using natural systems to manage stormwater and habitat restoration, at www.GreatRiversGreenway.org/conservation.



What's Next



RECOMMENDATION: Prioritize and Complete Partner Projects

We have begun to create a comprehensive conservation inventory along greenway to help us identify project opportunities and gaps.

- a. Develop model to prioritize conservation project opportunities based on need (both environmental and community) including engagement.
- b. Engage municipal operations and maintenance partners, community organizations, and other relevant stakeholders in codifying conservation project planning effort.
- c. Supplement conservation projects with local, state, and federal grants.
- d. Develop conservation project partnership agreements for accountability.

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RECOMMENDATION: Set Objectives, Goals and Report Progress

We have established Conservation Objectives and will establish specific annual goals for Conservation measures. This will allow us to have (and communicate) a clear platform, form a baseline, and to track and report our progress over time.

We will emphasize our progress toward conservation goals in our annual Greenway Impacts Report as well as regular communications and will:

- a. Communicate conservation projects, goals, milestones and achievements.
- b. Develop system for progress feedback.

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RECOMMENDATION: Expand Community Conservation Programs

We will build upon our current programs and events that center on conservation topics to reach more people in engaging ways:

- a. Expand educational programming including citizen science and similar opportunities.
- b. Increase frequency and regularity of community volunteer projects.
- c. Leverage organizational partnerships when possible to increase capacity.

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RECOMMENDATION: Pilot Conservation Maintenance Programs

With regional partners, we will develop a workforce training program that will introduce and engage young people with the values, techniques, and efforts of conservation. This program will be an opportunity to build on the systems and approach of existing programs, grow the green workforce and create opportunities for shared prosperity among a diversity of audiences.

We will develop an Adopt-a-Greenway Program to bring local communities and groups into agreements to provide volunteer or sponsored participation in greenway clean-ups or light maintenance.

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The background of the slide features a photograph of a maintenance team in a wooded area. Several workers wearing orange hard hats and dark uniforms are visible. One worker is standing near a white pickup truck with its rear door open, which is loaded with various equipment and supplies. The scene is set in a dense forest with many trees and green foliage. A large, semi-transparent 'DRAFT' watermark is oriented diagonally across the center of the image.

OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE

What's the best model to achieve a consistent level of care among many partners, on all greenways?

Great Rivers Greenway was originally set up to build the greenways, while partners (such as a municipality or other agency) would operate and maintain each segment in their area. It's a complex challenge to implement a regional, cohesive system of greenways in an area with 120 municipalities of varying sizes, resources, needs, knowledge, skills and capacity. How can the region rise to this challenge, together?



Why This Matters



Keeping the greenways in good shape is critical to the visitor experience (people's safety and comfort) and the longevity of our collective investment. It also contributes to our region's civic pride and our community's continued confidence in this bold vision for a network of greenways.

What We Heard From You



Overall, most greenway visitors are pleased with their experience, but we do hear about overgrown weeds and aging infrastructure needing repairs. Survey results encouraged us to explore any or all of the solutions — people understand the balance between wanting to keep adding miles and taking care of what's been built. Partners share their frustrations about taking on a new greenway (especially with daily operations, such as a bathroom) to maintain without any new resources.

What We're Doing

We contribute to our partners' efforts where we can with staff time, vendor support and volunteerism, as well as taking a bigger lead to replace signage or step in for catastrophic or emergency repair with a specific reserve fund. We strengthen our partners' capacity through trainings and workshops, and work to ensure resources are distributed equitably because everyone deserves a greenway, regardless of where you are in the region.

What's Next



RECOMMENDATION: Create Criteria For Support

We will develop criteria to help determine how we provide supplemental support to partners that have challenges meeting the desired level of care. These criteria will include specific reference to disadvantaged and disinvested communities, as part of our effort to improve equity across the system.

- Develop and implement criteria to help guide decision-making, beginning with a pilot project or time period to evaluate and refine.
- Evaluate current supplemental funding and staffing levels and adjust to fit the needs of the region, greenways and partners specifically.
- Develop long-term funding needs and strategy to maintain the program.

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RECOMMENDATION: Pilot Caretaking Programs

As referenced in the Conservation section, both the Adopt-A-Greenway program and Workforce Training program would serve this goal as well.

Next steps include researching peer programs across the country for best practices or lessons learned, finding resource and expertise partners and honing in on scope and scale for piloting the work.

These are opportunities to leverage the interest in volunteering and need for jobs, using our regional reach to make sure people have what they need throughout the system.

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RECOMMENDATION: Review Capital Repair Funding

We will review our planned capital repairs program to realistically assess what it can support in the future. Capital repairs generally fall outside the expectations of our partner maintenance agreements. As our system continues to age, we will need to increase funding.

- Finalize maintenance management plans to determine regular maintenance and capital repair costs.
- Develop a plan for how we estimate and budget future projects and their associated costs using data from current projects to help predict.
- Project and evaluate our probable needs over time,
- Consider alternative operating and maintenance funding, possibly endowments, in all capital fundraising project.

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RECOMMENDATION: Strengthen Shared Vision

We strive to maintain a shared vision with all our partners and constituents in the region. This vision needs to include an understanding of how operations and maintenance impact or benefit user experiences and the long term benefits to communities.

- Create a leadership level call to action of all partners in the region, work to develop consensus to undertake what the region told us they wanted and needed.
- Convene facilitated meeting of leaders with a goal of getting commitment of resources and mission.
- Determine which partners need support or additional resources, who can be celebrated and share wins, and how collaboration can increase impact.

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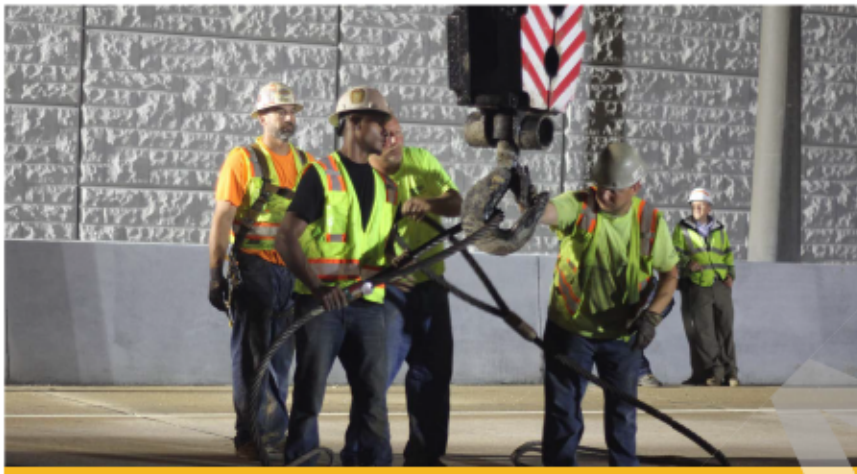
EQUITABLE OUTCOMES

How can we ensure we are maximizing our agency's impact in an equitable way?

As a steward of taxpayer's dollars, Great Rivers Greenway embraces the diversity of our region, proactively creating inclusive public spaces and processes with and for all. We're committed to bringing the vision of a dynamic network of greenways to life in ways that achieve more equitable outcomes. This plan update is an opportunity to advance our existing commitments and identify new ways to be thoughtful about our projects and our process.



Why This Matters



As a publicly funded asset, all community members have ownership in our greenway system. It belongs to the whole community and should benefit all of us — everyone across the region deserves greenways. We foster a more just and equitable community by being more inclusive with our engagement in the design, placement and operation of our greenway system. Through focused and intentional efforts, we can lower historic barriers associated with outdoor access by creating welcoming places and programs.

Focusing on diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) helps us to function more effectively as an organization and better support our communities, operations and decision-making. Diversity of thought promotes creative problem solving and innovation, and helps us serve our neighbors effectively.

What We Heard From You



Achieving equitable outcomes for all was a recurring theme in our work with our advisory committees, focus groups and surveys. These discussions suggest that our role and effort in these areas is respected but not widely known — we **should share our efforts and successes more**. Suggestions included stories in our monthly newsletter, posts on our social media, and periodic updates on our website.

What We're Doing

We have made meaningful progress on implementing our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan. Progress to date: <http://bit.ly/DEIGRG> We included DEI considerations throughout this plan and in this section.



What's Next



RECOMMENDATION: Continue Building Diverse Partnerships

We do our best work in partnership with others—organizations, people, and other agencies. We will continue to seek opportunities to be collaborative in our effort to deliver equitable outcomes.

- a. Build relationships with diverse groups and organizations that can provide insight into their experience of our greenways.
- b. Consider the perspectives of groups like Outdoor Afro, Black People Who Hike, St. Louis Front Runners, Paraquid and others.
- c. Inform our work in each greenway theme to ensure more equitable and inclusive outcomes.
- d. Build on the work of other organizations to expand impact, use and engagement with Great Rivers Greenway.
- e. Engaging with organizations with similar missions to understand how their DEI efforts may be applied to our work.

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RECOMMENDATION: Share our DEI Efforts

We will acknowledge our DEI efforts and successes more explicitly. We will pursue balanced communications that highlight DEI efforts, foster additional engagement and promote greenways as welcoming assets for everyone.

- a. Post or publish regular updates on our progress, highlight key milestones and tell our DEI story.
- b. Calendar these updates to demonstrate that DEI is a Great Rivers Greenway priority.
- c. Draw on principles of Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) rating systems to benchmark and assess progress.
- d. Feature and promote DEI partners and their activities in communications.

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RECOMMENDATION: Enhance Economic Vitality and Equity

We are committed to using our efforts to promote a diverse workforce in our projects. Workforce diversity is critical to a thriving region. We recognize our opportunity to create jobs and economic benefits when a greater diversity of people are employed in creating community benefits.

- a. Leverage the role of a new Equity and Economic Impact Director to retain, attract and engage local residents and businesses to foster inclusive economic growth.
- b. Identify qualified banking institutions with demonstrated focus on equitable outcomes as partners for investment of funds.

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RECOMMENDATION: Diversify Our Contracting, Vendors

We make a concerted effort to be inclusive in contracting practices when hiring planning and design firms. Consultant scoring criteria are used for all consultant selections.

- a. Increasing our efforts in tracking the performance outcomes as projects proceed.
- b. Actively develop a tracking process using monthly consultant invoices.
- c. Increase the accountability of consultant firms with more quantitative data.

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MEASURES OF SUCCESS

How should we be tracking results?

Well into our third decade of building, promoting and sustaining the St. Louis region's greenway network, we have achieved a lot—but recognize there is much work yet to do. Part of that is to evaluate what has worked and how we can continue to achieve greater impact with planning, user experience, conservation, maintenance and equity. Factors to consider include lessons learned, regional growth, changing priorities and trends, and advances in technology that enable us to measure success and prioritize future investment.



Why This Matters



Over twenty years ago, the voters in St. Louis City, St. Louis County and St. Charles County empowered Great Rivers Greenway with the mission to build a system of greenways. As stewards of public resources and community trust, we take this responsibility very seriously and are committed to continually improving our responsiveness, to deliver the highest quality, impactful and equitable greenway experience for as many of our residents as possible. We will use data and technology to measure quality, impact and equity to ensure accountability for the public investment.

What We're Doing

With geographic information systems (GIS) and project management software we have begun to develop a holistic database of greenway assets and are beginning to measure changes that occur as a result of greenway development. These measures are intended to help us better understand and evaluate the potential impact of future greenway investments. Appendix X: Measures of Success, includes a case study demonstration of how these tools can help prioritize future investments for the greatest impact.

What We Heard From You



Great Rivers Greenway must continue to be a responsible steward of public resources and engage with communities to build and maintain greenways for now—and for future generations. We can use new tools and technology to analyze data regarding the performance of greenways and the community, economic, environmental, health and transportation benefits they provide. These same analytic tools can also be used to plan new greenway projects where they will provide the greatest impact for the most people.

What's Next



RECOMMENDATION:

Automated Pedestrian and Cyclist Counts

We will expand our efforts to maintain pedestrian and cyclist count data, which demonstrates the value of a greenway network, quantifies the impact of new infrastructure, and reveals trends in peak traffic.

- Make trail user counts available to partners and local governments to help improve user comfort and provide new amenities where most valued and needed.
- Examine user count patterns for most popular times of day, week and year to effectively program greenway facilities and amenities to support recreation and transportation
- Analyze use patterns to prioritize future greenway expansion as well as activity programming to encourage greenway use

LEARN MORE:
APPENDIX X, PAGE X



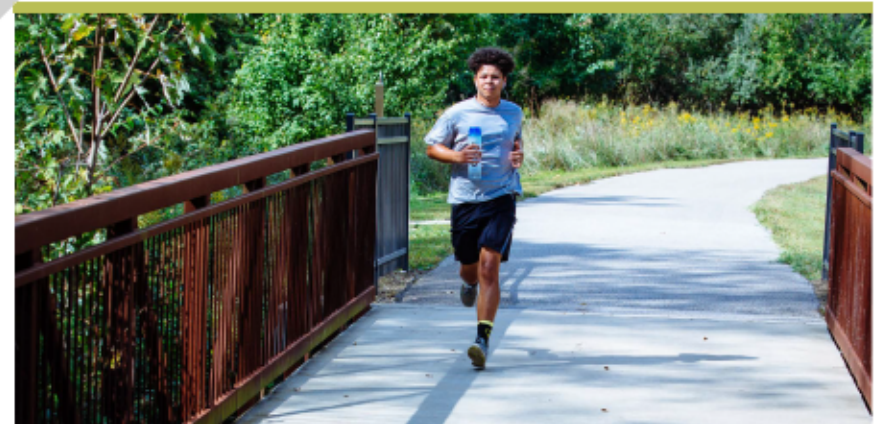
RECOMMENDATION:

Maintain a Greenway Database

We maintain a mapping system, with associated data for each greenway. This includes GIS mapping with numerous features and parameters identified in our asset inventory.

- Archive baseline data to monitor and analyze changes and possible impacts over time.
- Establish data categories and collect relevant data that may illustrated impacts on community, environment, economy, health and transportation.
- Expand use of our GIS data and analysis tools and integration with our project management software platform to build more accurate predictive models to prioritize future greenway investments.

LEARN MORE:
APPENDIX X, PAGE X





Tracking Success

Applying the evaluation tools (see Appendix X) as preliminary analysis provides a clear demonstration of greenway benefits across multiple categories. As new greenways are planned, the evaluation tool can be applied to show potential and expected impacts against baseline data.



COMMUNITY AND EQUITABLE ACCESS

- 127,000 residents live within 1/4 mile of existing greenways, a 186% increase in access since 2010 (from both new greenways and population growth near greenways)
- The racial composition of the population near greenways closely matches that of the region, with significant improvement in equitable distribution since 2010.



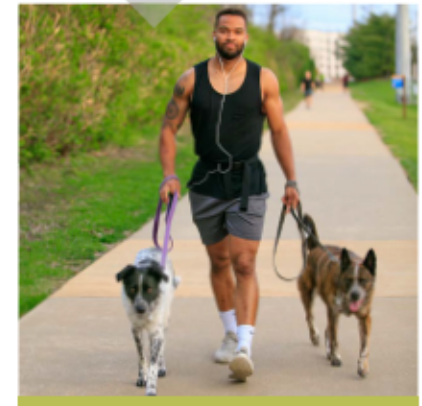
CONSERVATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL MEASURES

- Existing trees within the watershed of the greenways capture 15,700 tons of carbon annually.
- Air pollution benefits provided by the existing greenways are estimated to have a value of \$3.2 million annually.
- Total annual "ecosystem services" (benefits created by natural systems) are estimated at \$32.3 million annually.



ECONOMIC VITALITY

- Greenway development in the past five years totals \$228 million in regional spending.
- Greenway development in the past five years has resulted in \$80 million in personal earnings and 1200 jobs.



PUBLIC HEALTH

- Completing all currently planned greenways will result in an estimated reduction of 152 million vehicle miles travelled per year
- Reduced vehicle miles traveled would equate to 60,200 metric tons of CO₂ saved and \$3 million in carbon cost avoided.
- Reduced vehicle miles travelled would result in over \$32 million in avoided injuries and deaths for the existing greenway network.



THANK YOU *for voting to invest in this legacy for future generations.*

THANK YOU *for trusting us with your hard-earned tax dollars.*

THANK YOU *for giving us crucial feedback.*

THANK YOU *for voting again to invest in greenways.*

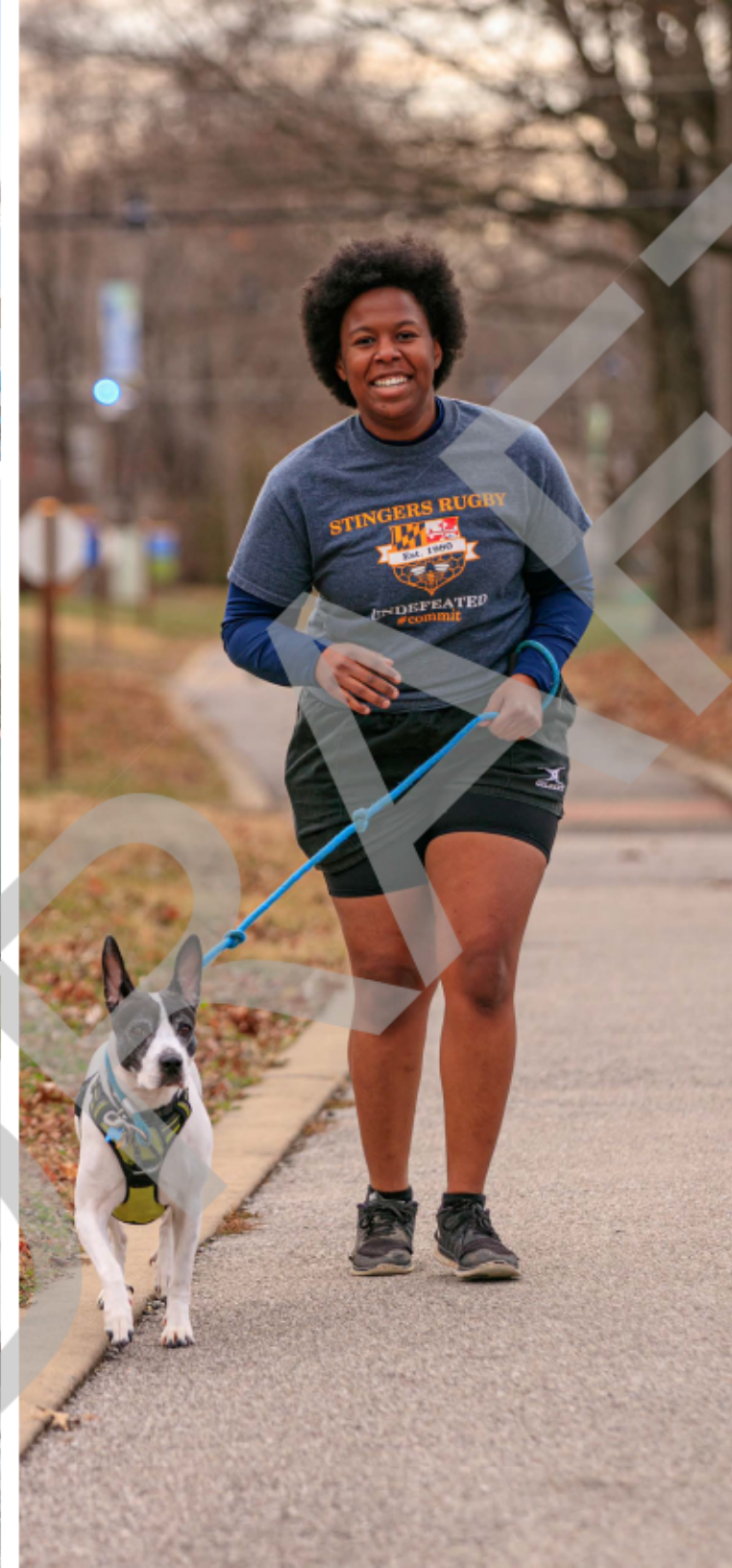
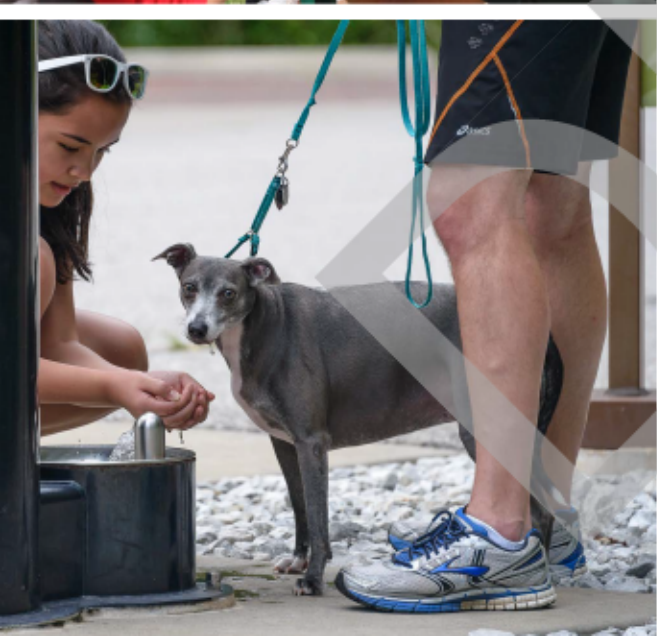
THANK YOU *for supporting the Great Rivers Greenway Foundation with your philanthropic donations.*

THANK YOU *for taking a walk, for riding your bike, for going for a run, for breathing fresh air on the greenways.*

THANK YOU *for volunteering, for reporting conditions, for asking questions, for sending pictures, for sharing stories.*

THANK YOU *for thinking about how you can help us in the next five years.*

THANK YOU *for making this amazing region a more vibrant place to live, work and play!*



Great Rivers Greenway

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