

Section V

Comments from MKT Neighbors

At the end of the questionnaire, an open ended question was asked to respondents: “What would you say to people who are concerned about a trail being established near their homes? (Or other comments)”.

Ninety-eight respondents (66%) commented. To ensure reliability, dual coders analyzed the text for emergent themes and content analysis recorded the frequency that each theme emerged.

Most respondents had a positive feedback in the comment section indicating they had no concerns and expressed love for the trail. “Asset” is a word frequently used to describe the MKT Trail. People enjoyed having access to the trail, which offered opportunities of enjoying nature, outdoor recreation and convenient and safe transportation. Some indicated that the trail provided individual/family benefits for quality of life and health and provided social connections. A few respondents had some concerns and some

provided suggestions to potential trail neighbors and the managing agency. The frequency and percentage of each emerging theme is presented in Table 1.



Nine themes emerged related to: 1) general positive feedback; 2) community/neighborhood asset; 3) individual/family benefits; 4) enjoy access to the trail; 5) enjoy nature and outdoor recreation; 6) convenient and safe transportation; 7) social connections 8) suggestions; 9) concerns. Each of the themes is presented below with example respondent quotes.

Table 1. Frequency and Percent of Themes from Respondents’ Comments

Themes	frequency	%
Theme 1: General positive feedback	37	32%
Theme 2: Community/neighborhood asset	19	17%
Theme 3: Individual/family benefits	11	10%
Theme 4: Enjoy access to the trail	10	9%
Theme 5: Enjoy nature and outdoor recreation	11	10%
Theme 6: Convenient and safe transportation	5	4%
Theme 7: Social connections	4	4%
Theme 8: Suggestions	11	10%
Theme 9: Concerns	6	5%
Total	114	

➤ **THEME 1: GENERAL POSITIVE FEEDBACK/NO CONCERNS**

The majority of the responses were very positive in their feedback. Most MKT neighbors expressed their love for the trail and indicated that they have not had any problems living near it. This theme emerged 37 times. Below are some examples from respondent quotes:

"I've never had disadvantage and I don't think I'll ever be able to live without it again."

"We had initial resistance, but today we couldn't find one person who is opposed."

"Best thing that could happen to them."

"The positives far outweigh any negatives."

"Don't be concerned. You would love it."



➤ **THEME 2: COMMUNITY/NEIGHBORHOOD ASSET**

Many respondents mentioned the word “asset” to describe the MKT Trail. They expressed pride for having the trail and see the trail as an asset to the community. A couple of respondents mentioned that they would “show off” the MKT Trail to out-of-town visitors. This theme emerged 19 times. Below are some examples:

"... We like to show it off to out-of-town visitors."

"It is a community asset that makes Columbia a better community."

"It's been a pleasure, fun and great community asset."

"Make it happen! It is a great asset."



➤ **THEME 3: INDIVIDUAL/FAMILY BENEFITS (QUALITY OF LIFE & HEALTH, ETC.)**

A portion of respondents mentioned the trail has offered benefits such as boosting quality of life and providing health benefits to themselves and their families. This theme emerged 11 times. Here are some examples:

"...and I get to exercise, relax."

"Our quality of life is much improved because of trail."

"Easy access to trails like MKT improves opportunities for quality fitness."

"Access to the trail has tremendous positive impact on our family's quality of life."

➤ **THEME 4: ENJOY ACCESS TO THE TRAIL**

Respondents commented on their enjoyment of having the easy access to the MKT Trail and enjoyed the proximity. This theme emerged 10 times. Examples of respondent quotes are listed:

"Access has made me use the trail more."

"We love having access to it."

"It's nice to have the trail nearby."

"...We love the trail and bought our home because of the close proximity to trail."



➤ **THEME 5: ENJOY NATURE AND OUTDOOR RECREATION**

Some respondents mentioned their enjoyment of the nature and outdoor recreation in their comments. They expressed their enjoyment of being able to connect to nature and have outdoor recreational opportunities such as walking, running and biking. This theme emerged 11 times. Here are some quotes:

"It provides wonderful recreational opportunities."

"We love hiking, biking running and viewing nature there."

"Learn to enjoy the out of doors again, like when we were young."

"It greatly increases our enjoyment of the outdoors."

➤ **THEME 6: CONVENIENT AND SAFE TRANSPORTATION**

This theme emerged 5 times. Respondents indicated that the trail provided safe and convenient transportation that enabled them to go to other places. Below are some quotes:

"It is our road to the Katy and biking to Rocheport and Hartsburg. I never want to live anywhere else!!!"

"Much safer to walk (maybe hit by a biker-not a car) on trail than ride a bike on unsafe bike trails on roads - especially at night."

"Living near the trail allows me to get downtown, work, crowded city events without paying for gas, parking meters (tickets). There's always a parking space for my bike."

"The trail provides a way to get around Columbia without the use of a car. Driving during peak traffic times, it is often faster to take the trail to get to places such as MU."

➤ **THEME 7: SOCIAL CONNECTIONS**

A few respondents mentioned social connections on the trail such as meeting friends, knowing neighbors and interacting with users. Since this theme emerged 4 times, all quotes are presented below:



"It is a good place to interact with people, frequent users or complete strangers."

"The trail has improved safety in our neighborhood because we know our neighbors better."

"...and meet friends too!"

"Get involved with opportunity of trail with special friends."

➤ **THEME 8: SUGGESTIONS**

Some respondents provided suggestions to potential trail neighbors and the managing agency. Suggestions to potential neighbors included building fences, picking up trash when they use the trail, and recognizing having a trail is a rare opportunity. Some suggested that the potential trail neighbors should not be concerned because trail users would not bother the property. Some advice to trail management agencies includes having trail patrols, paving the trail surface, and not putting up electrical lines. This theme emerged 11 times and all quotes are listed below:

"Don't fear. The majority of people who use the trail are not concerned with bothering the property by the trail. They are there to enjoy the trail."

"Enjoy it; know it is rare to have."

"We are farther from the trail than most and have a natural environmental barrier of various trees and plants to protect our privacy."

"We installed a fence along the trail to prevent deer from entering our property; this has reduced or eliminated concerns about safety and security."

"Build a fence, or plant an impenetrable tree and brush line."

"Use it often, pick up any trash that you come across."

"Trail patrols on regular daily basis and phones on trail."

"...Would suggest some patrols of trails by bike police since there are occasional homeless people."

"A very small percentage of Columbia residents use the trail regularly. Those individuals (including me) should bear more of the maintenance costs than nonusers."

"Lack of paved surface makes the trail unusable 3 or 4 months a year."

"I would oppose the electrical lines that are proposed near the trail."



➤ **THEME 9: CONCERNS**

Although a majority of responses were positive about the MKT Trail, a few mentioned some concerns such as having strangers passing by and noise on the trail. However, these respondents indicated that they enjoyed living near the trail but would have concerns about these problems if their house adjoined the trail. Concerns emerged 6 times. All quotes in this theme are listed below:

"Our house doesn't back to the trail, but I would not buy a house where random strangers were constantly passing - especially with young children."

“It will bring in strangers and make your neighborhood less safe and less private.”

“Have people crossing property looking for trail access.”

“Totally depends on closeness/proximity. I am aware of some thefts/ concerns by friends who adjoin the trail.”

“I would have concerns. You probably do not have a choice. I cannot use my deck - too noisy. It would help a little if they would put the benches facing a different direction than my house.”

“The process needs to listen to concerns and that can change the design plans to

accommodate everyone's concerns and desires. My neighborhood worked really hard to develop an acceptable plan. It was not helpful when people who didn't live in the neighborhood push their agenda of more trails.”

