

COLUMBIA'S TRAIL SYSTEM

With over 50 miles of trails throughout the city, Columbia, MO offers a wide variety of community fitness and nature trails for walking, jogging, and biking. By providing these trails that connect neighborhoods, community parks, greenbelts, and natural wetland areas across the city, Columbia encourages active, healthy lifestyles and certainly lives up to Missouri's Best Trail State distinction.¹



REFERENCES

¹ Best Trails State Award. (2013, April 16). American Trails. Retrieved from <http://www.americantrails.org/awards/2013awards/state13.html>

² Bai, H. & Wilhelm Stanis, S.A. (2013). MKT Trail residents survey technical report: Impact of the MKT Trail on nearby property owners. Columbia, MO: University of Missouri, Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism.

³ Consumer's Survey on Smart Choices for Home Buyers (2002, April). National Association of Realtors, National Association of Homebuilders. Retrieved from http://www.powershow.com/view/ae4b0-OWViZ/Consumers_Survey_on_Smart_Choices_for_Home_Buyers_powerpoint_ppt_presentation

⁴ City of Vancouver Bicycle Plan 1999: Reviewing the Past, Planning the Future. Retrieved from http://velobg.org/docs/Vancouver_1999_bike_plan.pdf

⁵ Seattle Engineering Department (1987). Evaluation of Burke-Gilman Trail's Effect on Property Values and Crime. Seattle, WA. Office for Planning.

⁶ U.S. Department of Transportation (1993). Case Study No. 15: The environmental benefits of bicycling and walking. Federal Highway Administration. Retrieved from <http://atfiles.org/files/pdf/BikePedBen.pdf>

⁷ U.S. Census Bureau (2014). Modes less traveled- bicycling and walking to work in the United States: 2008-2012. Retrieved from <http://www.census.gov/prod/2014pubs/acs-25.pdf>



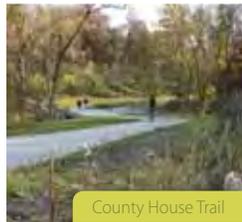
Scott's Branch Trail



Stephens Lake Park Trail



MKT Trail



County House Trail

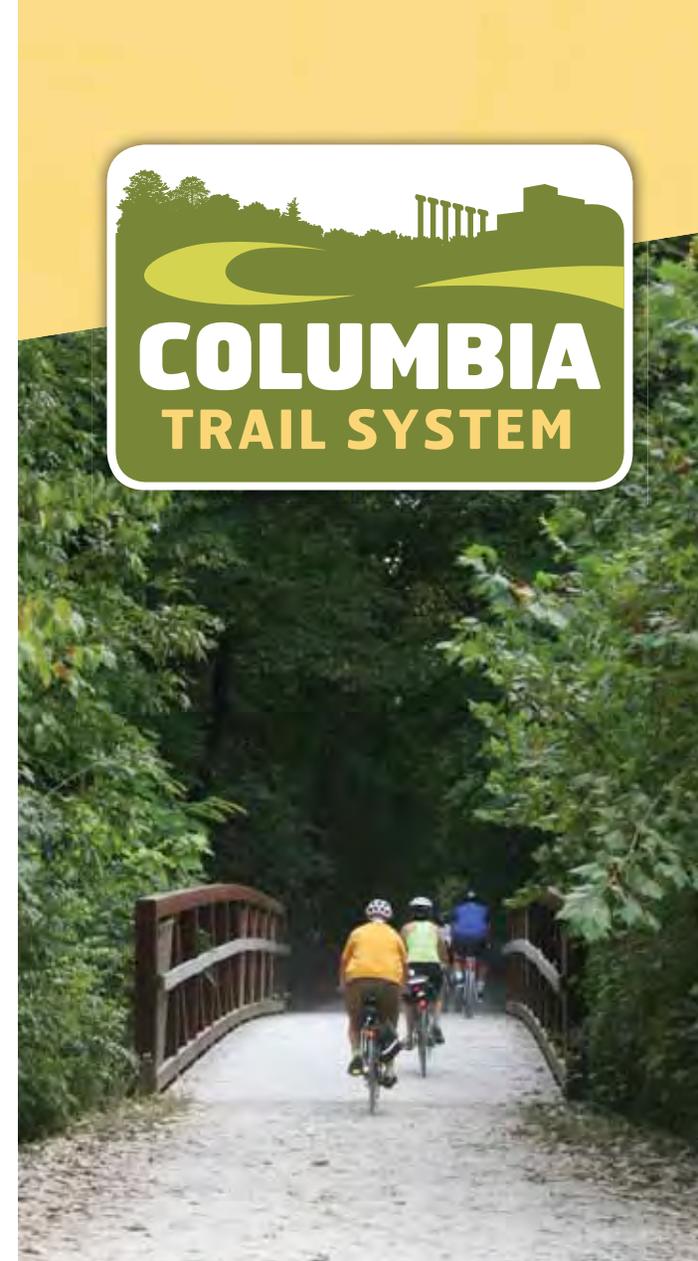


Bear Creek Trail

For more information regarding trails in Columbia, visit www.GoColumbiaMo.com (Search: trails).



1 South 7th St.
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COMMUNITY BENEFITS

Trail Information for
Property Owners

BENEFITS OF BEING TRAIL-ADJACENT

Can living near a trail increase my property value?

YES. Recently, a local survey found that 71% of property owners near the MKT Trail believed the trail's proximity would make it easier to sell their property.² Also, 77% of those who had bought their property during or after the MKT Trail development indicated that the trail had a positive influence on their purchase decision.² In fact, many local real estate agents emphasize nearby property's proximity to a trail as a selling point.



"An excellent location with easy access to MU by trail..."



"...the MKT is an easy walk..."



"Neighborhood surrounded by beautiful Hinkson Creek Nature Trail."

What other benefits are there to living near a trail?

Because trails provide opportunities for fitness, recreation, active transportation, appreciation of nature, and social interaction, a majority of Columbia respondents (89%) reported that **living near a trail increased their overall quality of life.**²

Community enrichment is also seen as an asset that trails can provide. For example, in a 2002 survey of recent home buyers, **trails ranked as the second most important community amenity**, second only to highway access.³

Transportation is also an important value-adding consideration for neighbors and users of trails. Specifically, neighborhood trails allow for safe, convenient, and active transportation within the community, and according to a Vancouver opinion survey, 85% of realtors feel that bicycle routes are an important community amenity.⁴



ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF TRAILS

The simple fact is that trails allow for more opportunities for walking and biking, the two major energy-efficient, non-polluting forms of transportation in the United States. In fact, the amount of auto miles displaced annually in the U.S. by walking and biking is estimated to be between 7.6 and 28.1 billion, and while this is only around 1% of total vehicle miles traveled each year, this is equivalent to displacing the consumption of 420-1,590 million gallons of petroleum and the release of 4.2-15.5 million tons of CO₂ emissions annually.⁶



These figures, together with U.S. census data showing Columbia, MO among the top 15 cities with populations between 100,000 and 200,000 in the country utilizing active transportation (i.e., walking to work), well above the national average⁷, means that the environmental benefits of easing our dependence on automobiles through trail development will be felt throughout the Columbia community. At the same time, incorporating nature into residents' regular commute will help promote local conservation efforts and preservation of these wild areas to be enjoyed by all.

ADDRESSING POTENTIAL CONCERNS

Does living near a trail create more crime in my neighborhood?

NO. Although theft and vandalism are traditionally among the largest concerns of home owners near trails, the local MU study found that a vast majority (93%) of property owners living near the MKT Trail reported that the trail had not increased thefts, vandalism, or other crimes on their property. Furthermore, when asked about how the nearby trail had affected the overall safety of the neighborhood, 95% of residents agreed that the trail had not decreased neighborhood safety.² A study of a neighborhood trail in Seattle, WA found that homes bordering the trail actually had lower rates of burglary and vandalism than the neighborhood average.⁵

Will I be held liable for accidents on my property due to trail users?

NO. Whether your property backs up to a Columbia trail or is partially leased through an easement agreement, you as the property owner are not held liable for accidents that occur on your property due to trail users. Under MO Revised Statutes (Ch. 258 Sec. 100), "any person owning land adjoining the trail shall be immune from civil liability for injuries to person or property of persons trespassing or entering such person's land without implied or expressed permission, invitation, or consent."

The Missouri legislature has enacted this recreational land use statute to encourage owners and managers to allow public access for recreation use on their lands.



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

~ Columbia resident discussing their property's proximity to the MKT Trail²