

CONNECTING TRAILS, CONNECTING COMMUNITIES *Connecting the Erie to Ohio Trail and the Little Miami Scenic Trail to Downtown Cincinnati*

LEADERSHIP CINCINNATI - CLASS XXIX
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The Vision

Two of the longest uninterrupted bike trails in the United States (starting in London and Springfield, Ohio) currently end in Milford, Ohio. By the end of 2006, they will end in Newtown. And by 2008, they will end within shouting distance of the Lunken Airport Bike Trail. With cooperation and effort from the governments of Cincinnati and Hamilton County, these trails can lead to Downtown Cincinnati by the end of 2008.

Completing both a narrow bikeway over the Little Miami River and filling a gap in the trail from Lunken Airport to Downtown Cincinnati would result in over 115 miles of uninterrupted scenic, largely waterside, trail leading to Downtown Cincinnati.

The momentum generated by trails of this scope leading to Downtown Cincinnati would provide the impetus for (1) extending the trail along the Ohio River waterfront through western Cincinnati and (2) communities along the trail adding their own spurs to connect to a bicycle parkway into Downtown Cincinnati.

The Impact and Opportunity

Values of properties near bike/pedestrian trails can appreciate by 5% or more, which leads to increased property tax revenues.

With annual traffic of 1 million or more on the trail leading to Downtown Cincinnati, economic development opportunities abound for restaurants, retail, and entertainment on and near the extended trail.

Both established Cincinnati businesses and businesses that Cincinnati wants to recruit rely on their ability to attract and retain talented workers. Talented workers have many choices where to locate and they gravitate to cities that promote active and healthy lifestyles. Trails promote these lifestyles, lend vibrancy to the areas around them, and serve as excellent recruiting tools for businesses.

Other cities with extensive trail systems include: Pittsburgh (a downtown waterfront trail with estimated annual traffic of over 2 million people); Indianapolis (estimated annual traffic of 2 million people); Boston (estimated annual traffic of 2 million people); and Seattle (estimated annual traffic of 1 million people).

An Investment

\$2.6 million in Federal funds have been approved for the trail to Downtown Cincinnati. Access to these *Federal funds requires the City of Cincinnati to approve a match of approximately \$600,000 toward this project.*

The Ohio River Way, a nonprofit corporation that is working toward completion of an Ohio River bike/pedestrian trail from Madison, Indiana through Downtown Cincinnati to Maysville, Kentucky, *has committed to raise \$3,000,000 in private funds* for the trail to Downtown Cincinnati. This fundraising campaign will start in June, 2006.

Estimated costs for the bikeway over the Little Miami River to the Lunken Airport Bike Trail amount to *\$4.5 million.*

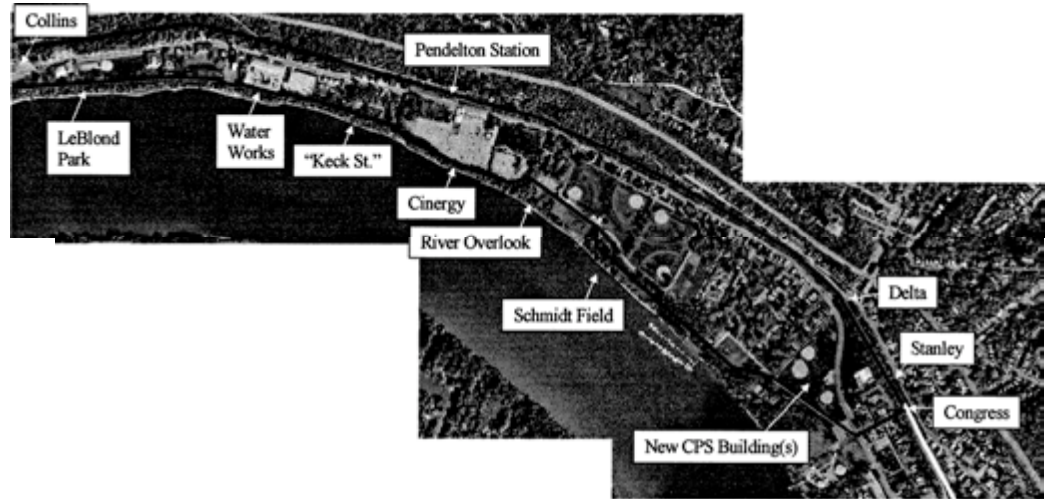
The Options

Options for permanently connecting the Lunken Airport Bike Trail to Downtown Cincinnati include:

- **OPTION 1:** Pave (until potentially needed for commuter rail service) the long dormant northern track of the Oasis Rail Line for the 4 mile trail segment from Lunken Airport to Downtown Cincinnati. Estimated costs for completing this 4 mile segment amount to \$8.2 million.
- **OPTION 2:** The City of Cincinnati acquires necessary easement rights for the approximately 3 miles needed to complete a trail next to the Ohio River into Downtown. Once such easement rights are obtained, complete necessary engineering and construction of the riverside trail.
- Under either option, the Cincinnati Recreation Commission, Cincinnati Park Board, and Hamilton County Park Board would enter into a joint operating agreement to maintain and operate the trail and its supporting restrooms, concessions,

Two Alignment Options (Rail vs. River Path)

- (1b) Carrell to Congress (0.6 mi)
- (2a) Congress St. (0.1 mi)
- (2b) Congress to Delta (0.2 mi, **Funded**)
- (2c) Delta to Corbin, (0.7 mi, **Existing**)
- (2d) Corbin to Lumber, River Trail, (0.6 miles)
- (2e) Lumber to Collins, River Trail, (0.4 miles)
- (2alt) Proposed Oasis Line Trail (2mi, RR)



How you can help:

- Join BikePAC (Cincinnati Bicycle/Pedestrian Advocacy Committee) 513-352-5305.
- Support Ohio River Way (www.ohioriverway.org)
- Contact Cincinnati City Council Members and other Leaders (www.cincinnati-oh.gov)
- Enjoy the trails in your area

For additional information regarding the **Connecting Trails – Connecting Communities** Project contact any of the following:

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