



On August 20, 2019 Great Rivers Greenway, the Missouri Department of Transportation, and the cities of Fenton, Kirkwood, and Sunset Hills held the a joint input meeting to receive feedback on the Interstate 44 project to build a greenway connection on the new Interstate 44 bridge over the Meramec River.

Attendees were given the option to share their contact information or remain anonymous when giving feedback. Below are the public comments that were received during the meeting.

Anonymous Comment:	Make sure you consider the flooding in Emmenegger and how the bank is eroding with each storm event. That proposed parking lot will surely be under water.
Anonymous Comment:	The existing wildlife is important – we need alternatives to asphalt. Bikes are legal on roadways, we’ve had enough development. Consider washouts and replacement costs. I’m in favor of the bridge but oppose future trails, oppose Busch development, etc. Long-term sustaining our environment is more important than bike paths.
Name: Contact Information:	██████████ ██████████
Comment:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If possible, add water source. • This is exciting! S someone who lives in Kirkwood, it’s a much closer connection for me to get to the west side of the Meramec greenway. It also provides a start to the idea of connecting Minnie Ha Ha to Emenegger of the Fenton side without going through old Fenton. • Anything we can do to help?

Name: Contact Information:	██████████ N/A
Comment:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I don’t believe the proposed bike trail across the Meramec will significantly benefit the citizens of Fenton or Kirkwood much at all. It’s quite a drive for Kwd. residents to get to. It’s far from where Fentonians bike or walk, usually starting at the City Park. <p>What are the cyclists going to do once they arrive at Laumeier? Turn around, I guess. Its pure fiction to think anybody would ride on-the-road in Sunset Hills to Grant’s Trail without shoulders, see Kennerly Road.</p> <p>The alternative that would benefit many greatly is to build a connector from Unger Park to Greentree, since both the Greentree/Mo141.</p> <p>Once issue that us worth mentioning is that Unger Park is “maintained” by St. Louis County and last I checked the trail from the back parking lit remains covered deeply by sand. The county does a good job maintaining Simpson but appears to have given up on Unger.</p> <p>All of that said, bike/walking trails expansion is important to keep up with other suburban areas in St. Charles County and Madison County, Illinois.</p>

Name:	[REDACTED]
Contact Information:	N/A
Comment:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Please build. We need a safe way to cross Meramec River!

Name:	[REDACTED]
Contact Information:	[REDACTED]
Comment:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If possible, add water source.• This is exciting! As someone who lives in Kirkwood, it's a much closer connection for me to get to the west side of the Meramec greenway. It also provides a start to the idea of connecting Minnie Ha Ha to Emenegger on the Fenton side without going through old Fenton.• Anything we can do to help?

**Letter
Submitted:**

Aug. 20, 2019

44 Bridge Trail way and Surrounding Conservation Areas:

The new trail link between Fenton River Trail, Powder Valley Conservation Area, Sunset Hills and Emmenegger Park should be a great boost to the peoples disengagement from work and the stresses that goes with living in a developed environment and offer a quiet escape. To that end, it is paramount to protect some of the gems that this area has to offer.

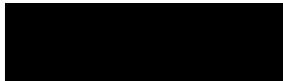
Preserve Emmenegger Park as is - I do not know of any other park in the City of St. Louis, including Forest Park or in St. Louis County that possesses such an undisturbed presence as Emmenegger Park. It is unique in its natural wild terrain. We need to protect this oasis from "civilization", need a true woodland forest experience in an otherwise much manicured and developed state of park areas. To protect this valuable ambiance the following are among the directives that should be followed:



- No new development Emmenegger, no connective trails envisioned, no polishing up entry or trails within this park
- No bicycling into Emmenegger. Beside signage prohibiting cycling within the park, preventative entry bars should be used to discourage people from trying to bring bicycles into the trail area, at the bridge bottleneck for starters
- No staged parking for the new connectivity to the trail system being developed. Parking will be an issue. It is one thing to say parking for Emmenegger use only and another for people to obey signage. Parking is available in Sunset, Fenton and Powder Valley.
- Please do not let Emmenegger get "updated" and lost in a shuffle "for the better good" or we will loose one of the few remaining areas that are isolating when entering, quiet, undisturbed, dark from forest and wild. It can take one out of all the world we normally live and put us into a one on one relation with nature.

Trails and connections should be designed as natural and environment friendly pathways. Designs should not become barriers to the movement of the local animal populations. I have heard that the Sunset Hills trail connection to the 44 Bridge trail connector is just the opposite of what might be considered natural and environmentally friendly. Concrete walkways and walls moves our ambiance back towards our busy civilized world and further away from why most of us go to a trail/park. More importantly, it will disrupt the ecosystems in its proximity.

Recommendations:

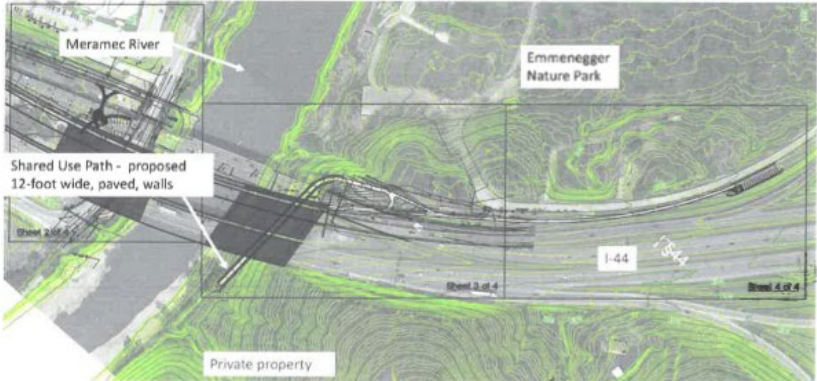
- Work with conservationists to design the least invasive trails and connectors with an eye to low maintenance, as high maintenance can also be invasive.



Name: Contact Information:	[REDACTED]
Letter Submitted:	<p style="text-align: center;">St. Louis Recreational Cyclists</p>  <p>August 20, 2019</p> <p>To: MoDot, Great Rivers Greenway, Cities of Crestwood, Fenton, Sunset Hills and Valley Park</p> <p>I am writing on behalf of the 170 members of the St. Louis Recreational Cyclists in support of the proposed addition of a shared bike/ped path on the new bridge spanning the Meramec River. This will create more enjoyable, safe and healthy bicycling and walking opportunities.</p> <p>STLRC depends on the region's system of connected bike paths for its ride program. Among the most popular is the path connecting Creve Coeur Lake County Park with the state's Katy Trail and other biking opportunities in St. Charles County. This connection was made possible with the inclusion of a dedicated bike/ped path on the Page Avenue Extension. Other bridge bike pathways popular with our members include the McKinley Bridge, the Old Chain of Rocks Bridge and the new Clark Bridge, all spanning the Mississippi River and linking cyclists to Madison County Transit's 125-mile trail system and other Illinois communities. These bridge connections are essential to our weekly group rides.</p> <p>Missing from these interstate and intrastate bridge links is a bicycle-accessible bridge across the Meramec River. Such a link would greatly improve access to our region's many recreational and cultural attractions along the I-44 corridor such as Koesterling, Simpson, and Lone Elk Parks and Castlewood State Park.</p> <p>Connecting trails and providing new trailheads, restrooms and benches will be a welcome addition. The bridge will allow senior citizens as well as families to more safely enjoy this area of St. Louis County. Other nearby trails such as Grant's Trail are increasing in popularity, demonstrating the need to continue to develop areas for citizens to enjoy.</p> <p>For more information on STLRC's programs and events I invite you to visit our website www.stlrc.org</p> <p>Sincerely, Faye Holdenried, STLRC President</p> 

Name: Contact Information:	N/A N/A
Comment:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am strongly opposed to trail development on the east side of the Meramec River. It is one of the last remaining nature bluffs in one area. It is also a waste of public money for a recreational use when public roadways, bridges, and sidewalks are crumbling all around us. The wildlife can't speak but we speak for them. The proposed trail will destroy their habitat. Shame on humans who destroy our natural world so someone can ride their bike to a new area. GRG and MoDOT may have too much money and may need to change.

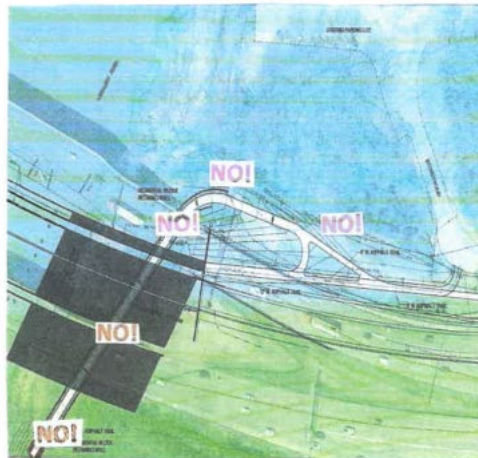
Name: Contact Information:	[REDACTED]
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Letter Submitted: Page 1 of 6	<p>STATEMENT: We have no problem with bike lanes on the new Hwy 44/Meramec River bridges. The project has no environmental liabilities, and we were originally told the bike lanes would help save the east side of the river from bike trail development.</p> <p>When plans were released, we were shocked to see a trail spur underneath the east side bridges:</p>  <p>Also called a "river overlook" or "river access", other planning maps and project RFQ presentations by engineering firms clearly indicated this trail spur is really a Trojan horse or "sleeper cell" to accommodate future east riverfront bike trail construction.</p> <p>Emmenegger Nature Park to the north and the Sunset Hills bluff forest to the south are unique relics of Ozark riparian habitat. 400+ species have been recorded at Emmenegger. Probably more at the Sunset Hills bluff forest, as it has been left undeveloped. The "trail spur" would rob wildlife of the critical link between these two natural areas, which together form the last and only bird-wildlife mobility corridor from the Meramec River to the Mississippi.</p> <p>We would like to see Emmenegger Nature Park and the Sunset Hills bluff forest preserved for nature and passive recreational uses (hiking, bird watching, nature education/ appreciation, etc) as a "Meramec River Bird-Wildlife Conservation Corridor." NO RIVERFRONT BIKE TRAIL.</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>
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SAVE EMMENEGGER PARK SAY NO TO THE TRAIL, NO TO THE TRAIL SPUR

Come to the Open House at Sunset Hills Community Center (3939 S. Lindbergh) August 20, 6pm to 8pm, and voice your opposition to the alignment of the Shared Use trail on Meramec River's east side that includes a trail spur/river access/overlook. The spur has no purpose except to connect the bridge trail to one planned for the east side of the river in a sensitive wildlife corridor.

That spur would be built underneath the new bridges. The partners and design team want biking/hiking access all through the steep terraces along the Meramec north and south of I-44. They've obscured reasons for this spur and show a lack of consideration for nature along this stretch of the river. The connectivity of the environment in this area is more important than any future trail connectivity. Any scenic overlook or any access to the river are just excuses to add another small link to a plan for greenway trails no matter what. We can have access to the river and be good stewards of nature—by keeping an important corridor: for the eagles and hawks, egrets and herons, for the frogs and beaver and songbirds, for the old growth trees, wildflowers, and native plants and the way they sustain wildlife. All without a trail on the east side, or a trail that doesn't connect to anything. Tell them: **"No trail spur!"**





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**NO bike trail through Emmenegger Nature Park and the
Sunset Hills bluff forest!**

Preserve the east riverfront as a "Meramec River bird-wildlife conservation corridor" for native species and healthy, low-impact passive uses - hiking, walking, bird watching, nature education and appreciation. **DON'T BULLDOZE and PAVE OVER this relic of Ozark riverine habitat** - old giant trees, long established wildflower colonies, extensive butterfly host and nectar plants, nests, dens and burrows, habitat for hawks, owls, eagles, kites, egrets, herons, wild turkeys, kingfishers and pileated woodpeckers, bats, turtles, salamanders, snakes, lizards, foxes, muskrats, beaver, woodchucks, mink, deer, migratory songbirds, etc, unique geological features, a natural scenic asset for kayakers and canoeists, and beautiful unspoiled scenic Hwy 44 entry into St. Louis.

---respect Kirkwood's Emmenegger Nature Park mission statement:

"The mission of Emmenegger Nature Park is to provide a place where visitors, utilizing the park's trail system, may respectfully study, observe and learn about birds, wildlife and native species, through preservation and restoration of the park's natural habitats."

---respect voters' trust in Prop C, regional tenth-of-a-cent funding source for Great Rivers Greenway projects and Municipal Parks Grant Commission grants:

Proposition C, November 2000:

Shall there be organized in the County of St. Louis, State of Missouri, a metropolitan park and recreation district for the purposes of improving water quality, increasing park safety, providing community trails, improving, restoring and expanding parks, providing disabled and expanded public access to recreational areas, preserving natural lands for wildlife and maintaining other recreational grounds within the boundaries of such proposed metropolitan district, and shall St. Louis County join such other Counties of St. Charles, Franklin, Jefferson, Lincoln and Warren and the City of St. Louis that approve the formation of such a district in their respective city and counties to form one metropolitan district to be known as the "Metropolitan Park and Recreation District" with funding authority not to exceed one-tenth of one cent sales taxation, subject to an independent annual audit, with fifty percent of such revenue going to metropolitan district and fifty percent being returned to St. Louis County for local park improvements, all as authorized by the County Council of St. Louis County pursuant to Ordinance No. 19,093, erected on the 15th day of June 2000.

Be fair. Bike the west side. Save the east side.

DON'T PAVE BOTH SIDES OF THE RIVER.



SAY NO TO TRAIL SPUR/"RIVER ACCESS"/"RIVER OVERLOOK" UNDERNEATH EAST HWY 44 BRIDGES:



Trail spur/"river overlook" site at 20 ft "moderate" flooding on 5/25/19.
The river crested at 44.5 ft in 2015.

---public access beneath the bridges is a waste of \$420,000+ taxpayer money. It's just an unsightly view of bridge supports and could be subject to flooding liabilities and maintenance.

---it would rob birds and wildlife of the critical corridor LINK between Emmenegger and the Sunset Hills bluff forest, the LAST AND ONLY wildlife mobility corridor from the Meramec to the Mississippi.

---a "river overlook" is unnecessary - river bluffs are more scenic - viewable from the west (Fenton) bike trail and from bike lanes on the new bridges.

---"river access" is unnecessary - the river is accessible at nearby sites upstream, downstream and directly across the river.

---**planning maps show the REAL intent is a trail connect for future riverfront bike trail expansion from Hwy 30 to Greentree Park.**

STOP IT NOW - SAY NO to the TRAIL SPUR!

