



Safe Routes to Parks Pilot Sites

Abbott Park and Lake Tuskegee, Tuskegee Parks and Recreation, Tuskegee, AL

Tuskegee is a rural town of less than 9,000 and is an important place in African-American history. Yet, this small town now faces high rates of childhood obesity and adult hypertension and diabetes. The Alabama Department of Transportation is investing in sidewalks improvements and wheelchair access along highways that run through downtown Tuskegee. This pilot project will capitalize on these improvements by connecting them to the three largest recreational areas in Tuskegee, Abbott Park, Henderson Park, and Lake Tuskegee to ensure that residents have safe spaces to be active.

Ashely Park, New Bedford Parks Recreation and Beaches, New Bedford, MA

Ashley Park, located near one of the poorest neighborhoods in New Bedford, sits in an environmental justice area, is adjacent to a business district, across from an Elementary School, serves as a summer meals site, and hosts regular programming for older adults and the Council on Aging. Unfortunately while the rest of Massachusetts has experienced a decrease in traffic accidents by 9%, New Bedford has seen an alarming increase of 30.4%, including 86 accidents with pedestrians, and 36 with cyclists. As New Bedford redesigns Ashley Park, the Action Framework will be used to engage local residents, increase pedestrian safety, and direct the large number of pedestrians walking by the park to utilize the space for physical activity and community gathering.

August Wilson Park, Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy, Pittsburgh, PA

The Hill District neighborhood of Pittsburgh is a case study of the harmful effects of some past urban renewal projects. Currently the neighborhood is 92% African-American and 67% make less than \$25,000. In recent years, investment has begun to revitalize the Hill District neighborhood and return of a vibrant, thriving community is the community's goal. In 2005, a consortium of organizations developed a "greenprint," a vision of how "green" principles can be used to create a community that encourages healthy activities, a connection to nature, appreciation of historic legacy, and economic development. August Wilson Park (formerly Cliffside Park) was one of the focus points of the "greenprint" vision and an extensive park renovation was celebrated in September 2016. Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy will use the Safe Routes to Parks Action Framework to assess factors contributing to challenges with connectivity to the park and between the park and other neighborhood assets and will identify opportunities to activate the space in ways that are meaningful to community members.

Dewey Point, Vigo County Parks and Recreation Department, West Terre Haute, IN

Dewey Point is a nature park with areas for education and recreation at the foot of the Wabashiki Trail and Wabashiki Fish and Wildlife Area. This park is located within walking distance of the majority of West Terre Haute residents but residents currently report the only way into the park is by vehicle. Through this project Vigo County Parks and Recreation will work with local schools and community residents to understand barriers for entering Dewey Point by foot. The ultimate goal will be to increase community support, engagement, and usage of Dewey Point to connect the community with nature.

East Athens Community Center and Trail Creek Park, Athens-Clarke County Leisure Services, Athens, GA

Athens, Georgia is one of two consolidated city-counties in Georgia. It is home to the University of Georgia, hosts a vibrant downtown, and contains over 2500 acres of greenspace. Unfortunately, almost 30% of the residents are below the poverty line. Athens-Clarke County has moved forward with redesigning their Greenway Network Plan to increase transportation choices and provide access throughout the city for those who cannot or choose not to use automobiles as their primary transportation method. East Athens has historically had one of the highest poverty rates within the community and contains both Trail Creek Park and East Athens Community Center. These two facilities are located within close proximity to each other and travel to and between them is a challenge because of the lack of pedestrian accessibility. The pilot project will involve developing a plan for safer pedestrian connections to parks and will create passage for programs, summer camp participants, families, and children to travel safely to and from the two facilities, as well generally improving community connectivity.

Hugh Force County Park, Morris County Park Commission, Wharton, NJ

Morris County Park Commission is currently working with several partners on “Connect to Walk”, a project to assess and recommend walking and biking resources and connections in the Borough of Wharton. Specifically this Safe Routes to Parks project will focus on Hugh Force County Park which is close to several trails, sidewalks, and points of interest in Wharton, NJ. The vision for Connect to Walk is first to highlight the county and local parks available to residents, and secondly, to create awareness among residents and officials that walking is an inexpensive and easy way to enhance the health of the community. The project brings recreation, wellness, and history to a community that has a 40% Latino population and about 6.8% of the population is below the poverty line.

Monte Sano Park, Recreation Commission for the Parish or East Baton Rouge (BREC), Baton Rouge, LA

Monte Sano Park is located in one of Baton Rouge’s zip codes with the greatest health needs. In an area with little health resources, Monte Sano park is an asset in the community. It has a playground, brand new basketball courts, picnic areas, and a baseball field. But despite the large community surrounding the park, including Monte Sano Village, a Housing Authority Site, the park only receives an average of 780 visitors each month. This project will focus on engaging the community to foster ownership of the park, gather information on programming, access points, and how to make the park and its amenities more user friendly and appropriate to ensure that it is one of the premier parks in north Baton Rouge. Through this project, BREC will increase community participation in activities at Monte Sano Park to improve physical and mental health and decrease crime in the area.

Trestle View Park and Winnepesaukee River Trailhead, City of Franklin, Franklin, NH

Franklin is a community of natural beauty and history where pride runs deep. Yet, the community struggles from high rates of poverty and unemployment, lack of transportation, and limited access to health resources. In order to revitalize the downtown and bring in economic development to this rural community, Franklin has been working to create a more walkable downtown. Part of this work includes increasing recreational opportunities and access to parks and the Winnepesaukee River. Through this project, Franklin will make plans to create a link between Trestle View Park and the Winnepesaukee River Trail and the proposed Mill City Park, establishing safer routes of access to the park and trail resources; encouraging and promoting healthier lifestyles to improve the quality of life for residents; and broadening the appreciation of the Winnepesaukee River and its natural resources as it transitions from an industrial use to a recreational resource.

Wesleyan MetroPark and the Wolf Creek Trail, Five Rivers Metro Parks, Dayton, OH

The Dayton region is home to the country's largest off road paved bike trail system at over 330 miles. These trails offer a large part of the region's population alternative transportation routes throughout the area. But in many cases, they lack connections to neighborhoods and MetroParks. The vision of the region is to have a fully accessible park system using a combination of mass transit and off-road paved multi-use trails. The framework will allow all stakeholders to provide input on their priorities and create a unified plan to accomplish the goal of complete accessibility to Wesleyan MetroPark and the Wolf Creek trail. Ultimately, this will expand to a county wide system of accessible parks and trails. Most importantly, the pilot phase of the process will utilize local youth already engaged in the park, as well as the surrounding neighborhoods to help them fully utilize the park and trail system to increase recreational use while in turn improving the overall health in the community.

West Willow Park, Ypsilanti Township Recreation, Ypsilanti, MI

West Willow Park is located in the north part of Ypsilanti Township directly west of the Airport, the neighborhood is bounded by a triangle of I-94, US-12, and Wiard Road – all limited access roads – which tends to isolate the community from the greater Ypsilanti area. Plagued with shootings and distrust of police, Ypsilanti Township's West Willow neighbors have begun to develop grassroots initiatives to rejuvenate their community and improve safety. As the only park in the neighborhood, West Willow Park is 2.5 acres with many facilities including trails, a small shelter, playground, benches, picnic areas, a small ball diamond and two basketball courts. Through this project, Ypsilanti Township Recreation will work with the West Willow neighborhood, to develop action plans to increase safety and perceived safety at West Willow Park.