



OZARKS TRANSPORTATION ORGANIZATION

A METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

2208 W. CHESTERFIELD BOULEVARD, SUITE 101, SPRINGFIELD, MO 65807
417-865-3047

April 15, 2021

The Honorable Billy Long
United States House of Representatives
2454 Rayburn HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Long:

I would like to request your consideration for congressionally directed funding to support the construction of the Chadwick Flyer Trail in Greene County. The Chadwick Flyer was a rail line running between Greene and Christian County that has been abandoned. The City of Ozark is already constructing a portion of the trail in Christian County. There are no portions currently funded in Greene County.

The region has been presented with the timely opportunity to convert rail currently owned by BNSF to trail. This rail line used to provide service for the James River Power Plant, which has been decommissioned. With no other customers along this portion of rail, BNSF is open to its conversion for trail use.

There is a lot of community support for this project. Ozark Greenways is partnering with the Community Foundation of the Ozarks to fundraise in support of the Chadwick Flyer. The Ozarks Transportation Organization (the Springfield area MPO) supports this project as a top priority for the region. The Springfield metropolitan area consists of seven cities and two counties that work together to determine the highest priority needs for the region. The construction of the Chadwick Flyer Trail in Greene County would help create an 8.3 mile trail that provides safe transportation for commuters and school children, as well as alternate access for businesses, entertainment, and tourism. It is a priority for the region to connect our communities with trails and this is one step toward that goal.

As project sponsor, the Ozarks Transportation Organization is willing to carry out the project and can obligate funding within the expected life of the next surface transportation reauthorization bill and according to the requirements for funding in said bill.

Thank you for your strong consideration of this project.

Sincerely,

Sara Fields



Regional Trails: Expansion of the Chadwick Greenway in Greene County, MO

Type of Project: Bicycle/Pedestrian/Trail

Name of the Project: Chadwick Flyer Central Greenway Trail

Location of Project: Springfield, MO 65810, MO-7 Congressional District

Project Sponsor: Ozarks Transportation Organization (Springfield Area MPO)

www.ozarkstransportation.org

Sponsor Point of Contact: Sara Fields, Executive Director 417-865-3042 ext 102.

sfields@ozarkstransporation.org

Project Description: Construct sections of the Chadwick Flyer Greenway between Bennett St and Christian County: This project will 1)complete the Greene County Chadwick Flyer segment between the existing southern terminus of the Galloway Creek Greenway at the MO Department of Conservation Nature Center and the Christian County line, and 2)extend the Chadwick Flyer Greenway north from the existing terminus at Pershing Elementary on Seminole to Bennett St. A significant project element is the acquisition of the existing RR corridor between Bennett St and Kissick Ave. The rail corridor will be partially converted to trail use and a portion will contribute to additional protected floodway along the Galloway Creek.

Project Benefits:

- Creation of approximately 8.3 miles of continuous trail between Bennett St in the north and Christian County
- Expands Safe Routes to School for students attending Pershing Elementary in Springfield
- Connects Lake Springfield Park, Trail of Honor Greenway, Nature Center, Sequiota Park

Amount Requested: \$4 million

Total Project Cost: \$5 million

20% Project match from City of Springfield/Springfield-Greene County Park Board/Ozark Greenways fundraising. Project will be funded in greater non-federal amounts as needed.

Project Phase: Design/ROW/Construction

Expected Obligation Date: December 2023

Estimated Award Date: February 2024

Estimated Project Completion Date: November 2025

NEPA Category of Action: Undetermined

Status of Environmental Review: Pre-Review. Preliminary environmental work to define need, determine logical termini, and evaluate alternatives completed in the 2017 [Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Trail Investment Study](#). Planning and Environmental Linkage Study submitted to FHWA March 2021.

Process to Provide for an Opportunity for Public Comment: The OTO Trail Investment Study was completed in 2017 with extensive public input including a project website, online engagement, and open houses. Additional opportunities for public comment will be provided during the design process with an

online and possible in-person open house. During the development of the OTO metropolitan transportation plan, the public was specifically asked for input on needed projects. OTO has a specific website giveyourinput.org where the public can comment at any time. Social media sites are continuously accepting public input. In addition, input is requested during the development of the annual OTO TIP.

Prior Federal Funding: Source and Amount: None

Prior U.S. DOT Discretionary Grant Requests: None

TIP/STIP Status: The project is not currently in the TIP but can be added quickly once funding is approved. Typical TIP approvals can occur in as little as 30 days. The project has been thoroughly discussed and vetted with the OTO Regional Trail Investment Study.

Metropolitan Long-Range Plan: Yes. The project is a top priority project to connect communities and enhance the regional trail system.

Project Websites:

<https://ozarkmissouri.com/523/Chadwick-Flyer>

<https://ozarkgreenways.org/explore/greenway-trails/chadwick-flyer-trail/>





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417-865-3047

**CERTIFICATION FOR INCLUSION IN THE
OZARKS TRANSPORTATION ORGANIZATION
TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM**

The Ozarks Transportation Organization, which is the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Springfield, Missouri Urbanized Area, hereby certifies that upon award of the Congressionally Directed Federal Highway Administration Funding, expanding the Wilson's Creek Battlefield Trail and the Chadwick Flyer Trail in Greene County will be included in the Transportation Improvement Program. The OTO recognizes the importance of this project and welcomes the federal investment in the region.

Signature

04-15-2021

Date

Sara J. Fields
Executive Director
Ozarks Transportation Organization

April 8, 2021

The Honorable Billy Long
United States House of Representatives
2454 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Long,

I am writing to express support for the Ozarks Transportation Organization's list of Transportation Priorities. We work closely with the Ozarks Transportation Organization (OTO). The OTO has developed a listing of priorities with a data driven approach that includes public input and community leader discussion. I understand that these projects may be submitted as a Community Project Funding request in one of the annual Appropriations bills, or as a project request in the upcoming Transportation and Infrastructure bill.

The City of Springfield supports OTO requests within the city limits of Springfield, including:

- Expanding US 60 (James River Freeway) to 6-lanes from National Avenue to Kansas Expressway
- I-44 Improvements from U.S. 65 to Glenstone
- Regional Trail Expansion including the Chadwick Flyer Trail
- Grand Street Pedestrian Underpass

This multimodal list considers pedestrians, transit, and highway users. In addition, we have included projects representing Missouri State University. The list represents projects needed to improve safety, accommodate growth, improve congestion, and promote economic development.

In addition, each project has been carefully selected based upon the ability to ensure that it can be completed if federal funds were directed to the project.

The City of Springfield would like to request your support for Congressionally Directed funds for these important transportation projects. We look forward to your partnership in making these projects a reality.

Thank you for your consideration and please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,



Ken McClure
Mayor, City of Springfield

Office of the Mayor
840 Boonville Avenue, P.O. Box 8368
Springfield, Missouri 65801 • 417-864-1651 • springfieldmo.gov





April 5, 2021

The Honorable Billy Long
United States House of Representatives
2454 Rayburn HOB
Washington D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Long,

I am writing to express support for the Ozarks Transportation Organization's list of Transportation Priorities. We work closely with the Ozarks Transportation Organization (OTO) and agree that the list represents a regionally agreed to list of transportation priorities. The OTO has developed a listing of priorities with a data driven approach that includes public input and community leader discussion.

These priorities include:

- US 60 Improvements in the OTO Urban Area
- I-44 Improvements in the OTO Urban Area
- US 65 Improvements in Christian County
- MM Highway in the City of Republic
- Regional Trail Expansion including the Wilson's Creek Boulevard Trail and the Chadwick Flyer Trail
- Electric Buses for City Utilities
- Grant Street Pedestrian Underpass

This multimodal list considers pedestrians, transit, and highway users. In addition, we have included projects representing two counties and seven cities, two transit providers, and a public university. The list represents projects needed to improve safety, accommodate growth, improve congestion, and promote economic develop.

In addition, each project has been carefully selected based upon the ability to ensure that it can be completed if federal funds were directed to the project.

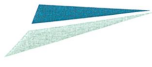
The City of Republic would like to request your support for Congressionally Directed funds for these important transportation projects. We look forward to your partnership in making these projects a reality.

Thank you for your consideration and please feel free to contact me at 417-732-3111 with any questions.

Sincerely,

David Cameron
City Administrator

cc: Laura Burbridge, City Clerk



April 16, 2021

The Honorable Billy Long
United States House of Representatives
2454 Rayburn HOB
Washington D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Long,

I am writing to express my strong support for the list of Transportation Priorities developed by the Ozarks Transportation Organization (OTO). We work closely with the OTO as a participant agency and agree that the list represents a regionally agreed to list of transportation priorities. It was developed using a data driven approach that includes public input and community leader discussion. These priorities include:

- US 60 Improvements in the OTO Urban Area
- I-44 Improvements in the OTO Urban Area
- US 65 Improvements in Christian County
- MM Highway in the City of Republic
- Regional Trail Expansion including the Wilson's Creek Boulevard Trail and the Chadwick Flyer Trail
- Electric Buses for City Utilities
- Grant Street Pedestrian Underpass

The Airport recognizes the need for a strong integrated multimodal transportation system. This list considers pedestrians, transit, and highway users. Proposed projects come from two counties and seven cities, two transit providers, and a public university. If completed, they will improve safety, accommodate growth, improve congestion, and promote economic develop for our region.

The Springfield-Branson National Airport would like to request your support for Congressionally Directed funds for these important transportation projects. We look forward to your partnership in making these projects a reality.

Thank you for your consideration and please feel free to contact me if I can be of further assistance.

Respectfully,

Brian C. Weiler, A.A.E.
Director of Aviation

OZARKS

Pokin Around: Plans call for part of Chadwick Flyer spur line to become recreational trail

Steve Pokin Springfield News-Leader

Published 10:00 p.m. CT Apr. 4, 2020

So there I was on Thursday in Ozark, investigating an Answer Man question from Richard Parnell, of Ozark, when two guys nearby chatting asked me what I was doing.

The men were Ozark Mayor Rick Gardner and Tim Ritter, an author and historian with expertise in the former Chadwick Flyer railroad spur.

I was there looking at the small picture: What is the history and former purpose of a small, old nondescript building just off West Jackson Street. Decades ago, it would have faced the former railway line.

They, on the other hand, were discussing the big picture — the city's efforts to work with Ozark Greenways and 17 property owners to transform a segment of the old railway into a recreational trail that would link with the Greenways network of trails.

This rails-to-trails project clearly excites them. Before I knew it, Mayor Gardner had called the city's city administrator, Steve Childress, and the city's public works director, Jeremy Parsons.

Poof! They appeared, ready to answer my every question.

The plan started in 2016. The goal is to extend the Galloway Creek Trail 7½ miles from where it currently ends at the Fallen Heroes paved trail at the Missouri Veterans Cemetery. The cemetery is along the James River.

The extension would take it to the Ozark Community Center off West Jackson Street.

The preferred route would be along the same line as the Chadwick Flyer, which was a daily run from Springfield to Chadwick, a small unincorporated area surrounded by the Mark

Twain National Forest in Christian County.

The run from Ozark to Chadwick was shut down by the Frisco Railway on March 14, 1933.

Dealing with 17 property owners

Mary Kromrey, executive director of the Ozark Greenways, tells me the \$8 million transformation is contingent on federal funding and, if all goes well, joggers and bicyclists might be able to traverse the new stretch in perhaps 10 years.

"We are anticipating some federal funds being awarded later this month," she says.

Clearly, the new path will be unable to follow the exact route of the rail line because that would take it right through the middle of the Tracker Marine plant at 3630 N. 21st St., Ozark. The plant is along Highway 65 on the west side.

For the most part, Kromrey says, she is hoping to have the land and/or easements donated by property owners.

Already, she adds, the developer of a new residential subdivision called Old World Estates has built and donated about four-tenths of a mile of paved trail.

The process of acquiring land and easements would have been far easier if "land banking" had been used when Frisco shut down the line.

Land banking would have allowed the various agencies, such as Ozark Greenways, to deal with only one property owner — the Frisco Railway. That is how the Frisco High Line Trail and the Katy Trail were created.

That's also what former Ozark Mayor Neal Grubaugh wanted to do, current Mayor Gardner tells me. But for reasons Gardner cannot recall, it didn't happen.

Grubaugh was mayor from 1982 to 1990 and died in 2012.

An August 1983 News-Leader story states that the Burlington Northern Railroad ended rail service to Ozark that year. Soon after, the actual rail ties were removed.

In 1983 it closed its line from Kissick, south of Springfield, to Ozark.

The line had been serving five Ozark companies: the Ozark Mill and Fertilizer Co.; Christian County Gas Co.; Ozark Concrete Express Co.; Ozark Building and Supply; and the MFA Plant food company.

The pillars that supported the track over the Finley River are still in place.

A leisurely 3-hour train trip

The Chadwick Flyer in its heyday ran 34 miles from the Frisco station on Commercial Street and Benton Avenue to Chadwick, where a hand-operated wooden roundtable allowed the train to turn around.

The line was extended to Chadwick in May 1883, where it primarily picked up timber logged in the Mark Twain National Forest. The timber was used by the railroad company for railway ties.

The train also carried freight, passengers, mail, produce, animals and, more than likely, huge blocks of ice.

Read the latest from Pokin Around:

Pokin Around: Our press crew was given a thoroughbred and they made it a champion
Small church moves Sunday worship outside; neighbor calls police
Who's in the green mystery bus? National Guard? No, it's Jeff and Anna

It stopped at various places, including Sequiota Park in Galloway, long before Galloway was part of the city of Springfield.

Many city residents would take the train to the park to picnic and take it back home in the afternoon.

The train departed Springfield at 9 a.m.; eventually reached Chadwick at about noon; and returned to Commercial Street at about 4 p.m.

It was never known for being on time, and it was never known for traveling at breakneck speed. The name "Flyer" was actually a joke.

Crew members were known for their leisurely pace and friendly manner.

They often spent time hunting while in Chadwick. Longtime engineer Robert Lyons would stop along the way to buy eggs.

"Some of the bikers and runners along the new trail might be moving as fast as the train once did," Kromrey tells me.

A boom time for Chadwick

Having the end-of-the-line in Chadwick was a boon for the area, Ritter tells me.

"It was an amazing, busy community," he says.

Local historian Marie Day, 84, lives in Chadwick. She tells me the population back then was probably around 500.

The whole area near Chadwick now has a census of about 200, with only a few residents and a couple of businesses along today's main drive, Highway 125.

In the days of the railroad, she says, there were saloons, casinos and two hotels.

In 1906, she says, two men died simultaneously in a shootout. One was a young man who had just gotten a young woman pregnant and the other was the aforesaid woman's father.

In the 1920s, she says, not only did Chadwick have a bank, but it was robbed.

According to Hank Billings, a longtime News-Leader columnist who died at t91 in 2017, the community was named after John J. Chadwick, a construction foreman who helped extend the railroad line to the area.

Hank noted that Chadwick went to his just reward soon after the line was finished. He was kicked in the head by a mule.

In addition to Galloway and Ozark, the Chadwick Flyer made stops in the area once known as Cassidy, McCracken, Sparta and Oldfield.

The story goes, according to Hank, that farmers along the railway complained that they couldn't grow crops because the train ran so slowly that it shaded their fields.

With all that said, Richard Parnell, I want you to know I did try to answer your original question. But the woman who owns the building you asked about did not return my calls.

My guess is that you're probably right: It was an ice house. That's what others in Ozark seem to think, as well.

It was common for ice houses to be built along railway lines back then. In the days before household refrigeration, trains often carried huge blocks of ice as freight.

These are the views of News-Leader columnist Steve Pokin, who has been at the paper eight years. and over his career has covered everuthina from courts and cons to features and

fitness. He can be reached at 417-836-1253, spokin@gannett.com, on Twitter @stevepokinNL or by mail at 651 N. Boonville, Springfield, MO 65806.



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SBJ PHOTO BY JESSICA ROSA

ON THE PATH: City of Ozark's Jeremy Parsons and Ozark Greenways' Mary Kromrey stand near the planned Chadwick Flyer Rail Trail intersection with the James River Greenway.



Trail Connections: Plans moving to link Springfield, Ozark with greenway trail



BY: MIKE CULLINAN, REPORTER | mcullinan@sbj.net

Posted online August 12, 2019 | 3:22 pm

An estimated \$8 million new greenway trail spanning nearly 7.5 miles is in the planning phase, with Springfield and Ozark city officials calling it a regional connector for the two communities.

A visioning steering committee was formed in April to study the southern portion of the Chadwick Flyer Rail Trail, which runs between Springfield and Ozark. The committee is focused on the development of the approximately 7.5-mile length of the trail from near the edge of Missouri Veterans Cemetery in Springfield south to the Ozark Community Center,

ADVANCED SEARCH

EDITORS' PICK



Open for Business: Formed: An Artist Collective

A downtown building most recently used as a temporary artist shop now has a full-time art gallery; Missouri Joint Ventures LLC opened the first medical marijuana dispensary in Christian County; and direct primary care practice Command Family Medicine PC relocated its Springfield office.

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1530 W. Jackson St. Jeremy Parsons, public works director for the city of Ozark, and Mary Kromrey, executive director of Ozark Greenways Inc., lead the committee.

“This planned trail alignment follows that old rail corridor as much as we can directly to the Ozark Community Center,” Kromrey said, while standing on a portion of the rail line that intersects with a segment of the James River Greenway. She noted that area of the rail line hasn’t been in use for about four years.

The rail trail runs nearly 17 miles in length from National Avenue near downtown Springfield to the Finley River Trail in Ozark. But only about 10 miles of it is in use by BNSF Railway Co., with the remaining portion not in active service.

Kromrey said the property in the area near the cemetery and south to the Christian County line is owned by City Utilities and the city of Springfield. The rail line’s intersection with the James River Greenway is just steps away from an aging iron bridge that crosses the James River.

“One day, we hope this can go all the way to downtown (Springfield),” she said of the planned trail development. “But this project right now is talking about going from this point to the (Ozark Community Center).”

Project plan

Both Parsons and Kromrey have been on board with the project well before May, with discussions by Ozark city officials beginning in 2017.

“We started looking at ways to connect, and by that I mean multimodal transportation,” he said.

Right of way, trails and learning about the Chadwick Flyer’s history was part of the process. The Ozarks Transportation Organization compiled a 2017 trail investment study that included, in part, cost estimates for the Chadwick Flyer Rail Trail to be developed as a greenway trail south to the Ozark Community Center.

The \$7.6 million estimate was based on 2017-18 prices, with inflation noted to be included for each year beyond 2018. Kromrey said that puts the current price tag around \$8 million.

Alignment for the trail is yet to be solidified, as easements from 16 landowners will need to be granted. Those discussions are yet to take place for the most part, Kromrey said, as the visioning committee just held its first meeting in May. Because Ozark Greenways and the committee want to be sensitive to any landowners’ wishes to not partner on the project, different alignments also will be considered.

“When we got this committee together, this was showing that this is not an Ozark project, it’s not a Springfield project, it’s a southwest Missouri



SBJ.NET POLL

Should the Missouri legislature fund the Medicaid expansion approved by voters last year?

Yes

No

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project that is going to benefit everyone,” Parsons said.

The Missouri Department of Transportation also is in favor of the project and part of the discussion, he added, as officials need to determine the best method for users to access the trail across Highway 65.

“We’re either going to go over it or under it, so we’re going to get across it,” Kromrey said. “We’re going to make sure it’s the safest way for folks who are biking and walking.”

Funding for the project also is yet to be secured, as different options will be studied, Kromrey said. A project of this length that crosses into different jurisdictions, including two cities and two counties, has realities of shared maintenance agreements and a funding package, she added.

Parsons said transportation alternative programming funding comes from the federal government, which can help with the cost. Kromrey added there also would be plans to put forward a funding appeal to the public early next year, with donations accepted at every level.

“It’s just timing as there’s lots of moving parts,” she said of future funding and easement considerations. “This is a very important story to tell and the connections it’s going to help us make to each other and to our outdoors in the future. We need to take a hot minute, and we want to set that up correctly.”

Early support

One of the property owners previously approached is David Counts with Kindrick-Counts Land Development LLC, who is developing Olde World Estates, a residential subdivision in Ozark. Counts said the development would have around 317 lots when it’s complete. Work started in March and he expects it will take about two years to finish. Currently, 60 houses are built, 10 are occupied and around 30 are sold, he said, noting the infrastructure costs will total around \$11 million when both phases are concluded.

The subdivision also will have a portion of the Chadwick Flyer Rail Trail running through it. Parsons said he approached the Olde World Estates developers in mid-2017 and the interest was immediate.

“They not only granted us the easement, they actually built that section of the trail,” he said. “Before the end of this year, we’ll have one-sixth of this trail complete within Christian County. In the grand scheme of things, these are usually 20- to 25-year plans.”

Phase I of the trail is complete, Counts said, with work starting this month on the second phase, which should wrap up by the end of the year. Between the two phases, he expects his trail investment to be about \$290,000.

“I thought it was a good idea,” Counts said. “Trails in Springfield are really nice and I think it’s good for the community. It sets our subdivision apart from anybody else’s. Most of our customer base are downsizing and like to walk. The more people walking in front of these houses, the better chance I

have to sell them.”

Opportunities abound

At its next meeting later this month, the visioning committee plans to start setting stakes and timelines for the project. Kromrey said the time it took to get to this point was to make sure, to the greatest extent possible, that all variables had been captured before assigning a timetable.

“We all agree this isn’t a project that we want phased in over the next 20 years,” she said. City of Ozark and Ozark Greenways officials also will be working behind the scenes to forward the project, she added.

Both Kromrey and Parsons see the trail as an opportunity to showcase the Ozarks, while providing more transportation and recreational options to connect with nature.

“We’re going to do it; we’re committed,” Kromrey said. “So are we going to have a phased-in project over a longer time frame or are we going to get in there and knock it out?”

MORE FROM SBJ DAILY UPDATE

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Comments

Please [log in](#) to add your comment

Randy Baker

it is forethinking and planning like this that will continue to improve and drive the growth of this area. I regularly use the trails especially from Ritter to Fulbright to Lost Hill to Truman Elementary...great trails. I try to always encourage people to get out and go use them!

TUESDAY, AUGUST 13, 2019

https://ccheadliner.com/free/first-piece-of-chadwick-flyer-trail-enters-design-phase/article_e52ba460-f0fd-11ea-9ad2-73a20742934b.html

FEATURED

First piece of Chadwick Flyer trail enters design phase

RANCE BURGER ranceb@ccheadliner.com

Sep 7, 2020



A MARKER placed by workers from the Ozark Special Road District shows right of way along the northern side of West Jack Street in Ozark at North 14th Street.

RANCE BURGER/Headliner News

A grant from the Federal Highway Administration will help put a trail project in Ozark into action.

On Aug. 17, the Ozark Board of Aldermen held the first reading of a bill that will allow the city to hire the firm of Crawford, Murphy and Tilly for professional engineering services for design of a piece of what officials hope will one day be known as the Chadwick Flyer trail.

“This particular engineer also designed the improvements on Jackson Street, and we felt like there was some economy to scale there. We felt like there was a lot of data that they could utilize with the Chadwick Flyer, as well,” Ozark Director of Public Works Jeremy Parsons said.

The Ozark Board of Aldermen will consider final approval of the \$9,045 contract at a meeting on Sept. 8. The contract will allow for the design of a trail from the Ozark School District property at West Jackson and North 18th Street northwest to where 18th Street intersects with West Clay Street, which is about 4,000 feet north of Jackson Street.

The trail will also run west of 12th Street to Diane Street, which serves several commercial properties.

The estimated cost of the trail is \$1.19 million, but that won't be discussed again until the design is finished.

Ozark's aldermen appear poised to support the trail project.

“I don't know how long it will take us to make this a reality, but this is a very exciting project,” Alderman Nathan Posten said.

In May 2019, a steering committee for what's being called the Chadwick Flyer Regional Trailways formed to look into the feasibility of a trails system from Ozark to Galloway Village. Parsons heads the steering committee along with Mary Kromrey, executive director of Ozark Greenways. The steering committee includes representatives from Springfield, Christian County, the city of Ozark, the Ozark R-VI School District and Bass Pro Shops Finley Farms.

In August 2019, a group of transportation stakeholders met to discuss future needs along the U.S. Highway 65 corridor in Ozark. That group, which included representatives from the city of Ozark, the Missouri Department of Transportation and the Ozarks Transportation Organization, among others, also discussed connecting downtown Ozark with the trail system from Lake Springfield and/or Galloway Creek in Greene County.

At the same time, work to widen West Jackson Street is underway. Jackson Street will be widened to five lanes, beginning at North 16th Street near KFC and El Taco, and continuing east for 0.9 miles to the Finley River Bridge, at a total cost of \$9.3 million.

The West Jackson Street widening project is scheduled to wrap up in the fall of 2021.

The larger scope of the trail project calls for two pedestrian underpasses to be constructed beneath Jackson Street. The underpasses will serve two locations between Ozark's combined junior high and high school campus to the north of Jackson Street, and the Ozark Innovation Center, the former FASCO manufacturing plant now under renovation.

One of the underpasses will be at North 12th Street, close to the Ozark High School softball field and King Cash Saver. The other underpass is close to North 16th Street, near the manufacturing plant-turned-Ozark Innovation Center.



📍 \$870k trail grant goes to Ozark



📷 +2

📍 Chadwick Flyer Trail section complete



📷 +5

Start slideshow



PHOTO PROVIDED BY CITY OF OZARK

UNDERPASS PLACEMENT: Crews with Emery Sapp & Sons Inc. install a pedestrian underpass on Jackson Street in Ozark.



Chadwick Flyer Trail gains momentum

Work on two road crossings is in motion on way to connecting Springfield and Ozark



BY: MIKE CULLINAN, REPORTER | mcullinan@sbj.net (mailto:mcullinan@sbj.net)

Posted online November 23, 2020 | 2:34 pm

A year after plans started to assemble for an estimated \$8 million greenway trail between Springfield and Ozark, activity is picking up.

The Chadwick Flyer Trail, a 7.5-mile southern portion of a 17-mile rail line, is in the development phase. Nearly one mile of the trail has been built and funding is secured for two of its three major road crossings, said Mary Kromrey, executive director of Ozark Greenways Inc.

Kromrey and Jeremy Parsons, public works director for the city of Ozark, have been leading efforts to develop the trail for cyclists, joggers and walkers. They lead a visioning steering committee formed in April 2019. To connect the communities, organizers are working on a trail that runs from near the edge of Missouri Veterans Cemetery in Springfield south to nearly reach the Ozark Community Center, 1530 W. Jackson St.

Kromrey said the trail's development will come in portions, adding there's currently no projected completion date.

"Unfortunately, big projects like that don't come with a start date and end date this far in advance," Kromrey said. "When you're working on trail projects in our region, they come on very much segment by segment."

One segment completed is nearly 4,300 linear feet in Olde World Estates, an Ozark residential subdivision. The second phase of trail work by Kindrick-Counts Land Development LLC wrapped up in August, Parsons said. Developer David Counts previously told Springfield Business Journal he expected his trail investment to be around \$290,000.

The trail's exact alignment is still undetermined, as officials continue to seek easements from a handful of landowners. Discussions with some of the 16 landowners started in spring 2019, according to past SBJ reporting. Parsons said they're about 75% through the process, with everyone granting easements so far.

"It's a slow process," Kromrey said, noting a couple of the remaining landowners live out of the area. "That's just the nature of the beast when you're working on a regional trail that's spanning that many landowners."

Jackson activity

One of the trail's main crossings, Jackson Street in Ozark, is undergoing improvements for a \$9.3 million widening project started in July by the

Missouri Department of Transportation, Parsons said.

MoDOT's work is in conjunction with Ozark's \$1.8 million Jackson Street project that includes over 4,000 linear feet of trails and two underpasses along the road to allow for bicycle and pedestrian connectivity on the Chadwick Flyer Trail. Ozark received an \$870,000 grant through the U.S. Department of Transportation to help fund its efforts. Parsons expects the city and MoDOT's Jackson Street projects to wrap by fall 2021.

"We identified the underpasses along Jackson as crucial. This was our one shot in maybe the next 30 years of improvement," he said of timing the city's work with MoDOT.

Although the Chadwick Flyer Trail runs close to Johnny Morris' Finley Farms development in Ozark, which is just off Jackson Street, it doesn't connect to it, Parsons said. However, the city is linking its existing Finley River Trail to Finley Farms – a project he said is being tackled at the same time as the Jackson Street improvements.

Along with the city matching over 50% of the Jackson Street project, the Ozark R-6 School District contributed \$323,000. Superintendent Chris Bauman said the money came out of the school's capital operating fund. The underpasses will increase safety for students traversing across Jackson Street, which will expand to five lanes.

Jackson, aka Route 14, is a main artery into Ozark from Highway 65, and the commercial stretch has the Ozark Junior High School, post office, a grocery store and restaurants along the path.

One of the underpasses is close to the junior high, 1109 W. Jackson St., while the other connects near Ozark Community Center, aka The OC.

"It really was a safety issue," Bauman said, noting 20-40 children cross the street every school day. "Now, they can cross Jackson without any concern for their safety. That was really the biggest reason why we wanted to take the step as a school district."

Looking ahead

Intersection improvements also are on tap in Ozark for Highway CC and Fremont Road, another crossing for the Chadwick Flyer Trail. Parsons said MoDOT is in final plan review for the work, which has an estimated \$410,000

cost. Bids will be sought in January for the project, he said, noting Ozark received Transportation Alternatives Program funds and will pay roughly \$82,000. Work is scheduled to finish by May 2021.

MoDOT also has been involved in discussions on getting the trail across Highway 65. With help from the Ozarks Transportation Organization, Kromrey said a new interchange proposal for the highway has been added to the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program.

“Getting something on the STIP makes it eligible for federal funding at some point in the future,” she said, noting funds are yet to be secured. “It doesn’t guarantee funding, but if a project isn’t on the STIP, then it’s a no-go. That was another crucial part of the process.”

Parsons said the consensus is pointing toward an overpass rather than an underpass in the area where the highway passes near Longview Road, south of the White River Marine Group plant in Ozark.

“Ultimately, it would accomplish more things to go over,” he said.

While the nearly 8-mile stretch of the Chadwick Flyer Trail is still likely years from being completed, Parsons and Kromrey are bullish on its progress.

“It’s kind of like an oxymoron with government to say ‘fast government project,’ but this one has really taken off at lightning speed,” Parsons said. “It’s a combination of very simply seeking the funding and the will of the people. People want these connections. They see the benefit on multiple levels.”

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