

TO: Ohio Department of Natural Resources
FROM: Brian Forschner, City Planner, City of Xenia
RE: REACH Xenia Trail
DATE: June 17, 2021

Project Description

The REACH Xenia Trail is a proposed multi-use trail that will connect two portions of Xenia, which are divided by an expressway, and facilitate connections with rural areas and regional trails. The project been requested by Xenia residents for years and was included as a high-priority recommended trail connection in X-Plan (Xenia's Comprehensive Plan) and the Greene County Master Trail Plan.

Southwestern Xenia is a nearly 3-square-mile area with a population of over 6,500 residents, separated from the rest of Xenia by the US-35 bypass expressway. Further to the west is a rural area consisting of farms, homes on large lots, and a the 100-acre County-maintained McCalmont Park. Upper Bellbrook Road and its overpass over US-35 is a primary connector between this area and the remainder of Xenia. Pedestrians and bikes already use this unsafe roadway and overpass, despite its narrow shoulders and lack of pedestrian or bike facilities.

Upper Bellbrook Road also intersects with Progress Drive, where the REACH center is located. REACH stands for Recreational, Educational And Community Health, and is a regional campus that houses the Xenia YMCA, Xenia Adult Recreation and Services Center, and a branch campus of Clark State Community College and Central State University. Healthcare uses are planned for the land surrounding the REACH center, and a major retail and restaurant district is located further to the north on Progress Drive.

The proposed trail will widen an existing overpass on Upper Bellbrook Road by adding a separated multi-use trail that connects Progress Drive to Colorado Drive, which is a collector roadway that serves southwestern Xenia. Upon completion, the City intends to extend on-street bike facilities along Colorado Drive to connect to the existing Little Miami Scenic Trail located 1.25 miles to the south. The Little Miami is a regional trail network that connects Xenia to Cincinnati, Dayton, Columbus, Springfield, and multiple state parks and universities. Greene County plans to extend the trail westward through a rural area to connect to McCalmont Park.

Community Benefits

The Upper Bellbrook Road trail will create significant economic, health, safety, recreational and environmental benefits, including the following:

- Fixes an unsafe overpass by adding a separate, protected bike/pedestrian space
- Links a regional recreation, education and health facility to neighborhoods and a regional trail network.
- Links a business district to local neighborhoods and a regional multi-use trail network.
- Encourages non-automobile local traffic, which relieves pressure on local roadways, reduces emissions and encourages healthy physical activity
- Provides a non-automobile means of access to community health, recreation and education services and employers for residents who lack a personal automobile for either age or economic reasons
- Extending trail connectivity to a rural area and to a County-maintained regional park.

Please contact me – bforschner@ci.xenia.oh.us or 937-376-7285 – if you have any questions or would like to discuss the project further.