



TO: Ohio Department of Natural Resources
FROM: Brian Housh, Council President, Village of Yellow Springs
RE: Yellow Springs-Clifton Connector Trail
DATE: May 21, 2021

Project Description

For over four decades, community members from the Villages of Clifton and Yellow Springs have been pursuing a connector trail that would allow pedestrians, bicyclists and mobility device users of all ages to safely travel between the two towns and facilitate access to such recreational opportunities as John Bryan State Park and Clifton Mill as well as the various amenities provided by these communities and Miami Township. Currently, if able, people must drive along the very narrow SR 343 to visit these and other areas or take significant risks if using active transportation modes. Thus, we are working to develop an off road/protected multi-use trail that is family-friendly and connects the Little Miami Scenic Trail in Yellow Springs to the Clifton Gorge parking lot.

Given the objectives of this project, the ideal alignment for the Yellow Springs-Clifton Connector Trail would follow along the south side of SR 343 to SR 370, and then through John Bryan State Park until reaching the Clifton Gorge parking lot. At this point, all major stakeholders, including ODNR, have been engaged and strongly support moving forward with this project. Specifically, both Villages have passed resolutions of support, including appropriations (\$10,000 Clifton, \$10,000 Yellow Springs, \$5,000 Miami Township) for preliminary engineering, and the State House appropriated \$20,000 to support this trail. We also greatly appreciate the \$7,000 grant provided by the Yellow Springs Community Foundation to support the planning process. Additionally, Greene County Parks & Trails, ODOT, Glen Helen Nature Preserve and Tecumseh Land Trust support this initiative, with many of these entities articulating particular benefits that are in line with their missions. Importantly, we walked the proposed alignment with John Bryan State Park, Clifton Gorge Nature Preserve and other ODNR representatives to conclude that this is a viable project. Our goal is to begin construction of Phase 1 in 2021, and complete the project by 2023 with the support of local, county, state and federal funding.

Community Benefits

Overall, there are significant economic, health, safety, recreational and environmental benefits associated with the Yellow Springs-Clifton Connector Trail. To elaborate:

- Providing a safe travel route for all ages, abilities & income levels using all transportation modes
- Supporting economic development to ensure that our Villages & Township communities thrive
- Promoting active lifestyles, decreasing such issues as obesity and lowering health care costs
- Facilitating access to recreational opportunities, e.g. those with mobility devices or those who cannot afford cars could better access such amenities as Glen Helen's Raptor Center and John Bryan State Park as well as the many opportunities in Clifton and Yellow Springs
- Reducing auto traffic, congestion and parking problems while promoting environmental health
- Helping various entities deliver on their goals, enhancing mental health and overall quality of life

Please contact me – brianhoush@vil.yellowsprings.oh.us or 937-776-9566 – if you have any questions or would like to discuss this project further. Thank You!