

PLEASANT RUN GREENWAY

OVERVIEW

The Pleasant Run corridor is one of the original creek corridors to be developed into a parkway based on the Park and Parkway Plan of George Kessler. Pleasant Run Parkway flanks both sides of the creek for most of its length. Older, well-established residential neighborhoods can be found on either side of the parkway. Commercial uses exist only where major streets intersect the parkway. Light to medium industrial uses are found at the headwaters, south of the Christian Park area and where Pleasant Run flows into the White River. One of the assets of the Pleasant Run corridor is its abundance of community facilities within easy access of the greenway. Nearby schools, parks, and open fields provide the public with exceptional access to recreational facilities. A majority of the corridor is owned by the city and is characterized by open space and parkland. During the 1994 Greenway Plan vision sessions, much of the public discussion centered on bringing back the historic character of the corridor and enhancing it by adding trails to connect major points such as Garfield Park, Christian Park, Ellenberger Park and local schools.

Since the 1994 Greenways Plan, Indy Parks Greenways has completed the portion of the Pleasant Run Greenway Trail from Garfield Park to Ellenberger Park. The trail moves north along the east banks of Pleasant Run under Raymond Street, under the Conrail railroad tracks with a major street crossing at Shelby Street before continuing under Interstate-65. From there it continues on the east bank until it crosses over to the west-side of the creek and connects with Orange Park. Several street crossings are necessary as the trail moves northeast to Prospect Street where it becomes necessary to travel on sidewalks to Keystone Avenue due to right-of-way restrictions. Another Conrail crossing is necessary before continuing along Pleasant Run Parkway adjacent to the Citizens Gas and Coke plant. The trail then runs along the edge of English Avenue to Pleasant Run where it can again meander along the creek banks. A trailhead is located at Christian Park as well as a pedestrian bridge crossing the creek providing access to the park facilities there. Right-of-way restrictions and trail narrowing are also encountered at the railroad and near the old Howe High School. Major street crossings at Washington Street and Emerson Avenue are required before again emerging into the greenway corridor of Pleasant Run and continuing on to the trailhead in Ellenberger Park where the trail ends. A natural trail within the park is accessible at this point. Challenges faced in project development included the location of a pedestrian bridge between Emerson Avenue and Michigan Street, the many street crossings necessary due to site considerations and the difficult railroad crossings. Over time, alternative solutions to some of the more difficult crossings should be identified and implemented.

Future trail development includes the southern section from Garfield Park to a connection with the White River Greenway Trail and the Eagle Creek Greenway Trail at Raymond Street and White River. This is an important link in the entire Greenway system as it will link the north, west and east-sides of Indianapolis with a continuous trail system and provide these areas a link to downtown Indianapolis and the various amenities located

there. Comprehensive project planning is required before implementation of this trail section.

The remaining portion of the Pleasant Run Greenway is located between Ellenberger Park and Shadeland Avenue with conservation areas along the creek where it begins near 30th Street. Comprehensive planning is also necessary prior to any work within this area. During the recent master planning public input process, concern was expressed about the future trail development within this area and also about the need to provide safe crossings at 10th Street and 16th Street, possibly with underpasses. Neighborhood involvement during the planning phase will be very important within this section.

MASTER PLAN UPDATE RECOMMENDATIONS

2001 to 2006

1. Prepare a comprehensive development plan for the greenway section between Garfield Park and White River/Raymond Street.
2. Continue to discuss with Warren Park and other neighborhood groups the issues involving the Ellenberger to Shadeland Ave. section and work with these neighborhoods to develop a portion of the trail.
3. Work with planners to establish additional links from the existing trail to community points of interest.

2007 to 2012

1. Implement the comprehensive project development plan for the greenway between Garfield Park and the White River/Raymond Street.
2. Prepare and implement a comprehensive project development plan for the trail from Ellenberger to Shadeland Ave. section.

Public Vision Statements

The Pleasant Run corridor team proposed installation of a new dam along the creek to create Lake Pleasant at Garfield Park. Construction of this dam would provide new wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities.

The development of biking and hiking trails would vary in location, relative to the waterway, along the length of the corridor. In some cases, such as some portions of the corridor between Shelby and the White River, the path could be very close to the creek, providing an illusion of walking through woods near a stream, or the path could be associated with an existing roadway such as Pleasant Run Parkway Drive South.

There are a number of locations where new parks of varying sizes could be developed. The woods and "fake lake" at the Pleasant Run headwaters could be developed into a community park. Parks along the greenway corridor could be located at renovated

pedestrian bridges, the Bemis Bag Company property, and possibly Garfield Park. These new parks, as well as the entire greenway corridor, should be accessible to surrounding neighborhoods, schools, public facilities, and commercial areas.

The aesthetics of the corridor would be improved by planting new trees and flowers along the waterway. Other aesthetic improvements include painting a mural on the abutment walls underneath I-65, using building materials from the Bemis Bag Company building for landscaping along the greenway corridor (as well as in the surrounding neighborhoods) and restoring the "Grove of Remembrance" with appropriate plantings. The first step in restoration would be to clean up the corridor. This would include collecting trash, mowing grass, removing some vegetation, and eliminating CSOs. The infrastructure of this corridor needs to be replaced or repaired for aesthetic, safety, and historic reasons. Bridges that have been closed should be repaired and renovated for use by pedestrians traveling along the corridor, or from one side of the waterway to the other. Other needed improvements include street lighting, emergency telephones, new footbridges, shelters, benches, new directional signage, and picnic tables. Many of the restoration/beautification/safety projects can be accomplished by encouraging volunteers to accept responsibility for clean-up or gardening or for serving as informal security people.

The selective removal of overgrown and diseased vegetation, restoration of the stream bank, improvement of water quality, and regular maintenance of the lawn areas along the corridor were also identified as issues.