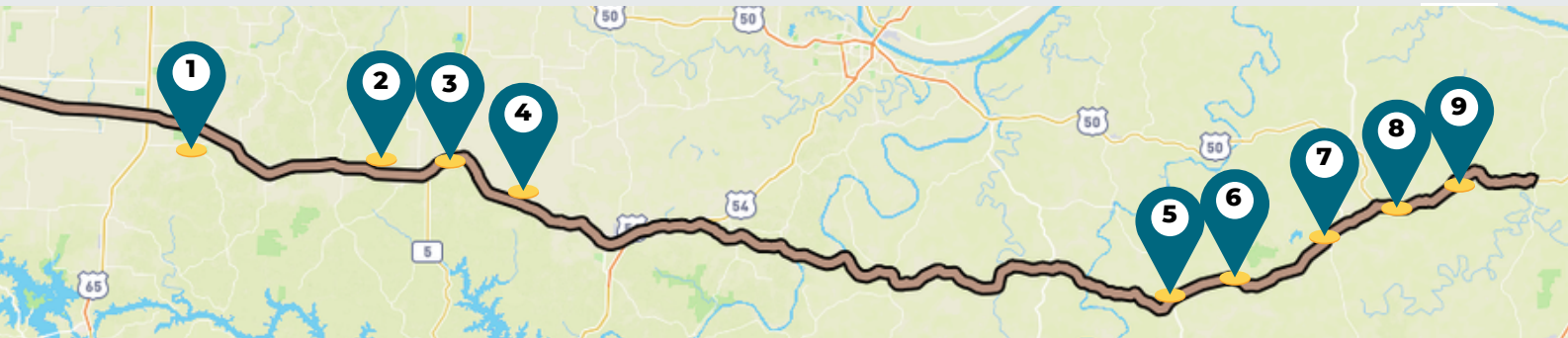


# Active Living Community of Practice

## Rock Island Trail: Connecting Communities



### Background

Rural residents are disproportionately affected by rates of physical inactivity. In 2021, adults in rural Missouri were less likely than urban residents to have exercised in the last month (69.7% vs. 77.6%). This may be due in part to limited walkability, as rural communities often lack built environment features such as sidewalks and parks.

The projected Rock Island Trail (RIT) corridor has gained a lot of momentum over the past year. To jumpstart the trail's development, trailhead communities along the route are taking steps to gain community support, complete planning work, and apply for grants to develop their town's portion of the trail. RIT communities are coming together to advocate for the trail's development, educating community members on the many benefits, including both health and economic benefits, the trail will bring.



### ALCP Approach

The nine communities identified on this map all received funding to participate in the Active Living Community of Practice (ALCP). The grant, administered by the CDC through DHSS, funds communities to work on active transportation plans and community engagement to encourage the trail's development. The goal is to prep the communities so they can submit successful applications for larger funding streams to develop their portions of the RIT. The



*The ALCP grant has helped the City of Cole Camp bring additional expertise and resources to our Walking and Biking planning. With the idea of including exercise and recreation on Rock Island Trail in our Master Plan we have been able to work with MO Department of Health, MO State Parks, MO Department of Conservation, National Park Service and BikeWalk KC. The grant created a relationship with the other 19 communities along the Rock Island Trail. We have worked closely with our sister communities to share best practices, speak as one voice to our state legislators, share resources and collaborate for problem solving.*

- Cole Camp Rock Island Workgroup Member

communities also focus on ways to bring biking and walking safety features to town, connecting the RIT and their community safely.

## Impact

1

### Cole Camp

has engaged in efforts to secure safe and accessible walking and biking for the community and visitors. The grant provided credibility and focus to pull together local efforts to improve walking and biking. The community now has a unified effort to bring multiple groups together to agree on a Master Plan.

2

### Stover

established a Sustainable Sidewalks group which contracted with BikeWalkKC to develop a long-term planning guide for sidewalks and bike paths in Stover.

3

### Versailles

has approved a shared bike bath plan as part of the City's Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan. This plan designates shared streets for bicycles and motor vehicles and will provide routes through the downtown area and access to the Rock Island Corridor trail.

4

### Barnett

has formed a new relationship with their Regional Planning Commission, Lake of the Ozarks Council of Local Governments. Using their ALCP funds, Barnett will partner with their Regional Planning Commission to develop an active transportation plan.

5

### Belle

was awarded \$250,000 by Missouri State Parks' Recreational Trails Program (RTP) grant to develop 1.4 miles of the trail through city limits.

*Through this process, we have made some great contacts, one of which is a potential donor who we are currently working with to help us to fund the materials to complete the trail through Rosebud and connect to the Gerald community. With this possible donation, these community conversations have become even more important as they are opening doors to possible donations of equipment and volunteers to provide the labor to complete the trail.*

- Mayor of Rosebud

*Building the heart of Missouri trail loop was an idea I thought would restore a little bit of what was lost when the railroads stopped running... The sidewalks will connect the town to the trail and the bike racks will be the encouragement to stop. In my story of Bland, I'll continue to dream about what will be and every day move a little closer to that reality.*

- Bland Community Member

6

### Bland

has been working with Meramec Regional Planning Commission to develop the town's active transportation plan. The community is actively working to improve businessness that could benefit from the economic development of the trail.

7

### Owensville

used their funds to create an active transportation plan, which was used to support their application to Transportation Alternatives Funds Program. Because of their strong application, Owensville was awarded \$500,000 to develop 2.4 miles trail.

8

### Rosebud

and the Meramec Regional Planning Commission are seeking to assess community needs as well as increase active transportation networks in Rosebud.

9

### Gerald

has been able to gain community support and has formed connections with neighboring communities to connect their portions of the trail, creating safe walkable and bikeable routes to adjacent trailheads.

## For more information

To learn more about development of the RIT including dates of public meetings and community assessment meetings, please visit:

<https://mostateparks.com/rockislandlinecorridor#tabs-panel-bottom2>

To learn more about Complete Streets work in Missouri and available resources, please visit:

<https://www.mocompletestreets.com/>

