

MID-SOUTH GREENWAYS: A CASE FOR REGIONAL DIALOGUE



SAVE THE DATE

Greenways and Byways: A Regional Forum for Success

Wednesday – November 18, 2009

9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Mud Island/River Terrace

PRESENTING SPONSORS



HYDE FAMILY FOUNDATIONS

AUGUST 2009 PRE-FORUM NOTES AND UPDATE

More than sixty people representing 46 organizations attended the Mid-South Greenways Pre-Summit meeting held on August 27, 2009. Participants endorsed the idea of a regional greenways dialogue and developed an expansive list of the benefits of regional greenways connectivity; however, there were some concerns expressed about the timing and nature of a forum versus a summit—from the perspective of whether we need a “summitting” activity or additional working sessions—and next steps immediately following the meeting. Below is a summary of the ideas and issues discussed both in group and at the conclusion of the meeting.

PURPOSE AND GOALS

The Regional Forum and supporting activities (pre-summit and additional meetings) seek to nurture the development of effective dialogue and collaborative efforts among regional greenways stakeholders, and establish specific actionable objectives that can enhance regional greenways connectivity. The purpose of the Mid-South Greenways Forum is to begin the process of encouraging regional greenways activity. Goals for the forum include:

- **Develop strategies for implementing a regional plan that unites communities across the region.**
- **Gain commitment to the implementation of a regional greenprint plan from a broad cross-section of stakeholders including elected and appointed officials.**
- **Enhance regional connectivity by informing, educating and engaging regional stakeholders through the exploration of greenprint best practices.**
- **Support development of a regional mapping project that identifies current and proposed greenprint projects and opportunities for connectivity.**

REGIONAL GREENWAYS BENEFITS

Participants suggested a broad range of benefits to be gained from a regional greenways dialogue. These include:

- **Promotes a more efficient use of resources**
- **Recognizes the increasing importance of collaboration for targeted funding**
- **Improves collective ability to regionally prioritize and phase greenways development**
- **Improves individual ability to market region for attraction/retention purposes**
- **Increases the possibility of greenways as a mode of transportation**
- **Provides community with a common, cohesive approach that can be recognized and supported**
- **Improves ability to gather and provide quantifiable data that can support decision-making**
- **Brings groups together to strengthen community**
- **Strengthens and increases number of stakeholders who would support policy reform/development**
- **Encourages movement toward sustainable growth patterns**

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REGIONAL GREENWAYS BENEFITS (cont'd)

In addition, stakeholders felt that a regional greenways concept map displaying existing and proposed greenways and opportunities for developing connectivity between these greenways could be valuable to the stakeholders.

Obstacles to developing a regional dialogue include the logistics of getting stakeholders together; making the dialogue relevant to all communities in the region; multi-state, multi-jurisdictional nature of the region; disconnect between values and action; lack of history of collaboration; and perceptions of the value of open space preservation in various communities.

NEXT STEPS

Pre-summit participants agreed that a regional dialogue about greenways connectivity would be beneficial to Mid-South communities and advance the development of greenways throughout the region. Most reacted positively to the idea of a regional greenways forum; however, there was some concern about whether the logical next step is actually a summit-type activity and the initially proposed October time-frame for such an event. A clear outcome from the pre-summit meeting was the need to develop a regional greenprint that would include conceptual connections between existing and proposed greenways.

Regional Greenprint Project – Phase I

It is recommended that development of a regional greenprint begin immediately. Tennessee Wildlife and Resource Agency (TWRA) and the University of Memphis Center for Partnerships in GIS (CPGIS) have agreed to partner in developing a Phase I regional greenprint. Additional levels of analysis, interactivity and future project development should be considered as part of the Phase I process. The final report should include benefits of regional greenways connectivity, stakeholders and future steps.

Future Working Session

A fall program featuring regional leaders from the National Scenic Byways program with a focus on regional connectivity would be produced with Mississippi River Corridor Tennessee. This program is suggested for November 18, 2009. Time would also be spent in working session focusing on conceptual connectivity between greenways, parks, open space and byways efforts. Key greenways topics include recreation and tourism, attraction & retention and economic development. Additional working session(s) would be considered for early 2010.

Mid-South Regional Greenways Steering Committee member organizations include Urban Land Institute District Council Memphis, Memphis Regional Design Center, Mississippi River Corridor-Tennessee, Hyde Family Foundations, Memphis Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, AW Bouchillon Institute for Community Planning, DeSoto County Greenways, Community Foundation of Northwest Mississippi, City of West Memphis, Community Foundation of Greater Memphis, Coalition for Livable Communities, Wolf River Conservancy and the Greater Memphis Greenline.

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Registration Fee: \$15.00

Morning Sessions

08:30 - Coffee and Registration/Reception

09:00 - Welcome

09:15 - Regional Greenprint update

09:45 - Points of Interest & Regional Success Stories

10:15 - Break

10:30 - National Scenic Byways: An Introduction to the Program

11:00 - Regional Scenic Byways Panel: Connecting Our National Scenic Byways with Regional Greenways Projects

12:00 - Lunch with Keynote (To be announced) – River Terrace

Afternoon Sessions

12:45 – Ribbon-cutting on the Mississippi River with four new National Scenic Byways state designations

1:15 - Connectivity in the Built Environment (Conservation Design Forum, Chicago)

2:15 - Break

2:30 - Working Sessions on Regional Connectivity with Greenways and Byways

3:30 – Final discussion and closing remarks

Questions? Please contact Andrew Trippel, ULI Memphis Coordinator by email or phone at 901-568-4423.