

Village of Cuyahoga Heights Multi-Purpose Trail



- **Type** Multi-Purpose
- **Length** 4/5 mile
- **Cost** \$800,000
- **Funding Sources**
 - Clean Ohio Trails Fund: \$500,000
 - Recreational Trails Program: \$150,000
 - Village: \$150,000

County: CUYAHOGA
District #8



The Village of Cuyahoga Heights has been planning the construction of the multi-purpose trail from Bacci Park for over ten years. The trail came to fruition with the help of two grant programs, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources' (ODNR) Clean Ohio Trails Fund (COTF) and with the Federal Highway Association's (FHA) Recreational Trails Program (RTP). The Multi-Purpose Trail is a "Rails-to-Trails" success story, as the project converted an old CSX railbed to a now frequently used trail. Cuyahoga Heights is a heavily industrialized first suburb so all greenspace is of the utmost importance. The trail provides views of some of the best preserved sections of the Millcreek and led to the clean-up of Sunny's Pond, a natural pond that previously was difficult to access.

The trail's next phases will connect Bacci Park, which is located on Canal Rd. to the Village's Civic Center on E 71st Street. (School System, Village Hall, and primary residential area). Funding has been secured for this phase through the Transportation Alternatives Program. Project completion is scheduled for 2017.

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- **Amenities:** Added parking to Bacci Park, bike rack, benches, trash cans, and doggie depot.
- **Connections:** Tow-Path Trail, Revived Sunny's Pond, Mill Creek, and eventually Village Civic and Residential area

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The Multi-Purpose Trail provides cycling, hiking, running, and other recreational opportunities for residents, employees working in the Village, and the students in the Cuyahoga Heights School District. Users can access the trail via the Bacci Park parking lot, can come through on the Towpath trail, and eventually from the civic area of Cuyahoga Heights.

Users have access to some of the best preserved sections of the Millcreek, natural wildlife, and the restored Sunny's Pond. Within Bacci Park, ball fields, pavilions, new ADA compliant restrooms, and playground equipment are available for use.

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- **Benefits:**
 - Increased recreational amenities
 - Student educational opportunities
- **Environmental enhancements:**
 - Contributes to Mill Creek stabilization
 - Refurbished and improved access to Sunny's Pond

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The trail has provided numerous benefits to the Village, its residents, students, and workforce. Visitors to Bacci Park increased and many residents utilize the trail regularly. In fact, access to Sunny's Pond increased and residents noticed the dilapidation of the pond. The pond had poor water quality, and trash had accumulated in and around the Pond, including tires. The Village took action to refurbish the pond and went a step further by providing trash bins and a doggie depot as well as benches for seating. The pond is now a recreational and green space amenity rather than a nuisance. Additionally, the trail increases Mill Creek stabilization and provides access.

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Buzz on the Street: Positive feedback from Village residents and the local workforce!

- “During the spring and summer months, I enjoy sitting on the bench – watching duck and muskrat activity at Sunny Pond.”
- “Love the new trail...it’s so serene! I enjoy looking around and listening to the birds – so peaceful.”
- “Bacci Park is truly a hidden gem where you can enjoy Mother Nature.”
- “I enjoy walking along the trail in the early evening, after being in the office all day. Most evenings I get to see a deer or two crossing the path ahead of me. It’s beautiful!”

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The Village’s workforce and residents all enjoy the trail. It provides quality greenspace to hide out in amongst the urban landscape. Residents are also excited for the next phase of the project, where residents and the school system will be able to access Bacci Park from the Civic Center without having to drive.

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See NOTES section

- Heavily industrialized first-ring suburb of Cleveland.
- Project planning occurred for over 10 years.
- State and federal funding were essential to project completion.
- Next phase planned: complete connection to Village Civic Center.
 - Transportation Alternatives Program funding secured (\$780,000)

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The project is located in a heavily industrialized first-ring suburb, home to steel mills and chemical mills. Securing and planning for quality greenspace is essential to a high quality of life. The Village has planned the project for over ten years, but did not have the funding to complete the project. The project was realized with the help of federal and state funding. One of the primary goals of the project is to link the Village Civic Center with greenspace. The next phase of the project will complete the task. The Village secured funding through NOACA and the Transportation Alternatives Program. This funding will not become available until 2016 at the earliest.