



HEMLOCK CREEK TRAIL



- All-purpose 10-ft wide asphalt trail
- 2-miles in length
- \$5 Million (Design & Construction)
- Federal Transportation Bill, ODNR Clean Ohio Trails Fund, City of Independence, Ohio & Erie Canalway Association, Rails to Trail Conservancy, Coca-Cola Foundation, Independence Garden Club
- Date: 2019
- Project Leaders/Managers:
 - West Creek Conservancy
 - City Officials
 - J.D. Williams Construction Company
 - Schirmer Construction, LLC

County: Cuyahoga
District: 6



1. 12 years of planning between the City of Independence, West Creek Conservancy, Cuyahoga Valley National Park, and Cumberland Development.
2. Federal Transportation Bill, ODOT, ODNR Clean Ohio Trails Fund, Cuyahoga County, Ohio & Erie Canalway Association, Rails to Trails Conservancy, Cuyahoga County Port Authority, Village of Valley View, Coca-Cola Foundation, Independence Garden Club, and more.
3. **REQUIRED:** Provide contact information in case we need to contact you about this project.
 - Name: Annie Lynch**
 - Phone #: 216.524.4131**
 - E-mail address: lyncha@independenceohio.org**
4. Go to next slide.

HEMLOCK CREEK TRAIL

The Good Stuff


- Paved and all-purpose
- Parking
- Trailhead
- Signage
- Drinking fountain
- Restroom
- Connections to:
 - Civic lands
 - City park lands
 - Library
 - Commercial Hubs
 - Residential neighborhoods
 - Towpath Trail
 - Cuyahoga Valley National Park
 - Scenic Railroad
 - Cuyahoga River
 - West Creek Greenway
 - Cleveland Clinic Business Operation Center

County: Cuyahoga
District: 6

The Hemlock Creek Trail is the newest and largest community connector trail providing linkage between the City of Independence, the Cuyahoga Valley National Park (CVNP) and the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail. The Hemlock Creek Trail is almost 2 miles long with 5 bridges, including a 200-foot bridge spanning the Cuyahoga River. The trail is a key part of the 25-mile West Creek Greenway which radiates from West Creek Valley in Parma, linking the Towpath Trail in CVNP to neighborhoods across seven communities.


The Hemlock Creek Trail is accessible to over 85,000 residents, supplemented by a prosperous daytime business population, within a 3-mile radius. It connects a large urban population to one of America's top 10 most visited National Parks, providing access to the Cuyahoga River, Ohio & Erie Canal, Scenic Railroad and an extensive system of paved and nature trails throughout the Cuyahoga Valley. Furthermore, the trail links people to the largest greenspace in the region, over 33,000 acres of protected conservation area, full of natural beauty, wildlife and unique geological features.

HEMLOCK CREEK TRAIL



- Unique!
- Increased usership
- Enhance market premiums
- Traffic and fuel reduction
- Health benefits
- Waterfalls
- Class 3 rapids
- Historical features
- 5 Bridges (4 new; 1 rehabilitated)
- 2 education waysides
- ADA accessible
- Safety

County: Cuyahoga
District: 6



The City of Independence is home to approximately 7,200 residents and a daytime population ballooning to 30,000 during typical business hours. One unique feature is the location of the trail on property leased by the Cleveland Clinic. More than 2,000 Cleveland Clinic Business Operations Center facility employees for years previously used their grounds to walk the parking lot during lunch and wellness break times which now have direct access to a recreational corridor and aligning with the Clinic’s goals to implement preventative healthcare initiatives.

The Hemlock Creek Trail project supports the City of Independence’s economic development strategy of introducing new visitors in the downtown area through their utilizations of multi-modal access to the Towpath Trail. The direct access to the Towpath Trail is an important part of encouraging a culture of health and wellness among the City’s residential and corporate communities. The City also enthusiastically considers the trail system as an amenity to attract and retain residents and businesses.

The Hemlock Creek Trail opened up access to an area previously not explored by many users. The area’s hilly terrain, beautiful wetlands, stream network and historical elements are now accessible.

HEMLOCK CREEK TRAIL

Buzz on the Street



"...Hemlock Creek Trail creates a transportation choice network and recreation. It connects people to greenspace and people to people."

- Derek Shafer, Executive Director, West Creek Conservancy

"It's a beautiful trail, which made the run more enjoyable."

- Josh Beemer, Runner

"I'm excited to have the trail as a part of nature. It will be preserved for future generations as a part of the Cuyahoga Valley National Park."

- Pat Jatsek, Resident

"I'm excited to see the completion of the trail and how it connects to the Towpath..."

- Rob Hersh, Hemlock Hustle participant

County: Cuyahoga
District: 6



Since its opening in 2019, the trail has quickly grown as a popular location for walkers, cyclists, and runners.

HEMLOCK CREEK TRAIL



CONNECTIVITY *investment*
 Greenspace **CVNP**
 destination Crooked River
 COMMUNITY west creek
 greenway *Natural Beauty*
TOWPATH

ГОМЬАІІІ
 ГІОНІІІІ ІІІІІІІ ІІІІІІІ
 СОМІІІІІІІ ІІІІІ ІІІІІ
 ІІІІІІІ ІІІІІ ІІІІІ
 ІІІІІІІ ІІІІІ ІІІІІ

County: Cuyahoga
District: 6



The Hemlock Creek Trail project has been an idea for over a decade and originated with Dave Vasarhelyi, West Creek Conservancy’s founder. In 2005, Ohio U.S. Representative Dennis Kucinich in coordination with the City and Conservancy, earmarked \$2 million for the Hemlock Creek Trail in the SAFETEA-LU Federal Transportation Bill. The City of Independence and West Creek Conservancy secured additional funding which included the ODNr Clean Ohio Trails Fund and Cuyahoga County participation and funds. With the trail’s dual connection to the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail and eventual link with West Creek Greenway and Reservation, this system further exemplifies the triumphant work and ongoing efforts of grassroots organizations such as West Creek Conservancy.

The West Creek Greenway and Neighborhood Trail System, is a thoroughly vetted, community endorsed study where the Hemlock Creek Trail was highest ranked trail area for implementation and construction. Additionally, the survey on Trails for Ohioans noted that the most popular trail activities were for walking, nature appreciation, bicycling on hard surfaces, day hiking, and jogging or exercising. The Hemlock Creek Trail directly serves those needs not only in the City of Independence but also throughout the region. Also as a result from the survey, was a clear indication of a need for more linear trails that take you from point A to point B. Again, the Hemlock Creek Trail has been a pivotal connection between major asset and amenity points including but not limited to The Cuyahoga Valley National Park, Cleveland Metroparks and West Creek Conservancy & the Cuyahoga River with it’s notable history, and hubs of activity to places people work, visit, and live.

This project involved a diverse group of stakeholders and with the perseverance of the City of Independence, the Hemlock Creek Trail moved forward from thought to completion.