



The Allen Creek Greenway Conservancy GREENWAY NEWS

Summer 2013

Message from the President

Dear Friends,

It has been a very exciting past few months for the Allen Creek Greenway Conservancy. The Conservancy has received two separate grants to support outreach and research initiatives. The first is a community grant from the [Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation](#), a nonprofit that supports local community organizations that sustain and protect our environment. This grant will help fund outreach efforts and collaboration meetings with key stakeholders in the future greenway. The second grant is from the [MillionMile Greenway](#), a nonprofit based in Atlanta, Georgia, that helps grassroots organizations build trails and protect green space. This grant combines a cash award and in-kind services from experts in marketing and technical planning. The two grants together total \$21,100. The support from these organizations coupled with donations from our members allow us to continue our work towards realizing a greenway that will benefit our entire community.

In addition to the grants, another exciting news item for the Conservancy is Ann Arbor City Council's commitment to the 721 North Main project with the passage of a resolution to secure funds for the project. The resolution is a transition for City Council from previously expressing support for the concept of a greenway, to now showing commitment to breaking ground. The 721 North Main project benefits the community in many ways: it begins to address downtown green space issues, serves as an important component of the North Main entrance into the City, and enables the building of the first element of the Allen Creek Greenway.

Thank you for your continued support, enjoy our summer edition which includes: examples of great urban greenways, biking safety, history of the Allen Creek and more!

See you on the (future) trail,

Bob Galardi, *President*

What is the Allen Creek Greenway?

The proposed greenway is a pedestrian- and bike-friendly path, located along the historic alignment of Allen Creek. The Greenway will create a safe, healthy and sustainable transportation corridor through downtown Ann Arbor and provide an opportunity for responsible environmental stewardship of one of Ann Arbor's oldest geological features—the Allen Creek and its surrounding floodway.

A way for cities to go green: Urban Greenways

You can find greenways all around America, especially in urban areas. Urban greenways are beneficial because they provide safe, non-motorized passages through cities, green spaces in concrete jungles and multi-use recreational opportunities. Consider these four urban greenways now being built, Ann Arbor could be the next city with an urban greenway.

- ◇ The Dequindre Cut Greenway, in Detroit, MI, is a 1.35 mile recreational path that opened in May 2009. [Learn more at www.detroitriverfront.org/dequindre](#)



Dequindre Cut Before and After Images

- ◇ The Beltline, in Atlanta, GA, is a project to convert 22 miles of abandoned rail lines. This multi-use trail connects forty-five Atlanta neighborhoods. [Learn more at www.beltline.org](#)

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Urban Greenways cont.

- ◇ The Bloomingdale Trail, in Chicago, IL, is a 3-mile multi-use, linear park and trail that will run through the heart of the city. This project will give residents access to urban parks and reuse an abandoned freight rail corridor. [Learn more at www.the606.org](http://www.the606.org)
- ◇ The Iron Horse Trestle, in St. Louis, MO, is a 1.5 mile trail along an abandoned railroad for bikers and pedestrians. [Learn more at www.greatriversgreenway.org/projects/the-trestle](http://www.greatriversgreenway.org/projects/the-trestle)

List modified from the blog "[Livin' the Highline](#)" by Annik La Farge

Who is Allen, and where is the creek?

When some people hear about the Allen Creek Greenway Conservancy for the first time, their first question is what and where is Allen Creek. What many people don't realize is every time they travel in downtown Ann Arbor they are walking on top of Allen Creek. The main branch of the creek begins near Pioneer High School and flows northward, paralleling the Ann Arbor Railroad tracks. The creek empties into the Huron River just below Argo Dam. This water system has a long history that dates back to the settlement of Ann Arbor in 1824. The creek is named after the City's co-founder, John Allen. As the area developed in the late 1800s, the creek supported many businesses like tanneries, which soaked their pelts in its water, and the City Brewery, which is now the Cavern Club. In 1923, property owners petitioned for the creek to become a storm sewer for "public health, convenience and welfare" reasons. In 1926, the drain was completed, and since then the creek has remained underground except for occasional flooding. The Allen Creek Greenway Conservancy is committed to preserving the historical significance of the creek. A greenway along Allen Creek will provide both a reminder of its past and protect the waterway for future generations.

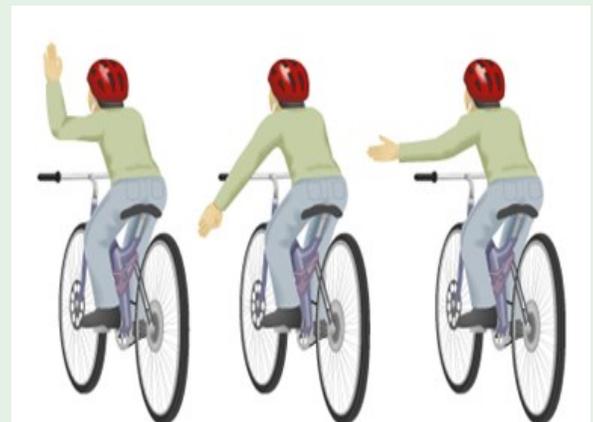
Information for this story is from the article "[The Rise and Fall of Allen's Creek](#)" by Grace Shackman, in the June 1993 Observer

Biking Safety

Biking is a great form of recreation and transportation but it can be risky, especially when bicyclists and motor vehicles share the same space. Ann Arbor and the surrounding area, have received many accolades as a bike-friendly community. Ann Arbor boasts over 36.2 miles of on-road bike lanes and many options for bike parking and storage. However, in the past five years there has been an increase in bike and motor vehicle related accidents.¹ This trend reiterates the importance of biker safety in our community. Here is a list of biking safety tips provided by the [State of Michigan](#).

Biking Tips

- Wear bicycle helmets and reflective clothing
- Obey the rules of the road, including all traffic signs, lane markings and signals
- Always yield to pedestrians
- Use a white front headlight and red rear reflector if riding after dark or in low light conditions
- Use proper hand signals



Right Turn

Slow Down

Left Turn

1. Amy Cervantes, Police Records Supervisor, Michigan State Police, 2013



Become a member today!

Visit us online at www.AllenCreekGreenway.org or call (734) 223-8247 to learn more about membership opportunities or give today with the enclosed envelope and membership form.

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To all of our members: Thank you for your generous support and commitment to the Allen Creek Greenway Conservancy!

You are one of over **150** members who have joined since November 2012.

BECOME A VOLUNTEER!

The Conservancy is growing and we want you to get involved! Volunteer opportunities include tabling at events like the Ann Arbor Farmers Market, Huron River Day and the Mayor's Green Fair, helping with mailings and print material assembly, and much more! Commit as much time to the Conservancy as you want, whether a few times a year, once a month or a more regular commitment. If you are part of a community or youth group interested in partnering with the Conservancy for a project, we would love to hear your ideas. As a volunteer you will become a member of the Conservancy, and it is great opportunity to learn about our organization while giving back to the community.

To become a volunteer email Rachel@AllenCreekGreenway.org

Downtown Parks: Express Yourself!

The Park Advisory Commission invites the public to complete a survey about parks and open spaces in downtown Ann Arbor. This is a great opportunity to share your thoughts and advocate for future greenway parks at 415 W Washington and 721 N Main.

Take the survey at
www.surveymonkey.com/s/6BFQ8X5

We would like to thank the following local businesses and organizations for their membership and support!

[Allen's Creek Watershed Group](#)
[Downtown Development Authority](#)
[Hooper Hathaway Price Beuche & Wallace Law Firm](#)
[Mighty Good Coffee](#)
[Peter Allen & Associates](#)
[Quinn Evans Architects](#)

Is your business interested in becoming a member? Contact membership@AllenCreekGreenway.org for details about Business Sponsorship

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Conserve. Connect...One Mile at a Time