

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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MEDIA ALERT

DATE: May 10, 2022

SUBJECT: Construction of new MCT Trail tunnel in Collinsville coming soon

DETAILS: In celebration of National Bike Month, Madison County Transit (MCT) is pleased to announce the construction of a tunnel for the MCT Schoolhouse Trail under IL-157 in Collinsville. The 135-foot-long tunnel will provide a safe and seamless crossing at the busy IL-157 intersection for bicyclists, runners, walkers and rollerbladers of all ages and skill levels. The project is expected to begin this fall, but temporary short term road closures to construct the tunnel won't occur until the summer of 2023. Nearby businesses, adjacent property owners, and the general public will be provided ample notice and full details in advance of the closure next year.

The 14 foot-wide, 10-foot-tall tunnel will be lighted and will be equipped to accommodate future video surveillance. Unique among trail systems, there are currently 23 tunnels and 50 bridges throughout the 138-mile network of MCT Trails, providing critical grade separation for trailgoers.

Although a bridge was also considered for this location, the cost and the obstruction of sightlines presented serious concerns for MCT and the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT). A hydrology study revealed that flooding and drainage issues would not be an issue for a tunnel in this area.

"Safety is our top priority," said MCT Managing Director SJ Morrison. "MCT is committed to as few at-grade trail crossings as possible and we're proud to be enhancing the MCT Schoolhouse Trail and creating a safe and family-friendly way for MCT Trails users to cross IL-157."

"The City of Collinsville is a strong supporter of MCT's plan to build a tunnel under IL-157," said Collinsville City Administrator Mitch Bair. "This tunnel will not only make the MCT Schoolhouse Trail safer, it will have a positive impact on future development, and supports Collinsville's goal of improving and expanding access to the trails throughout the City."

The \$2.4 million project is funded by MCT with support from a Metro East Park & Recreation District Bikeway grant.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: To learn more about the MCT Trails, visit www.mcttrails.org or find MCT Trails on Facebook.

Madison County Transit (MCT) provides multi-modal transportation services for Madison County, Illinois. MCT operates a fixed-route bus service, connecting to MetroLink; express weekday commuter service directly to and from downtown St. Louis; and seasonal express service to the Muni. For elderly and disabled residents who are unable to use the fixed-route buses, MCT provides complementary door to door service. MCT is also responsible for the construction and maintenance of more than 137 miles of bikeways that comprise the MCT Trails system, as well as overseeing RideFinders, the St. Louis region's FREE carpooling and vanpooling program.

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