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OFFICIALS CUT A RIBBON FOR NEW MCT MONARCH VALLEY TRAIL

The New Trail in Edwardsville is a Pollinator Pathway

PONTOON BEACH, IL., Oct. 24, 2022... The already extensive Madison County Transit (MCT) Trails system added another trail to its scenic network of Class One bikeways last week, with the opening of the new MCT Monarch Valley Trail in Edwardsville. Last Thursday morning, MCT Board members, staff, and local officials attended a ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate the completion of the new trail, which also serves as a “pollinator pathway,” a corridor of native plants that provide nutrition and habitat for pollinating insects and birds. The new Monarch Valley Trail is a 0.7-mile trail which stretches from Emerson Avenue to Irma Street on the former rail alignment of the Illinois Traction System’s Edwardsville Belt Railway. In addition to eight native pollinator beds, the trail also features two MCT interpretive panels: one includes information about the pollinator pathway and the other a brief history of the Edwardsville Belt Railway. Winding through the historic Leclaire neighborhood of Edwardsville, the MCT Monarch Valley Trail connects hundreds of residents to Leclaire Elementary School and nearby Leclaire Lake Park.

“The Monarch Valley Trail is a beautiful addition to the MCT Trails network,” said MCT Managing Director SJ Morrison. “We’ve planted hundreds of native pollinator plants and dozens of trees to encourage this scenic valley to be a haven for butterflies and other pollinators. The hope is that this trail will someday connect to the MCT Nickel Plate Trail and the rest of the MCT Trails system.”

An MCT Trails kiosk map and the interpretive panels can be found at the intersection of Franklin and Madison Avenue. The trail was funded in part by a Metro East Parks and Recreation District (MEPRD) grant. Juneau Associates Inc. served as the design engineer and Stutz Excavating was the contractor.

“This trail wouldn’t have been possible without the hard work of our staff and contractors as well as the support and assistance of the City of Edwardsville, the Edwardsville School District, Ameren Illinois, and the adjacent property owners,” said Morrison.

PICTURED (left to right): MCT Director of Engineering Mark Steyer, MCT Assistant Project Manager Jon Martin, Edwardsville Mayor Art Risavy, Edwardsville City Administrator Kevin Head, MCT Managing Director SJ Morrison, MCT Board Member Allen Adomite, MCT Board Chairman Ron Jedda, MCT Director Emeritus Jerry Kane, Edwardsville Community Unit District 7 Schools Superintendent Patrick Shelton, MCT Board Vice Chairman Chris Guy, MEPRD Executive Director Bryan Werner, President of Juneau Associates Charlie Juneau.

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 paratransit service. MCT is also responsible for the construction and maintenance of more than 138 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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