



TOWN BRANCH TRAIL

Town Branch Trail, Inc. is a non-profit organization dedicated to the revitalization of the Town Branch Creek in Lexington, Kentucky. We propose a trail park that will provide environmental, recreational, and economic benefits to our community.

A trail through Lexington. A trail through history.

Newsletter: Volume 3, No. 1, February 2002

www.townbranch.org

OUR HOTTEST NEWS

• View our Preliminary Trail Plan

After many hours of diligent work, our Trail Planning Committee has released a trail plan. Look inside for a map and trail segment summaries.

• Thanks to all who helped with our McConnell Springs Presentation!

With numerous volunteers and contributions from local retailers, we had a splendid evening last November. In an editorial that soon followed the event, the Herald-Leader said Town Branch Trail is a sign of "vitality in Lexington's civic life" and an example of "visionary thinking by ordinary citizens." Read more inside.

• Want to talk about Town Branch?

Visit our website for new & enhanced features at www.townbranch.org

• 2001 ANNUAL OPEN HOUSE & PRESENTATION Trail Plan Presentation at McConnell's Spring

"Make no little plans; they have no magic to stir [people's] blood, and probably themselves will not be realized. Make big plans: aim high in hope and work, remembering that a noble, logical diagram, once recorded, will never die."

-Daniel Burnham, architect

With this inspiring quote, Van Meter Pettit opened up Town Branch Trail, Inc.'s second annual Open House and Progress Report, held November 16, 2001 at the McConnell Springs Education Center. It was a festive occasion, as the Trail Planning Committee unveiled the Town Branch Trail Master Plan (see inside). Local businesses supported the meeting by donating all manner of delicious foods and great door prizes. We

*Old Burr Oak at
McConnell's Spring*



had good attendance, with several local and state legislators or their representatives, including LFUCG council members Sandy Shafer and Linda Gorton, and staff of Alice Forgy Kerr and Susan Westrom and editors from the Herald-Leader.

Van Meter's presentation included examples of famous greenways, from Frederick Law Olmsted's University of California at Berkeley campus to the famous Riverwalk in San Antonio. He emphasized that greenways and recreational trails are common in other states, and the benefits of such projects are well-documented. Following Van Meter's overview of the project, various committee members shared both past accomplishments and future goals.

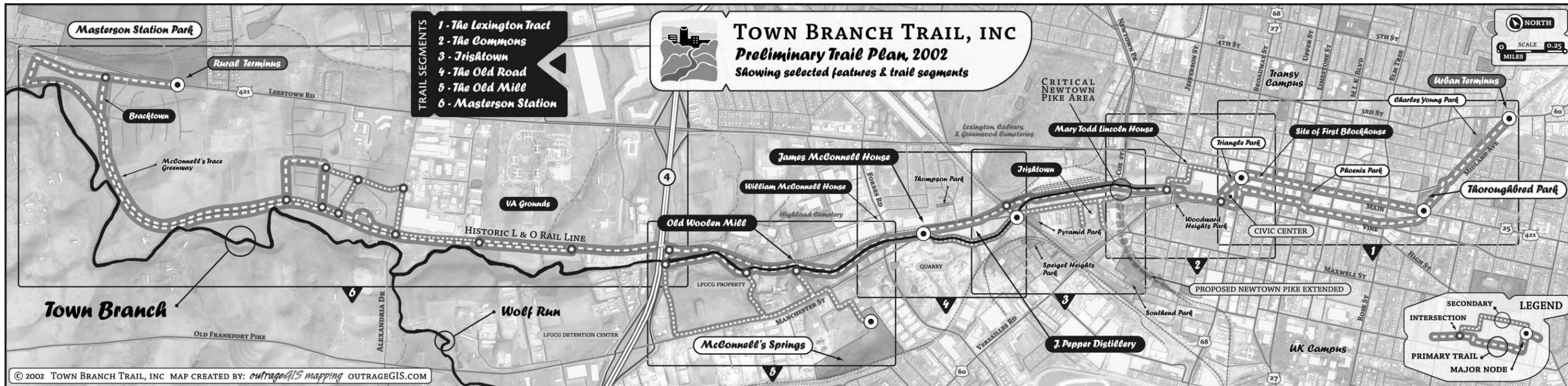
• MILESTONES OF 2001

• Town Branch Trail, Inc. left its parent organization, Friends of the Parks of Fayette Co., to become an independent, non-profit corporation.

• The first section of the trail through the McConnell Trace subdivision has been dedicated and funded due to a coordinated public/private and profit/non-profit partnership. Dennis Anderson, the developer and Doug Greene, the author of Lexington's \$100,000 TEA-21 grant, deserve high praise for this terrific first step.

• The LFUCG committed to providing land for the trail on what was formerly the city's landfill. This is an excellent example of finding greenway opportunities within civil and environmental engineering projects. Much gratitude is owed to individuals within the department of engineering who were alert to this opportunity and coordinated the details.

• We received \$20,000 in grants in 2001: \$10,000 from the City of Lexington and \$10,000 from the State of Kentucky for trail promotion and signage development.



• OUR PRELIMINARY TRAIL CORRIDOR PLAN Presented at McConnell's Spring

This preliminary plan is a great benchmark for us. It is the result of thousands of hours of research, planning, and discussion. Future work involves more detailed analysis of property ownership, zoning, and environmental conditions.

Segment 1: "The Lexington Tract"

The frontier outpost of Lexington was laid out in a small grid of streets on the northern side of the Town Branch Creek. The alignment of the city's streets and the location of its first structures were based upon the flow of the creek and the area's many springs.

This section of the trail follows the course of Lexington's historic creek as it runs beneath the urban core of the city. Special paving, signage, educational displays, and water features can guide visitors and residents alike on a path through Lexington's history. The path will connect pedestrians with many of the city's urban parks and public institutions.

Segment 2: "The Commons"

Town Branch was the location of Lexington's first public park space. In the first decades of the city's history the original creek became channeled into a straight canal with dry-laid limestone

retaining walls. A public promenade called "the commons" was created with an allee of locust trees planted on either side. Today the original dry-laid walls can still be seen along the banks of the creek.



Thoroughbred Park

This section of the trail goes around and through the Lexington Center before it joins together where the historic creek daylight between Jefferson and Cox streets. The existing historic dry-laid retaining walls can be restored with an arcade of trees to arch over paths along either side. New commercial and residential development is suggested around this new promenade to create an urban riverwalk experience.

A large opening will be needed through a raised crossing of the proposed Newtown Pike Extension in order for the trail to be continuous. This detail is extremely significant and will require very careful coordination so that the future promise of the Town Branch Trail is not "lost in the details."

Segment 3: "Irishtown"

Although Irishtown is one of Lexington's oldest and most centrally located neighborhoods, it has suffered decades of neglect. There are still numerous historic structures intact, and it still possesses a loyal core of residents, businesses, and public institutions. It is our hope that the

Town Branch Trail can help breathe new life into this area.

Segment 4: "The Old Road"

In 1830 the Lexington and Ohio Railroad was chartered to run from Lexington to Louisville. This rail line, the first west of the Appalachian Mountains, was one of the first railroad charters in the entire nation. This trail section focuses on this historic line because it will run between the rail line and Old Frankfort Pike. Other highlights of this segment are the James McConnell House, a circa 1790 stone house built by one of Lexington's founders, and the James Pepper Distillery, one of the first sites in the Bluegrass used for producing Bourbon whiskey.

Segment 5: "The Old Mill"

Along the south bank of the creek there is a historic little farmstead with a number of outbuildings around it. It is probably the last such intact agrarian setting inside of New Circle Road. Next there is a large stone ruin of an 1820 woolen mill that still stands with three massive two-story walls that have bars on the windows and harken back to when the structure served as a local jail and workhouse. This elegant ruin stands directly along the creek side. It is one of the oldest remaining industrial buildings in the Bluegrass. Continuing along the south bank the trail will follow the creek where the city has just recently closed its former

landfill. A trail has already been designated by the city for this area.

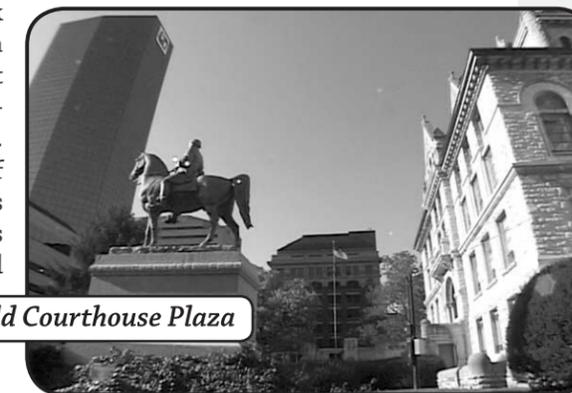


Phoenix Park

back to the creek on the old landfill property.

Segment 6: "Masterson Station"

This section of the trail has many institutional land uses that can benefit from connections to the greenway, such as Kentucky Tech, Leestown Middle School, and the VA Hospital. These properties lie on the north side of the railroad tracks and will require some designated pedestrian crossing to link back to the main trail proposed on the south side. Wolf Run merges into the Town Branch in this section and provides opportunities for a trail spur to connect the Cardinal Valley neighborhood with the greenway. Like other sections, the land lying between the tracks and the creek provide a wonderful opportunity for greenway development.



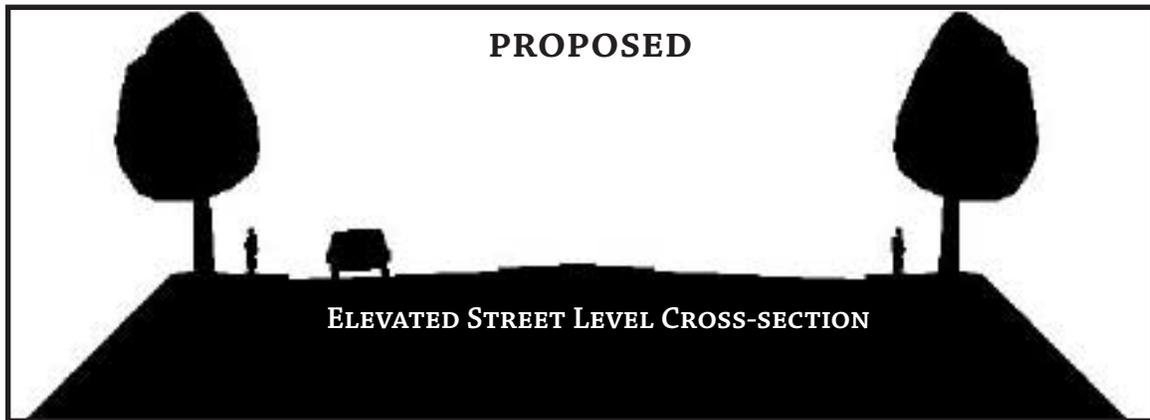
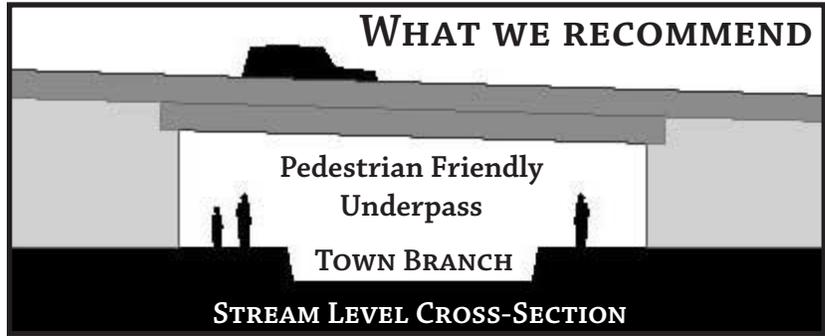
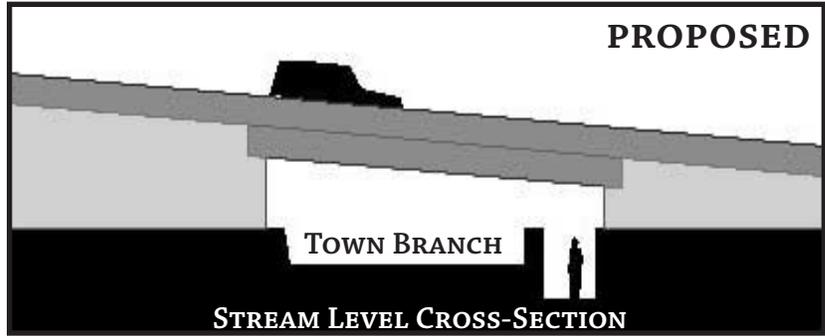
Old Courthouse Plaza

FOR MORE INFO: www.townbranch.org/maps.htm

**CRITICAL ISSUE
CONCERNING NEWTOWN
PIKE EXTENSION**

The Newtown Road Extension is a major downtown project that has been in the works for decades. It promises to be a great benefit to the downtown area by relieving unnecessary congestion caused by cross-town traffic.

(CONTINUED ON REVERSE)



CRITICAL ISSUE CONCERNING NEWTOWN PIKE EXTENSION

(CONTINUED FROM REVERSE)

Like many planning issues, the 'devil is in the details' and often the details do not become apparent until it is too late to affect change. We have the benefit of a very open and inclusive design process that has been soliciting input from the community.

Here's the issue: The road extension will travel across Town Branch Creek near Cox Street. The new road will be traveling down from the intersection of Main Street at Newtown to meet Manchester Street and then it will rise again to reach High Street. The current design for the road in this area has two major problems:

1) Where it crosses Town Branch the current plan does not allow for an adequate clearance for the trail to pass underneath it. We are asking for a path on both sides of the creek and a minimum head clearance of 10'-0"-12'-0".

2) Because of the nature of its sloped banks, the current road plan does not allow future infill development to be built along the road in this location. We are asking for vertical retention walls or support columns so that buildings may be built along the road in the future without compromising the road's structure.

Please review the drawings we have included for you to see exactly what is currently being proposed and how we would like to see those plans amended. We need you to write, call, or e-mail in support of the trail. **Please contact Andrew Grunwald and let him know that it is very important that the new road accommodate future urban development and have an adequate pedestrian underpass at Town Branch.**

Please stay polite and positive, because we are very grateful for the open planning process and a very responsive engineering staff. If you can please 'carbon copy' us your correspondences for our records.

Thanks Everyone!

Van Meter Pettit, President
Town Branch Trail, Inc.

February, 2002

SUPPORT TOWN BRANCH THROUGH THE NEWTOWN PIKE EXTENSION PLANNING PROCESS.

If you would like to voice support for our recommendations, or to send other comments, then please send your correspondence to:

Mr. Andrew Grunwald
LFUCG - Division of Engineering
200 East Main Street
Lexington, KY 40507
Telephone - 859-258-3410
E-mail: Agrunwal@lfucg.com

OPEN HOUSE SUMMARY

Those establishments contributing delicious food: Texas Roadhouse, Great Harvest, and Good Foods Coop.

Retailers' contributions: John's Run/Walk Shop gave two \$25 gift certificates, Dick's Sporting Goods gave \$50 worth of gift certificates, and Philip Galls gave free ski rental for a weekend.

Many thanks to the Herald-Leader for attending our open house and writing a November 27th editorial about our project. They said that Town Branch Trail is a sign of "vitality in Lexington's civic life" and an example of "visionary thinking by ordinary citizens." They further explained:

"Thanks are due to the small band of talented volunteers and city planners and engineers who are pushing this project, which deserves additional support from local, state and federal governments. Someday Town Branch Trail could be the premier link in a citywide network of paths and greenways, tying Lexington's past to its future and making the city a more desirable place to live and work."

CALLING ALL FRIENDS OF TOWN BRANCH TRAIL

Town Branch Trail has thrived and progressed rapidly thus far in our short life. We owe our success to the dedication and talent of our volunteers. We also owe it to the generosity of our contributors. As a result of this dramatic progress, our project needs more volunteers and financial support. **We need individuals who are interested and able in the following areas:**

- clerical & organizational
- marketing & public relations
- research & writing
- grant writing & fund raising
- graphic design & computer expertise

We also need individuals who are willing to provide tax-deductible donations to keep the project on track and moving ahead. If you enjoy reading our newsletters or attending our special events, then help us keep up the momentum with your support.

Email your interest to donate to Vanmeterp@aol.com or mail directly to:

**Town Branch Trail, Inc.
155 Constitution Street
Lexington, KY 40507**

Thanks for all your support and interest!!



RAIL-TRAILS AND GREENWAYS CONFERENCE 2002 ORGANIZED BY THE KENTUCKY RAILS-TO-TRAILS COUNCIL

Saturday, March 2, 8:30-4:30 at the Holiday Inn Capital Plaza, 405 Wilkinson Blvd., Frankfort, KY. \$75 by the 15th, \$85 after 15th and \$95 day of conference. Students \$35. Includes a book on acquiring trails (\$17.95 value) and a buffet lunch.

Send registration with personal information to KRTC, P.O. Box 597, Lexington, 40588-0597. Inquiries to George Ely, (859)277-4184; E-mail Gely2@aol.com Do not mail after February 22.



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WWW.TOWNBRANCH.ORG