The Glass City Riverwalk

Submitted by: Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments
Location: Toledo, Ohio
Total Project Cost: $29,585,200
BUILD Request: $23,668,160
Date: May 18, 2020
Table of Contents

Executive Summary ........................................................................................................................................ 1
I. Project Description ...................................................................................................................................... 2
  Project History ........................................................................................................................................... 3
  Project Goals ............................................................................................................................................... 4
  Expected Users .......................................................................................................................................... 7
  Transportation Challenges ......................................................................................................................... 7
II. Project Location .......................................................................................................................................... 9
  Demographics of the Project Area ................................................................................................................ 9
  Project Details ........................................................................................................................................... 10
  Project Area 1: Glass City Metropark ........................................................................................................... 11
  Project Area 2: International Park ................................................................................................................ 12
  Project Area 3: Downtown Toledo ................................................................................................................ 13
III. Grant Funds, Sources and Uses of all Project Funding ............................................................................... 15
IV. Selection Criteria ...................................................................................................................................... 17
  Safety ......................................................................................................................................................... 17
  State of Good Repair ................................................................................................................................. 18
  Economic Competitiveness .......................................................................................................................... 19
  Environmental Sustainability ....................................................................................................................... 21
  Quality of Life .......................................................................................................................................... 22
  Innovation ................................................................................................................................................. 23
  Partnership .............................................................................................................................................. 24
V. Environmental Risk .................................................................................................................................... 26
  Project Schedule ..................................................................................................................................... 26
  Required Approvals ................................................................................................................................. 27
  Environmental Permits ............................................................................................................................... 27
  Public Engagement ................................................................................................................................... 27
  Local and Regional Plans ............................................................................................................................ 28
  Assessment of Project Risks and Mitigation Strategies ............................................................................... 30
VI. Benefit Cost Analysis ............................................................................................................................... 30

List of Appendices ....................................................................................................................................... 30
Executive Summary

The Glass City Riverwalk (GCR) is a transformative project in the heart of Toledo. Taking advantage of the region’s greatest asset, the Maumee River, the GCR seeks to:

- Support and encourage multi-modal transportation options to and from points of interest
- Stimulate economic growth with infrastructure that supports a diversity of programming opportunities
- Implement a shared-use path network that encourages physical and mental health
- Transform the riverfront with a fresh appearance that connects people to the Maumee River
- Integrate urban ecology strategies that improves water quality and manages stormwater

This project seeks funding for multi-modal transportation and improvements in 3 distinct project areas: Glass City Metropark, International Park, and Downtown Toledo. Toledo’s riverfront has largely been closed off to the community due to heavy industrial land use. The vision of the GCR is a completely accessible riverfront that extends both sides of the Maumee. The open space is connected by a network of shared-use paths, parks, and open corridors. The new riverfront network in downtown Toledo will provide the cornerstone for the region’s parks and trail systems. A strong central core at the heart of the region, provides the areas with the highest density of human-alternative modes of transportation, offers universal access through the region, and allows for a greater appreciation for the area’s natural systems—all of which support a unified Toledo community.

The GCR will be completed in phases and for the BUILD grant funding, the focus will be on the core of the broader GCR. On the western side of the Maumee in downtown Toledo, repairs to the existing seawall, transient docks, bike/pedestrian access and an innovative kayak share program to facilitate access to a water recreational trail are all proposed. On the eastern side of the river, similar improvements are proposed for International Park and the under-construction Glass City Metropark.

When complete, the project will improve access to and from riverfront destinations and provide reliable safe and accessible transportation options as well as contribute to ongoing revitalization of downtown Toledo. The project places an emphasis on quality of life and improving healthy lifestyles through alternative transportation that encourages energy efficiency practices, such as walking, bicycling, and transit. An increase in transportation choices for pedestrians improves connectivity to jobs and other critical destinations. The new shared-use path will be a transportation resource connect into existing trail networks and facilitate outdoor recreational activities and increases environmental sustainability by repairing or removing existing sea wall. The installation of pedestrian and bicycle amenities will reduce the interactions of these two with vehicular traffic, reducing congestion, accidents and fatalities. The project is supported by a broad array of local stakeholders committed to revitalization of our region.
The BUILD program includes the following goals to which the GCR project directly responds:

- Improve access to reliable, safe and affordable transportation options
- Address safety and public health for residents
- Promote regional connectivity
- Facilitate economic growth and competitiveness

The requested BUILD grant funds would play a critical role in filling a funding gap and support the broader public-private campaign for a project with significant local and regional impact. All elements of the GCR have been shown to be technically and financially feasible and the project is ideally suited to an appropriate progression from grant award to construction. The project partners have secured all required right-of-way acquisitions and is prepared to coordinate with federal and state agencies in preparation for environmental clearance through the NEPA process.

Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments (TMACOG), the local municipal planning organization, seeks to achieve a sustainable and seamless intermodal transportation system, and is the recognized regional convener of all transportation stakeholders. TMACOG is requesting $23,668,160 from BUILD to support the GCR.

I. Project Description

The Maumee River is the prime asset for downtown Toledo, and the GCR will serve as the anchor for an activated riverfront, and creates new opportunities for downtown and neighborhood redevelopment and reinvestment. The GCR is the lynchpin for the future development of the broader riverfront on both sides of the Maumee, complementing the other essential elements in place or planned to create an active, livable and attractive downtown.

Prior to industrialization, the lower Maumee River was a wide estuary bordered by thousands of acres of riverine marshes and swamps. As Toledo expanded, wetlands were drained and filled, and the shoreline was hardened to meet demands for shipping and industry. The revitalization of Toledo’s downtown core is gaining momentum, and the area is primed for the next level of infrastructure investment.

Industry and shipping continue to be an important component of our regional economy and the proposed infrastructure improvements do not conflict with those endeavors.
The 2017 Downtown Toledo Master Plan created a vision of a thriving riverfront city. A city that celebrates and builds from its greatest natural asset and amenity outward into the surrounding neighborhoods, districts, and community. As stated in the plan, across the country and the region, the downtowns that are successful are the ones that are reinvesting in their riverfronts. The Plan focuses on access, connections, public space, activity and development opportunities, renewing the riverfront as the prime asset for Downtown Toledo, surrounding urban districts and adjacent neighborhoods.

The GCR is a highly connected urban experience with multi-modal transportation improvements and connections along the Maumee River. The Riverwalk will improve safety, facilitate growth, integrate natural systems, and encourage civic engagement. Shared green spaces along with safe multi-modal transportation options will increase civic engagement through the connection of neighborhoods which have historically been disconnected through activated greenspace and the promotion of civic and cultural institutions. The GCR will unite both sides of the river and be a destination for visitors.

Our plan is to invest in public spaces where our residents can gather to build life-long connections to each other and nature. More than 6 miles of new shared-use paths will connect communities on both sides of the river. So that you know when you’re here, you’re safe, you’re connected to community, and you belong.

Project History
Going back over 50 years, there have been community conversations regarding riverfront planning in Toledo. According to the 1980 publication, *Urban Waterfront Revitalization*, the people of Toledo have begun to “look to the river” appreciating its value as an investment and untapped community resource but a lack of funds delayed many of the concepts proposed for riverfront development. Currently, a number of Midwestern and “Rust Belt” cities like Toledo, the desire to attract and retain talent and create an improved quality of life, combined with the declining use of the riverfront for industrial purposes, has resulted in cities reclaiming and reinvesting in their riverfronts.

---

In 2018, ConnecToledo, a network of corporate and civic leaders from the community, embarked on a mission to develop a Riverfront Trail and Open Space Concept Plan with associated design guidelines. The Concept Plan was the next step for laying the framework for the future of the Toledo riverfront by building on the previously mentioned 2017 Downtown Toledo Master Plan. The Master Plan transpired into the 2017 Nautical Mile Vision Plan which laid out goals for a connected riverfront network.

![Figure 4. Rendering of the Glass City Riverwalk area once complete](image)

Formerly known as the Nautical Mile project, the Glass City Riverwalk is a major overhaul of downtown Toledo and the cornerstone of a united community with a strong regional presence. The multimodal improvements which are part of the Riverwalk will create an active transportation network in downtown Toledo that will connect more than 35,000 residents to employment, cultural assets, health care facilities, schools, shopping, entertainment and parks and green spaces.

**Project Goals**

The GCR seeks to refocus the community’s attention on one of the region’s greatest natural resources, the Maumee River, by creating a new asset in the community that promotes a healthy lifestyle, community engagement, and positive experiences that last a lifetime. The completed transportation network will be a centerpiece for the community and with a number of significant investments over the last 10 years in the downtown area, the Riverwalk will connect these investments to one another and serve as a major economic catalyst. The following are just some of the key investments in the last 5-6 years:

- **Hensville ($21 million in 2014):** Located in Toledo’s downtown Warehouse District, Hensville features restaurants, shopping, and live entertainment.
- **National Museum of the Great Lakes ($24 million 2014):** Educates visitors about the importance of the Great Lakes to our national story.
- **Tower on the Maumee ($30 million in 2016):** One of the region’s tallest buildings was vacant for more than 20 years before being converted to apartments.
• ProMedica Downtown Headquarters ($60 million in 2017): The locally owned, nonprofit healthcare organization is the largest employer in the region and their new, centralized headquarters in the heart of downtown repurposed an historic, steam plant, housing close to 1,000 employees.
• Nexus Health Care ($11 million in 2017): A 43,000 square foot medical facility operated by the Toledo-based Neighborhood Health Association.
• Renaissance Hotel ($30 million in 2017): Employing over 200 people, significant upgrades included two new restaurants, one with unparalleled views of the river
• Toledo Lucas County Downtown Library ($12 million in 2019): Significant renovations included improvements to the children’s library, a new cafe, new meeting spaces, and new recording/editing studios.
• Imagination Station ($10 million - Under Construction): Construction is underway for a new immersive theater at the science center
• Marina Lofts ($50 million - Under Construction): The mixed-use development includes apartment homes for rent on the Toledo riverfront

The vision and goals for the Riverwalk resulted from numerous planning processes and a high level of community interest. The vision for Toledo sees a completely accessible riverfront that extends both sides of the Maumee. The open space is connected by a network of paths, parks, and open corridors. The strength of the vision lies in the renewed focus on the natural systems of the Toledo region. As an outgrowth of several key local plans which identify the importance of providing safe and convenient transportation alternatives for Toledo residents and visitors, a unified plan is in place to guide the City of Toledo, partner organizations, and private development in phased implementation of the downtown riverfront.

The overall goal is that the GCR will highlight Toledo as one of the most livable cities in the United States through the use of modern infrastructure, shared-use paths, active transportation systems, and safe and vibrant neighborhoods.

The Glass City Riverwalk would complement the resurgence of downtown Toledo. Since 2012, over $305 million has been invested in development projects in the downtown area, with another $101 million projected by 2021. Downtown Toledo has experienced a 32% increase in residential population since 2000, and another 700 residential units are planned or currently under construction. Similarly, 200 hotel rooms are slated for completion by 2020. Thus, the Glass City Riverwalk will directly benefit downtown residents and visitors who are seeking alternative transportation modes to access shopping and restaurant venues in surrounding neighborhoods, as well as project area residents who want to commute to downtown for work, shopping or visiting attractions.

A prime example of the support for alternative transportation is the recent approval by Toledo City Council to spend $10.5 million to give Summit Street, which runs parallel to the Glass City Riverwalk, a pedestrian-friendly makeover, in time for the Solheim Cup,
the largest tournament in women’s golf, in September, 2021. The new design should slow vehicle traffic and expand space for pedestrians and outdoor dining.²

Our plan for the riverfront provides a continuous shared-use path on both sides of the Maumee River. Access points are strategically located to connect to each of the adjacent neighborhoods. The current infrastructure is in varying states of disrepair and has reached the end of its useful life. Additionally, in some areas, the infrastructure is disconnected from the later network and simply does not exist. In a truly accessible and connected network, people of all ages and abilities will be able to navigate the community through safe and reliable infrastructure. Fully accessible park elements will be located throughout the Riverwalk that individuals can use during every season. Additionally, safe access for kayaks, canoes and paddle boards will be constructed on a river that is still used by ships serving heavy industries.

As our nation continues to plan for the long-term impact of COVID-19, active transportation and open green space are being recognized in a new way as vital pieces of healthy community infrastructure.³ While the pandemic has presented many hardships and challenges, we have the opportunity to make transformative changes for the future as part of the recovery. As Congress begin to develop strategies to create jobs and stimulate the economy, there will likely be investments in infrastructure. A potential opportunity is the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) act which expires in September 2020. There is an opportunity to use active transportation infrastructure as a means to get people back to work while contributing to healthy, safe and equitable communities, and we would welcome this endeavor. Funding active transportation networks allows for a wide range of multi-modal options to become the safe and comfortable choice for more people, and we hope a range of potential funding sources will be available to support active transportation. In addition to reauthorizing the FAST Act, the Connecting America’s Active Transportation System Act (H.R.5696/S-3391) introduced in the House and the Senate in January 2020, could establish focused funding for active transportation connectivity, connecting walking and biking infrastructure so that people can safely travel between home and the places they need to go within their communities, such as jobs, schools, shopping and transit.

---

Expected Users

The expected users of the Glass City Riverwalk includes representation from the 35,000 residents within a mile of the project area, the over 25,000 people who work in downtown Toledo, and of course visitors to the area. In an ever-evolving mobility ecosystem, the needs and expectations of users are increasingly dynamic and do not necessarily revolve around an automobile. Over half of all trips taken in the United States are suitable for a short bike ride, and more than one in four are suitable for a short walk, making walking and biking both realistic and feasible transportation options. Americans desire safe places to walk and bike on a broad scale.4

To complement the Riverwalk, Toledo is fortunate to already have in place ToleGO Bike Share, the first public bike share program in Toledo. Launched in October 2018 by the City of Toledo, Metroparks Toledo, and Gotcha, the system is an affordable and convenient public transportation option for residents and visitors. Currently there are 100 bikes at 17 hubs throughout the City, many of which are in close proximity to the Riverwalk. The system is designed to enhance connectivity and serve as a first-mile/last-mile transportation solution. Historically, the five hubs along Summit Street in downtown Toledo, parallel to the Maumee River, have been the busiest and complement the Riverwalk perfectly. Through March of 2020, there had been almost 2,000 members who took over 4,000 trips which traveled approximately 7,000 miles.

To help with further mode shifts, it is necessary to invest in a connected network like the Riverwalk and support existing public transportation. By improving the connections between facilities along the Riverwalk, the result will be more transit trips offered by the Toledo Area Regional Transit Authority (TARTA). TARTA is the regional public transit system for the Toledo area. Creating a safe active transportation network can generate a nine-fold increase in the geographic area served by one transit station within a 10-minute bike ride (1.5 miles) relative to a 10-minute walk (0.5 mile). Improving networks for walking and bicycling allows more people to use these networks as their first- and last-mile methods of getting to and from a transit station, ultimately improving connectivity.5

---


5 Ibid
Furthermore, by investing in active transportation options like those proposed in the Riverwalk, future private development will be encouraged to make it easier to walk or bike to one’s destination.

The GCR will help with “last mile” connections to the transit network, due to proximity to existing bus routes, effectively increasing their catchment area. All TARTA buses are equipped with bike racks that hold 2-3 bikes, allowing for an even greater population positively impacted by the proposed Riverwalk. Key factors that are helping to drive the redevelopment of the downtown riverfront include the following:

- 70% of the adults and 37% of children in Lucas County are overweight or obese.
- 17% of the jobs in Lucas County are located in downtown Toledo. In a relatively small landmass, the GCR can reach a large percentage of the local population, making the return on investment more viable and sustainable.
- The neighborhoods near downtown contain some of the most economically disadvantaged families, and studies have shown there is a direct correlation between poverty and health risks (such as obesity).
- Residents, employees and visitors to downtown Toledo lack the proper quantity and access to open recreation space.

A growing number of individuals cannot or choose not to drive, including seniors, those without economic means, children and people with disabilities, so it is necessary that there are a range of safe transportation options. Senior citizens comprise an ever-growing portion of the overall population, and as seniors aspire to age in place, cities must plan for their needs, and supporting active transportation is crucial. Active transportation networks allows for greater inclusivity and connection to both destinations and opportunities, and to the broader community.

The GCR will be a safe means of connectivity and independence for everyone to access destinations, regardless of their age, ability or income. A measure of success will be the user experience, by studying the number of active participants, number of return visitors, and the overall comfort level for all demographics engaged.

---

Transportation Challenges
Currently, downtown Toledo lacks the appropriate amount of multimodal options to connect population centers to key destinations. Toledo, like some other communities across the country is seeking to find the right balance so its residents have a higher quality of life along with a greater range of transportation choices. The multimodal options proposed as part of the GCR encourages increased human-centered mobility to better maximize the number of people, not just cars, which move throughout the downtown area.

These multimodal options also address the issue of transportation justice, with the opportunity to provide safe, affordable transportation options that connect people to jobs, education, health care and all aspects of daily life. Linking the GCR to other safe walking and biking infrastructure eliminates stressful or dangerous gaps in a route.

II. Project Location
The primary project location is a 1 mile radius around the central core of the broader 6 mile Glass City Riverwalk. This area encompasses almost 33 sq. miles. The area is urban with 98% considered an environmental justice area. TMACOG incorporates Environmental Justice principles into all planning operations to avoid, minimize, or mitigate disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects, on minority populations and low-income populations.

Demographics of the Project Area
Residents in the project area have a different racial and ethnic breakdown from the rest of Lucas County, as highlighted in Table 1. In the immediate project area, there are almost 35,000 people. Unemployment is over 18% and 46% are in poverty7. Since nearly 30% of the households in the proposed area have no access to an automobile, an alternative transportation network is critical to allow residents to commute to work and school, and access other amenities. 11.5% of residents walk, bike, or use transit to access jobs.

---

7 Based on an income to poverty ratio of less than 1.00
Table 1. Race and Ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race and Ethnicity</th>
<th>BUILD Project Area</th>
<th>Lucas County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>32.7%</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>45.3%</td>
<td>68.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or More Races</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2018 U.S. Census estimates

The project will strongly enhance the multimodal transportation options for the 35,000 downtown residents, and specific to East Toledo, these neighborhoods are some of the most economically disadvantaged Census tracts in the City of Toledo. Two of the three project areas which are part of the BUILD request are located in designated Opportunity Zones (39095002800 and 39095004701).

Project Details

Toledo’s riverfront has largely been closed off to the community due to heavy industrial land use. The publicly accessible riverfront is concentrated in certain areas and other public spaces are situated as pockets in neighborhoods, creating a fragmented array of open space. The GCR proposes a strong central core at the heart of the region, provides the areas with the highest density of humans alternative modes of transportation, offers universal access through the region, and allows for a greater appreciation for the area’s natural systems—all of which support a unified Toledo community.

The Riverwalk is designed with three levels in mind:

- **Level 1**: The entire GCR needs to function as one unit. A consistent, underlying theme will be expressed throughout the network to provide a cohesive network.

- **Level 2**: Each district is rooted to a neighborhood that has its own sense of character and culture. Subthemes provides each district the opportunity to express their uniqueness.

- **Level 3**: Within each district is a smaller subset of spaces, referred to as nodes. These primary and secondary nodes are discussed in further detail below.

The current design of the GCR is a combination of connectors, links, and nodes:

- **Connectors** are generally linear corridors that provide clear routes in two directions. Widths vary and are determined by the intensity of users. Amenities are integrated in a designated zone.

- **Primary nodes** are landmark destinations. They are recognizable anchors within neighborhoods along the riverfront. Their primary role is to function as an attraction and provide both core and supplemental amenities.

- **Secondary nodes** are gateways. They are located at trail access points from adjacent neighborhoods and street ends. Their primary role is to function as a gateway and provide core amenities.

---

Glass City Riverwalk
This BUILD grant application includes connectors, 2 primary nodes, and 5 secondary nodes. The GCR serves multiple functions in addition to providing multimodal infrastructure. Primary and secondary nodes are placed at strategic locations as access points to the Riverwalk and for locating infrastructure and amenities to support programming. Strong, year-round programming will reinforce the GCR experience.

Overall, downtown Toledo currently attracts 3 million visitors annually at thousands of events every year. The proposed Riverwalk supports the growing tourism industry and has the full support of both Destination Toledo and ConnecToledo. Additional investments are required to ensure that the riverfront is fully accessible to all ages and abilities, and to ensure that all of the prior investments are fully capitalized upon.

Project Area 1: Glass City Metropark
Glass City Metropark, the hub of the Glass City Riverwalk, is currently under construction and Phase 1 is slated to be open in late 2020. As part of the BUILD grant request (1% of overall construction funds), specific features in this project area include:

- A transient dock landing to allow residents and visitors by boat to safely and more comfortably enjoy the waterfront.
- A new public transit stop with a shelter to service TARTA buses
- A new ToleGO bike share hub

Metroparks Toledo is already working to restore approximately 80 acres of former brownfields along the Maumee River formerly known as the Marina District. On a site that once produced electricity for local residents, this transformative Glass City Metropark brings a new kind of energy to the banks of the Maumee. The Maumee River was designated a State Scenic River in 1974, and Glass City Metropark will serve a new access point for the recently designated Maumee River Water Trail.

Activated by Toledo’s residents and visitors, this restored natural riverfront park, with its welcoming gathering spaces, connected trails and fun recreation opportunities will improve community quality of life, encourage healthy lifestyles, connect youth with nature and support Toledo’s economic vitality. Parks nearly always play a large role in determining quality of life in a community; in this, Toledo is no different. Glass City Metropark will dramatically add to the quality of life in downtown Toledo. Not only do these kinds of facilities and improvements make it easier for local businesses to retain and attract talent, but there is consensus in the relevant academic literature that parks and open spaces have significant effects on residential property prices as they provide improved access to recreational and fitness activities, protect ecosystems, wildlife, and watersheds, or enhance the esthetic environment of a neighborhood. Of critical importance though when establishing parks, is making sure they are accessible through a network of trails.

Glass City Metropark will provide area residents and visitors with a unique opportunity to experience various types of outdoor recreation in an urban setting. Special features include areas for Discovery Play, Water Play, Winter Play, and Urban Camping. These types of recreational opportunities and experiences are not currently available within
the vicinity of this project area. The planned restoration of forests, prairies and wetlands within Glass City Metropark will focus on restoring ecological function and maximizing habitat benefits for native plant and animal species. A new pedestrian/bicycle bridge will be installed over Main Street, connecting Glass City Metropark to an existing bicycle trail at International Park.

Already, this catalytic energy can be seen in a residential housing complex recently completed immediately adjacent to Glass City Metropark. That project will spur significant economic development, and according to the developer, Metroparks’ plan for a park was necessary to the $50 million investment he made.

This project area of the BUILD grant is well-positioned to move forward first to complement the work already completed by Metroparks Toledo. The infrastructure improvements for which we are seeking BUILD support will cover a shortfall in the current budget and complete aspects of the park that if not for BUILD support, will not move forward.

Project Area 2: International Park

As part of the BUILD grant request (17% of overall construction funds), specific features in this project area include:

- 3 secondary nodes
- Almost a half mile of shared-use paths to provide a route free of vehicle conflicts
- The existing walkway and amenities around the main gathering area, known as The Basin, appear tired and show signs of aging. The shoreline conditions discourage engagement with the water.
- Soften river’s edge with plants, and provide stepped access to water through planted edge. Manage stormwater in riparian buffer.
- Area behind The Docks restaurants improved with planters and other amenities
- A transient dock landing to allow residents and visitors by boat to safely and more comfortably enjoy the waterfront.
- A new public transit stop with a shelter to service TARTA buses
- A new ToleGO bike share hub
- A new kayak share location to allow for greater paddling access

International Park is also located on the east side of the Maumee River, and is owned by the City of Toledo. The park offers captivating views of Toledo’s downtown skyline, which prompted local business owners to open a number of restaurants there in 1996 (known as The Docks). International Park offers the longest unobstructed pedestrian path along the Maumee River within the GCR. During the summer, the park is often used at night by local residents to enjoy and take-in the lights of downtown. Additionally, competitive crew racing is a huge attraction. City owned sand volleyball courts are also riverside hosting summer and fall recreation leagues.

---

Once a favorite destination, visits to the park have dropped in recent years and the infrastructure, originally constructed in the 1970’s, is under-utilized and nearing the end of its life. When Metroparks Toledo was planning for Glass City Metropark, there was also some preliminary planning for improvements to International Park as part of the overall master plan. Conversations continue between the City of Toledo and Metroparks Toledo with a possible future goal to merge the two parks into one large green space.

Contained with the plans for the GCR are goals to enhance the existing park and restaurant assets which are in place and restore the riparian zone while softening the river’s edge. Primary and secondary nodes would capitalize on existing assets and create further programming opportunities. Most of the existing infrastructure needs to be replaced in order for GCR users to feel comfortable using the space. Existing seawalls and pathways need to be repaired or replaced with wider pathways, and new lighting and signage needs to be added in order to create a sense of place and make the area feel safe.

Project Area 3: Downtown Toledo

As part of the BUILD grant request (82% of overall construction funds), specific features in this project area include:

- 2 primary nodes
- 2 secondary nodes
- More than a half mile of shared-use paths to provide a route free of vehicle conflicts
- New lighting, benches and decorative banners will make the space feel more inviting and helps establish a sense of place.
- Sea wall repairs
- A new kayak share location to allow for greater paddling access

In the past decade, downtown Toledo has seen great success in bringing people back to the urban core, with nearly three million people annually visiting arts and cultural destinations and sporting events. The downtown riverfront plays host to a myriad of events through all seasons. Annually, our largest event is the Toledo Jeep Fest which brings over 60,000 people from all over the world for a three-day festival with a parade, displays, vendors and music festival. While the parade snakes through the streets of downtown, the major events happen on the riverfront in Promenade Park.

Promenade Park is the major event venue for all our riverfront events. Fourth in the 419, the city’s Fourth of July celebration, attracts up to 40,000 to the Maumee River while the Toledo Symphony Orchestra performs with the fireworks booming. The ProMedica Summer Concert Series takes place on 14 Fridays throughout June to September with attendance averaging 5,000 – 7,500 featuring national artists. The riverfront also saw

---

10 Glass City Metropark, International Park to be blended into one big downtown riverfront project (2020, April 22) Retrieved from https://www.toledoblade.com
the return of Formula One powerboat racing in 2019 and drew 25,000 spectators. These powerboats reach speeds up to 120 mph and captured the attention of the Great Lakes region for the whole weekend! The arts also draw large crowds to the riverfront. The Arts Commission hosts a monthly Art Loop, which celebrates art and artists all throughout downtown, and Momentum. Momentum is a three-day art festival that is based in Promenade Park and brought over 22,000 visitors to our riverfront. PRIDE, Toledo’s annual celebration for the LBGTQA, attracts tens of thousands from throughout the Midwest.

Of particular interest is increasing the number of transient docks to support the growing numbers of people enjoying downtown Toledo. At the 2019 Friday evening concert series, there was 100% usage for the existing 34 slips, with online reservations immediately selling out once the site went live.

The winter has not stalled activation of our riverfront as thousands gather around the 60 ft. tall tree in the middle of Promenade Park for the tree lighting. The lighting takes place in mid-November and is broadcasted live on a local news station. The Fire + Ice Festival is a free festival taking place in late February. The Festival attracted visitors with a zip line, fire throwers and giant fire breathing dragon!

As evidenced in the budget for this BUILD grant application, this area of the Riverwalk needs the most significant infrastructure improvements and amenities to support a high intensity of users, many notable community attractions, and a growing list of programming. One of the primary areas of opportunities is integrating green infrastructure at One SeaGate. The existing infrastructure is aging, but there are multiple opportunities to capitalize on water (water feature, the basin, Water Street terminus) to re-create a landmark space.

The development of ProMedica’s new corporate headquarters in the former Daniel Burnham designed steam plant was truly a landmark moment for downtown Toledo. However, the sidewalk, trees, and amenities behind the former steam plant along the river’s edge are all remnants of a past riverfront. ProMedica invested significant resources to improve Promenade Park but the path between the park and river was not included in those upgrades. The large-scale mooring bollards plus light poles on the riverside create the sense of a barrier to the river. The sidewalks are cracked and uneven, making it difficult to navigate for both pedestrians and bicyclist. This stretch of the GCR also lacks adequate places to sit, socialize or gather in small groups. With the
Owens Corning Headquarters located on the south end and the Fifth Third Bank Building on the north end, this portion of the GCR is the most heavily used. During the lunch hour, several hundred people can be seen walking, jogging, or biking this zone. The aged sidewalks, with their narrow configuration makes the experience challenging at best.

Also worth noting is the aged condition of the City of Toledo’s sewer overflow, which runs directly under this portion of the Riverwalk. The pathway is literally supported over the overflow. Recent photos show the concrete and steel supports in decay and in need of repair. The southern end of Promenade Park is dominated by parked cars on the uphill side and an aged and dilapidated shoreline littered with oversized riprap on the river side. Despite these poor conditions, this path is still heavily used by downtown employees and neighborhood residents eager to get out and enjoy the waterfront.

III. Grant Funds & Sources/Uses of Project Funds

The requested BUILD funds would be used for the planning, design and construction of various elements in three distinct portions of the broader Glass City Riverwalk.

While the Riverwalk is a much larger project that will be completed in phases, the requested BUILD funds have independent utility within the designated project areas. These infrastructure improvements are usable even if there is a delay in completing other aspects of the Riverwalk.

Table 2. Project Budget by Zone

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Zone</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project Area 1: Glass City Metropark</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design/Estimating Contingency</td>
<td>$39,200</td>
<td>.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>$292,700</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td>$331,900</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Area 2: International Park</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design/Estimating Contingency</td>
<td>$517,000</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>$4,122,400</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td>$4,639,400</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Area 3: Downtown</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design/Estimating Contingency</td>
<td>$2,258,900</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>$19,665,400</td>
<td>66.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td>$21,924,300</td>
<td>74.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Design/Engineering Fees</strong></td>
<td>$2,689,600</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>$29,585,200</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The GCR is a major revitalization project that requires support from a variety of sources. While the overall budget is approximately $200 million, the project has already secured $13 million in funding to complete the first phase of Glass City Metropark. In addition, another $3 million in CMAQ and TAP funding has been programmed for pedestrian/bike improvements to the Martin Luther King Jr. Bridge. The Riverwalk is not anticipated to be a single project completed all at once. Projects of this magnitude typically are completed in phases of several smaller projects over multiple years. It will take a coordinated effort to ensure that we make the most of the city’s forward movement to transform our collective future. Together, we can accomplish this vision of a united community that has a strong regional presence. An investment in the Riverwalk is an investment in our region’s vision to reinvent itself.

Table 3. Uses of Project Funds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Zone</th>
<th>Total Cost</th>
<th>BUILD Grant Request</th>
<th>Local Match</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$325,900,000</td>
<td>$259,688,400</td>
<td>$66,211,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Area 1: Glass City Metropark</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design/Estimating Contingency</td>
<td>$39,200</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$39,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>$292,700</td>
<td>$263,600</td>
<td>$29,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td>$331,900</td>
<td>$263,600</td>
<td>$68,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Area 2: International Park</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design/Estimating Contingency</td>
<td>$517,000</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$517,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>$4,122,400</td>
<td>$3,988,700</td>
<td>$133,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td>$4,639,400</td>
<td>$3,988,700</td>
<td>$650,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Area 3: Downtown</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design/Estimating Contingency</td>
<td>$2,258,900</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$2,258,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>$19,665,400</td>
<td>$19,415,860</td>
<td>$249,540</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td>$21,924,300</td>
<td>$19,415,860</td>
<td>$2,508,440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Design/Engineering Fees</strong></td>
<td>$2,689,600</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$2,689,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>$29,585,200</td>
<td>$23,668,160</td>
<td>$5,917,040</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. Sources of Project Funds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Source of Funds</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Funding %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Metroparks Toledo</td>
<td>Metroparks Capital Fund</td>
<td>Committed</td>
<td>$5,000,000</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metroparks Toledo</td>
<td>Restricted Gifts</td>
<td>Committed</td>
<td>$917,040</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Department of Transportation</td>
<td>BUILD 2020 Grant Request</td>
<td>Requested</td>
<td>$23,668,160</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$29,585,200</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While not part of the Metroparks commitment to the BUILD grant match, it is important to put this grant within the larger Riverwalk project. Current estimates for entire project put the whole project over $200,000,000. Of this, $40-60 million is anticipated through local/state/federal grants, $25-30 million through corporate and individual philanthropy, $10-15 million through Tax Increment Financing (funding begins in 2035), and $100 million through levy support. While these are significant goals, there is over $11 million already pledged in philanthropic support and Glass City Metropark has secured over $10 million in grant funding. Receiving federal support through the US Department of Transportation BUILD grant program is critical to the overall vision of the GCR.
As project applicant, TMACOG encourages and enables all appropriate agencies within the TMACOG region to efficiently and effectively secure and invest available federal transportation funds to improve transportation facilities and services. We believe that an investment in active transportation is a cost-effective strategy for delivering multimodal options that serve a broad segment of our community. Investments in walking and biking infrastructure have the potential to address several of the key concerns with today’s transportation system, including accessibility, congestion and the cost of construction—while yielding an outsized return on investment when measured by economic, health and environmental gains. A 2012 study commissioned by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials on jobs created by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act found that transportation enhancement projects (i.e., walking and biking infrastructure projects including trails) created 17 jobs (design, engineering and construction) per $1 million spent, more than any other type of project.

IV. Selection Criteria

Safety

Safety is the highest priority for this project, and the proposed infrastructure improvements as part of the Glass City Riverwalk seek to improve accessibility and safety for pedestrians, cyclists, paddlers, and transit users. While there has been a decrease in recent years in traffic fatalities among motor vehicles, pedestrian fatalities continue to increase. Pedestrian deaths increased by 3.4%, there was also a 6.3% increase in the number of people killed while riding bicycles or other pedaled vehicles.11 We appreciate the leadership from Secretary Chao at the Department of Transportation to prioritize pedestrian safety.

In Ohio, our project stakeholders have engaged with the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) as part of their development of Walk.Bike.Ohio, ODOT’s first plan to focus on walking and biking policies and programs around the state. When complete, this plan will guide Ohio’s bike and pedestrian transportation policies and investments in infrastructure and programs. TMACOG has hosted local stakeholder meetings with ODOT officials for Walk.Bike.Ohio and project partner, Metroparks Toledo, serves as the Northwest Ohio representative on the steering committee.

The initial data collection that is part of Walk.Bike.Ohio12 reveals some worrisome trends over the past decade. Bicyclist and pedestrian fatalities made up 14% of all roadway fatalities. Both have increased dramatically, even as overall roadway fatalities have decreased. Fatalities and serious injuries for bicyclists and pedestrians combined increased by 7%. Pedestrian fatalities rose by an astounding 64%; and bicyclist fatalities by 17%. An initial recommendation is that to ensure equity in our transportation system while also reducing crashes, active transportation investments should be directed to those areas with the greatest demonstrated demand and demonstrated need.

---

As shown in the project area, there are high rates of crashes in key portions of the GCR, and providing dedicated active transportation infrastructure will allow for safe access to transportation for residents and visitors. In the last 5 years, there were 41 pedestrian/bike incidents and these trips would have utilized the Riverwalk.

Specific to increasing bike usage among residents, safety is often cited as a primary barrier to access. Many potential users prefer the inherent safety of a dedicated bicycle/pedestrian path, especially families traveling with children. The lack of an active transportation network in downtown Toledo represents a barrier to access for a significant portion of the population.

**State of Good Repair**

The proposed infrastructure improvements that are part of the GCR will help reduce long-term maintenance costs by creating a dedicated multi-use path for bicycle and pedestrian trips, reducing the number of motor vehicle trips. As noted previously in the different project areas, much of the current infrastructure is in a poor state of repair. Following the proposed improvements, the Riverwalk will be maintained by Metroparks Toledo staff. Metroparks has extensive experience and capability in providing management of more than 180 miles of existing trails, and is industry recognized for its high quality park maintenance. Metroparks is accredited by the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA), and provides regular and consistent safety patrols by park rangers and a volunteer trail patrol.

Metroparks Toledo has a strong reputation for high standards in operating and maintaining all of its parks and recreation facilities. Metroparks uses computerized maintenance management software to automatically track the useful life of all infrastructure, buildings, equipment and materials. This is the program used to forecast maintenance activities and costs (see Appendix C), assuring Metroparks’ ability to anticipate the resources needed to properly care for the Riverwalk.

**Resiliency**

Biking trips in place of driving results in less wear and tear on the existing infrastructure, which can reduce road maintenance costs, and can help ease congestion. Lessening automobile use results in less of the pollution that contributes to climate change and its resultant environmental degradation. These non-motorized transportation options provide the opportunity for individuals to move more safely and capably by foot or bike, and are in line with recent socio-economic and cultural trends demonstrating a desire for walkable and bikeable communities.
Long-Term Impacts

Increased access to safe and reliable transportation options, which are low-cost, will improve the economic mobility of local residents. In addition, the further development of the GCR will enhance economic activity in nearby neighborhoods. The proposed parks and open space will benefit the community by helping to clean the air and water, retaining storm water, harboring wildlife and enhancing property values.

Economic Competitiveness

This project will be a successful driver of economic growth that helps shift our region into a healthy, sustainable, and interactive place to live. We’re proud to call this place home and believe this project will be a cornerstone to the city’s continued growth.

Investing in walking, biking and paddling is a good deal for the American economy. The benefits of active transportation are enjoyed throughout society. Therefore, as the Glass City Riverwalk enhances transportation options, it leverages new development. Adjacent businesses to the future Riverwalk should be able to take advantage of the increase in traffic in the area. Future amenities could additionally boost the quality of life for local employees and help enhance curb appeal in the area. We believe that the higher the quality and greater the quantity of services and amenities included in the Riverwalk (1) the more people will be attracted, (2) the longer people will stay in the downtown area, (3) the more money people will spend in the community, and (4) the more income and jobs people will create for local residents.13

Strategically, communities who position themselves to offer high quality of life are positioning themselves to do well in economic development. Job seekers no longer focus solely on the financial incentive package offered by prospective employers, but are increasingly influenced by the quality of life in their prospective “home” community. They take into serious consideration what amenities are offered nearby. Strategically, communities who position themselves to offer high quality of life are positioning themselves to do well in economic development. 17% of the jobs in Lucas County are located in downtown Toledo, making the return on investment in downtown more viable and sustainable. The importance of the region’s quality of life for economic development is acknowledged by the region’s community and economic development organizations as well as its business community. According to the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for Northwest Ohio and Southeast Michigan (see Appendix C), the region’s relatively high quality of life and wide variety of recreational opportunities are critical factors that help attract and retain workers.

13 Crompton, John, Measuring the Impact of Park and Recreation Services, NRPA, 2010
Two of the three project areas which are part of the BUILD request are located in designated Opportunity Zones (zones 39095002800 and 39095004701). The proposed improvements in multimodal infrastructure and riverfront access will positively impact local traffic and tourism. A 2014 study of Indianapolis' eight-mile Cultural Trail found that the values of properties within a block of new infrastructure project increased 148%. A similar impact on the neighborhoods surrounding the Glass City Riverwalk would serve as a major step in revitalizing downtown Toledo. We anticipate that significant private investment will follow, taking full advantage of the benefits present with Opportunity Zone investments. There is an estimated $1 billion in economic impact anticipated by generating private construction, increasing property values, and establishing new business opportunities.

Not only do outstanding parks make it easier for local businesses to retain and attract talent, but national trends prove they also positively impact property values for both adjacent and nearby real estate. Parks and open spaces have significant effects on residential property prices as they provide improved access to recreational and fitness activities, protect ecosystems, wildlife, and watersheds, or enhance the esthetic environment of a neighborhood. Real estate brokers know that being near a park is often a priority for families looking to relocate. The Economic Benefits of Metroparks Toledo study completed in 2019 determined that Metroparks raises the value of nearby homes by $40.8 million and increases the property tax revenues by $1.13 million a year.

Downtown Toledo is undergoing a dramatic transformation and the Glass City Riverwalk will complement the growing list of tourist attractions. The benefits to local communities from tourist spending can be measured in terms of different economic impacts. Economic impacts are made up of the direct and indirect effects. Direct effects are equivalent to the total tourist spending, while indirect effects are the “ripple effects” of tourist spending as expenditures on secondary inputs are increased in order to meet tourists’ spending demands. For example, when a tourist comes to GCR, they will spend money on food, fuel, and lodging. The “ripple effect” expenditures made by all business sectors in order to meet tourist requests for goods and services are the indirect effects of tourist spending.

---

15 Figure based on the assumption of a $7 to $20 return on investment for park spaces, which has been proven across many urban park projects and cited specifically in this Grand Rapids report: https://www.grandrapidsmi.gov/Government/Departments/Parks-and-Recreation/Parks-and-Recreation-Strategic-Master-Plan. Using the lowest number, a 7:1 return on investment for a $200M project is over $1B.
16 The report as well as an infographic summary can be downloaded at http://www.tpl.org/economic-benefits-metroparks-toledo.
Tourist expenditures stimulate economic growth and increases the overall wealth in the economy. For example, tourists on bicycles contribute to the economy $133 billion annually in the US. This industry support nearly 1.1 million jobs across the US and produces $53.1 billion annually in retail sales and services17.

The Economic Benefits of Metroparks Toledo study from 2019 determined that Metroparks is critical to the local tourism economy because it provides numerous parks, trails, facilities, and programming that attract visitors. Metroparks generates $59.5 million annually in direct visitor spending18.

Environmental Sustainability

Our environmental vision for The Glass City Riverwalk is to promote conservation through planting thousands of new trees, restoring natural areas, and creating new wetland spaces to improve the quality of our natural water source.

The Maumee River, flowing into Lake Erie’s western basin, has the largest watershed of any Great Lakes tributary, and is the single largest source of sediment and phosphorus to Lake Erie. It is vitally important to engage in practical solutions that help reduce these inputs and also demonstrate that when these solutions are implemented on a local level, the collective impact can make a meaningful contribution to the health of the Maumee River, Lake Erie and our quality of life in the Great Lakes Region. When people experience a resource like the Maumee River, they are generally more likely to feel a connection to the place, to value and care for it.

Transportation is a significant contributor to climate emissions. Bicycling, paddling, and walking are all a zero-emission transportation mode, so any of these trips as opposed to driving a car decreases the amount of pollution emitted into the air. When infrastructure is provided for walking, bicycling, paddling and public transit, more trips can be safely made using these modes rather than driving, which results in an overall reduction in air pollution. This will lead to a reduction in energy consumption, reduced emissions, and reduced greenhouse gas emissions. Shared-use paths like the GCR that are intentionally designed to serve both transportation and recreation will lead to a reduction in driving and carbon emissions, thereby providing a higher return on investment.

It is unlikely that the GCR will negatively impact traffic volumes, vehicle mix, or any other factor that would cause an increase in emissions impacts relative to the no-build alternative pursuant to the Clean Air Act criteria for pollutants. It is possible that it will decrease the amount of motorized traffic, though specific impact to air quality would be difficult to calculate.

---

18 The report as well as an infographic summary can be downloaded at http://www.tpl.org/economic-benefits-metroparks-toledo.
Currently just two percent (32 acres) of downtown land area consists of parkland and greenspace. The Trust for Public Land’s ParkScore® measures how well the 100 largest U.S. cities are meeting the need for parks, and in their 2018 analysis, Toledo ranked 79 out of the 100 largest U.S. cities. To make Downtown Toledo more attractive and livable to employers, residents and visitors, the plan recommends a tenfold increase in parkland and greenspace (to 320 acre). The plan specifically lists the development of a Riverwalk experience as a priority action item, describing this project as one of six “Catalytic Projects” needed to revitalize Downtown Toledo.

Furthermore, completion of this project will underscore the importance of innovative stormwater management within Toledo’s urban center. All stormwater runoff from the GCR will be managed and can use the development of Glass City Metropark as a guide for coordinating this work with private developers. Various stormwater practices, depending on the site conditions, will include restored riparian buffer, vegetated swales, and bio-retention facilities in planters along the Riverwalk. Along with restoring water quality, these added green spaces will reduce maintenance costs by allowing trees, shrubs, and vegetation to purify the air of pollution that corrodes and damages city buildings, roads, and bridges.

Quality of Life

**Imagine a riverfront that unites neighborhoods.** The Glass City Riverwalk will link together a network of multi-modal facilities and provide access to transit centers and increase transportation choices. Our plan is to invest in public spaces where our residents can gather to build life-long connections to each other. New shared-use paths will connect communities on both sides of the river and district branding will produce a unique cultural identity for each riverfront neighborhood. So that you know when you’re here, you’re safe, you’re connected to community, and you belong.

The Riverwalk will help increase the number of mobility choices available to Toledo residents, encourage greater physical activity levels, expand access and improve connectivity to jobs, healthcare, and other critical destinations. By making biking and walking a viable mode of transportation for far more people than current conditions allow, the Riverwalk strongly advances accessibility and transportation choices in the disadvantaged communities like East Toledo. Because they provide a safe environment, paths like those proposed in the GCR may be the only place where many residents exercise.

The 2018-2021 Lucas County Community Health Improvement Plan shows that the percentage of Lucas County adults who were obese – which is related to many chronic diseases and other health problems – continues to be high at 36%, while obesity among high school students increased to 15%. Lucas County residents are adversely affected by

---

19 For further detail, see Letters of Support in Appendix A from Continental and Ft. Industry
negative health outcomes due to lack of access to recreation and a sedentary lifestyle. The Glass City Riverwalk will allow more residents to access active transportation options and other outdoor recreation areas to improve their health.

A 2019 study by the Trust for Public Land regarding the economic impact of Metroparks Toledo found that access to parks and green spaces increases residents’ levels of physical activity. The average adult saves $1,230 per year on health care costs by being physically active in the park system, and these savings are double for seniors. In total, residents save $12.5 million in health care costs each year. The Glass City Riverwalk will allow even more residents to improve their health. Metroparks is committed to providing ample non-motorized transportation opportunities and connectivity for residents and visitors to use to improve health, increase fitness and sustain wellness.

The cost-benefit analysis of physical activity using bike/pedestrian trails has been well documented in the health literature. In a study conducted in Lincoln, Nebraska, benefit-cost ratio for trails was 2.94, which means that every $1 investment in trails for physical activity led to $2.94 in direct medical benefit. The inference of the study was that building trails is cost beneficial from a public health perspective.

Innovation
The development of the Glass City Riverwalk provides an innovative model for how to transform an urban riverfront in a significant transportation, environmental, economic, and recreational resource for the entire community.

Innovative Technologies
Metroparks Toledo developed the region’s first kayak-share, based on the bike share concept. Currently in use at one location, Howard Marsh Metropark near Lake Erie, users rent boats by the hour using a smartphone. Boats, along with paddles and personal flotation devices, are secured in lockers that open once payment is made through a mobile application, Movatic. Metroparks worked with Movatic to modify the software to accommodate this use.

Originally, Metroparks researched available third party vendors for the kayak share, but did not find any which met the Metroparks design and operating standards. This led the staff to develop their own fabricated six locker unit, which is serving as a template for other agencies around the state. BUILD funding will allow us to improve and expand upon this system at two locations, connecting both sides of the river.

21 Metroparks Toledo won a 2020 National Association of County Park and Recreation Officials (NACPRO) Award in the Park & Rec Facility - Class I category for the Kayak Share program.
Innovative Project Delivery
As part of the design phase for the Riverwalk, we plan to use Virtual Reality (VR) to have an opportunity to explore a virtual representation of key project elements like primary nodes. This technology will allow project partners and other stakeholders, including the public, the opportunity to understand how a design will look to scale and at a more instinctual level.

Innovative Financing
In the area of financing, the public/private partnership which includes a number of different funding agencies providing grant support along with a broad diversity of philanthropic support is a new model for our community coming together as one to support a visionary project.

Partnership
The Glass City Riverwalk brings together a partnership of key agencies that have a successful history of collaborating on significant projects in the greater Toledo area.

TMACOG is a non-partisan regional planning partnership made up of voluntary members in northwest Ohio and southeast Michigan. Together, TMACOG members focus on transportation and water quality, and support regional economic development endeavors that affect quality of life for everyone in our region. Founded in 1968, TMACOG has an agreement with the Ohio Department of Transportation which designates TMACOG as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Toledo urbanized area. TMACOG’s role in transportation is to help plan an integrated multimodal transportation system: roadways, rail, bike and pedestrian accommodations, and public transit that move goods and people safely and efficiently throughout the region. The staff at TMACOG regularly compiles and analyzes information that local elected officials need to set priorities and make plans. Ultimately those plans are used to secure federal and state funding for area transportation projects. TMACOG is the recognized regional convener of all transportation stakeholders within the region and one of the stakeholders that has a role in providing transportation services.

Metroparks Toledo conserves the region’s natural resources by creating, developing, improving, protecting, and promoting clean, safe, and natural parks and open spaces for the benefit, enjoyment, education, and general welfare of the public. Metroparks Toledo currently owns over 12,000 acres of land and operates sixteen parks, each connecting people with nature and outdoor adventure in compelling and exciting ways. There are over 180 trail miles within the park system, and Metroparks either manages or is a participating owner in a number of additional regional trails. The completion of this project is the top priority for Metroparks Toledo. In addition to providing guidance on the development of this grant proposal, Metroparks will commit to working with TMACOG to provide project implementation services if funded. Metroparks has a demonstrated record of achieving results and over the past 5 years, Metroparks has completed (or is working to complete) 30 individual grant-funded park acquisition, restoration and development projects totaling over $10 million.
The mission of the Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority is to develop expertise and assets that drive and grow the region’s transportation and logistics infrastructure and its economic prosperity for all. Tangible investment in site infrastructure is an important consideration as site selectors contemplate a Toledo location for their clients. Numerous projects in recent years have supported the redevelopment of downtown Toledo, and one of the most significant is the Ironville Terminal/Cleveland Cliffs project. Located in East Toledo, the Port Authority’s investment in preparing the dock led directly to Cleveland Cliffs $830 million hot briquetted iron production facility at the site. This project will bring over 100 additional vessels to the port of Toledo each year carrying over 2 million tons of iron ore. Other recent projects include:

- United States Maritime Administration awarding the Port Authority $16 million in federal funds for the reconstruction of a dock wall and constructing a new liquid bulk handling terminal at the Overseas General Cargo Facility. Construction will take place using these grant dollars matched with $4 million in local funding.
- Through the Ohio EPA and Ohio DNR Healthy Lake Erie Fund, approximately $10 million has been invested in projects designed to help eliminate the disposal of dredged material into Lake Erie from Toledo Harbor by advancing alternatives. Overall, the Port is administering $5.5 million in H2Ohio projects for ODNR.

The Toledo Area Regional Transit Authority (TARTA) serves the communities of Maumee, Ottawa Hills, Rossford, Sylvania, Sylvania Township, Toledo, and Waterville. TARTA is working to increase total ridership rates and is committed to supporting public transportation infrastructure investments. Public transit, along with the other multi-modal options presented in this application, are essential to expanding options beyond the personal automobile.

Founded in 1837 and the County seat for Lucas County, the City of Toledo is the fourth largest city in the state of Ohio and covers 84 square miles. Centrally located within the Great Lakes region, Toledo has become well-known for its industry, particularly in automobile assembly and glass (hence the nickname, "The Glass City"). Toledo is now at the heart of the New Manufacturing Economy, which is entrepreneurial in spirit. Mayor Wade Kapszukiewicz, who was Lucas County Treasurer from 2004-2018, was elected Mayor of Toledo in November, 2017 and took the oath of office on January 2, 2018. The city has more than 2,600 employees and an annual budget of approximately $251 million.

Led by a network of corporate and civic leaders from the community, ConnecToledo is a 501(c)3 organization committed to the redevelopment of downtown Toledo. This is accomplished by connecting public and private investment to facilitate the implementation of the Downtown Toledo Master Plan and other community priorities. In 2017, ConnecToledo evolved from the 22nd Century Committee, which sought to align downtown revitalization efforts through a new master plan. As the master plan was completed, the 22nd Century Committee was reconstituted as the Downtown Toledo Development Corporation with the public-facing name of ConnecToledo. Partnering with the Downtown Toledo Improvement District through a contract for services, ConnecToledo maintains programs for marketing/communications, business advocacy, residential attraction, business attraction including pre-development activity, and an ambassador program focused on hospitality, cleaning and safety.
**Destination Toledo Convention and Visitors Bureau**, a not-for-profit enterprise, is the official Destination Marketing Organization for Lucas County and the Greater Toledo Region. Staffed with an enthusiastic team of Toledo experts, Destination Toledo's core mission is to attract meeting, convention and tourism business through strategic, long-term marketing and sales efforts. This combination of expert knowledge, tactical planning and excellent relationships positions the Toledo Region as an attractive travel destination. This greatly attributes to visitor spending at area hotels, restaurants, attractions, retail and local services leading to the economic growth and well-being of the entire Toledo Region.

V. Environmental Risk

Project partners have engaged in an appropriate level of preplanning and site condition investigations to guarantee that the project is both technically and financially feasible. If awarded BUILD funds, the project is well positioned to immediately begin design development and steadily move through to construction. Design details will build off of the Riverfront Trail and Open Space Concept Plan commissioned by ConneToledo. Furthermore, a study of the seawall in both the downtown project area and the International Park project area was conducted on behalf of the City of Toledo. Portions these plans are included in Attachment C.

Technical Feasibility

The construction of the Glass City Riverwalk will provide a better user experience in the heart of downtown Toledo and replace outdated infrastructure, making for a more vibrant live/work/play environment. Access that is both functional and attractive will be provided for all users. Modern infrastructure technology will be used ensuring sustainable improvements with room to adapt and grow in subsequent years.

Metroparks Toledo staff and consultants are well versed in designing technically feasible projects adjacent to the Maumee River. Recently completed Middlegrounds & Glass City Metropark offer many of the same components as proposed in this BUILD application. Multiple Riverwalk partners are familiar with permitting requirements and environmental clearances and maintain working relationships with respective regulatory agencies.

The construction techniques are feasible from a design perspective, as is all necessary environmental clearances through the area. Metroparks possess a high level of design expertise and project management skills for projects in both rural and urban areas.

Project Schedule

TMACOG and its partners are ready to begin preliminary design, environmental, permitting, and construction quickly upon receipt of a BUILD grant agreement. As per the project schedule, all necessary preconstruction activities will be complete to allow grant funds to be obligated no later than September 30, 2022, and completion of construction by the end of 2025. This schedule assumes a signed grant contract by the third quarter of 2021. The project is “shovel-ready” and does not anticipate any delays to slow this project.
Required Approvals

As shown in Table 5, GCR partners have completed or are in the process of completing several state and federal permits. The following table also identifies which permits are required moving forward.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document/Permit</th>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Approval Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Assessment</td>
<td>ODOT</td>
<td>Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site Plan Review</td>
<td>City of Toledo Plan Commission</td>
<td>Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maumee Riverfront Review</td>
<td>City of Toledo</td>
<td>Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>404/Section 10 Permit</td>
<td>Army Corps</td>
<td>Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stream Construction Permit</td>
<td>ODOT</td>
<td>Required</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Environmental Permits

Formal NEPA activities for the Riverwalk will begin immediately after the signing of the grant agreement, and progress for the next year. We will plan to coordinated with ODOT District 2 and likely enlist the services of an outside consultant to manage the process. Multiple project partners have experience with the NEPA process including the City of Toledo, Metroparks Toledo and the Toledo Lucas County Port Authority, and have jointly administered hundreds of DOT funded NEPA review processes. Both preliminary engineering and environmental engineering will move forward under the LPA Process for Locally Administered Transportation Projects.

Public Engagement

Numerous public engagement conversations regarding the Riverwalk were a key component of the following local and regional plans. Physical connectivity and accessibility will be a major factor in appealing to a diverse user population. The development of the Riverwalk is important to a wide variety of people and organizations as is shown by the many support letters contained in the Attachments.
Local and Regional Plans

The 2017 Downtown Toledo Master Plan was developed by the 22nd Century Committee and is now under the oversight of ConnecToledo. The Master Plan included significant support and input from Toledo-area business leaders from both the private and public sectors, including the City of Toledo Department of Economic Development. The Downtown Toledo Master Plan specifically calls out the Riverwalk project, referred to in the plan as the Nautical Mile, as a “priority action item” and “Catalytic Project” needed to revitalize Downtown Toledo.

This transpired into the 2017 Nautical Mile Vision Plan which laid out goals for a connected riverfront experience on both sides of the Maumee from the Anthony Wayne Bridge to the I-280 Bridge. This plan was the result of a $25,000 grant that The Healthy Downtown Toledo Coalition received from General Electric through their HealthyCities Leadership Challenge program. Developed with the assistance of The Collaborative’s team of Landscape Architects and Planners, the goal of the 2017 Nautical Mile Vision Plan is to create a multi-use path that encourages physical exercise and capitalizes on the unique opportunities along Toledo’s downtown waterfront.

In 2018, ConnecToledo led the development of the Riverfront Trail and Open Space Concept Plan. The Concept Plan was the next step for laying the framework for the future of the Toledo riverfront by building on the 2017 Downtown Toledo Master Plan, which “creates a vision of a thriving riverfront city that celebrates and builds from its greatest natural asset outward into the surrounding neighborhoods, districts, and community.”

TMACOG’s On the Move, 2015-2045 Transportation Plan – Update 2020, includes a number of policy statements to provide a framework and guidance for the efforts of transportation stakeholders to accomplish our mutual vision. Of the policies, a significant number of them relate to the Glass City Riverwalk including:

- **Protect and improve air quality** to improve personal health and allow for further economic development, by supporting development and use of fuel efficient and non-motorized modes of transportation
- **Support balanced growth** to protect the natural environment and existing communities, by encouraging more transit-oriented development to promote walkability and decrease the need for driving to destinations.
- **Improve pedestrian and bicycle networks and connectivity** to accommodate safe, efficient, accessible, and convenient non-motorized travel trips for work, school, shopping, entertainment, and recreation.
- **Reduce roadway congestion** by providing pedestrian facilities and developing denser, more walkable neighborhoods.

The 2015-2045 Transportation Plan includes the Riverwalk as one of the top 20 projects, and is the highest ranked non-motorized project. This plan is used as the basis for securing transportation enhancement funding through the Ohio Department of Transportation for non-motorized transportation projects.
The Metroparks Toledo Comprehensive Master Plan, adopted in 2013, calls for the restoration of publicly accessible river frontage on both sides of the lower Maumee River near Toledo’s urban center. Metroparks implemented the first stage of this plan in 2016 with the opening of Middlegrounds Metropark in downtown Toledo.

Board Approval

On April 22, 2020 the Board of Park Commissioners of Metroparks Toledo passed a resolution committing to meeting the required match. See Appendix C 22.

Letters of Support

All of the letters of support for the Glass City Riverwalk can be found in Appendix A.

Letters of Support from US and State Senators and Representatives
United States House of Representatives, 9th District, Marcy Kaptur
United States Senate, Sherrod Brown
United States Senate, Rob Portman

Letters of Support from Other State and Local Elected Officials
Representative Lisa Sobecki, Ohio House District 45
Representative Michael Sheehy, Ohio House District 46
Senator Teresa Fedor, Ohio Senate District 11
Theresa Gadus, Toledo City Council District 3
Rob Ludeman, Toledo City Council

Additional Letters of Support
City of Toledo
ConneToledo
Continental Real Estate
Destination Toledo
Docks Restaurants
DTID
East Toledo Family Center
Fort Industry/BuildTech
Gotcha Mobility
Greater Toledo Community Found.
Historic Vistula Foundation
Huntington Center
Imagination Station
LISC
Maumee Bay Brew Company
Maumee Valley Heritage Corridor
Mercy Health
Metroparks Toledo

National Museum of the Great Lakes
Ohio Dept. of Natural Resources
Ohio Dept. of Transportation
One SeaGate
Owens Corning
ProMedica
Regional Growth Partnership
Renaissance Hotel
TARTA
Toledo Chamber of Commerce
Toledo/Lucas County Plan Comm.
Toledo/Lucas County Port Authority
Toledo Police Department
Toledo Public Library
Trust for Public Land
University of Toledo
Walleye/Mud Hens Organization
We Are Traffic

22 A slight adjustment was necessary to the resolution passed in April. The original resolution is included along with an unsigned copy of the new resolution. The new resolution will be provided after submission.
Assessment of Project Risks and Mitigation Strategies

One of the key factors in the success of the GCR is the identification, assessment, mitigation, and management of risk. GCR partners are committed to taking a proactive approach in the management of the project risks as is shown in the following table.

Table 6: Risks and Mitigation Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk</th>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Likelihood</th>
<th>Mitigation Strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Loss of public funding</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>If awarded, Metroparks will move committed matching funds into a designated fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Compliance</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Site assessments and NEPA process will be complete prior to construction and taken into consideration during design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction Delays, including Covid-19 and Water Levels</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Potential construction delays have been taken into account in the project schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staffing to complete the project</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>TMACOG and partners have qualified and experienced staff to manage the project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Escalating construction costs over estimates</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Include anticipated escalation in budget proposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property ownership where right-of-way is needed could change</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Maintain ongoing communication with property owners</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TMACOG has the organizational experience to implement the Glass City Riverwalk project in partnership with the stakeholders described in this application. TMACOG has established systems in place to administer grant awards. Metroparks Toledo will assist TMACOG with project implementation, as the Metroparks regularly develops, bids, and manages construction projects using in-house professional staff.

Benefit-Cost Analysis Results

The Benefit Cost Analysis compared the costs of the project to the following economic benefits that will be generated by the project and quantified by the University of Toledo research team: reduced auto use, health, recreation, mobility, and safety. The analysis demonstrates that the quantifiable net benefits are $254 million based on a total project cost of $29,585,200 million, a benefit to cost ratio of 10.7:1. The detailed report and supporting spreadsheet is available in Appendix B.

Appendices

Appendix A: Letters of Support and Commitment
Appendix B: Benefit-Cost Analysis
Appendix C: Additional Materials

23 The additional materials can also be found at [http://www.tmacog.org/BUILD_Grant_2020.htm](http://www.tmacog.org/BUILD_Grant_2020.htm)