



July 11, 2019

Mary Kromrey
Executive Director
Ozark Greenways
PO Box 50733
Springfield, MO 65805

RE: Trail Funding Support

Dear Ms. Kromrey:

Mid-America Technology Alliance (MATA) supports the use of any available funding that can develop, improve, maintain, and create new trails in our area.

Over the last decade studies have continued to show that greenways and trails are engines for economic development, community revitalization, and a tool for attracting and retaining talent. Technology careers are often work-from-home positions that allow candidates a choice about where to reside, despite the location of the company. MATA is committed to providing an environment in the Springfield region that will attract and retain both our local technology talent and draw outside talent here.

"The link between well-designed trails and improved property values is strong. Trails are a positive community asset that people appreciate." *Rails to Trails Conservancy Aug2007*

Millennials are currently the largest generation in the US workforce and tend to prefer walkable neighborhoods and trail access. Brad Neumann of Michigan State Cooperative Extension articulated, "In the New Economy, it is all about creating communities with amenities and high quality of life to retain and attract talent. Talented individuals, who are mobile and can live anywhere, want a walkable, bikeable community to call home."

We understand that there is currently \$1.6 million in omnibus funding available in the Springfield region that could be used for trails. We would like to lend our support of those funds being used for the creation of new trails as part of the region's current trail plan.

Sincerely,



Jason Arend
MATA Board President