

2024



RAISE and Reconnect Toledo's Historic Neighborhoods

February 28, 2024

**RAISE Grant
Application**



Project Description

Executive Summary

RAISE and Reconnect Toledo's Historic Neighborhoods is the next step in the Glass City Riverwalk (Riverwalk), a transformative project in the heart of downtown Toledo in Northwest Ohio (see Figure 1). Taking advantage of the region's greatest asset, the Maumee River, the Riverwalk seeks to: (1) implement a shared-use path network; (2) support multi-modal transportation options; (3) drive economic growth; and (4) transform the riverfront and connect people to the river



Figure 1. Project Location

The purpose of this project is to **improve connectivity between residential neighborhoods and the Riverwalk by increasing safe access to affordable, active transportation options, including walking, cycling, and public transportation.** When it is completed, the Riverwalk will span 2.5 miles on each side of the Maumee River in the heart of the city, connecting neighborhoods, parks, museums, dining and entertainment venues, and the corporate campuses of some of the region's largest employers. This phase of the project seeks funding for multi-modal transportation improvements in two distinct project areas: the former International Park on the east side of the river and the Vistula neighborhood on the west side. Proposed improvements include a 12 foot wide multi-use path, benches, river overlooks, lighting, restrooms, shelter house, kayak launch, trees, parking, and access to green space and play areas.

The Riverwalk 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 that connects into existing trail networks and facilitates 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.

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. All of the census tracts in the project area are both Areas of Persistent Poverty and Historically Disadvantaged Communities. The plans for the Riverwalk have brought new focus and attention and investments to these underinvested neighborhoods.



Project Location

The project area is located in Lucas County Census Tracts 29, 30, and 48 (see Figure 2). All three census tracts are designated as Areas of Persistent Poverty (APP) and Historically Disadvantaged Communities (HDC) by the White House Council on Environmental Quality’s Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (see Figure 3). The project area is located in a central point of the region’s transportation network for vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists.

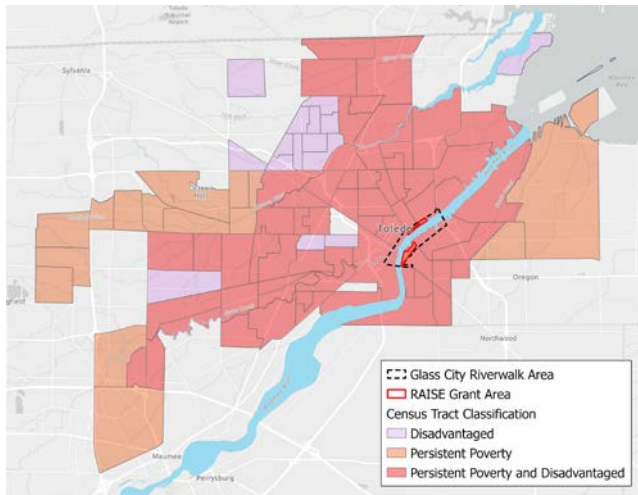


Figure 3: Areas of Persistent Poverty and Historically Disadvantaged communities

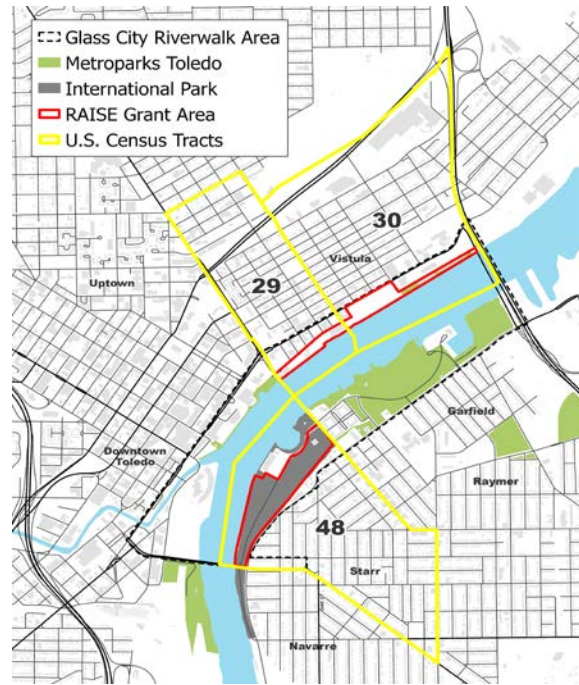


Figure 2: Project Area Census Tracts

The neighborhoods adjacent to the Riverwalk, including Starr and Vistula, which are the focus of this request, are primarily residential in character. See Table 1 for poverty level and median household income in the project area.

Table 1: Poverty Level and Median Household Income

	Census Tract 29	Census Tract 30	Census Tract 48
Poverty Level ¹	91.8%	77.5%	81.2%
Median Household Income	\$9,860	\$16,719	\$22,708

Source: USDOT Equitable Transportation Community (ETC) Explorer

Project History

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. The Plan focused 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. In 2018, ConnectToledo, a network of corporate and civic leaders from the community finalized 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 previously mentioned 2017 Downtown Toledo Master Plan.

¹ Percentage of population in the tract at 200% or less of the federal poverty level



These planning efforts laid the groundwork for a successful BUILD grant application in 2020² which funded the initial construction of the Riverwalk which began in August 2022. Ongoing construction from the Martin Luther King Bridge upriver to The Docks restaurant complex on the East Side, and from the bridge to Fort Industry Square downtown, will continue through 2024, opening in the first half of 2025. A circular bridge is under construction to carry cyclists and pedestrians from ground level up to the Martin Luther King Bridge, which will be renovated as part of a separate project by the City of Toledo. At the same time, public input is informing plans for another stretch of Riverwalk, from Cherry Street through the historic Vistula neighborhood to the Craig Street Bridge. Piece by piece, year by year, Toledoans will see Glass City Riverwalk become one of the region’s signature attractions, with open space, playgrounds and private entertainment venues linked by a five-mile multipurpose path.

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. In some areas, the infrastructure is disconnected from the later network and simply does not exist. Additionally, safe access for kayaks, canoes and paddleboards will be constructed on a river that is still used by ships serving heavy industries.

Transportation Challenges

Downtown Toledo lacks the appropriate amount of multimodal options to connect population centers to key destinations. The multimodal options proposed as part of the Riverwalk encourages increased human-centered mobility to better maximize the number of people, not just cars, which move throughout the downtown area. Throughout the project area, there is no accessible ADA access to the river, particularly in the Vistula neighborhood. These multimodal options presented in this application will 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. See Table 2 for further transportation data at the census tract level.

Table 2: Transportation Data

	Census Tract 29	Census Tract 30	Census Tract 48
Transportation Cost Burden	85.66% of income on transportation	50.04% of income on transportation	37.63% of income on transportation
# of Households with no vehicle	51.5% do not own vehicles	43.9% do not own vehicles	18.3% do not own vehicles

Source: USDOT Equitable Transportation Community (ETC) Explorer

The expected users of the 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

² B20 OH Glass City Riverwalk – PID 114239



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.³

Scope of Work

The RAISE and Reconnect Toledo's Historic Neighborhoods project's main goals are to **improve connectivity, increase safety, enhance quality of life, improve public health, and revitalize neighborhoods**. This project will provide an essential multimodal connection from some of Toledo's most underserved and under-invested neighborhoods to essential services downtown.

Project Area 1: International Park

International Park is located on the east side of the Maumee River, and was formerly 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). 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 was planning for Glass City Metropark, there was also preliminary planning for improvements to International Park as part of the overall master plan. Conversations continued between the City and Metroparks, and the property will be transferred to Metroparks in 2024 with the intention to merge it with Glass City Metropark. Glass City Metropark, which opened in 2023, includes the first leg of the Glass City Riverwalk.



Figure 4: View over International Park towards Vistula

Most of the existing infrastructure needs to be replaced in order for Riverwalk users to feel comfortable using the space. Initial funding for the Riverwalk in International Park was included in the 2020 BUILD grant. Work in this area has already begun, including new pathways, seating, playscapes and water access, and the remainder of the park, now in design, will capitalize on its natural assets and focus on shoreline access for boating, fishing and kayaking, as well as creating and restoring miles of multi-purpose trails. Additionally, Metroparks received Transportation Alternatives Program funding to construct the remaining portion of the multi-use path from the Docks Restaurants to the Anthony Wayne Bridge.

Requested RAISE funding for the former International Park will include user amenities along the Riverwalk including benches, lighting, restrooms and additional tree planting. ADA access and Universal Design elements for accessibility are included throughout.

³ Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (2019, October) *Active Transportation Transforms America*. Retrieved from <https://www.railstotrails.org/resource-library/resources/active-transportation-transforms-america>



Project Area 2: Vistula

The Vistula Neighborhood, on the west side of the Maumee River, is Toledo's original neighborhood dating back to the 1840's. Remnants of much of the neighborhood's rich history can still be seen within the historic neighborhood. As Toledo's original neighborhood, Vistula remains a downtown neighborhood near many of Toledo's major centers of employment. However, there are virtually no spaces for the community to gather and the Riverwalk will provide a free space for the community to come together.

Vistula is currently experiencing a renaissance. In the early 2000s, the Historic Vistula Foundation began to lead efforts to preserve, restore, and redevelop Vistula. This effort continues today with continued work to implement the recommendations of the 2020 Vistula Neighborhood Master Plan⁴. In that plan, the key findings determined there is great opportunity because of the proximity to downtown and the Riverfront. The neighborhood's two major pieces: the connection to the Maumee River along Summit and Water Streets and the residential piece of the neighborhood each feeds into each other, allowing residents to get to the riverfront and vice-versa. Furthermore, the Vistula Neighborhood Plan noted that the majority of parks and open space should be placed along the riverfront and there should always be public access to the riverfront.



Figure 5: Rendering of future Riverwalk in Vistula

Through the linear park which will develop along the Riverwalk in the Vistula neighborhood, there is over 1 mile of 12 foot wide shared use path. A portion of the path is already funded through a project in collaboration with the City of Toledo and RAISE funds will complete the remaining 4,184 feet. RAISE project funding will also cover earthwork, seawall, floating wetlands, parking, boardwalks, landscaping and amenities including shelter houses, kayak launch and kayak locker, playground, shade structures, benches, lighting, and restrooms. ADA access and Universal Design elements for accessibility are included throughout.

⁴ <https://toledodesigncollective.org/project-detail/vistula-neighborhood-plan>



Merit Criteria

Safety

Safety is the highest priority for this project, and the proposed infrastructure improvements that are part of the **RAISE and Reconnect Toledo's Historic Neighborhoods** aim to improve accessibility and safety for pedestrians, cyclists, paddlers, and transit users. With the increase in the severity of injuries caused by taller and larger vehicles to pedestrians in crashes¹ it is more important than ever to create distinct separation between cars and pedestrians. The Riverwalk will protect non-motorized travelers, which will hopefully lead to a reduction in fatalities and serious injuries. The designs in this project are a direct reflection of Secretary Buttegeig's call to action to create safer people and safer roads.²

Over the last few years, 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. This plan guides Ohio's bike and pedestrian transportation policies and investments in infrastructure and programs. The initial data collection that is part of Walk.Bike.Ohio 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%. A plan 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, like the Starr and Vistula neighborhoods.

From 2009-2018, Lucas county had the third highest fatal and serious injury (FSI) bicycle crash rate by population in the state according to the Walk.Bike.Ohio 2020 Bicycle Safety Report. Lucas County also had the second highest FSI pedestrian crash rate during the same time period. The same studies also show that 87% of the bicycle crashes and 80% of the pedestrian crashes occur in an urban area similar to the Vistula and Starr neighborhoods. The project areas also fall under the Walk.Bike.Ohio studies' distinction of "areas with a high concentration of vulnerable populations, including those living in poverty, older adults, youth, low educational attainment, minority groups, limited English proficiency, and limited access to a motor vehicle."

As shown in the project area (see Figure 1 and Table 1), there are high rates of crashes in key portions of the Riverwalk, and providing dedicated active transportation infrastructure will allow for safe access to transportation for residents and visitors.

¹ Ohio Department of Transportation (2020) Walk.Bike.Ohio Policy Plan.

² <https://www.transportation.gov/briefing-room/part-major-push-bring-down-traffic-deaths-usdot-launches-roadway-safety-call-action>



In the last 5 years, there were **20 pedestrian/bike incidents** and these trips would have utilized the Riverwalk. The lack of facilities with modal separation is an issue that creates the potential for the multimodal conflict, and the Riverwalk will provide opportunities to those that either need or want to travel by foot or bike in the downtown area safely. 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.

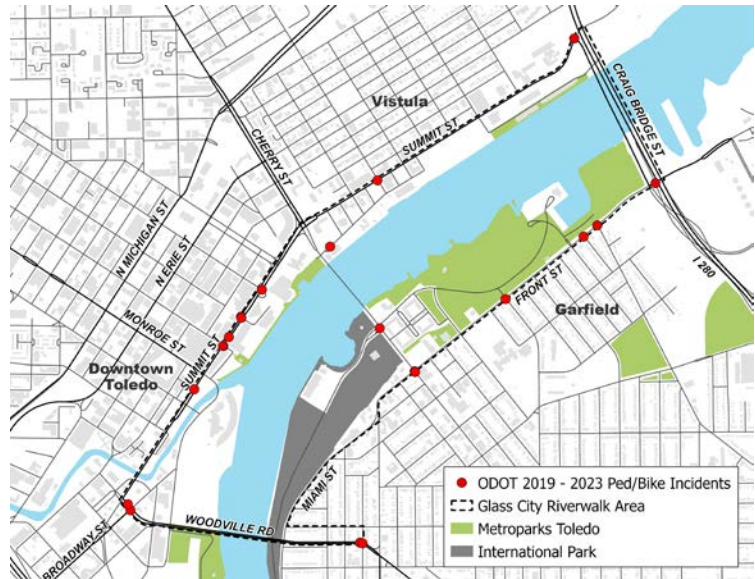


Figure 1: Ped/Bike Crashes in Project Area

Table 1: Non-PDO crashes by mode, Toledo and Project Area, 2019-2023

	Toledo	Project Area
Pedestrian	533	15
Bicycle	292	5
Other	11,224	341
Total non-PDO	12,049	361

Source: Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments. Further details are included in the Appendix.

The Riverwalk supports the work of the City of Toledo in implementing Vision Zero³. The plan, which was adopted in 2023, advocates that people bicycling are 3x more likely to die or be seriously injured than a person in a car, and people walking are 4x more likely to die or be seriously injured than a person in a car. Specific to increasing bike usage among residents, safety is often cited as a primary barrier to access. On both sides of the river, Summit Street and Front Street are seen as a barrier to accessing the river due to high traffic volumes and speeds with few signalized intersections, making crossing difficult and dangerous for pedestrians and other non-motorized road users.

This design will improve neighborhood access to the Toledo Area Regional Transit Authority (TARTA) transit hub located on the southwest edge of the project area. In public meetings in Vistula, bus transportation was identified as one of the strengths of the neighborhood. A separate multi-use path that excludes motor vehicles makes pedestrians feel more comfortable and likely to walk or bike. As stated in the USDOT Improving Safety for Pedestrians and

³ <https://cdn.toledo.oh.gov/uploads/documents/Public-Service/Transportation/2023-Toledo-Vision-Zero-Plan-Draft.pdf>



Bicyclists Accessing Transit Report⁴, “The actual amount of walking or bicycling that is possible within that walkshed or bikeshed is a direct reflection of the quality of the multimodal network.” The existing road access to the transit center does not include a pedestrian only path, and is a barrier to people who do not feel safe walking or biking near motor vehicle traffic.

The ever-growing Veo electric scooter program (detailed in Mobility and Connectivity) has increased the number of vulnerable road users, and the construction of the Riverwalk will allow a safe and separated multi-use path for these users to reach a number of key destinations in and around the downtown area.

Environmental Sustainability

Overall, the Riverwalk will fulfill a goal to increase the amount of downtown Toledo greenspace from 30 to 300 acres, as recommended by the Downtown Master Plan. This effort is more than just beautification, as it demonstrates we are a forward thinking community that values quality of life as a key component of a brighter future. As part of this project, there will be over 5 acres of greenspace added in Vistula.



Figure 2: Combined Sewer Overflow area in Vistula

Our environmental vision for the Riverwalk is to adhere to conservation principles to create a climate resilient landscape using nature-based solutions in Areas of Persistent Poverty (APP) and Historically Disadvantaged Communities (HDC) disproportionately impacted by climate change, pollution, and environmental hazards in alignment with the Justice40 Initiative. By planting trees and planting pollinator-friendly habitat, restoring natural areas, creating bioswales, and wetlands to improve the quality of our natural water source, the Riverwalk will have significant local and regional impact on the health residents in these communities and the health of the Maumee River.

The infrastructure improvements proposed in this project are expected to reduce transportation-related emissions, increase the resilience of public infrastructure to climate impacts, and improve access to high-quality lower-carbon travel options such as walking, cycling, and public transportation. The Maumee River, flowing into Lake Erie’s western basin, has the largest watershed of any Great Lakes tributary, and it is the single largest source of sediment and phosphorus to Lake Erie. It is vitally important to engage in practical nature-based 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. Vehicular transportation is a significant contributor to greenhouse gas emissions. Bicycling, paddling, and walking are all a zero-emission transportation modes. When infrastructure is

⁴ https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/ped_bike/ped_transit/fhwas21130_PedBike_Access_to_transit.pdf (pg.9)



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, and reduced greenhouse gas emissions. Shared-use paths like the Riverwalk that are intentionally designed to serve both transportation and recreation will lead to a reduction in driving and greenhouse gas emissions, thereby providing a higher return on investment. As reflected in Table 2, the census tracts which are the focus for this application have high rates of negative health outcomes.

Table 2: Negative Health Outcomes

	CT 29	CT 30	CT 48
Diesel particulate matter exposure (percentile)	75	72	77
Traffic proximity and volume (percentile)	84	73	71
Greater than or equal to the 90 th percentile for asthma/diabetes/heart disease and low income	Yes	Yes	Yes

CEJST: <https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/en/>

It is unlikely that the Riverwalk 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 is difficult to calculate.

This Riverwalk is expected to increase walking and cycling trips for recreational purposes, especially from the residential areas adjacent to the Riverwalk. This impact can already be seen with the opening of Glass City Metropark in 2023. Using Placer.ai software, we estimate that the park drew almost 12,000 visitors from the census tracts neighboring the park in just a 7-week period in June and July 2023. Extrapolating this data over a whole year, while adjusting for cold-weather seasonal reductions, we can predict over 70,000 visits a year just to Glass City Metropark from the census tracts immediately adjacent. Once the rest of the Riverwalk is constructed, it is safe to assume annual visits to the Riverwalk from the adjacent neighborhoods would be in excess of 100,000.

This Riverwalk will also improve the resilience of at-risk infrastructure through the repair of seawall on both sides of the river. Depending on the area and the current condition, the seawall will be removed and repaired or replaced and the shoreline will be softened. Furthermore, completion of this project will underscore the importance of innovative stormwater management and cooling centers within Toledo's urban center through nature-based, climate resilient designs. Various stormwater practices, depending on the site conditions, will include restored riparian buffer, vegetated swales near parking lots, utilizing native pollinator plants with large water retention capacity, reforested areas, street trees, and bio-retention facilities in planters along the Riverwalk.

The **floating wetlands** which will be installed in Vistula provide aesthetic, biological and water quality benefits. Aesthetic benefits include softening up hard edges of water ways (i.e. seawall, concrete, rocky edges) with green, natural and colorful planted floating islands. Biological



benefits include providing plant habitat above water for birds, pollinators, insects and reptiles and below water roots providing habitat for microorganisms, aquatic insects, invertebrates and fish. Water quality benefits are provided similar to traditional wetlands by uptake and removal of Phosphorus and Nitrogen from the water column.

Along with restoring water quality, 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. Additionally, these nature-based designs will prevent harm to aquatic life by contributing to water cooling, preventing runoff with increased temperatures from reaching the river. Vegetation, even small spaces, acts as ambient air cooling centers mitigating increased land surface temperatures up to 12 degrees Fahrenheit.⁵

Quality of Life

The proposed improvements expand active transportation infrastructure, in support of the Lucas County Active Transportation Plan⁶, that enable residents to access jobs, recreation opportunities, and various downtown services. Imagine a thriving, vibrant downtown with 300 acres of new and revitalized riverfront greenspace connected by five miles of multi-use trails spanning both sides of the Maumee River from Veteran's Glass City Skyway to the Anthony Wayne Bridge. By shaping community identity and serving as the backdrop to social interactions among different groups, parks and open spaces can help strengthen cohesion in historically segregated neighborhoods. 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 daily destinations.

Table 3: Project Area Demographics

	CT 29	CT 30	CT 48
Population	1,982	1,887	2,580
Unemployment (percent) (percentile)	99	98	95
Unemployment (percent)	35	21	14
Percent of individuals below 200% Federal Poverty Line (percentile)	99	99	97

CEJST: <https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/en/>

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 along the Riverwalk. Because they provide a safe environment, multi-use paths like those included in the Riverwalk may be the only place where many residents exercise.

In both the Starr and Vistula neighborhoods, most of the homes were built circa 1900s making them some of the oldest in the City of Toledo. According to the Vistula Neighborhood Master

⁵ (Oliveira et al., 2011). <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/eco.2126>

⁶ <https://lucascountyhealth.com/lucas-county-active-transportation-plan/>



Plan, over one-fourth of the housing stock in Vistula is vacant, and over time these units have endured poor maintenance, significantly reducing their condition and value. Healthy neighborhoods are vital to the success of Toledo and its people. Strong and vibrant neighborhoods create lasting communities rich with engagement, culture, and a strong sense of place. Mercy Health (see Letter of Support) recently awarded a \$290,000 Community Health Fund grant to create a community hub in Vistula in collaboration with the Vistula Foundation (see Letter of Support). They are looking to reinvigorate programming which include well-being programs, empowerment programs, a financial opportunity center, food pantry, a resource center, and after-school programs⁷.

Table 4: Lucas County Land Bank 2021 Survey

	Starr	Vistula	City of Toledo
% People of Color	32%	63%	38%
Median Residential Property Value	\$28,500	\$22,200	\$55,300
% Owner Occupied	53%	46%	70%

Source 2021 Lucas County Land Bank⁸

Life expectancy in the census tracts which are part of this application range from 62.5 to 70.9 while the state average is 77.6⁹ The 2021-2024 Lucas County Community Health Improvement Plan¹⁰ 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 38%, while obesity among high school students increased to 19%. Lucas County residents are adversely affected by 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, using Universal Design principals to better connect users of all ages to exercise opportunities.

When Glass City Metropark opened in June 2023, more than 200,000 people visited the riverfront park in just the first three months. Glass City breathed new life into a long abandoned waterfront property that was a relic of the city's past, replacing it with the first example of what the future holds for the riverfront. Almost overnight, it became the most visited of the 19 Metroparks and one of the region's top attractions. Starting with this new park, the next decade will see the Glass City Riverwalk develop on both sides of the Maumee River, connecting neighborhoods and transforming the core of our region – our riverfront. One of the main concerns residents have shared through community engagement efforts in Vistula is the

⁷ <https://www.toledoblade.com/local/city/2024/01/28/mercy-health-grant-revitalize-community-center-vistula/stories/20240124098>

⁸ https://assets.lucascountylandbank.org/uploads/documents/2021-Toledo-Survey-Booklet-FINAL_web.pdf

⁹ <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data-visualization/life-expectancy/index.html>

¹⁰ <https://www.healthylucascounty.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2021/11/2021-2024-Lucas-County-Community-Health-Improvement-Plan.pdf>



lack of a “third space.”¹¹ In Vistula currently there are no spaces for the community to gather, with no public school/grocery/library/gyms//theater etc. and, limited (unsafe) park space. Vistula’s Riverwalk will provide one of the open free spaces people can go to as a community.

The active transportation connections described in this application will provide direct access to several of the region’s largest employers, including ProMedica and Owens Corning (both provided Letters of Support). Increased pedestrian safety on TARTA bus routes will improve access to the broader range of employers and opportunities throughout the city and region.

The Riverwalk project is already encouraging long-term economic revitalization along with new job and housing opportunities for residents. Specific to housing, **in the 3 census tracts which make up the project area, between 18-52% of households do not own a vehicle**¹² and rely on active transportation or transit to access everyday needs. Rising housing costs puts additional financial pressure on families, leading to both housing and transportation cost burdens. The new facilities proposed as part of the Glass City Riverwalk provide efficient and safe transportation options for residents of all ages and abilities, greatly reducing the existing transportation burden created by limited options.

Table 5: Transportation and Housing Cost Burdens

	CT 29	CT 30	CT 48
Median Household Income	\$9,860	\$16,719	\$22,708
Transportation Cost Burden	85.66% of income on transportation	50.04% of income on transportation	37.63% of income on transportation
Housing Cost Burden	29.45% of income on housing	28.78% of income on housing	34.72% of income on housing

Source: USDOT Equitable Transportation Community (ETC) Explorer

As described in their Letter of Support for this project, Lucas Metropolitan Housing has four properties close to the Riverwalk, and is working closely with the partners for this project to provide services and support to residents. Additionally, a local developer has plans for a 47 units of market-rate housing along Summit Street immediately adjacent to the Riverwalk.¹³

Improves Mobility and Connectivity

The Riverwalk will improve mobility and system-wide connectivity by supporting and enhancing the existing pedestrian/bike trail systems and the TARTA public transit network. All of the

¹¹ Third places is a term coined by sociologist Ray Oldenburg and refers to places where people spend time between home (‘first’ place) and work (‘second’ place). They are locations where we exchange ideas, have a good time, and build relationships.

¹² USDOT Equitable Transportation Community (ETC) Explorer

¹³ <https://www.toledoblade.com/local/city/2022/09/16/new-apartment-project-planned-for-toledo-s-vistula-neighborhood/stories/20220916016>



proposed infrastructure improvements will meet ADA requirements and use Universal Design principles to ensure accessibility for those with disabilities.

The Riverwalk will facilitate “last mile” connections to TARTA network, due to proximity to existing bus routes, effectively increasing their catchment 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. All TARTA buses are equipped with bike racks that hold 2-3 bikes, allowing for an even greater population positively impacted by the Riverwalk.

The Starr and Vistula neighborhoods which are the focus of this application are served by TARTA bus routes 12 and 15. According to the Vistula neighborhood master plan, 8% of residents take the bus to get to work, providing a critical service that could definitely be expanded. Metroparks continues to work with TARTA to enhance bus stops near the Glass City Riverwalk, and further reduce access barriers to public transportation.

In August 2021, the City of Toledo and University of Toledo launched a shared micromobility service in partnership with [Veo](#). Since then, locals, visitors, and students have taken nearly 700,000 rides of which nearly 300,000 occurred last year alone. In 2023, nearly 25,000 unique individuals used Veo to reach work, school, entertainment, and local businesses all without relying on cars for those trips. According to Veo’s 2023 rider survey **36% of 2023 riders indicated that the availability of Veo has enabled reduced car use**. Another 23% indicated the question was “not applicable” due, presumably, to not having a car - which was reported by 43% of respondents. Veo has updated its fleet to include its seated “Cosmo” scooter which allows riders to sit, unlocking micromobility for riders who are unable to stand or are uncomfortable standing, and in many cases making longer trips more comfortable.

While almost all local Veo trips ended without a reported safety incident, Veo did have approximately 16 reported safety issues. One being too many, this highlights the need for continued investment in safe riding infrastructure. According to Veo, in Toledo specifically, surveyed riders far exceeded the national average of surveyed Veo riders, with nearly 60% of users saying they have been able to decrease or get rid of car travel altogether thanks to the availability of shared scooters and bikes. Of the Toledo users surveyed, nearly a third don't own a car. To highlight the tremendous potential for increased future use, at Glass City Metropark, Veo has reported about 38,000 rides pass through the park.

The City of Toledo is finalizing the “Forward Toledo¹⁴” comprehensive land-use plan that will help guide planning initiatives and projects over the next 10 years. The plan, launched in July 2020, includes the following strategies that the Riverwalk supports:

¹⁴ <https://toledo.oh.gov/residents/forward>



- Increase Connectivity: Provide a diverse transportation network that better connects people throughout the community.
- Support Public Transit: Promote public transit through policies that encourage more housing units along key transportation corridors.
- Walkable Neighborhoods: Encourage more goods and services within walking distance, promoting independence among residents and sustainable uses of land.
- Accessibility Opportunities: Explore how development and public infrastructure (i.e., sidewalks) can contribute to a more inclusive community.

The Riverwalk will be a safe means of connectivity and independence for everyone to access destinations, regardless of their age, ability or income. By supporting affordable transportation options, 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 engaged.

Economic Competitiveness and Opportunity

We know the Glass City Riverwalk is a successful driver of economic growth that helps shift our region into a healthy, sustainable, and interactive place to live. **Already the Riverwalk, currently less than 25% completed, has already seen close to \$400 million in new economic investments.** Investments in active transportation and access to greenspace is already catalyzing redevelopment in East Toledo. Glass City Metropark alone has the potential to drive an estimated \$1 billion in economic impact through private construction, increased property values, and the establishment of new business opportunities.¹⁵ With investment at this scale, it is essential to ensure the adjacent neighborhoods benefit and that the residents are able to stay in their homes as property values increase. In APPs and HDCs, there is often a concern that rising property values will lead to gentrification and displacement.

Over the last few years, a number of investments have been occurring in Vistula like the Lofts at Wonder Bread (\$7.5 million) and The Gateway at Lowertown (\$12 million). A recent article in the local Toledo Blade¹⁶ highlighted how developers are increasing activity in the Vistula neighborhood with plans for a new food market, addressing food desert concerns, and the Ostrich Towne development. Ostrich Towne, as noted in their Letter of Support, includes eight buildings with flexible space that can be customized into loft-style interiors, retail and restaurant space and banquet options. As noted in the article, the Vistula District developers have pointed to the success of Metroparks in creating spaces where people want to be.

Another example of this investment is in the potential family-themed recreation center along Water Street in the Vistula neighborhood. This 40,000 square foot building (see Figure 3) formerly housed the City of Toledo Streets, Bridges & Harbor Division. After acquiring the building as part of a development agreement with the City, Metroparks entered into a joint

¹⁵ Figure based on the assumption of a \$7 to \$20 return on investment

<https://www.grandrapidsmi.gov/Government/Departments/Parks-and-Recreation/Parks-and-Recreation-Strategic-Master-Plan>.

¹⁶ <https://www.toledoblade.com/business/development/2023/11/12/developers-pour-new-energy-into-vistula-district/stories/20231027123>



cooperation agreement with Toledo Pickle, LLC who is now assessing converting the building into a multipurpose facility that could include indoor pickleball courts, a restaurant, and various activities.¹⁷ Toledo Pickle LLC, estimates the project to cost \$7.2 million and would generate hundreds of jobs.



Figure 3: Proposed concept for Family Entertainment Venue

Investing in active transportation is a good deal for the American economy, and the benefits 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.

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, the region's relatively high quality of life and wide variety of recreational opportunities are critical factors that help attract and retain workers.

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. 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.¹⁸

¹⁷ <https://www.toledoblade.com/local/environment/2024/02/12/metroparks-moves-step-closer-to-creating-family-rec-center-in-vistula-district/stories/20240212093>

¹⁸ The report as well as an infographic summary can be downloaded at <http://www.tpl.org/economic-benefits-metroparks-toledo>.



Downtown Toledo is undergoing a dramatic transformation and the Glass City Riverwalk will complement the growing list of tourist attractions. 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 spending¹⁹.

When it comes to promoting local inclusive economic development and entrepreneurship through the utilization of Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE), Metroparks has extensive experience through our current BUILD grant. DBE goals for that project were set at 9% by ODOT which has a committee dedicated to this task. Metroparks is committed to making good-faith efforts to ensure that DBEs are made aware of opportunities to the fullest extent possible and to making information on forthcoming opportunities available to DBEs. **Last year, Metroparks was named the Ohio Minority Supplier Development Council's 2023 Minority Supplier Buyer of the Year for its intentional strategies to increase work with minority businesses.**

Metroparks hosts monthly roundtable meetings with community leaders to share future projects and connects project managers to qualified minority companies. Quarterly workshops create opportunities for staff and minority-owned businesses to connect.

The importance of creating good-paying jobs is ever-present with the Riverwalk. As stated in the Letter of Support from the Northwest Ohio Building and Construction Trades Council, this investment in infrastructure is anticipated to create a significant influx of construction jobs. At the December 2018 Metroparks Toledo Board of Park Commissioners meeting, resolution 132-18 authorized and directed the incorporation of project-specific project labor agreements with the Northwest Ohio Building and Construction Trades Council for capital improvement projects in excess of \$50,000.

State of Good Repair

The proposed infrastructure improvements that are part of the Riverwalk 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 while supporting all modes of mobility. This active transportation network, adjacent to accessible transit stops, utilizes existing right-of-way, prioritizing improvements within the existing footprint and will not require land acquisitions.



Figure 4: Water Street in Vistula

As noted previously, in the different project areas, much of the current infrastructure is in a poor state of repair (see Figure 4). Following the proposed improvements, which incorporates efficient design to reduce construction and maintenance burdens, the

¹⁹ See footnote above



Riverwalk will be maintained by Metroparks Toledo staff. Metroparks has extensive experience and capability in providing management of more than 200 miles of existing trails, and is recognized industry wide 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. Great communities have great parks, we were honored that our work was acknowledged with the 2020 National Gold Medal Award. That award reflects a broad national recognition of our great parks, and it spreads the word about the kind of place we as a community have created. 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 assuring Metroparks' ability to anticipate the resources to properly care for the Riverwalk.

Biking trips and micromobility options like Veo 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, especially in vulnerable communities, 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.

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 Riverwalk will enhance economic activity in nearby neighborhoods. The proposed parks and open space utilizing green infrastructure will benefit the community by helping to clean the air and water, retaining storm water, harboring wildlife and enhancing property values.

Partnerships and Collaboration

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. The vision of the Glass City Riverwalk has been shaped by more than a decade of community engagement. This application is widely supported by political, institutional, and community-based organizations, as reflected in the letters of support included with this application.

Founded in 1837 and the County seat for Lucas County, the **City of Toledo** is the fourth largest city in the state of Ohio, with approximately 270,000 residents. 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, and was re-elected on November 2, 2021.



An example of recent partnership and coordination with other projects is the reconstruction of Water Street in the Vistula neighborhood. This City of Toledo project, with funding from TMACOG, saw Metroparks assisting with design and bidding to incorporate the Glass City Riverwalk into the reconstruction plans. Construction on that project is slated to begin in 2025. Also, a recently approved Development Agreement between Metroparks Toledo and the City of Toledo authorizes the City to grant easements to Metroparks for the Glass City Riverwalk project and authorizes the sharing of services between the Parties to support the operation and maintenance of the Glass City Riverwalk.

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. 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 contributes 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.

The **Toledo Area Regional Transit Authority (TARTA)** serves all of Lucas County and Rossford with 19 fixed routes, paratransit transportation, and its TARTA Flex on-demand service. With routes now traveling to Oregon and TARTA Flex reaching Whitehouse, TARTA has greatly expanded the public transportation options for reaching many of the area's great Metroparks. TARTA looks forward to embracing electric and emissions-free vehicles through its TARTA Zero program, and continuing to find innovative and affordable solutions for northwest Ohioians looking to connect to the people, places and events that matter most.

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 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 \$1 Billion direct reduced iron production facility at the site.

In addition to these project partners, extensive community engagement has occurred with the neighborhoods adjacent to the Riverwalk as part of the planning for Glass City Metropark and for the BUILD funding for the Riverwalk²⁰. Building off the work of the 2017 Downtown Toledo Master Plan, when planning for Glass City Metropark, Metroparks committed to numerous public engagement efforts regarding the future park and broader Riverwalk. The stakeholder meetings were organized into four groups: citizen groups, community leaders, business, and government entities; each with their own respective questions.

The purpose of the meetings was to update stakeholder and the public on the park planning process, scope and schedule; gather background information that is pertinent to the creation of a new Metropark; and provide an opportunity for the community to share their thoughts about the new park including ideas about what will make it a success, connectivity, recreation opportunities, economic and community development impact and partnerships. In addition to



Figure 5: Community Engagement in Vistula (October 2023)

these project partners, extensive community engagement has occurred with the neighborhoods adjacent to the Riverwalk as part of the BUILD funding. In preparation for future phases of the Riverwalk through the former International Park and Vistula neighborhood, community engagement has continued while construction was underway on the BUILD-funded portions of the Riverwalk. Listening sessions were held specific to International Park to focus on the history of Toledo and the ethnic groups which make Toledo home. Specific to the Vistula neighborhood, an area in which Metroparks did not have much history, Toledo Design Collective (TDC) was hired to lead the community engagement (see Letter of Support).

²⁰ See Appendix for 2020 BUILD Grant Public Engagement Plan for ODOT



Goals for TDC include addressing concerns about Riverwalk access and increased connectivity. Every 4-6 weeks, representatives from the Vistula neighborhood, Metroparks Toledo, the design team, and TDC have met to ensure collaboration and outreach to as many people as possible in the community.

In October 2023, the first workshop and open house (See Figure 6) was held at the neighborhood's anchor Salem Lutheran Church with more than 75 people attending. Partners provided information about the Riverwalk, how its expansion fits in the neighborhood, encouraged community input through a series of engagement exercises, and provided participants with elements and images that they could mark as important to them. In addition, food, community resources, and children's activities were available.

A second workshop occurred just this month on February 21²¹, at The Friendly Center, offering two time slots for resident convenience. The format included engagement exercises, presentations on design intentions, and interactive stations. At the February meeting, residents were asked about how they would like to see the Riverwalk project balance the needs of recreation with the historic building preservation and the area's industrial heritage. After reviewing the proposed improvements, a driving consensus was a focus on clean, safe areas for families to gather. Metroparks will continue to leverage the extensive network of community relationships it has cultivated through participation in these planning efforts to ensure that community needs continue to guide the implementation of this project.

Innovation

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

Innovative Project Delivery

Metroparks is very familiar with breaking new ground to expedite projects. Metroparks Glass City Riverwalk BUILD²² grant project was the first federal aid project managed through ODOT to use the CMAR (Construction Manager at Risk) or CM/GC (Construction Manager/General Contractor) method of delivery. Metroparks Staff helped develop a procedure manual for this new non-conventional and expedited delivery method and worked side by side with ODOT staff to move this project through design to construction. An Independent Cost Estimator (ICE) proved to be a valuable part of the project and realized cost savings by performing an in-depth bid analysis. On the construction end of the project, Metroparks' consultant has been utilizing an electronic system and mobile app to maintain inspection reports, photos, pay quantities, change orders and project documentation. Electronic As-Built drawings are being maintained by the CMAR contractor. If awarded a RAISE grant, Metropark intends to use the CMAR method of delivery.

²¹ <https://www.toledoblade.com/local/community-events/2024/02/21/vistula-residents-asked-for-riverwalk-input/stories/20240221119> Retrieved 2/22/2024

²² B20 OH Glass City Riverwalk – PID 114239



Project Budget

RAISE and Reconnect Toledo's Historic Neighborhoods refocuses 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 healthy lifestyles, community engagement, and positive experiences that last a lifetime. The completed active transportation network will be a centerpiece for the community and with a number of other significant investments over the last 10 years in the downtown Toledo area, the Riverwalk will connect these investments to one another and serve as a major economic catalyst.

Metroparks Toledo requests a \$25,000,000 RAISE Discretionary Grant funding to be used for the construction of various elements in two distinct portions of the broader Riverwalk project. These portions of the Riverwalk are in both an Area of Persistent Poverty and Historically Disadvantaged Community. While being located in these areas of designation allow for RAISE application without a local match, Metroparks Toledo will provide the 17% local match contribution of \$4,944,319 using district capital improvement funds. The total project cost is \$29,944,319.

While the Riverwalk is a much larger project that will be completed in phases (see Figure 1 for the BUILD and proposed RAISE project areas), the requested RAISE 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. Regarding the level of design completion, at the time of this submission, 30% deliverables are complete and consultant teams are actively working toward 60% deliverables.

The Riverwalk is a major revitalization project with an overall budget of approximately \$230.5 million, requiring support from a variety of sources. The project has already secured \$110 million in levy support, \$37 million in federal/state/local grants, and \$9 million in corporate and individual philanthropic support. Additional funding is anticipated through Tax Increment Financing (funding begins in 2035). Metroparks issued \$34 million in direct placement tax anticipation bonds with very competitive interest rates to advance the timing of the project.

Projects of this magnitude typically are completed in phases of several smaller projects over multiple years. In order to responsibly plan for major initiatives such as this while maintaining our exceptional standards for core services to the community, Metroparks employs a robust financial forecast. The financial forecast is a long range financial representation of the comprehensive and strategic plans. It provides estimates of revenues, expenditures and fund balances of the general operating fund for the previous year, the current year and four future years. The forecast indicates the resources necessary to carry out the strategic plan and park operations while ensuring sustainability and appropriate fund balance.

Metroparks and our project partners have learned valuable lessons on managing cost overruns through construction of our recent BUILD project during COVID and extreme supply chain delays



and demand. To address potential cost overruns we have learned to maintain and hold tight onto our contingencies and project alternates until construction items with potential unknowns, such as underground work, are completed. We will work closely with our project team on value engineering such as the potential to reuse/recycle construction materials from nearby projects (temporary causeway rock, fill material, etc.) and stay within our budget allowances.

While not a part of this requested RAISE project, it is important to also note some other specific significant funding to wider Riverwalk project. Metroparks received a \$150,000 Coastal Management Assistance Grant (CMAG) from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and that is supporting the planning and community engagement efforts in Vistula. Metroparks is providing \$300,000 in match to that project. Metroparks worked with the City of Toledo on a Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) to support pedestrian and bike improvements on the Martin Luther King Jr. Bridge which is the central point of the broader Riverwalk. The City of Toledo will administer the project after receiving \$4,237,615 in funding and Metroparks is providing the match amount of \$1,483,659. A Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) grant to Metroparks for \$743,457 will fund the construction of a boardwalk underneath the Martin Luther King Jr. Bridge for the Riverwalk, and Metroparks is providing \$805,411 in match. A second TAP grant for \$1,000,000 will fund 0.6 miles of Riverwalk multi-use path in the former International Park, and Metroparks will provide \$1,337,748 in match.

The CMAG, CMAQ, and TAP grants are highlighted to further illustrate that it takes a coordinated effort to ensure that we make the most of the region's forward movement to transform our collective future. Together, we are accomplishing this vision of a united community that has a strong regional presence. The requested RAISE grant funds will 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. An investment in the Riverwalk is an investment in our region's vision to reinvent itself. All elements of the Riverwalk have been shown to be technically and financially feasible and the project is ideally suited to an appropriate progression from grant award to construction.

Cost Estimation

Projected construction costs were prepared by Metroparks Toledo staff in collaboration with the design teams working on the project. A stamped opinion of probable cost with a detailed breakdown of overall costs is provided here, and a breakdown by census tract is provided in the Appendix. Andrew J. Langenderfer, PE, a Senior Project Manager with Tetra Tech stamped the estimate on February 26, 2024. Costs were calculated based on 2026 dollars in line with the anticipated project sale and award.

Table 1 separates the costs of each project component. Table 2a breaks out the costs by 2020 census tracts. Table 2b breaks out the costs by 2010 census tracts. Table 2c breaks out the costs by urban and rural. Finally, Table 3 summarizes the overall cost and breakdown of the project within each project area.



Table 1: Federal and Match Funding by Component

Funding Source	International Park Funding Amount	Vistula Funding Amount	Total Funding
RAISE Funds	\$900,000 (3.6%)	\$24,100,000 (96.4%)	\$25,000,000 (100%)
Other Federal Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0
Non-Federal Funds	\$97,121 (2%)	\$4,847,198 (98%)	\$4,944,319 (100%)
Total Project Cost	\$997,121 (3.3%)	\$28,947,198 (96.7%)	\$29,944,319 (100%)

Table 2a: Cost by 2020 Census Tract

2020 Census Tract	Project Costs per Census Tract
29	\$7,348,454
30	\$21,598,744
48	\$997,121
	Total Project Cost: \$29,944,319

Table 2b: Cost by 2010 Census Tract

2010 Census Tract	Project Costs per Census Tract
29	\$7,348,454
30	\$21,598,744
48	\$997,121
	Total Project Cost: \$29,944,319

Table 2c: Costs for Urban/Rural

Urban/Rural	Project Costs
Urban	\$29,944,319
	Total Project Cost: \$29,944,319

Table 3: Summary Budget by Project Area

	Former International Park	Vistula
Earthwork		\$6,245,525
Surfaces		\$2,770,043
Bridges/Boardwalks		\$2,063,470
Structures		\$945,000
Landscaping	\$115,104	\$3,038,792
Water Features		\$4,157,300
Land Features		\$375,000
Amenities/Furnishings	\$662,460	1,130,000
Miscellaneous	\$27,215	2,638,225
Contingency	\$80,478	\$2,336,336
Escalation	\$111,864	\$3,247,507
Total	\$997,121	\$28,947,198



GLASS CITY RIVERWALK

DATE: 2-26-2024

LOCATION: City of Toledo, Lucas County, Ohio

TI PROJECT NO. 200-64854-23001

BASIS FOR ESTIMATE: [X] CONCEPTUAL [] PRELIMINARY [] FINAL

ESTIMATORS: AJL/RJS/AJF/TB/KT

WORK: Boardwalks, concrete and asphalt paths, asphalt parking lots, seawalls, recycled plastic lumber (RPL), outlooks, get downs, comfort stations, boat docks, kayak launches, curbing, earthwork, landscaping, aesthetics, & lighting

OVERALL OPC: CENSUS TRACTS 29, 30, 48							
ODOT SECTION	ITEM NO.	DESCRIPTION	SUPPL. DESC.	QUANT.	UNIT	UNIT AMOUNT	TOTAL AMOUNT
		EARTHWORK					
		ROCK CHANNEL PROTECTION AND WATER EDGE TREATMENT EMBANKMENT	149,311 SF * 5.5 FT/27 x 1.4= 36,775 CY (2:1 SLOPE)	36,775	CY	\$130.00	\$4,780,717.02
		EXCAVATION	COVE AREA = 63,337 SF * 15' DEPTH = 23,458 CY	35,187	CY	\$40.00	\$1,407,488.89
						SUBTOTAL =	\$6,245,525.91
		SURFACES					
		ASPHALT MUP	4,184' * 12' WIDTH	50,202	SF	\$5.00	\$251,010.00
		RECYCLED PLASTIC LUMBER (RPL) DECKING	BEHIND PORT AUTHORITY	13,265	SF	\$55.00	\$729,575.00
		CONCRETE WALK, AS PER PLAN	8" THICK	30,041	SF	\$14.00	\$420,574.00
		CONCRETE WALK - TYPE 2, AS PER PLAN	IMPREGNATED GLASS FINISH, 8" THICK	8,832	SF	\$16.00	\$141,312.00
		STAIRS FROM SUMMIT STREET		3,000	SF	\$40.00	\$120,000.00
		SUMMIT PLAZA		4,550	SF	\$40.00	\$182,000.00
		PARKING LOT - NEAR MAGNOLIA		20,398	SF	\$14.00	\$285,572.00
		GRASS PAVERS	1600*20 = 32000 SF	32,000	SF	\$20.00	\$640,000.00
						SUBTOTAL =	\$2,770,043.00
		BRIDGES AND BOARDWALKS					
		RAILING		1,600	LF	\$400.00	\$640,000.00
		BOARDWALKS	TOLEDO PICKLEBALL AREA	2,475	SF	\$230.00	\$569,250.00
		BOARDWALKS	COVE AREA	3,714	SF	\$230.00	\$854,220.00
						SUBTOTAL =	\$2,063,470.00
		STRUCTURES					
		COMFORT STATION		1	EACH	\$300,000.00	\$300,000.00
		SHELTER HOUSE		1	EACH	\$300,000.00	\$300,000.00
		SHADE STRUCTURES		3	EACH	\$75,000.00	\$225,000.00
		PICNIC PLATFORMS		6	EA	\$20,000.00	\$120,000.00
						SUBTOTAL =	\$945,000.00
		LANDSCAPING					
		PLANTING MIX FURNISHED AND PLACED		5,687	CY	\$80.00	\$454,960.00
		RIPARIAN PLANTING MIX, AS PER PLAN, S.C.D.		1,399	CY	\$80.00	\$111,920.00
		CLASS 1 LAWN MIXTURE		145,869	SF	\$0.50	\$72,934.50
		CLASS 4B LOW GROWING NATIVE GRASS MIXTURE		176,653	SF	\$0.50	\$88,326.50
		PERENNIAL BEDS		30,767	SF	\$18.00	\$553,806.00
		RIPARIAN PLANTING BED, S.C.D.		25,180	SF	\$18.00	\$453,240.00
		DECIDUIOUS LARGE SHADE TREE, 3" CAL.		115	EA	\$1,000.00	\$115,000.00
		DECIDUIOUS MEDIUM SHADE TREE, 3" CAL.		228	EA	\$1,000.00	\$228,000.00
		DECIDUIOUS MULTI-STEM SHADE TREE, 8'-10' HGT.		30	EA	\$1,000.00	\$30,000.00
		EVERGREEN TREE, 8'-10' HGT.		26	EA	\$1,000.00	\$26,000.00
		SHREDDED MULCH, AS PER PLAN		285	CY	\$75.00	\$21,375.00
		IRRIGATION - DRIP		30,777	SF	\$5.00	\$153,885.00
		IRRIGATION - SPRAY		145,869	SF	\$5.00	\$729,345.00
						SUBTOTAL =	\$3,038,792.00
		WATER FEATURES					
		SEAWALL	BEHIND PORT AUTHORITY	210	LF	\$5,000.00	\$1,050,000.00
		SEAWALL	AT TOLEDO PICKLEBALL	225	LF	\$5,000.00	\$1,125,000.00
		GET DOWN		1	EACH	\$1,000,000.00	\$1,000,000.00
		OVERLOOK STRUCTURES		3	EACH	\$250,000.00	\$750,000.00
		FLOATING WETLANDS		2,323	SF	\$100.00	\$232,300.00
						SUBTOTAL =	\$4,157,300.00
		LAND FEATURES					
		PEDESTRIAN TRELLIS FEATURE		1	EACH	\$375,000.00	\$375,000.00
						SUBTOTAL =	\$375,000.00
		AMENITIES/FURNISHINGS					
		SWINGS		10	EACH	\$35,000.00	\$350,000.00
		KAYAK LOCKER		1	LS	\$30,000.00	\$30,000.00
		KAYAK LAUNCH		1	LS	\$50,000.00	\$50,000.00
		MISCELLANEOUS FURNISHINGS		1	LS	\$500,000.00	\$500,000.00
		PLAYGROUND		1	LS	\$200,000.00	\$200,000.00
						SUBTOTAL =	\$1,130,000.00
		INTERNATIONAL PARK					
		TRASH/RECYCLING RECEPTACLE STATIONS		7	EA	\$2,500.00	\$17,500.00
		PEDESTRIAN LIGHT POLES		18	EA	\$12,000.00	\$216,000.00
		PEDESTRIAN LIGHTING	2388' LF (CONDUIT/CABLING/PULL BOXES/CONTROLLERS)	2,388	LF	\$45.00	\$107,460.00



GLASS CITY RIVERWALK

DATE: 2-26-2024

T1 PROJECT NO. 200-64854-23001

ESTIMATORS: AJL/RJS/AJF/TBK

LOCATION: City of Toledo, Lucas County, Ohio

BASIS FOR ESTIMATE: [X] CONCEPTUAL [] PRELIMINARY [] FINAL

WORK: Boardwalks, concrete and asphalt paths, asphalt parking lots, seawalls, recycled plastic lumber (RPL), outlooks, get downs, comfort stations, boat docks, kayak launches, curbing, earthwork, landscaping, aesthetics, & lighting

OVERALL OPC: CENSUS TRACTS 29, 30, 48								
ODOT SECTION	ITEM NO.	DESCRIPTION	SUPL. DESC.	QUANT.	UNIT	UNIT AMOUNT	TOTAL AMOUNT	
		COMFORT STATION		1	EACH	\$300,000.00	\$300,000.00	
		SWING BENCHES		4	EA	\$3,500.00	\$14,000.00	
		BENCHES		5	EA	\$1,500.00	\$7,500.00	
		LANDSCAPING	2388' *8' WIDTH* 2 SIDES	38,208	SF	\$0.50	\$19,104.00	
		TREES		96	EA	\$1,000.00	\$96,000.00	
						SUBTOTAL =	\$777,564.00	
		MISCELLANEOUS						
		LIGHTING - GLASS CITY RIVERWALK - VISTULA AREA	4184 LF OF PATH + 1200 LF*2 SIDES OF PARK AREA + 700' UP EXISTING PATH TO SUMMIT = 7284 LF	7,284	LF	\$240.00	\$1,748,160.00	
		FIRE PROTECTION	AT TOLEDO PICKLEBALL BOAT DOCK AREA	1	LS	\$100,000.00	\$100,000.00	
		CONSTRUCTION LAYOUT STAKES AND SURVEYING	1% OF PAY ITEMS	1	LS	\$233,508.55	\$233,508.55	
		MOBILIZATION	2.5% OF PAY ITEMS	1	LS	\$583,771.37	\$583,771.37	
						SUBTOTAL =	\$2,665,439.92	
		CONSTRUCTION SUBTOTAL						\$24,168,135
		CONTINGENCY (10%)						\$2,416,813
		ODOT ESCALATION TO FIRST QUARTER OF 2026 = 13.9%						\$3,359,371
		TOTAL COST SUBTOTAL						\$29,944,319





Project Readiness

Metroparks and the project partners have a demonstrated history of delivering on significant infrastructure projects. Through already established coordination and communication, project partners have engaged in an appropriate level of preliminary planning and site condition investigations to guarantee that the project is both technically and financially feasible.

Environmental Risk

If awarded RAISE grant funds, the **RAISE and Reconnect Toledo's Historic Neighborhoods** project is well positioned to immediately finalize design and steadily move through to construction. Carefully chosen qualified design teams are currently under contract to produce conceptual, schematic, design development, construction documents and perform due diligence tasks to properly complete design within both Vistula and International Park. At the time of this submission, 30% deliverables are complete and consultant teams are actively working toward 60% deliverables.

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. The recently completed Glass City Metropark and initial phases of the Glass City Riverwalk demonstrates our level of experience to construct the components proposed in this 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 Toledo possesses a high level of design expertise and project management skills for projects in both rural and urban areas.

Project Schedule

Metroparks is well positioned and ready to finalize design, complete environmental and right of way clearance, finalize permitting, and begin construction quickly upon receipt of a RAISE grant agreement. As per the project schedule, all necessary preconstruction activities will be complete to allow grant funds to be obligated no later than April 1, 2026, and completion of construction by the end of 2028. This schedule assumes a signed grant contract by the third quarter of 2025. The project is fully underway with the design and Metroparks does not anticipate any delays to slow this project.



Calendar Quarter	2024				2025				2026				2027				2028			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Project: International Park																				
Preliminary Design	■	■	■																	
Environmental/Permitting/Right-of-Way			■	■	■	■	■													
Final Design				■	■	■	■	■												
Advertising and Bidding									■											
Award									■											
Construction										■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	
Project: Glass City Riverwalk - Vistula																				
Preliminary Design	■	■	■																	
Environmental/Permitting/Right-of-Way			■	■	■	■	■													
Final Design				■	■	■	■	■												
Advertising and Bidding									■											
Award									■											
Construction										■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

Required Approvals

As shown in Table 1, Riverwalk partners are in the process of completing several local, state and federal approvals. The following table also identifies which permits are required moving forward.

Table 1: Required Approval Status

Document/Permit	Agency	Approval Status
Environmental Assessment	ODOT	Required
Site Plan Review	City of Toledo Plan Commission	Required
Maumee Riverfront Review	City of Toledo	Required
404/Section 10 Permit	US Army Corps of Engineers	Required
401 Certification	Ohio EPA	Required
Stream Construction Permit	ODOT	Required

The Riverwalk project is already in the Local Transportation Improvement Program (LTIP) and Metroparks will work with the Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments (TMACOG) to have the project added to the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

Environmental Permits

Formal NEPA activities for this phase of the Riverwalk will begin immediately after the signing of the grant agreement, and progress for the next year. We will plan to coordinate 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, 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. To expedite progress, upland portions of the Project will qualify for Categorical Exclusion (CE) and can be permitted and under construction while any in-water-work is under Army Corp NEPA review. The NEPA process is already underway for Vistula Water St. and for schematic concepts of Vistula. Metroparks anticipates parallels in design intent and infrastructure improvements shared by BUILD and RAISE will yield similar permitting success realized with BUILD.

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.

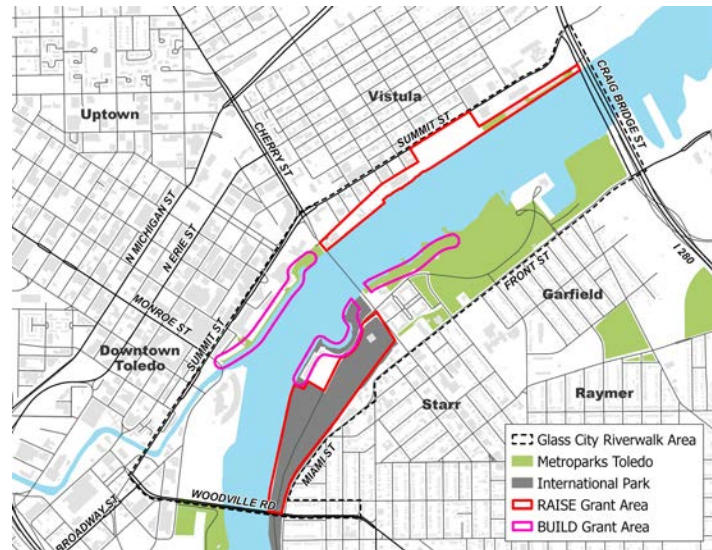


Figure 1: BUILD and RAISE Project Areas

Local and Regional Plans

As reflected in numerous local planning efforts, the general public supports a more walkable and bikeable downtown and has contributed towards the prioritization of these projects. Clear and consistent communication will continue as the project moves to construction through various channels including dedicated websites to the Riverwalk.¹

The 2017 Downtown Toledo Master Plan was developed by the 22nd Century Committee and is now under the oversight of ConnecToledo. The 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. 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.”

¹ Current websites include <https://www.glasscityriverwalk.com/> and <https://www.gcrtoledo.com/>



The 2017 Downtown Toledo Master Plan was updated in 2023. The plan highlights the more than \$425 million of catalytic projects currently underway since the 2017 plan, including the Glass City Riverwalk. As noted in the plan, “Metroparks has exceeded the vision of the 2017 plan by investing in 380 acres of new or renovated park space in downtown. Leveraging this community is a focus of this plan update².”

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 alternatives 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 and this work continued with the opening of Phase 1 of Glass City Metropark in 2020 and Phase 2 in 2023.

Board Approval

On January 24, 2024 the Board of Park Commissioners of Metroparks Toledo passed a resolution committing Metroparks to the proposed RAISE grant project and to meeting any required match.

Letters of Support

All of the letters of support for the Glass City Riverwalk can be found in the attachments. Overall, there were over 30 letters of support from elected officials, businesses, community groups, and other key stakeholders.

² <https://www.connectoledo.org/media/1331/23-1205-toledo-downtown-plan-update-final.pdf>. See page 9



Assessment of Project Risks and Mitigation Strategies

One of the key factors in the success of the Riverwalk is the identification, assessment, mitigation, and management of risk. Riverwalk partners are committed to taking a proactive approach in the management of the project risks as is shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Risks and Mitigation Strategies

Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Mitigation Strategy
Loss of public funding	High	Low	If awarded, Metroparks will move committed matching funds into a designated fund
Environmental Compliance	Moderate	Low	Site assessments and NEPA process will be complete prior to construction and taken into consideration during design
Construction Delays, including Water Levels	Low	Low	Potential construction delays have been taken into account in the project schedule
Staffing to complete the project	Moderate	Low	Metroparks have qualified staff to manage the project.
Escalating construction costs over estimates	Moderate	Low	Anticipated escalation factors have been included in the budget proposal
Property ownership where right-of-way is needed could change	Low	Low	Maintain ongoing communication with property owners, including the railroad

Metroparks has the organizational experience to implement the Glass City Riverwalk project in partnership with the stakeholders described in this application. Metroparks has established systems in place to administer grant awards, and 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 \$934 million based on a total project cost of \$29,944,319 million, a benefit to cost ratio of **37.11:1**. The detailed report and supporting spreadsheet is available in the Appendix.

RAISE and Reconnect Toledo's Historic Neighborhoods Website

All materials submitted as part of this application along with additional supporting materials can be found at: <https://metroparkstoledo.com/raisegrant>