trail + rail

A Greenway
Through the Heart of St. Louis



Rail + Trail

A Greenway Through the Heart of St. Louis

Rail + Trail is an informal study into the promise of building a bike and pedestrian greenway through the heart of St. Louis, MO along the active Mill Creek and Oak Hill rail corridors.

As the rail and the industry it once supported have waned, the space and spaces left behind create a timely opportunity to utilize a century of existing infrastructure to take pedestrians and bicycles safely and quickly through some of St. Louis' most populated areas, while re-activating historic industrial structures, and reconnecting communities long separated by tracks.

St. Louis

Rail + Trail
Corridor Alignment

Rail + Trail in Context

The Oak Hill Corridor

The St. Louis , Oak Hill and Carondelet

line aka "The Oak Hill" was built in 1886 and ran south from the MoPac line at Tower Grove Ave, winding through much of South St. Louis to Carondelet where it met up with the Iron Mountain and Southern Railroad aka "The Iron Mountain."



Industry quickly grew on the land adjoining the double tracked rail with residential neighborhoods growing just beyond.

In 1906, city legislation forced much of the line below grade and began the construction of numerous bridges crossing the corridor. The line was acquired by MoPac in 1910 and subsequently by Union Pacific.

Today that industry has waned, and the line has been reduced to a single track--leaving behind an underutilized corridor that runs through many of the city's most populated neighborhoods.

Rail + Trail in Context

The Mill Creek Corridor



The Mill Creek Corridor, named for the creek that once ran along this valley, is the oldest rail corridor west of the Mississippi River.

The Pacific Railroad, the first here, began construction in 1851. In 1872 it was renamed the Missouri Pacific Railway aka "MoPac", and remained as such until it was acquired by Union Pacific in 1982.

By then, most heavy industry had left the corridor, leaving behind a vast railway with numerous bridges and zero traffic crossings east of Macklind Ave.

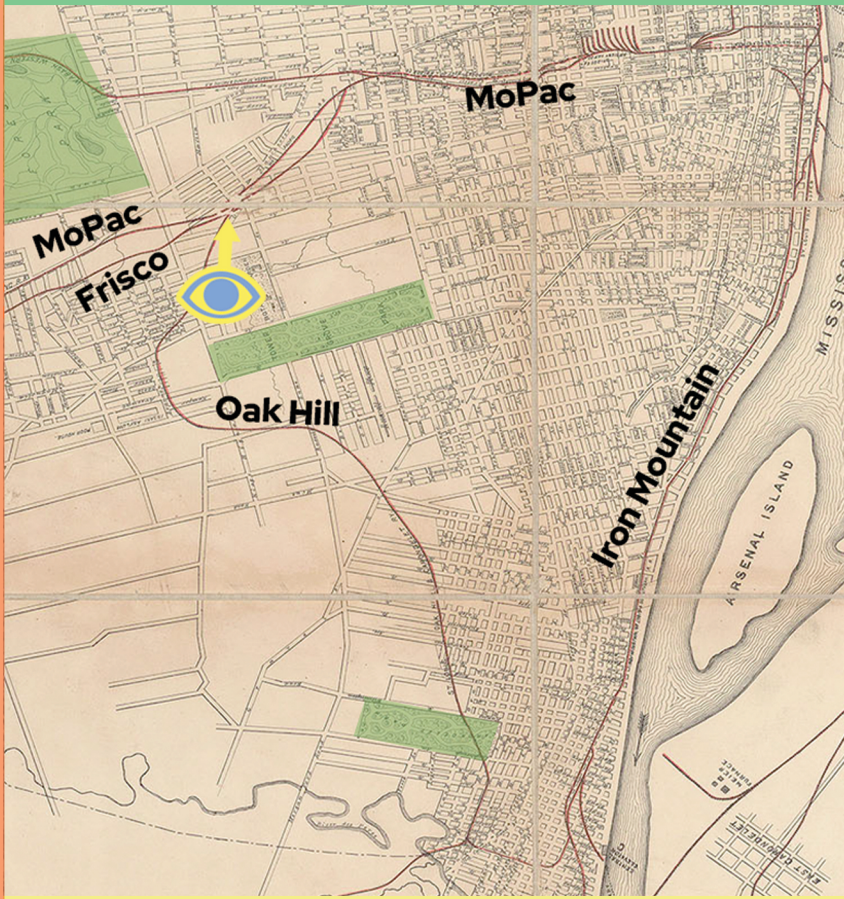
In 1999, developer McCormack Baron proposed the Chouteau Lake and Greenway Plan, an open space and redevelopment plan, which included, lakes, wetlands, and trails along much of the corridor.

Rail + Trail builds on ideas from this inspiring plan.



St. Louis

St Louis Railroads
1888





St Louis Railroads
2024

St. Louis



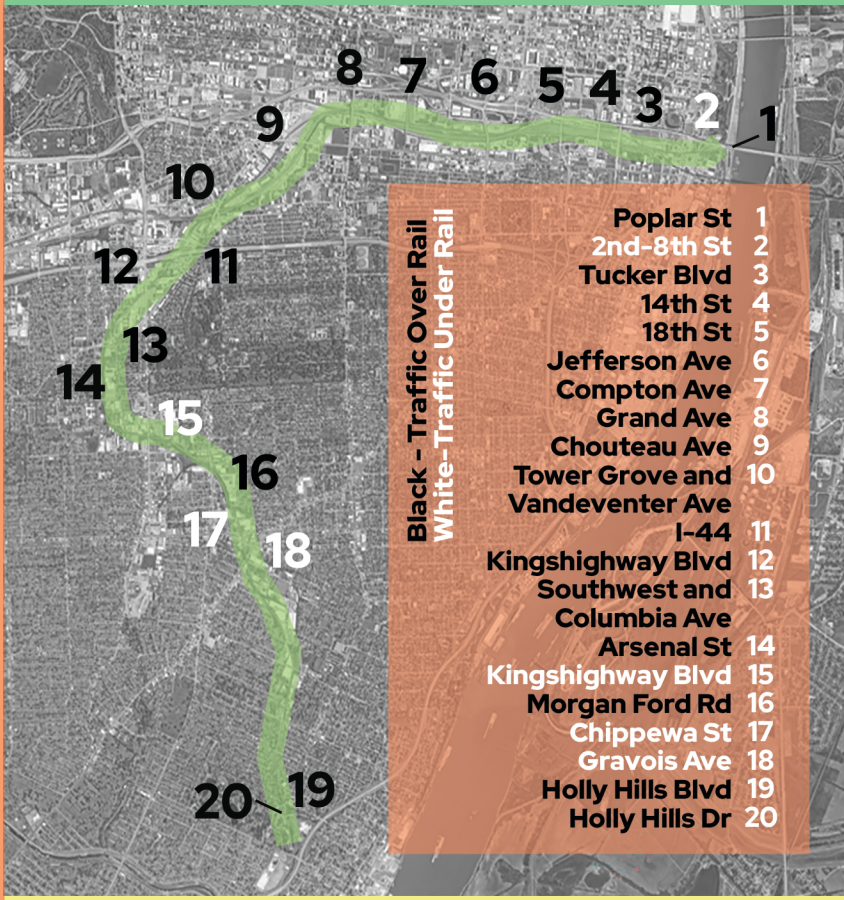
Rail + Trail In Context
Crossings



St. Louis

Rail + Trail In Context
Bridges

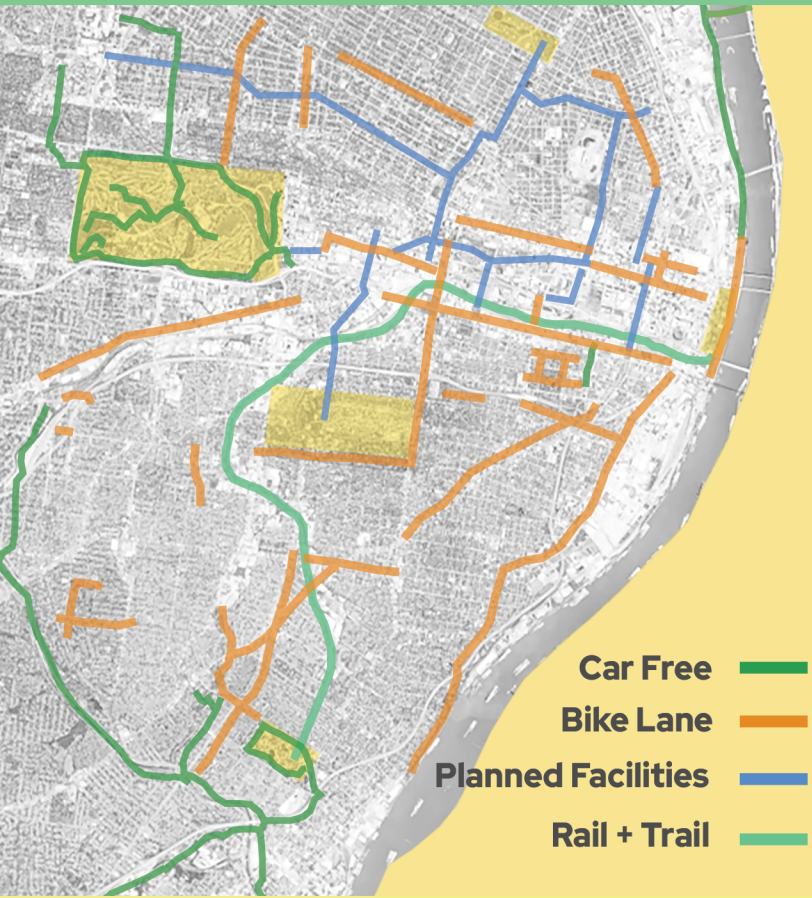
St. Louis



Black - Traffic Over Rail
White - Traffic Under Rail

Poplar St	1
2nd-8th St	2
Tucker Blvd	3
14th St	4
18th St	5
Jefferson Ave	6
Compton Ave	7
Grand Ave	8
Chouteau Ave	9
Tower Grove and Vandeventer Ave	10
I-44	11
Kingshighway Blvd	12
Southwest and Columbia Ave	13
Arsenal St	14
Kingshighway Blvd	15
Morgan Ford Rd	16
Chippewa St	17
Gravois Ave	18
Holly Hills Blvd	19
Holly Hills Dr	20

Rail + Trail In Context
Bike Facilities



St. Louis

Rail + Trail In Context
Greenways

St. Louis Area



Existing

Planned

Other Trails

Rail + Trail

Rail + Trail In Context
Entertainment Districts



St. Louis

Rail + Trail
Points and Nodes of Access*

St. Louis



*not accounting for existing at-grade crossings



Major Nodes of Access
Gateway Arch NP



Downtown

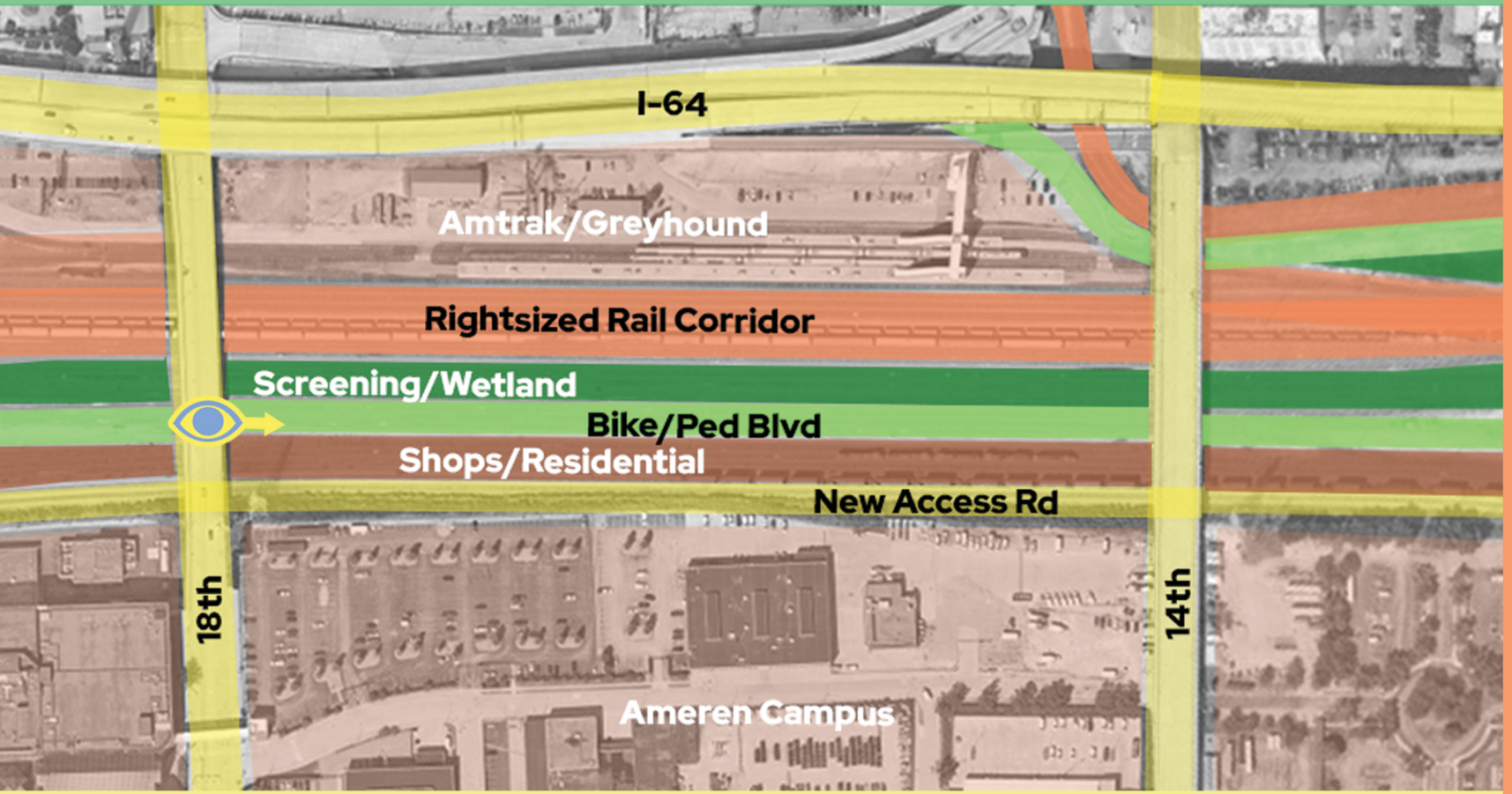


Pedestrian/Bike Hub
Chouteau Lake

Downtown

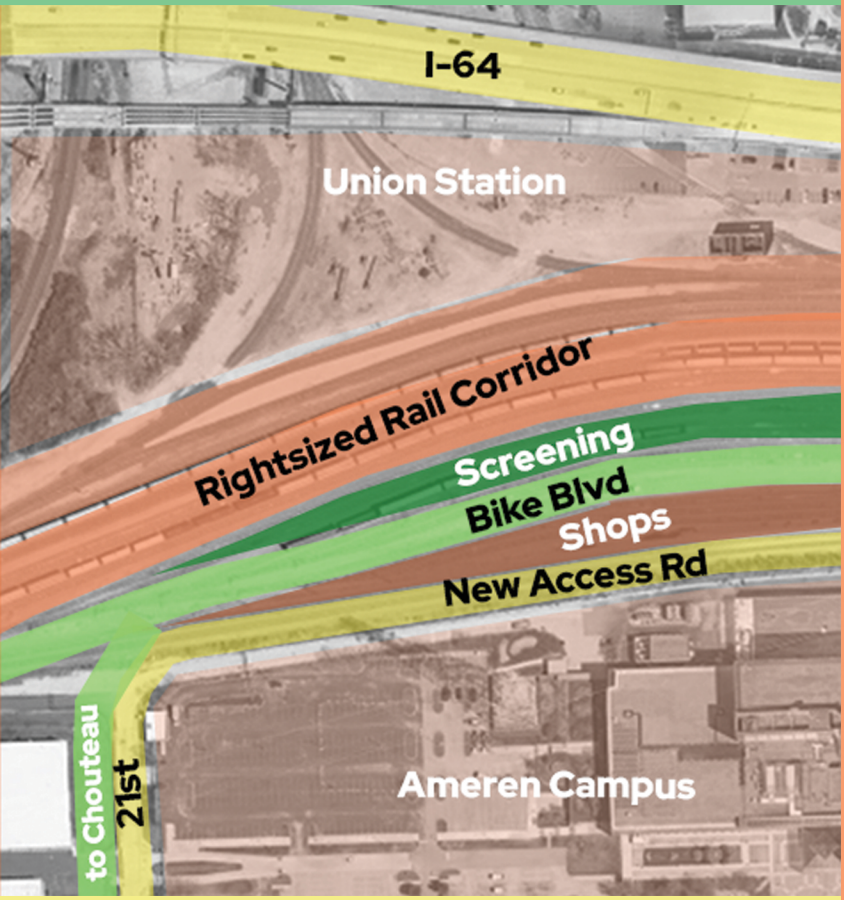


Pedestrian Corridor
The Railyard





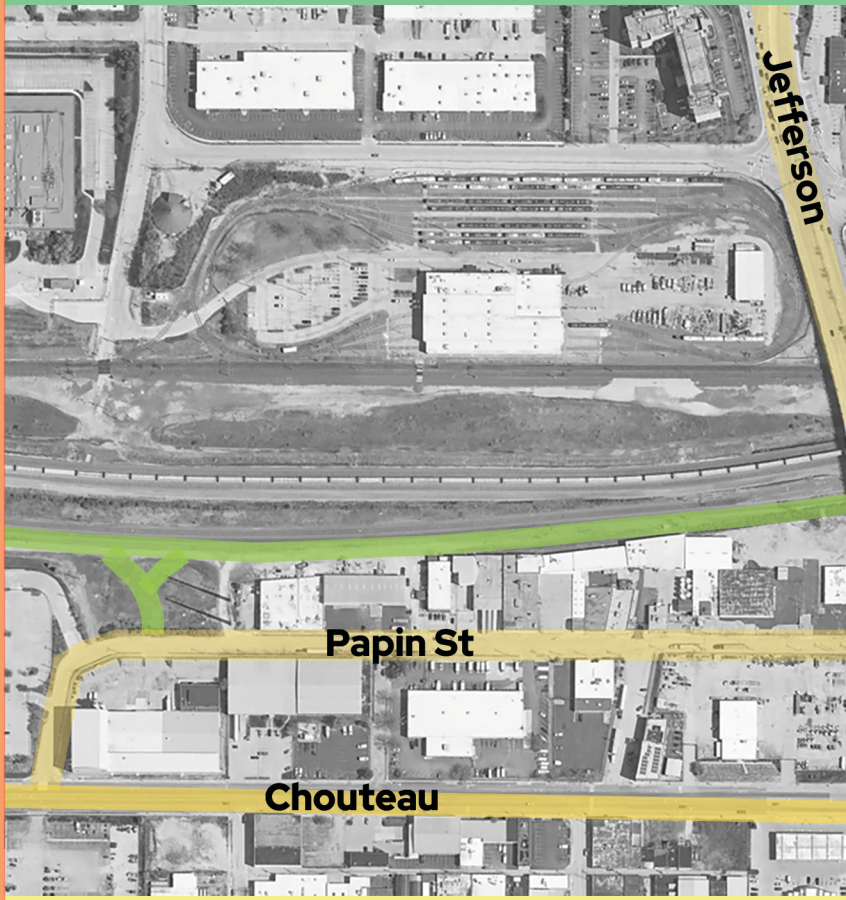
Points of Access
21st Street



Downtown

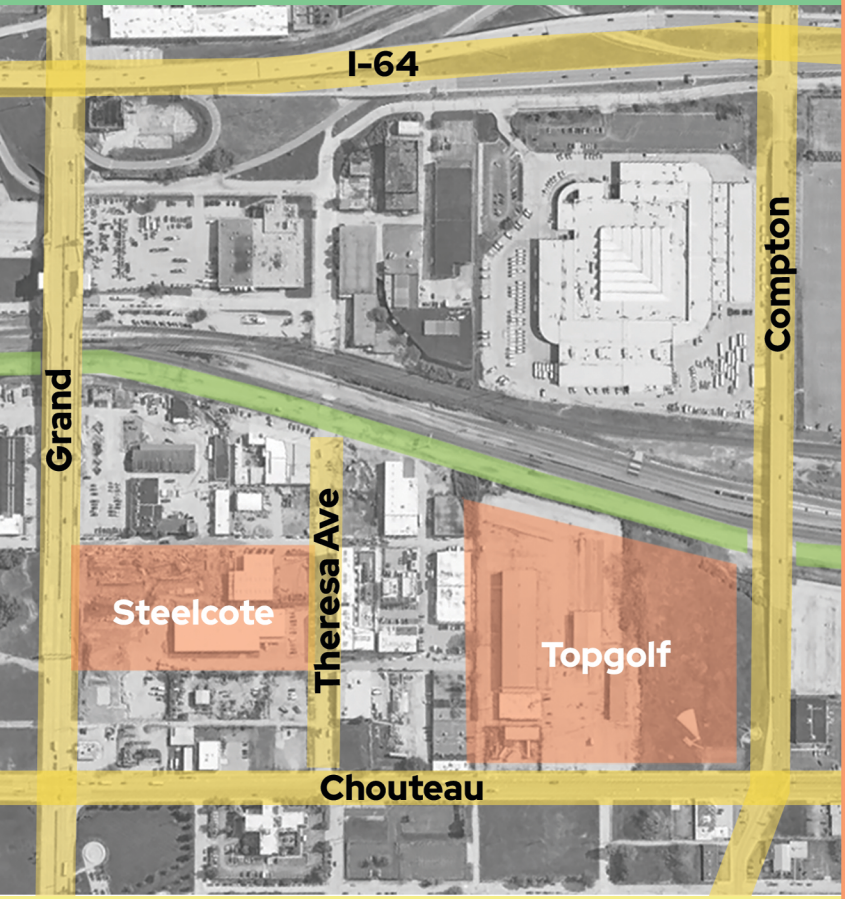
Points of Access
Papin St

Midtown



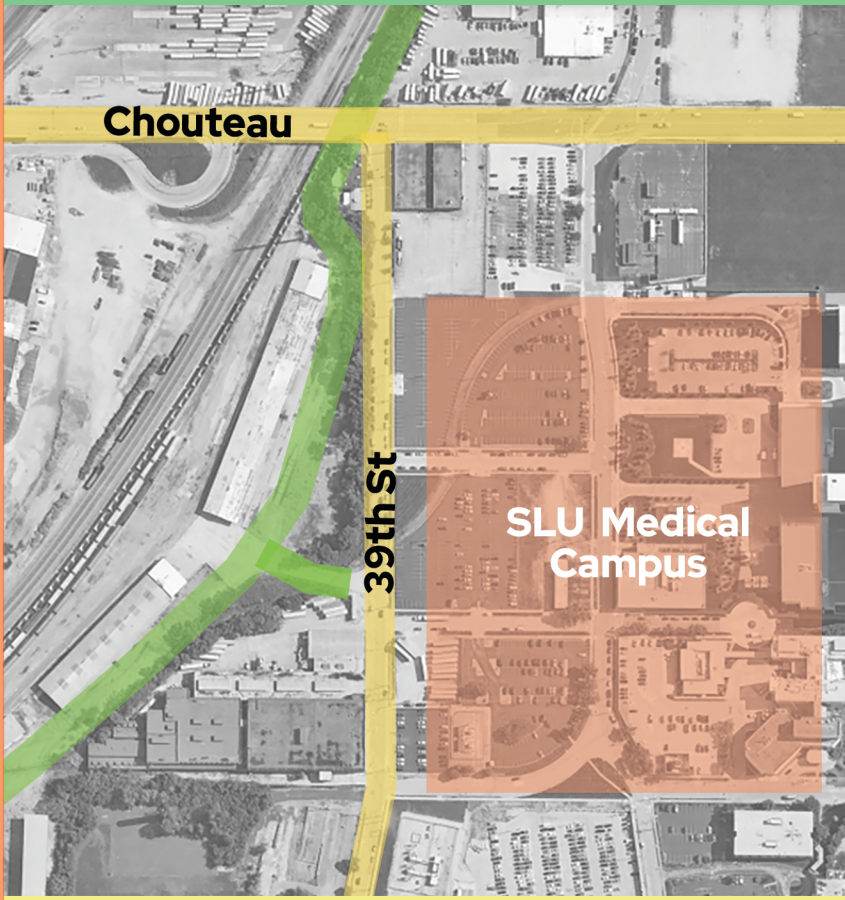
Points of Access

Theresa Ave



Midtown

Points of Access
39th St



Botanical Heights

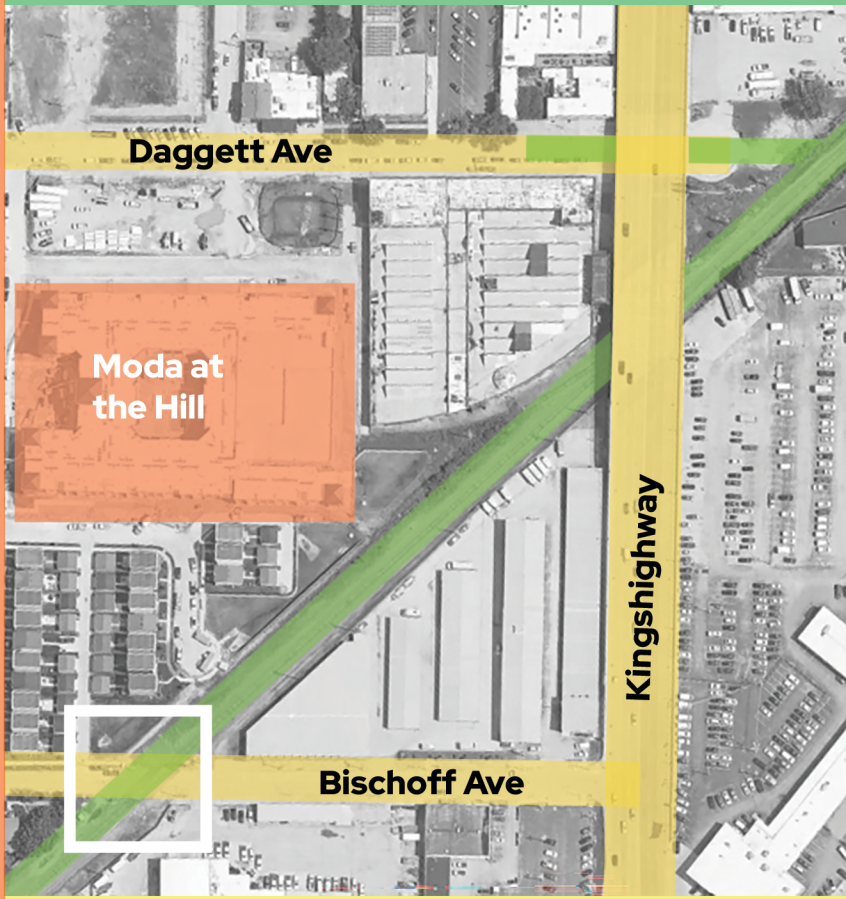
Major Nodes of Access

Tower Grove Ave

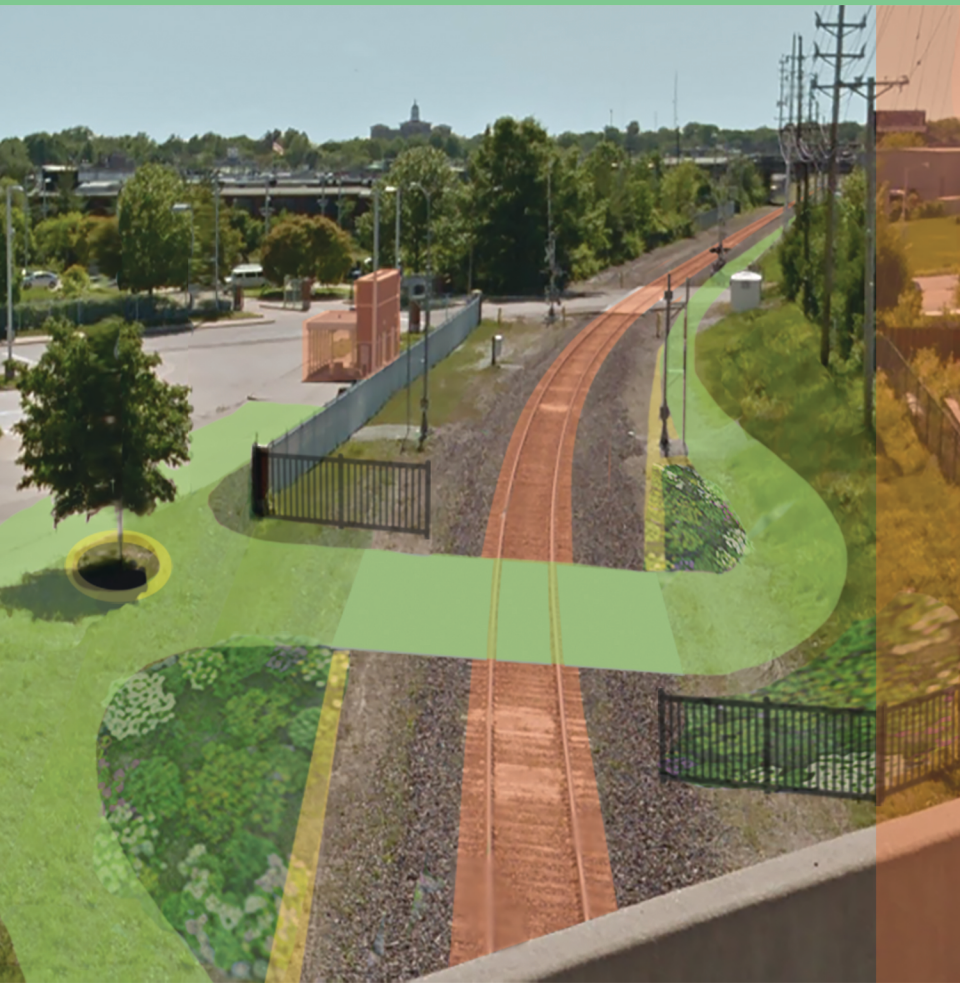


Forest Park SE/Bot. Heights

Point of Access Dagget Ave
+ At-Grade Crossing Bischoff Ave



The Hill



Southwest Garden

At-Grade Crossings
McRee Ave and Shaw Blvd




ARSENAL STREET

Point of Access Reber Place
+ Bridge at Arsenal St

Southwest Garden



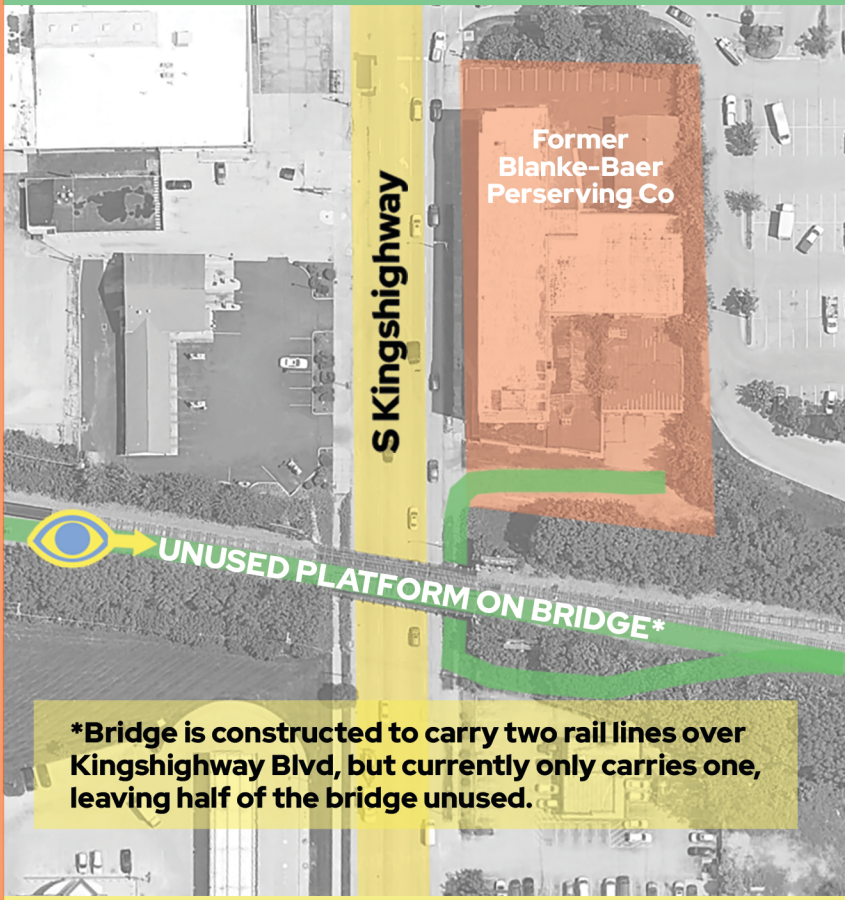
Points of Access
Brannon Ave



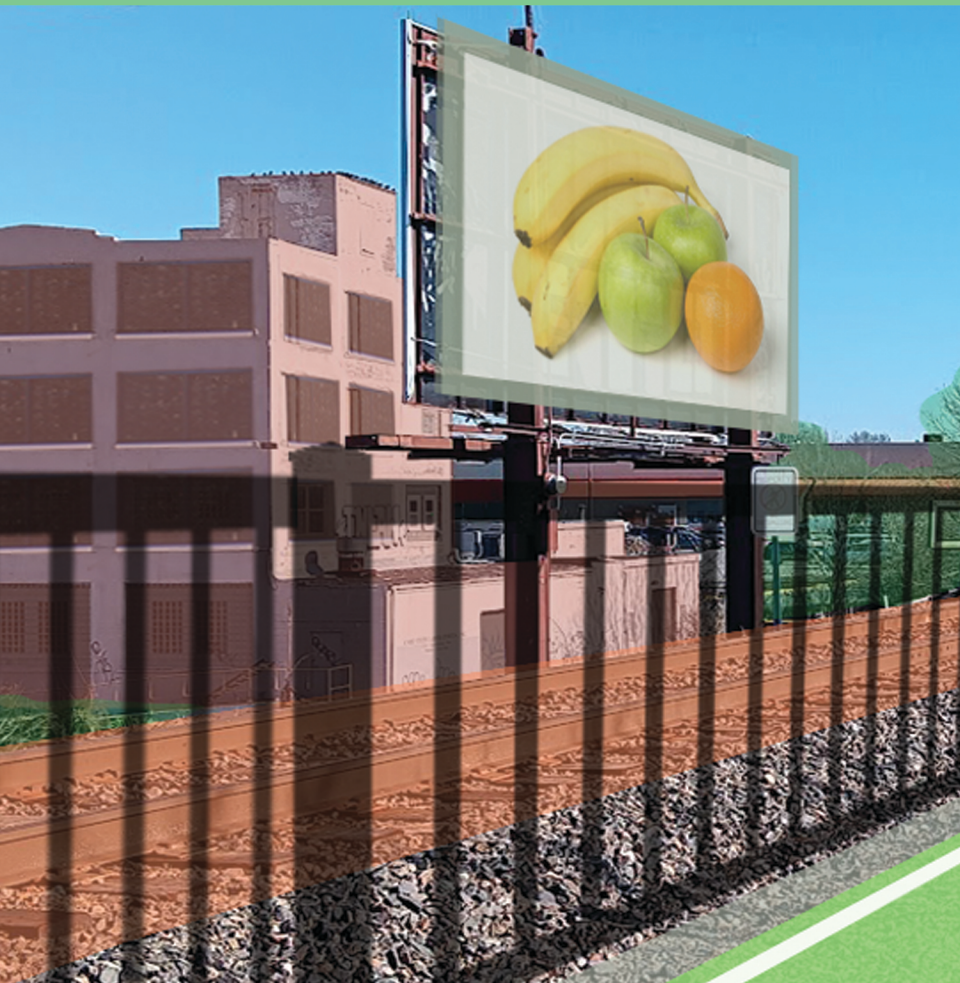
North Hampton

Tower Grove South

Point of Access + Bridge
S Kingshighway Blvd



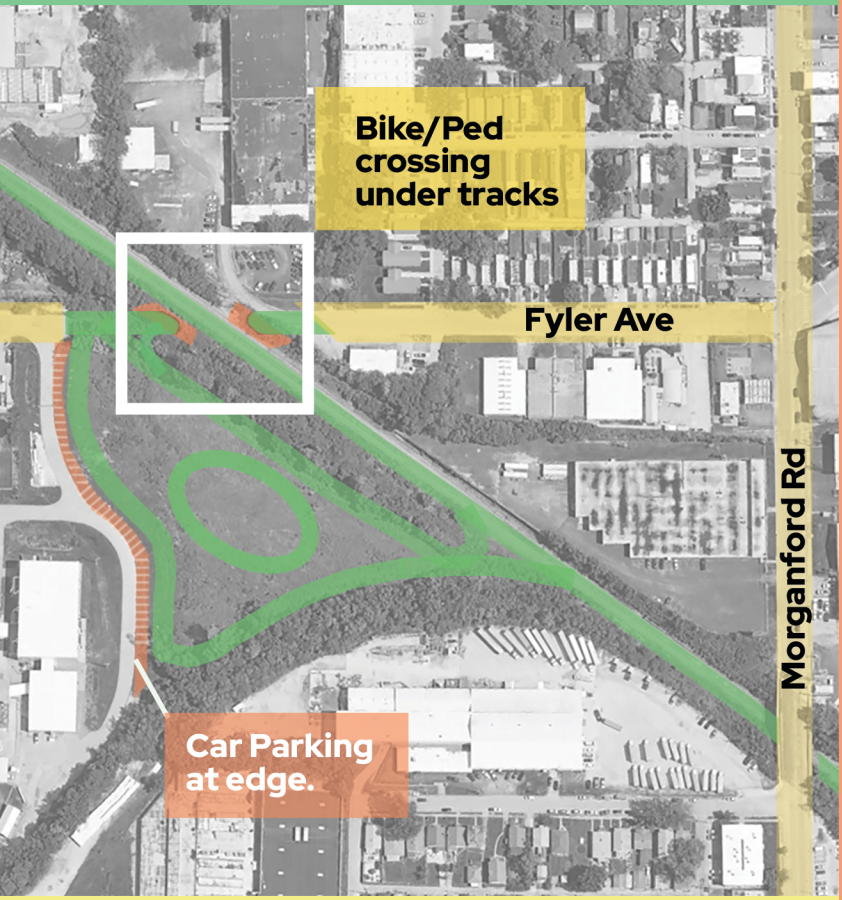
***Bridge is constructed to carry two rail lines over Kingshighway Blvd, but currently only carries one, leaving half of the bridge unused.**





Major Nodes of Access

Fyler Bike Park



Tower Grove South

Tower Grove South

At-Grade Crossing
Beck Ave



Point of Access Gravois Blvd

+ At-Grade Crossing Meramec St



Bevo/Dutchtown

Bevo/Dutchtown

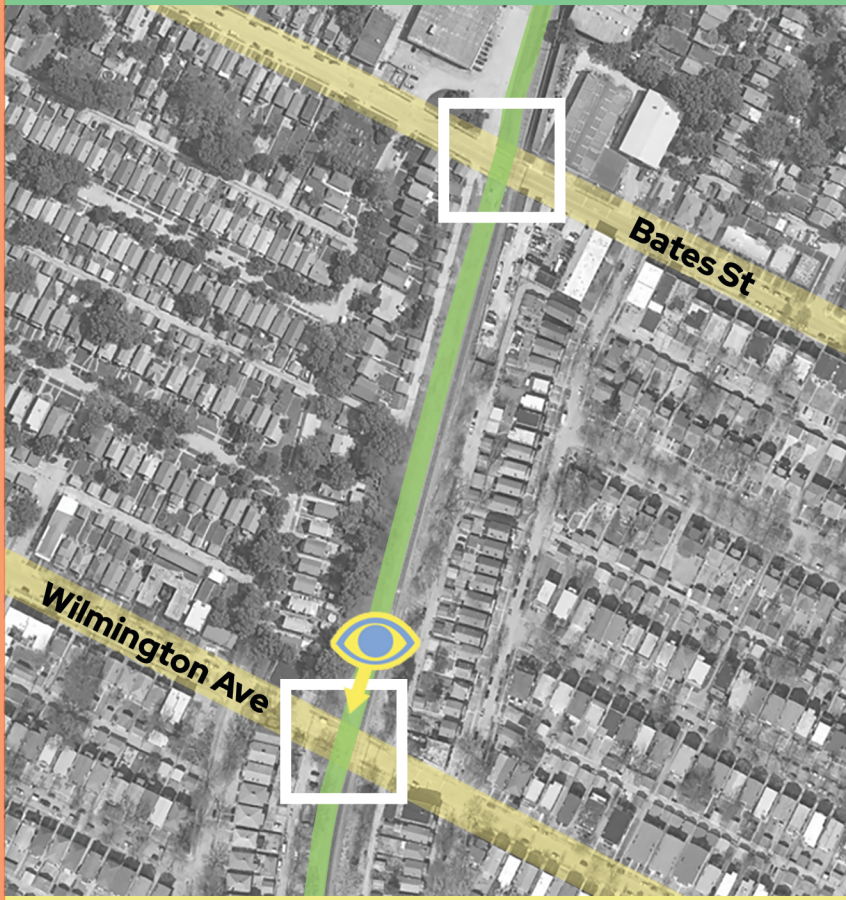
At-Grade Crossings
Gustine Ave and Delor St

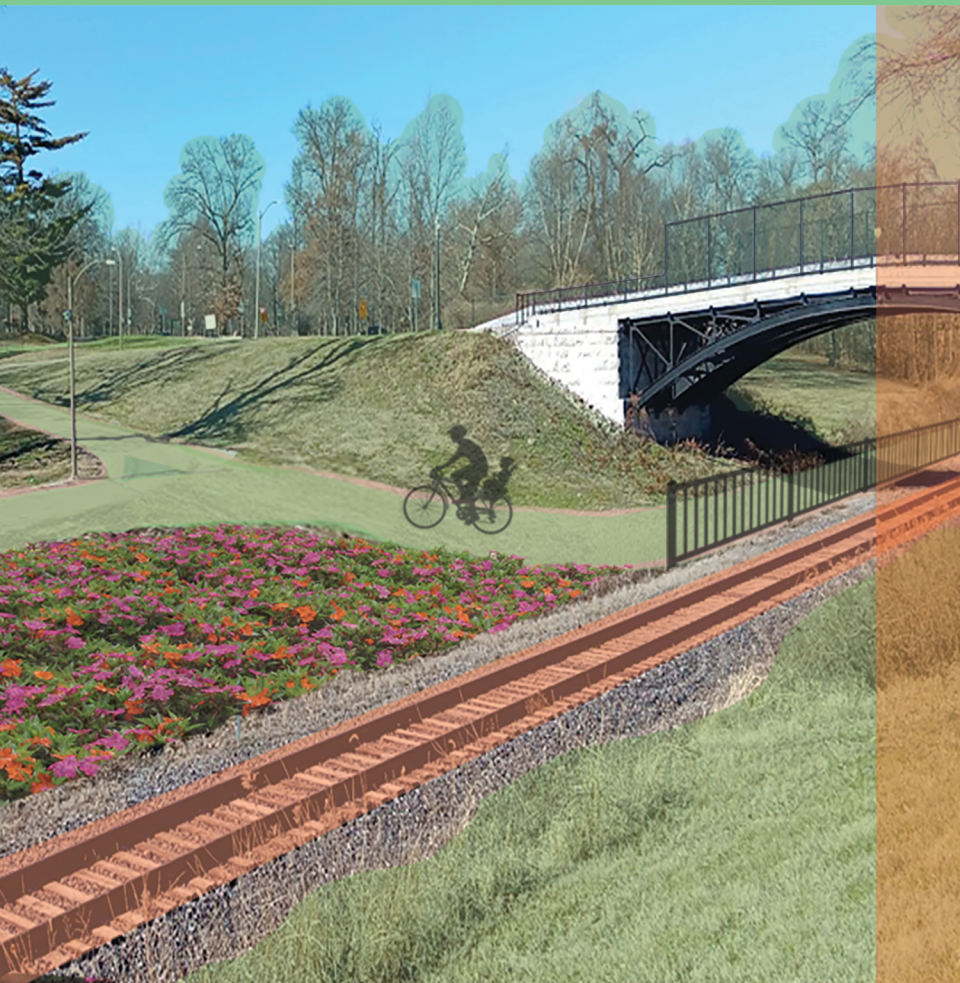




Holly Hills

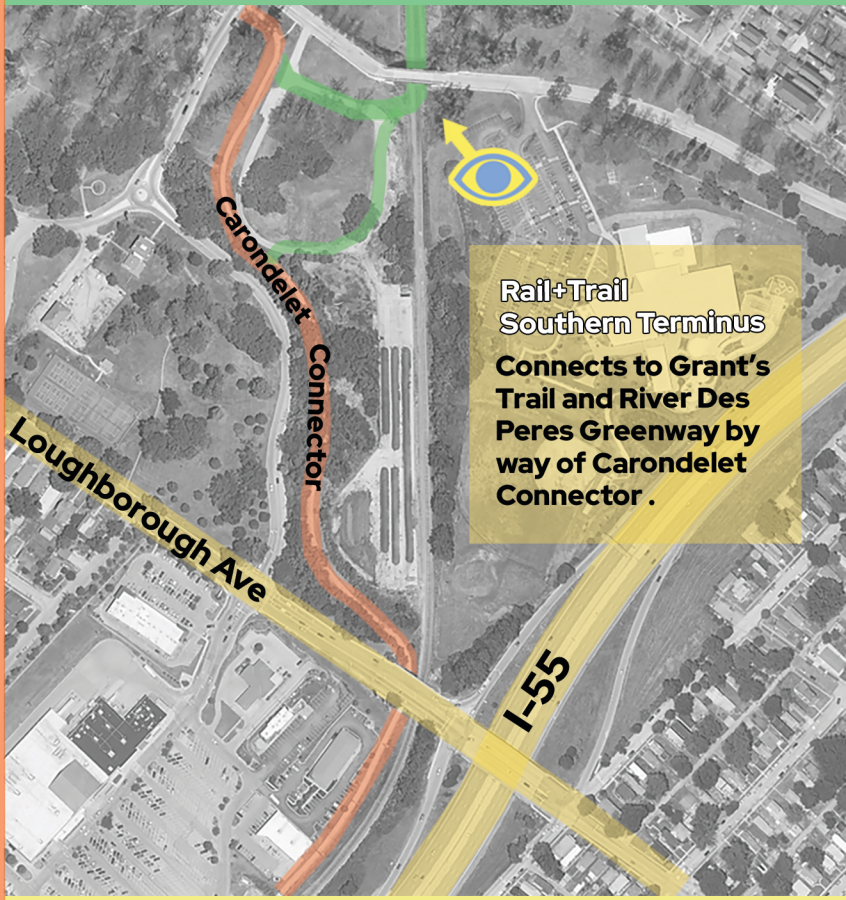
At-Grade Crossings
Bates St and Wilmington Ave





Carondelet Park

Major Nodes of Access
Carondelet Park



--"As of 2021, there are more than 399 rails-with-trails in the United States, with the length located along active railroad corridors totaling more than 1025 miles—and more are being built
each year."

-Rails-to-Trails Conservancy
railstotrails.org



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