

## **APPENDIX I: RAILS AND TRAILS**

### **RAILS-AND-TRAILS RESEARCH**

The Rails-to-Trails Conservancy recently reported that there are over 60 cases of trails coexisting with rail operations in 30 states nationwide. These "rails-with-trails", defined as bicycle/pedestrian paths located directly adjacent to active railroad corridors, vary in characteristics from a few slow-moving short-haul freight trains weekly to high-frequency Amtrak trains traveling as fast as 150 miles per hour.

In the Southwest Study area there are three rails-with-trails segments. These include the Cedar Lakes Trail in Minneapolis that is adjacent to the BNSF freight rail line, the Kenilworth Trail in Minneapolis that is adjacent to the CP freight rail line, and the Southwest Trail in St. Louis Park and Hopkins that is adjacent to the CP freight rail line.

#### ***RAILS-TO-TRAILS CONSERVANCY SURVEY RESULTS***

*The Rails-to-Trails Conservancy is a nonprofit organization with more than 100,000 members whose purpose is create a nationwide network of public trails from former rail lines and connecting corridors. In 1999, the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy compiled information regarding the design, management and operating characteristics of 61 rails-with-trails corridors. The following section summarizes the results of this survey.*

#### **Overall Statistics**

- From 1996 to 2000, the number of rails-with-trails increased from 37 to 61. The resulting mileage increase was from 151 miles in 1996 to 239 miles in 2000.
- Of all rails-with-trails nearly 40% pass through suburban areas, over 60 percent pass through residential areas, and nearly 10 percent passed through nature preserves.
- Typically, trails adjacent to rail lines are 10 feet wide with the average distance between the active rail track and the trail (as measured from the centerline to the nearest edge of the trail) of 33 feet.
- In approximately 71% of rails-with-trails a barrier separates the tracks and trails. Barriers most often used include vegetation, grade separation, a chain link fence and a ditch.

#### **Rail Operation**

- Rail operations adjacent to trails included freight rail service as well as transit (light rail, trolley, heavy rail)
- The number of freight trains operating within the rails-with-trails ranged from one to 9 trains per hour.
- The range of train speeds ranged from five to 150 miles per hour with the average speed of 32 miles per hour.

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### **Trail Use**

- The average number of trail users in 2000 was 240,409— ranging from 16,000-1.5 million users per year.
- One accident occurred as a direct result of a trail being adjacent to a rail line. This accident occurred at an at-grade crossing on the Illinois Prairie Path when a bicyclist ignored warning bells and flashing red lights and rode around a lowered crossing gate and was injured in a collision with a train.

### **LOCAL EXAMPLES**

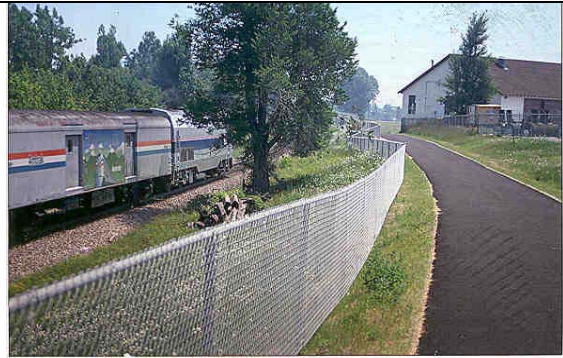
There are three examples of Rails-with-Trails corridors in Hennepin County. The Cedar Lakes Trails is located in Minneapolis, the Kenilworth Trail is also located in Minneapolis, and the Southwest Trail where rails coexist with trails occurs in the cities of St. Louis Park and Hopkins. All three of these Rails-with-Trails corridors have active freight rail service adjacent to the biking/pedestrian trail.

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**Photos of Rails-and-Trails**



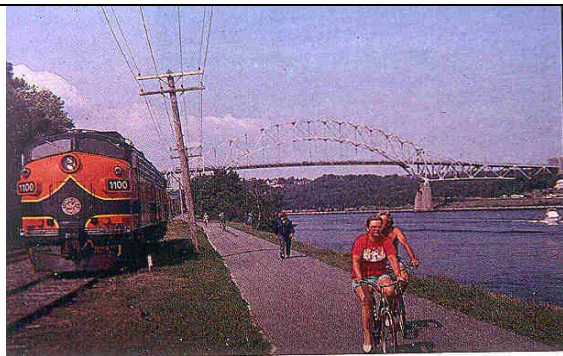
**Kenilworth Trail, Minneapolis**



**Amtrak in Platt**



**Baltimore, Maryland**



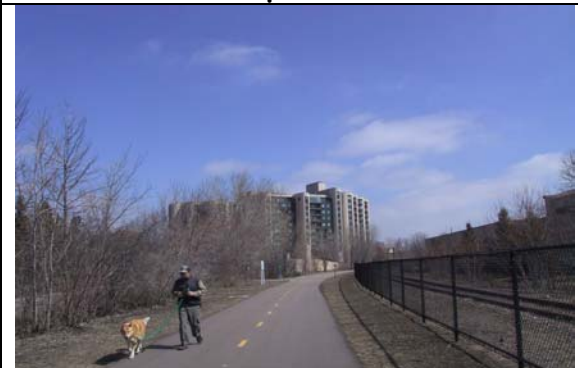
**Cape Cod, Rhode Island**



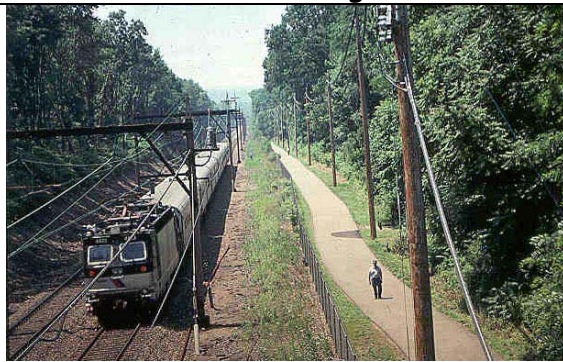
**Newport, RI**



**Strasbourg**



**Kenilworth Trail, Minneapolis**



**Traction Line**

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