

Kent County Parks

Creating Accessible and Safe Recreation Opportunities



*Since the first phase of the **Fred Meijer M-6 Trail** was completed in 2008, it's become one of the **most popular trails in the County.***

The Fred Meijer M-6 Trail is a recreational trail stretching between Kent Trails on the west and the Paul Henry Thornapple Trail on the east. The trail follows the corridor of the M-6 highway and ties residential, schools and commercial areas together. Currently, trail users must cross Division Avenue at street level with the nearest traffic light nearly a half-mile away. The original plans called for a pedestrian overpass over Division, however funding limitations kept that phase from being completed. While no safety incidences have been reported, crossing the five-lane road and requiring the user to follow narrow road-side sidewalks is a safety hazard. Kent County Parks is attempting to address this safety issue with two new phases of construction. Making these improvements will increase the usability of the trail for people of all ages.

The first phase is to construct a trail bridge over Division Avenue. This bridge will be completed with a grant from Grand Rapids Community Foundation. This grant will leverage an additional \$357,780 in Federal funds that have been earmarked for the project.

As the population continues to expand along the M-6 corridor, this trail serves as a valuable recreational asset and a key linkage between Kent Trails (leading into Millennium Park and John Ball Park) and the Thornapple Trail (which reaches through Caledonia and into Barry County.)

Grant Facts

Organization: Kent County Parks Dept.

Grant amount: \$100,000

Grant Purpose: To construct a bridge across Division Avenue to provide a needed, safe central link between the east and west segments of the M-6 Trail.

Web site: www.accesskent.com/parks

No. served: Approximately 600,000 residents

Area served: Southern Kent County

This is community leadership.

Grand Rapids Community Foundation supports projects which increase the amount of park and green space in urban areas. Parks and green space **improve environmental quality** and the **health of residents**, due in part to **increased opportunities for recreation** on trails such as this one.

Ways You Can Help

To help ensure the success of this grant you may give to address any of the needs listed below. Please call the Kent County Parks Dept. at 616.336.7275 to learn more.

- **Landscaping** - \$5000 to enhance the bridge and trail location.
- **Wildflower seeding** - \$5000 to add color and interest along trail sections
- **Signage** - \$5000 to inform users of safety practices and benefits while using the trail.

*To ensure the Community Foundation can make grants like this one in the future, please consider a gift to the **Fund for Healthy Ecosystems.** Please call **616.454.1751** to learn the benefits of Community Foundation giving and how gifts can be made.*



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