

## Stories from Small Towns

### Brentwood, Missouri (Pop. 8,032)

Parks have long been promoted in Brentwood, considered good for residents and businesses. Recently, Brentwood formally adopted a master plan, a blueprint for parks. The city turned to Great Rivers Greenway to align plans to establish connected trails in the area. Responding to resident input, Brentwood installed benches and tables as small amenities to make greenways more enjoyable.

As a suburban area, Brentwood's young family population appreciates renovations of playgrounds. Positive reaction to one improvement leads to others as residents want the same improvements in their parts of town. Five-foot wide sidewalks now connect parks that were previously unconnected. The town recently re-built its recreation complex and is connecting its plans for biking and walking with nearby communities.

Brentwood sees quality of life as the biggest benefit. Businesses and families support parks and walkability, and health is a side benefit.

#### Key Lessons

- Talk with residents early and often for truly engaged citizen involvement.
- When possible, provide requested amenities (e.g., benches); citizens will support projects more.



Kids at play in a Brentwood park. Photo: Brentwood Parks Department. Used with permission.

Thanks to Assistant City Administrator Justin Wyse, Brentwood, Missouri.