

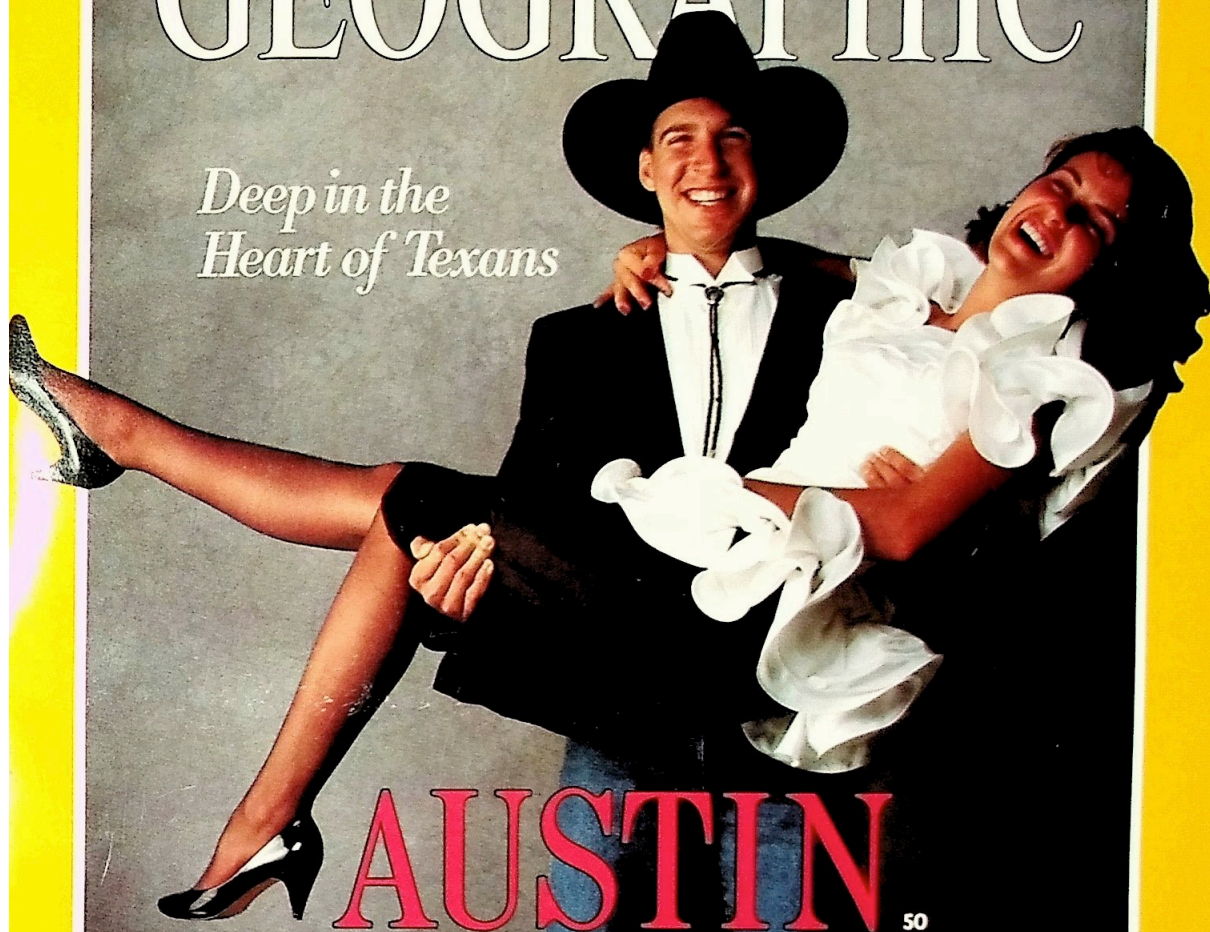
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*Deep in the
Heart of Texans*



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bad. On the trail in Columbia a woman was murdered, and they've had some robberies too. Our objection is the way they took the land, but we have some personal concerns as well."

Studies indicate that trails are no less secure than other areas of human use and cause no increase in crime. Seattle law officers pointed out that problems in park areas are usually related to easy automobile access, which is not available on that city's Burke-Gilman Trail. A long-term study of the Appalachian Trail, which passes through both rural areas and small towns, revealed impressively low crime statistics considering the volume of people who use the facility.

"If a corridor runs through a city, you've got to remember you're still in a city," I was told by city planner Bob Mosher in path-conscious Raleigh, North Carolina.

"Our statistics indicate you're probably safer on a greenway than in most areas. People with a criminal mind-set don't usually frequent places like that."

GREENWAYS in New York City? A two-tour Vietnam veteran has already mapped one. "Not many people realize that New York has 40,000 acres of parks, and a greenway is a way of pulling them all together," said Tom Fox, a Brooklynite who calls himself an open-space hustler. "Besides, there are tremendous cultural opportunities along the way. I love the diversity in this city."

Following sidewalks, existing bike paths, and streets when necessary, Fox mapped a 40-mile bike route from Brooklyn's Coney Island to Queens' Fort Totten. We began at Coney Island and were soon riding on the wide sidewalk along Ocean Parkway heading north, Fox a rolling monologue of local highlights.

"See the Russian restaurants? This area is popular with Russian émigrés . . . iron grillwork, we've entered an Italian neighborhood . . . now Jewish temples . . . here's Prospect Park! Olmsted considered it his best combination of woods, water, and a meadow more than a mile long . . . let's stop for a walk through the Brooklyn Botanic Garden. . . ."

Our passage through a down-at-the-heel neighborhood with boarded-up windows and bored-looking residents only added to his optimism: "A greenway allows these people to get out to other areas, just as it allows us to get into theirs," he insisted.

Decaying urban neighborhoods are actually aiding creation of useful open space in New York and other cities. Across town in the Bronx, Rob Feder of the Trust for Public Land (TPL) walked me through vacant lots covered with weeds and trash.

"During fiscal crises in the 1970s a lot of property reverted to the city through tax foreclosures," he said. "These areas will come back some day," he added, as we crunched over broken glass and dried dog scat. "As development pressures mount, we are working with other groups to preserve green oases for people to enjoy. They make a city livable."

TPL is also aiding in the creation of the Bronx River Trailway, a recreational use of now derelict stretches of waterfront. Nationwide, the organization helps form local land trusts to purchase open space. In Ohio, for example, TPL is helping an effort to tie together the cities of Cleveland and Akron with a

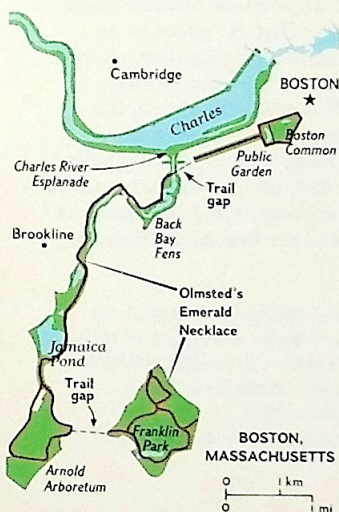


Courting attention, young Brooklynites stroll Ocean Parkway on the Jewish Sabbath. Famed landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted, considered the father of greenways, designed this "shaded pleasure drive" in the 1860s as an approach to his new creation, 526-acre Prospect Park. Extending his vision, the Brooklyn/Queens Greenway (map) will cross Long Island by 1995, joining 13 parks and such landmarks as Shea Stadium and the Brooklyn Museum.

For further information on greenway development write:
AMERICAN GREENWAYS
1800 North Kent Street
Suite 1120
Arlington, Virginia 22209



Bathing alfresco, Gabino Martínez-Paz soaps up in his garden plot in Boston's Back Bay Fens (facing page). A legacy of World War II, the Fenway Victory Gardens thrive in this park "created from foul tidal flats" by architect Olmsted. The Fens are one jewel in the eight-mile-long Emerald Necklace he designed for the city in the 1870s and 1880s (map).



greenway, doing for recreation what was once done for industry.

In the early 19th century the Ohio and Erie Canal allowed boat commerce from Lake Erie to the Ohio River. Cleveland and Akron grew up by the canal, which was abandoned in 1913. The Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area was opened between the cities in 1974, totaling some 33,000 wooded acres along 22 miles.

Now a citizens movement led by TPL and the National Park Service wants to tie the recreation area from Cleveland to Akron and 30 miles beyond to the historical village of Zoar. The corridor would include foot-and-bike trails, picnic stops, a pioneer farm and village, and steam engine service, all allowing users to enjoy the outdoors while learning the history of the region. Using donated funds and land trusts, a coalition of citizens, businesses, governments, and organizations hopes to negotiate land purchases into a 60-mile greenway rich in scenery and culture.

PERHAPS NOTHING better reflects the mounting interest in greenways than the earmarking of government funds for their construction. California's Proposition 70, passed in 1988, provides three-quarters of a billion dollars for parks and recreation. Only five million dollars is tagged specifically for trails, but another 120 million goes to local communities for open-space projects, including greenways.

"Greenways with trails are one of the cheapest forms of recreation," said Phyllis Cangemi, whose group, Whole Access, works to make them available to the many Americans who are often excluded from the outdoors—people with disabilities. Stricken with Hodgkin's disease, she powers her three-wheeled scooter on weekend outings and camping trips, and lobbies for firm trail surfaces and paths with gentle gradients.

"Those with mobility difficulties include not only the 16 to 20 percent of the population with disabilities," she told me, "but also older people, and our population is aging."

The demand for neighborhood corridors of recreation knows no age, however, and seemingly no limits. Minneapolis and St. Paul are ahead of most cities in creating trails for biking, walking, and cross-country skiing because, as park board planner Al Wittman told me, "Minnesotans have always had a tradition of outdoor activity. The demand is terrific. When a new trail was installed, kids were riding their bikes a hundred yards behind the asphalt-laying machine."

In Yakima, Washington, I began an evening run a few yards outside my motel, built next to the Yakima Greenway. The path, still under construction, was rocky and uneven, but it curved gracefully beside a clear trout and salmon stream that a few years ago had been little more than a dumping ground.

Financing looked like a rocky road when the project started in an agricultural community with high unemployment. To the surprise of everyone, the first private fund drive yielded a half million dollars. State funds were also squeezed—out of grants from eight different accounts, including an obscure one for Aquatic Land Enhancement. "It's a matter of knowing where the money is and how to get it," said Jim Whiteside, former county commissioner.