

“Hike Through History” comprises a series of ten museum-quality interpretive panels along the Burroughs Creek Trail and Linear Park, a 1.7-mile paved path running north-south from 11th Street to 23rd Street in East Lawrence. The interpretive panels function as an outdoor museum and provide relevant history in engaging and well-illustrated narratives for residents and visitors alike who can exercise their minds and bodies simultaneously while enjoying the trail.



This series of interpretive panels provides access to Lawrence’s unique history and cultural identity. The route of the Burroughs Creek Trail passes by locations that tie together William Clarke Quantrill and Langston Hughes, 19th century travelers on the Oregon Trail and World War II-era German prisoners of war, the artistry of William S. Burroughs and the agricultural history of Douglas County, plus a long-forgotten railroad line and a number of dimly-remembered east side neighborhood notables whose names still grace streets and parks.



The project was conceived and overseen by Henry Fortunato, a Fellow at the Hall Center for the Humanities at the University of Kansas and founder of Sunflower Republic, LLC. The development of the project was done in partnership with the Lawrence Public Library, the Watkins Museum of History, the Hall Center for the Humanities at the University of Kansas, and Freedom’s Frontier National Heritage Area. The City of Lawrence and the Lawrence Parks and Recreation Department also contributed to the project and are the recipients of the gifted panels.

The Burroughs Creek Trail and Linear Park runs along a former rail line originally opened by the Leavenworth, Lawrence, and Galveston Railroad in 1868. Named for Burroughs Creek, which it parallels for much of its length, the Trail opened in 2010. It is a popular and well-used recreational amenity and active transportation corridor. It is considered by many to be among the crown jewels of the Lawrence Parks and Recreation system and is part of the Lawrence Loop.

