

# DEAN TRANSPORTATION



## SOCIETY OF ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE FACILITIES

CASEstudy

**LOCATION:** 4812 Aurelius Road  
Lansing, Michigan

**OWNER:** Dean Transportation

Dean Transportation located in Lansing, Michigan is a SERF certified transportation and bus company that has been part of Mid-Michigan for many decades. Dean Transportation operates in 14 offices throughout the state, overseeing over 1,100 buses and operating in approximately 100 school districts. Their headquarters have been in South Lansing since 1999.

Environmental stewardship is one of the founding principles of Dean Transportation. Operating heavily in the fossil fuel industry, President Kellie Dean feels that the company should be held at a higher standard of environmental responsibility.

Dean Transportation became SERF Certified in 2011 for their outstanding commitment to **Practical Environmental Stewardship™**. There are countless ways in which Dean incorporates this mission into his business and his personal investments; not only is the Dean Transportation office and fleet ecologically conscious, but Dean personally believes in investing to improve the conditions of the surrounding community.

Kellie Dean is one of several property owners in the South Lansing area that has made generous donations to the expansion and improvement of the Lansing River Trail. The Lansing River Trail is a series of paved pathways that connect different parks throughout the Lansing area. To date, the River Trail has 13 miles of trail ideal for walking, biking, and running.

Dean generously donated 7 acres of land to the City of Lansing to extend the River Trail path through his South Lansing property. This donation was essential, creating 1,500 feet of pathway that connect the existing trail to Maguire Park, the southernmost terminus of the river trail. Without Dean's charitable land donation, the expansion and the park would not have been possible.

This new portion of the park crosses behind the Dean Transportation offices on Aurelius Road. In order to encourage his employees to walk or ride bikes to the work, Dean constructed a path that



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runs from the river trail to the company's offices. In doing so, they have successfully reduced the amount of vehicles driven by employees during their commute.

Kellie Dean's generous land contribution for the Lansing River Trail has greatly benefitted his employees and the residents of the South Lansing area. Because of his donation, more than 1,000 feet of trail were added and the creation of Maguire Park was made possible.



quarters and runs alongside the River Trail, has been carefully protected by Dean Transportation since their arrival on-site.

The creek is ecologically important to the salmon, trout, and other fish species that inhabit it. In order to ensure that these species are not affected by Dean's operations, Dean Transportation installed a drainage system for storm water and wash water. This system captures on-site water and directs it through three different filters before it is allowed to enter the creek. This ensures that no fuel or harmful substances can infiltrate the creek and disrupt aquatic life.



Dean also made sure that the property was environmentally sound before constructing the current facility. Prior to building the Dean headquarters, the property on Aurelius Road was home to a concrete block company. Though most of their infrastructure was removed when Dean arrived, there were several underground tanks and a few concrete structures remaining on the property.

Dean and his team dug out the four tanks that remained in the ground, keeping any potentially hazardous material from entering the watershed. The remaining concrete structures were removed, and these waste materials that resulted were used in the construction of I-96, a nearby highway.

For the generous gifts and active contributions to the planning of the southern extension of the River Trail, Kellie Dean received the 2009 Michigan Recreation and Park Association *Community Service Award* and the *Hometown Hero* award from Lansing Mayor Virg Bernero.

Dean and his team work every day to demonstrate SERF's mission of **Practical Environmental Stewardship**<sup>™</sup>. Donating land to the City of Lansing for the River Trail, reducing the amount of vehicles used in employee's commutes, and sustainably maintaining the grounds are only a few examples of their environmental dedication.

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This increase in trail space and park creation benefits the surrounding area greatly. Parks and trails in urban areas create opportunities for nearby communities; and new options for recreation create a population that is healthier and more active. The river trail also attracts visitors, increasing economic activity in South Lansing.

Dean has made additional efforts to make the grounds as environmentally friendly as possible. Sycamore Creek, which passes behind the head-



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**SERF** is a coalition of property owners and professionals certifying and promoting environmentally responsible homes and building.

**SERF** affirms that with private property rights come *responsibilities* – not least of which are the responsibilities to construct, rehabilitate, and operate our homes and facilities, enhance our communities and minimize environmental impact.

**SERF** recognizes that protection of our environment is the duty of every steward of the land, and such stewards who act accordingly should be recognized and encouraged.

**SERF** holds that honest cost-benefit analysis should be applied to building improvements and systems intended to help the environment. To endure, sustainability must be affordable.

**SERF** is an inclusive organization which provides live and online forums for members to share methods to cost-effectively meet our goals.

**SERF** builds future generations of environmentally responsible property owners. Our examples and support can teach and endow future generations to live in harmony with our planet and to conserve its precious resources.

**SERF** *Catch the wave ~ get certified!*



## PRACTICAL ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP



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