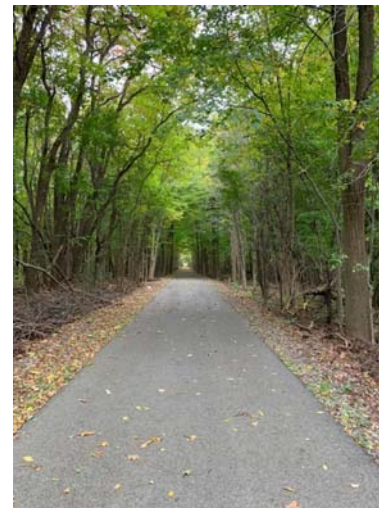
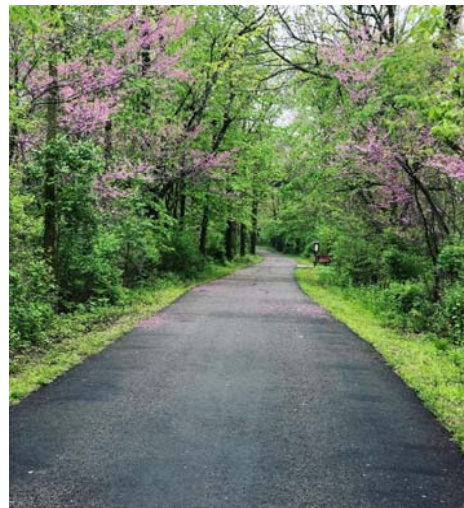


INTRODUCTION:

The DeKalb County Trails Plan will be used to guide the future planning and development of trails in unincorporated DeKalb County with connections to our neighboring counties and to the municipalities and their existing trails network.

DeKalb County, Indiana has been growing steadily in population over recent years, mostly due to the build out of Allen County land to the south for those looking to live in a “country like” setting. With that growth, there is now a greater need to improve the trail connectivity options for the County. With this in mind, an enthusiast biking group of local and regional trail supporters was formed in 2013 as the DeKalb County Trails, Inc., a 501(c) not-for-profit corporation. This organization has been looking for ways to develop a connected trail system within the County from the existing and proposed trails ending at the Allen County/ DeKalb County line and with connections to Steuben County and Pokagon State Park.

DeKalb County Trails Inc. along with the Auburn/Waterloo Trail Committee – an existing trails committee dedicated to improving and extending the existing Auburn/Waterloo Trail in DeKalb County – are an energetic group of pedestrian trail users, biking enthusiasts, and enjoyers of the outdoors. These organizations are eager to plan for the development of trails that can be utilized safely by a wide range of community members with different mobility levels.



All images used are from the DeKalb County Trails & Auburn Waterloo Trails Facebook Pages

INVOLVEMENT & LEADERSHIP:

The development of a trails plan began with the January 25, 2019 reorganization meeting of the DeKalb County Trails Inc. The groups mentioned above are responsible for spearheading this 2021 DeKalb County Trails Plan. The DeKalb County Trails Inc. and the Auburn/Waterloo Trail Committee have been focusing on the development of trails in DeKalb County for many years. They are the true leaders when it comes to the DeKalb County Trails Plan. The leadership in DeKalb County through various elected and appointed positions as well as other individuals involved in the creation of this plan are:

Auburn Waterloo Trails – Richard Shankle
City of Auburn, Michael Ley – Mayor
City of Auburn Building, Planning & Development
City of Butler, Mike Hartman – Mayor
City of Butler Planning Department
City of Garrett, Todd Fiandt – Mayor
City of Garrett Planning Department
Cody Burniston
City of Garrett Planning Department
DeKalb County Commissioners:
 William Hartman – President
 Todd Sanderson – Vice President
 Mike Watson – Vice President
DeKalb County Council:
 Richard Ring – President
 William Van Wye – Vice President
 Bob Krafft
 Eldonna King
 David Yarde
 Amy Prosser
 Amy Demske

DeKalb County Economic Development Partnership
DeKalb County Highway Department
DeKalb County Plan Commission
 Chris Gaumer – Zoning Administrator
 Sarah Delbecq – President
 Frank Pulver – Vice President
 Sandra Harrison
 William Van Wye
 Mike Watson
 Elysia Rogers
 Jason Carnahan
 Jerry Yoder
 Taylor Wineland
 Mike Kline
DeKalb County Trails, Inc.
Larry Getts
Town of Hamilton, Brent Shull – Planning Department
Town of Waterloo, Pam Howard – Town Manager
William Spohn

PROCESS:

Pedestrian trails and bikeways have become a major factor in the economic development of communities, as well as, a recreational source for a healthier population and an improved quality of life. Trails can provide easier and safer connections to points of interest, alternative means for commuting to work, and connections to schools, shopping and other recreational facilities. Trails, if extensive enough, can also provide for regional and local connections with other trails, municipalities, counties and possibly other states. DeKalb County's location gives it the benefit to make many of these connections feasible, as it supports the trails being proposed or developed within the surrounding counties that border our County.

For this DeKalb County Trails Plan to be adopted, the DeKalb County Plan Commission must make a recommendation to the DeKalb County Commissioners. Once the recommendation is approved, the DeKalb County Commissioners will vote on adopting the Plan.



All images used are from the DeKalb County Trails & Auburn Waterloo Trails Facebook Pages

DeKalb County Elected & Appointed Officials have spearheaded the creation of this plan for the use of any group in DeKalb County to further the development and construction of trails in the County. Furthermore, the primary focus for DeKalb County should be the North/South connection trail from Allen County to Steuben County with connection to the existing trail along County Road 11A just east of County Road 56 up to County Road 23, the existing trail through the City of Auburn, the Rieke park Trail and the Auburn/Waterloo Trail along County Road 427. The existing trail within the City of Auburn begins at the intersection of S Van Buren St and Wayne St near the Auburn Cord Duesenberg Museum. From here it runs north along S Van Buren St to 20th St, then east to S Jackson St where it continues north to 9th St. At 9th St the trail heads back west to Van Buren St and then north until it connects to North St. From North St the trail runs west to connect with the Rieke Park Trail where it then heads north to Betz Rd and east to connect with the existing Auburn/Waterloo Trail at CR 427. From here the Poka-Bache Connector heads north along the Auburn Waterloo Trail to the south edge of the Town of Waterloo, where the trail will continue heading north along CR 427 up to Wayne St once the town of Waterloo completes a section of trail that will be constructed in 2021. It's important that we recognize this as the primary trail but also understand there is potential for secondary trails to connect to the communities of Ashley, Butler, Garrett, Hamilton and St. Joe.

The Northeastern Indiana Regional Coordinating Council (NIRCC) was involved in this plan. NIRCC strives to implement community development and transportation improvements that assure healthy and orderly growth. In fact, much of the plan has been around since the Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan for Northeast Indiana was developed in 2007, with months of public meetings and conversations amongst counties in the region. This regional trail plan was rebranded in 2017 as the “Northeast Indiana United Trails System”. Public input has come from a number of different resources throughout the region that include consultation with local governments, special project organizations, planners and highway officials, concerned citizens, advocacy groups, and parks representatives. Various community plans and comprehensive plans from communities throughout the region have also been incorporated into the regional plan. The United Trails Plan covers 12 counties in Northeast Indiana which include the counties of: Adams, Allen, DeKalb, Grant, Huntington, Kosciusko, LaGrange, Noble, Steuben, Wabash, Wells, Whitley, and the communities within.

The primary DeKalb County Trail will be 20.6 miles long – including 6.5 miles of existing trail, .7 miles of planned trails & 13.5 miles of proposed trails. The DeKalb County Trail makes up 25.4% of the Poka-Bache Trail – between Allen, Steuben and Wells Counties – which totals 81.3 miles!

GOALS and OBJECTIVES:

The DeKalb County Trails Plan generally depicts where new trail systems will be located and where to expand existing trails. With existing road rights-of-way being a priority to help expand the development of trails, it will take other creative ways to connect. Examples include: the use of abandoned railroad beds, unused government owned properties, underutilized properties not being developed for other uses, and/or private owners willing to donate or sell property or right-of-way that support new trail development.

- Develop an Inventory of all existing trails within DeKalb County and its municipalities.
 - Meet with DeKalb County municipal corporation officials to determine and collect data on any existing trails within their boundaries.
 - Review current trail plans of regional and state agencies for connectivity with the surrounding counties. Examples are the Northeastern Indiana Regional Coordinating Council (NIRCC) and the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR).
- Look for opportunities to expand upon or extend any existing municipalities' trails into the County areas to provide for connectivity to various points of interest or destinations.
 - Work with local plan commissions and developers to recommend trail development where projects can connect to existing and proposed trails.
 - Encourage private property owners to donate or sell portions of their property where potential trail development could connect to existing or proposed trails.
 - Encourage local elected officials to support future trail development where connectivity is available as a means to reach various points of interest or destinations. An example would include acquiring additional right-of-way when new road projects are being planned and help develop a trail along those roadways.
- Promote trails that connect to regional and state trail systems
 - Work with NIRCC to promote regional and state-wide trail systems.
 - Work with Indiana Department of Natural Resources to promote regional and state-wide trail systems.
 - Work with neighboring counties with similar goals of connecting to regional and state-wide trail systems.

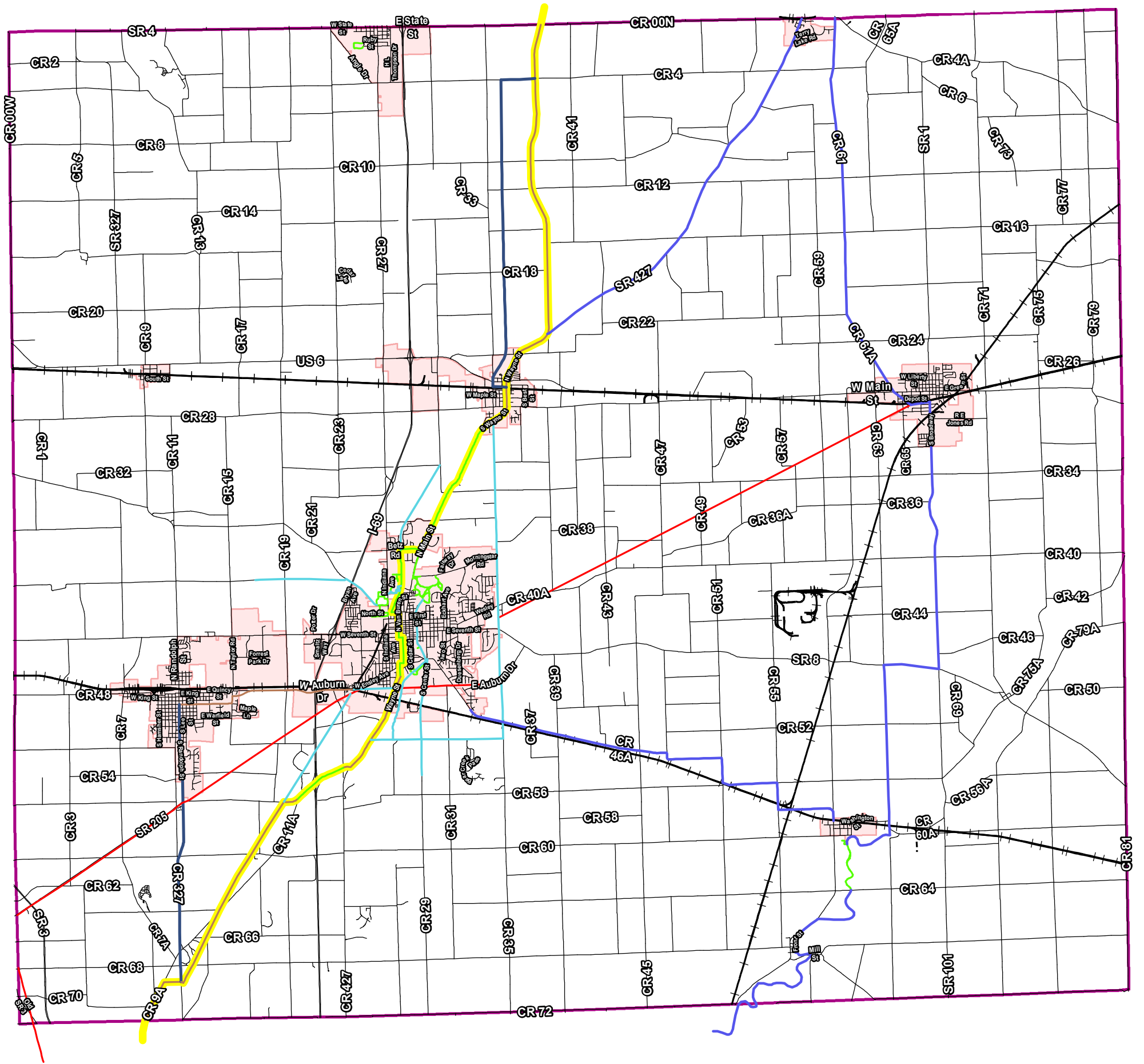


Image provided by Cody Burniston

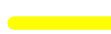






- Promote the creation and use of trails to the citizens of DeKalb County through social media and educational events
 - Identify utilized social media resources within the County to promote public service announcements, narratives, or material that helps to educate the citizens on the benefits of Trail development.
 - Hold public meetings, seminars, or training sessions addressing the benefits of trail development in the County.
- Prioritize specific projects for development
 - The primary north/south trail is DeKalb County's top priority for development.
 - The "spurs" off the primary trail to the other municipalities of Garrett, Butler, St. Joe, Hamilton and Ashley should be developed when projects present themselves.
 - Future trail projects should be developed when projects present themselves.
- Create a trail user signage system within the County
 - Review the trail signage Brand & Wayfinding Signage Guidelines that were prepared by NIRCC and in signage that is being used in Auburn and Allen County.

DEFINING TRAIL PRIORITY & MAPS:





- Map of the DeKalb County Trail Plan
 - Top Priority – North/South Connection
From Allen County at County Road 9A to abandoned rail corridor up to County Road 56 & County Road 11A to County Road 427 through the City of Auburn and the Auburn/Waterloo Trail through the Town of Waterloo to County Road 39 (Old US 27) to Steuben County
 - Secondary Trail Routes
These Secondary Routes are important if the top priority route cannot be achieved. These connections are also important and can provide connections to Garrett and Auburn and then to connection Waterloo to Steuben County.
 - Future Trail Connections
DeKalb County recognizes the desire to connect the municipalities of Butler, Hamilton and St. Joe to the primary North/South route.
- Regional Trail Map Prepared by NIRCC
 - Poka-Bache Connector
State Priority Trail highlighted along with a portion of the Northeast Indiana United Trails Plan covering Adams, Wells, Allen, DeKalb and Steuben Counties.
 - Northeast Indiana Regional Trails Priorities
The Northeast Indiana United Trails Plan and identified “Regional Trail Priority Corridors” which cover the counties of Adams, Allen, DeKalb, Grant, Huntington, Kosciusko, LaGrange, Noble, Steuben, Wabash, Wells, Whitley, and the communities within.

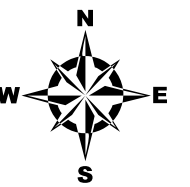
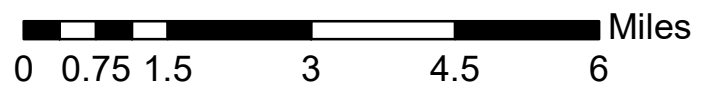


DEKALB COUNTY TRAILS PLAN

-  North/South Connection - Top Priority
-  Proposed Primary Trail Route
-  Secondary Trail Routes
-  2018 Auburn Trail Plan - Regional Connections
-  Existing Trails
-  Possible Future Trail Connections
-  Potential Trail Connections

Type

-  Street
-  Railroad Track
-  Municipal Boundary
-  DeKalb County Line





Northeast Indiana United Trails Plan

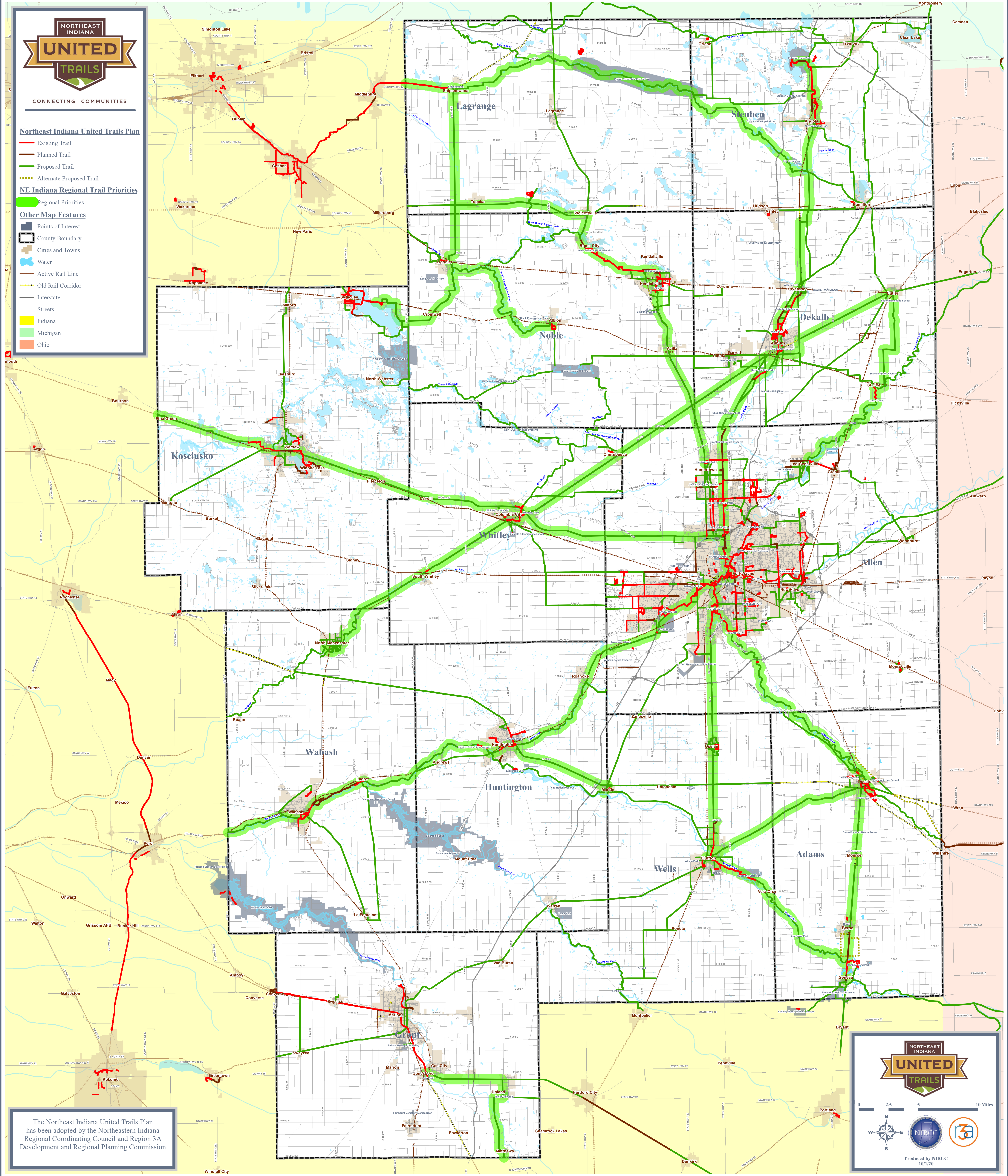
- Existing Trail
- Planned Trail
- Proposed Trail
- Alternate Proposed Trail

NE Indiana Regional Trail Priorities

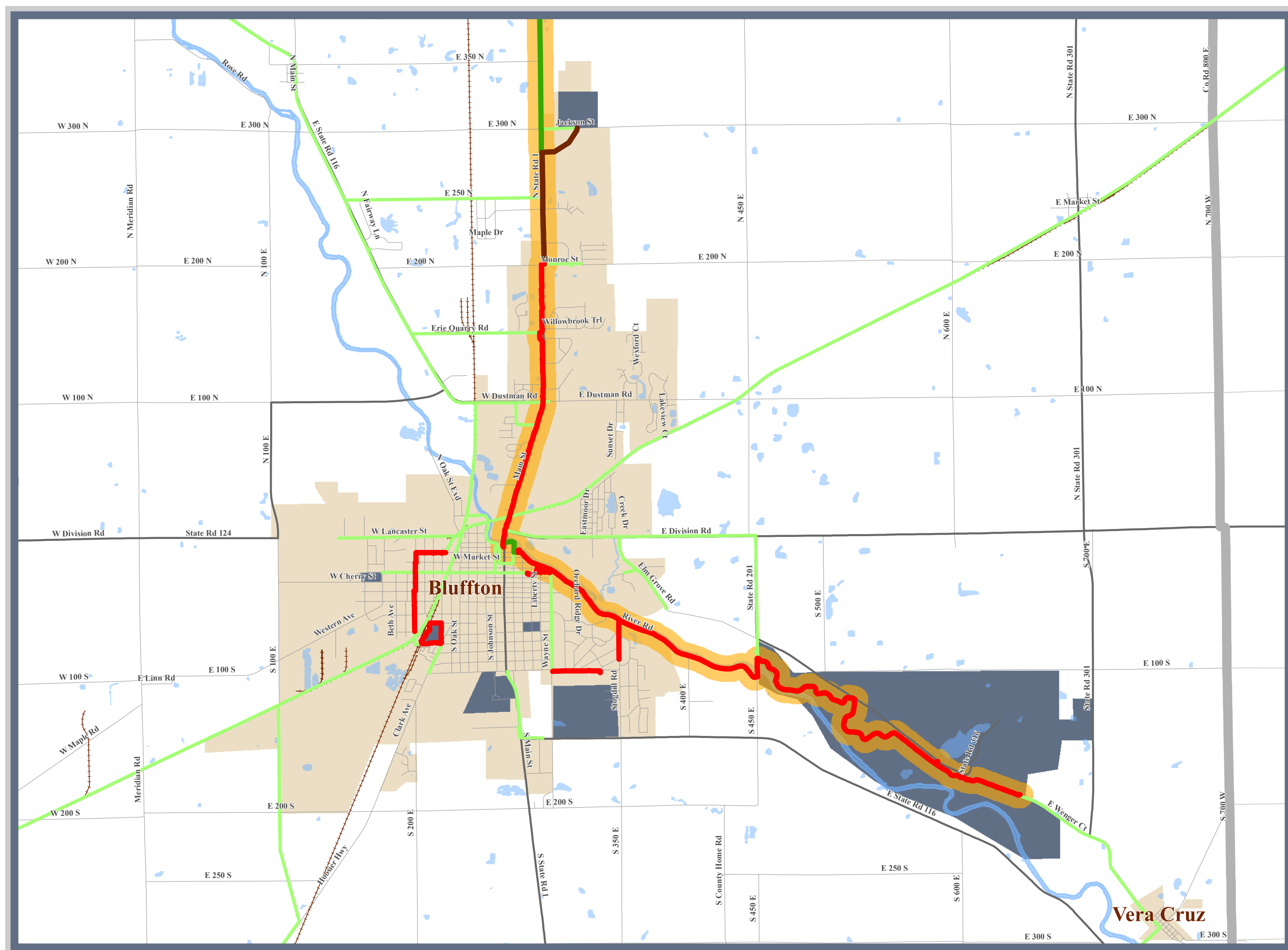
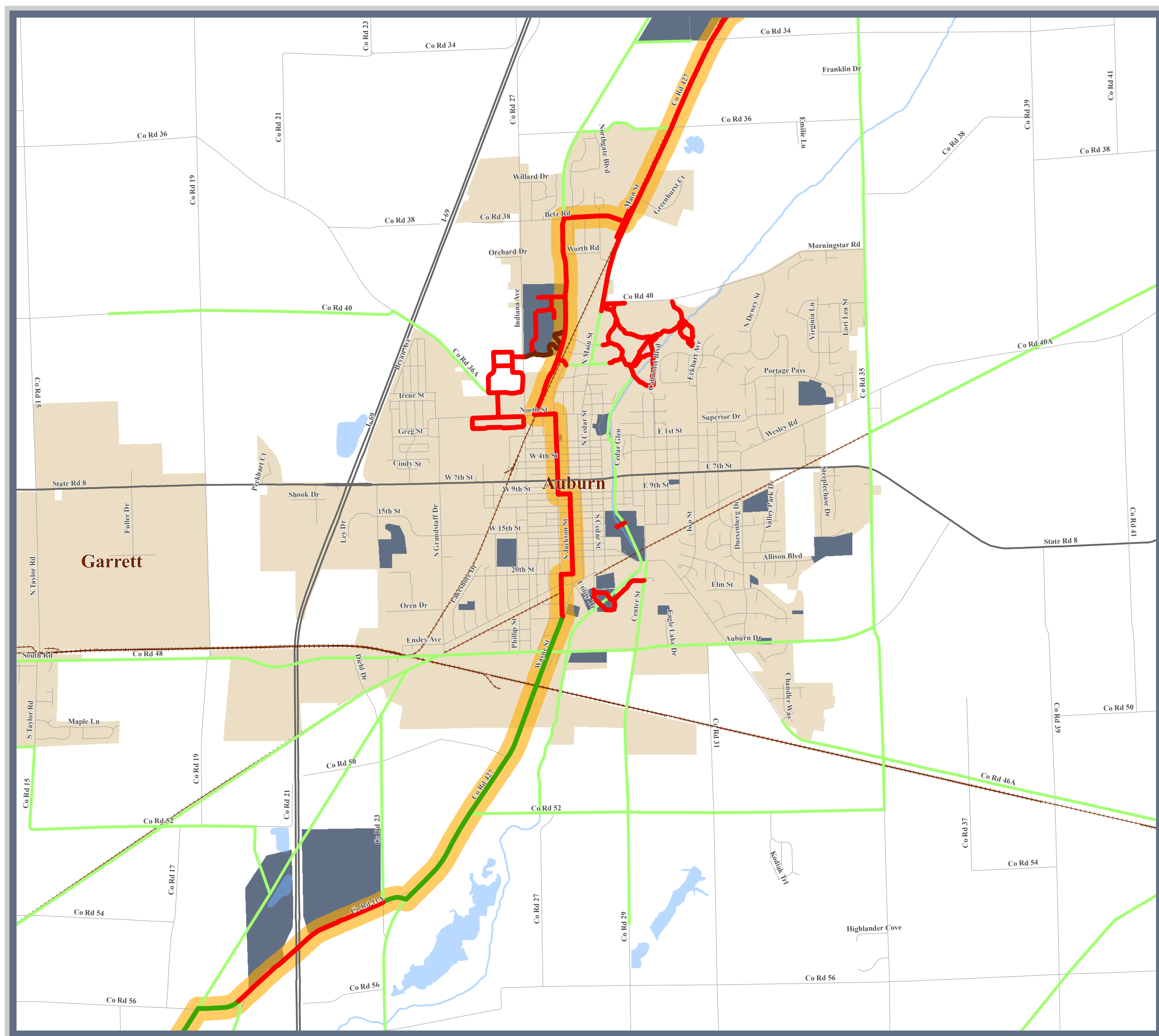
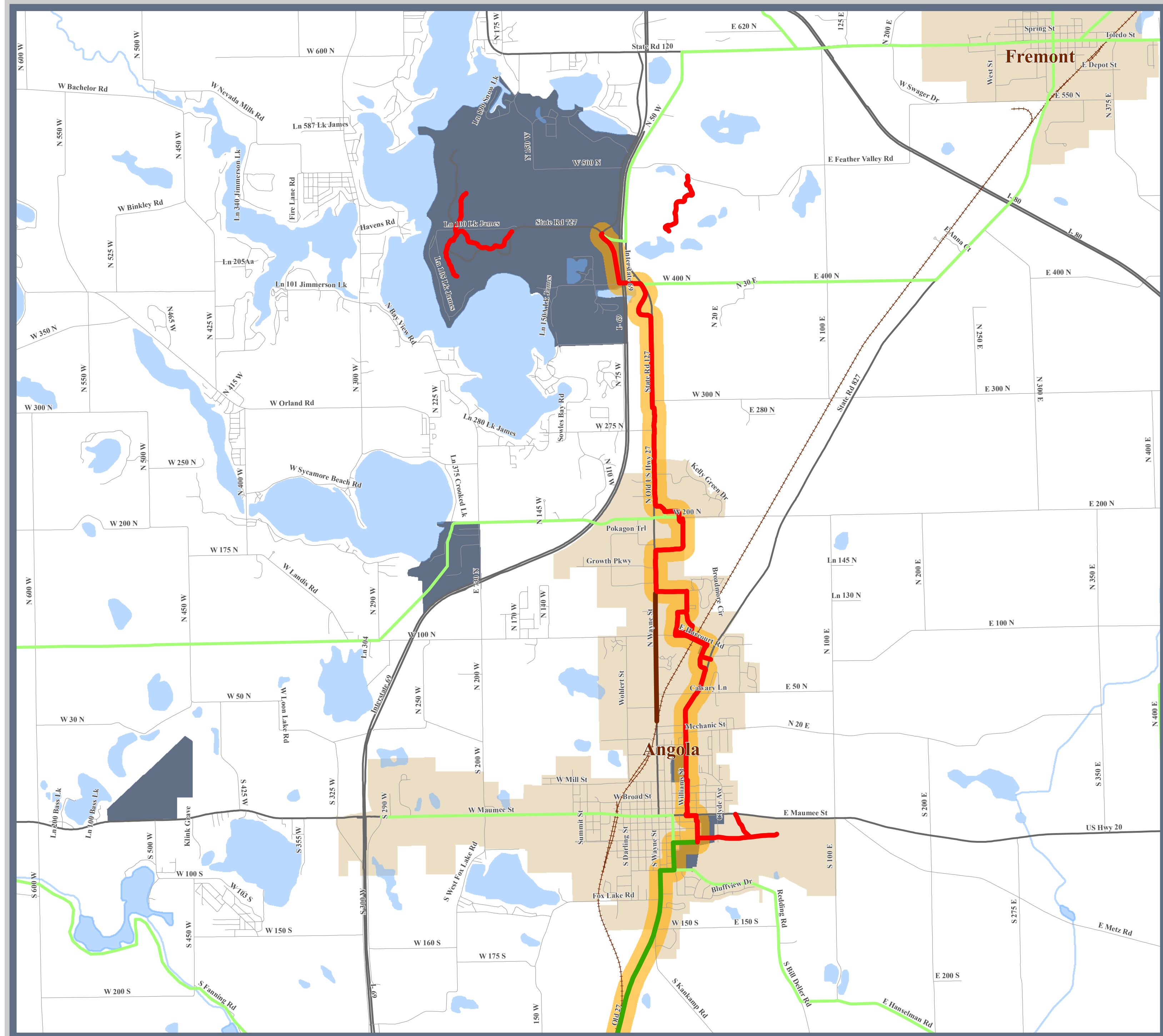
- Regional Priorities

Other Map Features

- Points of Interest
- County Boundary
- Cities and Towns
- Water
- Active Rail Line
- Old Rail Corridor
- Interstate
- Streets
- Indiana
- Michigan
- Ohio



The Northeast Indiana United Trails Plan has been adopted by the Northeastern Indiana Regional Coordinating Council and Region 3A Development and Regional Planning Commission

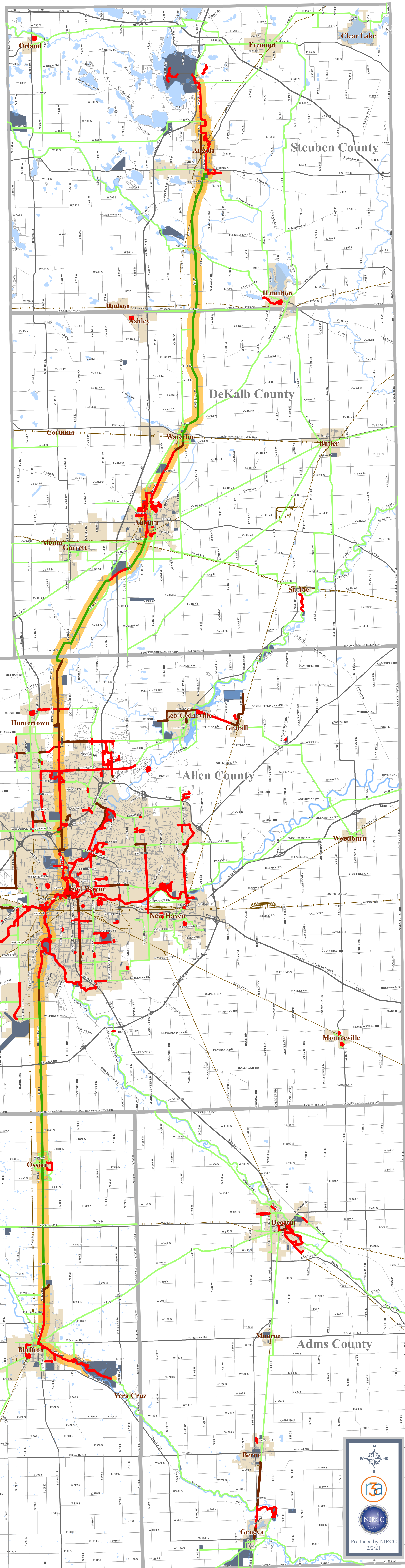


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UNITED TRAILS
POKA-BACHE
CONNECTOR



Northeast Indiana United Trails Plan

TRAILS PLAN		OTHER MAP FEATURES	
	Existing Trail		Points of Interest
	Planned Trail		City or Town
	Proposed Trail		County Boundary
	State Visionary Trail		Highway
			Street
			Railroad
			Water

0 2.5 5 10 Miles



RESOLUTION 21-R- 16
AN AMENDMENT TO THE DEKALB COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2017
TO INCLUDE THE DEKALB COUNTY TRAILS PLAN

WHEREAS, The General Assembly of the State of Indiana granted powers to the counties to adopt and amend a comprehensive plan in accordance with IC 36-7-4-500 series; and

WHEREAS, The DeKalb County Commissioners adopted the current DeKalb County Comprehensive Plan on February 27, 2017 and adopted subsequent amendments; and

WHEREAS, The DeKalb County Plan Commission did seek and consider public input and held a legally advertised public hearing on July 7, 2021 and voted to certify with a favorable recommendation to the DeKalb County Commissioners for an amendment to the DeKalb County Comprehensive Plan 2017 to include the DeKalb County Trails Plan. The DeKalb County Trails Plan will be used to guide the future planning and development of trails in unincorporated DeKalb County with connections to neighboring counties and to the municipalities and their existing trails network; and


WHEREAS, The DeKalb County Commissioners believes this to be in the best interest of the residents, property owners and for the County's future growth and development to approve the amendment to the DeKalb County Comprehensive Plan 2017 to include the DeKalb County Trails Plan; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED by the County Commissioners of DeKalb County, Indiana as follows:

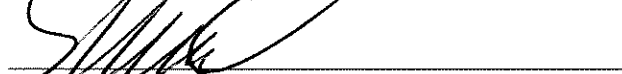
Section 1: That the DeKalb County Comprehensive Plan 2017 is amended to include the DeKalb County Trails Plan.

Section 2: That this resolution shall be in full force and effect upon its passage by the DeKalb County Commissioners.

DULY PASSED, ORDAINED AND ADOPTED on this 19 day of July 2021, by the County Commissioners of DeKalb County, Indiana by a vote of 3 in favor and 0 opposed.



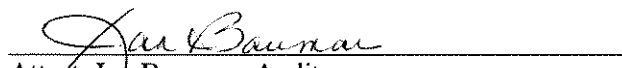
William L. Hartman, President



Michael V. Watson, Vice President



Todd R. Sanderson, Vice President



Attest, Jan Bauman, Auditor

Prepared by: Chris Gaumer "I affirm under the penalties of perjury, that I have taken reasonable care to redact each social security number in this document, unless required by law."

