

**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."



**A DEKALB COUNTY, INDIANA PLAN COMMISSION CERTIFICATION  
OF A PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE  
DEKALB COUNTY, INDIANA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
TO THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

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, DeKalb County, Indiana adopted the current DeKalb County Comprehensive Plan on February 27, 2017; and

WHEREAS, The proposed amendment to the DeKalb County Comprehensive Plan will 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.

WHEREAS, The DeKalb County Plan Commission, in accordance with law, held a public hearing on July 7, 2021 and did seek and consider public input for the proposed amendment to the DeKalb County Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, The DeKalb County Plan Commission finds that the said plan is in the best interest of citizens of DeKalb County, Indiana; and

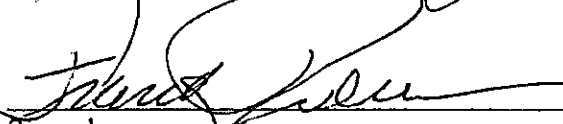
**RESOLVED**, That in accordance with IC 36-7-4-508, the DeKalb County Plan Commission certifies with a ✓ favorable,        unfavorable,        no recommendation for the DeKalb County Trails Plan, an amendment to the DeKalb County Comprehensive Plan, to the County Commissioners of DeKalb County, Indiana.

Certified this 7 day of July 2021.


DEKALB COUNTY PLAN COMMISSION:

  
Signed  
DeKalb County Plan Commission Official

7/7/21 Sarah Delbecq  
Print

  
Signed  
DeKalb County Plan Commission Official

7/7/21 Frank Pulvin  
Print

  
Attest, Secretary  
DeKalb County Plan Commission

Isabella Mowan  
Print

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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 \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 2021, by the County Commissioners of DeKalb County, Indiana  
by a vote of \_\_\_\_\_ in favor and \_\_\_\_\_ opposed.

\_\_\_\_\_  
William L. Hartman, President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Michael V. Watson, Vice President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Todd R. Sanderson, Vice President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Attest, Jan Bauman, Auditor

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# DeKalb County Trails Plan

## 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 with in 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  
    Taiylor 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 20<sup>th</sup> St, then east to S Jackson St where it continues north to 9<sup>th</sup> St. At 9<sup>th</sup> 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



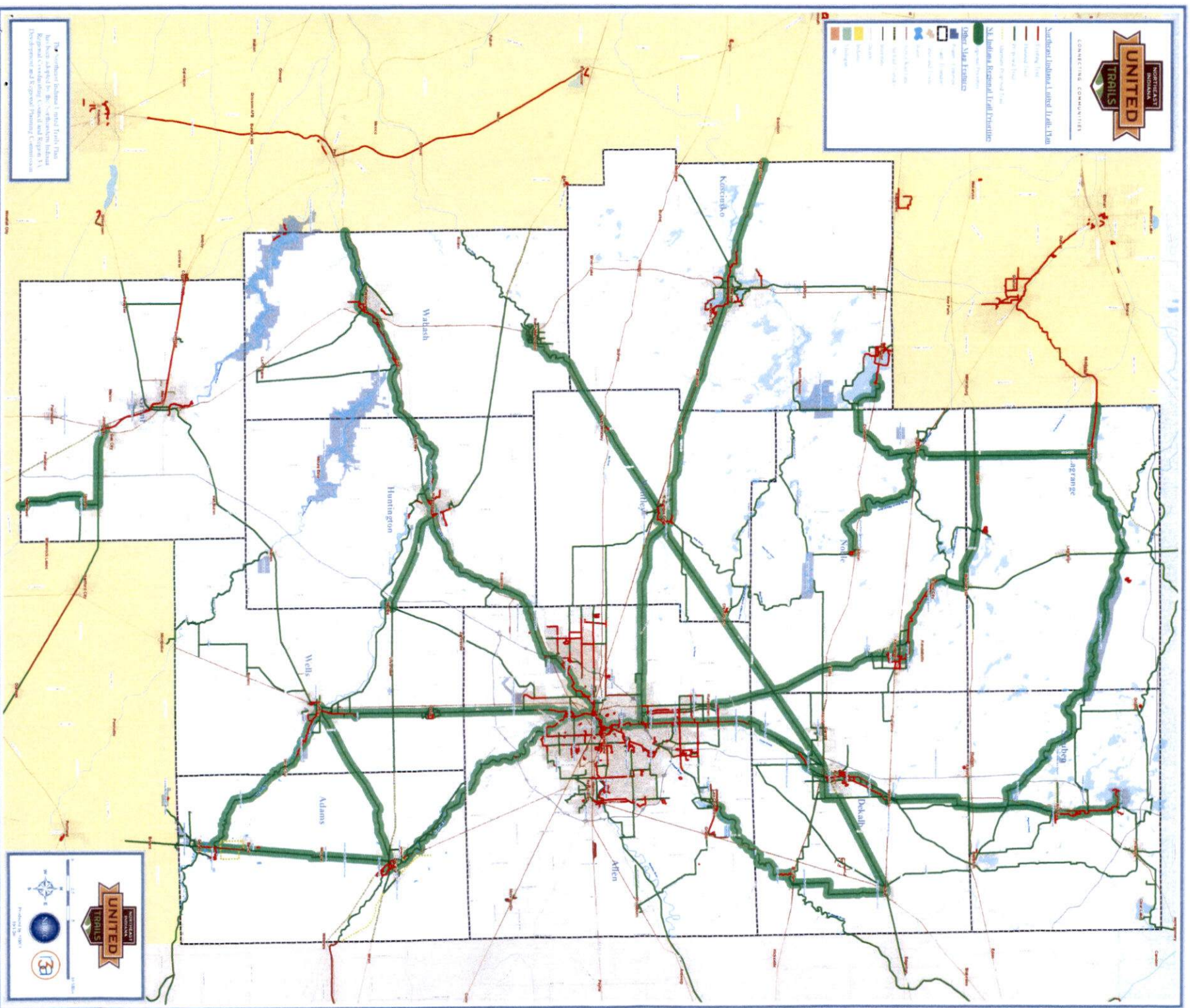
- Promote the creation and use of trails to the citizens of DeKalb County through social media and educational events
  - Identify utilized social media resources within the County to promote public service announcements, narratives, or material that helps to educate the citizens on the benefits of Trail 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:**

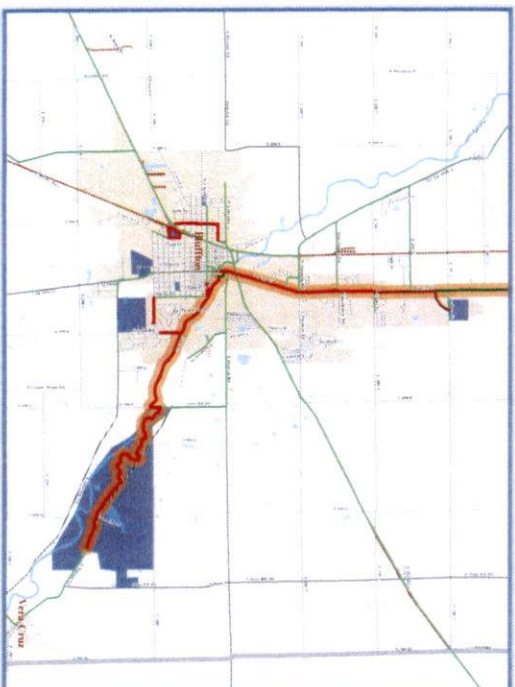
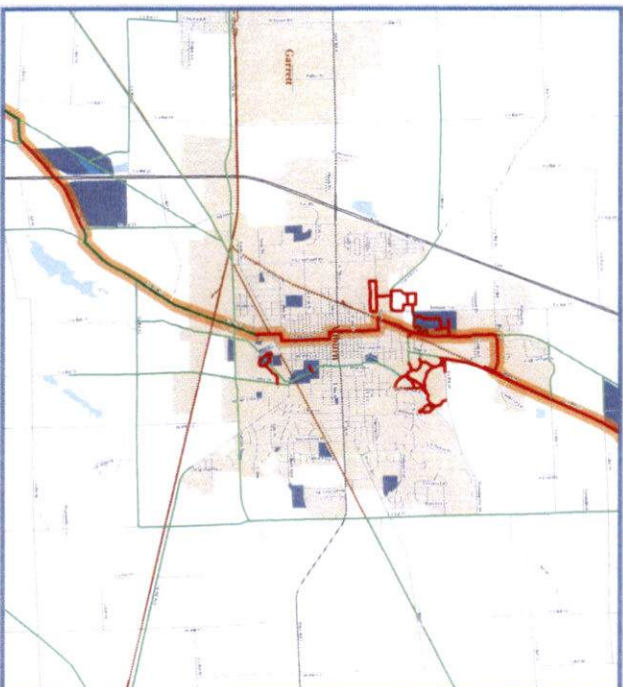
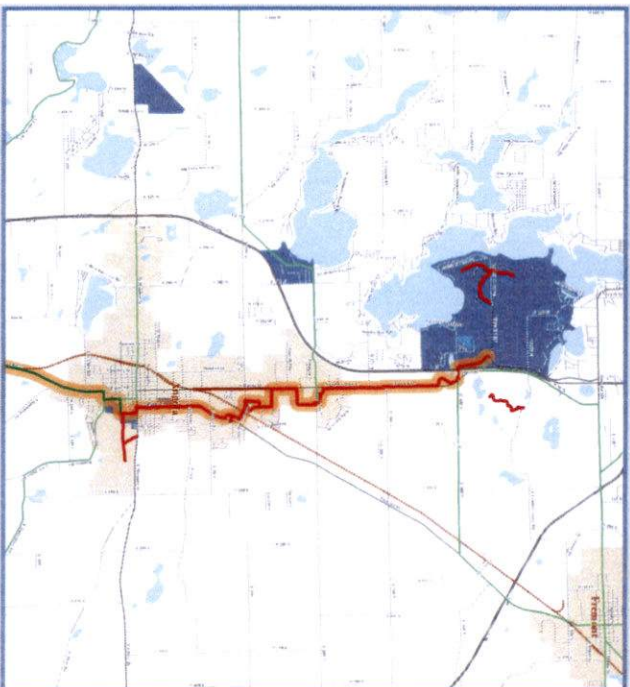
- Map of the DeKalb County Trail Plan
  - Top Priority – North/South Connection  
From Allen County at County Road 9A to abandoned rail corridor up to County Road 56 & County Road 11A to County Road 427 through the City of Auburn and the Auburn/Waterloo Trail through the Town of Waterloo to County Road 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.



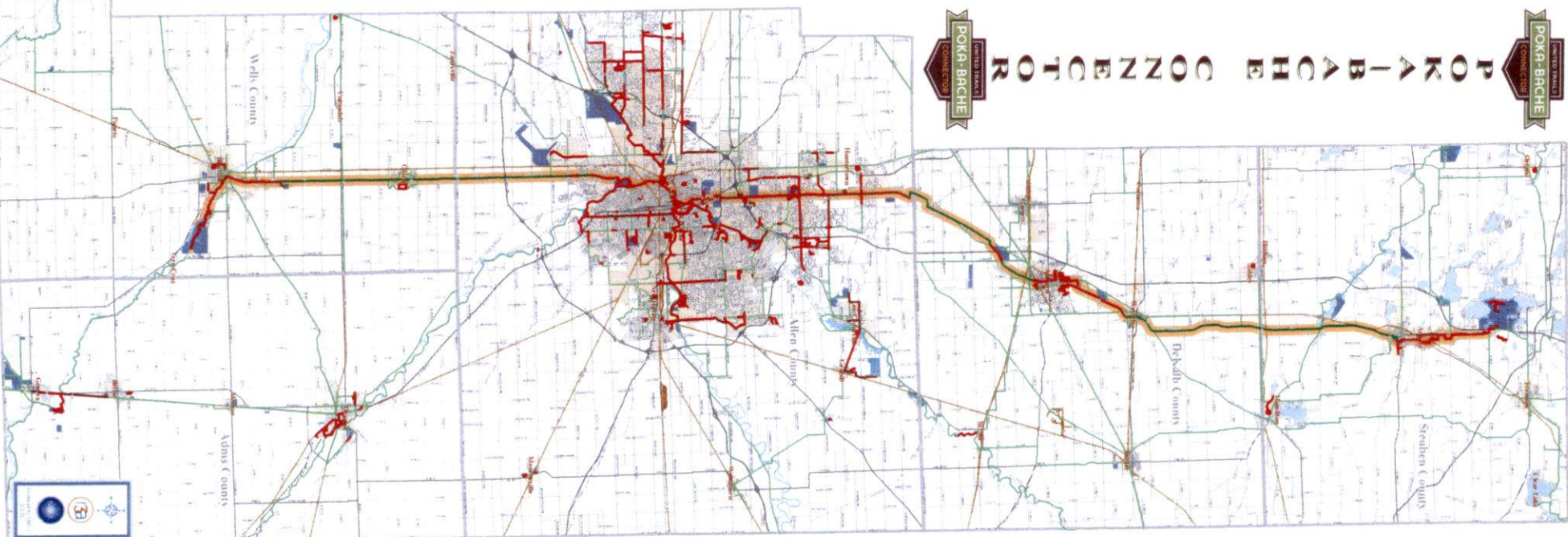








**POKA-BACHE CONNECTOR**



**Northeast Indiana United Trails Plan**

**TRAIL PLAN**

- Existing Trail
- Proposed Trail
- State Highway Trail

**OTHER MAP FEATURES**

- County Boundary
- City or Town
- Water Body
- Highway
- Railroad
- State

0 2.5 5 10 Miles



CONNECTING COMMUNITIES