



Transportation Times

Adams-Allen-DeKalb-Wells

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Northeast Indiana Trail Branding and Wayfinding Initiative

Our regional trail system now has a name. “Northeast Indiana United Trails” has become the brand for our 11 county regional trail system in Northeast Indiana. A long list of names were considered and then narrowed down to three

popular choices which included Northeast Indiana Horizon Trails, Northeast Indiana Frontier Trails, and Northeast Indiana United Trails. After a number of public input sessions, surveys, and public meetings, United Trails was the clear choice for our regional trail system.

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With connecting communities being one of the main goals of our unique regional trail system the word “United” was deemed most appropriate by a number of people. The regional system covers 11 counties including Adams, Allen, DeKalb, Huntington, Kosciusko, LaGrange, Noble, Steuben, Wabash, Wells and Whitley Counties, and the communities within.

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Northeast Indiana Water Trails



The Northeast Indiana Water Trails (NEIWTs) which is housed under NIRCC is a group consisting of representatives from regional governmental agencies, watershed groups, businesses and outdoor enthusiasts. NEIWTs mission is to increase recreation opportunities on our waterways by promoting boat access, water safety and stewardship, and development of regional water trails that will empower our citizens to become more active and unified. NEIWTs has had two successful fundraisers this year to help accomplish their mission. One was a crowdfunding campaign championed by Arts United to develop and print waterproof water trail maps showing the 29 access sites on the St. Joseph, St. Marys and Maumee Rivers and the Cedar Creek. The Knight Foundation provided matching funds. NEIWTs hosted the 1st annual 3Rivers Federal Credit Union Pedal, Paddle, and Play in downtown Fort Wayne on June 11th where 126 individuals registered to bike or boat to various locations to learn about water quality, trails, and riverfront development. The event was a way to get people out on the water and land trails and experience the city from a new perspective, learn more about the Water Trails in NE Indiana, and raise funds for the NEIWTs. With over 300 people attending this first annual event; it was a huge success. The event could not have happened without the support of our sponsors including 3Rivers Federal Credit Union, HOT107.9, Wane-TV, Wabash River Heritage Corridor Commission, Earth Adventures Unlimited, Fort Wayne Outfitters and Bike Depot, Downtown Improvement District, Wells Street Corridor, and Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation.



The money raised from these two fundraisers afforded NIRCC to create comprehensive waterproof water trails maps showing the 29 access sites, any dangers on the rivers, and what type of amenities are available at each of the access sites. Additionally, the map provides a narrative on water safety tips, the dangers of low-head dams, fishing in our rivers, and the multi-use land trails within Fort Wayne. If you would like a map of the water trails visit Fort Wayne Outfitters and Bike Depot, Earth Adventures Unlimited, Visit Fort Wayne, or the NIRCC office. A suggested donation of \$5 is requested to cover the printing expenses of the map and make reprints sustainable.



Community Development Updates

Did you know that NIRCC is available to assist communities within Adams, Allen, DeKalb, and Wells Counties with community and economic development activities? We can assist communities with projects receiving funding through a myriad of sources such as grants and loans from the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA), the State Revolving Fund (SRF), the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM), United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and other State, Federal, and private programs. The NIRCC community development team has the capabilities to assist with project development and to provide grant writing, grant administration, and labor standards ad-



ministration services. Information regarding available funding opportunities and the community development services provided by the NIRCC community development team is available by contacting Matt Vondran at Matt.Vondran@co.allen.in.us or Kyle Quandt at Kyle.Quandt@co.allen.in.us or calling (260) 449-7309.

Current Projects

Monroeville 5-year Master Park and Recreation Plan

The Town of Monroeville identified a need to write a comprehensive 5-year Master Park and Recreation Plan to help guide their park development and prioritize needs and wants. They have contracted with NIRCC to write the Plan which entails compiling background information on the Town and the Parks, conducting public meetings and disseminating surveys, analyze gathered public input, assist in prioritization of needs and wants and identify funding sources. The Plan will be submitted to the IN Department of Natural Resources for review and approval in April 2017. Once the Plan is approved by IN DNR, the Town of Monroeville will be able to use it to justify grant proposals and other requests for funding park improvements and enhancements.

Saint Mary Nature Preserve – Decatur

NIRCC assisted the City of Decatur with a Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant application in June of 2015 to construct a Nature Preserve on vacant land adjacent to the St. Marys River just south of Monroe Street. The proposal was reviewed and approved by both the IN DNR and the National Park Service. A Grant Agreement between the City of Decatur and the IN DNR was executed in August, 2016. NIRCC has been contracted to administer the LWCF grant and assist with making sure the project moves forward without issue. Construction on the approximately 47 acre Nature Preserve will begin in the summer of 2017 and is expected to be open to the public in the fall of 2017. The final Nature Preserve will consist of approximately 3,700 feet of linear trail which will connect to the existing trail, a pond overlook, parking area, and interpretive signage. The Nature Preserve will be a great addition to Decatur and will be utilized by residents for passive recreation and schools as an outdoor class room. NIRCC is excited

to offer our assistance in making this Nature Preserve a Decatur treasure.

Labor Standards Administration

Federally funded projects are most often required to follow rules and regulations of the Davis-Bacon and Related Acts (DBRA) which requires labor on these construction projects to be paid the prevailing Federal wage. NIRCC has over 17 years of experience assisting communities with following the DBRA requirements

by doing the heavy lifting and tedious payroll reviews. Projects we have recently provided Labor Standards Administration (LSA) for include: three waste water/ sewer State Revolving Fund (SRF) projects in Bluffton; seven SRF funded sewer extension projects for the Allen County Regional Water and Sewer District; and two SRF funded projects in Hometown. Please contact NIRCC if you are in need of LSA services at 260-449-7309.

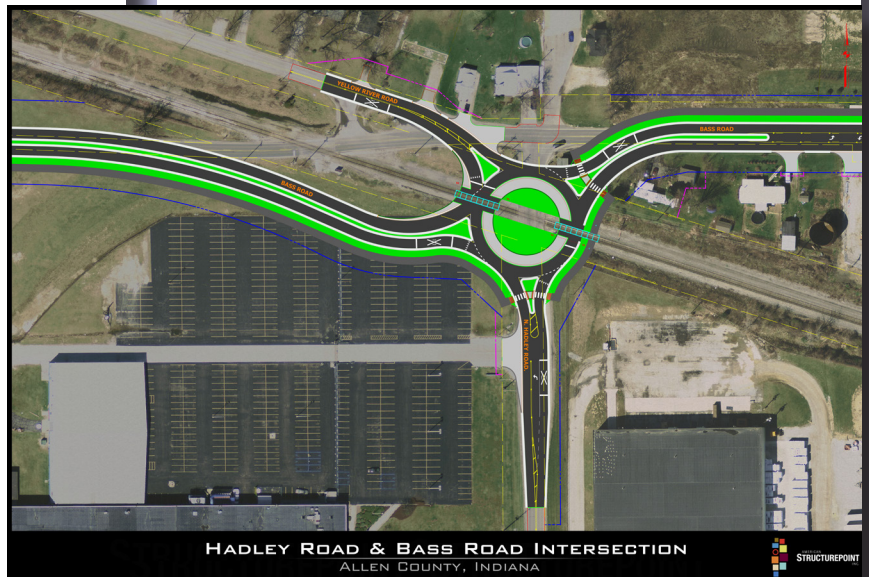
Upcoming Transportation Projects

A number of local road and trail projects will be going to construction in the next few months. This section of the Transportation Times will highlight and summarize several of these projects that are in process and have been programmed through the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and are now ready for construction. To see a complete listing of our TIP projects visit our website at www.nircc.com.

Bass Road: west of Hadley Road to Clifty Parkway

The Bass Road corridor from Scott Road to Hillegas Road has been under design for several years. With the corridor being nearly 4 ½ miles long, the construction was divided into five phases. Though the Hadley Road intersection is near mid-point of the overall corridor, it was deemed to be the first phase for construction, based on the need to improve congestion and safety. This intersection is very unusual as it is an offset “K” style intersection with the Yellow River Road leg forming an acute angle with Bass Road. In addition there is a skewed railroad crossing

which intersects with both Bass Road and Hadley Road near the point of intersection. After completion of an alternatives analysis, traffic study, and much discussion, a design was finally agreed upon that would alleviate congestion, improve safety, include pedestrian crossings and be accepted by the railroad. With delays associated with the design revisions and coordination with the railroad, this phase took longer than expected. The next phase, Shakespeare Boulevard to Clifty Park,



is now designed and ready for construction as well. It was decided that instead of staggering the two phases as it had been originally planned, the two phases would be combined into one contract for construction. The bid was opened on November 30, 2016 and came under the Engineer's Estimate at \$7,624,243.05. Construction of these two phases will begin in the spring of 2017 and is estimated to be completed by fall of 2019.

Construction of these two phases will improve two intersections (at Hadley Road and at Flaugh Road); the road will be widened from two to three lanes; the bridges over I-69 and over Flaugh Ditch will be widened; and a new multi-use trail will be constructed along Bass Road. The two intersections will be converted to roundabouts. The new three lane roadway will consist of one lane in each direction with a center turn lane, including curb and gutter for roadway drainage and a storm sewer system. A 10 foot wide multi-use trail will be constructed on the north side of the roadway switching to the south side of the roadway as it crosses Hadley Road going west. The trail will connect two subdivisions (Stratford Forest and Hickory Pointe) to Buckner Park.

The next phase of the Bass Road corridor scheduled for construction will be from Clifty Parkway to Thomas Road. It is currently scheduled for construction in fiscal year 2020.

Carroll Road: Preserve Boulevard to Bethel Road

Bids for this project will be opened by INDOT on January 19, 2017, with construction scheduled to begin in the spring. This project begins at Preserve Boulevard and ends east of Bethel Road. You'll soon start to see some utility-related activity along the project corridor even this winter as utility companies move their servic-

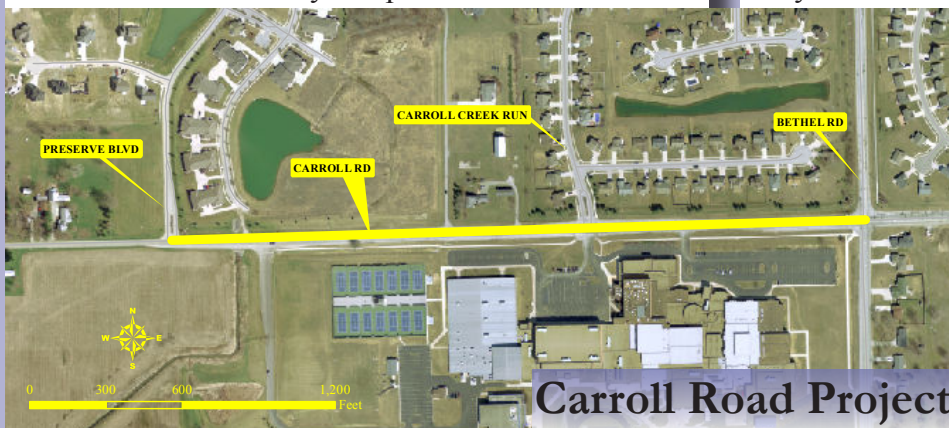
es out of the way. When the project is completed, the roadway will have curb and gutter on both sides with an underground storm sewer system to address drainage on the roadway. The improvements to the roadway will be a combination of fully reconstructed pavement in some areas and milling/resurfacing in others. The new roadway will be asphalt. Good news – there will be a new sidewalk on the north side of Carroll Road from Preserve Boulevard to Bethel Road and beyond. For the south side of Carroll Road, the existing sidewalk in front of the schools will remain, but at the Bethel Road intersection, sidewalk ramps will lead to new sidewalk on the south side of Carroll Road east of Bethel Road. New marked crosswalks and sidewalk ramps at the various public road approaches (Preserve Boulevard, Carroll Creek Run, and Bethel Road) will be ready for use once the project is completed. Plans call for new street lighting at the Bethel Road intersection to help light up the sidewalk ramp areas. The project will be completed in 2017. The Contractor will be required to wait until after school has let out before closing any portion of the roadway and there will be good communication regarding any road closures.

Pufferbelly Trail: State Boulevard to Fernhill Avenue with a trail spur to Franke Park

This project will open bids on February 8, 2017, with construction planned for the spring. This trail project is 1.6 miles long and part of the Pufferbelly Trail that when constructed will be 13-miles long. The Pufferbelly Trail is part of the Poka-Bache Connector which is a State Visionary Trail that will ultimately be about 81-miles long, running from Pokagon State Park in Angola to the Ouabache State Park in Bluffton. When finished, the 13-mile Pufferbelly Trail section of the Poka-Bache Trail will stretch from downtown Fort Wayne to the northern Allen County border. A direct

connection to the Rivergreenway will allow for extensive recreational and commuting access throughout Fort Wayne.

The name "Pufferbelly" is derived from the historic nickname for a steam locomotive. The Pufferbelly Trail is situated on an abandoned New York Central Railroad corridor. The Pufferbelly Trail uses the



right-of-way of the Fort Wayne to Jackson, Michigan to Saginaw, Michigan Railroad. The rail line began in 1868 and later became part of the New York Central system in 1880. The railroad operated as the Penn Central in the 1970's and ceased operation in 1976. Two years later the tracks were removed.

tion to Fort Wayne's trail system. It will blend urban and rural areas providing a unique view of Fort Wayne.

Pufferbelly Trail Project

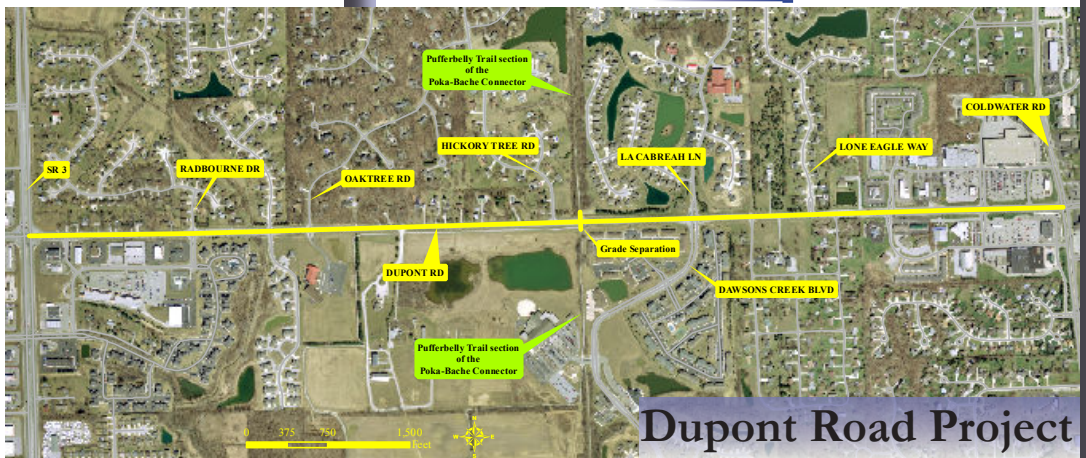


This trail section will be 12' feet wide and 1.6 miles. When the trail is finished from State Boulevard to Fernhill Avenue, plus a short extension along Franke Park Drive, bikers, hikers and walkers will have access to Franke Park and the Fort Wayne Children's Zoo. This project will connect to another phase of the Pufferbelly Trail that will continue south of State Boulevard to the intersection of Fourth Street and Clinton Street and the Rivergreenway. The Pufferbelly Trail, following the old rail line, will be an impressive addi-

Dupont Road: Lima Road to Coldwater Road

This project is scheduled to let (bids are open on this date) on July 12, 2017. This project will widen Dupont Road from a two lane roadway to a four lane roadway, with a boulevard design. There will be left turn lanes at the intersections along the corridor. This project will add curb and gutter with a sidewalk on the north side and a 10 foot wide multi-use trail on the south side. There will also be a (below) grade separation for the Pufferbelly Trail/Poka-Bache Connector crossing near the Parkview YMCA property. This grade separated crossing will safely connect this Pufferbelly Trail section of the Poka-Bache Connector that currently runs north and south of Dupont Road.

The boulevard design for this project is intended to provide an aesthetic corridor design which will enhance adjacent property values and quality of life. The boulevard design adds a number of benefits including a design intended to lower travel speeds. This calmer street design will also be more pedestrian friendly, more environmentally friendly, reduce traffic noise and increase safety by reducing head-on and left-turn crashes. The addition of the sidewalk and multi-use trail will provide a network of pedestrian facilities that connect area neighborhoods with one another as well as other activity centers with the neighborhoods, such as the commercial areas on the east and west ends of the project as well as the YMCA. The project will also be designed to treat the first 1 inch of rainfall in the right-of-way before it reaches the storm sewer outfalls, thus keeping our rivers and streams clear of sediment and other vehicular pollutants.



Dupont Road Project

Traffic Data Solutions

With the consistent need to collect more traffic data each year, NIRCC has come up with a solution that will not only facilitate the collection of more data, but also reduce man hours. One of the most time consuming types of studies NIRCC conducts throughout the year just became much easier to complete. Intersection counts are used for a variety of purposes that range from gathering information needed to justify if intersection improvements are needed to analyzing how an entire corridor functions. Until just recently NIRCC has relied on a manual traffic count method which consisted of staff sitting at an intersection for up to 12 hours pushing buttons on a JAMAR turning movement counter to model traffic patterns and movements. Coordinating staff and working around weather conditions to conduct these manual intersection count studies limited the amount of data we could collect and the times of day we could perform the studies. Also, depending on the locations available to park and observe an intersection, sometimes the study itself distracted drivers and caused various interruptions in normal traffic flow. Upon evaluation of various options in the marketplace, NIRCC decided to use a much more non-intrusive technology that will not only collect data more efficiently, but also allow for a variety of other types of traffic studies. This new solution was MioVision.



MioVision is a camera-based traffic, bicycle, and pedestrian monitoring system. The types of data MioVision allows us to gather includes intersection counts, roundabout counts, road volume data, vehicle gap data, pedestrian and bicycle pathway counts, and pedestrian and bicycle junction counts. Field technicians are able to easily, and safely, set up the camera at various locations to capture videos of traffic at any hour of the day and even in poor weather conditions. A single MioVision camera can collect data from multiple legs of a large intersection without difficulty. Once the study is complete the data is pro-



cessed and returned in a format we prefer. The cameras can be set up on tripods that come with the camera unit or attached to existing posts at the study site.



This technology has allowed us to expand our data collection capabilities to all hours of the day, reduce study completion turnaround time, and create a non-intrusive portable means of conducting traffic studies. Also, having access to video footage of a study allows us to illustrate what is actually happening at a particular location and give a better understanding of the data being provided. While initial costs are high for MioVision, more accurate data and cost savings down the road make this a great solution and added tool to our traffic analysis techniques.

Northeast Indiana Trail Branding and Wayfinding Initiative continued...



Our hope is to create a branded trail system that people will recognize no matter what part of our region they visit. When someone walks or bikes along a trail in Steuben County they will recognize the same regional trail system name and signage as when they walked or biked along a trail in Wells County.

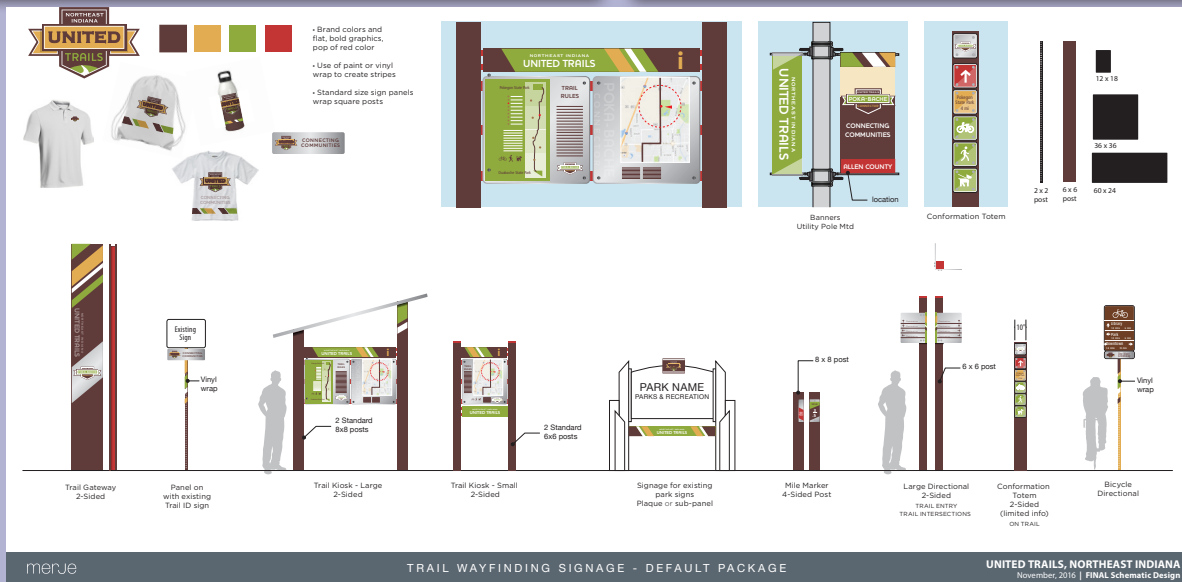
The Northeastern Indiana Regional Coordinating Council (NIRCC) had contracted the consultant firm Merje and partnered with Region 3A Development & Regional Planning Commission to create a regional trail system name, logo and signage design/sign templates for trail identification, trail gateways, trail information and other wayfinding signs for our region. A number of logos for specific trail sections within the regional trail network will also be created as part of this project. On October 12, 2016 Merje Traveled to Northeast Indiana to unveil the regional trail system name, “Northeast Indiana United Trails”, and the name chosen for the state priority trail connecting Ouabache State Park near Bluffton, IN to Pokagon State Park near Angola, IN. The name chosen for the state priority trail corridor is the “Poka-Bache Connector”. The

name combines “Poka”, from “Pokagon State Park”, and “Bache”, from “Ouabache State Park”. In case you were wondering, Ouabache is a French word and is pronounced ‘wabash’.

While Merje was in town presenting the new names and logos for our regional trail system they also presented the final four choices for sign types that will be included in the sign manual produced with this project.



Once the four choices were presented there was a clear choice for our basic sign design template which you can see below. This template gives a general idea of what signs along the trails will look like. Once the final product is complete there will be a sign manual that will describe the materials, dimensions, and installation details for all the different sign types. There will also be different menus to choose from that range from very basic sign types to enhanced sign types. These menus will allow communities to choose sign packages based on what their needs are and what their budgets may be.



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