



# Call For Projects Submission

You will receive an email verification stating that your application was received from the [info@oursoinrda.org](mailto:info@oursoinrda.org) account within 48 hours of receipt. If you do not receive an email in this timeframe, please contact Amber Ruoff at (812)945-0266.

## General Information

### 1. Project Name & Location:

### 2. Project Partners:

Primary Project Leader:

Point of Contact (POC) (Name; Email Address; Phone #):

Project Partner(s)/Supporter(s):

### 3. Which Priorities, Goals and/or Barriers does this project address? Please check all boxes that apply:

Destinations

Connections

Workforce

Government & Collaboration

Economic Development

Infrastructure

Natural Assets

Other

### 4. What area or areas will benefit from this project? If appropriate, please attach a project map (limit map size to 11" x 17").

### 5. Project Description/Narrative – If more space is needed, please attach a separate sheet(s).



## Funding and Timeline Information

Project Cost/Budget – Construction Projects (if applicable)				
Description	Cost – Fiscal Year 2021	Cost – Fiscal Year 2022	Cost – Fiscal Year 2023	Cost – Fiscal Year 2024
Acquisition/Rights-of-Way Expense	\$	\$	\$	\$
Design/Inspection Expense	\$	\$	\$	\$
Legal/Financial Expense	\$	\$	\$	\$
Infrastructure Construction Cost	\$	\$	\$	\$
Building Construction Cost	\$	\$	\$	\$
Other Construction Costs	\$	\$	\$	\$
<b>Total Project Cost (all fiscal years)</b>	\$			

Project Cost/Budget – Programs (if applicable)				
Description	Cost – Fiscal Year 2021	Cost – Fiscal Year 2022	Cost – Fiscal Year 2023	Cost – Fiscal Year 2024
	\$	\$	\$	\$
	\$	\$	\$	\$
	\$	\$	\$	\$
	\$	\$	\$	\$
	\$	\$	\$	\$
<b>Total Project Cost (all fiscal years)</b>	\$			

Funding Source				
Description	Cost – Fiscal Year 2021	Cost – Fiscal Year 2022	Cost – Fiscal Year 2023	Cost – Fiscal Year 2024
Private/Philanthropic Funds \$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Local Government Funds \$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Other Funds \$	\$	\$	\$	\$
<b>Total Project Cost (all fiscal years)</b>	\$			

**6. Funding Gap – READI Funds Request:** \$

**7. What other funding sources have been explored to fill the gap for the project? List sources, amounts and status of request.**



**8. Timeline:**

Construction Projects:

Estimated Date for Start of Construction:

Estimated Date for Construction to be Completed:

Programming:

Estimated date to start/expand the program:

Estimated duration of program:

**9. If the Project/Program is to be phased, list the number of phases, the start date for each phase, and the costs associated with each phase:**

**Readiness**

**10. Explain the status of the property control/rights-of-way necessary to complete the project (list anticipated dates to acquire control of the property if not already under control).**

**11. Is the property needed for the project properly zoned for the proposed objective/project? If not, please discuss if a change in zoning has/will be requested and the appropriate timeline?**

**12. Is there an engineers estimate for the project, if so, when was it last updated?**

**13. Has any design been completed, if so, to what extent? (Please do not attach construction drawings)**

**14. Have all necessary permits been identified?**



## Post Project Implementation

### 15. Is your project sustainable?

#### Construction Related Projects:

Is there a maintenance plan in place for the project after implementation?

Who is responsible for on-going maintenance of the project?

What is the funding source?

#### Programmatic/Non-construction Projects:

Is your program self-sustainable after 3 years?

If not, when would the program achieve sustainability?

Do you have a sustainability plan?

### 16. What are the projected outcomes and impacts resulting from the implementation of the project?

## Other

### 17. If your project is to support housing, please indicate the following:

Type of housing:

Single Family Homes  
(detached homes, including townhomes and condos)

Multi-Family Housing

Average Housing Cost for Single Family Homes:

Average Monthly Rent for Multi Family Homes:

Categorize the type of housing proposed with this project, including the price points for the selected type:

Low Income Housing:

Workforce/Moderate Housing :

Market Rate:

### 18. Attach any other relevant information that you would like to share, 2 page limit.

**Project Name and Location:** Regional Trail Submission / “South Monon Freedom Trail”

**Project Leader:** Mayor Jeff Gahan, City of New Albany

**Point of Contact:** Josh Staten, Economic Development & Redevelopment Director

**Other Contact(s):** Claire Johnson, Neighborhood Initiatives Coordinator / John Rosenbarger, Public Works Supervisor

**Project Partner(s) / Supporter(s):** Jeff Quyle, Radius Indiana / Shawn Carruthers, Floyd County Commissioner / John Schellenberger, Floyd County Commissioner / Tim Kamer, Floyd County Commissioner / Steve Ferguson, Chairman of the Board, Cook Group Inc.

**Next Level Trails Application (CSX Railway Acquisition) Partner(s) / Supporter(s):** Dana C. Wavle, Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance, Indiana University Southeast / Philip T. Hendershot, Jeffersonville Chair, Ohio River Greenway Commission / Shawna M. Girgis, Mayor, City of Bedford, Indiana / Michael Hall, City Operations, City of New Albany, IN / Gene McCracken, County Commissioner, Lawrence County / Jeff Quyle, President/CEO, Radius Indiana / Kerry Thompson, Executive Director for the Center for Rural Engagement, Indiana University Southeast / Troy Merry, Past Mayor, City of Salem / Justin Green, Mayor, City of Salem

## Table of Contents

<b>General Information</b> .....	<b>pp. 3-8</b>
Question 4.....	pp. 3-4
Question 5.....	pp. 5-8
<b>Funding and Timeline Information</b> .....	<b>pp. 9-13</b>
Question 7.....	pp. 9-10
Question 8.....	p. 11
Question 9.....	pp. 12-13
<b>Readiness</b> .....	<b>pp. 14-18</b>
Question 10 .....	p. 14
Question 11 .....	p. 15
Question 12.....	p. 16
Question 13.....	p. 17
Question 14.....	p. 18
<b>Post Project Implementation</b> .....	<b>pp. 19 - 26</b>
Question 15 .....	p. 19
Question 16 .....	pp. 20 - 26
<b>Other</b> .....	<b>pp. 27 - 42</b>
Exhibit A (South Monon Freedom Trail Map) .....	p. 28
Exhibit B (South Monon Freedom Trail Phase 1 - Floyd County) .....	pp. 29 - 30
Exhibit C (Letter of Support - Radius) .....	p. 31
Exhibit D (Letter(s) of Support – Next Level Trails Application) .....	pp. 32 - 42
<b>References</b> .....	<b>pp. 43 - 44</b>

## General Information

### 4. What area or areas will benefit from this project? If appropriate, please attach a project map (limit map size to 11”X17”).

The City of New Albany intends to acquire 68-miles of railway currently owned by CSX and construct the first phase of the potentially longest regional trail system in the state of Indiana (see **Exhibits A & B**), with the working name of “The South Monon Freedom Trail” to which it will be referred throughout this document. New Albany designates The South Monon Freedom Trail as the most impactful regional project to drive growth and improve quality of life.

When completed, The South Monon Freedom Trail will be an extension of the Ohio River Greenway Trail (ORG Trail) that borders the Ohio River along the New Albany, Jeffersonville, and Clarksville shorelines. The extension will bring the benefits of the considerable amount of pedestrian and bicycle traffic experienced by these ORG Trail adjacent communities to interior communities throughout the Southern Indiana region. The additional 68-miles to Bedford, extending from the present Ohio River Greenway Trail (ORG Trail) on the New Albany Shoreline, will connect communities in Floyd County, Clark County, Washington County, Orange County, and Lawrence County providing Southern Indiana with a world class regional trail attraction.

This proposed project would build a trail through a significant part of Indiana that currently has little or no access to regional trails. The new extensions, combined with the communities currently along the ORG Trail, would connect the following cities, towns, counties, and recreational amenities through a single regional trail system:

#### Cities and Towns:

- Jeffersonville, IN (including Big Four Station) – Pop. 47,673
- Clarksville, IN (including the Falls of the Ohio State Park and the future Origin Park) – Pop. 21,548
- New Albany, IN (including the New Albany Shoreline, New Albany Loop Island Wetlands, New Albany Golf Course, New Albany Flow Park, Binford Park, Sam Peden Community Park, Purdue Polytechnic Institute, Southern Indiana Sports Center, and Indiana University Southeast) – Pop. 36,647
- Mitchell, IN (including Spring Mill State Park) – Pop. 4,261
- Bedford, IN (including Milwaukee Road Transportation Trailway) – Pop. 13,272
- Borden, IN – Pop. 3,162
- New Pekin, IN – Pop. 1,458
- Orleans, IN – Pop. 2,028
- Salem, IN (including Salem Community Trail) – Pop. 6,172
- Campbellsburg, IN – Pop. 676
- Saltillo, IN – Pop. 106

- Louisville, KY (including Waterfront Park and the Louisville Loop trail system) – Pop. 617,790

Counties:

- Floyd County, IN – Pop. 78,522
- Clark County, IN (including Deam Lake State Recreation Area and Clark State Forest) – Pop. 118,302
- Washington County, IN – Pop. 28,036
- Orange County, IN – Pop. 19,545
- Lawrence County, IN (including Milwaukee Road Trail and Spring Mill State Park) – Pop. 45,370

The South Monon Freedom Trail completes a section of the State Visionary Trail and the American Discovery Trail systems in Clark and Floyd Counties. The Visionary Trails include the Milwaukee Road Transportation Trailway that runs through Bedford as well as the Visionary Trails and American Discovery segments that run through Clark and Floyd Counties to the Ohio River. The Trail connects two State Parks; the Clark State Forest and Deam Lake Recreation Area including the adjacent Knobstone Trail and runs within two miles of the Spring Mill State Park outside of Mitchell. The south end of the trail will connect to the Ohio River Greenway and to the 100-mile-plus Louisville Loop trail system.

The newly proposed regional trail system, in addition to the two ORG Trail extensions currently underway (ORG Trail Westward Extension and Silver Creek Landing Trail Extension), seeks to expand trail access to residents that currently lack necessary trail amenities to access the regional benefits of the ORG Trail system and the proposed South Monon Freedom Trail.

*Ohio River Greenway Trail Westward Extension:* The City of New Albany is currently in the design phase for two new extensions of the ORG Trail and future amenities to the New Albany Shoreline that will ultimately connect with the proposed South Monon Freedom Trail. The first extension is in the final phase of the original ORG Trail plan. Completion of this stage will make the City of New Albany the first of three communities to complete their portion of the original ORG Trail plan. The ORG Trail extension westward would connect the current ORG Trail with approximately 32 acres of future park area which will serve as the anchor to the western portion of the ORG Trail. This development provides new trail connectivity to the neighborhoods west of I-64 in New Albany providing much needed amenities to the approximately 3,265 residents (per 2019: ACS 5-Year estimates) formerly disconnected from downtown New Albany by the construction of the Sherman Minton Bridge in 1961. Funding for this project has already been acquired through a private donation of \$2.5 million from the Caesar's Foundation of Floyd County and locally controlled public funds.

*Silver Creek Landing Trail Extension:* The 1/2-mile Silver Creek Landing trail extension will further trail connectivity and access to the ORG Trail system, and ultimately The South Monon Freedom Trail, to New Albany neighborhoods and approximately 4,966 residents (per 2019: ACS 5-Year estimates) northward along Silver Creek and will include trail heads on East Market



Street and Beharrell Avenue. Funding for this project has already been acquired through locally controlled public funds.

**5.) Project Description/ Narrative – If more space is needed, please attach a separate sheet(s).**

CSX's decision in December of 2017 submitted to STB a proposal to abandon its rail line from the northern edge of New Albany to the East Fork of the White River, south of Bedford, created the opportunity to develop an important new trail to add to Indiana's growing network of trails. It is important to note that this proposed new regional trail, in addition to its recreational value, will bring a significant new economic development asset into an area of the State that has substantial economic distress and high poverty rates.

Specifically, part of the City of New Albany's proposal is to purchase 68-miles of CSX rail line for interim trail use/rail banking from the north side of Bedford to New Albany, milepost 00Q314.0, all in Clark, Floyd, Lawrence, Orange and Washington Counties. The cost of acquisition is expected to be \$5.5 million. The applicants intend to use any funds not needed for the corridor acquisition to begin construction of the trail in New Albany and Floyd County and other segments as funds allow.

The proposed South Monon Freedom Trail would connect five Indiana counties (Lawrence, Orange, Washington, Clark, Floyd), nine towns and cities (Bedford, Mitchell, Saltillo, Campbellsburg, Salem, New Pekin, Borden, Orleans and New Albany), and connect to three additional towns and cities (Louisville, KY, Clarksville, and Jeffersonville) byway of the 7.5 miles of the heavily-used ORG trail. The conversion to a trail for this 68-mile corridor would represent the longest such trail in Indiana. Overall, the corridor contains approximately 545 acres (excluding separately owned accessory-use CSX properties).

The City of New Albany is excited and humbled to have an opportunity not only to help bring a new amenity to the region, but to reimagine the former New Albany – Salem railroad while paying homage to its significance as part of the Underground Railroad. The railway served as a verified escape route serving as a pathway to freedom for many enslaved African Americans traveling both in train cars and following the tracks by foot.<sup>1</sup> If purchased and constructed, we hope to build future partnerships with the State and its appropriate agencies, along with historians and other interested entities, in providing guidance and assistance in this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to tell the stories of formerly enslaved persons and their pathway to freedom. The South Monon Freedom Trail has the potential to allow descendants, students, and everyday trail-users to acknowledge and recognize the remarkable journey to freedom, literally following in the footsteps of those that travelled this corridor to escape enslavement. This aspect of the project is what makes the South Monon Freedom Trail truly unique, the trail itself will be a destination that will support education, healing, and reflection. The trailhead for the South Monon Freedom Trail in New Albany will serve as a cultural heritage destination, designating the location as a monumental site and symbol of African-American history, with the potential to

---

<sup>1</sup> Peters, Pamela. The Underground Railroad in Floyd County, Indiana. McFarland & Company, 2001.

be expanded and include markers and additional sites along the trail that will tell the stories unique to their respective locations.

The proposed 68-mile regional South Monon Freedom Trail, in addition to the ORG Westward Extension and Silver Creek Landing Extension projects, will continue to build upon the growing reputation Southern Indiana has for providing amenities that contribute to a high quality of life for its residents. This is especially important for the areas where the neglected railways have become a blight upon their communities as the South Monon Freedom Trail will function as a catalyst to economic prosperity.

As part of the City of New Albany's application to the RDA, the City is asking for consideration on the following three items, for a total of \$20.5 million:

- 1.) *CSX Railway Acquisition (from New Albany to Bedford) (\$5.5 million)*: For the past several years the City of New Albany has been granted authorization on behalf of all communities along the railway by the Federal Surface Transportation Board (STB) to negotiate directly with CSX in an effort to purchase the 68+ miles of railway between New Albany and Bedford. Thus far, the asking price from CSX has been \$5.5 million. The City has been working diligently to either negotiate that price down or acquire additional outside funding to make the purchase possible. Without acquisition of the railway, a regional trail of this magnitude likely does not happen. **The City of New Albany is requesting \$5.5 million to be included by the RDA in its READI Grant application for the City of New Albany to offer to CSX and to acquire ownership of this railway.** If the RDA assists by providing the funding necessary to purchase and if CSX accepts the offer, the City of New Albany will then turn over any railway not located within its jurisdictional boundaries to either/or: the respective underlying government jurisdictions; state agencies; regional economic development organizations; or non-profit entities focused on trail development.
- 2.) *South Monon Freedom Trail Phase 1 ROW & Construction (from the ORG Trail in New Albany to milepost 00Q314.0) (\$12 million)*: This 5.5-mile portion of the trail connects the ORG Trail with the proposed regional 68-mile South Monon Freedom Trail. Due to the CSX reactivation of part of the railway in New Albany, this portion does not have access to railway. For the past two years, the City of New Albany has been working with an engineering firm on a Trail Feasibility Study to route this 5.5 mile portion of the trail (see **Exhibit B**) and what potential construction would look like. The study (available upon request) was completed in the spring of 2020 and provided the information needed to begin looking for funding options. Based upon the aforementioned feasibility study; **the City of New Albany is requesting \$12 million to be included by the RDA in its READI Grant application for construction of this "connector" 5.5-mile portion of trail that would connect the present ORG Trail with the future regional South Monon Freedom Trail.** While this portion of trail is located entirely within the City of New Albany's jurisdictional boundaries; it has a huge regional impact because without it, the present high-level of pedestrian and bicycle traffic from the ORG Trail is not able to connect with the proposed regional South Monon Freedom Trail.
- 3.) *South Monon Freedom Trail Phase 2 Construction (CSX railway conversion from New Albany to Bedford) (\$3 million)*: This portion relies upon the acquisition of right-of-way from CSX. If the railway is not purchased, the transition from "rail to trail" could take

multiple years and multiple phases. **To begin construction of the regional trail northward, the City of New Albany is requesting an additional \$3+ million to be included by the RDA in its READI Grant application.** Based upon construction estimates from the University of North Carolina, Highway Research Center in 2013, this additional \$3 million will complete trail construction from the City of New Albany to the Floyd County line (approx. 3.384 miles), at which point the next phase of construction would begin in Clark County.

If and when the City of New Albany is able to complete Phase 1 of the South Monon Freedom Trail or the 5.5 mile connection, the City of New Albany intends to collaborate with and support, when possible, communities and organizations along the trailway in their efforts to construct the new trailway. The City of New Albany would be in full support of the RDA adding to its READI Grant application additional funding for other communities working on regional trail development and projects relating to a connected regional system. These communities and organizations include but are certainly not limited to:

- Floyd County
- Clark County and respective communities along the trailway
- Washington County and respective communities along the trailway
- Orange County and respective communities along the trailway
- Lawrence County and respective communities along the trailway
- Radius Indiana

The City of New Albany has received letters of support (attached) from the following individuals/communities/organizations:

- Jeff Quyle, President/CEO – Radius Indiana (**Exhibit C**)
- Shawn Carruthers, Floyd County Commissioner (Letter in Progress)
- John Schellenberger, Floyd County Commissioner (Letter in Progress)
- Tim Kramer, Floyd County Commissioner (Letter in Progress)
- Steve Ferguson, Chairman of the Board, Cook Group Inc. (Letter in Progress)

In February of 2019, The City of New Albany applied for the first round of the Next Level Trails grant to request \$5 million in funding for the acquisition of the rail line for the regional trail system discussed in this grant application (Next Level Trails grant application available upon request). The City did not receive the grant, as the monies was determined to not be eligible to be used for this purpose. During the application process, letters of support were obtained from organizations and municipalities that agreed to partner and collaborate on a potential trail system, the same one that we request funding from READI from today. Letters of support (**Exhibit D**) were received from the following individuals/communities/organizations:

- Dana C. Wavle, Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance, Indiana University Southeast
- Philip T. Hendershot, Jeffersonville Chair, Ohio River Greenway Development Commission
- Shawna M. Girgis, Mayor, City of Bedford, Indiana

- Michael Hall, City Operations, City of New Albany, Indiana
- Gene McCracken, County Commissioner, Lawrence County
- Jeff Quyle, President/CEO, Radius Indiana
- Kerry Thompson, Executive Director for the Center for Rural Engagement, Indiana University
- Troy Merry, Mayor, City of Salem
- Justin Green, City Council President, City of Salem

In December of 2021, the City of New Albany intends to apply for the next round of Next Level Trails grants for additional construction funding along the trailway. With the potential of combining the \$20.5 million from the READI grant and the next round of Next Level Trail grant funding, the South Monon Freedom Trail could see major progress over the coming years.

*FURTHERMORE:* For this regional trail system to truly be a world class experience, the RDA has the opportunity to partner with multiple different communities to improve not only the future Regional Trail, but also to improve and develop new amenities and trail connections along the existing ORG Trail. The City of New Albany is in full support of the RDA adding to its READI Grant application additional funding to communities and organizations along the ORG Trail for trailway development, park development, and other related amenities. This would include projects such as the completion of the ORG Trail in Jeffersonville, construction of the regional trail in Washington County by Radius Indiana, and the development of ORIGIN Park in Clark County 32 by the River Heritage Conservancy.

## **Funding and Timeline Information**

### **7.) What other funding sources have been explored to fill the gap for the project? List sources, amounts and status of request.**

*Ohio River Greenway Trail Westward Extension:* The City has acquired \$2.5 million from the Caesar's Foundation of Floyd County to assist in this project. All other funding for this project will be locally controlled public funding.

*Silver Creek Landing Trail Extension Phases 1 & 2:* All funding for this project will be locally controlled.

*CSX Railway Acquisition (from New Albany to Bedford):* Funding packages have been examined that included funds from the City of New Albany, Radius Indiana, and private donors. The funding packages have only made up a portion of the total asking price of \$5.5 million. In February of 2019, The City of New Albany applied for the first round of the Next Level Trails grant to request \$5 million in funding for the acquisition of the rail line for the regional trail system discussed in this grant application. The City did not receive the grant, as the monies was determined to not be eligible to be used for this purpose. In December of 2021, the City of New Albany intends to apply for the next round of Next Level Trails grants for additional construction funding along the railway. With the potential of combining the \$20.5 million from the READI grant and the next round of Next Level Trail grant funding, the South Monon Freedom Trail could see major progress over the coming years. The region would clear a major hurdle in completing this project should the RDA step in and provide the financial resources for acquisition. It is important to note that if funding is not acquired, the abandonment of the railway would make trail development nearly impossible on this corridor because the right-of-way would revert to current property owners. In other words; trail development currently is dealing with one owner (CSX) as opposed to 68-miles of adjacent property owners.

*South Monon Freedom Trail Phase 1 ROW & Construction (from the ORG Trail in New Albany to milepost 00Q314.0):* Funding beyond the RDA READI application and potentially locally controlled public funds have not been identified, however if solely local funding is used, the project could take years to complete. The Trail Feasibility Study estimates the cost for this portion to be \$12 million. The importance of this phase relies upon the purchase of the CSX Railway (above). Without rail acquisition, then this phase would lead only from the ORG Trail northward 5.5 miles to the center of the City as opposed an additional 68+ miles to Bedford.

*South Monon Freedom Trail Phase 2 Construction (CSX Railway conversion from New Albany to Bedford):* To this point no other funding has been committed for this portion of the project. The cost for this portion is estimated to be between \$23.32 million and \$40.05 million, based upon an estimated figured using the *Costs for Pedestrian and Bicyclist Infrastructure Improvements: A Resource for Researchers, Engineers, Planners, and the General Public*. Within this application, the City has requested \$3 million to complete trail construction from the City of New Albany to the Floyd County line (approx. 3.384 miles), at which point the next phase of construction would begin in Clark County. The City of New Albany is committed to assisting other communities in identifying financial resources for trail construction such as

private donations and grants including the State of Indiana's Next Level Trails Program. Potential partners include but are not limited to:

- Local, State, and Federal Government(s) and respective government agencies
- Radius (The City of New Albany's partner in CSX RR purchase negotiations)
- River Hills Economic Development District
- One Southern Indiana

**8.) Timeline:**

*Ohio River Greenway Trail Westward Extension*: Start Date: Early 2022 / End Date: Early-Mid 2023

*Silver Creek Landing Trail Extension*: Start Date: Early 2022 / End Date: Early-Mid 2023

*CSX Railway Acquisition (from the ORG Trail in New Albany to Bedford)*: Completion of purchase is funding dependent.

*South Monon Freedom Trail Phase 1 ROW & Construction (from the ORG Trail in New Albany to milepost 00Q314.0)*: Funding Dependent – Start Date: Early 2022 / End Date: 2024

*South Monon Freedom Trail Phase 2 Construction (CSX Railway conversion from New Albany to Bedford)*: Funding Dependent – Start Date: Early 2022 / End Date: TBD

**9.) If the Project/Program is to be phased, list the number of phases, the start date for each phase, and the costs associated with each phase:**

*Ohio River Greenway Trail Westward Extension:* The construction estimate for this project and the related amenities is between \$4 million and \$6 million, updated in late 2020. Funding has been identified for this project and construction should begin in early 2022. This project will be funded in its entirety through a combination of a \$2.5 million donation from Caesar's of Floyd County (for the ORG Westward extension only) and the remaining portion from locally controlled public funds. This project is currently under the engineering design phase, all right-of-way has been acquired, permitting is underway and construction is planned to begin in early 2022 with an estimated completion date of sometime in 2022.

*Silver Creek Landing Trail Extension:* The estimate for both phases of this project and the related amenities is estimated between \$3.5 million and \$4 million, updated in late 2020. This project will potentially be funded from locally controlled public funds. This project is currently under the engineering design phase, right-of-way acquisition is nearly completed, permitting is underway and construction can potentially begin in early 2022 with an estimated completion date later in 2022.

*CSX Railway Acquisition (from New Albany to Bedford):* It is critical that financial resources to secure a path for a regional trail through the RDA are provided, otherwise this once in a lifetime opportunity is likely lost forever. Without funding for acquisition (asking price of \$5.5 million), it is uncertain whether this project and its following phases (below) can proceed. An offer has been submitted by the City of New Albany to CSX. Once funds are secure, the acquisition process can be executed as soon as practical.

*South Monon Freedom Trail Phase 1 ROW & Construction (from the ORG Trail in New Albany to milepost 00Q314.0):* Pending funding from the RDA, it is the City of New Albany's hope to begin right-of-way and design engineering in 2022 with construction to follow upon completion of right-of-way and engineering phases. This portion of the project is estimated to cost between \$11 million and \$12 million, based on the Trail Feasibility Study commissioned by the City of New Albany and completed in spring of 2020. Due to the high cost of this portion, the start date is contingent upon acquiring funding. Should funding be received from the RDA, right-of-way could start as early as late 2021 or early 2022 with construction starting the following year.

*South Monon Freedom Trail Construction Phase 2 Construction (CSX railway conversion from New Albany to Bedford):* The University of North Carolina, Highway Research Center in 2013 estimates that railway to trail conversion can range from \$200,000 - \$500,000 in rural areas and up to \$1,000,000 in urban areas (this does not include bridge conversion). Based on these estimates; a project running 68-miles from New Albany to Bedford (roughly 55.86 rural miles and roughly 12.15 urban/suburban miles) can expect to be anywhere from \$23.32 million to \$40.075 million not including bridges or additional amenities. This project is funding dependent and the City of New Albany has asked the RDA for \$3 million (in addition to funding for Phase 1 above) to begin construction northward along the CSX railway. Once the railway is acquired, work can begin almost immediately. Contributing organizations and communities tasked with



converting the railway to the regional South Monon Freedom Trail are prepared to begin identifying additional financial resources, engineering design, and construction.

## **Readiness**

**10.) Explain the status of the property control/rights-of-way necessary to complete the project (list anticipated dates to acquire control of the property if not already under control).**

*Ohio River Greenway Westward Trail Extension:* Necessary right-of-way acquisition is completed for this project; the City of New Albany expects construction to begin in early 2022.

*Silver Creek Landing Trail Extension:* Necessary ROW acquisition is nearly completed for this project; the City of New Albany expects construction to begin in early 2022.

*South Monon Freedom Trail Phase 1 ROW & Construction (from the ORG Trail in New Albany to milepost 00Q314.0):* The City of New Albany already has control due to portions of this trail being located in the public right-of-way. However, over half of the right-of-way for this project still needs to be acquired. Right-of-way acquisition can begin immediately as soon as funding becomes available to complete this phase of the project.

*South Monon Freedom Trail Construction Phase 2 Construction (CSX railway conversion from New Albany to Bedford):* The City of New Albany is in negotiations with CSX to purchase the entire 68-mile railway. If the RDA provides the financial resources for acquisition of the CSX railway, no additional right-of-way will be needed for this phase of the project. It is important to note that if purchase negotiations were to fail and no agreement reached, the abandonment of the railway would make trail development nearly impossible on this corridor because the right-of-way would revert to current property owners. In other words; trail development currently is dealing with one owner (CSX) as opposed to 68-miles of adjacent property owners.

**11.) Is the property needed for the project properly zoned for the proposed objective/project? If not, please discuss if a change in zoning has/will be requested and the appropriate timeline?**

Additional amenities such as trail heads, parks, residential and commercial facilities, may potentially require future zoning approvals. However, the South Monon Freedom Trail itself will be built in public right-of-way and thus, action is not required, per the City of New Albany's Director of Plan Commission.

**12.) Is there an engineer's estimate for the project, if so, when was it last updated?**

*Ohio River Greenway Westward Trail Extension:* The construction estimate for this project and the related amenities is estimated between \$4 million and \$6 million, updated in late 2020. Funding has been identified for this project and construction should begin in early 2022.

*Silver Creek Landing Trail Extension:* The estimate for both phases of this project and the related amenities is estimated between \$3.5 million and \$4 million, updated in late 2020. Potential funding has been identified for this project and construction of Phase 1 could potentially begin in early 2022.

*South Monon Freedom Trail Phase 1 ROW & Construction (from the ORG Trail in New Albany to milepost 00Q314.0):* The engineers estimate for engineering, right-of-way acquisition and construction of the 5.5-mile "connector" trail between the ORG Trail and the CSX Railway is between \$11 million and \$12 million based on the Trail Feasibility Study commissioned by the City of New Albany completed in mid-2020. This project is funding dependent and is part of the City of New Albany's ask of the RDA.

*South Monon Freedom Trail Construction Phase 2 Construction (CSX railway conversion from New Albany to Bedford):* Based upon estimates from the University of North Carolina, Highway Research Center in 2013: railway to trail conversion can range from \$200,000 - \$500,000 in rural areas and up to \$1,000,000 in urban areas (this does not include bridge conversion). Based on these estimates; a project running 68-miles from New Albany to Bedford (roughly 55.86 rural miles and roughly 12.15 urban/suburban miles) can expect to be anywhere from \$23.32 million to \$40.075 million, not including bridges or additional amenities. This project is funding dependent and the City of New Albany has asked the RDA for \$3 million (in addition to funding for Phase 1 above) to begin construction northward along the CSX railway in hopes of completing the approximate 3.384 miles necessary to reach Clark County.

**13.) Has any design been completed, if so, to what extent? (Please do not attach construction drawings)**

*Ohio River Greenway Westward Trail Extension:* Currently under full engineering design and can be bid out for construction early 2022.

*Silver Creek Landing Trail Extension:* Currently under full engineering design and can potentially be bid out for construction early 2022.

*South Monon Freedom Trail Phase 1 ROW & Construction (from the ORG Trail in New Albany to milepost 00Q314.0):* The City of New Albany Trail Feasibility Study outlines a route and engineering estimates for this 5.5-mile portion to connect the ORG Trail with the CSX Railway, including taking advantage of existing portions already constructed such as:

- 0.63 miles (3,325 feet) of multi-use path (trail) was installed on the west side of Grant Line Road from Beechwood Avenue to Cherokee Drive. North of Cherokee Drive the multi-use path was existing and installed with the Sam Peden Community Park Pedway project.
- 0.62 miles (3,260 feet) of sidewalk was installed on the east side of Grant Line Road from Beechwood Avenue to the south entrance to the medical building and from the entrance to the new building north of the medical building to the south entrance to Walmart. There was already existing sidewalk in these gaps and all the way to McDonald Lane.
- 0.9 miles (4,755 feet) of multi-use path (trail) was installed to and through Sam Peden Community Park to the north of Sam Peden Community Park's family shelter.

*South Monon Freedom Trail Construction Phase 2 Construction (CSX railway conversion from New Albany to Bedford):* This project relies on funding for both acquisition and construction. Therefore, no design has been completed as of yet. Mileage and mapping have been completed, see **Exhibit C**.

**14.) Have all necessary permits been identified?**

*Ohio River Greenway Westward Trail Extension:* All permits have been identified and the acquisition is complete.

*Silver Creek Landing Trail Extension:* All permits have been identified and the acquisition is nearly complete.

*South Monon Freedom Trail Phase 1 ROW & Construction (from the ORG Trail in New Albany to milepost 00Q314.0):* This portion of the project is funding dependent. Permits have been identified based upon the route(s) outlined in the Trail Feasibility Study.

*South Monon Freedom Trail Construction Phase 2 Construction (CSX railway conversion from New Albany to Bedford):* This portion of the project is funding dependent. Permits have been identified and will be secured as required.

## **Post Project Implementation**

### **15.) Is your project sustainable?**

*Is there a maintenance plan in place for the project after implementation?*

There are five counties and nine cities/towns along the CSX trail route. Specific maintenance plans will be established upon purchase of the trail and prior to initiation of construction. It is anticipated that County and municipal governments will be responsible for on-going maintenance.

*Who is responsible for on-going maintenance of the project?*

Ultimately, due to the multitude of communities and jurisdictions involved throughout this project; maintenance will be left to the discretion of the governing body of each portion of trail. It is possible that a State agency, such as the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR), would take the lead in providing a maintenance plan to ensure continuity throughout the project.

*What is the funding source?*

Jurisdiction would fall to a governing body of volunteers or to a State agency. The underlying body governing their respective portion of the trail will be responsible for maintenance funding.

## Other

### **16.) What are the projected outcomes and impacts resulting from the implementation of the project?**

The trail runs through a classically and uniquely attractive part of Indiana that is currently virtually hidden. The trail will show travelers and tourists how genuine, intact and beautiful southcentral Indiana remains with its rolling hills of crops and flowers interspersed with quaint livable towns and cities. It would weave through towns and counties that could very much use the economic development that a regional trail brings. Over 50% of the trail length is located in counties that meet the US EDA's criteria for distress.<sup>2</sup> Four out of the five counties along the proposed trail lag the state median household income of \$56,303.<sup>3</sup> Two counties out of the five, and seven of the nine towns and cities, report higher poverty rates in comparison to Indiana's poverty rate of 11.9%, with one community reporting a poverty rate of 34%.<sup>4</sup> The corridor communities have embraced the trail concept because of the potential for new opportunities that the trail will bring. Over the last decade, as CSX stopped maintaining the rail line, the impact of the abandonment has been seen. With no maintenance, the rail bed will become an overgrown nuisance with no value to the communities and landowners.

Studies of connected active transportation infrastructure, like trails, have shown that it benefits local retail businesses not only in terms of the value of goods sold but also by contributing to livable communities and providing an amenity that can attract young, talented and skilled workers to relocate and work for them. Additionally, property values increase as a direct result of proximity to a trail or other active transportation facility. Active transportation contributes to not only the livability of communities, but also to their economic well-being. Large or small, active transportation networks can benefit every local economy.

#### *Property Values*

Living close to a trail has significant benefits for property values. In southwestern Ohio, the Little Miami Scenic Valley Trail is associated with higher property values for urban, suburban and rural areas.<sup>5</sup> The closer to the trail, the greater the benefits; properties directly adjacent to the trail sold for 9% more than properties a half-mile from the trail. Similarly, in Dallas, since the opening of the Katy Trail in 2006, property values have increased by 80%.<sup>6</sup> In Indiana, the median home value is \$141,700, by comparison, Lawrence County has a median home value of \$117,400, Orange County with a median home value of \$94,700, and Washington County with a

---

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.statsamerica.org/distress/distress.aspx>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/lawrencecountyindiana,orangecountyindiana,washingtoncountyindiana,clarkcountyindiana,floydcountyindiana,IN/PST045219>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/IN>

<sup>5</sup> Duygu Karadeniz, *The Impact of the Little Miami Scenic Trail on Single Family Residential Property Values* (Unpublished master's thesis, 2008), University of Cincinnati School of Public Planning. <http://headwaterseconomics.org/trail/22-miami-scenic-trail>.

<sup>6</sup> Urban Land Institute, *Active Transportation and Real Estate: The Next Frontier* (Washington, DC: Urban Land Institute, 2016), <http://uli.org/wp-content/uploads/ULI-Documents/Active-Transportation-and-Real-Estate-The-Next-Frontier.pdf>.



median home value of \$118,100.<sup>7</sup> The potential increase in property values, which in turn are associated with increases in property tax revenue for the areas that build trails, could mean a boost to the tax base for the Indiana towns, cities, and counties that host the South Monon Freedom Trail.

### *Cultural-and-Eco-Tourism*

The communities and towns along the railway are approximately five to twelve miles apart, serviceable spacing for “places of interest” stops by trail-users. The South Monon Freedom Trail will also serve as a gateway to the many attractions in southcentral Indiana. These include but are not limited to: Big Four Station and Bridge in Jeffersonville; Falls of the Ohio State Park and the future Origin Park in Clarksville; New Albany Shoreline, New Albany Loop Island Wetlands, New Albany Golf Course, New Albany Flow Park, Binford Park, Sam Peden Community Park, Purdue Polytechnic Institute, Southern Indiana Sports Center, and Indiana University Southeast in New Albany; Salem Community Trail in Salem; Deam Lake State Recreation Area and Clark State Forest in Clark County; and Milwaukee Road Trail and Spring Mill State Park in Lawrence County. In addition to the amenities listed above, five nationally recognized historic districts in Indiana are located along the corridor, including: New Albany Downtown Historic District; Orleans Historic District; Bedford Courthouse Square Historic District; Mitchell Downtown Historic District; and Salem Downtown Historic District.

The South Monon Freedom Trail will be a destination within itself, both as the longest trail system in the State of Indiana and as a cultural heritage site. The South Monon Freedom Trail will allow students, descendants of formerly enslaved persons, and everyday trail-users to acknowledge and recognize the remarkable journey taken on the way to freedom, literally following in the footsteps travelling north along the South Monon Freedom Trail. This trail provides the opportunity to support education, healing, reflection, and reconciliation by telling the stories of formerly enslaved persons that traveled this very same route. The trailhead for the South Monon Freedom Trail in New Albany will serve as a cultural heritage destination, designating the location as a monumental site and symbol of African-American history. The South Monon Freedom trail has the potential to be expanded along the corridor to include markers and additional sites that would tell the unique history of their respective location.

Destination trails, like the South Monon Freedom Trail, helps small towns and villages boost their economic productivity by driving recreational and outdoor tourism. Trails attract visitors and bring revenue to small-town and rural America. For example, the Great Allegheny Passage, a 150-mile trail that runs through nine former industrial towns from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to Cumberland, Maryland, many of which have a population of just a few thousand people, much like the interior communities along the South Monon Freedom Trail. The trail receives an estimated 940,000 visits per year. A 2008 study of the Great Allegheny Passage estimated \$40 million in trail-attributed revenue and \$7.5 million in wages distributed by trail-facing businesses. The average day guest spends \$18 and the average overnight guest spends \$124.

---

<sup>7</sup><https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/lawrencecountyindiana,orangecountyindiana,washingtoncountyindiana,clarkcountyindiana,floydcountyindiana,IN/PST045219>

From 2007 to 2015, trail towns along the Great Allegheny Passage saw a net gain of 65 new businesses, leading to more than 270 jobs created. In 2014, the most recent year for which data is available, an estimated 40% of sales were related to trail traffic.<sup>8</sup> The Great Allegheny Passage demonstrates the boost that a destination trail and the associated recreational and outdoor tourism can bring to the local economies along the South Monon Freedom Trail.

The cities of Bedford and New Albany, at each end of the 68-mile regional trail, will provide attractive and convenient trailheads with their historic downtowns that offer locally owned boutiques, restaurants, breweries, and more. In New Albany, the education that the South Monon Freedom Trail hopes to instill in the trail-users will be further enhanced with such local destinations as: the award-winning permanent exhibit “Ordinary People, Extraordinary Courage: Men and Women of the Underground Railroad” at New Albany’s Carnegie Center for Art and History; Town Clock Church, a truly significant structure connected to the Underground Railroad serving as a beacon of hope to freedom seekers across the river, a connecting point between cities in a slave and free state, and a safe haven in a hostile environment on a long journey to freedom; Town Clock Church Sculpture Garden; the future Town Clock Church Museum; and Freedomland Cemetery, the main burial ground for African Americans in New Albany from the 1850s until the early twentieth century.

### *Health Outcomes*

Multiuse trails has been found to have short- and long-term increases in walking and bicycling, especially on urban trails and those that connect to destinations, such as schools, grocery stores or workplaces.<sup>9</sup> Research has shown that trails can promote physical activity among groups that are at a high risk of physical inactivity, especially women and people in lower socioeconomic groups, like those populations located along the South Monon Freedom Trail and its extensions.

The use of active transportation has been shown to have a direct relationship to meeting physical activity guidelines within the United States. For e instance, proximity to trails is associated with people being 50% more likely to meet physical activity guidelines and 73% to 80% more likely to use a bicycle.<sup>10</sup> Studies also have linked active transportation to a more than 40% decrease in mortality rates.<sup>11</sup> According to recent research on health care costs avoided due to physical activity, healthy and active people save an average of \$537 (or \$630 in 2019 dollars), compared

---

<sup>8</sup> The Progress Fund, “Economic Impact of Regional Trails,” The Progress Fund, Trail Town Program, <https://www.trailtowns.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Economic-impact-of-all-Trails-1.pdf>.

<sup>9</sup> NICE Public Health Collaborating Centre, “Physical Activity and the Environment, Review One: Transport,” September 2006, National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng90/evidence/transport-evidence-review-summary-pdf-172342130580>.

<sup>10</sup> A. Moudon et al., “Cycling and the Built Environment, a US Perspective,” *Transportation Research Part D: Transport and Environment* 10, no. 3 (May 2005): 245–61, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.trd.2005.04.001>.

<sup>11</sup> M. Wanner, “Active Transport, Physical Activity, and Body Weight in Adults: A Systematic Review,” *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 42, no. 5 (May 2012): 493–502, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22516490>.

with those who are inactive or insufficiently active. In other words, they would save an average of \$1,313 (or \$1,437 in 2019 dollars).<sup>12</sup>

Not only will the South Monon Freedom Trail generate economic value from retail sales, tourism, property value increase and the attractiveness for companies to do business for localities along the corridor, it will also help Hoosiers become healthier. The health outcomes from building a trail through South Central Indiana is a quality of life benefit that can make our communities happier and healthier.

### *Equity*

Active transportation routes are an issue of transportation justice. The South Monon Freedom Trail and its extensions offer the potential to provide safe, affordable transportation options that will connect people to jobs, education, health care and all aspects of daily life. Investments in new trail connections has been shown to drastically improve connectivity for all residents, including those living in neighborhoods experiencing inequality such as a lack of investment, poverty, racism and discrimination, and lack of access to social resources.<sup>13</sup> If all Hoosiers are to have safe, convenient and affordable options to access work, school and other major destinations vital for their survival and well-being, multi-use trails offer an option beyond the personal automobile. The South Monon Freedom Trail and its extensions will connect demographics within the respective communities that may experience inequality and or have been historically underserved to ladders of opportunity.

Increasing opportunities for active travel through the South Monon Freedom Trail and its extensions, will promote fair distribution of public resources for those who do not drive, an increase in financial savings and opportunity for lower income individuals, and improved mobility options for those who do not have adequate access to transportation.

### *Social Cohesion*

The South Monon Freedom Trail would hope to help residents develop a sense of togetherness both within their respective community and with the other communities along the corridor. Research has shown that trails serve a direct role in encouraging physical activity and improving social cohesion by fostering trust within a community, promoting equity, building social interactions and developing a shared sense of identity among the people who live there. A trail creates a physical sense of community by encouraging physical activity and therefore, social interaction.<sup>14</sup> Areas with walkable or bike-able facilities increases the opportunity for both planned and unplanned social interactions. According to one study, green spaces and walking

---

<sup>12</sup> Susan A. Carlson et al., “Inadequate Physical Activity and Health Care Expenditures in the United States,” *Progress in Cardiovascular Diseases* 57 (2015): 315–323, <https://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/docs/carlson-physical-activity-and-healthcare-expenditures-final-508tagged.pdf>.

<sup>13</sup> U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, Office of Policy and Governmental Affairs, *Summary of Travel Trends: 2017 National Household Travel Survey* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Transportation, 2018), [https://nhts.ornl.gov/assets/2017\\_nhts\\_summary\\_travel\\_trends.pdf](https://nhts.ornl.gov/assets/2017_nhts_summary_travel_trends.pdf).

<sup>14</sup> Project Team for South Hadley, *South Hadley Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan* (South Hadley: Town of South Hadley, Massachusetts, 2016), <https://www.southhadley.org/DocumentCenter/View/2404/Comprehensive-Bicycling-and-Pedestrian-Plan-Final-Draft-December-6-2016-20MB-File-PDF?bidId=>.

areas in a neighborhood contribute to a sense of community, support between residents and social interactions.<sup>15</sup> Another study found that improvements in health, overall well-being and quality of life can provide support, esteem, a feeling of belonging and the facilitation of social interaction—in other words, strong social ties.<sup>16</sup> The South Monon Freedom Trail will allow for these very interactions to happen, building communities with strong social ties, and in turn, those residents feel a strong connection to their respective community, encouraging them to stay and build a life there.

### *Business Attraction*

The South Monon Freedom trail will ultimately connect to the City of Louisville, with a population of 617,790, via the connection to the ORG. The ORG travels through New Albany, Clarksville and Jeffersonville riverfronts and ultimately across the bike-and- pedestrian-only Big Four Bridge, over the Ohio River, to Louisville and the Louisville Loop trail system. New Albany has experienced an influx of usage along the ORG after the completion of the Silver Creek Bridge in Clarksville in 2018, connecting New Albany to the ORG path in Clarksville and allowing trail-users not to touch a main road between the two communities. Clarksville Parks Department provided the City of New Albany with data from the “Greenway Bridge Trailcounter”, which reported 53,396 trail-user crossings between April 20, 2020 and July 26, 2020.

Active transportation is used as a key strategy to attract new corporate businesses looking to relocate and attract young, talented workers. The Louisville Loop is a vision for a 100-mile-plus loop trail system. More than that, it has been identified by the community as an essential component for the economic growth and prosperity of the entire surrounding region of Louisville, Kentucky, which would include the neighboring communities across the river and along the ORG Trail. The master plan for the Louisville Loop sets economic prosperity as one of the key goals for the trail, stating that the trail “will distinguish Louisville as one of the nation’s most livable cities through the use of green infrastructure, shared-use trails, active transportation systems, and safe and vibrant neighborhood districts.”<sup>17</sup>

The New Albany Comprehensive Plan Year 2036 (2017), identified the following key themes: invest in quality of life to make New Albany the premier place to live in the greater Louisville market; increase investment in New Albany’s traditional neighborhoods; continue making New Albany a more walkable city; and improve connectivity within New Albany. The South Monon Freedom Trail addresses these key themes by attracting and retaining a quality workforce in today’s competitive economic development environment, continuing to attract residents and new

---

<sup>15</sup> Virginie Anquetil, *Neighbourhood Social Cohesion Through the Collective Use of Green Spaces: A Case Study of EVA-Lanxmeer Neighbourhood, Culemborg, the Netherlands* (Wageningen: Wageningen University & Research, 2009), <https://www.wur.nl/web/file?uuiid=74502222-16f9-4810-a0a6-0d0f90d53fc3&owner=837bc763-8e44-4f10-997a-9a21e2ad348d>.

<sup>16</sup> V. Cattell et al., “Mingling, Observing, and Lingering: Everyday Public Spaces and Their Implications for Well-Being and Social Relations,” *Health & Place* 14, no. 3 (September 2008): 544–61, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18083621>.

<sup>17</sup> Louisville Metro Council, *Louisville Loop Master Plan* (Louisville: City of Louisville, Kentucky, 2013), [https://louisvilleky.gov/sites/default/files/parks/planning\\_and\\_design/loopmaster\\_adopted2013.pdf](https://louisvilleky.gov/sites/default/files/parks/planning_and_design/loopmaster_adopted2013.pdf).

employers, and investing in the downtown, parks, greenways, and public spaces. The extensions of the South Monon Freedom Trail demonstrate investment that has been directed toward New Albany's traditional neighborhoods in order to help them be more attractive, diverse, and stable and to raise the quality of life for all New Albany residents. The trail and its extensions create walkable connections within the city, thus increasing equitable access to resources in the city and the overall health of the community and addressing the city's priority is to enhance multi-modal connectivity throughout the city.<sup>18</sup>

### *Economic Impact*

The South Monon Freedom Trail will have the economic power to create local tourism industries and generate revenue. Rails to Trails Conservancy has conducted local spending and direct economic impact surveys of trails for over 20 years. The results of these surveys point to an average spending of \$5 million to \$7 million at trail-oriented and trail-adjacent businesses. Rails to Trails Conservancy found that for the 2,128 trails in their database, the local spending impact is between \$10.6 billion and \$21 billion.<sup>19</sup>

An example of this economic power of trails has been evidenced by the Indianapolis Cultural Trail, which has experienced successes in terms of trail users, community engagement and economic impact. A study of the trail in 2015 conducted trail counts and found that it receives between 47,000 and 214,000 visits per year, depending on the location of the counter. In addition, the trail significantly boosted nearby property values. For residential, commercial and lodging establishments within 500 feet of the trail, the estimated total assessed value of these properties increased by \$1 billion between 2008 and 2014.<sup>20</sup> In another part of the study, business owners responding to a survey reported a total of nearly 50 full-time and 50 part-time positions having been added due to increased customer traffic and revenue. The average planned or expected expenditure by trail users was \$53 per day, with hotel and restaurant spending accounting for much of this spending. In total, the average estimated economic impact of each of the six segments was between \$1.2 million for local residents and \$1.9 million for tourists annually.<sup>21</sup> The successes of a trail system like the Indianapolis Cultural Trail right here in Indiana demonstrates the desire that Hoosiers have for trails and reinforces the potential to generate local tourism and revenue. The Indianapolis Cultural Trail is just one example among many of the benefits that communities reap when they invest in trails.

A 2012 study commissioned by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials on jobs created by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act found that

---

<sup>18</sup> <https://cityofnewalbanycom.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/FINAL-COMP-PLAN.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> Patricia A. Tomes and Carl Knoch, *Trail User Surveys and Economic Impact: A Comparison of Trail User Expenditures* (Washington, DC: Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, 2009), <https://www.railstotrails.org/resourcehandler.ashx?id=3589>.

<sup>20</sup> Jessica Majors and Sue Burow, *Assessment of the Impact of the Indianapolis Cultural Trail: A Legacy of Gene and Marilyn Glick* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Public Policy Institute, 2015), <http://indyculturaltrail.org.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/15-C02-CulturalTrail-Assessment.pdf>.

<sup>21</sup> Jessica Majors and Sue Burow, *Assessment of the Impact of the Indianapolis Cultural Trail: A Legacy of Gene and Marilyn Glick* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Public Policy Institute, 2015), <http://indyculturaltrail.org.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/15-C02-CulturalTrail-Assessment.pdf>.

transportation enhancement projects such as walking and biking infrastructure projects (including trails), created 17 jobs, such as design, engineering and construction, per \$1 million spent, more than any other type of project.<sup>22</sup> By these standards, an investment of \$20.05 million through this READI grant could mean the creation of approximately 349 jobs.

The South Monon Freedom Trail is an once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to transform South Central Indiana. The benefits of the 68-mile regional trail are far-reaching and bring powerful outcomes to every community located along the corridor. The South Monon Freedom Trail will connect people to jobs and other opportunities, create opportunities for people to be physically active and outdoors, and revitalize economies and communities. The South Monon Freedom Trail is a unique opportunity to realize these benefits while addressing issues related to public health and chronic disease, economic development, and social equity - all while taking a stand against the evils of slavery by sharing the stories of those that travelled this very same route on a long journey to freedom, those that risked much to help them, and the significance of this corridor as part of the Underground Railroad.

---

<sup>22</sup> Paul Dowell and Lisa Petraglia, NCHRP 08-36, Task 103 Mining Recovery Act Data for Opportunities to Improve the State of Practice for Overall Economic Impact Analysis of Transportation Investments, prepared for the AASHTO Standing Committee on Planning (Washington, DC: American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, 2012), [http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/nchrp/docs/NCHRP08-36\(103\)\\_FR.pdf](http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/nchrp/docs/NCHRP08-36(103)_FR.pdf).

**EXHIBITS**

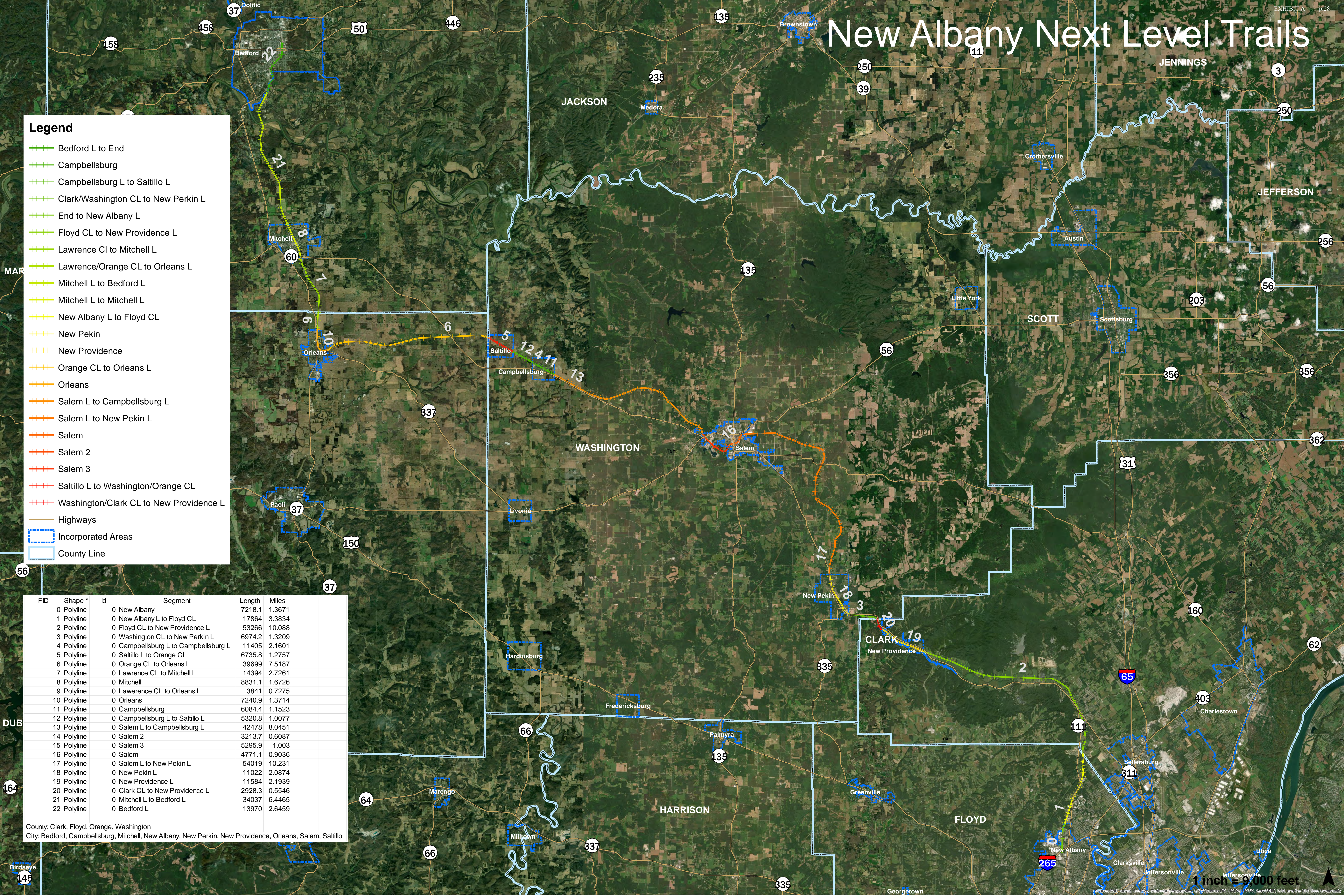
# New Albany Next Level Trails

**Legend**

- Bedford L to End
- Campbellsburg
- Campbellsburg L to Saltillo L
- Clark/Washington CL to New Perkin L
- End to New Albany L
- Floyd CL to New Providence L
- Lawrence Cl to Mitchell L
- Lawrence/Orange CL to Orleans L
- Mitchell L to Bedford L
- Mitchell L to Mitchell L
- New Albany L to Floyd CL
- New Pekin
- New Providence
- Orange CL to Orleans L
- Orleans
- Salem L to Campbellsburg L
- Salem L to New Pekin L
- Salem
- Salem 2
- Salem 3
- Saltillo L to Washington/Orange CL
- Washington/Clark CL to New Providence L
- Highways
- Incorporated Areas
- County Line

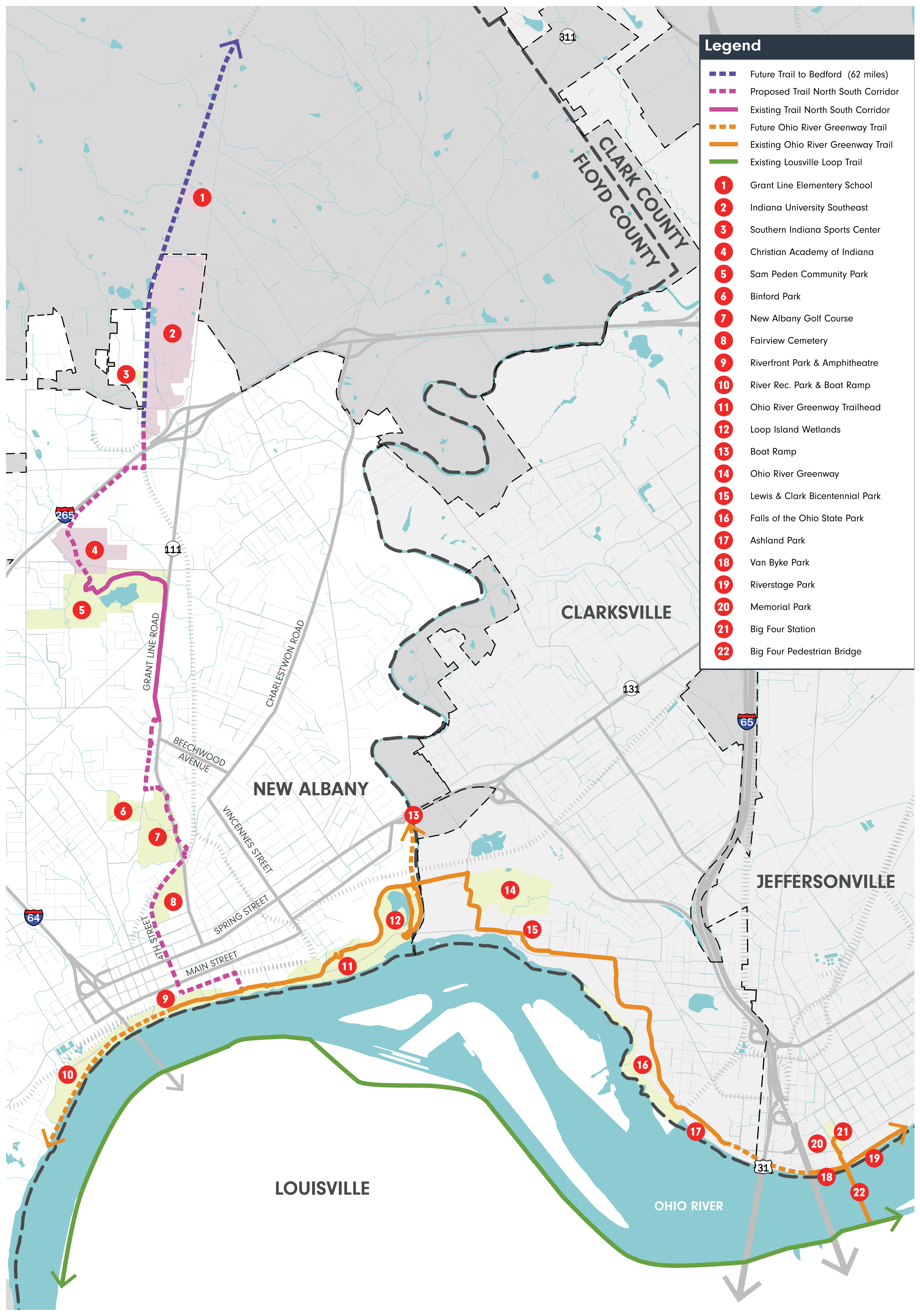
FID	Shape *	Id	Segment	Length	Miles
0	Polyline	0	New Albany	7218.1	1.3671
1	Polyline	0	New Albany L to Floyd CL	17864	3.3834
2	Polyline	0	Floyd CL to New Providence L	53266	10.088
3	Polyline	0	Washington CL to New Perkin L	6974.2	1.3209
4	Polyline	0	Campbellsburg L to Campbellsburg L	11405	2.1601
5	Polyline	0	Saltillo L to Orange CL	6735.8	1.2757
6	Polyline	0	Orange CL to Orleans L	39699	7.5187
7	Polyline	0	Lawrence CL to Mitchell L	14394	2.7261
8	Polyline	0	Mitchell	8831.1	1.6726
9	Polyline	0	Lawrence CL to Orleans L	3841	0.7275
10	Polyline	0	Orleans	7240.9	1.3714
11	Polyline	0	Campbellsburg	6084.4	1.1523
12	Polyline	0	Campbellsburg L to Saltillo L	5320.8	1.0077
13	Polyline	0	Salem L to Campbellsburg L	42478	8.0451
14	Polyline	0	Salem 2	3213.7	0.6087
15	Polyline	0	Salem 3	5295.9	1.003
16	Polyline	0	Salem	4771.1	0.9036
17	Polyline	0	Salem L to New Pekin L	54019	10.231
18	Polyline	0	New Pekin L	11022	2.0874
19	Polyline	0	New Providence L	11584	2.1939
20	Polyline	0	Clark CL to New Providence L	2928.3	0.5546
21	Polyline	0	Mitchell L to Bedford L	34037	6.4465
22	Polyline	0	Bedford L	13970	2.6459

County: Clark, Floyd, Orange, Washington  
 City: Bedford, Campbellsburg, Mitchell, New Albany, New Perkin, New Providence, Orleans, Salem, Saltillo



1 inch = 9,000 feet












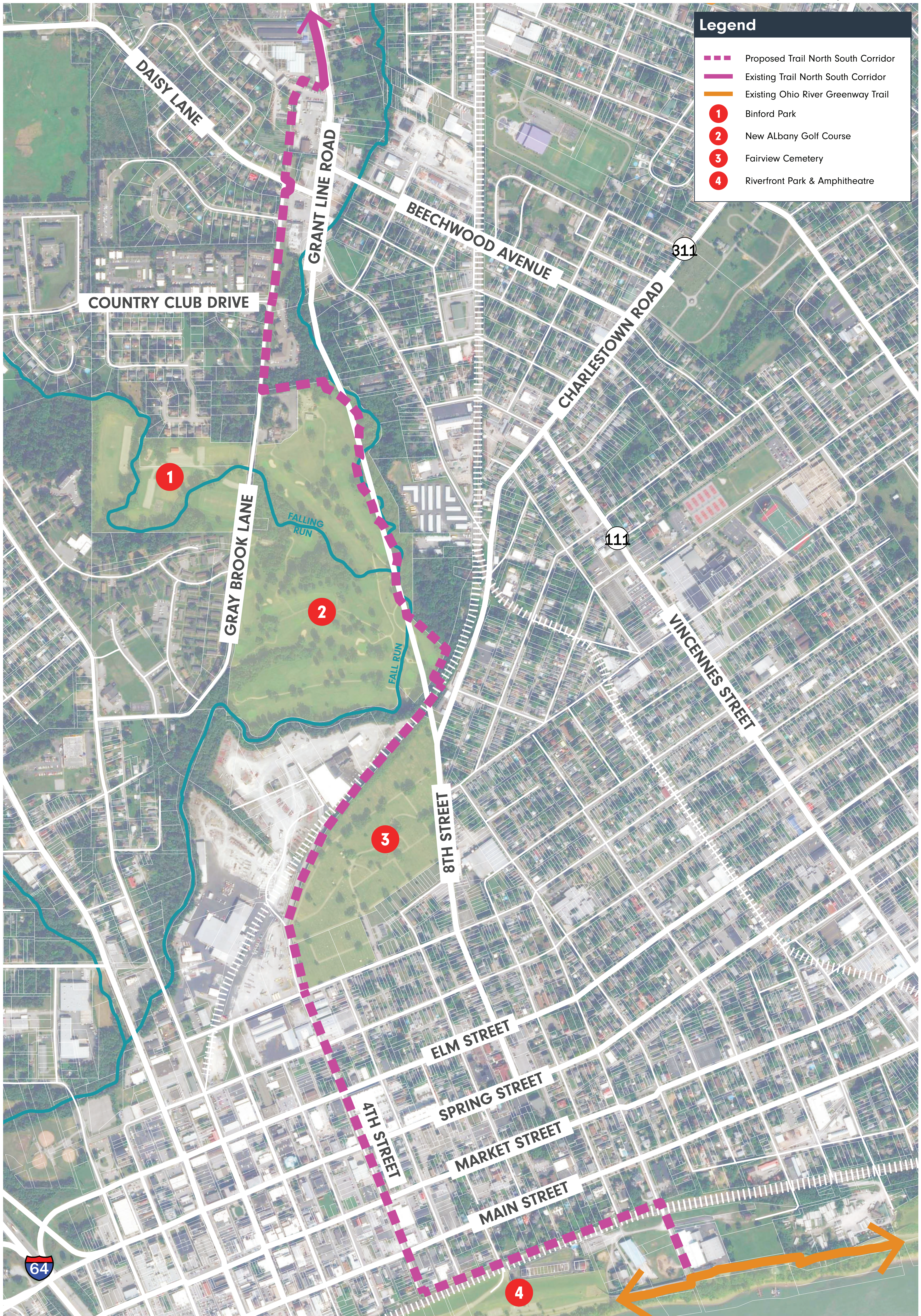
### Legend

- Future Trail to Bedford (62 miles)
- - - Proposed Trail North South Corridor
- Existing Trail North South Corridor
- - - Future Ohio River Greenway Trail
- Existing Ohio River Greenway Trail
- Existing Louisville Loop Trail

- 1** Grant Line Elementary School
- 2** Indiana University Southeast
- 3** Southern Indiana Sports Center
- 4** Christian Academy of Indiana
- 5** Sam Peden Community Park
- 6** Binford Park
- 7** New Albany Golf Course
- 8** Fairview Cemetery
- 9** Riverfront Park & Amphitheatre
- 10** River Rec. Park & Boat Ramp
- 11** Ohio River Greenway Trailhead
- 12** Loop Island Wetlands
- 13** Boat Ramp
- 14** Ohio River Greenway
- 15** Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Park
- 16** Falls of the Ohio State Park
- 17** Ashland Park
- 18** Van Byke Park
- 19** Riverstage Park
- 20** Memorial Park
- 21** Big Four Station
- 22** Big Four Pedestrian Bridge

**Legend**

-  Proposed Trail North South Corridor
-  Existing Trail North South Corridor
-  Existing Ohio River Greenway Trail
-  1 Binford Park
-  2 New Albany Golf Course
-  3 Fairview Cemetery
-  4 Riverfront Park & Amphitheatre



NEXT LEVEL TRAILS  
**SOUTH ENLARGEMENT**

NEW ALBANY, INDIANA

SCALE: 1"=0.06 MILES  
 0 0.03 0.06 0.12  


PREPARED FOR:  
 CITY OF NEW ALBANY



MAY 17, 2021



Dear Sirs,

Radius Indiana is pleased to offer an endorsement of New Albany's proposal for acquisition and development of the CSX rail corridor that is now often referred to as the Monon South Corridor.

Radius is a nonprofit, multi-county, regional economic development organization serving eight counties in rural southern Indiana. Among the counties we serve are Washington, Orange, and Lawrence, all of which are home to portions of the Monon South Corridor.

Over the past three years, Radius has worked closely with and strongly supported New Albany's efforts to negotiate with CSX Corp. for acquisition of the Monon South Corridor. New Albany has shown a strong regional vision of collaboration to develop the trail corridor as an asset that will enhance the quality of place in multiple communities in southern Indiana, and New Albany recognizes that creation of such a long-distance trail in southern Indiana will create a powerful tourism and population attraction draw.

New Albany is seeking support through the READI grant program for financial assistance to enable the purchase and development of the corridor. New Albany's request is for funds that will allow the City to meet CSX's requested purchase price, as well as for funds for the construction of the trail through the City, so that a critical connection to the Ohio River Greenway will be completed. Finally, New Albany is seeking funds to build the trail north of the City through Floyd County to the Clark County line.

Radius is committed to partnering with New Albany on the construction of the trail in the corridor. Radius has established a single-purpose new nonprofit entity, Southern Indiana Trailways, to be the recipient and caretaker of the trail corridor outside of Floyd County. We will collaborate with New Albany in developing common design and wayfinding standards along the entire length of the trail, and we will work with the communities along the trail to help them customize their vision of trail development. This includes Borden, Pekin, Salem, Campbellsburg, and other communities.

We believe that our partnership with New Albany is a successful example of the regional collaboration the READI program seeks to engender, and we believe that your support for New Albany's request for financial assistance will be a positive population attraction and quality of place success story.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Sincerely,



Jeff Quyle, President & CEO  
Radius Indiana



**INDIANA UNIVERSITY  
SOUTHEAST**

**OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS**

February 4, 2019

Next Level Trails Grant Program  
c/o Mayor Jeff Gahan  
City of New Albany  
311 Hauss Square #316  
New Albany, IN 47150

**Re: Letter of Support for the City of New Albany's Next Level Trails Grant**

To: Next Level Trails Grant Program

Indiana University Southeast ("IUS") enthusiastically and wholeheartedly endorses the City of New Albany's application for a Next Level Trails grant to support the development of a regional trail spanning over 60 miles through five Indiana counties. The importance of this trail to the five-county region cannot be overstated. In a stressful, fast-paced world, our citizens need more recreational opportunities for renewal and rejuvenation. Research has confirmed that people are happier and healthier when they regularly spend time in natural environments (Dolesh, 2013). This particular "rail-to-trail" conversion provides the perfect opportunity to improve the quality of life and place in the five-county region!

IUS was recently approved for an Indiana University Bicentennial grant to develop a trail system in the northern 40 acres of campus. Our trail is positioned adjacent to the abandoned railroad tracks. If the City's Next Level Trail grant is approved, we would hope to connect our trail to the new five-county regional trail, which will benefit both trail systems. Our Bicentennial Trail will include markers and stations that celebrate IUS's rich history making it a destination for faculty, staff, students, and community members. Additionally, the Bicentennial Trail will increase faculty, staff, and student engagement by creating a living learning lab to explore recreation, wellness, sustainability, conservation, and campus history.

Stephen Mather, the first director of the National Park Service, understood the role that public lands play in promoting health and wellness. In 1920, he provided the following assessment in his annual report to the Secretary of the Interior:

"The parks will have a constantly enlarging revivifying influence on our national life for which there is no other public agency. They are our antidote for national restlessness. They are national character and health builders. They are giving a new impetus to sane living in this country" (Mather, 1920, p. 6).

As Mather envisioned, the new five-county regional trail will provide a critical recreational opportunity for the communities it will serve. The trail will offer a place of refuge from the everyday stresses and pressures endured by our citizenry. To use Mather's wording, the

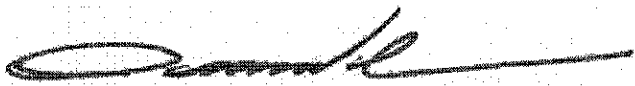
proposed trail will become a “character and health builder” for the five-county region and its large number of communities.

The importance of this trail is amplified with the current plans to create a 400-acre public park along the north shore of the Ohio River. The work being done by the River Heritage Conservancy to create this world class park is aligned with a regional transformation that has seen two new bridges over the Ohio River, the conversion of the Big Four railroad truss bridge to a pedestrian bridge, and the continued development of the Ohio River Greenway. The City’s proposed five-county regional trail will provide a new pathway of discovery to a region that embraces the spirit of the Lewis and Clark expedition, rooted in Clarksville, Indiana.

Finally, before the end of the 2020 decade, we will see the full effects the regional transformation that is presently underway. It is highly likely that all of the aforementioned public lands and projects will be interconnected in some way or fashion. With such a strong network of high quality recreational opportunities, our region will become a destination for visitors from surrounding states, or perhaps even other parts of the country or world. The combined positive impact on the Hoosier economy will be undeniable!

Thank you for your consideration of this letter and the City’s Next Level Trail grant application.

Sincerely,



Dana C. Wavle  
Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance

#### References

Dolesh, R. (2013). The "soft fascination" of nature. *Parks & Recreation*, April 2013, 34-35.

Mather, S. (1920). *Report of the Director of the National Park Service to the Secretary of the Interior*. Washington: Government Printing Office.

**Voting Members**

**Clarksville:** Paul Fetter -Town Council President, Jim McCoskey, Tony Munich  
**Jeffersonville:** Mayor Mike Moore, Philip Hendershot – Chair, Chris Fox -Treasurer  
**New Albany:** Mayor Jeff Gahan, Christopher Gardner – Vice-Chair, Courtney Lewis

**Non-Voting Members**

**SoIN Tourism:** Jim Epperson      **One Southern Indiana:** Wendy Dant Chesser  
**Indiana DNR:** Lucas Green      **Indiana DOT:** Jim Ude

February 13, 2019

Indiana Department of Natural Resources  
 Division of Outdoor Recreation  
 Grants Committee

**Subject:** Support for Next Level Trails Grant Application  
 Multi-County Rail Trail – New Albany to Bedford

To Whom It May Concern:

The Ohio River Greenway Development Commission (Commission) expresses our support for the above-referenced grant application, which is being prepared by the City of New Albany in conjunction with partners from Floyd, Clark, Washington, Orange and Lawrence Counties. This application involves the conversion of an approximate 69-mile abandoned rail line between New Albany and Bedford into a regional trail.

The Commission, together with its member communities and valued partners in state and Federal government have been working for many years on the enhancement of our riverfronts, through the implementation of the 7.5-mile Ohio River Greenway Project, a connective trail between three communities; New Albany, Clarksville, and Jeffersonville.

As the Greenway project nears completion, the Commission is supportive of efforts to develop connective trails that would intersect the Greenway and/or provide longer and safer bicycling opportunities through our three communities. The application above led by the City of New Albany is a great example of such a trail, and an opportunity to enhance the connectivity of several communities.

Sincerely,

Philip T. Hendershot, Chair



## City of Bedford

Office of the Mayor

Shawna M. Girgis

February 12, 2019

Indiana Department of Natural Resources  
Next Level Trails Review Committee  
402 W. Washington St. W271  
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Dear Committee Members,

As the Mayor of the City of Bedford, I greatly appreciate the opportunity the State of Indiana has provided through the Next Level Trails program to assist in the development of regionally significant trails. Citizens from the City of Bedford identified trail development as a top priority in our comprehensive plan. As a result, Bedford constructed a connector trail with INDOT funding from downtown to a rail-trail that connects Bedford to Williams with the capacity to reach Crane, Indiana. This rail-trail was constructed in collaboration with the Indiana Trail Fund and is utilized regularly by citizens and visitors alike. Given the enthusiasm for trails in my community, I am very excited about the opportunity to expand trail connectivity through the proposed conversion of a CSX rail corridor into a multi-jurisdictional trail that would connect nine municipalities in five counties in southern Indiana. This corridor that spans from New Albany to Bedford is a stellar example of the type of project that Next Level Trails can make a reality by developing a 62.3 mile trail but it is imperative that we act now.

The unused CSX corridor passes by the courthouse square in downtown Bedford, accordingly, we know that commerce on Main Street, tourism, and overall quality of place within our community would be greatly improved if this regional trail were developed. In addition, this multi-jurisdictional trail would replace the neglected rail line that has created blight in the community, as well as improve the quality of life for area residents. For these reasons, Bedford supports and is an active proponent for the New Albany application for funding through the Next Level Trails program that would be used for the acquisition of the identified CSX rail corridor.

If funded, the City of Bedford will be a reliable and engaged partner in this regional rails-to-trails project and will seek additional funding to help with the acquisition of the identified rail corridor within our boundaries. In addition, we will work collaboratively with Radius Indiana, which is developing a regional tourism strategy, and the Regional Impact Fund to secure grant matching funds for this project. The City of Bedford will also use our demonstrated expertise to assist with construction, as well as help maintain the trail within our jurisdiction once complete.

I look forward to learning about funding through the Next Level Trails program for this ambitious regional endeavor. I am confident that this project will benefit the citizens and communities of Indiana for generations to come. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at 812-279-6555 or via email at [sgirgis@bedford.in.us](mailto:sgirgis@bedford.in.us).

Thank you for your consideration and assistance regarding this important matter. It is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Shawna M. Girgis  
Mayor, City of Bedford



## City of New Albany, Indiana

Michael Hall  
City Operations

DATE: October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2018  
TO: John Rosenbarger  
FROM: Michael Hall, City Operations  
MEMO: Rails to Trails Video Analytics

We posted a video of Mayor Gahan detailing the Rails to Trails proposal onto our social media channels in October of 2018. The response that we received from the public was overwhelmingly positive, and so I thought I would compile them for you.

According to our social media analytics, the video reached 46,860 people (as of October 4, 2018 at 10:30am). 2,350 people engaged with the post, meaning they liked, commented, or shared in some way. The video had an immensely positive reaction rate – 97% of the people who engaged with the post engaged in a positive manner.

Additionally, here are some of the positive comments to showcase how Southern Indiana residents are excited about this project:

**“Wonderful news. We came from Bloomington and love and miss the B-line trail there.”**

“This is why I love living in Southern Indiana, we re-use and re purpose so many things and this will be an awesome addition.”

**“Fantastic idea! I wish Kentucky leaders would follow the example set by so many states in converting old train beds to trails. This is a win for local individuals and local economic development.”**

“As an avid hiker, I'm truly excited for this potential opportunity.”

**“Rails to trails are wonderful...one great example ..the MONON TRAIL IN INDIANAPOLIS”**

“I would love to mountain bike it!”

**“What a great program and opportunity. I'm impressed by the foresight shown by the parties involved.”**

“I love this project, it has my support!”

“We have one that goes from DC through VA, I used it all the time! So great!”

###





February 14, 2019

Indiana Department of Natural Resources  
 Next Level Trails Review committee  
 402 W. Washington St.  
 Indianapolis, IN 46204

Dear Indiana Department of Natural Resources,

Asa county commissioner of Lawrence County, I greatly appreciate the investment opportunity the State of Indiana has provided through the development of its innovative new grant program, Next Level Trails, to assist in the development of regionally significant trails.

One particular potential regional trail that fits the new program to a tee is the proposed conversion of a CSX rail corridor into a multi-jurisdictional trail that can connect nine municipalities in five counties in southern Indiana. This New Albany-to-Bedford corridor sits as a poster child of the type of project that Next Level Trails can catalyze. We recognize this CSX RR corridor as an unprecedented opportunity to acquire and subsequently build a 60+ mile trail through a beautiful, but largely undiscovered part of Indiana. It's a once in a lifetime opportunity to secure a path for a regional trail...if we don't act now, this opportunity is likely lost forever.


Because Lawrence County sits astride the CSX corridor, we are intimately familiar with the enhancement to our quality of place that a new regional trail will create if it replaces the derelict and neglected rail line that is a current blight upon our community. For this reason, we are strong supporters of the New Albany application for grant funds that can be used for the acquisition of the CSX corridor.

We pledge that we will be a reliable and engaged partner in the rails-to-trails project. Lawrence County will look for sources of financing to help with the acquisition of the more than seven miles of corridor within our boundaries. We will work with Radius Indiana and the Regional Impact Fund to help locate funding as a match, knowing that Radius values outdoor recreation as an important part of the regional tourism strategy that is being developed.

We will use our transportation construction expertise to assist in the efficient and cost-effective construction of the trail within Lawrence County, provided we find the finances needed for the construction. And we will pledge to maintain the trail once construction is complete within our jurisdiction. We recognize that acquisition and construction of the trail may be a lengthy process, and we will prioritize our efforts to most cost-effectively remove the blighted portions of the rail within Lawrence County as a highest priority, acknowledging that the overall trail in Lawrence County is likely to be a multi-year project for us.

We look forward to hearing about the assistance that the Next Level Trails program can provide to New Albany, Lawrence County, and all the partners who will be a part of this ambitious project. It is a project that will be a legacy of vision and community value that will last and assist many generations in the future.

Appreciatively,

  
 Gene McCracken *by t&e*



February 12, 2019

Indiana Department of Natural Resources  
402 W. Washington St.  
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Dear Indiana Department of Natural Resources,

As a resident of Indiana, I greatly appreciate the investment opportunity the State of Indiana has provided through the development of its innovative new grant program, Next Level Trails, to assist in the development of regionally significant trails.

One particular potential regional trail that fits the new program to a tee is the proposed conversion of a CSX rail corridor into a multi-jurisdictional trail that can connect nine municipalities in five counties in southern Indiana. This New Albany-to-Bedford corridor sits as a poster child of the type of project that Next Level Trails can catalyze. We recognize this CSX RR corridor as an unprecedented opportunity to acquire and subsequently build a 60+ mile trail through a beautiful, but largely undiscovered part of Indiana. It's a once in a lifetime opportunity to secure a path for a regional trail.

Radius Indiana is an eight-county regional economic development organization that includes the majority of the corridor length – the span in Washington, Orange, and Lawrence counties. One of the key components we see needed for economic development success in our region is a combination of improving quality of place investment, as well as an expanding number of outdoor recreation facilities that can be used by visitors and residents alike.

For these reasons, we have supported New Albany's leadership in the CSX corridor initiative. We pledge that we will be a reliable and engaged partner in the rails-to-trails project. We will work to provide and locate funding as a match. Our expectation is that we will work with our local communities to contribute up to \$300,000 from our Regional Impact Fund to bolster their ability to deliver a portion of the local match needed for this grant; the RIF leaders recognize the value of this project and have the financial resources available to provide the funds in short order.

We look forward to hearing about the assistance that the Next Level Trails program can provide to New Albany and all the partners who will be a part of this ambitious project. It is a project that will be a legacy of vision and community value that will last and assist many generations in the future.

Appreciatively,

Jeff Quyle, President/CEO  
Radius Indiana



## INDIANA UNIVERSITY

CENTER FOR RURAL ENGAGEMENT

February 14, 2019

Indiana Department of Natural Resources  
402 West Washington Street  
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Dear Indiana Department of Natural Resources,

On behalf of the Center for Rural Engagement at Indiana University, I greatly appreciate the opportunity to provide this letter of support for the proposed conversion of the CSX rail corridor into a multi-jurisdictional trail. We commend the State of Indiana for its investment in the Next Level Trails program, and feel that this project would be an excellent candidate for funding under the program.

The goal of the Center for Rural Engagement is to improve the lives and opportunities of Hoosiers by working with partners to discover and deploy evidence-based, data-informed and scalable solutions to common challenges facing rural communities. In pursuit of this goal, we work closely with communities to build upon their existing assets by connecting IU resources.

The CSX corridor sits adjacent to and within the region that we primarily serve – the eleven counties of the Indiana Uplands region. One of the opportunities that has been most frequently identified by partners in the Uplands region is the enhancement of our regional recreational amenities. Many leaders believe that the Uplands has a unique opportunity to leverage its natural beauty, significant park and forest facilities, and charming small towns to become a leading Midwest destination for recreation-based tourism.

Based on this feedback from partners, in 2018 the Center for Rural Engagement worked with the Eppley Institute for Parks and Public Lands at IU to launch a study of the recreational assets and opportunities within the Indiana Uplands region. The Eppley Institute conducted focus groups in each of the eleven counties to hear from residents and recreation and tourism leaders about their priorities. Although the study has not yet been released to the public, the focus groups were completed in December and the major findings have been identified. The following findings directly relate to, and make the case for, funding the conversion of the CSX line into a trail:

- When asked about which recreational facilities were used the most, nine of the eleven counties identified trails.



## INDIANA UNIVERSITY

### CENTER FOR RURAL ENGAGEMENT

- Trails were one of the most frequently mentioned amenities when focus group attendees were asked what types of facilities they'd like to see enhanced in their community.
- Strong support for trails was found in at least ten of the eleven counties.
- A significant number of recreational managers within the eleven counties identified a noticeable increase in trail use within their facilities in recent years, findings which several of them noted had been supported by data from FitBit users.
- A number of focus group attendees identified longer, multi-county trails as an important enhancement that would drive regional tourism.
- The public health impacts of trails were identified as a reason for needing more trails in seven of eleven counties.

This New Albany-to-Bedford corridor is an ideal candidate for Next Level Trails funding, because of its potential impacts on a beautiful area that is in need of economic and public health investment. It will connect rural communities, promote an enhanced sense of regionalism, provide the region with another significant tourism and quality of place asset, and encourage healthier lifestyles.

Enhancing recreational facilities is an objective that touches all three of the primary focus areas of the Center for Rural Engagement – resilience, quality of place, and public health. We pledge our support to the partners that are participating in this grant application and intend to play a significant role in moving this initiative forward.

Successfully converting the CSX line into a trail will leave a legacy that will benefit many generations of future southern Indiana residents. We would appreciate the support of the State of Indiana on this initiative.

Appreciatively,

Kerry Thomson, Executive Director  
Indiana University Center for Rural Engagement

Dear Indiana Department of Natural Resources,

As Mayor, I greatly appreciate the investment opportunity the State of Indiana has provided through the development of its innovative new grant program, Next Level Trails, to assist in the development of regionally significant trails.

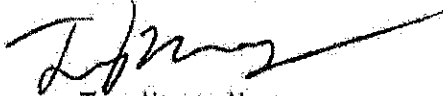
One particular potential regional trail that fits the new program to a tee is the proposed conversion of a CSX rail corridor into a multi-jurisdictional trail that can connect nine municipalities in five counties in southern Indiana. This New Albany-to-Lawrence County corridor sits as a poster child of the type of project that Next Level Trails can catalyze. We recognize this CSX RR corridor as an unprecedented opportunity to acquire and subsequently build a 62.3 mile trail through a beautiful, but largely undiscovered part of Indiana. It's a once in a lifetime opportunity to secure a path for a regional trail...if we don't act now, this opportunity is likely lost forever.

Because the city of Salem sits astride the unused CSX corridor, we are intimately familiar with the great enhancement to our quality of place that a new regional trail will create if it replaces the derelict and neglected rail line that is a current blight upon our community. For this reason, we are strong supporters of the New Albany application for grant funds that can be used for the acquisition of the CSX corridor.

We pledge that we will make every effort to be a reliable and engaged partner in the rails-to-trails project. Salem will look for sources of financing to help with the acquisition of the approximately three miles of corridor within our boundaries. We will work with Radius Indiana and the Regional Impact Fund to help locate funding as a match, knowing that Radius values outdoor recreation as an important part of the regional tourism strategy that is being developed.

We look forward to hearing about the assistance that the Next Level Trails program can provide to New Albany, Salem, Washington County, and all the partners who will be a part of this ambitious project. It is a project that will be a legacy of vision and community value that will last and assist many generations in the future.

Appreciatively,



Troy Merry, Mayor  
City of Salem

Dear Indiana Department of Natural Resources,

As City Council President, I greatly appreciate the investment opportunity the State of Indiana has provided through the development of its innovative new grant program, Next Level Trails, to assist in the development of regionally significant trails.

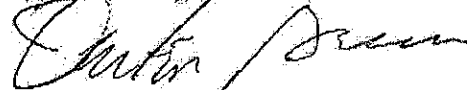
One particular potential regional trail that fits the new program to a tee is the proposed conversion of a CSX rail corridor into a multi-jurisdictional trail that can connect nine municipalities in five counties in southern Indiana. This New Albany-to-Lawrence County corridor sits as a poster child of the type of project that Next Level Trails can catalyze. We recognize this CSX RR corridor as an unprecedented opportunity to acquire and subsequently build a 62.3 mile trail through a beautiful, but largely undiscovered part of Indiana. It's a once in a lifetime opportunity to secure a path for a regional trail...if we don't act now, this opportunity is likely lost forever.

Because the city of Salem sits astride the unused CSX corridor, we are intimately familiar with the great enhancement to our quality of place that a new regional trail will create if it replaces the derelict and neglected rail line that is a current blight upon our community. For this reason, we are strong supporters of the New Albany application for grant funds that can be used for the acquisition of the CSX corridor.

We pledge that we will make every effort to be a reliable and engaged partner in the rails-to-trails project. Salem will look for sources of financing to help with the acquisition of the approximately three miles of corridor within our boundaries. We will work with Radius Indiana and the Regional Impact Fund to help locate funding as a match, knowing that Radius values outdoor recreation as an important part of the regional tourism strategy that is being developed.

We look forward to hearing about the assistance that the Next Level Trails program can provide to New Albany, Salem, Washington County, and all the partners who will be a part of this ambitious project. It is a project that will be a legacy of vision and community value that will last and assist many generations in the future.

Appreciatively,



Justin Green  
City of Salem

## REFERENCES

- Peters, Pamela. *The Underground Railroad in Floyd County, Indiana*. McFarland & Company, 2001.  
<http://www.statsamerica.org/distress/distress.aspx>
- <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/lawrencecountyindiana,orangecountyindiana,washingtoncountyindiana,clarkcountyindiana,floydcountyindiana,IN/PST045219>
- <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/IN>
- Duygu Karadeniz, *The Impact of the Little Miami Scenic Trail on Single Family Residential Property Values* (Unpublished master's thesis, 2008), University of Cincinnati School of Public Planning.  
<http://headwaterseconomics.org/trail/22-miami-scenic-trail>.
- Urban Land Institute, *Active Transportation and Real Estate: The Next Frontier* (Washington, DC: Urban Land Institute, 2016), <http://uli.org/wp-content/uploads/ULI-Documents/Active-Transportation-and-Real-Estate-The-Next-Frontier.pdf>.
- <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/lawrencecountyindiana,orangecountyindiana,washingtoncountyindiana,clarkcountyindiana,floydcountyindiana,IN/PST045219>
- The Progress Fund, "Economic Impact of Regional Trails," The Progress Fund, Trail Town Program,  
<https://www.trailtowns.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Economic-impact-of-all-Trails-1.pdf>.
- NICE Public Health Collaborating Centre, "Physical Activity and the Environment, Review One: Transport," September 2006, National Institute for Health and Care Excellence,  
<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng90/evidence/transport-evidence-review-summary-pdf-172342130580>.
- A. Moudon et al., "Cycling and the Built Environment, a US Perspective," *Transportation Research Part D: Transport and Environment* 10, no. 3 (May 2005): 245–61,  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.trd.2005.04.001>.
- M. Wanner, "Active Transport, Physical Activity, and Body Weight in Adults: A Systematic Review," *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 42, no. 5 (May 2012): 493–502,  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22516490>.
- Susan A. Carlson et al., "Inadequate Physical Activity and Health Care Expenditures in the United States," *Progress in Cardiovascular Diseases* 57 (2015): 315–323,  
<https://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/docs/carlson-physical-activity-and-healthcare-expenditures-final-508tagged.pdf>.
- U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, Office of Policy and Governmental Affairs, *Summary of Travel Trends: 2017 National Household Travel Survey* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Transportation, 2018),  
[https://nhts.ornl.gov/assets/2017\\_nhts\\_summary\\_travel\\_trends.pdf](https://nhts.ornl.gov/assets/2017_nhts_summary_travel_trends.pdf).
- Project Team for South Hadley, *South Hadley Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan* (South Hadley: Town of South Hadley, Massachusetts, 2016),  
<https://www.southhadley.org/DocumentCenter/View/2404/Comprehensive-Bicycling-and-Pedestrian-Plan-Final-Draft-December-6-2016-20MB-File-PDF?bidId=>.

- Virginie Anquetil, *Neighbourhood Social Cohesion Through the Collective Use of Green Spaces: A Case Study of EVA-Lanxmeer Neighbourhood, Culemborg, the Netherlands* (Wageningen: Wageningen University & Research, 2009), <https://www.wur.nl/web/file?uuid=74502222-16f9-4810-a0a6-0d0f90d53fc3&owner=837bc763-8e44-4f10-997a-9a21e2ad348d>.
- V. Cattell et al., “Mingling, Observing, and Lingerin: Everyday Public Spaces and Their Implications for Well-Being and Social Relations,” *Health & Place* 14, no. 3 (September 2008): 544–61, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18083621>.
- Louisville Metro Council, *Louisville Loop Master Plan* (Louisville: City of Louisville, Kentucky, 2013), [https://louisvilleky.gov/sites/default/files/parks/planning\\_and\\_design/loopmaster\\_adopted2013.pdf](https://louisvilleky.gov/sites/default/files/parks/planning_and_design/loopmaster_adopted2013.pdf).
- <https://cityofnewalbanycom.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/FINAL-COMP-PLAN.pdf>
- Patricia A. Tomes and Carl Knoch, *Trail User Surveys and Economic Impact: A Comparison of Trail User Expenditures* (Washington, DC: Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, 2009), <https://www.railstotrails.org/resourcehandler.ashx?id=3589>.
- Jessica Majors and Sue Burow, *Assessment of the Impact of the Indianapolis Cultural Trail: A Legacy of Gene and Marilyn Glick* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Public Policy Institute, 2015), <http://indyculturaltrail.org.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/15-C02-CulturalTrail-Assessment.pdf>.
- Paul Dowell and Lisa Petraglia, *NCHRP 08-36, Task 103 Mining Recovery Act Data for Opportunities to Improve the State of Practice for Overall Economic Impact Analysis of Transportation Investments*, prepared for the AASHTO Standing Committee on Planning (Washington, DC: American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, 2012), [http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/nchrp/docs/NCHRP08-36\(103\)\\_FR.pdf](http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/nchrp/docs/NCHRP08-36(103)_FR.pdf).