



# Transportation Times

## Adams-Allen-DeKalb-Wells

**N** Northeastern Indiana Regional Coordinating Council

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### Broadway and Taylor St - Safe Streets for All

The Northeastern Indiana Regional Coordinating Council (NIRCC) assisted in the development of a Safe Streets for All (SS4A) federal grant application for improvements to the Broadway and Taylor Street corridors. The grant was approved in December of 2023 for \$5,600,000. The proposed improvements are for the Broadway Corridor from Wall Street to Creighton Avenue, and the Taylor Corridor extends from Nelson Street to Fairfield Avenue. The application also requested funding for a roundabout at the intersection of Broadway and Taylor Street.



NIRCC provided crash data and traffic data to support the need of the project. The improvements will include various design changes to reduce crashes on both corridors and help calm traffic. This growing area near Electric Works is anticipated to continue to see an increase in pedestrians and cyclists. The project will help ensure

that all vulnerable roadway users can safely interact with motor vehicles on Broadway and Taylor Street corridors.

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The roundabout included in this project was previously identified and deemed eligible for federal safety funds. The intersection had been identified as a hazardous crash location for several consecutive

**(Continued on page 12)**

# U

## Urban Transportation Advisory Board

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*Allen County Highway Director*

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*INDOT (Non-voting members)*

# B

**La'Kesha Stewart**  
*Federal Highway Administration (Non-voting member)*

## Community Development Updates



**D**id you know that NIRCC is available to assist communities within Adams, Allen, DeKalb, and Wells Counties with community and economic development activities? We can assist communities with projects receiving funding through a myriad of sources such as grants and loans from the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA), the State Revolving Fund (SRF), the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM), United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and other State, Federal, and private programs. The NIRCC community development team has the capabilities to assist with project development and to provide grant writing, grant administration, and labor standards administration services. Information regarding available funding opportunities and the community development services provided by the NIRCC community development team is available by contacting Matt Vondran at [Matt.Vondran@co.allen.in.us](mailto:Matt.Vondran@co.allen.in.us), Kristine Christlieb at [Kristine.Christlieb@co.allen.in.us](mailto:Kristine.Christlieb@co.allen.in.us), Alexis Degitz at [Alexis.Hathaway@co.allen.in.us](mailto:Alexis.Hathaway@co.allen.in.us), or calling (260) 449-7309.

The NIRCC community development team has been working on a number of projects recently. The following provides a summary of a few projects they have been working on:

### City of Butler Completes CDBG Depot Street Recovery Housing Project

BUTLER IN—NIRCC recently assisted the City of Butler, on behalf of Inspiration Ministries, Inc., with grant administration and project closeout following a successful grant request of \$600,000 for a CDBG Recovery Housing Program Pilot (RHP) and subsequent award in Feb. 2022. However, due to an inflationary bidding environment and supply-chain disruptions, the project had to be modified and rebid to build two conventional-framed homes instead of the three manufactured homes as initially proposed. The construction of the two new homes began in March 2023, and since completion in November 2023, has provided ten new beds for persons recovering from substance abuse disorders—The homes will

assist 50 persons in recovery over the next five years. The RHP project totaled \$783,894; of which \$600,000 derived from CDBG funds, a local investment of \$178,894 from Inspiration Ministries, and a \$5,000 in-kind donation for environmental review services provided by NIRCC.

**BUTLER RECOVERY HOUSING PROJECT (MODIFIED SCOPE)**



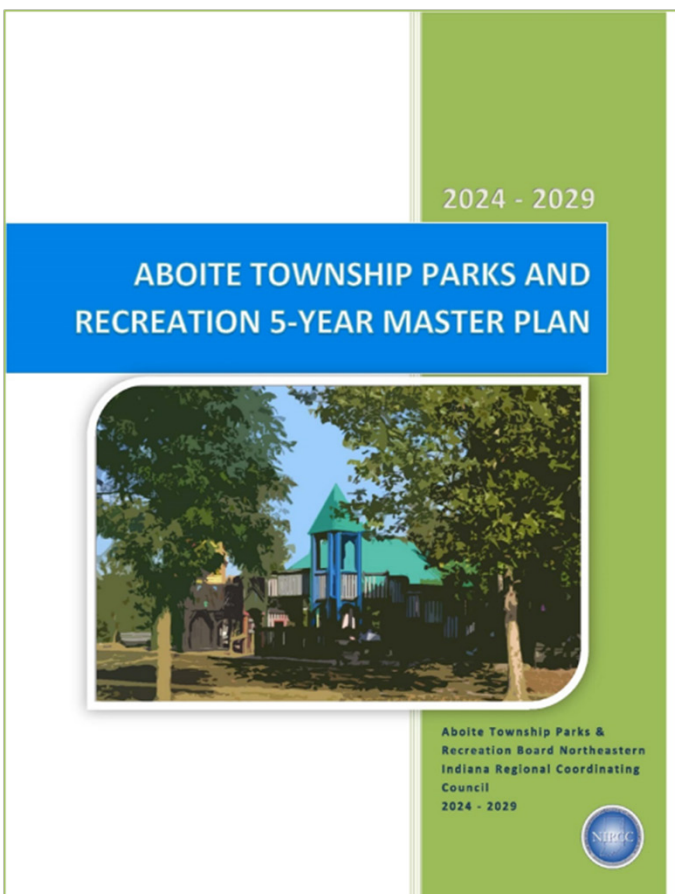
**BUTLER DEPOT STREET RECOVERY HOUSING  
2023 PROJECT COMPLETION**



Butler Ribbon Cutting: (Front Left to Right) Mike Hartman, Mayor of Butler, Andy Foster, President, Inspiration Ministries, Christmas Hudgens, Program Director, OCRA. (Back) Don Harvey, VP, Inspiration Ministries, Kristine Christlieb, Grant Administrator, NIRCC, Kirsten Foster, Inspiration Ministries, Associate.

**Aboite Township Parks and Recreation 5-Year Master Plan**

NIRCC planners assisted the Aboite Township Parks and Recreation Board (ATPRB) with a study to develop the Aboite Township Parks and Recreation 5-Year Master Plan. The study included a review of current conditions, trends, and an assessment of existing recreational facilities. Aboite Township has experienced exceptional growth of 586% since 1970, and a park study was vital to help understand the community's unique recreational needs—and to assist the park board with establishing fundamental strategies for prioritizing capital investments, developing administrative functions, and estimating budget projections for future park development. A current



park master plan is also required to be eligible for grant programs offered through the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) Division of State Parks, Community Grants and Trails to apply for Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and Indiana Trails Program (ITP) grants. The master plan provides the park board with strategies to move forward with the priorities developed within the action plan and implementation schedule.

Since November 2022, NIRCC planners have worked with the ATPRB to establish a planning committee of key stakeholders to help coordinate public input venues and to provide personal perspectives concerning the recreational needs of the community. Planning strategies included a 2022 pre-survey to determine the overall park usage in Aboite Township and to assess the general public perception for expanded park development. In addition, a 2023 survey was developed following a public engagement meeting held in April 2023, to help refine the focus and identify highly desired improvements for both the Van Hoozen Park and the Indian Trails Park. The two surveys were valuable tools to help gauge park usage and establish high and

low priority needs at both of the township-owned parks—And instrumental in gathering feedback from local park users who were unable to attend the public meetings in person.



April 18, 2023, Public Forum

The mixed method planning strategies used by the NIRCC planners were helpful in determining and refining the scope of work and for prioritizing the implementation schedule for the park board to use over the next five years. These actions include: 1) ADA Transition Plan updates; 2) Development strategies for the Van Hoozen Park; 3) Development strategies for the Indian Trails Park; and 4) Administrative actions for establishing a fundraising committee and volunteer coordination as needed to help facilitate park development strategies.

Top priorities for Aboite Township park development include: 1) Van Hoozen Park sports complex with cloverleaf ballfields, rectangular fields, restrooms, and concessions; 2) A perimeter trail, ADA accessible routes, and seating areas at Van Hoozen Park; 3) Indian Trails pickleball court expansion; and 4) Indian Trails Park, ballfield, concessions, parking expansion and drainage upgrades. However, implementation of various park priorities is contingent upon the success of fundraising efforts and obtaining grant funding. A presentation of the park plan that included the resulting action plan and implementation schedule was presented

at a public meeting held March 18, 2024 (see Van Hoozen and Indian Trails Park concepts below).

The Aboite Township Parks and Recreation 5-Year Master Plan was submitted to IDNR Division of State Parks on April 12, 2024, for a final review: A draft version had been submitted to IDNR in November 2023 for an initial evaluation. The Aboite Parks resulting action plan and implementation schedule was finalized in February 2022, and the IDNR approval is anticipated to occur in late April to early May 2024. Upon approval, a final version will be available on the NIRCC website at <https://www.nircc.com/> and the Aboite Township website at <https://www.aboitetwp.com/>. Please contact NIRCC Community Planners for additional information.

ACTION PLAN—VAN HOOZEN PARK



ACTION PLAN—INDIAN TRAILS PARK



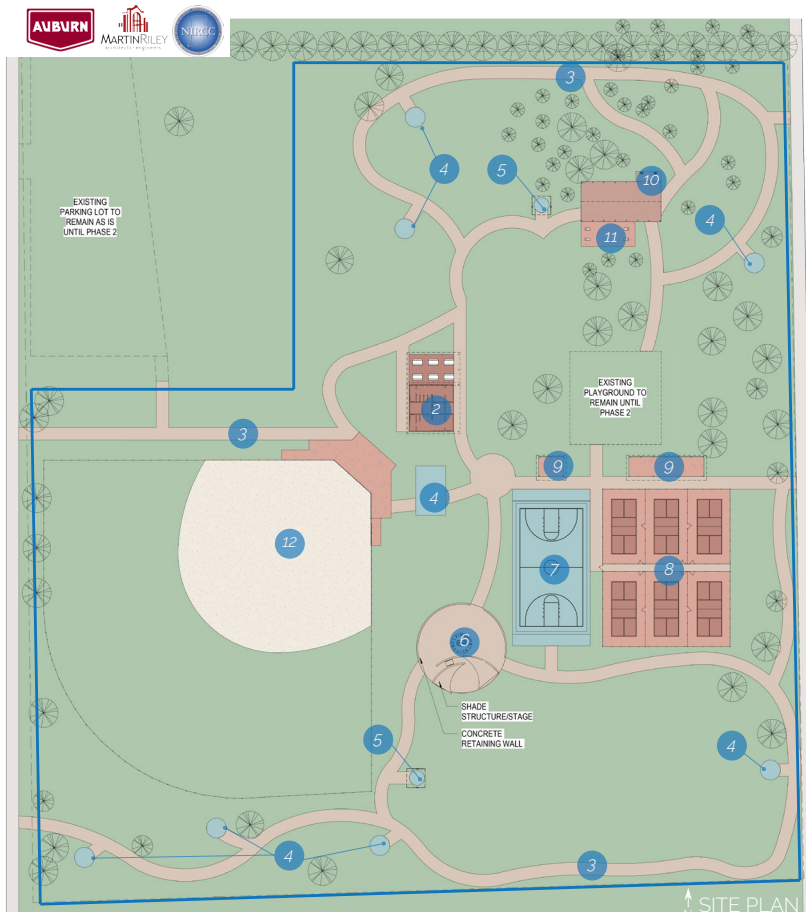
**City of Auburn Hoosier Enduring Legacy Program or HELP funded Memorial Park Improvements Project**

Since the Spring of 2023, NIRCC has been assisting the City of Auburn with both project and grant application development for their Memorial Park Improvements Project to be funded with Hoosier Enduring Legacy Program or HELP funding from OCRA. In 2021, the City of Auburn was 1 of 9 communities selected to participate in HELP, which was a 2-year-long program that offered guidance for communities in spending their allotments of Coronavirus Local Fiscal Relief Funds, which was created under the American Rescue Plan Act, known as ARPA. The program required Auburn to complete a Strategic Investment Plan or SIP and allocate a minimum of 30% of the community’s ARPA allocation to projects identified in the SIP. The HELP Core Team and Community Coordinator completed Auburn’s HELP SIP in early 2023 identifying several community projects. Completion of the SIP made Auburn eligible for up to \$1 million dollars in Community Development Block Grant CARES Act program funding, known as CDBG-CV program funding through OCRA’s HELP program to complete projects identified in the SIP as long as they spend an equivalent amount of ARPA and local funding to complete

projects identified in the SIP.

Out of all the projects identified in the SIP, the HELP Core Team identified that the improvements to Memorial Park would be the best project to pursue due to the fact that it met both the CDBG-CV Covid-19 Tie-Back requirements and the traditional CDBG National Objective requirements. HUD requires all CDBG-CV funds be used for coronavirus-related needs to satisfy the CARES Act statutory purpose. Projects must prevent, prepare for, or respond to the coronavirus. This project is both preventing and responding to the coronavirus by making improvements to the park that encourage social distancing and address COVID-19 impacts. In addition, the City showed that the project would benefit at least 51% low- to moderate income individuals within the project area. The project area meets this requirement per Census data, given that 61.81% of the total population of the 3 block groups containing the neighborhoods surrounding Memorial Park are considered low- to moderate income individuals.

The City submitted a HELP grant application for the project to OCRA in January 2024 and were awarded funding in March 2024. The project is at Memorial Park, which is located at 604 Hazel St. in Auburn, IN. The total project cost is \$2,107,627; funded with the \$1 million HELP CDBG-CV grant and \$1,107,627 in local funds from the City's ARPA and other local funds. The primary focus of the \$1 million in CDBG-CV funding will be to construct a new ADA compliant restroom; 10 FT wide pedestrian pathways connected to fitness nodes and a community meeting node; shade structures; and new ADA compliant drinking fountain & hand sanitizing stations. These specific improvements encourage and accommodate social distancing and promote increased community health and wellness, all of which will assist with the prevention and response to COVID-19. In addition, the project will also include: a new community meeting area with memorial and performance space, a rehabilitated basketball court, a new pickleball facility, a new baseball diamond, and concrete pads for grills and a permanent



# MEMORIAL PARK AUBURN, INDIANA

## PHASE ONE — HELP GRANT PROJECT

1. GENERAL SITE WORK
2. ADA COMPLIANT RESTROOM WITH ATTACHED SHELTER
3. 10' PATHWAYS THROUGHOUT PARK - 4,000 +/- WITH 8 BENCHES
4. EIGHT CONCRETE FITNESS NODES WITH EQUIPMENT ALONG PATHWAYS
5. TWO ADA COMPLIANT DRINKING FOUNTAINS WITH SHADE STRUCTURES
6. COMMUNITY MEETING NODE
7. REHABILITATED BASKETBALL COURT
8. PICKLEBALL FACILITY - 6 COURTS
9. SHADE STRUCTURES AT THE PICKLEBALL/BASKETBALL COURTS
10. CONCRETE PAD FOR GRILLING AREA
11. CONCRETE PAD FOR PERMANENT CORNHOLE GAME
12. BALL DIAMOND

CONSTRUCTION TIMELINE: SEPTEMBER 2024-MAY 2025

cornhole game. The proposed HELP grant project will complete Phase 1 of 2 phases of improvements planned for Memorial Park. Phase 2 improvements will occur following the completion of the HELP grant project. The site plan included illustrates the Phase 1 improvements to be completed as part of the HELP project. The City anticipates bidding the project in July 2024, with construction starting as early as September 2024 and completion in May 2025.

### **Labor Standards Administration**

For several years, NIRCC has assisted communities and agencies in Northeast Indiana with the Labor Standards (LSA) requirements associated with the Indiana Finance Authority's (IFA) funding programs, including SRF and SWIF. The SRF and SWIF funding is utilized to complete water, wastewater and storm water improvement projects. The LSA services provided by NIRCC include documentation and payroll review, jobsite interviews, and the compilation and submission of required reports. NIRCC staff is currently providing, or has previously provided these LSA services to the Adams County Regional Sewer District, the Allen County Regional Water and Sewer District, the City of Berne, the City of Bluffton, the Maysville Regional Water and Sewer District, the Town of Monroe, the Town of Ossian, and Wells County. If you are in need of an experienced Labor Standards Administrator, please feel free to discuss your project with us.

## **Current Transportation Improvement Program Projects**



FY 2025 is just around the corner, and with that, there are a number of projects being let for bidding from NIRCC's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). To see the TIP, go to <https://www.nircc.com/transportation-improvement-program.html>.

The TIP is a multi-year capital improvement program document that includes roadway, bridge, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian projects. These projects will serve the needs of all the cities and towns in Allen County.

Most projects go through three phases of development. The first phase is Preliminary Engineering (PE); this is design and development of the plans needed for the project. The second phase is Right of Way; this is the determination and acquisition of land needed for the project. The third phase is Construction; which is the actual building of the project. The projects listed in the TIP go through one or more of the phases during the four-year period of the TIP.

Many local projects will appear in multiple TIPs as projects can take more than four years to go from preliminary engineering to construction. In the current TIP, fiscal year 2024-2028 TIP, there are nine projects that will be let for bid. Being let for bid means that these projects will be open for contractors to submit bids which include their estimated construction cost, their qualifications, any special provisions that are required, etc. Once bidding is closed, each bid will be reviewed and competitively scored to select a contractor for the project. Once selected, the project can advance to construction. The following is a list of those projects along with a map of their location.

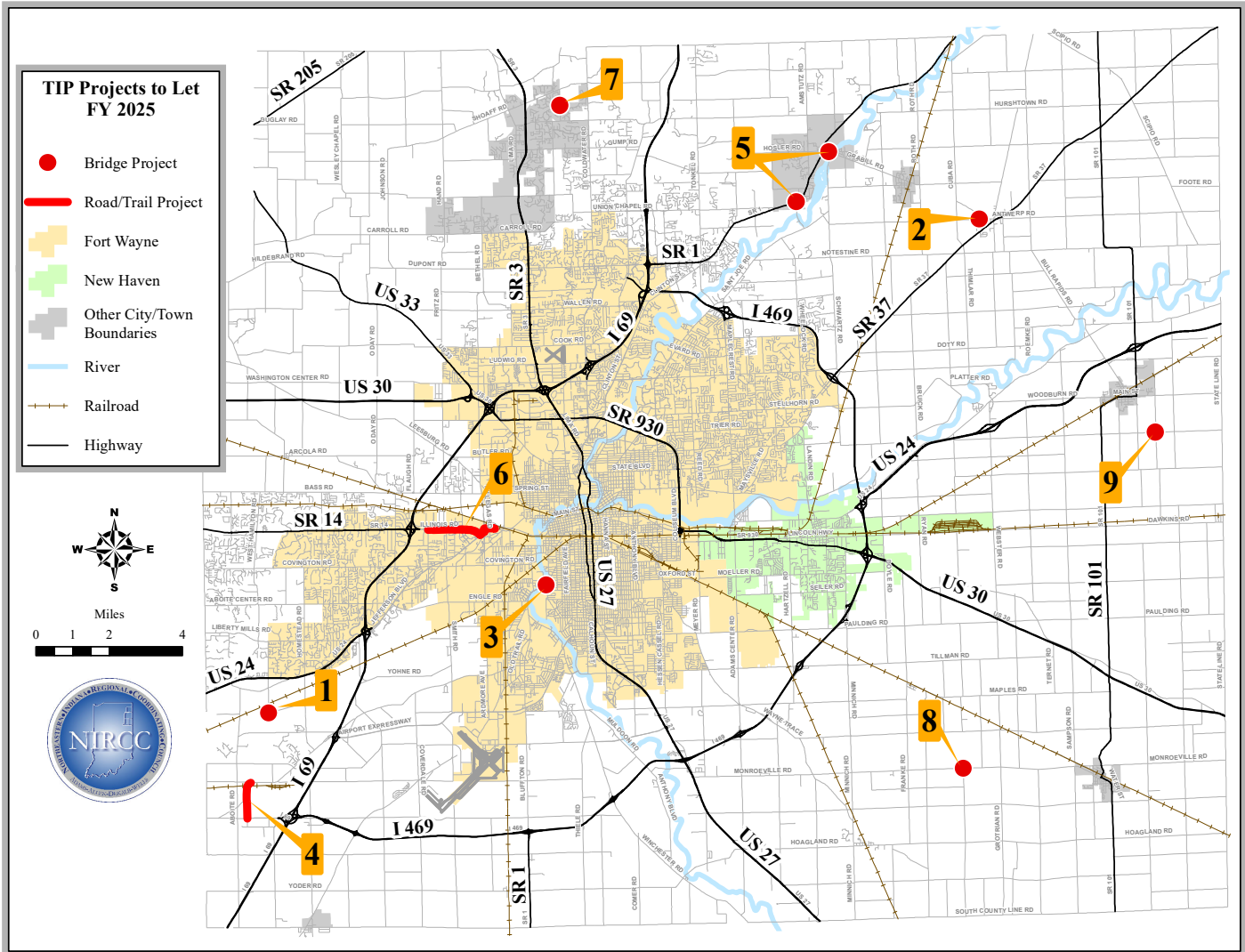
### **Projects to be Let in Fiscal Year 2025:**

#### **1. Amber Road Bridge #226**

This is an Allen County bridge replacement located over the Little River, which is approximately one mile south of US 24 in Aboite Township. The bridge is scheduled to go to bid on November 14, 2024.

#### **2. Antwerp Road Bridge #15**

This Allen County bridge project is located over the Oberhaltzer Ditch, approximately 1,050 feet



west of Trammel Road near Harlan. This is a two lane bridge replacement project that is scheduled to bid on October 9, 2024.

### 3. Bluffton Road Bridge #358

This is a City of Fort Wayne bridge deck reconstruction project. The Bluffton Road bridge is located over the St Mary’s River in Fort Wayne between Vesey Avenue and Broadway. This is a four-lane bridge with a letting date of December 11, 2024.

### 4. Fogwell Parkway

This is a four-lane road reconstruction project located on Fogwell Parkway from Lafayette Center Road to Winters Road. This Allen County road

project is scheduled to go to bid on September 11, 2024.

### 5. Grabill Road Bridge and SR 1 & Clay Street

The intersection at SR 1 and Clay Street will have a traffic signal installed. The traffic signal will be installed prior to the Grabill Road bridge construction. The new signal will offer an alternative route around the construction of the bridge. The Grabill Road bridge will be reconstructed and will add pedestrian facilities to the bridge. These Allen County projects are scheduled to go to bid on August 14, 2024.

### 6. Illinois Road Trail

This is a new trail on Illinois Road from Getz Road



to W. Jefferson Boulevard / Willowdale Road. This trail will be on the north side of Illinois Road between W. Jefferson and Ardmore Road, then on the west side of Ardmore, then the north side of W. Jefferson, then the south side of Illinois Road all the way to Getz Road. The City of Fort Wayne is planning construction to begin for this trail in the fall of 2024.

**7. Kell Road Bridge #46**

This Huntertown bridge project is located over Willow Creek between Cedar Canyon Road and Shoaff Road. This is a bridge deck overlay project and will also add pedestrian facilities to the bridge. The bid date is scheduled for October 9, 2024.

**8. Monroeville Road Bridge #277**

This is an Allen County bridge replacement project. The two-lane bridge is located on Monroeville Road over Hoffman Drain. The bridge project is scheduled to be bid on December 11, 2024.

**9. Slusher Road Bridge #141**

This is a two-lane bridge replacement project on Slusher Road over the Edgerton-Carson Ditch between Fahlsing Road and Brobst Road. The Allen County bridge project bid date is scheduled for December 11, 2024.

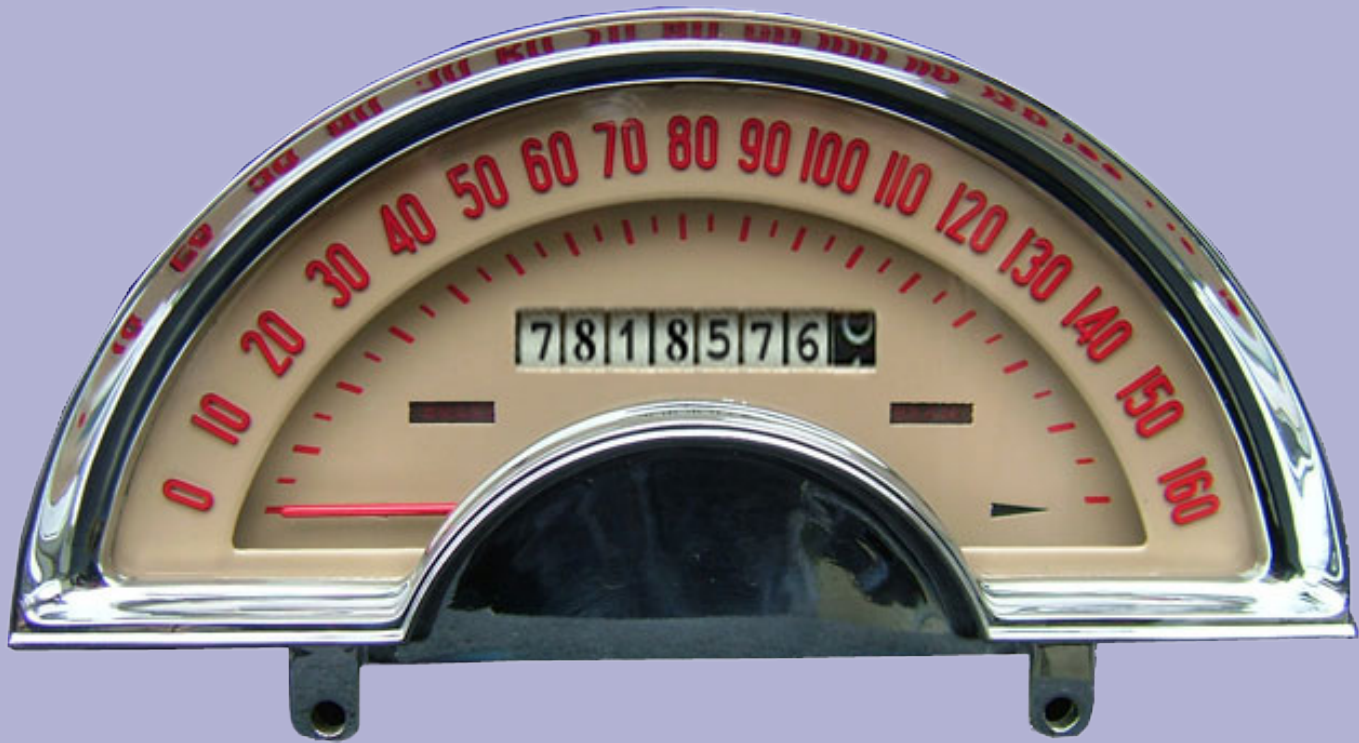
## Resilience Improvement Plan

NIRCC has commenced work on a Resilience Improvement Plan. The purpose of this plan is to ensure that Allen County’s transportation system is resilient in the face of climate change and extreme weather events. Thanks to the 2021 Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, developing a Resilience Improvement Plan will allow Allen County to receive an increase in the share of federal funding. This will allow for the funding of critical improvement projects. The first step in the planning process is establishing a Critical Infrastructure Assessment. The goal of this assessment is to identify critical assets, that if disrupted, would pose a significant threat to the transportation system and community. A Steering Committee established by NIRCC will meet on May 9th, 2024 to discuss the initial steps in the Critical Infrastructure Assessment process. After the critical assets are identified NIRCC will begin the process of assessing vulnerability.



## Vehicle Miles of Travel

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**N**IRCC has completed the Vehicle Miles of Travel (VMT) report for 2023. In 2023 there were 7,818,576 vehicle miles traveled. This is 2.89% higher than in 2022 (7,591,997 Vehicle Miles of Travel).

**T**o calculate VMT statistics NIRCC utilizes traffic count data collected throughout the year. In 2023, approximately 739 locations were counted throughout Allen County. NIRCC also collects count data for other counties. NIRCC counted 35 locations in Adams County, 401 locations in DeKalb County, 2 locations in Huntington County, and 94 locations in Whitley County. NIRCC plans on working in Allen County for the 2024 traffic counting program.

## United Trails - Next Level Trail Grant Awards



**R**ound four of the Next Level Trails grant program saw three trail projects from the Northeast Indiana United Trails Plan get awards. One local project award was given for the Illinois Road Trail in the City of Fort Wayne and two regional project awards were given for projects along the Poka-Bache Connector Trail in the City of Angola and Steuben County!

Next Level Trails has invested \$180 million – the largest infusion of State trail funding in Indiana history – toward the development of regionally and locally significant trails throughout Indiana. As part of Governor Holcomb’s broader Next Level Connections infrastructure program, Next Level Trails (NLT) is designed to incentivize collaborative efforts to accelerate trail connections. (<https://www.in.gov/dnr/state-parks/recreation/grants/next-level-trails/>)

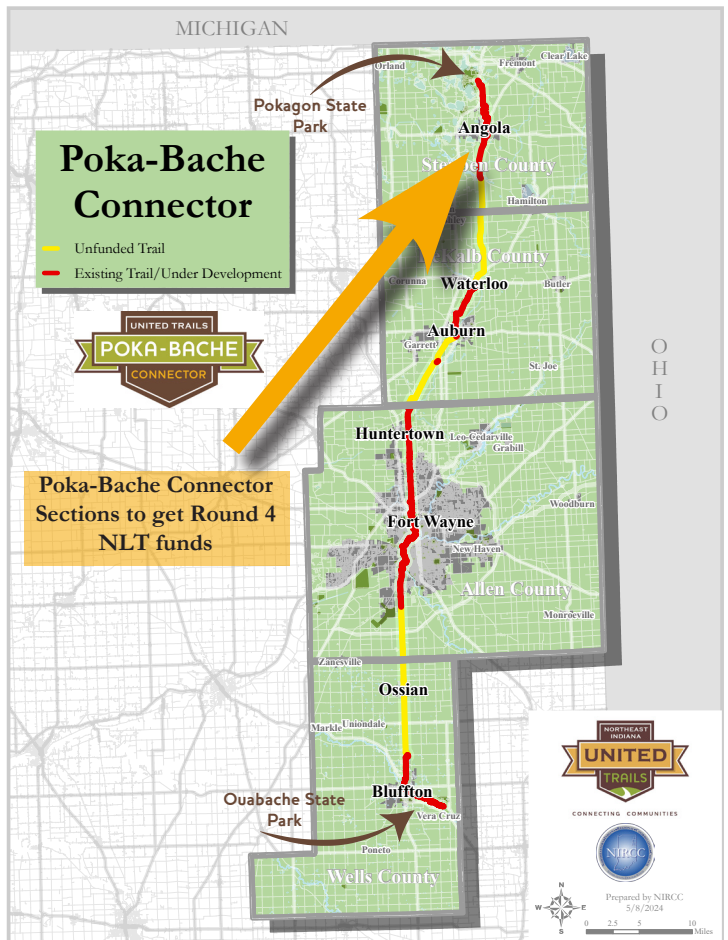
The Illinois Road Trail was awarded \$1,000,000 for a 1.97 mile section of trail, primarily along Illinois Rd in



Fort Wayne, connecting the Yarnelle Trail along Jefferson Blvd to the sidewalks and trail at Getz Rd and Illinois Rd. The total project cost is \$4.5 million. The trail will create connections to Rockhill Park, the Getz Rd corridor, the Ardmore Avenue Trail, and the Towpath Trail. It will also create access for residents to connect with the Illinois Rd commercial corridor which includes a large number of businesses, shopping centers (including Jefferson Point Shopping Center), entertainment, and restaurants.

The City of Angola and Steuben County has teamed up to add approximately 4.4 miles of trail along the Poka-Bache Connector. Angola was awarded \$1.5 million towards a \$2 million dollar project to extend the Poka-Bache Connector Trail 1.2 miles from Commons Park to the southern boundary of the city. From this point, Steuben County was awarded \$3.7 million towards a \$4.8 million dollar project to extend the Poka-Bache Connector an additional 3.2 miles to connect with Pleasant Lake.

The Poka-Bache Connector Trail is a State Visionary Trail and regional priority that will eventually connect Pokagon State Park, north of Angola, to Ouabache State Park near Bluffton. The total length of this corridor, once complete, will stretch over 81 miles and become the longest trail in Indiana! So far approximately 38.5 miles exist along this corridor and another 10 miles are currently under development. Once the sections under development are complete, the entire trail will be nearly 60% finished.



# Broadway and Taylor St - Safe Streets for All continued...



CONCEPTUAL PLAN

## BROADWAY & TAYLOR ST. SINGLE-LANE ROUNDABOUT



years. NIRCC completed a roadway safety audit at this location to obtain an independent review by professional engineers and safety officials. Upon review of the crash data and traffic data the roadway safety audit team recommended that Fort Wayne officials pursue plans to fund and construct a roundabout to address the issues at Broadway and Taylor Street.

The additional components of the Broadway and Taylor Street corridors were developed by local officials and input from residents. In June of 2023, Fort Wayne Board of Works held public input meetings to get feedback on proposed designs. Construction is planned to begin in three years.

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