



TERRE HAUTE TRAILS

Connecting People & Places



TERRE HAUTE BIKE & PEDESTRIAN PLAN



TAYLOR
SIEFKER
WILLIAMS
design group

landscape architecture | community planning | urban design | visioning | strategic planning



VS
ENGINEERING

Acknowledgments

PROJECT TEAM

City of Terre Haute, Indiana

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

- Eddie Bird - Golf Director of Hulman Links and Rea Park
- Daniel Bradley- Vice President of Wabash Valley Riverscape
- Lori Danielson - Director of Riverfront Development
- Maitri Desai - City Planner
- Marcus Maurer - Director of Engineering
- Shannon Moss - Parks and Recreation - Director of Maintenance
- Kilie Smith - Parks and Recreation - Superintendent
- Ellie Templeton - Art Spaces, Inc. - Executive Director
- Amanda Thompson - City Councilperson - District 2
- Jesse Tohill - Director of Public Works
- Caleb Williams - Staff Engineer

TAYLOR SIEFKER WILLIAM DESIGN GROUP/VS ENGINEERING

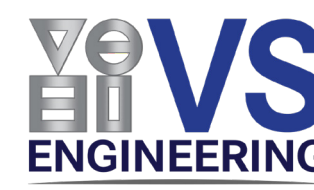
- Justin Butts (TSW)
- Nick Jahn (VS)
- Alex Mroczka (VS)
- Jake Newland (TSW)
- Scott Siefker (TSW)
- Ron Taylor (TSW)

SPECIAL NOTE

This plan was supported by funds made available from the Indiana Department of Health (IDH). The City of Terre Haute continues to promote walking and bicycling, and the intent of this planning effort is to build upon these efforts to enhance the overall comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian system network in the City. This planning study effort was divided into three parts and organized to meet the criteria outlined as part of the Indiana State Department of Health Grant Program



TAYLOR
SIEFKER
WILLIAMS
design group





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1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an overview of the planning process, engagement opportunities, benefits of bike and pedestrian travel, and the plan organization. A strategy focusing on the 5 E's of biking and pedestrian planning is identified to advance walking and biking in Terre Haute.

CHAPTER CONTENTS

- PLANNING PROCESS
- ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES
- BENEFITS OF BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN TRAVEL
- PLAN ORGANIZATION

Part 1: Assessment of Existing Conditions and Opportunities

Part one of the project included data collection, assessment of existing physical conditions and the collection and analysis of opportunities related to specifically the project focus area also known as the “Thompson Ditch Trail” corridor.



Part 2: Route Development and Conceptual Trail Design

The second part of the planning process was synthesizing and prioritizing the final destinations and routes and assembling the support information for the preparation of the recommendations.



Planning Process

In the summer of 2025, the City of Terre Haute was awarded a Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Planning Grant from the Indiana Department of Health (IDH). With this grant, the community developed a plan to accomplish the goals set as part of the grant guidelines as well as community needs and priorities.

The primary objectives of this plan were to:

- Focus on addressing health disparities and traditionally under-served populations in the community (such as minority or low-income populations)
- Prioritize investments in walking and biking based on cost, use, and overall network connectivity.
- Strengthen applications for future state and federal funding opportunities.

The planning process developed for this Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan sought to combine local leadership input and public engagement to identify opportunities and challenges related to walking and bicycling in Terre Haute. The process utilized these input mechanisms to direct the planning process for bike and pedestrian routes. In addition, special emphasis is placed on the “Focus Corridor” of the Thompson Ditch as a potential new major trail connection. The method by which these goals are met are outlined in the graphic on this spread.

Part 3: Trail Plan Recommendations

The third part of the planning process was finalizing the plan based upon input received during the Trail Plan Advisory Committee and public meetings.



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Engagement Opportunities

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

An Advisory Committee was developed to aid in directing the planning efforts and to provide feedback throughout the planning process. The committee was comprised of elected officials and key staff of the City of Terre Haute. Four advisory committee meetings were held throughout the planning process:



PROJECT KICKOFF MEETING

The first of four advisory committee meetings was held on August 11, 2025. At this meeting with project planning staff and the Advisory Committee members, the team discussed the overall project, timelines, and processes. Existing data, maps, plans and other resources were identified to aid in the planning process, and a site walk of the focus corridor was facilitated.



TRAILS PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING #2

The project team facilitated the second meeting on October 20, 2025. Base data identified in the project kickoff meeting was compiled into an overall existing conditions inventory and assessment. This inventory allowed for the mapping of opportunities and constraints for future connections, destinations, and route alternatives.



TRAILS PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING #3

The third meeting took place on December 9, 2025. In this meeting, sections of the draft plan including the existing conditions, community profile, and survey feedback were discussed. Feedback from the advisory committee on the findings were used to make adjustments to overall plan goals and objectives and establish direction for draft plan priorities and recommendations.



TRAILS PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING #4

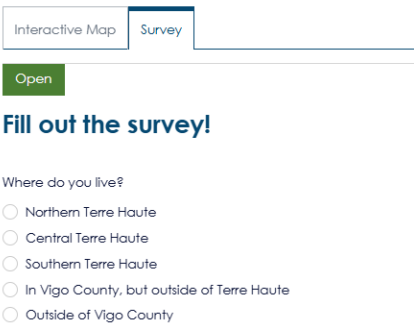
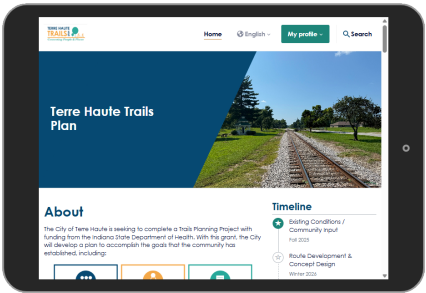
The fourth and last advisory committee meeting took place on February 17, 2026. In this meeting, the committee reviewed a complete draft of the trails plan. Special focus was placed on the recommendation and implementation sections. Members were given a copy of the draft to make additional comments.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

A combination of online and in-person engagement opportunities were provided to facilitate the planning effort. These methods were utilized to maximize the number of community members participating in the study by providing flexible options for input. Each method is summarized below.

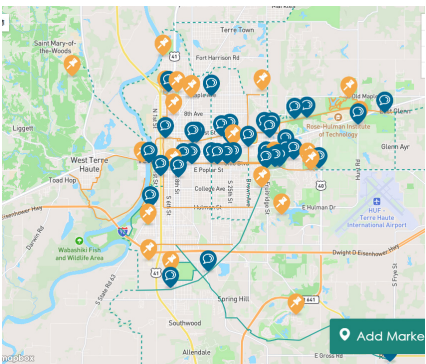
PROJECT WEBSITE

The project team created a project specific website that allowed members of the community to access important project information including a project overview, timeline, and maps. Community members were encouraged to visit the website to provide feedback on the plan by using an interactive map feature as well as a survey to gather perceptions on walking and bicycling in Terre Haute. Over the course of the planning process, there were 955 total visits, 79 unique users, 73 online survey responses and 62 comments generated on the digital map.



COMMUNITY SURVEY

A community survey was conducted on the project website to obtain information about how the public interacts with Terre Haute's trail system and their perceptions of walking and cycling. The survey helped to identify priorities for placement of future trails, destinations to be connected, and important amenities to be included. The survey was open from August 31, 2025 to December 14, 2025 and captured 73 responses.



INTERACTIVE MAP

In addition to the survey, a digital map was available for users to interact and provide site-specific comments. This tool allowed users to see all existing, planned, and proposed trails overlayed on a map of Terre Haute. Users were instructed to identify destinations, key linkages, and areas for improvement by placing a marker. Each marker could be designated as a "comment" or "destination" to identify areas of strength/weakness or key destinations respectively.



COMMUNITY MEETING

A public open house was held on March 25, 2026 with approximately 40 community members in attendance. The meeting was held in the second floor conference room of The Hub in Terre Haute from 3-5 p.m. Attendees received a brief presentation followed by an open house to discuss plan materials.

Benefits of Bike and Pedestrian Travel

Improving pedestrian safety and connectivity has the potential to address several challenges while providing many benefits to the community and users. By designing streets that are safe for all modes of transportation, the City of Terre Haute can become more inviting for pedestrians and cyclists. A more inviting pedestrian environment encourages regular physical activity which can reduce the risk of chronic disease, improve mental health, and boost overall quality of life. A transportation system that provides varying modes of travel greatly benefits those in the community that do not have reliable access or have an inability to travel by car. By increasing the number of people using walking and cycling as a mode of transportation, the city is also improving the environment by producing less air pollution and reducing their dependence on fossil fuels. Sidewalks, shared-use paths, and trails also provide economic benefits by increasing community livability. These facilities are valuable amenities that attract and retain residents, businesses, and tourists. By striving to create a more walkable and bike-friendly city, Terre Haute is taking steps to improve public health, safety, and equity while also enhancing environmental stewardship and economic development.

5 E'S OF BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN PLANNING

While roads, sidewalks, crossings, and trails are critical to improving the pedestrian experience of a city, other pieces such as local policies, ordinances, and programs must also be used to create walking and bike-friendly communities. The League of American Bicyclists has adopted a set of essential elements that help make a pedestrian and bike-friendly community. These elements are the 5 E's, and they form a multi-pronged strategy for an equitable and safe framework that focuses on building safer walking and biking routes through a combination of means. The 5 E's include:

- **Engineering:** The design and construction of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, such as sidewalks, trails, shared-use paths, crosswalks, traffic signals, and signs.
- **Education:** Giving people of all ages the knowledge, skills, and confidence to ride and walk. This can be geared towards pedestrians and cyclists but also applies to drivers.
- **Evaluation:** A community's ability to track and measure travel behavior, safety, and the condition of its infrastructure. With plans and policies as a framework a community can be proactive in addressing issues of pedestrian accessibility, safety, and comfort.
- **Enforcement:** Enforcement activities often include traffic safety laws and regulations. Community-based speed reduction programs, public education, and roadway engineering are also recommended.
- **Encouragement:** Creating a culture that supports and encourages active transportation within the community. A culture can be created through community-based programs like walking groups, organized bike rides, and special events.

Plan Organization

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an overview of the planning process, opportunities for engagement, benefits of walking and biking, and the plan organization. A strategy focusing on the 5 E's provides a multi-pronged approach to advancing walking and biking.

CHAPTER 2: EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

The goal of this chapter is to depict a clear image of where the community is at now in terms of pedestrian infrastructure and use it to form a vision of where the community wants to be in the future. The analysis reveals the opportunities and challenges that will need to be addressed to achieve the larger vision laid out in this plan.

CHAPTER 3: VISION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

This section introduces the vision and goals that form the framework for the policy, program, and project recommendations. The vision is derived from the communities' aspirations as captured during public engagement and the findings of existing conditions analysis. Goals are broad statements that support the vision by outlining a desired outcome. Furthermore, objectives provide specific action items and recommendations on how to move forward and complete goals.

CHAPTER 4: STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter suggests a complete bike and pedestrian network based on gaps located in the existing system and desire areas indicated by the community. There is a focus on the Thompson Ditch Corridor as a north-south spine that would connect a variety of existing trails. Lastly, this chapter highlights standards for potential trailheads that would enhance trail access as well as prototypical design standards that can be applied to both the focus corridor as well as the entire bike and pedestrian system.

CHAPTER 5: IMPLEMENTATION

The proposed trail connections are sorted by priority and additional details regarding the implementation of ideas found within this masterplan are outlined in this section. Each prioritized trail includes supporting strategies for implementation, a prototypical trail design, and a facilities toolbox outlining key trail amenities that could enhance the user experience.

APPENDIX A: PUBLIC INPUT AND MEETING SUMMARIES

The appendix provides project meeting summaries, public open house materials, and public input summaries in the form of graphs and tables.