



NEW ALBANY LEISURE TRAIL MASTER PLAN

A COMPONENT OF THE NEW ALBANY STRATEGIC PLAN

*Prepared for the Village of New Albany by MSI
2006 Update*



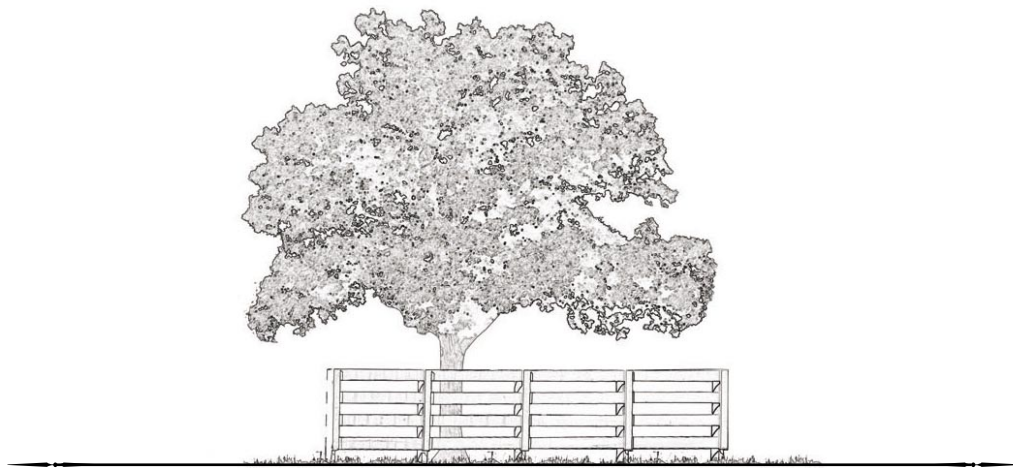


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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As New Albany has grown, so has its leisure trail system. It is the beginning of a comprehensive system that will link its users throughout the Village and to the greater region.

As New Albany matures the community must establish a more focused approach to create the comprehensive system that achieves the goals of the community. This focused effort includes this Leisure Trail Master Plan.

This document is intended to guide the community's future decision making for future trail miles. A series of routes and loops are recommended in this plan to establish a foundation for the system. The loops and routes proposed in this plan are not intended to limit the construction of leisure trails only along the routes and loops, it is meant only to focus the efforts of the community to ensure a strong foundation that can then be built upon.

The New Albany Leisure Trail Master Plan is intended to guide future development of the Leisure Trail system to:

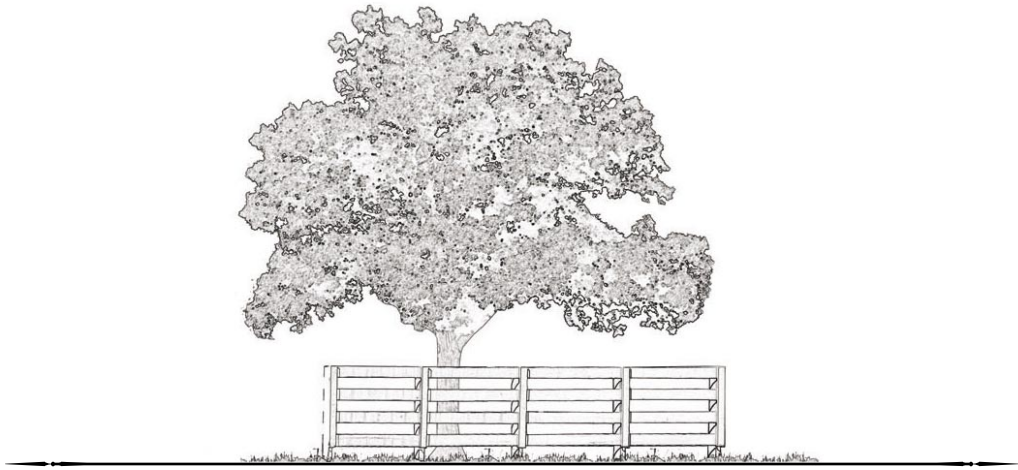
1. Provide recreation and leisure opportunities
2. Ensure the basic connections to neighborhoods, the Village Center, the Learning Campus, etc.
3. Ensure regional connections
4. Create a legible system

The routes and loops recommended by this plan are based on the existing conditions and informed by the expected future development plan in the Village. The routes form the basic structure and function like spokes on a wheel. The loops then connect each of the routes and provide recreational opportunities of varying length and experience.

In addition to establishing a structure for the leisure trail system the plan recommends strategies to add new trails, improve safety, increase legibility, provide amenities and protect the environment.

By focusing the community's efforts on leisure trails, New Albany will establish a strong foundation for a comprehensive system that will benefit residents, employees, neighbors and visitors.





INTRODUCTION

PROCESS

The New Albany Leisure Trail Master Plan was a publicly led effort undertaken in conjunction with the 2006 New Albany Strategic Plan Update. It was crafted by a steering committee comprised of the New Albany Parks and Trails Advisory Board and additional representatives from the community. This plan will be included in the overall Strategic Plan for New Albany.

The intent of the process was to map and inventory the existing trail system in the Village and plan for strategic future connections to create a leisure trails system that is comprehensive and user friendly. Additionally, the committee was asked to make recommendations for strategies to create additional trail miles and to increase wayfinding and legibility of the trail system. The resulting master plan will guide trail building in the future and create a framework for decision making to improve the trail system for New Albany's residents, employees, neighbors and visitors.

GOALS

In order to devise strategies to improve and expand the leisure trail system in the Village of New Albany it was critical to determine the community's goals for the system. The steering committee created a prioritized list of goals that the future leisure system should meet.

They are as follows:

1. Connectivity - Increase access and usability of all trails for residents and employees in New Albany by providing safe and accessible links to neighborhoods, schools, parks, the Village Center, and other amenities within New Albany and by making connections to regional systems in Gahanna, Columbus, Franklin County and Licking County.
2. Usability - Increase understanding and legibility of the trail system by improving the wayfinding and signage and design leisure trails and sidewalks to meet the standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act when appropriate.
3. Natural Environment - Provide active and passive recreation opportunities and access to the natural environment, including rivers, streams, wooded lots and other natural habitats, to promote a healthier community through walking, running, biking, etc.
4. Alternate Transportation - Provide opportunities for New Albany residents and employees to utilize the trail system as an alternate form of transportation.



Existing trail in the New Albany Country Club



Bridge on the Rose Run Corridor

SCHEDULE

Steering Committee Meeting #1.....August 7, 2006
Steering Committee Meeting #2.....September 6, 2006
Steering Committee Meeting #3.....October 2, 2006
Steering Committee Meeting #4.....November 6, 2006

STEERING COMMITTEE

Bill ReschParks & Trails Advisory Board
Char Steelman.....Parks & Trails Advisory Board
George StribickParks & Trails Advisory Board
Richard Williams.....Parks & Trails Advisory Board
Steve Pleasnick.....Village Council
Phil Heit.....New Albany Walking Club
John GleasonResident

VILLAGE OF NEW ALBANY STAFF

Joseph Stefanov..... Village Administrator
Debra Mecozzi Deputy Village Administrator
Jennifer Chrysler Community Development Director
Kathryn Meyer..... Deputy Community Development Director
William Dorman Assistant to the Public Service Director
Michelle Murphy Community Development Planner

MSI STAFF

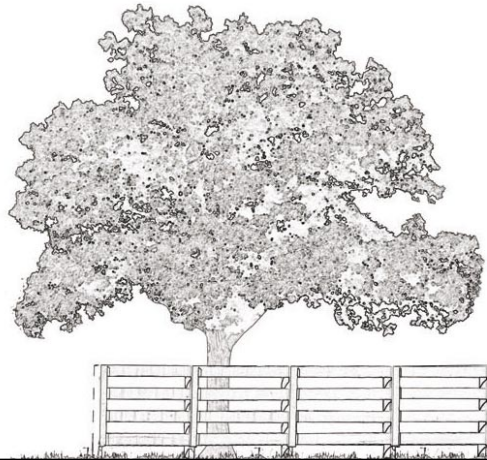
Keith Myers, ASLA..... Principal
Chris Hermann, AICP Director of Planning
Erin Prosser, AICP Planner
Aron Fraizer, ASLA..... Planner



Existing Rural Leisure Trail



Sidewalk in the Historic Village Center



EXISTING CONDITIONS & ANALYSIS

EXISTING SYSTEM

The existing leisure trail system reflects the high priority on livability in the Village of New Albany. Many miles of leisure trails have been built and an impressive foundation has been laid for a cohesive trail system that connects the users within the Village and to the greater regional network.

The existing system includes 24 miles of trails connecting users to the Village Center, the Learning Campus and other locations. The primary strength of this system is that it provides an important recreational opportunity for residents and employees.

An inventory was taken of the existing trail system focusing on the asphalt paths in the Village that make up the leisure trail system. This inventory did not include all of the sidewalks in the Village. Although sidewalks provide necessary connections to the leisure trail system, the focus of this plan is on the asphalt trails.



Example of existing leisure trail system in New Albany

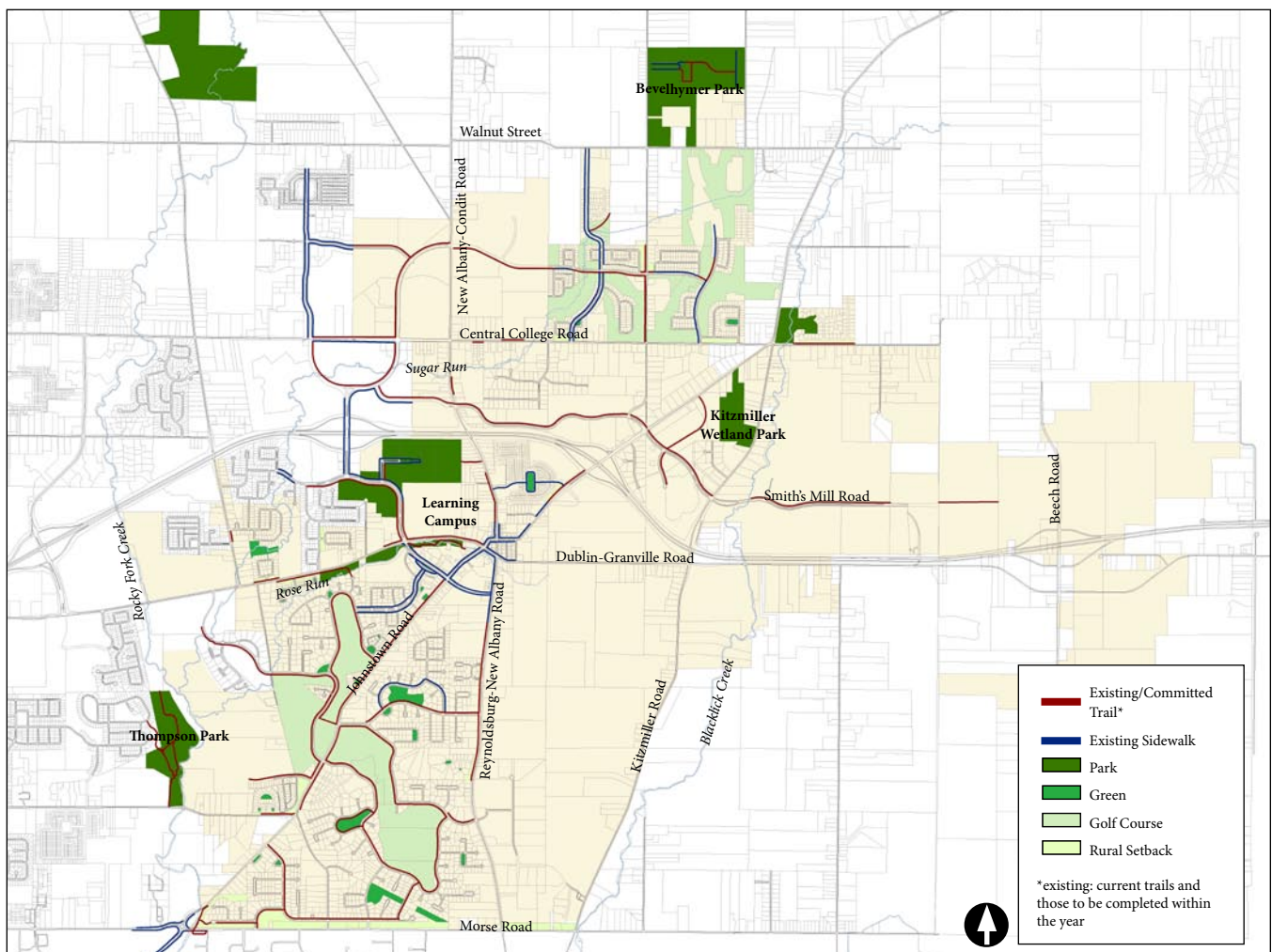


Figure 1: Existing Leisure Trail System in New Albany (2006)

REGIONAL TRAIL SYSTEM

The regional system in central Ohio and statewide is an important asset to the Village residents and employees. The system provides important recreation and future commuting opportunities. The neighboring systems for the Village include:

- Westerville
- Gahanna
- Columbus
- Licking County - TJ Evans Trail

By coordinating and collaborating with these neighboring systems, the New Albany leisure trail system will expand and provide new opportunities for riders to travel between communities for leisure, recreation or commuting.

A larger network of trails exists and is expanding. This larger regional system includes:

- MORPC Greenways
- Rails-to-Trails
- Ohio to Erie Trail

Connections to this larger regional system provides an increased level of recreation that residents and employees in the Village would benefit from.



Figure 2: An example of a statewide system is the Ohio to Erie Trail. It is a non-profit initiative funded by local, state, and federal governments for land acquisition and trail construction to connect Lake Erie to the Ohio River in Cincinnati.

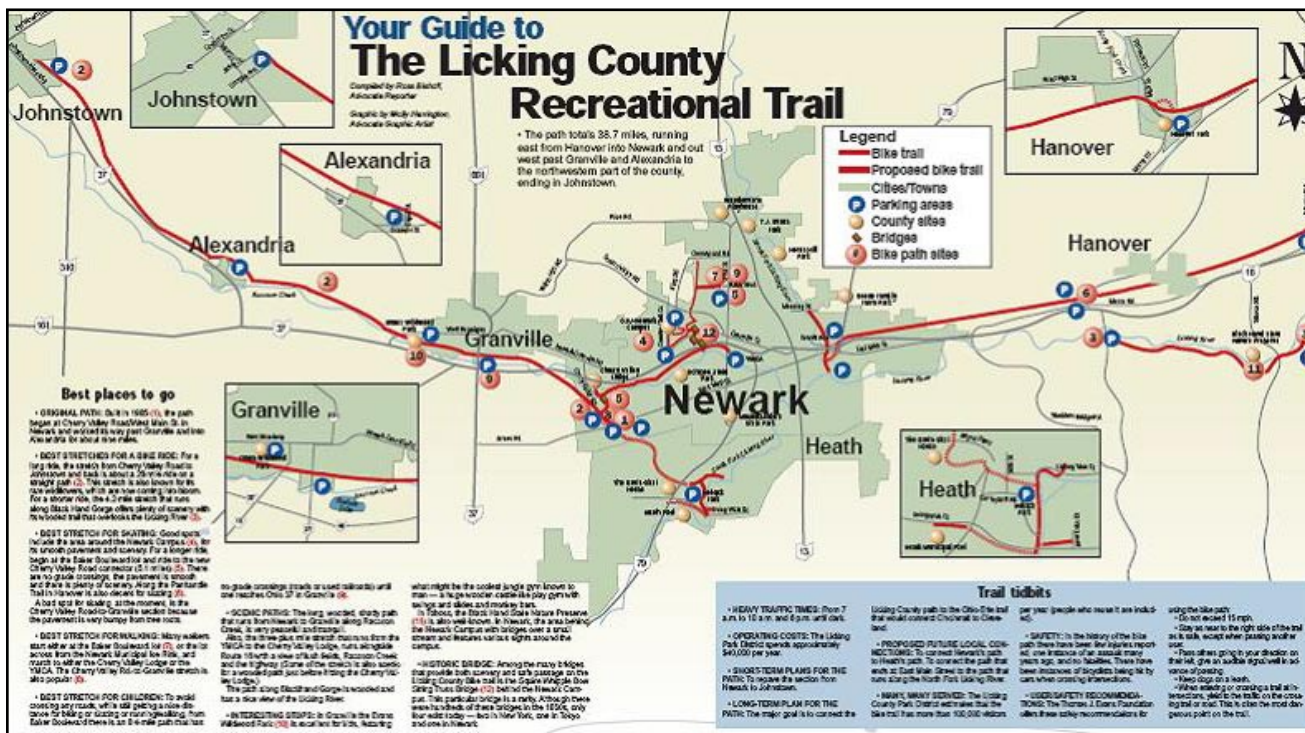


Figure 3: An example of a local neighboring system is the Licking County Recreational Trail System that consists of 38.7 miles of trail between Johnstown and Hanover. This system includes the TJ Evans Trail from Johnstown to Newark. They estimate 100,000 visitors per year use the trail system.

STRATEGIC PLAN CORRIDORS

The 2006 New Albany Strategic Plan is a concurrent process that includes strategies to define the primary roadway corridors in the Village. These recommendations are important to consider with the Leisure Trail Master Plan since the majority of the leisure trails are constructed in the Rights-of-Way along the Village roadways.

The Strategic Plan recommends three primary types of roads.

- Village Center Streets
- Rural Corridors
- Semi-Rural Corridors

Each roadway corridor designation includes a typology which defines the width, the setback, the stormwater infrastructure, the formality of the condition along the road. Most critical for this plan is the location of the leisure trails in the rural and semi-rural corridor typologies and sidewalks within the Village Center.

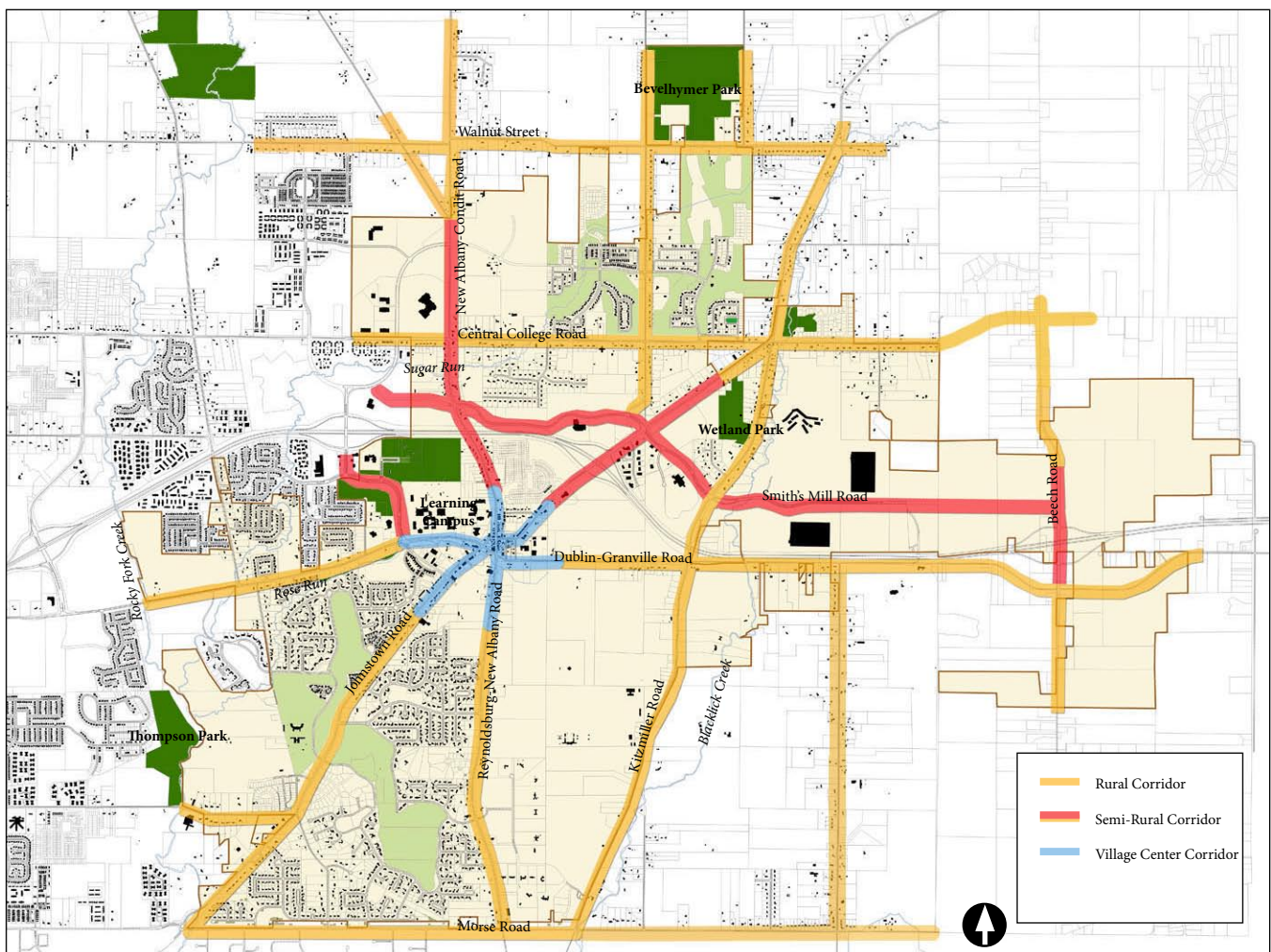


Figure 4: Roadway corridor typology map - 2006 Strategic Land Use Plan

VILLAGE CENTER

The Village Center presents unique challenges to providing safe and usable leisure trail connections. Asphalt leisure trails are not present throughout the Village Center. Sidewalks are the dominant condition. The 2005 Village Center Plan provides the detailed conditions for the streets and should be the guiding document for design.

Within the Village Center the urban condition presents conflicts between the cyclists and the vehicles. If bicycles are on the sidewalks within the Village Center, conflicts may occur between riders and vehicles at intersections or curb cuts if a driver is not able to anticipate bicycle travel along sidewalks. However, roadways are often not an appropriate location for some riders like children or those not comfortable on the roadway.

If riders are travelling at higher rates of speed it is safer and more appropriate to operate as a vehicle on the roadway, not on the sidewalk. This is the recommendation of bicycle advocates in Ohio. Cyclists on the sidewalks appear at intersections and curbcuts quickly and unexpectedly. This increases the likelihood of a crash. When cyclists travel in the vehicle lanes the cars are able to anticipate their movements and react accordingly. According to the Ohio Bicycle Federation, if you are travelling fast on a bike, riding on sidewalks has two to nine times the accident risk as proper cycling on the road.

Recently signed House Bill 389 from the 126th General Assembly addressed these challenges. It changed Ohio law to prohibit communities from requiring bicycles to use the sidewalks. The argument is that cyclists will be safer if they are part of roadway traffic where drivers will be more likely to see them.

In the Village of New Albany there are many types of riders; those travelling through the Village Center as part of their recreation and those with the Village Center as a destination. These differences should be recognized and all types of riders should be accommodated.

However, there are a set of riders that are safer on the sidewalks than on the roadway. These riders operate more like a pedestrian on the sidewalk than a vehicle on the road. Children or leisure riders with destination in the Village Center are not travelling fast and therefore do not have the same safety concerns on the sidewalks as their counterparts. These more passive set of riders should be permitted to use the sidewalk within the Village Center and in the neighborhoods.

The system within the Village Center should be designed to accommodate all riders and be developed according to the recommendations in the Village Center Plan.

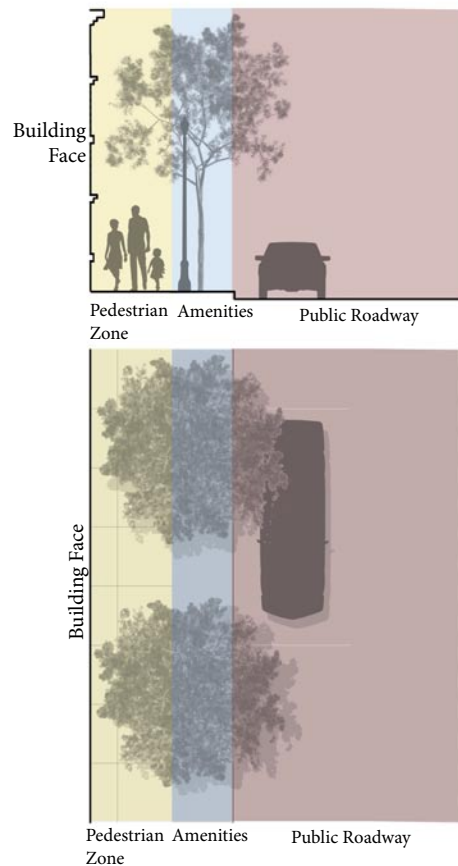


Figure 5: Village Center Street Envelope Components - Please consult Village Center Plan for the other recommended typologies.



Existing Village Center Condition - High Street

TYPES

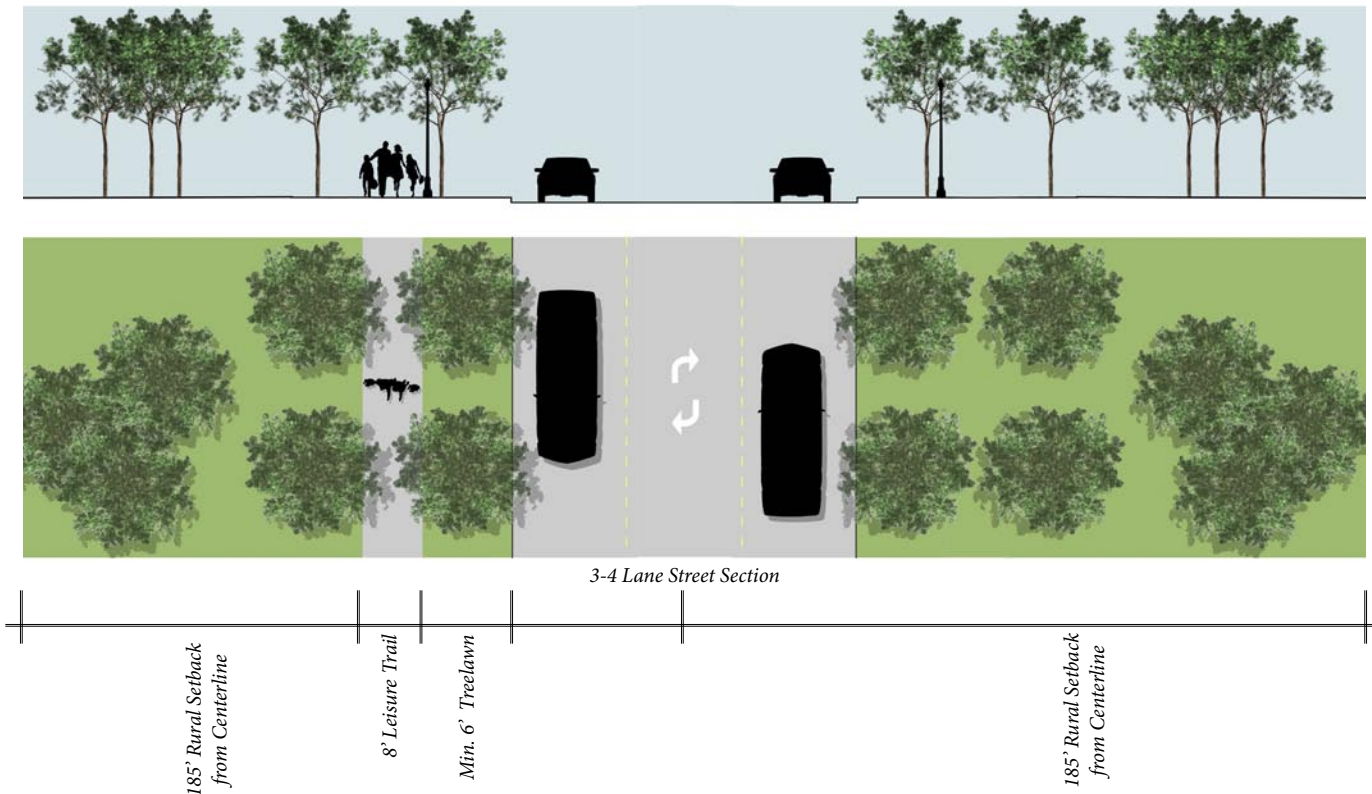


Figure 6: Semi-Rural Typology

Developers are required to install trails and sidewalks with the development/redevelopment of their site whether it falls along a semi-rural corridor, rural corridor or elsewhere in the community. All public streets are required to have sidewalks or trails along them. The minimum standard width for concrete sidewalks is five (5) feet and eight (8) feet for asphalt trails. Certain areas of the community may necessitate wider sidewalks or trails and should be determined by the Parks and Trails Advisory Board or as otherwise determined by code.

Semi-Rural Corridor

The semi-rural corridors in the Village include Smith's Mill and Fodor Road. These roads connect to more intense uses such as the Learning Campus and the Business Campus. These roads are typically two to four lanes with a turn lane or median in the center. The deciduous street trees are located in a well organized pattern along the roadway and street lights are present. Trails should be located on both sides parallel with the roadway.

The typology for this corridor includes a dedicated leisure trail. Sidewalks and bike lanes are not appropriate in this condition.



Existing Semi-Rural Condition in the Village - Smith's Mill Road.

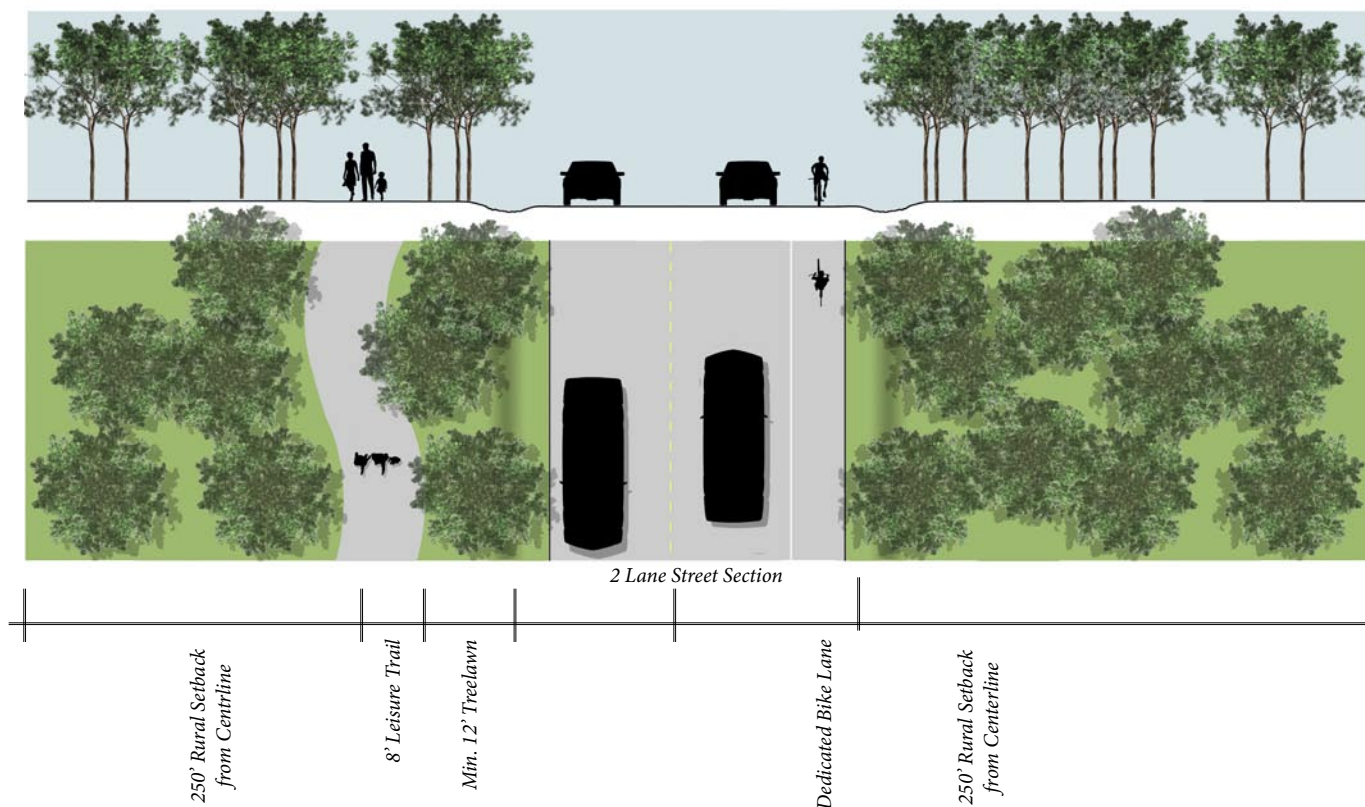


Figure 7: Rural Typology

Rural Corridor

The rural corridors typically have lower traffic volumes than the semi-rural corridors and therefore generally require only two lanes of vehicular traffic. The landscape is more naturalized. Street trees are clustered in natural patterns, formal street trees are not present.

In this condition the leisure trail should meander, it is not necessary to maintain a parallel relationship to the roadway. The trails should respond and capitalize on natural features in the area. It is encouraged for a leisure trail to be located on both sides of the roadway, however in the rural corridor one is sufficient and in some locations described by the plan a bike lane is permitted.

When a dedicated leisure trail is not likely to be constructed as part of the development of land and the traffic volume is low enough another option would be to expand the asphalt width of the roadway to create a bike lane along side of the vehicular lanes.

The Ohio - Kentucky - Indiana Regional Council of Governments recommends 4'-10' width (standard is 5') for a paved shoulder bike lane.



Existing Rural Condition in the Village - Johnstown Road.

GREEN CORRIDORS

The tradition of development in New Albany places a high priority on the green corridors throughout the Village. These corridors provide environmental protection areas to preserve water quality. They also improve the aesthetic of the Village and provide recreational opportunities for trails within the green corridors.

The strategic plan identifies green corridors along four primary streams in the Village, the Rose Run, Rocky Fork Creek, Blacklick Creek, and Sugar Run. These green corridors are critical to preserving the landscape of New Albany. They also provide environmental protection by preserving floodplain and riparian corridors for the streams.

These green corridors also provide the opportunity to build trail connections. The trail already constructed along a portion of Rose Run is a successful example of this existing strategy.

Leisure trails constructed along green corridors may be wider and may employ alternative materials. These recreational connections should be sensitive to the natural features and respond to the conditions present along the green corridor.

The opportunity to build leisure trails along green corridors is significant in New Albany since there are still many locations along corridors where development has not occurred.

Areas along the Rocky Fork Creek are largely undeveloped both on the north and south sides of the bypass. Blacklick Creek is also a strong candidate for a leisure trail connection.

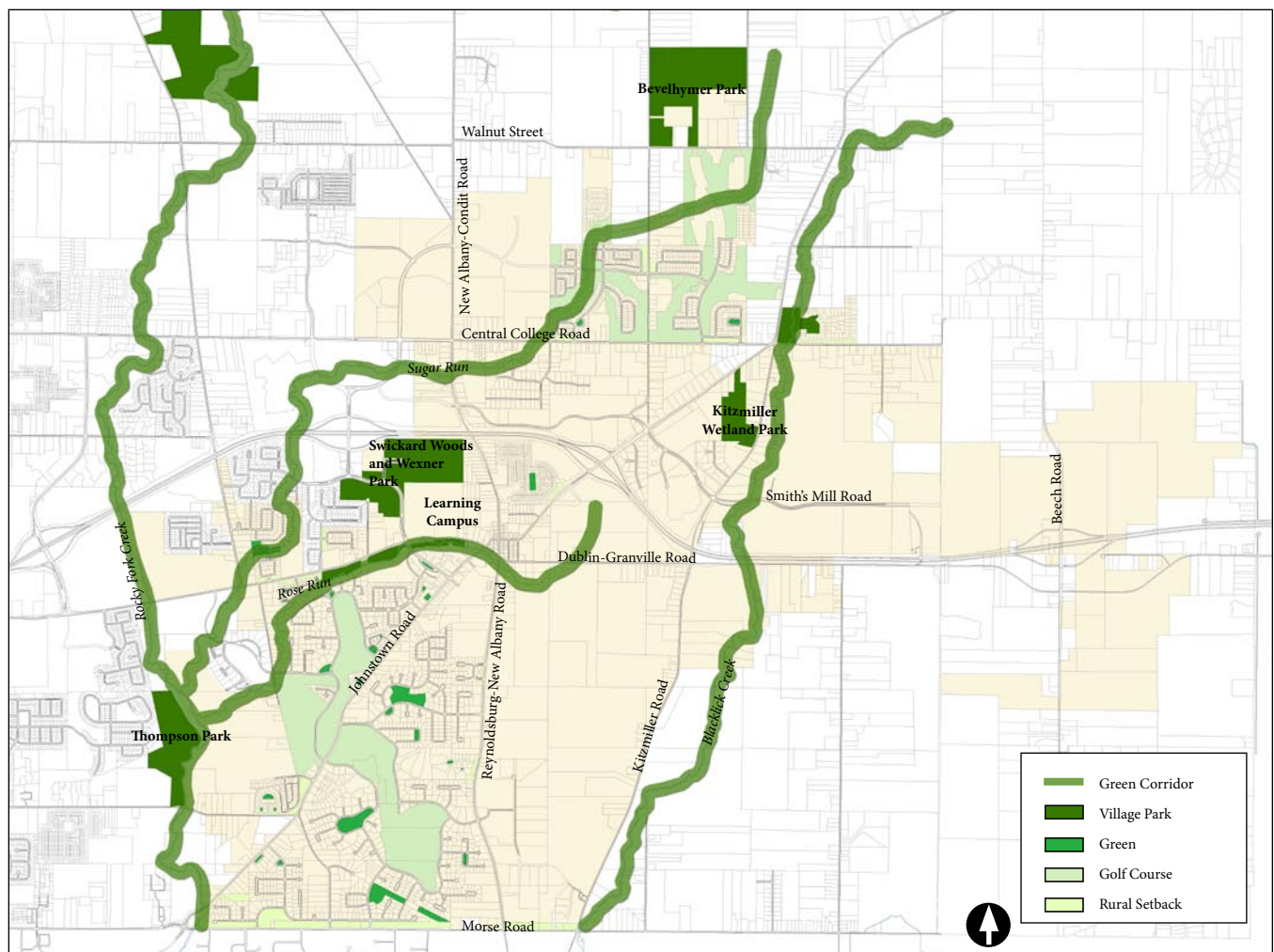


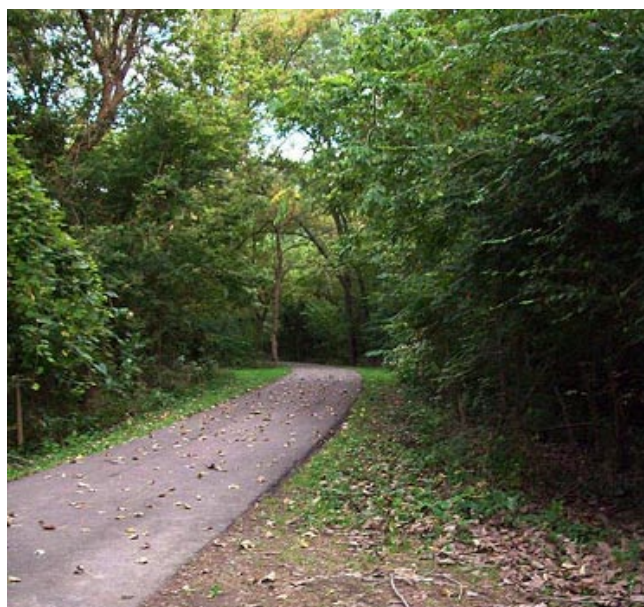
Figure 8: Green Corridors



2003 Rose Run Greenway Corridor Study



The Rose Run Corridor in New Albany serves as an example of a preserved green corridor that includes a leisure trail.



Olentangy Multi-Use Trail utilizes the river corridor to establish a trail along the river. This provides a different recreational experience that would add to the overall leisure trail system in New Albany.

SYSTEM ANALYSIS

The goals of the Leisure Trail Master Plan are to create a trail system that connects users throughout the Village and to the regional systems, provides recreational and leisure opportunities and is legible.

The Leisure Trail Master Plan achieves these goals by establishing a foundation for the trail system that is built on existing conditions and informed by future development. The resulting map depicts the system's basic structure combining routes and loops to make all the critical connections. The routes function like spokes of a wheel and the loops provide the connections between each of the route. While this is not the exhaustive system, it establishes an important framework to create a successful leisure trail system for New Albany.

Missing Links

In order to inform future trail development, the first consideration was to inventory the existing conditions. All missing segments of the system were identified and mapped. Figure 9 is a map of the existing conditions with the missing segments identified.

Captured By Development

The next step in establishing the system framework was to identify locations where missing links will be mended at the time of that development. It is expected that if a parcel is developed a leisure trail will be constructed along any roadway frontage. It is not expected that these connections will need to be addressed by the community.

Figure 10 identifies the areas anticipated for development in the short term. These areas were identified based on location, existing conditions and existing zonings.

Unaddressed Missing Links

After identifying the areas that are complete or will be addressed by development, the areas that will need community attention were revealed. Figure 11 shows the missing links that are not anticipated to be addressed by development. These unaddressed missing connections include roadway sections and green corridors. In order to make these connections the community will need to use the strategies provided in this plan.

Loops and Routes

Based on the existing conditions and the missing links analysis, a system of routes and loops were identified as key to achieving the basic structure upon which to build the leisure trails system for the community.

The routes and loops were devised based on the existing conditions to plan for a comprehensive leisure trail system.



Example of a missing link along Dublin-Granville Road.

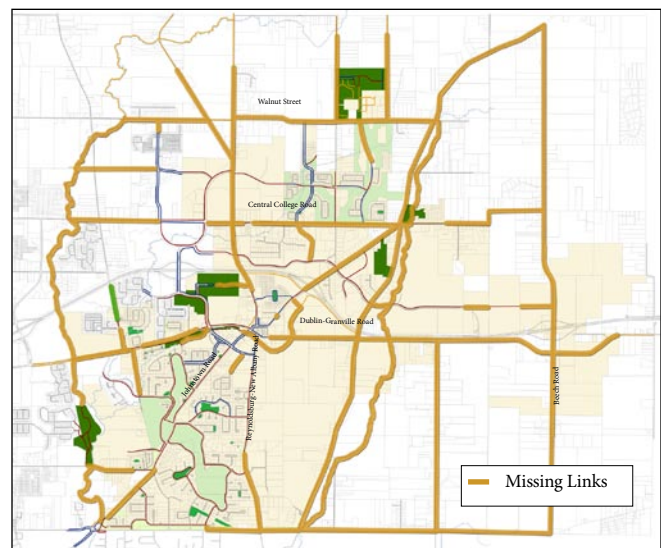


Figure 9: Missing Links

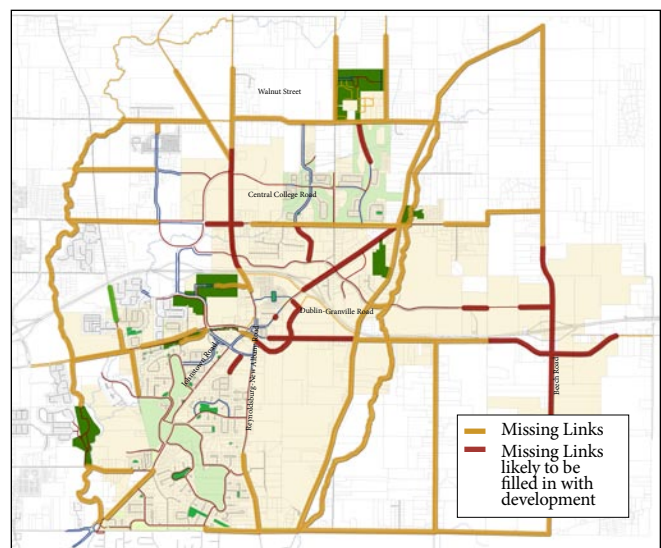


Figure 10: Missing links that over time may fill in with development.

The routes create the structure of the system and provide the connection points to regional and neighboring systems.

The loops create connections between the routes and may function independently as recreational trails of varying mileage.

By structuring the overall system using routes and loops, the community not only achieves a diverse, well planned leisure trail system, but it also informs priorities for construction of additional trail miles by the community.

Figure 12 shows the missing links of the routes and loops system. The community should first invest to complete the route system, and secondly, connections for the loops should be addressed.

This foundation is not intended to be the exhaustive trail system, instead it serves as the basic structure of the resulting system. It allows the community to prioritize its efforts and provides direction and guidance to the community as it adds trail miles in the Village.

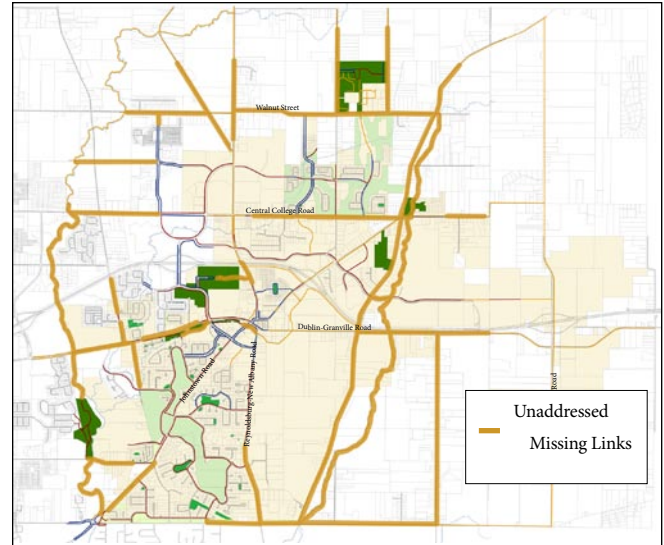


Figure 11: Unaddressed leisure trail missing links

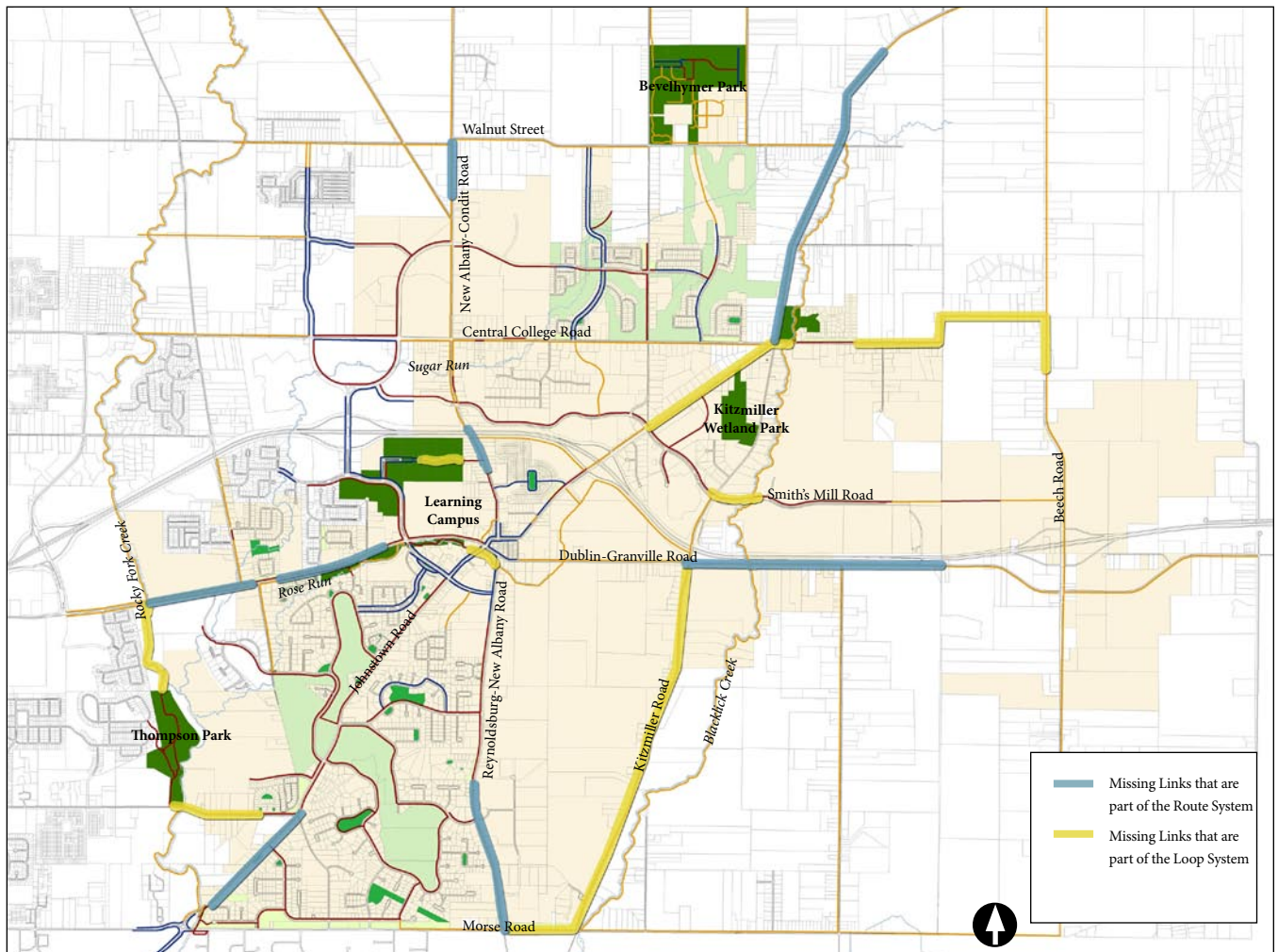
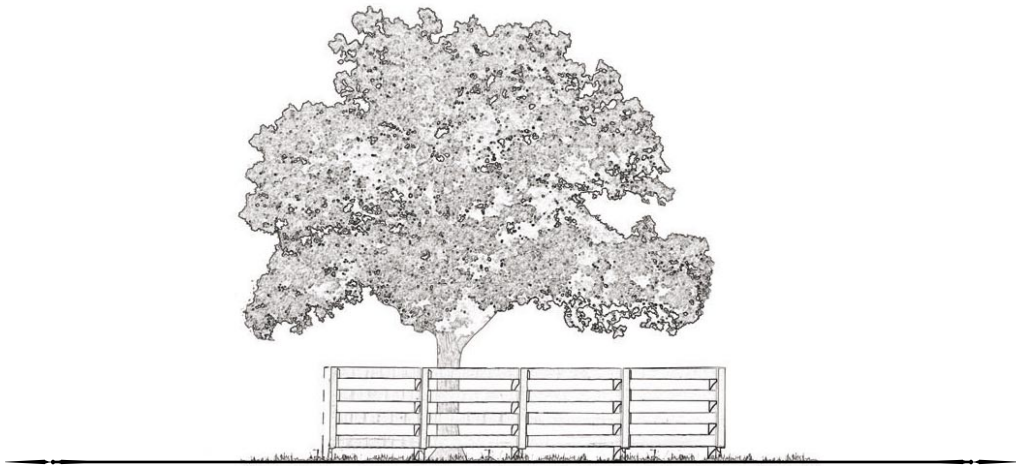


Figure 12: Missing Links Route and Loop priorities



LEISURE TRAIL MASTER PLAN

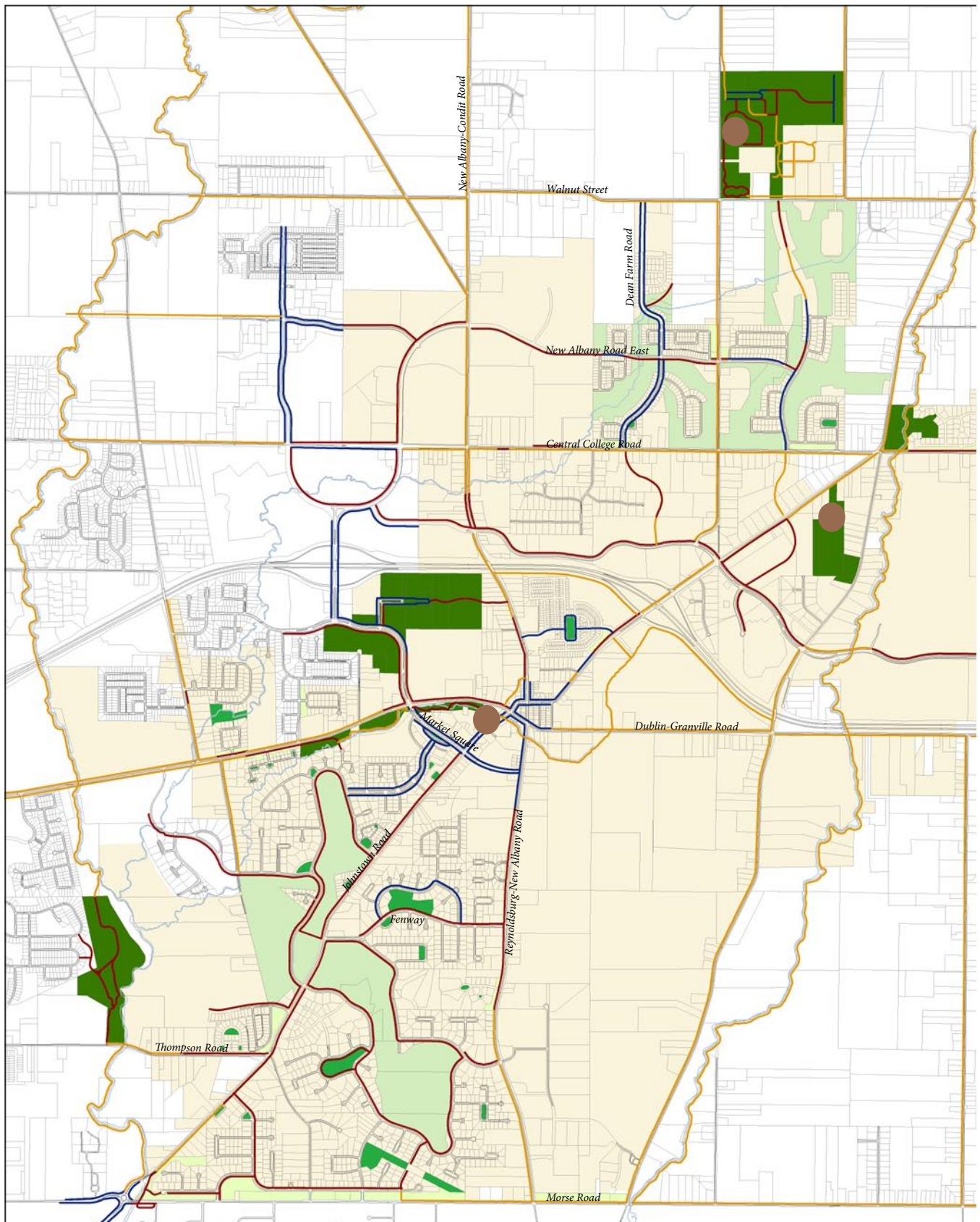


Figure 13: Leisure Trail Master Plan

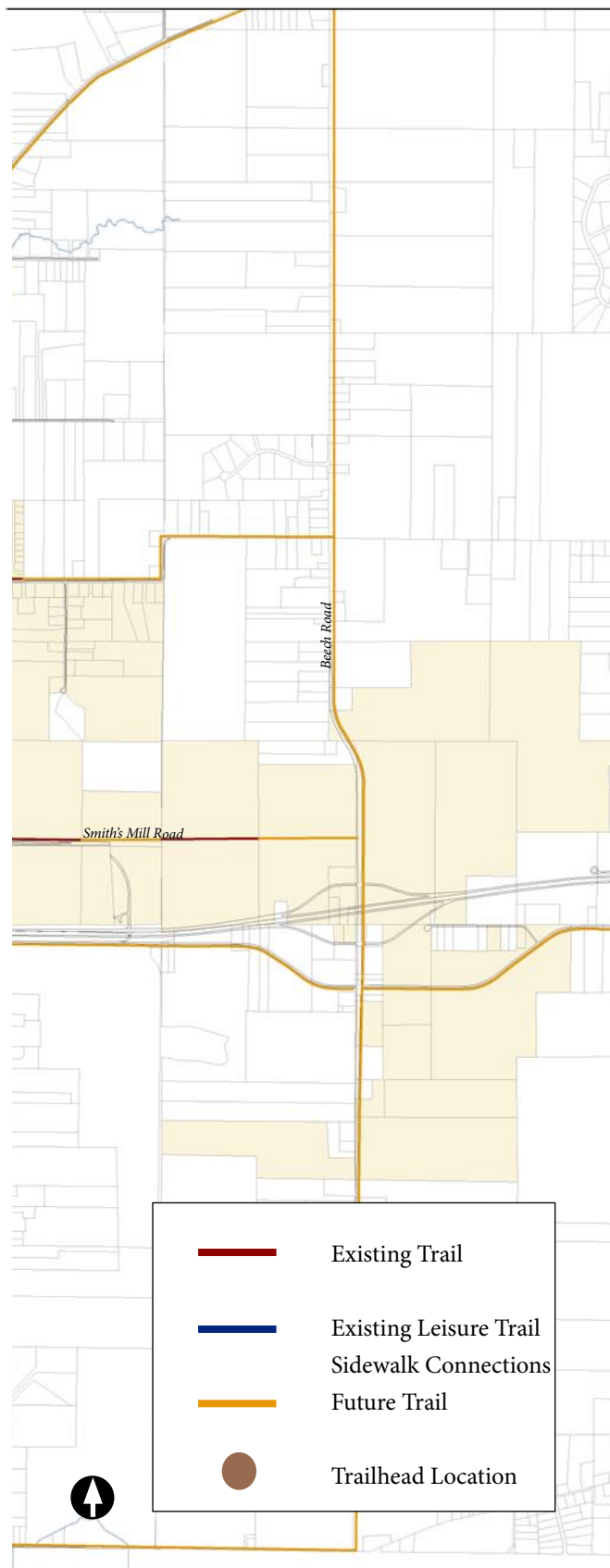
LEISURE TRAIL MASTER PLAN

The Leisure Trail Master Plan is intended to guide the construction of future trail miles at the time of development or as part of a community effort.

Developers are required to install trails and sidewalks with the development/redevelopment of their site. Trail linkages indicated on this map are meant to show primary routes for the leisure trail system. Sidewalks and leisure trails along secondary roadways are critical as well and are intended to be constructed as well.

All public streets are required to have sidewalks or trails along them. The minimum standard width for concrete sidewalks is five (5) feet and eight (8) feet for asphalt trails. Certain areas of the community may necessitate wider sidewalks or trails and should be determined by the Parks and Trails Advisory Board or as otherwise determined by code.

Leisure trails are a critical component to the success and livability of New Albany. By establishing a future Leisure Trail Master Plan the community can be assured that the trails system will continue to expand.



EXISTING LEISURE TRAIL STATISTICS

- *Existing Leisure Trails (24 miles)*
- *Existing Leisure Trail System Sidewalk Connections (15 miles)*
- *Future Leisure Trails (62 miles)*

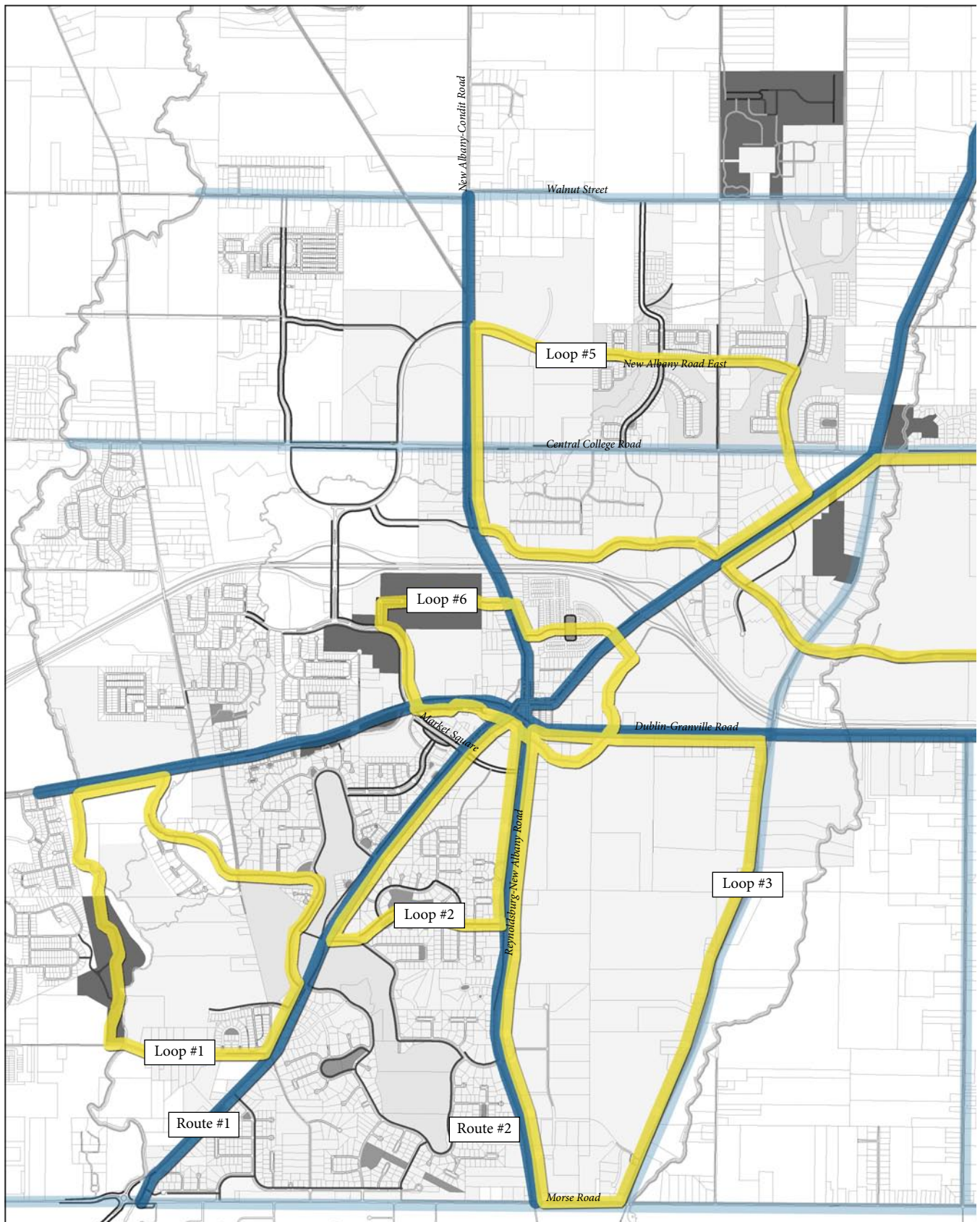
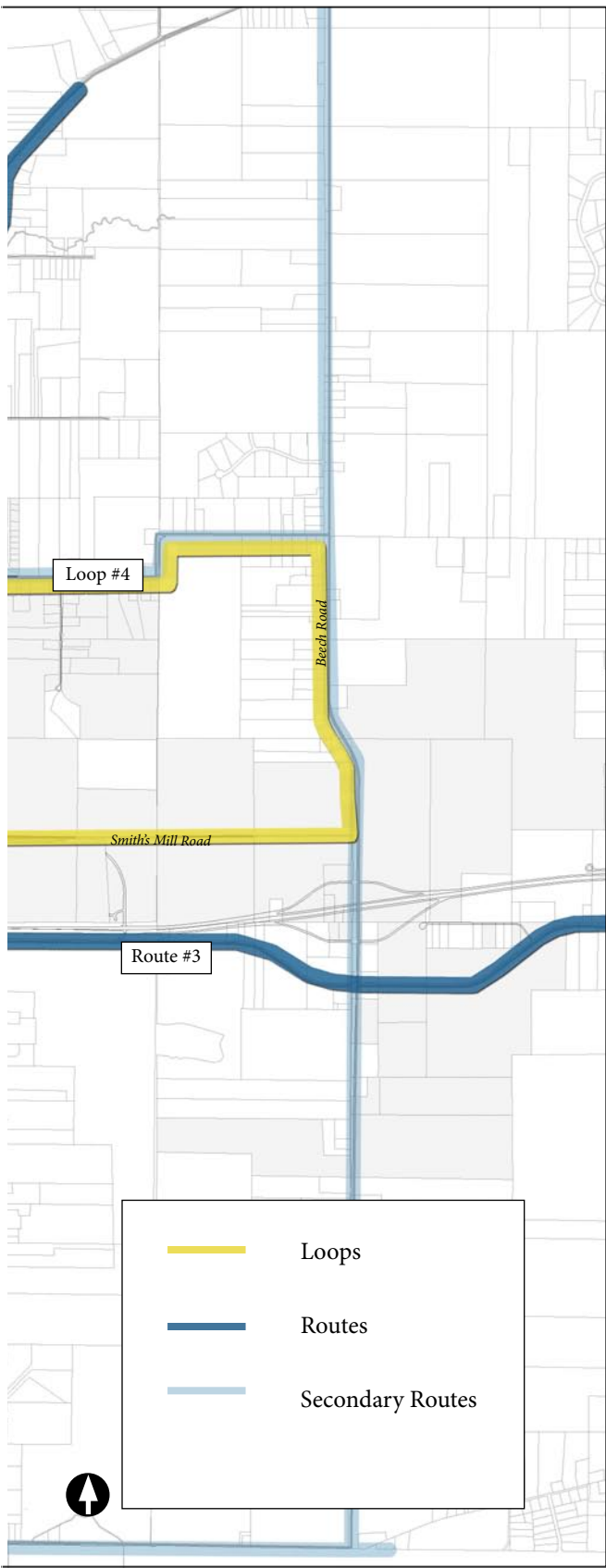


Figure 14: Routes and Loops Map

LOOPS AND ROUTES

In addition to the Leisure Trail Master Plan, which is intended to guide the construction of all leisure trails in conjunction with development, the loops and routes map was developed to prioritize the development of trail miles by the community.

The loops and routes designations are meant to provide guidance for the trail miles built by the community. This map provides another layer of direction to the community. It prioritizes the critical components of the systems to create the basic structure for the New Albany Leisure Trail System.



LOOP STATISTICS

- Loop #1: 3.8 miles
- Loop #2: 2.9 miles
- Loop #3: 5.4 miles
- Loop #4: 5.7 miles
- Loop #5: 4.4 miles
- Loop #6: 3.0 miles

ROUTE STATISTICS

- Route #1: 5.9 miles
- Route #2: 6.2 miles
- Route #3: 4.3 miles

STRATEGIES

Leisure Trail System

The future leisure trail system for the Village of New Albany will consist of the routes and loops designated by the Future Trails Map. These routes and loops will achieve the desire of the community to have a legible, usable, extensive system that provides various recreation opportunities and connects to the regional system in central Ohio.

In order to achieve this future trails map, strategic actions by the Village and developers will be required.

1. Future Leisure Trails Map (see page 24): Require the construction of leisure trails according to the future trails map. If development occurs, leisure trails should be constructed.
2. Priorities: In areas where leisure trails are not likely to be constructed in conjunction with a development, the Village should work to complete those links based on the following priorities as designated by the loops and routes map (see page 26):
 - a. Routes: Connections to complete routes should be the primary priority of the Village. These routes provide key connections throughout the Village and to the regional system.
 - b. Loops: Connections to complete loops should be the secondary priority of the Village. These loops provide quality recreational opportunities and in many cases connect users to the broader route system.
 - c. Green Corridors: Leisure trails along green corridors designated in the plan should be the third priority. These connections provide unique opportunities for recreation and are critical to the success of the overall system.
3. Rural Corridors: Along the Rural Corridors it may be possible, where dedicated leisure trails will not be constructed, to provide bike lanes as part of the roadway. These bike lanes would be accommodated by expanding the asphalt and striping a dedicated bike lane along rural roadways.
4. Opportunities: The key to completing the leisure trails system in the Village is to make all connections whenever possible. While the priorities listed in this plan are meant to guide the Village it is not meant to restrict the Village from capitalizing on opportunities to make connections that may be tied to specific grants, etc. If an opportunity arises the Village should seize it to make any connections to the complete the system
5. Legibility: The wayfinding and usability of the leisure trail system should be improved. Improvements may include:
 - Signage
 - Pamphlets for distribution
 - Mapping
 - Route Markers
 - Mileage Markers



Example of bike lane along shoulder



Example of signage to increase safety for cyclists.

6. Typologies: Construction of Leisure Trails/Sidewalks should occur according to the corridor map and its designated priorities and typologies. Dedicated leisure trails should occur on the side of the road that is most safe for the user and is appropriate given existing trails.

Materials

1. Asphalt is the material used for all primary trails.
2. Leisure Trail materials can be diversified in some locations. Different materials can decrease the environmental impacts of impervious surface and provide other benefits. Alternative materials may be more appropriate in certain locations.

Examples of alternative materials include:

- Crushed stone: compacted stone base with compacted gravel screenings surface. May require geotextile base for stabilization.
- Crushed stone with Stabilizer
- Polypavement: Liquid soil solidifier tilled into native soil.
- Pervious concrete
- Crushed aggregate
- Grass pavers (not a typical trail material)

All alternative materials should be evaluated against cost, maintenance, accessibility and feasibility considerations.

Maintenance

1. Successful maintenance of the leisure trail system is critical to the long term success of the system. As trail miles are increased throughout the Village, careful attention should be paid to the Village's ability to maintain what is built.
2. Any amenities added to the leisure trail system should be evaluated against the maintenance costs of the amenity.



Example of alternative materials. Grass Pavers



Example of alternative materials. Crushed Stone with Stabilizer



Example of alternative materials. Crushed Stone with Geotextile Base

Safety

1. Measures should be taken in priority areas to increase safety for users of the system. These priority areas include:
 - a. Locations where the trail crosses a roadway
 - b. Trails serving the Learning Campus
 - c. Trails in the Village Center
2. Increased safety measures may include:
 - a. Increased signage to alert drivers to a leisure trail crossings.
 - b. Raised or different materials at crossings
 - c. Signage indicating Rules of Conduct for the system
 - d. Pedestrian triggered stop lights
3. Village ordinances on bicycle and pedestrian safety should be evaluated for effectiveness and amended as needed.

Amenities

1. Circuit Training: Circuit training stations along the trails could be added to increase the fitness and recreation experience for the residents and employees of the Village.

2. Trail Heads: Coordinate trail heads throughout the system to provide locations for parking so individuals may join the system. Trailheads should be planned to reflect the overall system and the regional connections. Trailheads may include parking, bike racks, information, maps, etc.

Village Center

1. Within the Village Center the relationship between vehicles, pedestrians and bicycles will have to be managed well to ensure safety due to the urban form and increased density.
 - a. Encourage through bike movement on roadways or dedicated leisure trails, not sidewalks
 - b. Encourage slow speeds within the Village Center
 - c. Provide signage explaining expected conduct in the Village Center for pedestrians, bicycles and motorists
2. Active or more experienced bikers should be encouraged to use the roadways for travel through the Village Center while passive or leisure bikers with destinations in the Village Center may use the sidewalks provided their speed is slow and caution is paid around pedestrians and at intersections.



Circuit training opportunities are a potential amenity for the trail system and can take the form of signage along the route detailing exercises or equipment such as pull-up bars, etc.

3. Bike racks should be located where leisure trails terminate into the Village Center so that riders could walk to their Village Center destinations if they prefer.
4. Because the Village Center is centrally located and a frequent destination, wayfinding map signs could be added in the Village Center to indicate key locations as well to explain the overall trail system.

New Trail Construction

1. Pursue grant opportunities for new trail construction.
2. Explore the feasibility of selling naming rights to the system components to fund future trail expansion.
3. Commercial development must construct or provide fee-in-lieu of for the construction of new leisure trails.
4. Cost of construction of leisure trails should be established for the Village to help guide decision making for future trail construction.
5. Require trail or sidewalk connections be constructed with new development



Example of widened pavement widths with a striped median.

Green Corridors

1. Continue construction of leisure trails within the Green Corridors.
2. Trails located in green corridors along streams may benefit from a wider asphalt footprint allowing for two wide travel lanes. Asphalt may be widened up to 10' with a median stripe.
3. Leisure trails in the green corridors may be appropriate locations for alternative materials including pavers, pervious concrete or other pervious surfaces.

Connections

1. Connection points between sidewalks in the neighborhoods and the leisure trail system should be made in all instances. Users should be able to travel seamlessly from the neighborhoods and join the greater system. These connection points should also be made to sidewalks in the Village Center.

Neighborhood Loops

1. The New Albany Walking Club and other community groups should work with the Village to determine if there are specific neighborhood loops that the entire Village should be made aware of. Those recommendations should be incorporated into the wayfinding efforts of the Village.

Regional Strategies

1. Encourage coordination and collaboration with neighboring communities to expand the regional network and work together to complete links between communities.
2. Consider partnerships with regional, state and federal resources to acquire grants, complete projects, determine needs of the users, and monitor the level of wear on the trails.