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Preface



Acknowledgements

This plan was prepared with the assistance, direction, and cooperation of the City of Noblesville Parks and Recreation Board, the Noblesville NAT Committee, and the citizens of the City of Noblesville.

Mayor

John Ditslear

City Clerk/Treasurer

Janet Jaros

Common Council

Roy Johnson, District 1
Steve Wood, District 2
Rick Taylor, District 3
Mark Boice, District 4, President
Greg O'Connor, District 5
Brian Ayer, At-large
Jeff Zeckel, At-large

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Noblesville Park Board

Todd Thurston, President
Marcia Granger, Vice President
Scott Noel, Member
Ann Minnich, Member
Donna Clark, Noblesville School Board Representative



Executive Summary

Noblesville Alternative Transportation Plan – 2015 Statistics

The proposed routes and pathway segments of the *Noblesville Alternative Transportation Plan – 2015* will cover 236.18 miles throughout the Noblesville study area, with 94.95 miles currently in place (including Blueways, 80.45 miles without Blueways). The Roadway / Right-of-Way Trail is planned to have 150.38 miles of trail, with 67.89 miles currently in place. Easement routes will cover 61.39 miles, with 5.51 miles currently in place. Open Space routes will cover 9.91 miles, with 7.06 miles currently in place, and the Blueway traverses 14.50 miles, which is already established.

What Are Pathways and Greenways?

Pathways and greenways are corridors of protected open space managed for conservation, recreation and alternative transportation purposes. Greenways often follow natural land or water features, and link nature reserves, parks, cultural features and historic sites with each other and with populated areas. Greenways can be publicly or privately owned, and some are the result of public/private partnerships.

Pathways are trails used for walking, bicycling, horseback riding or other forms of recreation. Some greenways include pathways, while others do not. Some appeal exclusively to people, while others attract wildlife. From the hills of inland America to the beaches and barrier islands of the coast, greenways provide a vast network linking America's special places.

Noblesville's Citizen Survey

The City of Noblesville had a citizen survey conducted that captured peoples' community values and quality of life matters. The Noblesville NAT system continues to be a highly valued community asset and in many categories rank high when compared to national averages. The health benefits and values that trails provide the citizens as well as the connectivity from neighborhoods to public places and spaces all result in the quality of life characteristics of the Noblesville community.

Why Establish Pathways and Greenways?

Pathways and greenways positively impact individuals and improve communities by providing recreation and transportation opportunities and also by influencing economic and community development. Some of the many pathways and greenways benefits include:

- Making communities better places to live by preserving and creating open spaces;
- Encouraging physical fitness and healthy lifestyles;
- Creating new opportunities for outdoor recreation and non-motorized transportation;
- Strengthening local economies;
- Protecting the environment; and
- Preserving culturally and historically valuable areas.

The City of Noblesville, lead by the Park Department, several years ago undertook an important step toward meeting both the current

"Today we wouldn't consider building a home or an office without a blueprint, just as we should not continue to grow and develop our communities without a greenprint. The Noblesville Alternative Transportation Plan – 2015 will continue to provide the greenprint (infrastructure) for the future growth of the Noblesville community."

*– Chuck Lehman, ASLA
President, Lehman & Lehman, Inc.*



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and future alternative transportation needs of its citizens. The *Noblesville Alternative Transportation Plan – 2015* continues to provide a “greenprint” for the City to use as a guide in forming a pathway network through existing developments and into future expansions of the community.

The *Noblesville Alternative Transportation Plan – 2015* reaches the goals of the Noblesville Pathways Mission by providing safe, non-motorized transportation pathways to the Noblesville community. Once implemented the *Noblesville Alternative Transportation Plan – 2015* will fulfill the Noblesville Pathways Vision by improving the health, fitness, and quality of life of Noblesville residents and providing safe and attractive alternative options for movement and circulation through the community.

The *Noblesville Alternative Transportation Plan – 2015* represents a commitment by the City to design, construct, and maintain a network of safe, convenient, and attractive bicycle and pedestrian facilities for commuting and recreational use throughout the Noblesville community. One of the goals and benefits of an alternative transportation system is to minimize the use of cars, especially for short, frequent trips. As the City of Noblesville continues to grow, more and more vehicles will congest city streets, especially if no easy alternative transportation routes exist for citizens to use when traveling short distances. Increased traffic equates to increased road maintenance costs, the need for new and wider streets, traffic congestion, driver / bicyclist / pedestrian frustration, additional safety concerns and an image of a non-pedestrian friendly community.

The *Noblesville Alternative Transportation Plan – 2015* will form a network of multiuse alternative transportation options including walkers, runners, cyclists, skaters, all resulting in many benefits to the City of Noblesville. These include:

- Connecting the neighborhoods with neighborhoods, the community to adjacent communities and outward to the region;
- Further enhancing the community image / pride and visitors’ impressions;
- Promoting the healthier lifestyles through exercise and leisure recreation;
- Expanding the tourism opportunities, related commerce and local economy;
- Being accessible to persons with disabilities;
- Increase the self-reliance for non-drivers;
- Providing “linear parks and parkways” throughout the community;
- Connecting neighborhoods to schools, parks and other community destination points;
- Promoting quality of life issues to current and future residents of Noblesville; and
- Improving and stabilizing natural environments and natural areas.
- Safe Routes to Schools

Slogan

**“Noblesville Parks...
Your Vacation
In Town!”**

Vision

“Noblesville Parks envisions a future where there is growth and unification of community recreation, programs, services and facilities. The promotion of these resources and the contributions of individuals will result in an enhanced quality of life.”



Master Plan Document

The *Noblesville Alternative Transportation Plan — 2015* document is composed of three sections. These include Planning Approach and Plan Development, Design Guidelines, and Implementation Strategies.

The *Planning Approach and Plan Development* section reviews the planning approach and process in the formation of the master plan. In this section the benefits of alternative transportation and greenways development as well as the vision, goals, and objectives for the Plan will be described.

The *Design Guidelines* section sets pathway and trail standards to ensure uniformity of bicycle and pedestrian facilities throughout the Noblesville community.

The *Implementation Strategies* section discusses the development and implementation of the overall pathway and greenway network system. In this section key project areas will be addressed as well as funding strategies.

The *Appendix* includes:

- Definitions
- Reference Sources
- Sample Trail Head Signage
- Indianapolis Cultural Trail System
- 2006 Indiana Trails, Greenways and Bikeways Plan (Chapter 3) – Value Added Features of Trails
- American Canoe Association – 2005-06 ACA Recommended Water Trails

The *Noblesville Alternative Transportation Plan — 2015* should not be viewed as static, never-to-be-changed set of ideas or project. It must be seen and used as a dynamic plan. For effectiveness in its implementation, the plan must be reviewed, evaluated on a regular basis, and, when necessary, updated to reflect changing growth trends and attitudes of the community. In doing so, the City of Noblesville can always be on the “front end” of the master plan. Besides the physical component of the master plan there needs to be an educational



element of the citizens in promoting and usage of an alternative transportation system.

The realization of the *Noblesville Alternative Transportation Plan — 2015* will require a cooperative effort among public agencies, private and nonprofit organizations within the City of Noblesville. To assist in this coordination, the *Noblesville Alternative Transportation Plan — 2015* recommends the creation of an Advisory Committee (NATPAC). This group would be seen as a resource to all City Departments in the promotion of the

Noblesville Alternative Transportation Plan — 2015, coordinating projects and priorities, assistance in obtaining funding and sponsorships, education of the community on the benefits of the system, etc.



Usage of the Master Plan Document

The *Noblesville Alternative Transportation Plan — 2015* is intended to be adopted and used in daily and long-term decision making by elected and appointed officials and City staff. These individuals, as well as the general public, should become familiar with the goals and objectives of the plan and implement them to the greatest extent possible. The concepts, goals, and objectives discussed in this Plan should complement and be a part of the City's Comprehensive Plan, Thoroughfare Plan, Parks Master Plan, etc.

The *Noblesville Alternative Transportation Plan — 2015* reflects the current and anticipated alternative transportation needs of Noblesville. However, as a dynamic plan it must respond, evolve and expand, as does the City. The plan's effectiveness will be measured through periodic reviews and refinements. A master plan update should occur every five to ten years to reflect changing trends, growth, and desires of the community. Using the plan as a guide, while periodically updating/refining it, will be an act of positive stewardship in maintaining and promoting the "greenprint" infrastructure of the Noblesville Community.

Recommendations

There are several recommendations that have been concluded as a result of this planning effort. They are listed below:

1. Adoption of the *Noblesville Alternative Transportation Plan — 2015* as the City's alternative transportation and "greenprint" plan.
2. Adoption of the plan by the Park Board as an amendment to their 5-Year master plan.
3. Adoption by the Plan Commission and Common Council as an amendment to the City's thoroughfare plan, comprehensive plan and any other applicable plans.
4. Modification of existing subdivision and development ordinances incorporating the pathway and greenway standards.
5. Establishment of cost estimates and a priority action plan for phased implementation of the trail segments.
6. Formulation of an ongoing, citizen-driven *Noblesville Alternative Transportation Plan Advisory Committee (NATPAC)*. This Advisory Committee would serve as a volunteer resource group to the City and its various departments. Assistance can be in the areas of educating the community on the benefits of the system, identification of need and priority, funding and sponsorships, marketing and promotion of the greenways and pathways system, organizing community functions and festivals utilizing the greenway system.
7. Commitment to annually review the *Noblesville Alternative Transportation Plan — 2015* and make refinements and adjustments in response to trends, community need and development growth.
8. Commitment to seek out connectivity outside of the Noblesville planning limits expanding the system to adjacent communities. The City becomes an active partner and catalyst in the Noblesville area in the promotion and connections of trails, pathways for the betterment of the communities and region.
9. Commitment to seek out funding options. Study the application of special funding resources such as TE grants, recreation impact fees, etc.
10. Utilize the identified priority trail segments done as part of this study and anticipated to be implemented with funding commitments over the years 2015-2016. These trail segments are highly visible segments that maximizes achievement of the implementation criteria and serves as a demonstration of the master plan components for the community.



Plan Directions

The directions of the plan established at the threshold of the planning startup were identified as follows:

- Establish a vision for the community alternative transportation, pathways and greenways network,
- Identify key destinations and potential linkages within Noblesville,
- Develop a conceptual design routing plan for alternative transportation, pathways and greenways route segments,
- Identify goals and objectives to guide future decision making, and
- Coordinate this plan with Noblesville's Comprehensive Plan and Thoroughfare Plan, the City's implications to the subdivision ordinances, and the Parks and Recreation 5-Year Master Plan.

Overview of the Planning Process

The Noblesville Park Board selected Lehman & Lehman, Inc., landscape architects • planners • placemakers from Mishawaka, IN to assist in the planning and development of this *Noblesville Alternative Transportation Plan – 2015*.



Since over the years various plans suggested alternative choices for commuting and mobility throughout the Noblesville community, a coordinated plan was necessary and it was essential that a long-range vision be established for alternative transportation in Noblesville.

This visioning process has become an on-going effort with initial planning studies dating back as far as 2004. With the continual growth of the Noblesville community and now further development growth into Wayne Township to the east, the *Noblesville Alternative Transportation Plan – 2015* planning results as being part of the “green infrastructure” so vital to direct current and future growth.



Resolution Adopting the Noblesville Alternative Transportation Plan — 2015

WHEREAS, The City of Noblesville Parks and Recreation Board is focused on providing a quality parks and recreation system for the citizens of Noblesville, Indiana as defined by its Mission Statement and its Vision Statement; and,

WHEREAS, in doing so the City of Noblesville Parks and Recreation Board has sought opinions and input from the officials and citizens of City of Noblesville in developing the *Noblesville Alternative Transportation Plan — 2015*; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Noblesville Parks and Recreation Board is committed, with the assistance of the City of Noblesville, to the implementation of the *Noblesville Alternative Transportation Plan — 2015* by establishing standards, defining priorities, targeting development schedules and seeking funding sources; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Noblesville Parks and Recreation Board desires to make the *Noblesville Alternative Transportation Plan — 2015* a part of its current 5-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan by addendum; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Noblesville Parks and Recreation Board desires to make itself eligible to meet certain requirements for participation in grant programs; and,

WHEREAS, on _____, the City of Noblesville Parks and Recreation Board received the final document of the proposed *Noblesville Alternative Transportation Plan — 2015*, prepared by Lehman & Lehman, Inc. of Mishawaka, Indiana.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Noblesville Parks and Recreation Board hereby accepts and adopts the final document of the *Noblesville Alternative Transportation Plan — 2015* presented on _____, as its official Alternative Transportation, Pathways and Greenways System Master Plan.

Dated this ____ day of _____, 2015

