

The Kiwanis Trail is a regional non-motorized recreational amenity that starts in the City of Adrian, runs through Adrian and Raisin Township, then ends at the corner of Green Highway and Ives Road. One mile and a half short of reaching the City of Tecumseh.

In 2018, Lenawee County submitted application to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources to ascertain \$300,000 match grant from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund. The application was successful and the match grant was awarded to support the construction of the remaining 1.5 miles necessary to complete the connection.

From there, a number of municipal and community leaders met with engineers and consultants, to determine the most economical pathway. In November of 2020, the engineers of Mannik and Smith, alongside the Lenawee County Road Commission, determined a solution.

An 8-foot-wide asphalt shared-use path will be constructed on the South side of Ives Road from Green Highway to Raisin Center Highway. From there, the path will run on the West side of Raisin Center Highway ending in Cal Zorn Park, Tecumseh, Michigan.

During this journey to find a solution, a remarkable development took place between the leaders of the City of Adrian, the City of Tecumseh, Adrian Charter Township, Raisin Charter Township and the Adrian Kiwanis Club. They decided to form an Authority to manage the affairs of the existing trail and to expand the footprint it has in our communities. It was agreed to share in the ongoing maintenance of the existing trail and to find ways to enhance the experience of its users.

In November of 2020, the Kiwanis Regional Trail Authority was formed under State law and now is a public body that is represented by the City Administrators of Adrian and Tecumseh, the Supervisors of Adrian and Raisin Township and a member of the Adrian Kiwanis Club. This is truly a historic collaboration.

In December of 2020, a fundraising committee was formed and the capital campaign began. The total cost of the project is approximately \$925,000 dollars, of which, \$300,000 will be covered by the MDNR Grant. The KRTA has also been approved to run a “Public Spaces Community Places” \$50,000 Match Grant provided by the MEDC and Patronicity.

At the time of this report, the fundraising committee has raised \$248,000 toward the goal and continues to work diligently with potential donors. On May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021, we will begin the public phase of the fundraising efforts by introducing the PSCP Patronicity Campaign. The plan is to utilizing numerous media sources to tell this remarkable story and to show our citizens how they can donate.

Many of the existing non-motorized trail projects across Michigan and the country have shown that trails can have a significant positive impact on local economies. The Land Information Access Association (LIAA) out of Traverse City has shown through their Trail Towns initiative the positive economic and social impacts trails have on their surrounding communities ([http://www.liaa.org/trail\\_towns.asp](http://www.liaa.org/trail_towns.asp)).

Academic research has demonstrated that trails have a significant positive impact on surrounding property values and people living near trails report a higher quality of life (Univ. of Delaware- Center for Applied Demography & Research). We need not look any further than neighboring Washtenaw County to see the tremendous recreational use and value provided by the Border-to-Border Trail and Potawatomi Trail.

Not only will this project improve a highly desirable recreation amenity for the almost 100,000 thousand residents of Lenawee County, it will provide an economic advantage by drawing visitors to the County, and most importantly it will physically and perceptually connect our communities. The primary goals of the project include the following:

- Significant improvement of a highly desirable recreation amenity that will provide a regional draw and benefit.
- Enhancement to local economy from a) creating a more sought-after location for prospective new residents and b) visitors to the area that will spend money at local restaurants and retail businesses.

- Improvement in the health of individuals that now have much easier access to a recreational amenity for walking, running, biking, etc.

Success will first and foremost be measured by completion of the construction of the Trail extension. However, there will be several other measures of success that the Kiwanis Regional Trail Authority is looking toward tracking as that organization moves forward including, but not limited to:

- increasing number of users of the Trail,
- participation in volunteer maintenance events,
- participation in fun runs/walks/bikes on the Trail, and
- feedback from surveys regarding recreation that are conducted periodically by the individual communities and Lenawee County.

There will be a recognition board constructed at the Trailhead in Cal Zorn Park that will list donors, and the fundraising committee is planning a dedication ceremony when the project is complete to recognize donors. During the active fundraising effort, the participating communities have also committed to recognize donors on their websites and social media pages. Finally, a series of press releases is planned to encourage new donors as well as recognize existing donors.

Please consider a donation of \$100,000 toward this endeavor. Multiple year commitments are acceptable.

I would like to thank the following leaders for sharing their talents to make this project possible:

Marty Marshall, Lenawee County Administrator

Scott Merillat, Lenawee County Road Commission Managing Director

Jim Koehn, Adrian Charter Township Supervisor

Dan Swallow, City of Tecumseh Administrator

Greg Elliott, City of Adrian Administrator

Tom Hawkins, Raisin Charter Township Supervisor

Dale Witt, Raisin Charter Township Treasurer

Todd Brown, Mannik Smith Senior Project Manager

Robert Ford, Landscape Architect and Planners President

The Lenawee County Commissioners

The Adrian City Commissioners

The Tecumseh City Commissioners

The Adrian Charter Township Board of Trustees

The Raisin Charter Township Board of Trustees

Joe Williams, Lenawee Community Foundation President & CEO

Marcy Brown, VP, Retail Administration, County National Bank – Fundraising  
Committee Member

Janis Montalvo, Owner, Living in Lenawee Realty, LLC – Fundraising Committee  
Member