



Frequently Asked Questions: North Vernon Muscatatuck Trail

A meeting to discuss the City of North Vernon's new Stellar Communities Multi-Use Trail is scheduled for April 9 at 5:00 p.m. at the Muscatatuck County Park Cafeteria. The following article answers some of the most common questions about the new program.

Where will the trail go?

It will run from State Road 7 to Muscatatuck County Park, paralleling the former railroad right-of-way along Gum Street.

How long will it be?

About 1 mile.

What type of trail is it?

It will be 10-foot-wide and paved with asphalt.

Where will the trailheads be?

One will be near the Water Tower Mini-Park and one at Muscatatuck County Park's west entrance.

Will those be the only places to get on the trail?

No, there will be connecting sidewalks at intersections along the route.

When will it be built?

Design will occur this year and construction in 2013.

Will it be lighted?

There is existing lighting along Gum Street, but no new lighting will be installed.

Are trails like this safe?

Accidents and crime can happen anywhere, but studies have shown that trails are safe.

"Compared to the abandoned and forgotten corridors they replace, trails are a positive community development and crime prevention strategy of proven value," according to a 1998 study of 372 trails across the country by the National Park Service.

How will the trail impact property values?

In similar communities, residents have found that having nearby trails increases the value of their property.



A 1999 study of home sales in Indianapolis found that homes along the Monon Trail sold for as much as 10 percent more than other homes in the area.

In a 2000 survey, the National Association of Realtors and the National Association of Homebuilders ranked multi-use trails second among 18 factors positively influencing a property's marketability.

I believe I may own the former railroad right-of-way. Will I be paid for the use of it?

Yes. The city will first conduct a detailed title search to confirm ownership. They will then work with the legal owner of the property for purchase. Appraisals will be conducted to determine the amount.

If I'm a landowner, will I be contacted by the city or should I call someone?

Representatives from Associate Right of Way Services Co. will be at the open house on April 9 to answer questions. If you can't make that meeting, contact the Mayor's office directly to ask any questions.

How much will the trail cost?

About \$1.25 million.

Who is paying for it?

Grant money received after North Vernon was selected as one of two cities in Indiana to win a new program from the state called Stellar Communities. Receiving the grant will amount to millions of dollars for roads, housing, storefront façades and other programs over the next few years.

What is meant by 'multi-use?'

Bicyclists, pedestrians, joggers, roller-skaters and skateboarders can use the path. Motorized bikes or other vehicles are not allowed.

Are you going to use local contractors?

Yes, including the engineering firm FBPH of North Vernon. To date, all general construction contracts for Stellar projects have gone to local contractors.

For more information contact Kathy Ertel at (812) 346-2388. Details about all of the North Vernon Stellar Communities projects can be found at www.northvernonstellar.com.