

INDIANA



Indiana's Cardinal Greenway offers quiet woodlands in the area around Muncie. | Photo by Eric Oberg, courtesy Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

ROUTE

RTC met with Indiana state officials early in the Great American Rail-Trail process, recognizing that the route through Indiana would have a significant impact on the potential routes through its neighboring states. Two routes were presented: a shorter one across the north of the state and a longer diagonal one from Richmond, Indiana, toward the Chicago metropolitan area. Officials from the Indiana Department of Transportation were so excited about the potential of the Great American Rail-Trail that they asked RTC to

consider including as many miles as possible in Indiana by using the longer diagonal route. In September 2018, Governor Holcomb announced the Next Level Connections program, a \$1 billion investment in infrastructure projects including trails, which will be important to completing a trail across Indiana.

RTC found and reviewed 41 plans in Indiana to better understand the state's trail priorities. A full list of these plans can be found in Appendix A.

TABLE 12 GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL STATISTICS IN INDIANA

Total Great American Rail-Trail Existing Trail Miles in Ind. (% of Total State Mileage)	112.6 (51.1%)
Total Great American Rail-Trail Trail Gap Miles in Ind. (% of Total State Mileage)	107.6 (48.9%)
Total Trail Gaps in Ind.	10
Total Great American Rail-Trail Miles in Ind.	220.2

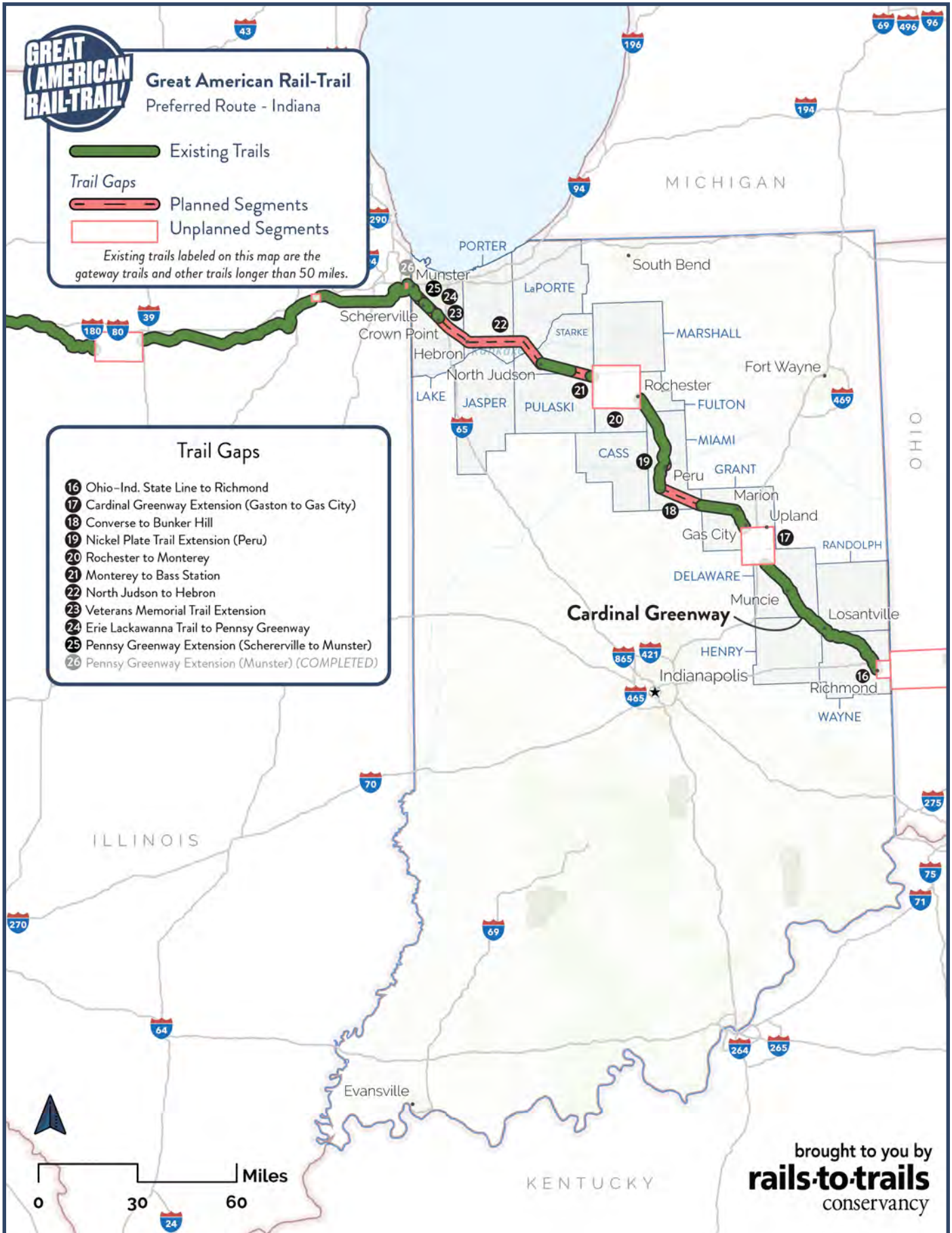
GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL ROUTE ASSESSMENT
INDIANA

TABLE 13 GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL ROUTE THROUGH INDIANA

Existing Trail or Trail Gap Name	Length in Ind. Along Great American Rail-Trail (in Miles)
TRAIL GAP 16 – Ohio–Ind. State Line to Richmond	5.0
Cardinal Greenway (Richmond to Gaston)	50.5
TRAIL GAP 17 – Cardinal Greenway Extension (Gaston to Gas City)	15.1
Cardinal Greenway (Gas City to Sweetser)	10.4
Sweetser Switch Trail	4.0
Converse Junction Trail	2.0
TRAIL GAP 18 – Converse to Bunker Hill	13.6
Nickel Plate Trail (Bunker Hill to Peru)	6.6
TRAIL GAP 19 – Nickel Plate Trail Extension (Peru)	2.6
Nickel Plate Trail (Peru to Rochester)	21.3
TRAIL GAP 20 – Rochester to Monterey	21.1
Monterey Erie Trail	0.6
TRAIL GAP 21 – Monterey to Bass Station	6.3
North Judson Erie Trail	9.0
TRAIL GAP 22 – North Judson to Hebron	25.2
TRAIL GAP 23a – Veterans Memorial Trail Extension (Hebron to Crown Point)	11.8
Veterans Memorial Trail	0.3
TRAIL GAP 23b – Veterans Memorial Trail Extension (Crown Point)	0.2
Erie Lackawanna Trail	1.2
TRAIL GAP 24 – Erie Lackawanna Trail to Pennsy Greenway	3.3
Pennsy Greenway (Scherverville)	2.8
TRAIL GAP 25 – Pennsy Greenway Extension (Scherverville to Munster)	3.4
Pennsy Greenway (Munster to Ind.–Ill. State Line)	3.9
TRAIL GAP 26 – Pennsy Greenway Extension (Munster) COMPLETED	-
Total Miles	220.2
<i>Existing Trail Miles</i>	112.6
<i>Trail Gap Miles</i>	107.6

GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL ROUTE ASSESSMENT

MAP 6: INDIANA



GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL ROUTE ASSESSMENT INDIANA

TRAIL GAP 16 – OHIO-INDIANA STATE LINE TO RICHMOND

Picking up from Trail Gap 15 at the Ohio-Indiana border, Trail Gap 16 encompasses the 5 miles from the state line to Richmond in Wayne County, Indiana. The city of Richmond’s Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (2015) illustrates a proposed greenway connecting Richmond to the Ohio border. The proposed greenway parallels the East Fork Whitewater River and connects to downtown Richmond through an unnamed existing trail.

An important east-west connection to the adjacent county land and eventually to the state of Ohio is a proposed greenway along the East Fork of the White River. Although only a small portion of the greenway lies within the city limits, constructing this portion of the greenway could provide the catalyst needed to spur construction of the greenway to the state line. Building the greenway in this eastern direction will also provide connections to both Glen Miller Park and Hayes Arboretum on a more scenic route than what you would find along U.S. Route 40.

CARDINAL GREENWAY

Total Length (in Miles)	62.0
Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ind. (in Miles)	60.9
Trail Type	Rail-trail
Surface Type	Asphalt
Trail Manager	Cardinal Greenways
Website	cardinalgreenways.org
TrailLink Map	traillink.com/trail/cardinal-greenway

The Cardinal Greenway, the longest rail-trail in Indiana, stretches almost 62 miles along a former CSX Transportation railroad corridor. The Cardinal Greenway was the 2018 inductee into the Rail-Trail Hall of Fame. The trail is named after the Cardinal, a passenger train that once ran the length of the greenway. The Cardinal Greenway will host the Great American Rail-Trail from its southernmost endpoint in Richmond to Marion, just east of the greenway’s northernmost endpoint in Sweetser. The Cardinal Greenway has been championed by Cardinal Greenways, a nonprofit that aims to extend the Cardinal Greenway throughout eastern Indiana.

The Cardinal Greenway is currently divided into two segments of existing trail with one gap between them:

Segment 1 – 50.5 miles of trail between Richmond and Gaston.

Segment 2 – 10.4 miles of trail between Gas City and Sweetser.

The gap between the two segments of the Cardinal Greenway is discussed in Trail Gap 17, below.

TRAIL GAP 17 – CARDINAL GREENWAY EXTENSION (GASTON TO GAS CITY)

An approximately 15.1-mile gap in the Cardinal Greenway currently exists between Gaston and Gas City due to private landowners acquiring the former rail corridor. The trail gap begins in Gaston and follows various county roads to reach Gas City. Cardinal Greenways will be submitting a grant application in the summer of 2020 to Indiana’s Next Level Trails Program for funding to acquire and construct 4 miles of trail within Trail Gap 17.

There is an active CSX Transportation corridor heading west from Upland to Jonesboro that could be helpful in bridging some of Trail Gap 17. Exploring trails along local county roads could also help fill the gap. Further exploration is needed to determine the best way to fill Trail Gap 17.

SWEETSER SWITCH TRAIL

Total Length (in Miles)	4.0
Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ind. (in Miles)	4.0
Trail Type	Rail-trail
Surface Type	Asphalt
Trail Manager	Cardinal Greenways, Town of Sweetser
Website	sweetserin.us/switch_trail.html
TrailLink Map	traillink.com/trail/sweetser-switch-trail

The 4-mile Sweetser Switch Trail is an important regional connector that follows the original corridor of the Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Chicago and St. Louis Railroad. The paved rail-trail connects to the Cardinal Greenway at North 400 West in Sweetser and joins the 2-mile Converse Junction Trail in Converse, making the Sweetser Switch Trail a key piece of north-central Indiana’s trail system.

The residents of Sweetser have championed this trail throughout the years. When residents explored the possibility of turning the right-of-way into a trail, they first had to create a park board because the small town did not have a parks and recreation department. Residents chipped in with donations and volunteer labor to complete the path’s first mile.

GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL ROUTE ASSESSMENT INDIANA

CONVERSE JUNCTION TRAIL

Total Length (in Miles)	2.0
Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ind. (in Miles)	2.0
Trail Type	Rail-trail
Surface Type	Asphalt
Trail Manager	Town of Converse
Website	facebook.com/Converse-Junction-Trail-1442126726034826
TrailLink Map	trailink.com/trail/converse-junction-trail

The Converse Junction Trail provides around 2 miles of smooth asphalt along a former Penn Central Transportation Company line, linking the small Indiana communities of Mier and Converse. The Mier trailhead is located on North 800 West 27, from which point the Sweetser Switch Trail extends eastward. The Converse Junction Trail travels northwest across Pipe and Taylor creeks to reach downtown Converse. The trail ends at County Road 1000 West, which also serves as the western border of Marion County.

TRAIL GAP 18 – CONVERSE TO BUNKER HILL

Nickel Plate Trail Inc. is working to fill the 13.6-mile trail gap between the western terminus of Converse Junction Trail in Converse and the town of Bunker Hill, near the southern end of the Nickel Plate Trail. The Nickel Plate Trail website illustrates a future trail traveling from Bunker Hill eastward to Amboy, but does not go into great detail.

Three-fourths of the trail gap land has been acquired and two grants have been secured. To complete the connection, Nickel Plate Trail Inc. hopes to receive funding from the Next Level Connections Program announced by Governor Holcomb in September of 2018. The program will provide \$1 billion to a variety of transportation projects including trails. Nickel Plate Trail Inc. and other trails throughout the state will have access to funds that are part of the Next Level Connections program. These funds, with the two separate secured grants, can potentially be used to fill the gap from Converse to Bunker Hill.

NICKEL PLATE TRAIL

Total Length (in Miles)	36.9
Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ind. (in Miles)	27.9
Trail Type	Rail-trail
Surface Type	Asphalt
Trail Manager	Nickel Plate Trail Inc.
Website	nickelplatetrail.org
TrailLink Map	trailink.com/trail/nickel-plate-trail

The Nickel Plate Trail is currently divided into two segments of existing trail with one gap between them:

Segment 1 – About 15.6 miles of trail from Kokomo to Peru.

Segment 2 – About 21.3 miles of trail from Peru to Rochester.

The Nickel Plate Trail will host the Great American Rail-Trail, using 6.6 miles of Segment 1 (from Bunker Hill to Peru) and all of Segment 2 to travel between Bunker Hill and Rochester. The gap in the Nickel Plate Trail is discussed in Trail Gap 19, below.

TRAIL GAP 19 – NICKEL PLATE TRAIL EXTENSION (PERU)

The 2.6-mile trail gap in Peru currently utilizes an interim on-road connector. The interim connector heads east into downtown Peru before connecting back to Segment 2 of the Nickel Plate Trail. Nickel Plate Trail Inc. is leading efforts to bridge this gap with off-road trail and is looking for funding to do so.

TRAIL GAP 20 – ROCHESTER TO MONTEREY

Nickel Plate Trail Inc. is actively working to connect the Nickel Plate Trail to downtown Rochester by extending the trail from its current terminus just south of Rochester to Rochester's city center.

The remaining 21.1-mile gap from downtown Rochester west to Monterey has not been discussed in depth. There is an abandoned rail corridor that begins north of Rochester and travels south of Leiters Ford that could form a potential route. More research needs to be done to develop a viable gap-filling strategy for Trail Gap 20.

MONTEREY ERIE TRAIL

Total Length (in Miles)	0.6
Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ind. (in Miles)	0.6
Trail Type	Rail-trail
Surface Type	Asphalt
Trail Manager	Hoosier Valley Railroad Museum
Website	hoosiervalley.org/visit/trail/
TrailLink Map	trailink.com/trail/monterey-erie-trail

GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL ROUTE ASSESSMENT

INDIANA

The 0.6-mile Monterey Erie Trail occupies the same railbanked corridor as the North Judson Erie Trail to its west, and the two rail-trails are planned to be linked in the future. The towns of Monterey and North Judson once saw frequent freight service between the two communities, first by the Erie Lackawanna Railway and, later, by the Erie Western Railway, Tippecanoe Railroad and JK Lines. The 16-mile corridor was put up for abandonment in 2003, and the Hoosier Valley Railroad Museum stepped in to preserve the corridor for public use.

TRAIL GAP 21 – MONTEREY TO BASS STATION

There is an approximately 6.3-mile gap between the western terminus of the Monterey Erie Trail in Monterey and the eastern terminus of the North Judson Erie Trail in the unincorporated community of Bass Station. The Prairie Trails Club Inc., a volunteer group that oversees the North Judson Erie Trail, mentioned filling the gap in its 2016 Future Vision Phase Plan.

NORTH JUDSON ERIE TRAIL

Total Length (in Miles)	9.0
Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ind. (in Miles)	9.0
Trail Type	Rail-trail
Surface Type	Asphalt
Trail Manager	Hoosier Valley Railroad Museum, The Prairie Trails Club Inc.
Website	hoosiervalley.org/visit/trail
TrailLink Map	trailink.com/trail/north-judson-erie-trail

The 9-mile North Judson Erie Trail occupies the railbanked right-of-way of the former JK Line Railroad. In May 2019, an Indiana Department of Natural Resources Next Level Trails grant was awarded to construct 2.08 miles of trail beginning at the eastern terminus of the North Judson Erie Trail at U.S. 35 and stretching toward Ora. This section will include both an asphalt multiuse trail and a natural-surface equestrian trail. Plans for filling the remaining 6 miles from Ora to the western terminus of the Monterey Erie Trail in Monterey are still to come.

TRAIL GAP 22 – NORTH JUDSON TO HEBRON

There are two known options to connect the 25.2 miles from the western endpoint of the North Judson Erie Trail in North Judson northwest to the town of Hebron.

Option 1 – The first option is to develop a trail along the Kankakee River. While this potential route is not mentioned in any formal plans, discussions with the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission indicate that a trail connection along the banks of the Kankakee River is viable in the long term and would offer trail users a scenic ride through northwest Indiana.

Option 2 – The second option is to develop a trail along an abandoned rail corridor connecting northwest from North Judson to La Crosse, Indiana, then west to Hebron. This option is discussed in several local and regional plans, including LaPorte County’s 2008 Countywide Land Development Plan. More research needs to be completed to identify the best option for connecting North Judson and Hebron via trail.

TRAIL GAP 23a – VETERANS MEMORIAL TRAIL EXTENSION (HEBRON TO CROWN POINT)

An 11.8-mile gap exists from the town of Hebron to the Erie Lackawanna Trail in Crown Point. To fill part of this gap, the Veterans Memorial Trail is currently under development from Hebron to 113th Avenue in Crown Point. In May 2019, a Next Level Trails grant of \$302,956 was awarded to construct 0.9 mile of asphalt multiuse trail from Tower Crossing in Hebron to the Porter–Lake county line along U.S. 231 (the easternmost portion of Trail Gap 23). Plans to fill the remaining 10.6 miles are still to come, with certain sections of the trail slated to open in 2020 and other sections in the process of being acquired. Traveling west from Hebron to Crown Point, the development of the Veterans Memorial Trail is as follows:

- **Hebron to Porter-Lake county line:** The segment connecting Hebron to the Porter–Lake county line is anticipated to open in 2020 as an asphalt multiuse trail.
- **Porter–Lake county line to Iowa Street:** This next section to Iowa Street in Crown Point is to be acquired starting in 2020, with construction planned for 2023 and beyond. It is anticipated that the trail will be surfaced with asphalt and include an adjacent equestrian trail.
- **Iowa Street to Broadway:** Lake County Parks is actively working to purchase parcels between Iowa Street and Broadway in Crown Point. Right-of-way acquisition will be complete in early 2020. One portion of this section will be built in 2023.
- **Broadway to 113th Avenue:** The final section between Broadway and 113th Avenue in Crown Point has been purchased. Lake County Parks has acquired funds for construction in 2022.

Lake County Parks is working to purchase land from individual landowners from both ends of the developing Veterans Memorial Trail, with the intention of connecting the trail from Hebron to Crown Point through the community of Leroy. From 113th Avenue in Crown Point, the final section through the city that connects to the southern terminus of the Erie Lackawanna Trail is currently an interim on-road connector. Crown Point and Lake County should consider off-road trail options to make a safer connection between the Veterans Memorial Trail and the Erie Lackawanna Trail.

GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL ROUTE ASSESSMENT INDIANA

VETERANS MEMORIAL TRAIL

Total Length (in Miles)	0.3
Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ind. (in Miles)	0.3
Trail Type	Rail-trail
Surface Type	Asphalt
Trail Manager	City of Crown Point, Lake County Parks, Town of Hebron, Friends of the Veterans Memorial Parkway

The Veterans Memorial Trail will connect Hebron to the Erie Lackawanna Trail in Crown Point. The trail is currently being developed in phases, with acquisition and construction underway. The open section of trail encompasses 0.3 mile in Crown Point.

The Veterans Memorial Trail will connect a series of memorials dedicated to those who have served our country in times of war and peace. Currently one memorial—the Lake County Korean Veterans Memorial—has been completed, with two more under development. These include the Lake County World War I & II Veterans and Holocaust Memorial in Crown Point and the Northwest Indiana Middle East Veterans Memorial in Hebron. The connection to the Erie Lackawanna Trail will go through the heart of Crown Point and will be adjacent to property slated for a future city hall.

TRAIL GAP 23b – VETERANS MEMORIAL TRAIL EXTENSION (CROWN POINT)

Following the existing 0.3 mile of the Veterans Memorial Trail, a 0.2-mile gap begins just before the intersection of East Summit Street and Main Street/state Road 55 in Crown Point. The corridor crosses Summit Street before traveling along the northern side of the road. The gap ends just before North West Street and meets the Erie Lackawanna Trail Summit Street Trailhead.

ERIE LACKAWANNA TRAIL

Total Length (in Miles)	17.7
Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ind. (in Miles)	1.2
Trail Type	Rail-trail
Surface Type	Asphalt
Trail Manager	Lake County Parks, Town of Schererville, City of Hammond
Website	schererville.org/town-government/parks-and-recreation/erie-lackawanna-trail
TrailLink Map	traillink.com/trail/erie-lackawanna-trail

The Erie Lackawanna Trail travels 17.7 miles between Crown Point and Hammond—two former rail junctions along a route that carried goods and people in and out of Chicago. The paved trail is bordered by green space and crosses wetlands and parks along the way. The Erie Lackawanna Trail will host the Great American Rail-Trail for about 1 mile in Crown Point, starting from its southern terminus at West Summit and North Court streets and ending at Veterans Lane.

TRAIL GAP 24 – ERIE LACKAWANNA TRAIL TO PENNSY GREENWAY

Trail Gap 24 constitutes a 3.3-mile gap between Veterans Lane (along the Erie Lackawanna Trail) and the Pennsy Greenway corridor. Lake County Parks reported that there is a feasibility study underway to examine a potential route owned by the town of Schererville between Clark Road and Rohrman Park. Moving forward, funds are being gathered so that this section of trail can be completed in 2020 or 2021.

In May 2019, a Next Level Trails grant of \$2,910,172 was awarded to complete 2.33 miles of trail between Clark Road and Rohrman Park, including a new trailhead along Clark Road.

From Clark Road, the trail can eventually extend the remaining 1.3 miles to Veterans Lane through the White Hawk Country Club. The Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission also illustrates a planned trail connecting this gap from Crown Point to south of Schererville in its 2018 Greenways and Blueways Plan.

GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL ROUTE ASSESSMENT INDIANA



Wabash Bridge on Indiana's Nickel Plate Trail | Photo by TrailLink user ob

PENNSY GREENWAY

Total Length (in Miles)	7.9
Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ind. (in Miles)	6.7
Trail Type	Rail-trail
Surface Type	Asphalt
Trail Manager	Forest Preserve District of Cook County, Lake County Parks, Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission, Schererville Parks & Recreation
Website	indygreenways.org/pennsy-trail
TrailLink Map	traillink.com/trail/pennsy-greenway

The Pennsy Greenway is currently open in three segments between Schererville, Indiana, and Calumet City, Illinois. The 7.9-mile paved trail runs along the former Penn Central Transportation Company rail line and is planned to travel a total of 15 miles once complete. The Pennsy Greenway will host the Great American Rail-Trail from Schererville, Indiana, to Lansing, Illinois, across the three existing segments of the trail, totaling 8.4 miles (6.7 of which are in Indiana, and 1.7 of which are in Illinois).

In Indiana, the Pennsy Greenway is currently divided into two segments of existing trail with one gap between them:

Segment 1 – 2.8 miles of trail in Schererville, Indiana.

Segment 2 – 3.9 miles of trail from Munster, Indiana, to the Indiana–Illinois state line.

The remaining trail gap in the Pennsy Greenway in Indiana is discussed in Trail Gap 25, below.

TRAIL GAP 25 – PENNSY GREENWAY EXTENSION (SCHERERVILLE TO MUNSTER)

The 3.4-mile gap in the Pennsy Greenway from Schererville to Munster is illustrated in the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission's Greenways and Blueways Plan (2018) as a trail to be updated in 2020. Lake County Parks confirmed a planned trail beginning in Schererville and traveling northwest to Munster. The trail is expected to open in the summer of 2020 if a railroad crossing is approved.

TRAIL GAP 26 – PENNSY GREENWAY EXTENSION (MUNSTER) COMPLETED

Trail Gap 26 (Pennsy Greenway Extension – Munster) is now a completed trail segment as part of the Pennsy Greenway.