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New Grant Fuels Milwaukee Neighborhood Organizing to Develop Plan for 30th Street Corridor Linear Park

Catena Foundation Awards \$200,000 to Advance a Community-Led Project That Envisions Safe Outdoor Access, Active Transportation and Equitable Economic Development Within Historically Disinvested Northwest Neighborhoods

MILWAUKEE—Four Northwest Milwaukee organizations, led by the 30th Street Industrial Corridor Corporation with support from Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC), announced today a newly funded project that will kickstart a community-driven equitable trail-development process with neighborhoods along the 30th Street Corridor.

The project, made possible with a \$200,000 grant from the Catena Foundation, will work with residents and local organizations to envision the neighborhood future they want to experience. More specifically, the process will focus on how safe and equitable access to trails, walking and biking can be leveraged to generate equitable economic development investments that will benefit local residents. The two-year equitable trail-development process will be led by the 30th Street Industrial Corridor Corporation in partnership with Northwest Side Community Development Corporation, Near West Side Partners and Havenwoods Neighborhood Partnership. It is part of the next phase in developing a shared-use trail next to a 7.25-mile rail line that runs north from the Hank Aaron State Trail to Havenwoods State Park.

“The 30th Street Corridor rail line on Milwaukee’s Northwest side once served as the spine of the city’s economic engine,” said Cheryl Blue, executive director of the 30th Street Industrial Corridor Corporation. “We see the equitable trail-development process for a world-class linear park as an opportunity for us to come together to create a new vision for the corridor, which is currently plagued with serious challenges. The only way for us to change that is to build a new and better reality—with and for all the wonderful people and businesses here. We are excited to begin this process and grateful for the partnership with RTC and the Catena Foundation and for their support of this initiative.”

Milwaukee is one of the [most racially segregated cities in the United States](#), and this has resulted in an infrastructure system in which significant trail and transportation disparities exist. Currently I-94 and I-

43 divide Northwest side communities from destinations and opportunities, but connected trails offer a solution.

An [RTC study](#) found that the city's most disinvested communities had the least access to walking and biking infrastructure. Two trail projects, including the 30th Street Corridor, have the potential to create new walking and biking access for more than 200,000 residents living in these communities.

"We're delighted to fund the equitable trail-development process for the 30th Street Corridor. The four Northwest Milwaukee organizations who are at the forefront of this project are leaders in their communities who will organize their neighbors and friends to identify the best path forward for creating new walking and biking access along 30th Street," said Mike Wight, restoration and trails program officer for the Catena Foundation.

The proposed shared-use trail will connect residents in Milwaukee's Northwest side to the regional Route of the Badger trail network—expanding opportunities for Northwest Milwaukee residents to walk and bike safely in areas where they currently do not exist.

"Milwaukee has some amazing trail facilities that can take you to the city's most popular destinations, but residents along the 30th Street Corridor are cut off from many of these recreation and active transportation opportunities," said Willie Karidis, RTC's project manager for the Route of the Badger trail network. "A recent preliminary feasibility study determined that a 30th Street Corridor shared-use trail is the most important trail investment the city could make because it would create more equitable trail access for all residents. This community-led planning work along the corridor is the next step to making this a reality. It can serve as a national model for other cities across the country that are tackling the redevelopment of infrastructure that currently segregates residents from jobs, schools, and recreation and transportation opportunities."

The Route of the Badger is part of RTC's TrailNation™ initiative, which is designed to establish model trail networks across the country to prove what is possible when you equitably connect people and places by trail. The regional trail network will connect rural and urban communities in Southeast Wisconsin—in Milwaukee County, as well as Kenosha, Racine, Walworth, Waukesha, Washington and Ozaukee counties—linking residents to jobs, communities, schools, parks and local attractions. Currently, half (350 miles) of the 700-mile trail network is complete.

To learn more about the Route of the Badger trail network, visit railstotrails.org/badger.

Read RTC's "Reconnecting Milwaukee" report (rtc.li/reconnecting-milwaukee), a study analyzing the impact that potential new trails could have on walking and bicycling access in the city, and the "30th Street Corridor Shared-Use Trail Preliminary Feasibility Study" (rtc.li/30th-street-corridor-study) for more information.

To learn more about the project partners, visit the following websites:

- 30th Street Industrial Corridor Corporation: thecorridor-mke.org
- Northwest Side Community Development Corporation: nwscdc.org
- Near West Side Partners: nearwestsidemke.org
- Havenswood Neighborhood Partnership: havenswood.org

The 30th Street Industrial Corridor Corp is a 30-year-old organization whose mission is to serve as the mobilizing entity to collectively promote and spark an economic resurgence for businesses and residents of Milwaukee's 30th Street Industrial Corridor. Connect with The Corridor at thecorridor-mke.org and on [Facebook](#).

Rails-to-Trails Conservancy is the nation's largest trails organization—with a grassroots community more than 1 million strong—dedicated to building a nation connected by trails, reimagining public spaces to create safe ways for everyone to walk, bike and be active outdoors. Connect with RTC at railstotrails.org and @railstotrails on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).