Chapter 5 – Multipurpose Trails and Pedestrian Network

Background and Overview

The trail network in Region 9 provides users with numerous opportunities for both recreation and transportation. The term "trail" generally refers to any route utilized by non-motorized transportation modes. For many communities, a multipurpose trail serves as a close-to-home recreational area accommodating a range of users including walkers, bicyclists, joggers, and more. In addition to these recreational uses, virtually every multipurpose trail also serves a functional role. Whether used for a shortcut to a local library or for a 20-mile bicycle commute into a major metropolitan area, these trails serve an important transportation purpose. Because of their linear nature and previous or concurrent uses (i.e. on abandoned rail corridors, along utility easements, or road right-of-way), multipurpose trails connect places and amenities together – neighborhoods to community and cultural resources (libraries, schools, businesses, museums, etc.), small towns to metropolitan areas, and city centers to the countryside – serving as transportation corridors.

Modal Recognition of Trails and Federal Funding

Over the past three decades, bicycling has grown in popularity as a viable mode of transportation. Beginning with the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) in 1994 that started funding bicycle projects. The success of ISTEA from 1992-1997 to passage of the Transportation Equity Act of the 21st Century (TEA-21). During the five years of TEA-21, from 1998-2003, spending of federal transportation funds on bicycling and walking improvements nearly doubled that of ISTEA. In August 2005, the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) continued to fund alternative transportation projects. This bill renewed and expanded funding opportunities for multipurpose trails and pedestrian safety projects.

A more recent federal transportation bill, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21), passed in 2012, consolidated many programs under SAFETEA-LU into larger programs that must compete among larger pools for funding. MAP-21 was soon replaced by the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act), signed into law in 2015. The primary federal transportation funding program for bicycling projects, known as the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) under the previous transportation act, MAP-21, was replaced with a set-aside of Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG) funding for transportation alternatives (STBG-TA). These funds encompass a variety of smaller-scale transportation projects, such as pedestrian and bicycle facilities, recreational trails, and safe routes to school projects. Support for trails continued as a set-aside with the passage of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) in 2021.

Local Impacts

Trails and bikeway networks can affect communities in a positive way through improved public health, more robust economies, and an improved environment. Trail development, accessibility, and connectivity are integral factors in evaluating livability in communities. A well-planned and constructed multipurpose trail and pedestrian network adds a desir-

able asset to the entire transportation network and to the quality of life for residents, and may attract new residents and businesses to a community. They enrich the quality of life for residents by promoting active lifestyles, improving health through physical activity, and providing connectivity to desired destinations while having a positive impact on congestion and air quality by providing an alternative choice to motorized transportation on streets and roadways. According to the *2024 Quad Cities Health Assessment*, 39.6% of residents in Scott County and 55.4% of residents in Muscatine County are obese, while 37.4% of Iowa residents are obese. Recreational opportunities could help alleviate the obesity epidemic in the United States, Iowa, and Region 9. Additionally, the types of commutes that people take affect their health. Multiple studies have indicated that people who walked or bike to work report positive psychological benefits in their lives and at work,[1] and are less likely to suffer from negative physical and mental health outcomes.[2]

Results of a survey conducted of Region 9 indicated a considerable public demand for trails in the region. The majority of respondents indicated that they either agreed or strongly agreed that Region 9 should "encourage alternative modes of travel, such as public transit, bicycling, and walking," and that Region 9 should "add sidewalks along streets where none exist." For a more detailed breakdown of the results of this survey, see Appendix E.

Economic benefits from a robust trail and pedestrian network can be derived through a variety of ways. According to the Iowa Bicycle Coalition's report *Economic and Health Benefits of Bicycling and Trails in Iowa*, the total annual economic impact of recreational cycling is estimated to be $1.4 billion. In addition to local users, the economic benefits of bicycling in Region 9 also include long-distance touring cyclists travelling on the two national trails in the region, the Mississippi River Trail (MRT) and the American Discovery Trail (ADT)[3]. Long-distance cyclists normally travel away from the Interstates, stopping in small towns along their route where their impact on local economies is larger than if they stopped with the majority of traffic along the highway. Additionally, large events, races and rides, such as RAGBRAI (the Register's Annual Great Bicycle Ride Across Iowa), can have a tremendous impact on the economies of small towns and cities through which the route runs. Region 9 has hosted RAGBRAI numerous times, the most recent of which being in 2023, when the ride's route entered Muscatine County via West Liberty and continued to Muscatine before finishing in Davenport.

Multipurpose Trail Facility Types

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) supports a flexible approach to bicycle and pedestrian facility design. This support often benefits urban areas the most, but has effects on rural facilities as well. According to The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), selection of a bicycle facility type is dependent on many factors, including the ability of the intended user (including "Experienced and Confident" riders, "Casual and Less Confident" riders, and children), specific corridor conditions, and facility cost. The following is

1 Source: Martin, A., Goryakin, Y., & Suhrcke, M. (2014). "Does active commuting improve psychological wellbeing? Longitudinal evidence from eighteen waves of the British Household Panel Survey." Preventive Medicine.

2 Source: Friel et al (2024). "Health benefits of pedestrian and cyclist commuting: evidence from the Scottish Longitudinal Study." British Medical Journal

3 Referred to for the remainder of this chapter as the MRT and ADT, respectively

a description of each facility type and general design as stated in the AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities, 2012.

Shared Roadway (No Bikeway Designation): This is a roadway that is open to both bicycle and motor vehicle travel. Most bicycle travel in the United States currently occurs on streets and highways without bikeway designations. In some instances, a community's existing street system may be fully adequate for efficient bicycle travel, and signing or striping for bicycle use may be unnecessary. In other cases, some streets and highways, particularly those with high volumes of traffic and/or higher traffic speeds, may be unsuitable for bicycle travel, and it would be inappropriate to encourage bicycle travel by designating the routes as bikeways. Finally, some routes may not be considered high bicycle demand corridors, and it would be inappropriate to designate them as bikeways regardless of roadway conditions (e.g., minor residential streets).

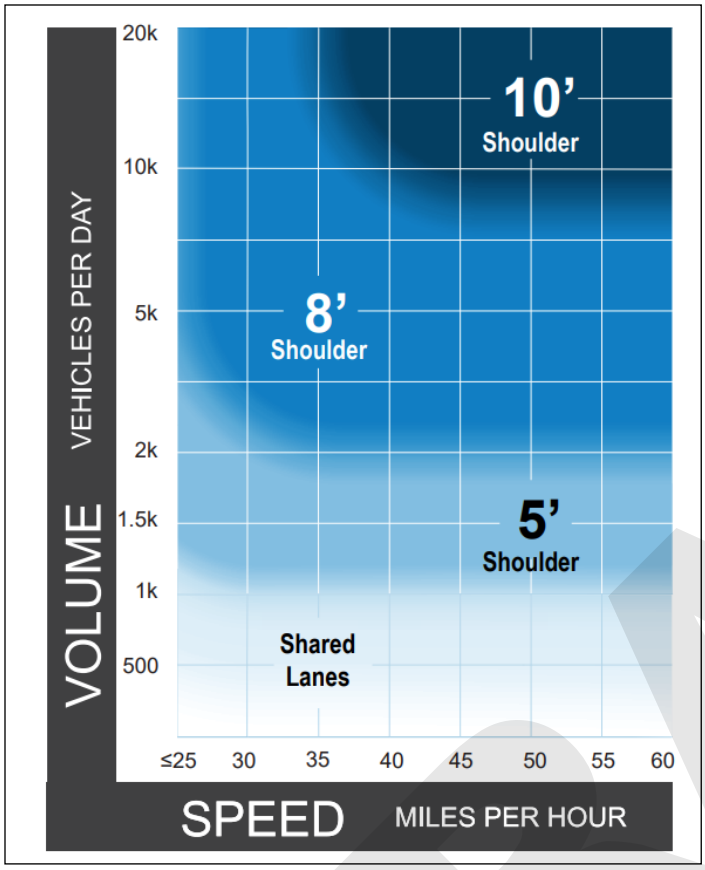
Some rural highways are used by touring bicyclists for intercity and recreational travel. In most cases, such routes should only be designated as bikeways where there is a need for enhanced continuity with other bicycle routes. However, installing a paved shoulder at least 5 feet can significantly improve the safety and convenience of both bicyclists and motorists along such routes.[4] Figure 5.1 shows the FHWA's recommended paved shoulder width for rural roads based on traffic volume and speed, which can be found in the 2019 FHWA Bikeways Selection Guide.

A shared roadway with a paved shoulder (No Bikeway Designation) in Muscatine County

Source: Bi-State Regional Commission, 2025

4 Chapter 3 of the Iowa Department of Transportation Office of Design - Design Manual, originally issued January 23, 2004, outlines the State's Paved Shoulders and Milled Rumble Strips policies.

Figure 5.1 – Preferred Shoulder Width for Rural Roadways



Source: Bikeway Selection Guide, FHWA, 2019

Signed Shared Roadway: Signed shared roadways are designated by bike route signs, and serve either to provide continuity to other bicycle facilities (usually bike lanes) or designate preferred routes through high-demand corridors.

As with bike lanes, signing of shared roadways should indicate to bicyclists that particular advantages exist to using these routes compared with alternative routes. This means that responsible agencies have taken actions to assure that these routes are suitable as shared routes and will be maintained in a manner consistent with the needs of bicyclists. Signing also serves to advise vehicle drivers that bicycles are present.

A signed shared roadway in the City of Blue Grass

Source: Bi-State Regional Commission, 2026

Bike Lane or Bicycle Lane: A portion of roadway that has been designated for preferential or exclusive use by bicyclists by pavement markings and, if used, signs. It is intended for one-way travel, usually in the same direction as the adjacent traffic lane, unless designed as a contra-flow lane

Bike lanes are typically established along streets in corridors where there is significant bicycle demand and where there are distinct needs that can be served by them. They are the preferred facility for roadways in both urban and suburban areas. Bike lanes are intended to delineate the right-of-way assigned to bicyclists and motorists and to provide for more predictable movements by each. Bike lanes also help to increase the total capacities of roadways carrying mixed bicycle and motor vehicle traffic, and to allow cyclists to ride at their preferred speed, regardless of the speed of motor vehicle traffic. Another important reason for constructing bike lanes is to better accommodate bicyclists where insufficient space exists for comfortable bicycling on existing streets; this can be accomplished by reducing the width of vehicular lanes or prohibiting parking in order to delineate bike lanes. In addition to lane striping, other

measures should be taken to ensure that bicycle lanes are effective facilities. In particular, bicycle-safe drainage inlet grates should be used, pavement surfaces should be smooth, and traffic signals should be responsive to bicyclists. Regular maintenance of bicycle lanes should be a top priority, since bicyclists are unable to use a lane with potholes, debris, or broken glass.

If bicycle travel is to be improved, special efforts should be made to assure that a high quality network is provided with these lanes. However, the needs of both the motorist and the bicyclist must be considered in the decision to provide bike lanes.

Shared-Use Path: This is a bikeway physically separated from motor vehicle traffic by an open space or barrier and either within the highway right-of-way or within an independent right-of-way. Shared-use paths may also be used by pedestrians, skaters, wheelchair users, joggers, and other non-motorized users. Most shared-use paths are designed for two-way travel.

Generally, shared-use paths should be used to serve corridors not served by streets and highways or where wide utility or a former railroad right-of-way exists, permitting such facilities to be constructed away from the influence of parallel streets. Shared-use paths should offer opportunities not provided by the road system. They can provide a recreational opportunity or, in some instances, can serve as direct commute routes if crossflow by motor vehicles and pedestrians is minimized. The most common applications are along rivers, ocean fronts, canals, utility rights-of-way, former or active railroad rights-of-way, within college campuses, or within and between parks. There may also be situations where such facilities can be provided as part of planned developments. Another common application of shared-use paths is to close gaps in bicycle travel caused by construction of cul-de-sacs, railroads, and freeways or to circumvent natural barriers (rivers, mountains, etc.).

Sidewalks: Sidewalks generally are not acceptable for bicycling. However, in a few limited situations, such as on long and narrow bridges and where bicyclists are incidental or infrequent users, the sidewalk can serve as an alternate facility, provided any significant difference in height from the roadway is

A bike lane in the City of Blue Grass

Source: City of Blue Grass, 2026

A shared-use path in the City of Muscatine

Source: Bi-State Regional Commission, 2025

protected by a suitable barrier between the sidewalk and roadway[5].

Pedestrian-only facilities, such as sidewalks, offer residents and visitors the most fundamental of transportation options. Abundant historic municipality centers provide opportunities various types of uses, including transportation, recreation, and commerce in the form of outdoor seating at restaurants and sidewalk stalls. However, they are not provided everywhere. Areas that have been built in the last few decades do not uniformly have sidewalks, and many communities still have portions or sections of their towns without any sort of pedestrian facility/sidewalk. Pedestrian facilities are also non-existent between communities within Region 9 due to the long distances/stretches of roads from community to community. Individual communities are largely responsible for the construction and maintenance of their sidewalk networks; however, federal funding is available through the Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TASA) program.

In selecting the proper facility, an overriding consideration is to assure that the proposed facility will not encourage or require bicyclists or motorists to operate in a manner that is inconsistent with the rules of the road. The needs of both motorists and bicyclists must be considered in selecting the appropriate type of facility.

Another important consideration in selecting the type of facility is continuity. Alternating segments of shared-use paths and bike lanes along a route is generally inappropriate and inconvenient because street crossings by bicyclists may be required when the route changes character. Also, wrong-way bicycle travel with a higher potential for crashes may occur on the street beyond the ends of shared-use paths because of the inconvenience of having to cross the street.

A sidewalk in the City of Muscatine

Source: City of Muscatine, 2025

The determination of which facility is most appropriate in a given context depends on the numerous factors described above. According to FHWA's Bikeway Selection Guide (2019), bicycle network design should be guided by seven principles, with the first three listed bullets, Safety, Comfort, and Connectivity, having particular importance in guiding bikeway selection:

- **Safety –** The frequency and severity of crashes are minimized and conflicts with motor vehicles are limited.
- **Comfort –** Conditions do not deter bicycling due to stress, anxiety, or concerns over safety.
- **Connectivity –** All destinations can be accessed using the bicycling network, and there are no gaps or missing links.
- **Directness –** Bicycling distances and trip time are minimized.
- **Cohesion –** Distances between parallel and intersecting bike routes are minimized.

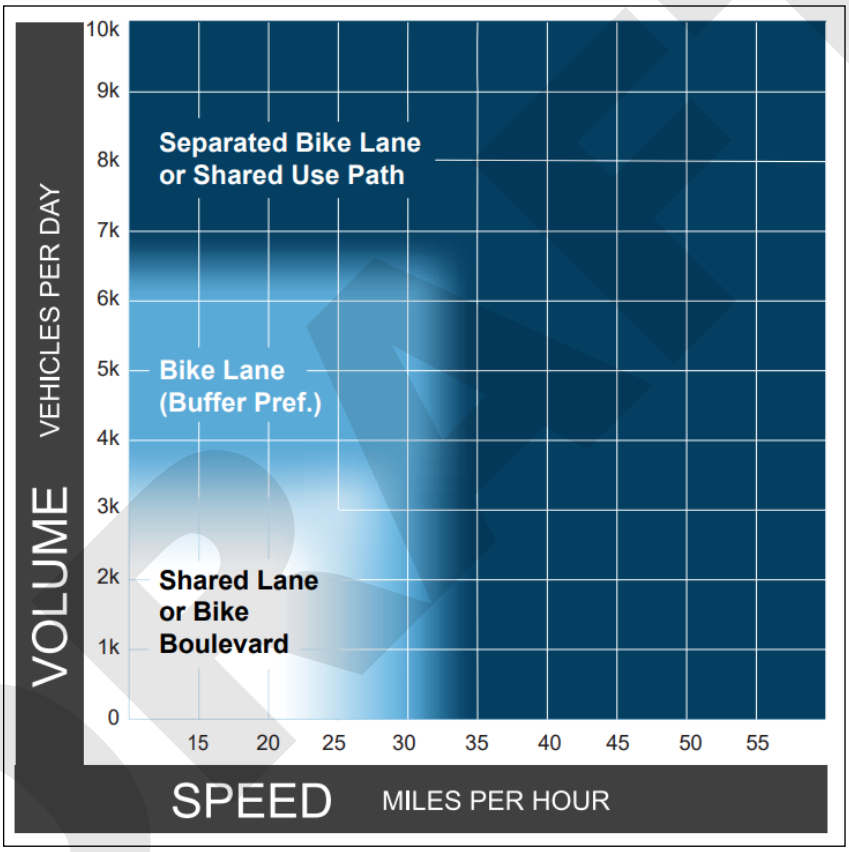
5 Source: The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities, Fourth Edition, 2012

- **Attractiveness –** Routes direct bicyclists through lively areas, and personal safety is prioritized.
- **Unbroken Flow –** Stops, such as long waits at traffic lights, are limited, and street lighting is consistent.

These same principles can also apply to sidewalks and shared-use paths.

Additionally, the FHWA's *Bikeway Selection Guide* offers guidelines on which facility is most appropriate based on the volume and speed of traffic on a corridor. These guidelines can be seen in Figure 5.2.

Figure 5.2 – Preferred Bikeway Type Based on Traffic Volume and Speed



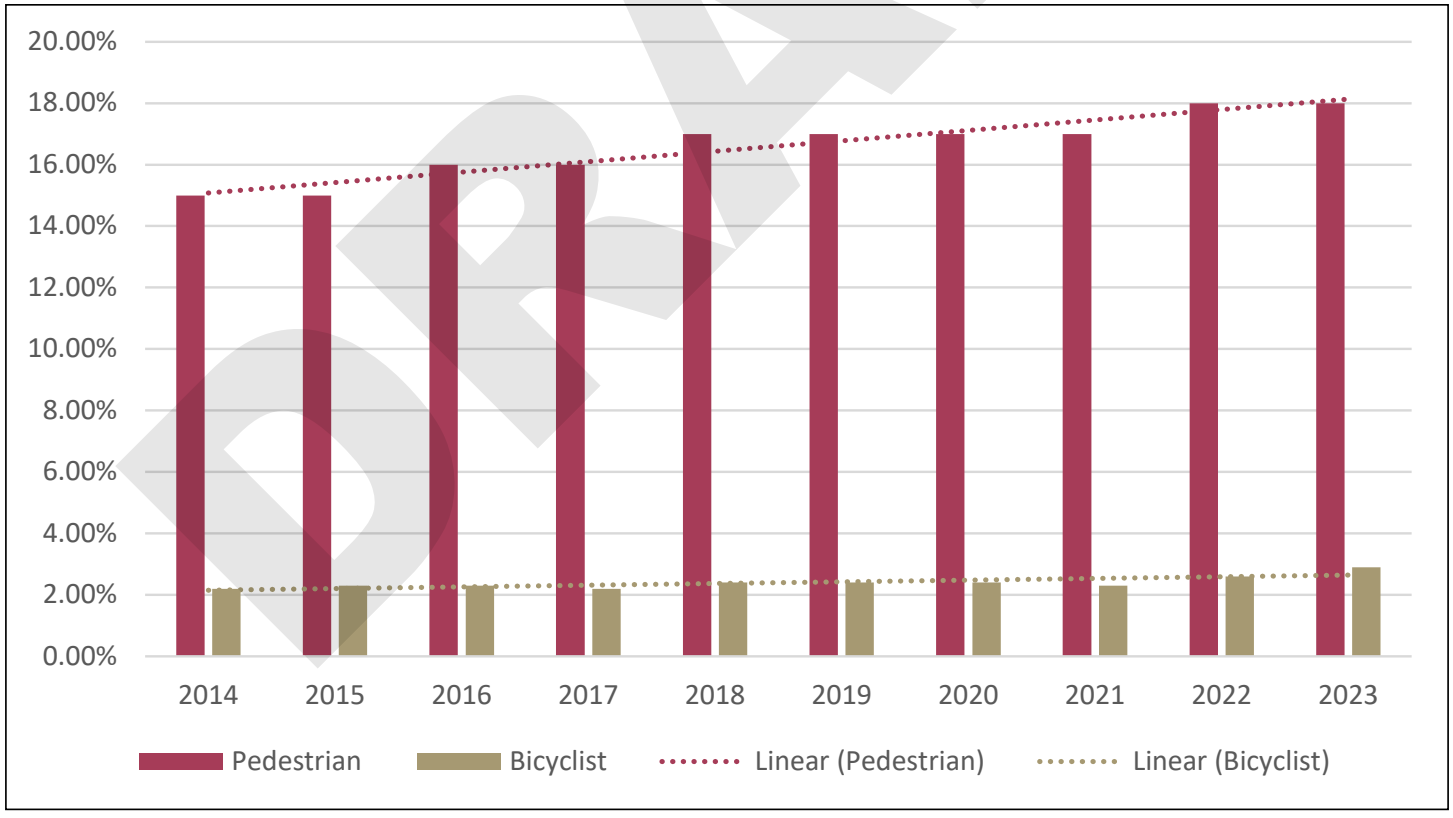
Source: Bikeway Selection Guide, FHWA, 2019

Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety

Recent increases in pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities nationwide and their increasing share of total traffic fatalities raise concern about the level of safety of these modes when interacting and sharing road space with automobiles. See Figure 5.3 for recent trends in fatalities among these two groups. Figure 5.4 shows that statewide crashes in Iowa have been also been increasing in the years since the COVID 19 pandemic, increasing every year since 2020. Pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities statewide have been increasing in recent years, following a significant drop-off from 2021 to 2022, as shown in Figure 5.5.

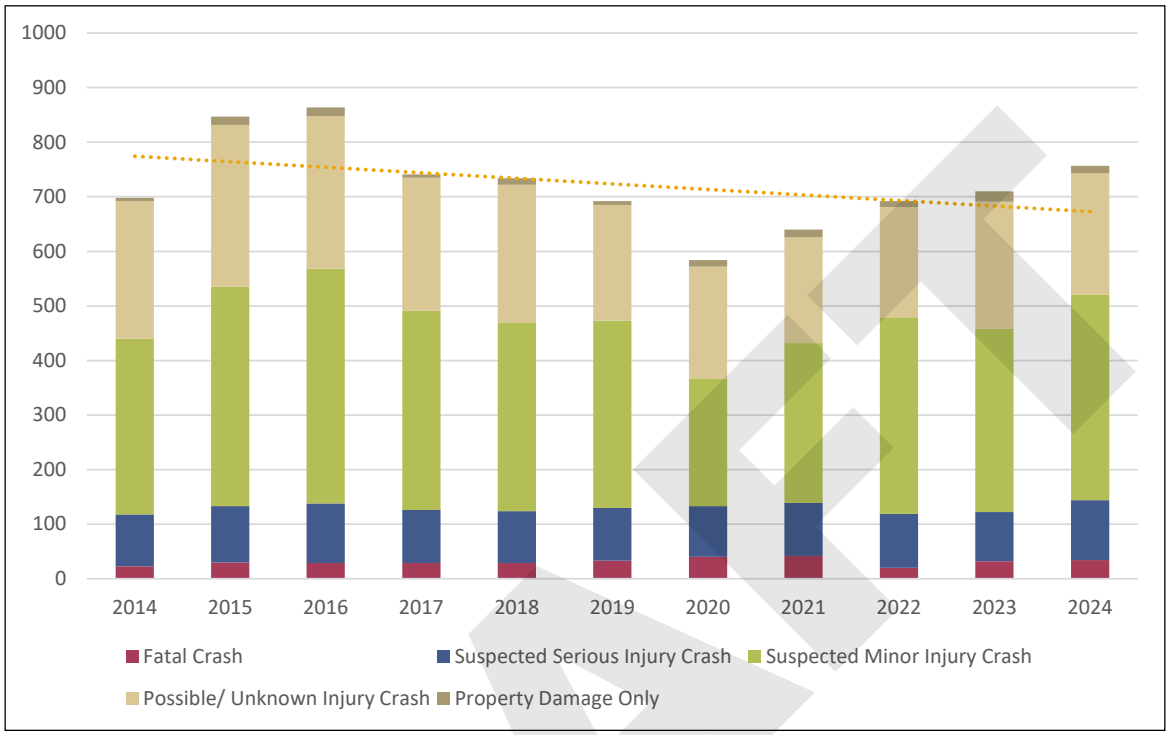
In Region 9, there have been 8 total pedestrian and cyclist fatalities recorded from 2014 to 2024 in the region. There have been no pedestrian or bicyclist fatalities in Region 9 since 2020 and two suspected serious injury crashes in the same time frame (Figure 5.6). The *2024-2028 Iowa Strategic Highway Safety Plan* (SHSP) reaffirms the state's aspirational goal of zero fatalities on Iowa roadways, and the Quad Cities-Kewanee-Muscatine Traffic Safety Action Plan (2025) also supported a Vision Zero goal to reduce fatal and serious injury crashes to zero. In order to achieve this aspirational goal in Region 9, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure must examine the needs of all users in the region and seek viable solutions, so that no one is left in a vulnerable situation as a bicyclist or pedestrian.

Figure 5.3 – Percent of Total Fatalities Nationwide



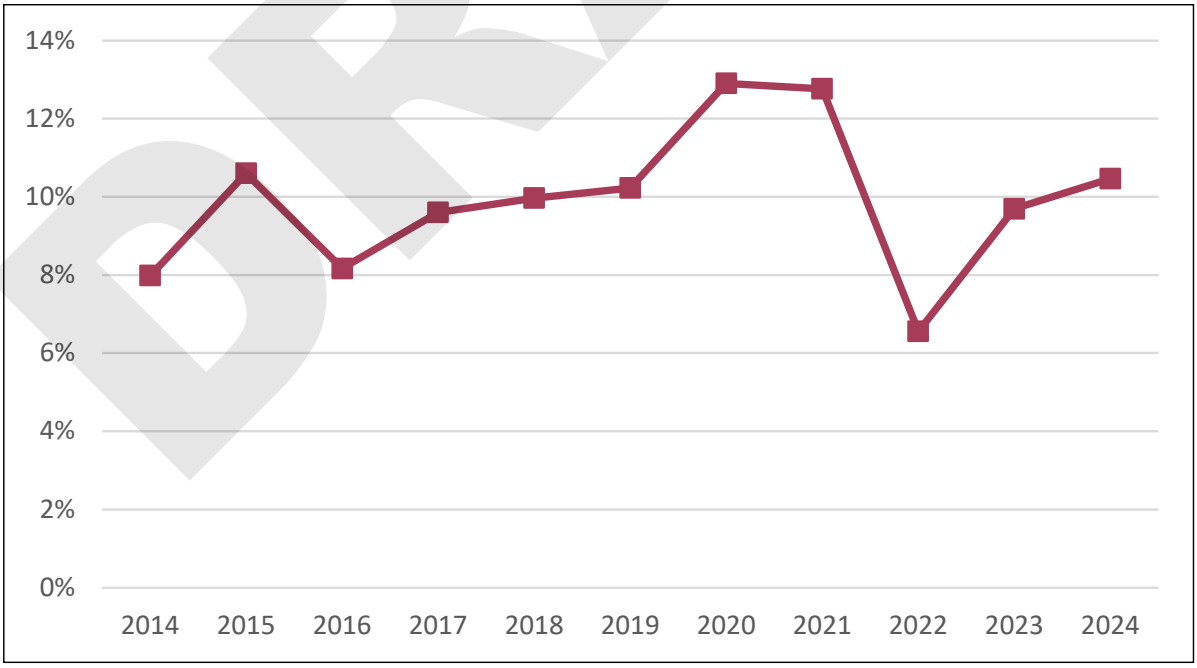
Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 2025

Figure 5.4 – Pedestrian & Pedalcyclist Crash Severity in Iowa, Statewide



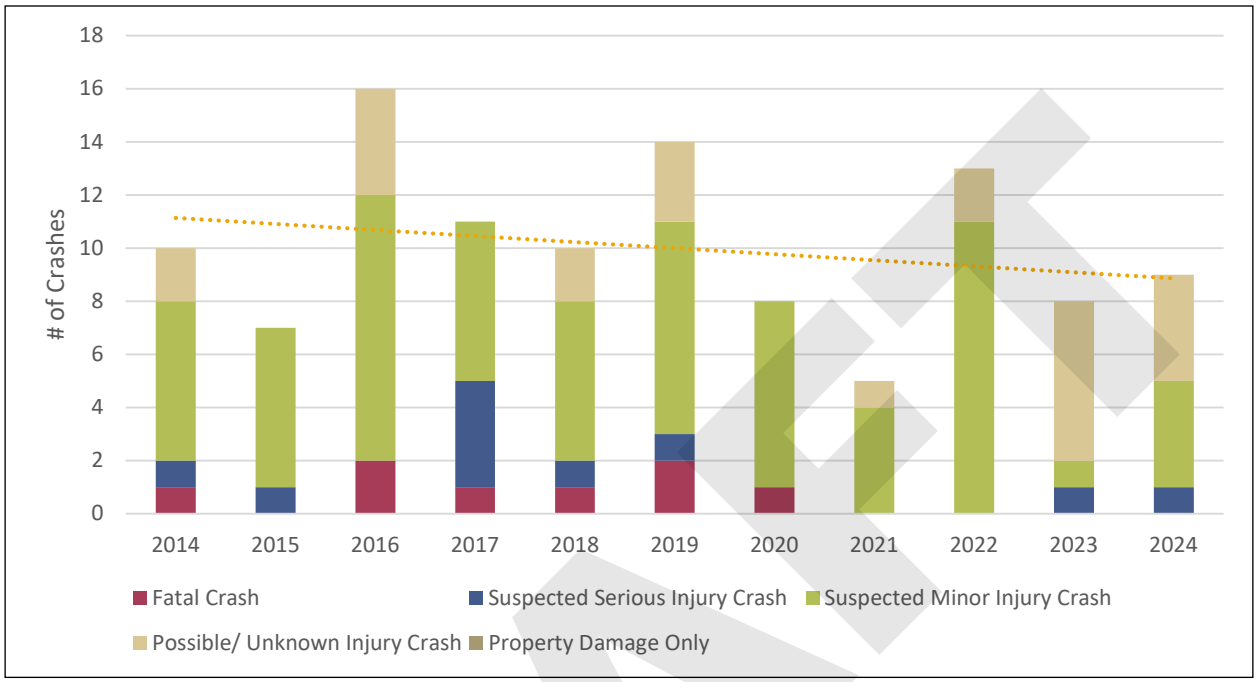
Source: Iowa Department of Transportation Crash Analysis Tool, 2025

Figure 5.5 – Percent of Fatal Pedestrian & Pedalcyclist Fatal Crashes Statewide



Source: Iowa Department of Transportation Crash Analysis Tool, 2025

Figure 5.6 – Pedestrian & Bicyclist Crash Severity in Region 9



Source: Iowa Department of Transportation Crash Analysis Tool, 2025

E-Bikes & Micromobility

E-bikes, or electronic assist bicycles, have been growing in popularity nationwide and in the Bi-State Region. These bikes provide propulsion assistance on traditional bicycle frames with an electric motor of less than 750 watts. The three types of e-bikes are classified by top speed and means of propulsion, see Table 5.1. A recent trend of micromobility vehicles that fall outside of these classes – due to their top speed exceeding 28 miles per hour or their power being greater than 750 watts – has created potentially unsafe situations on trails. It is recommended by organizations like Ride Illinois that such vehicles be allowed only on roadways, and not on bicycle infrastructure or trails. In 2024, the Bi-State Regional Trails Committee endorsed updated language to its Unified Trail Use Ordinance, which communities in the area may use to set uniform rules and regulations on the trails across the region. Following input from statewide advocacy groups and local police departments, all three classes of e-bike would be allowed under the model language. However, speeds must be kept reasonable and prudent when utilizing the trails.

Table 5.1 – E-Bike Classifications

Class	Top Speed (mph)	Means of propulsion
Class 1	20	Pedal-assist
Class 2	20	Throttle; Pedal-assist
Class 3	28	Pedal-Assist

Multi-Purpose Trail System

A well-planned and integrated system of trails throughout the Region 9 Planning Area can supplement other alternative transportation modes creating a more accessible, accommodating, and balanced transportation network. The Region 9 Area continues to plan and develop trails providing transportation alternatives, commuting options, and important connections. An emphasis on connecting national trail segments of the ADT, MRT, and Great American Rail Trail are a priority. This is followed by trail connections within communities along these trails, or interconnectivity within cities in Region 9, and lastly regional trail connects between major cities in Region 9, such as between Wilton and Muscatine in Muscatine County.

In addition, a robust alternative transportation system can attract bicycle tourism that can benefit local economies. As mentioned above, the region has been host to the Register's Annual Great Bicycle Ride Across Iowa, or RAGBRAI, on multiple occasions, as well as other coordinated bicycle rides using the national trail system. Existing trails in the region, such as Muscatine's riverfront trail, can see up to hundreds of users per day in the summer months.

The following sections identify the current status and proposed development for multipurpose trail and pedestrian projects in the planning area. Map 5.1 provides a visual representation of the existing and proposed multipurpose trails for the Region 9 Planning Area. Table 5.2 breaks down the mileage of existing visually or physically separated trails in Region 9 by jurisdiction, while Table 5.3 breaks down the mileage of proposed trails in Region 9 by jurisdiction.

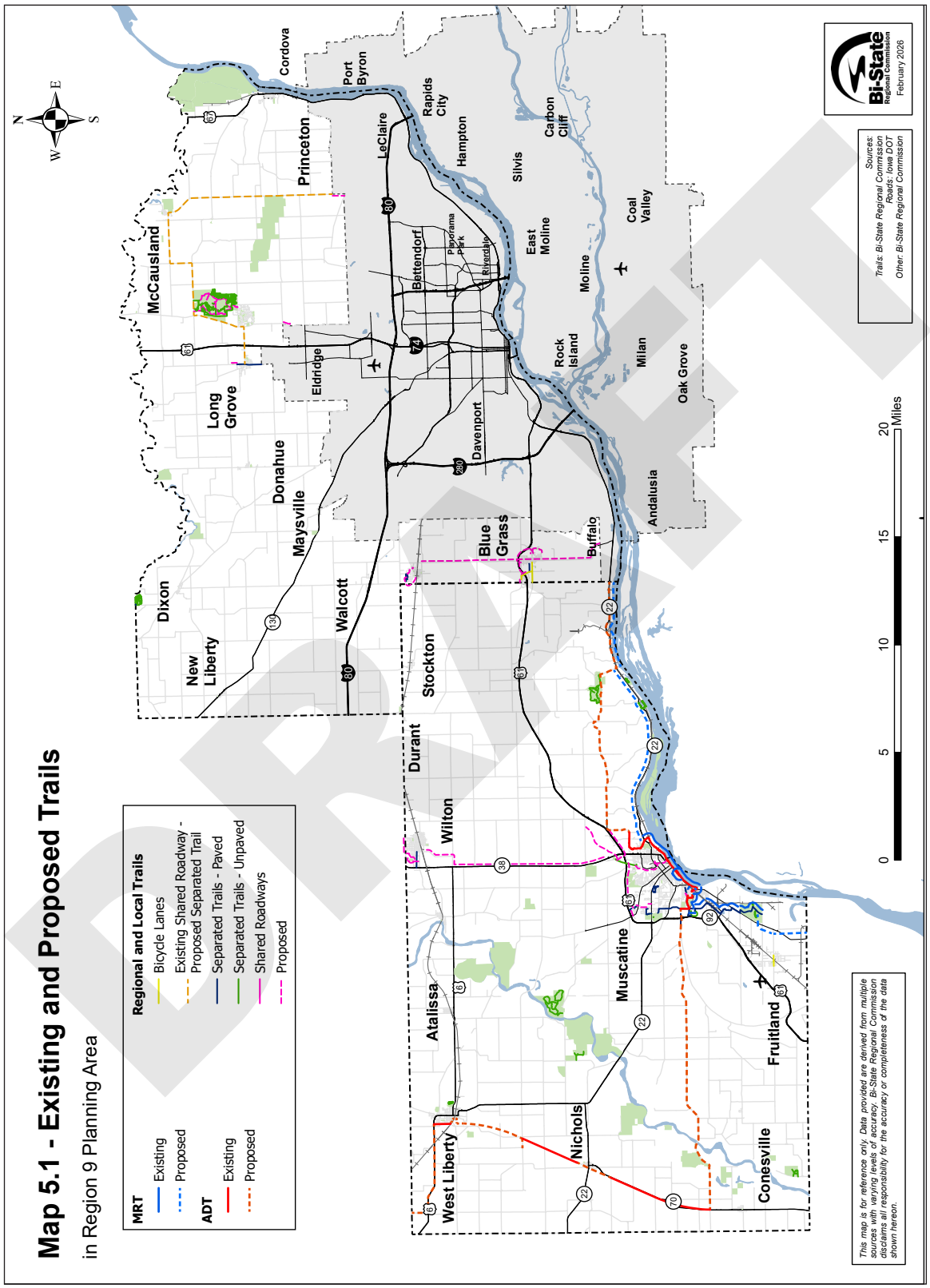

Map 5.1 - Existing and Proposed Trails
in Region 9 Planning Area
Regional and Local Trails
MRT
Existing
Proposed
Bicycle Lanes
Existing Shared Roadway - Proposed Separated Trail
ADT
Existing
Proposed
Separated Trails - Paved
Separated Trails - Unpaved
Shared Roadways
Proposed
N
E
S
W
0
5
10
15
20
Miles
Cordova
Port Byron
Rapids City
Hampton
Carbon Cliff
Silvis
Coal Valley
Princeton
LeClaire
McCausland
Bettendorf
Pipsorama Park
Riverdale
East Moline
Moline
Rock Island
Milan
Oak Grove
Long Grove
Eldridge
Davenport
Andalusia
Donahue
Maysville
Walcott
Dixon
New Liberty
Blue Grass
Buffalo
Stockton
Durant
Wilton
Atalissa
Muscatine
Fruitland
West Liberty
Nichols
Conesville
Sources:
Trails: Bi-State Regional Commission
Roads: Iowa DOT
Other: Bi-State Regional Commission
Bi-State Regional Commission
February 2026
This map is for reference only. Data provided are derived from multiple sources with varying levels of accuracy. Bi-State Regional Commission disclaims all responsibility for the accuracy or completeness of the data shown hereon.
DRAFT

Table 5.2 – Existing Separated Trail Mileage in Region 9 by Jurisdiction

Jurisdiction	Existing Trail Mileage (rounded to the nearest hundredth)
Region 9 (Total)	107.48
Muscatine County (Total)	53.15
Scott County (Total)	54.32
Unincorporated Muscatine County	13.32
Unincorporated Scott County	50.37
Muscatine County Communities	
Conesville	1.12
Durant	0.00
Fruitland	0.51
Muscatine	35.85
Nichols	0.00
West Liberty	1.36
Wilton	0.75
Scott County Communities	
Blue Grass	2.04
Dixon	0.00
Donahue	0.00
Durant	0.00
Long Grove	1.12
Maysville	0.00
McCausland	0.00
New Liberty	0.00
Walcott	0.80

Table 5.3 – Proposed Separated Trail Mileage in Region 9 by Jurisdiction

Jurisdiction	Proposed Trail Mileage (rounded to the nearest hundredth)
Region 9 (Total)	120.21
Muscatine County (Total)	88.04
Scott County (Total)	32.17
Unincorporated Muscatine County	70.44
Unincorporated Scott County	30.30
Muscatine County Communities	
Conesville	0.00
Durant	0.00
Fruitland	0.00
Muscatine	12.33
Nichols	0.66
West Liberty	1.04
Wilton	3.58
Scott County Communities	
Blue Grass	0.00
Dixon	0.00
Donahue	0.00
Durant	0.00
Long Grove	0.24
Maysville	0.00
McCausland	0.00
New Liberty	0.00
Walcott	1.63

Muscatine County

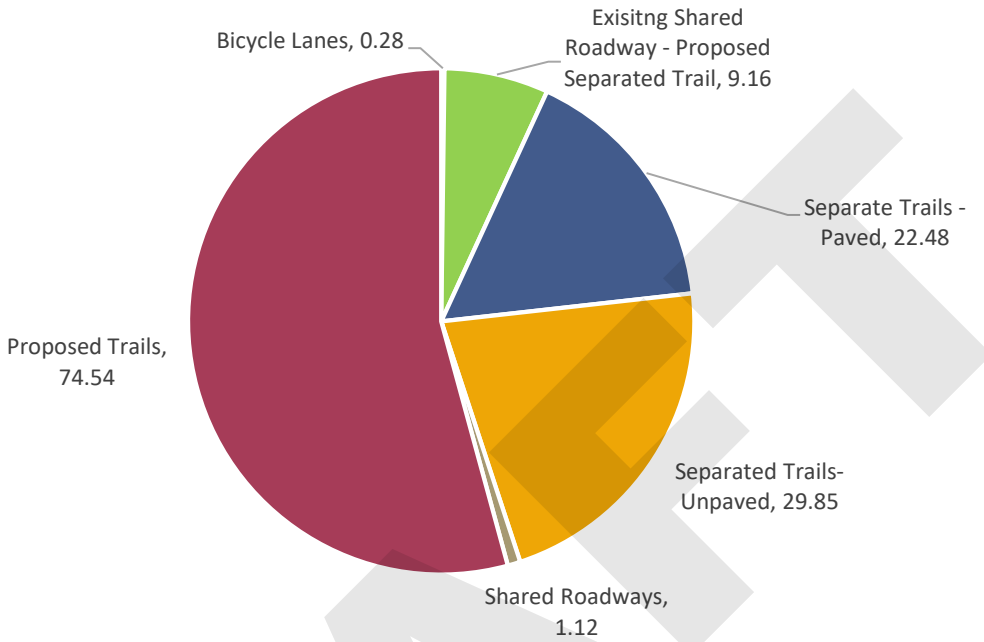
The 2019 *Muscatine County Trails Plan* identified approximately 234 total miles of trails, which are being re-evaluated with a change in priority and emphasis on completing the national trail system segments. The trails plan identified trails connecting communities and adjacent counties and emphasized completing national, state, and regionally-significant connections and links[6]. An update to the trails plan is currently underway, which will place greater emphasis on connecting the gaps in the national trails (ADT, MRT, and Great American Rail Trail) within the county, and on creating connections to the national trails and the local trail systems of the municipalities in the county. There are approximately 40 miles of the ADT, and 18 miles of the MRT still to be completed in Muscatine County, as well as 35.08 miles of separated regional trail connections yet to be completed. These segments, as well as the estimated costs of building and maintaining them, can be seen at the end of the chapter in Table 5.4.

An effort by counties north of Muscatine is underway to plan and expand trails eventually to connect the ADT in Muscatine County to Cedar Falls and Waterloo in Black Hawk County, a distance of approximately 120 miles. In Cedar County, public input for the *2025 RPA 10 Active Transportation Plan* indicated that the preferred route to connect the ADT to Muscatine County would be by constructing a separated trail following the West Branch Wapsipinicon Creek. Due to cost restraints, an alternative route was identified by which a trail would be constructed along Bancroft Ave, west of West Liberty.

In 2019, the Rails to Trails Conservancy began promoting the Great American Rail Trail (GART), which largely follows rail trail corridors from Washington, D.C. to Washington State. In Iowa, the corridor roughly follows the ADT. The *Iowa Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan* also emphasizes trail completion and networks, specifically through their Complete Streets Policy, which was implemented in 2018 and serves as a means to improve trail conditions statewide.

6 For more specifics on existing and proposed trails throughout the county, see the 2019 Muscatine County Trails Plan

Figure 5.7 – Total Trail Miles by Facility Type in Muscatine County



Source: Bi-State Regional Commission, 2026

The City of Muscatine has approximately 35.9 miles of trails already in place, with an additional 12.33 miles of proposed trails. Muscatine has several projects in the development stages and many additional miles of interconnected trails proposed in the county and as a part of The Running River Bike and Pedestrian Trail System in the city. In accordance with the adopted comprehensive plan, one of the next priorities will be to establish a trail across the north side of the city along the U.S. 61 corridor and add an extension to the Mad Creek Trail to the riverfront. The city is currently moving forward with the latter project, receiving TASA funds to construct the first phase of the trail extension. Work is expected to begin in Federal Fiscal Year 2027. The city has plans to connect this trail to the city's Green Belt trail via a new trail constructed along Isett Avenue. Once completed, the interconnected system of trails will provide a complete trail beltway around the City of Muscatine for alternative transportation, commuting, and recreation opportunities.

The City of West Liberty plans to complete the ADT segment through the community. Additional trail and pedestrian paths will link neighborhoods within the city to the national trail. Efforts will be made to connect to Cedar County and beyond along the ADT to Black Hawk County.

The City of Wilton recently completed a shared-use path on the north side of West 5th Street. The city has plans to construct a trail connecting Wilton Elementary School and Westview Park as well as plans to connect to Muscatine via trail along IA-38, with the trail entering the city via F65 and Story Avenue.

The City of Fruitland recently completed a section of a buffered bike lane on North Street from Evergreen Street to the local fire station.

For more detailed information on Muscatine County trails, see the 2019 Muscatine County Trails Plan.

Scott County

Trails in Scott County are predominantly located in the urban area, with connections to the rural areas of Scott County. National and regional trails of significance, such as the MRT, the ADT, and the Duck Creek Trail, all draw bicyclists and other users from around the region and country. Trails in the Region 9 portion of Scott County largely tie into these larger trail systems. However, some proposed trails, like those in Walcott and Blue Grass, offer recreational opportunities to residents in the form of loops around their respective communities. Proposed trails in Muscatine County, in comparison, are largely rural routes and may be realized as paved shoulders along the roadways.

Winding through mostly rural Scott County, the Cody Trail is a 25.5 mile shared roadway trail named after William "Buffalo Bill" Cody. The trail extends from North First Street in Eldridge to the riverfront city of LeClaire. The trail is labeled as a recreational and historical tour providing a glimpse of Scott County heritage. A majority of this trail lies within the Region 9 transportation planning area. The Cody Trail is significant to this plan for its proposed connections to the Quad Cities metropolitan area network of trails. The section of the trail from Eldridge to Long Grove has been completed. It is a 3-mile-long, 10-foot wide multi-use path running parallel to 1st Street/Y-64. Recently, the first phase of a spur of the Cody Trail extending north through Long Grove has been completed (E Grove Road to Pine Street), with the second phase (Pine Street to the northern Long Grove city limits) beginning construction in FFY 26. The long-term goal for the Cody Trail in Region 9 is for the entirety of the trail to be constructed as a separated shared-use trail.

Walcott is planning a pair of shared-use paths that will connect Prairie View Park to Wescott Park and Walcott K-8 School, linking the school with two of the principal parks in the city.

The City of Blue Grass recently added multiple bike lanes on W Mayne Street, N Oak Lane, and Telegraph Road, and has also constructed a shared-use path between N Oak Lane and Blue Grass Elementary. Looking forward, the city has proposed a perimeter green belt trail that will link neighborhoods, schools, parks, and community facilities in a loop. Both the Blue Grass and Walcott community trail systems would eventually connect to the MRT in Buffalo, which is currently under development.

The Scott County Board of Supervisors has adopted a trail funding resolution revising the Capital Improvement section of the Scott County Financial Management Policies. Scott County's Bike Trail Funding Policy is as follows:

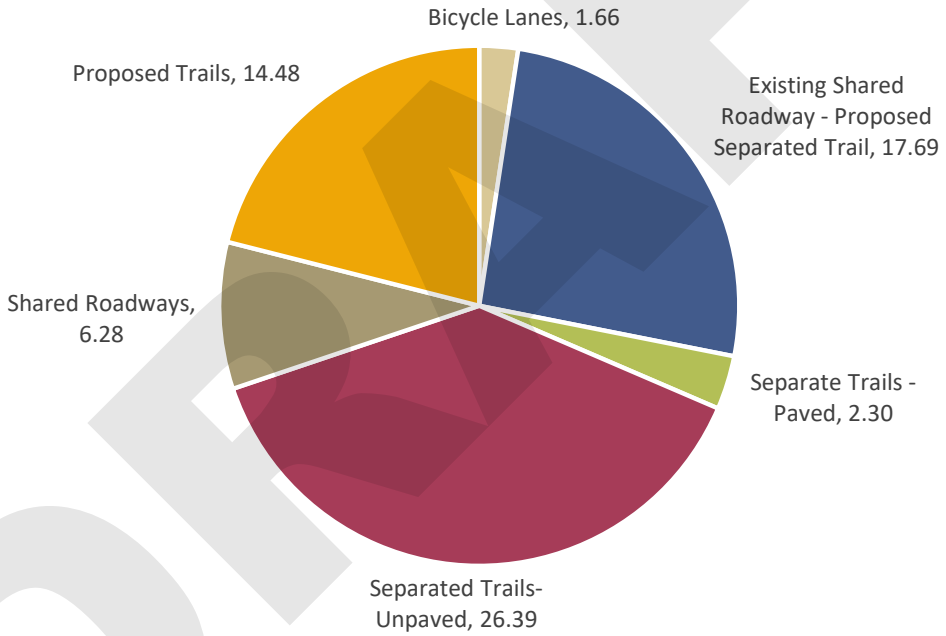
Bike Trail Funding

- The Board of Supervisors supports the development and construction of bike trails that will connect communities within the county. The Board encourages state and federal legislators to fund grant opportunities to fund these bike trails. The Board will support grant applications to appropriate state and federal agencies for grant funding of these trails.
- The Board will participate in funding the local match grant requirement of bike trail development and construction that connect non-contiguous cities within Scott County. The Board will also consider allowing the use of the county's right-of-way for portions of proposed trails along county roads.
- The Board of Supervisors will fund 10% of the local match grant requirement up to a 30% local match requirement. For example, for a $1 million grant with a 30% local match requirement ($300,000), the county would fund $30,000 toward the local match, or 10%

of the total local match. If the same $1 million grant had a 40% local match requirement, the county would still only fund $30,000 of the local match. If the grant is a multi-county application, the 10% county local match funding amount will be based on the percentage of bike trail mileage in Scott County.

- The county encourages communities to secure additional local grant funding toward the local match requirement (i.e., riverboat grants, foundations, businesses, etc.). The county will not reduce its 10% local match commitment by any additional funding secured by the communities toward their 90% share of the local match.
- The county will not participate in any ongoing maintenance costs of bike trails[7].

Figure 5.8 – Total Trail Miles by Facility Type in Scott County



Source: Bi-State Regional Commission, 2026

7 Source: Scott County Financial Management Policies; Capital Improvement Budget Policies; Item 9; pg. 33-5; Adopted 09/26/24

National, State, and Regional Trails

The MRT and the ADT are two prominent national trail systems. Portions of both of these systems are located in Scott and Muscatine Counties. The MRT and ADT in Scott County share the same alignment and are located entirely within the MPO boundary. Various plans for Muscatine County recommend both shared alignments and separated portions of the two national trail systems. The following are portions of the two national trails that have been or are still yet to be completed within the Region 9 planning area, with approximately 17.8 miles of trail still to be completed for the MRT and 47.18 miles of the ADT yet to be completed. The sections are identified as either short or long-term projects. The routes of the MRT and ADT in Muscatine County can be seen in Map 5.1.

Along the 4-mile stretch from the Scott-Muscatine County line to Wildcat Den Road, the MRT and ADT would use the same alignment. An alignment study has been completed along this portion of trail and would extend the ADT and MRT along Route 22 from Y-40 in Buffalo to Wildcat Den Road.

In the short term, both national trails would also utilize a shared alignment from Wildcat Den Road to the Solomon Avenue Trailhead in Muscatine along New Era Road. Currently, there is signage for both the ADT and the MRT along New Era Road, with the road currently serving as a shared roadway trail. Establishing a separate alignment for the MRT, closer to the river, is a long-term goal, ideally following IA-22. The construction of a separated trail along New Era Road is the long-term goal for this segment of the ADT.

The ADT enters the city of Muscatine at the Solomon Avenue Trailhead, following the trail until it intersects with the proposed MRT alignment at IA-22. The MRT and ADT share alignment along approximately 5 miles of the City of Muscatine's multipurpose trail network before diverging at the western end of Kent-Stein Park, where the Kent-Stein Park Trail, Westside Trail, and Deep Lakes Park Trail all intersect.

The MRT follows the Kent-Stein Park Trail to Deep Lakes Park Trail, which is 4.5 miles south to the southern boundary of Deep Lakes Park at 57th Street. Departing the City of Muscatine' s multipurpose trail network at 57th Street, the MRT uses a shared roadway to travel the 2.6 miles south to the Muscatine-Louisa County line and the edge of the Region 9 planning boundary. From the diverging point with the MRT, the ADT travels north a short distance along the Westside Trail until it intersects Hershey Avenue. The ADT follows Hershey Avenue as it goes under the U.S. 61 Bypass and turns into County G28. The ADT continues west for approximately 14 miles along G28 until reaching the existing Hoover Nature Trail near the City of Conesville. The *Muscatine County Trails Plan* recommends a visually separated facility, such as widened and paved shoulders, be added along the roadway due to traffic volumes and the national significance of the ADT. Shoulder improvements, bike lane accommodations, or development of a completely separated shared-use path, though more ideal, would be long-term objectives.

At the intersection of County G28 and U.S. 70, the ADT turns north and continues through much of the remainder of Muscatine County and Region 9 as a separated shared-use path utilizing the old Rock Island Railroad right-of-way. Along the western edge of Muscatine County, the ADT shares the same alignment as the Hoover Nature Trail (HNT). Muscatine County prefers to use the more nationally recognized ADT designation to acknowledge this corridor. The trail as it exists today is a grassy corridor, which makes cycle travel difficult. The HNT may require paving in the future if it is to be suitable for a national biking trail. A few components are needed to fully connect the ADT from north of Conesville to the Muscatine-Cedar County line, and trail maintenance has become an issue. Among these components are a

trail bridge, just south of Nichols, spanning Hockey's Slough and the development of approximately two miles of trail near West Liberty.

The currently designated on-road route of the ADT turns right, off of the HNT, onto County Highway E70 before turning north on IA-70. The ADT then enters West Liberty, where it follows S Park Avenue and E A Street before turning north again on N Columbus Street. It then turns northeast along Garfield Avenue/X40, following this road until exiting Muscatine County and Region 9.

The proposed separated route of the ADT would continue on the HNT until just north of the Muscatine County fairgrounds, where it would turn east until reaching S Calhoun Street. The ADT would then continue north until reaching W 3rd Street in downtown West Liberty where it would continue west until reaching the existing paved shared-use path that runs north/south and is located east of West Liberty High School. It will continue north on this path until reaching U.S. Highway 6. The ADT would then exit West Liberty by traveling west on Highway 6 until turning north on Bancroft Avenue and exiting Region 9.

The remaining segments within Region 9 are identified as short-term initiatives. Possible alternative routes are being discussed, such as the ADT entering West Liberty from the west via Davis Avenue and X34.

Bikeway Construction/Development

The cost of new trail construction is difficult to generalize because of the many variables that are involved. Trail surface, width, location, needed structures (such as bridges), signage, amenities, and timeframe all affect total construction cost. During preliminary engineering phases of development, the optimal routing, trail classification, and materials for construction need to be determined.

Within the Region 9 planning boundary, there are approximately 107 miles of existing trails and roughly 120 miles of various types of trails that have been identified for implementation. Within the Region 9, trails of national, state, and/or regional importance comprise 100.1 miles of the total proposed trail distance with approximately 64.7 miles of the MRT/ADT and 18 miles of the Cody Trail yet to be constructed as separated trail, as well as 8.8 miles for a proposed Wilton to Muscatine trail connection and 8.59 miles for a proposed Wilton to Buffalo connection. Some portions of the MRT and ADT are located along state routes, which may have paved shoulders added to the roadway in the future as part of the Iowa Department of Transportation's policy to achieve pavement preservation and driver safety benefits. In addition, some county roads may also be considered for adding paved shoulders for similar reasons.

While trail construction costs vary by location and type, construction costs have increased significantly in recent years due to material unavailability, logistics challenges, and global trade uncertainties . In 2017, the *Iowa City Bicycle Master Plan* estimated the cost of a paved multi-use trail in an urban area at $1,000,000 per mile. More recently, the 2025 *Iowa DOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan* provided a series of cost estimates based on trail type, terrain, and location. The FFY 2024-2028 *Muscatine Capital Improvement Plan* proposed the construction of multiple paved multi-use trails, ranging in cost from $639,000 per mile to $1,847,000 per mile depending on the location of the trail.

Bike lanes are another option for implementing alternative transportation infrastructure in Region 9.

Recent estimates place the cost of implementing new bike lanes at around $100,000 - $125,000.[8] On-road demarcated bike travel lanes are becoming more prominent in many areas across the country. Where little or no modification to the roadway is required, bike lanes could be a lower cost option for Region 9.

Maintenance and Operation

Maintenance and operation can also have a broad definition for bikeways. Routine maintenance can be defined as upkeep that is needed to keep the trail operating in a safe and usable condition, not involving major rehabilitation or reconstruction. Routine maintenance activities might include:

- Annual facility evaluation to determine the need for minor repairs
- Removing encroaching vegetation
- Mowing
- Map/signage updates
- Trash removal/litter clean-up
- Flood or storm damage repair (i.e. silt removal, culvert clean out, etc.)
- Patching, minor re-grading, or concrete panel replacement
- Planting, pruning, and general landscaping
- Snowplowing

Annual per mile maintenance and operation costs fluctuate due to a broad range of factors.

The city of Davenport, IA spends between $1,321-$1,761 per mile per year on trail maintenance, budgeting between $150,000 and $200,000 every other year for the routine maintenance of its 56.77-mile trail network. The 2017 *Iowa City Bicycle Master Plan* estimated that the annual per mile maintenance cost for side paths, similar to those proposed in Region 9, is $2,500. Adjusting this number for inflation gives an estimate of roughly $3,300 per mile.

Table 5.4 shows the estimated construction and maintenance cost to construct the remaining segments for both the ADT and MRT in Region 9 as well as three significant regional trails (Cody Trail, Wilton to Muscatine, Walcott to Buffalo). Construction costs were estimated using the City of Muscatine's estimated construction costs noted above ($639,000/mile – $1,847,000/mile), while maintenance costs were estimated using the projected costs from the cities of Davenport ($1,761) and Iowa City ($3,300). These maintenance costs provide a potential barrier for long-distance trail connections between communities in Region 9. For instance, the proposed Wilton to Muscatine trail would, using the Davenport and Iowa City estimates above, cost an estimated $15,500 – $29,000 annually to maintain, beyond the estimated $5.5 – $16 million it would cost to construct.

8 Iowa City Bicycle Master Plan (2017) https://www.iowa-city.org/weblink/0/edoc/1745938/FINAL%20Iowa%20City%20Bicycle%20Master%20Plan.pdf/, Wasatch Front Regional Transportation Plan 2023-2050 (2023) https://wfrc.utah.gov/VisionPlans/RegionalTransportationPlan/2023_2050Plan/2023RTP.pdf

Table 5.4 – Estimated Construction and Maintenance Costs for National and Regional Trails in Region 9

Trail	Approximate Distance (mi)	Estimated Cost to Construct ($)	Estimated Annual Cost to maintain ($)
ADT			
ADT (Scott County line to City of Muscatine)	14.4	$9,201,600 – $26,596,800	$25,400 – $47,500
ADT (City of Muscatine Portions)	0.7	$447,300 – $1,292,900	$1,200 – $2,300
ADT (City of Muscatine to Hoover Nature Trail)	14.1	$9,009,900 – $26,042,700	$24,800 – $46,500
ADT (Hoover Nature Trail to West Liberty)	12.0	$7,674,390 – $22,182,470	$21,100 – $39,600
ADT (West Liberty Portions)	1.04	$664,560 – $1,920,880	$1,800 – $3,400
ADT (West Liberty to Cedar County Line)	4.93	$3,150,270 – $9,105,710	$8,600 – $16,300
ADT (Total)	**47.18**	**$30,148,020 – $87,141,460**	**$83,100 – $155,700**
MRT			
MRT (Scott County line to City of Muscatine)	12.79	$8,172,810 – $23,623,130	$22,500 – $42,200
MRT (Deep Lakes Park to Louisa County Line)	4.73	$3,022,470 – $8,736,310	$8,300 – $15,600
MRT (Total)	**17.52**	**$11,195,280 – $32,359,440**	**$30,800 – $57,800**
Cody Trail			
Long Grove to McCausland	9.95	$6,358,050– $18,377,650	$17,500 – $32,800
McCausland to Argo (MPO Boundary)	7.74	$4,945,860– $14,295,780	$16,600 – $25,500
Cody Trail (Total)	**17.69**	**$11,303,910– $32,673,430**	**$31,200 – $58,400**
Other Regional Trails			
Wilton to Muscatine	8.8	$5,623,200 – $16,253,600	$15,500 – $29,000
Walcott to Buffalo	8.59	$5,489,010 – $15,865,730	$15,100 – $28,300

Conclusion

Within the Region 9 Planning Area, improvements are desired to enhance the multipurpose trail and pedestrian network. Planners and engineers from the communities, the Department of Transportation, and other agencies are encouraged to maintain regular communication to facilitate these efforts. Information on trail and bikeway development needs to be made easily accessible and shared freely in order to align with adopted plans, or referenced, before the initial design work begins. Consideration should always be given to provisions for multipurpose trails and pedestrian accessibility when designing new roadways or upgrading existing ones.

The Region 9 Planning Area will continue to design and build its multipurpose trails and pedestrian network to meet ADA compliance. Alternative transportation projects must be inclusive of all demographic groups, but especially the growing senior population, people with special needs or disabilities, as well as any other person or group that may utilize non-motorized or alternative transportation. For trail and bikeway system to meet user needs, these groups are encouraged to be involved in the planning, designing, and implementation of trail and pedestrian projects.