



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Evansville Trail Project Moves Forward

Evansville Area Trails Coalition & Evansville Coordinate Successful Next Level Trails Grant Application for Wesselman Park Loop Trail Project, \$2-Million Dollar Award

EVANSVILLE, INDIANA – The Evansville Area Trails Coalition (ETC) and Evansville Department of Parks & Recreation (DPR) are elated to announce the successful Next Level Trail (NLT) Grant award to upgrade and build new trail sections that will link multiple parks, including the Roberts Festival Grounds and Wesselman Park.

Led by ETC's Executive Director, Lorie Van Hook, in collaboration and partnership with the DPR, the grant proposal was submitted earlier this year and has now received approval from the Indiana Department of Natural Resources. Van Hook conveyed appreciation, stating, "We are thrilled to be the recipients of the NLT Grant, enabling us to make a lasting contribution to our community. This funding empowers us to establish a trail connection that fosters well-being, recreation, and improvements to our built environment. We eagerly anticipate the exciting upcoming phases of turning this vision into reality."

As a key component of the Wesselman Park Master Plan, the project has garnered enthusiastic support from Mayor Lloyd Winnecke, who emphasized the significance of connected green space, by stating, "This initiative represents a significant step towards creating a more vibrant, healthy, and connected community, fostering outdoor activities, alternative transportation, and the trails that provide connections to develop a continuous trail system network."

A celebration event with Governor Eric Holcomb in LaCrosse, IN, was held Wednesday, December 20, 2023 at 2 p.m. The NLT grant, secured through a competitive application process, will fund the development and improvement of the 2+-mile Wesselman Park Loop Trail connecting to the Walnut Street Improvement Project at Vann Avenue, providing connections to Woodmere Park, Wesselman Park, the Roberts Festival Grounds, Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve, downtown Evansville and the Greenway Riverfront segments.

The trail project is slated to begin in 2024 and is expected to be completed by 2026. Throughout the process, ETC will work closely with the City of Evansville and community members to ensure the successful realization of this transformative project.

ETC and the DPR extends their heartfelt appreciation to Indiana Governor, Eric Holcomb, Indiana Department of Natural Resources and Trail Department, Mayor Winnecke, former Deputy Mayor/Department of Parks Executive Director, Steve Schaefer, and the entire Evansville community of Trailblazers for their support. Together, we look forward to creating a legacy that enhances the quality of life and place for generations to come.

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About Evansville Area Trails Coalition:

ETC is a nonprofit organization dedicated to its mission to *Connect People and Places, Promote Active Living, and Advocate for the Development of Multiuse Trails*. Since 2008, ETC has been committed to making a positive impact in the community through various initiatives, programs, and projects. ETC aims to connect communities, advocate for multi-use trails, and champion active living through experiential programs and initiatives. Their primary goal orbits around enhancing trails for both recreational and transportation purposes, coupled with a commitment to sustainability and stewardship. ETC endeavors to expand the Evansville Greenway locally and regionally through partnership and collaboration. Learn more at www.walkbikeevv.org

About Evansville Department of Parks and Recreation:

Committed to establishing, fostering, and conserving dynamic parks and green spaces, the Evansville Department of Parks and Recreation stands as a beacon for quality of life. Their mission champions a blend of fun, fitness, and education for all Evansville residents.