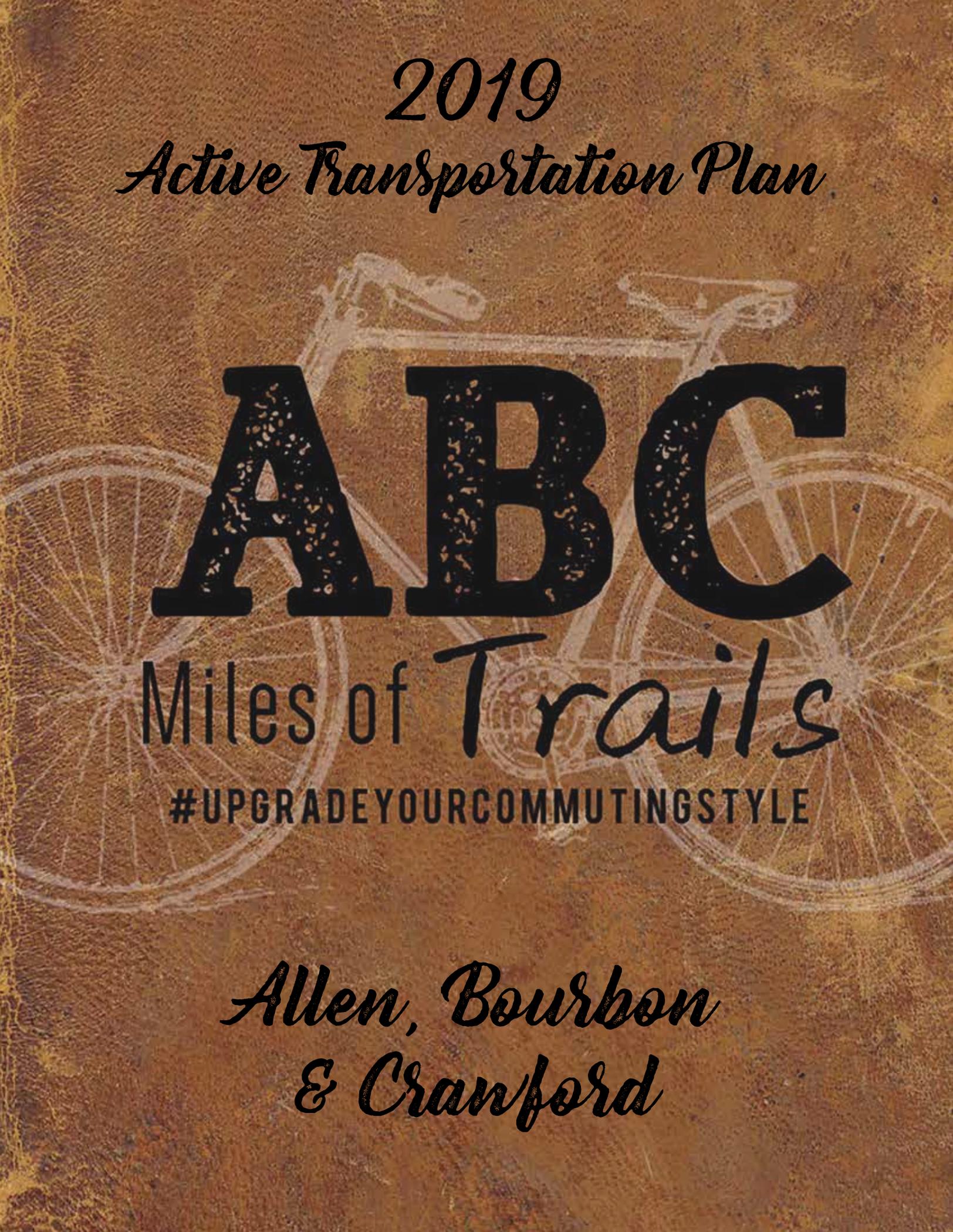


2019
Active Transportation Plan

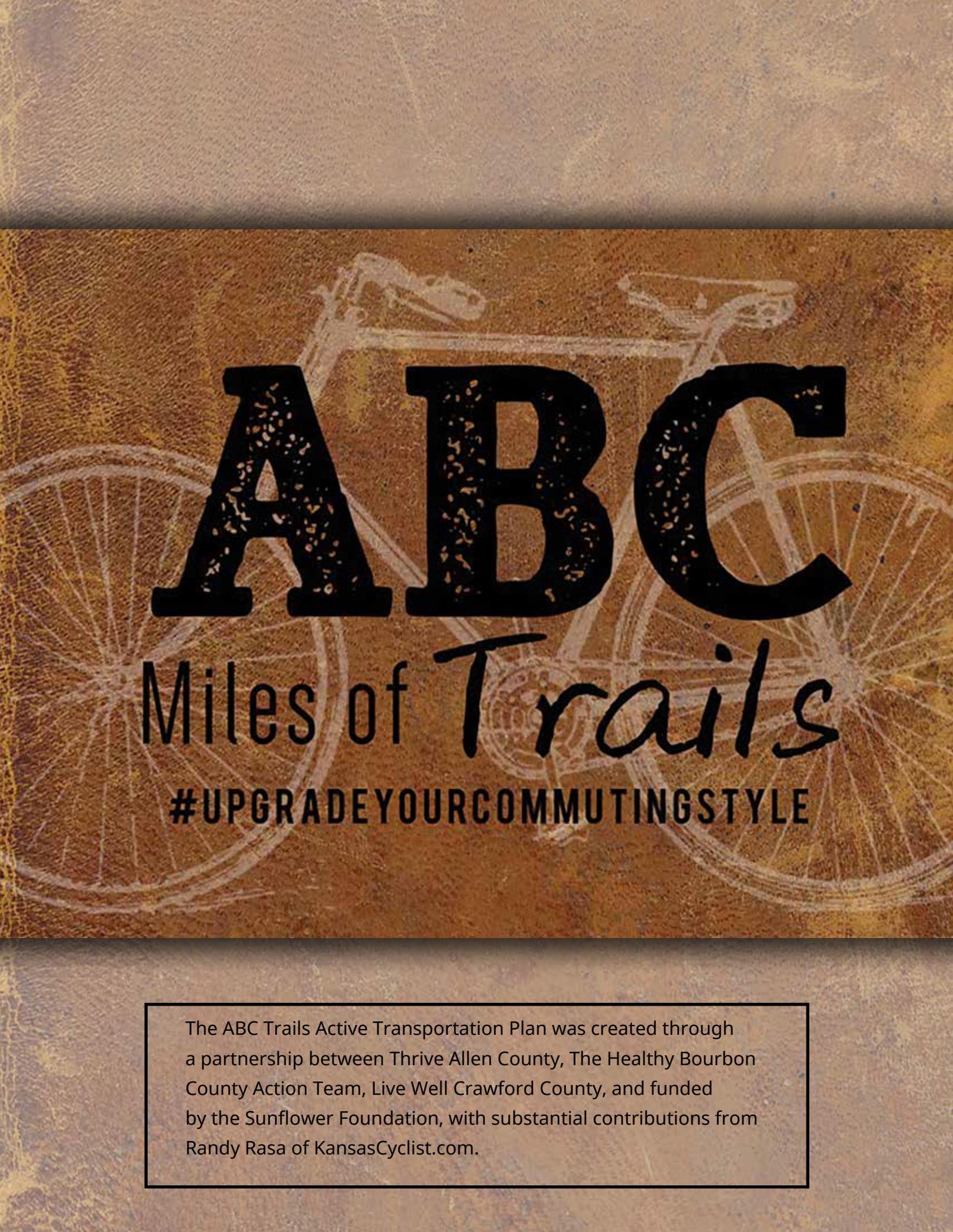


ABC

Miles of *Trails*

#UPGRADEYOURCOMMUTINGSTYLE

*Allen, Bourbon
& Cranford*

A chalk-drawn bicycle is centered on a textured, brownish-gold background. The bicycle is drawn in a light, sketchy style, showing the frame, wheels, handlebars, and pedals. The background has a mottled, paper-like texture with some darker and lighter patches of brown and gold.

ABC

Miles of *Trails*

#UPGRADEYOURCOMMUTINGSTYLE

The ABC Trails Active Transportation Plan was created through a partnership between Thrive Allen County, The Healthy Bourbon County Action Team, Live Well Crawford County, and funded by the Sunflower Foundation, with substantial contributions from Randy Rasa of KansasCyclist.com.

ABC Active Transportation Plan

Introduction

Allen County, Bourbon County, and Crawford County (“ABC”) is actively working to improve the bicycling and walking environment to improve access to opportunities for physical activity, enhance quality of life, and encourage economic growth. Each community recognizes that active transportation – biking and walking for transportation, as well as outdoor recreation – impacts our lives in a number of important ways. Research, such as the cost benefit analysis “The Potential Trail Benefits for Bourbon County, Kansas,” (Robb, 2017) has shown trails to do more than add to community’s appeal as a place to live, such as:

- Increased sales for existing businesses
- Opportunities for new business
- Increased value and speed of sale of nearby properties
- Reduced medical costs from healthy activities
- Business location and relocation decisions
- Healthcare insurance decisions
- Addresses rural transportation issues
- Low or no-cost recreational opportunity
- Attracts and retains a skilled and unskilled workforce
- It helps lower transportation costs, both for individuals and for communities as a whole;
- Provides attractions for visitors

Each county has focused on individual investments in planning and infrastructure. Until now, there has not been a larger vision of a Regional Active Transportation Plan with connections between the three communities. This Plan seeks to provide that vision, and become a resource for future planning, investments, and development. Formal adoption of the Plan by the three county’s commissioners improves upon chances of receiving funding through state, federal, and foundation resources.

It is called the “ABC Plan” not only because it applies to Allen, Bourbon, and Crawford Counties, but because, just as learning their ABC’s is a basic building block of a child’s educational journey, this plan is a basic building block in the journey towards an active population, a robust and diversified economy, and a sustainable culture of health.

While the ABC Plan concentrates on Allen, Bourbon, and Crawford counties, it is important to take note of the regional, state, and national trails and routes. Creating this plan and documenting these connections will make it easier for our region to be a part of these larger networks, ensuring our communities are not left out, and making it easier for people to visit.

About The ABC Plan

This plan contains both short-term and long-term goals. The short-term goals are concrete steps that the three counties can take, right now, to make it safer and more attractive for residents and visitors to recreate or travel by bicycle. The long-term goals are concepts for projects that may take five, ten, twenty or more years to come to fruition, but have the potential to have large positive impacts on our physical and economic health. The long-term goals may seem ambitious, but establishing them as part of this plan is the first step to making them reality.

The short-term goals are, by and large, things that do not require large investments in time or money but do require commitment and cooperation between the three counties. The short-term goals are:

- Identify and designate bicycle routes between the major communities in each county – Iola, Fort Scott, and Pittsburg – and add consistent wayfinding signs and markings along these routes.
- Install signs and markings identifying United States Bicycle Route 76 (USBR76) in Crawford County, and a USBR76 Alternate Route in Crawford, Bourbon, and Allen Counties.
- Install signs to help educate drivers about Kansas’ three-foot passing law, which was signed by Governor Brownback in 2011 to help improve safety on Kansas roadways.
- Create a website to document bicycle routes, day trips, and resources in our region, and promote trails, events, and bicycling culture within the three counties.
- Create and print a paper brochure, for distribution through each of the local chamber of commerces, visitor centers, museums, shops, and motels, briefly describing bicycling opportunities in the counties, and pointing visitors to a website for detailed information.
- Establish a standing committee, consisting of commission-appointed representatives from each county, to continue the work of implementing and fleshing out the strategic plan.

It is anticipated that the majority of funding for the short-term goals will be procured through grants and private sources.

The long-term goals can be described under several broad categories:

- Singletrack: Adding additional singletrack trails for mountain biking, hiking, trail running, and nature walks will both improve each county’s attractiveness to visitors, and increase the opportunities for recreation for residents.
- Rail-Trails: There are a number of rail-trail projects that are possible. Rail-trails function as both recreational amenities and transportation infrastructure, providing comfortable and scenic routes safe from automobile traffic.
- Historic Trails: Identify routes that follow historic trails that have passed through the counties, including the Pike National Historic Trail, the Frontier Military Historic Byway, the Jefferson Highway Trail, and the King of Trails Route. Historic trails provide a down-to-earth way to learn about the region’s rich history, and experience the landscapes of these routes.
- Bicycle Touring and Bikepacking Routes: These routes would be used by people traveling on multi-day bike trips, including people who drive to the region to explore, and those on cross-state or cross-country tours, on both both paved and unpaved routes. There is a quickly-growing network of routes, documented primarily online, and followed by thousands of people every year.

A Broader Context For This Plan

The ABC Plan is not a document that has been developed in isolation. It builds on previous planning documents, such as the Vision Iola Plan, the Crawford County Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, the City of Girard Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, the City of Pittsburg Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, the Bourbon County Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, Kansas Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan, and the Kansas Statewide Rail-to-Trails Plan.

In addition, several of the long-term goals of this plan are inspired by the Travel Industry of Kansas’ recommendations to the Kansas Governor for the state to enhance its active tourism opportunities by investing in development of non-motorized trails along Kansas Scenic and Historic Byways, and along the routes of Historic Trails that pass through the state. Tourism is the third-largest industry in Kansas, in terms of employment, and annually pumps over \$7.2 billion into the state economy.

Communities in nearby states have made significant investments in trails and active transportation. Studies have revealed:

- \$18.6 million annual economic impact of the Katy Trail in Missouri
- \$137 million annual economic impact for mountain bike trails in Northwest Arkansas
- \$1.5 billion annual economic impact for bicycling in Wisconsin
- \$365 million annual economic impact for bicycling in Iowa
- \$1.6 billion annual economic and health benefit of Bicycling and Walking in Colorado

The state of Iowa recognized the economic importance of trails to such an extent that the Iowa Department of Transportation produced the “Handbook for Iowa Communities: Implementing Trail-Based Economic Development Programs.”

A 2018 article in a leading cycling publication asked “Where Will The Bikepackers Go?”, noting that the past five years have seen a dramatic rise in the popularity of bikepacking, and the demand for new routes in all parts of the U.S. has trended up, and has created a pressing need for high-quality bikepacking routes.

Active Transportation Infrastructure

The following is a brief description of various types of active transportation infrastructure.

- **Sidewalks** – Sidewalks are paved paths located parallel to streets, for the preferential use of pedestrians. Bicycles are permitted on some sidewalks, but prohibited on others, according to local ordinances.
- **Sidepaths** – A sidepath is a paved path adjacent to a street, typically wider than a sidewalk, and intended for both pedestrian and bicycle traffic.
- **Bike Lanes** – A bike lane is a portion of a roadway set aside for the preferential use of bicycle traffic. The lane must be marked by signage and appropriate roadway markings. There are a number of types of bike lanes, identified by how much separation is provided between the bicycle lane and shared traffic lanes. At its simplest, the separation can be a painted line, but the separation may also include physical barriers such as curbs, bollards, or parked vehicles. Bike lanes are typically located on both sides of a roadway, but a bi-directional bike lane on one side of a roadway is also possible.
- **Sharrows** – A sharrow consists of a bicycle symbol and chevron arrows, painted within a shared traffic lane, and indicates to drivers that they should expect bicycle traffic, and indicates to bicyclists the appropriate place within the lane to ride.
- **Wide Shoulders** – The paved shoulders of a roadway may also be used by bicyclists and pedestrians, when available, and can facilitate safe active transportation, if unobstructed and of sufficient width.
- **Park Trails** – These are often located in city, county, or state parks, and often meander, intended more for recreation than transportation.
- **Rail-Trails** – A rails-to-trails project converts a railbanked railroad corridor into a multi-use trail, maintaining the right-of-way for possible future rail use, while providing a recreation and transportation corridor in the interim. A rail-trail may be paved or gravel-surfaced.
- **Singletrack** – Singletrack is a narrow natural-surface trail that is intended for hiking, trail running, or mountain biking. Singletrack uses the terrain, vegetation, and natural features of the land to create a scenic and challenging trail.
- **Nature Trails** – A nature trail is typically used to provide pedestrian access to natural areas such as gardens, prairies, or woodlands. The focus of a nature trail is on immersing the user in the environment. Nature trails may be singletrack, mown paths, or wood-chipped, gravel, or paved paths.
- **Hiking Trails** – Hiking trails are singletrack that is intended primarily (or solely) for pedestrians. Bicycle traffic may or may not be permitted.

- **Bicycle Routes** – A bicycle route is an on-street or on-road marked route for bicycle traffic. The route may be denoted by signs or sharrows. Bicycle routes may include city street networks, long-distance routes, or historic routes.
- **Equestrian Trails** – An equestrian trail is intended primarily for horseback riding, though pedestrian and bicycle traffic are also sometimes permitted.
- **Water Trails** – A water trail is a water route, for use by canoes, kayaks, and other human-powered watercraft. May be located on a stream, creek, river, or lake.

Existing Plans

- Vision Iola (2010)
<http://thriveallencounty.org/files/Vision-Iola-Master-Document.pdf>
- Crawford County Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (2017)
http://www.livewellcrawfordcounty.org/uploads/8/3/4/7/8347984/crawford_county_bicycle_and_pedestrian_master_plan.pdf
- City of Girard Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (2017)
<https://pednet.org/wp-content/uploads/Girard-Bike-Ped-Master-Plan-Compressed.pdf>
- City of Pittsburg Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (2017)
https://pednet.org/wp-content/uploads/Pittsburg-Bike_Ped.pdf
- Kansas Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan (1995)
<https://www.ksdot.org/Assets/wwwksdotorg/bureaus/burRail/bike/Documents/bikeplan1995.pdf>
- Bourbon County Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (2017)
<https://bourboncoplan.com/>
- Kansas Statewide Rail-to-Trails Plan (2013)
<http://www.kansascyclist.com/docs/KS-Statewide-Rail-Trails-Plan-2013.pdf>

Inventory

Trails and Infrastructure

The following is an inventory of existing trails and related infrastructure in Allen, Bourbon, and Crawford counties.

Allen County

Allen County has approximately 40 miles of existing trails, a mixture of rail-trail, singletrack, sidepaths, park paths, and on-street routes.

- **Prairie Spirit Trail**
The Prairie Spirit Trail is a 52-mile trail that connects Iola and Ottawa. Approximately 8 miles of the trail are in Allen County. It runs north from Iola to the Anderson County line. The Prairie Spirit Trail is a rails-to-trails project managed by the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks, and Tourism, as a Kansas State Park. The surface is limestone screenings, except for asphalt sections within the Iola city limits. The Prairie Spirit Trail connects to the Southwind Rail Trail and the Missouri Pacific Recreational Trail.
- **Southwind Rail Trail**
The Southwind Rail Trail connects the cities of Iola and Humboldt, about 6.5 miles along a former railroad corridor. Functionally, it is an extension of the Prairie Spirit Trail. The surface is limestone screenings.
- **Lehigh Portland Trails**
The Lehigh Portland Trails is a trail system located near Iola, on the site of a former cement plant. The system includes rail-trails, park trails, and singletrack, as well as creek and lake access for potential

water trails, and potential nature trails through restored prairie. The Lehigh Portland Trails connect to the Southwind Rail Trail and the Lola Bike Route Network. About 2.5 miles of gravel trails, and about 10 miles of singletrack.

- **Missouri Pacific Recreational Trail**

A paved rail-trail running east-west through Lola. It connects to the Prairie Spirit Trail and the Lola Bike Route Network. About 0.5 miles.

- **Centennial Trail**

The Centennial Trail is a short (0.25 miles) paved asphalt trail in Humboldt. The trail is located on the south side of town, and connects George Sweatt Park in the east with Centennial Park in the west.

- **Fees Park Trail**

The Walter and Helen Fees Memorial Park is a small city park in Gas, Kansas, featuring a 0.25-mile trail for walking and biking.

- **Allen Community College Fitness Trail**

The Allen Community College Trail meanders around Allen Community College athletic fields. The gravel trail is about 1 mile in length.

- **Neosho River Park Trail**

The Neosho River Park Trail is a 0.2-mile gravel path that winds along the Neosho River in Humboldt, with many native trees and flowers, and an impressive view of the low-water dam on the Neosho River.

- **Savonburg Old Swedish Trail**

The Savonburg Old Swedish Trail is a 1-mile paved route on city streets in Savonburg. The name pays homage to the ethnic origin of the community's original settlers.

- **La Harpe City Park Trail**

The La Harpe City Park Trail is a 0.3-mile gravel trail located in La Harpe's city park.

- **State Street Trail**

A 0.8-mile concrete sidepath connecting Cofachique Park (and the Prairie Spirit Trail) to Lola's northern commercial and industrial district.

- **Miller Road Trail**

An Lola 0.5-mile concrete sidepath that connects the Prairie Spirit Trail to residential neighborhoods, employment, recreation, shopping, and dining opportunities.

- **Lola Bike Route Network**

Lola has a small bike route network of about 2 miles, connecting the Prairie Spirit Trail, the Southwind Rail Trail, the Lehigh Portland Trails, the Missouri Pacific Recreational Trail, and downtown Lola, along city streets marked with sharrows.

- **Humboldt Bike Route Network**

The Humboldt bike route network is a signed bicycle route on city streets, connecting parks, schools, and downtown. About 5 miles.

Bourbon County

Bourbon County has approximately 13 miles of existing trails, primarily singletrack, sidepaths, and park paths (not counting the ORV jeep trails at Kansas Rocks Recreation Park).

- **Kansas Rocks Recreation Park**

A 380-acre commercial park with over 60 miles of trails. The trails are primarily intended for off-road motor vehicles, but may also be used for hiking and mountain biking.

<http://www.ksrockspark.com/>

- **Uniontown Walking Trail**

A 1.3-mile gravel path around Uniontown schools.

<https://www.getoutdoorskansas.org/trails/uniontown-walking-trail>

- **Belltown Trail**

Located on the north side of the Marmaton River in Fort Scott, the Belltown Trail is a paved path that loops around Riverfront Park for about 0.5 miles.

<https://www.getoutdoorskansas.org/trails/fort-scott-belltown-trail>

- **River Loop Road**
Located on the south side of the Marmaton River in Fort Scott, River Loop Road is an on-street route shared with motor vehicle traffic. About 1.3 miles.
<https://www.getoutdoorskansas.org/trails/ft-scott-river-loop-road-path>
- **Ellis Park Trail**
A 0.75-mile paved trail at Ellis Park in Fort Scott.
<https://www.getoutdoorskansas.org/trails/ft-scott-ellis-park-path>
- **Fort Scott Community College Trail**
A 0.5-mile paved multi-use path around a small lake at Fort Scott Community College.
<https://www.getoutdoorskansas.org/trails/ft-scott-community-college-walking-trail>
- **Fort Scott Sports Field Path**
A 0.75-mile paved walking path at Fort Scott Community College.
<https://www.getoutdoorskansas.org/trails/ft-scott-sports-field-path>

Crawford County

Crawford County has approximately 63 miles of existing routes and trails, with the biggest portion of that being US Bicycle Route 76, and the remainder a mixture of rail-trail, singletrack, sidepaths, park paths, and on-street routes.

- **Wilderness Park Trails**
About 4 miles of gravel paths and singletrack on the northside of Pittsburg.
<https://www.getoutdoorskansas.org/trails/wilderness-park-trails>
- **23rd Street Bike Park**
A small network of about 4 miles of singletrack for hiking, trail running, and mountain biking, in Pittsburg. Includes a pump track.
<https://www.getoutdoorskansas.org/trails/23rd-street-bike-park>
- **Watco Rail Trail**
A paved rail-trail through west-central Pittsburg. 1 mile.
<https://www.getoutdoorskansas.org/trails/watco-rail-trail>
- **Pittsburg Bike Route Network**
Bike lane on city streets, including 4th Street and Jefferson Street.
- **Crawford State Park Trails**
Crawford State Park, located near Farlington, offers about 7 miles of nature trails and singletrack, for hiking, biking, and mountain biking
<https://www.getoutdoorskansas.org/trails/networks/crawford-state-park-trails>
- **United States Bicycle Route 76**
USBR 76, also known as the TransAmerica Bicycle Trail, is a cross-country bicycle touring route that runs for over 4,000 miles from Astoria OR to Yorktown VA. In Crawford County, the route follows paved roads, from Walnut, through Girard, and through Pittsburg. About 40 miles.
- **Carbon Street Path**
A paved off-road path in Girard, from Winston Park to the high school, about 0.7 miles.
<https://www.getoutdoorskansas.org/trails/girard-carbon-street-path>
- **Prairie Street Path**
A paved sidepath from downtown Girard to the elementary school, about 0.5 miles.
<https://www.getoutdoorskansas.org/trails/girard-prairie-street-path>
- **East-West Connector Trail**
Rail trail connecting Schlanger Park with Watco Rail Trail. About 1.1 miles.
<https://www.getoutdoorskansas.org/trails/pittsburg-east-west-connector-trail>
- **Schlanger Park Path**
Paved 0.4-mile trail in park.
<https://www.getoutdoorskansas.org/trails/schlanger-park-path>

- **Pittsburg High School Trail**
0.5-mile paved sidepath along south side of 4th Street from High School to nearby neighborhoods.
<https://www.getoutdoorskansas.org/trails/pittsburg-high-school-trail>
- **Lakeside Park Trail**
A 0.5-mile paved path around lake in Pittsburg.
<https://www.getoutdoorskansas.org/trails/pittsburg-lakeside-park-trail>
- **Centennial Drive Path**
A 1.4-mile paved sidepath along Centennial Drive connecting to Joplin Street Bike Path and University Trail in Pittsburg.
<https://www.getoutdoorskansas.org/trails/pittsburg-centennial-drive-path>
- **Ford Avenue Path**
A 1.1-mile paved sidepath along Ford Avenue from Rouse Avenue to Broadway Street on the south side of the University campus in Pittsburg.
<https://www.getoutdoorskansas.org/trails/pittsburg-ford-avenue-path>
- **Joplin Street Path**
A 0.9-mile paved sidepath along east side of Joplin Street from campus to shopping center in Pittsburg.
<https://www.getoutdoorskansas.org/trails/pittsburg-joplin-street-bike-path>

Existing Events

Allen County

- Biblesta Run for the Son - 3K Walk and 5K Run, part of the Biblesta festival in Humboldt
2018-10-06
- Humboldt Breast Cancer 3k Walk/ 5k Run
2018-04-14
- Jingle Bell Jog - Iola
2018-12-15
- Portland Alley Pedalfest - Iola bike ride (retired)
- Mad Bomber Run - Iola running race (retired)

Bourbon County

- Marmaton Massacre - Mountain bike race at Gunn Park in Fort Scott
2018-07-07
- Tri-Yak-a-thon - Mountain bike, trail run, kayak event at Gunn Park in Fort Scott
2018-10-13
- Zombie Chase/Werewolf Attack 5K Run/1-Mile Walk - Fort Scott
2018-10-26
- Oz-Somesauce - Gunn Park in Fort Scott, 5K, 10K, Half Marathon, Marathon, Ultra-Marathon
2018-09-15

Crawford County

- Gorilla Century - Bicycle ride in Pittsburg
2018-09-01
- Paint the Town Red 5K - Running race in Pittsburg
2018-09-01
- Arma VJ Homecoming 5K and Kids Fun Run
2018-08-11
- Strong Legs Run 5K - Pittsburg
2018-07-28
- Cheer Pitt Spirit Run 5K - Pittsburg
2018-04-06
- Gorilla Grind 5K - Pittsburg
2018-10-20

Points of Interest

“Points of Interest” are places that would be attractive to visitors: parks, historic sites, museums, galleries, shopping, etc.

Allen County

- Allen County Historical Society Museum
- Funston Home
- Russell Stover Candies
- Humboldt Museum
- Humboldt Neosho River Park
- Bike Shop (Southwind Cycle and Outdoor)
- Humboldt Camp Hunter (camping)
- Lehigh Portland Trails (camping)
- Iola RV Park (camping)
- Bowlus Fine Arts Center

Bourbon County

- Fort Scott National Cemetery
- Gordon Parks Museum
- Fort Scott National Historic Site
- Bourbon State Fishing Lake (camping)
- Hollister Wildlife Area
- Lake Fort Scott
- Rock Creek Lake
- Cedar Creek Lake
- Elm Creek Lake
- Lake Frances (camping)
- Gunn Park (camping)
- Boiler Room Brew Haus

Crawford County

- Crawford County Historical Museum
- Big Brutus
- Miner’s Hall Museum
- Crawford State Park (camping)
- Pittsburg State University
- Bone Creek Lake
- Mined Land Wildlife Area
- Bike Shop (Tailwind Cyclists)



Regional Destinations

- Katy Trail (Clinton MO) - rail-trail
- Mine Creek Battlefield Park (Pleasanton KS) - museum, nature trails
- Prairie State Park (Liberal MO)
- Route 66, USBR-66 (Galena KS, Joplin MO) - bicycle touring route
- Neosho Wildlife Area (St Paul KS)
- Martin and Osa Johnson Safari Museum (Chanute) - museum
- Cross Timbers State Park (Toronto KS) - nature trails, singletrack, camping
- Fall River State Park (Fall River) - nature trails, singletrack, camping
- Elk City State Park (Independence) - hiking trails, singletrack, camping
- Big Hill Lake (Cherryvale) - horse trails, camping

Food/Water Resources

Allen, Bourbon, and Crawford counties are largely rural, and as such, finding places to get food and water (and restrooms) during long rides can be an issue. The larger communities (Fort Scott, Iola, Pittsburg) have numerous options, but many small towns have no retail businesses or public services. Here is a rough list of where to restock in the three counties:

Allen County:

- Humboldt: C-stores, grocery, parks (seasonal water)
- Gas: C-store
- La Harpe: City Hall (limited hours), vending machines
- Moran: C-store, grocery, city hall, library, park (seasonal water)
- Mildred: Grocery
- Elsmore, Petrolia: No services
- Savonburg: Community center/library, vending machine

Bourbon County:

- Bronson: City hall, library, park (seasonal water), vending machine
- Uniontown: C-store, park (seasonal water)
- Devon, Fulton, Garland, Hiattville, Mapleton, Marmaton, Redfield: No services

Crawford County:

- Arcadia: City Park
- Mulberry: City Hall, City Hall
- Arma: Market, City Park, Restaurants
- Franklin: Community Center
- Frontenac: Restaurants
- C-Store

Project Highlights

The following pages contain short summaries of planned short-term and long-term active transportation projects in Allen, Bourbon, and Crawford Counties.

County	Short-Term Projects	Long-Term Projects
Allen County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fort Scott ⇄ Iola Bicycle Route ● Pittsburg ⇄ Iola Bicycle Route ● USBR76 Alternative Bicycle Route ● Safe Passing Awareness Education ● Lehigh Portland Trail Improvements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lehigh Portland Trail Improvements ● Southwind - Western Sky Connector ● US Bicycle Route 55 ● King of Trails Bikepacking Route ● Neosho Grand Trail ● Pike National Trail ● Humboldt Riverfront Trails ● MoPac Trail

<p>Bourbon County</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fort Scott ⇌ Iola Bicycle Route • Fort Scott ⇌ Pittsburg Bicycle Route • USBR76 Alternative Bicycle Route • Safe Passing Awareness Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frontier Military Historic Byway Trail • Jefferson Highway Trail • Pike National Trail • Bourbon State Fishing Lake Singletrack • Kansas Rocks Singletrack • MoPac Trail • Old Picher Pike Trail • MKT East Trail • Katy Trail Connection
<p>Crawford County</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fort Scott ⇌ Pittsburg Bicycle Route • Pittsburg ⇌ Iola Bicycle Route • USBR76 Wayfinding • USBR76 Alternative Bicycle Route • Watco Trail Extension 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frontier Military Historic Byway Trail • Jefferson Highway Trail • Mined Land Trails



Fort Scott ⇄ Iola Bicycle Route

Description: A designated bicycle route between Fort Scott and Iola, on low-traffic rural roads, using wayfinding signs and roadway markings. Approximately 43 miles, from downtown Fort Scott to downtown Iola. Mostly asphalt, using Nebraska Road in Allen County, and Old 54 Highway in Bourbon County. There is a 5-mile section of gravel between La Harpe and Moran. Services in Uniontown, Bronson, and Moran.

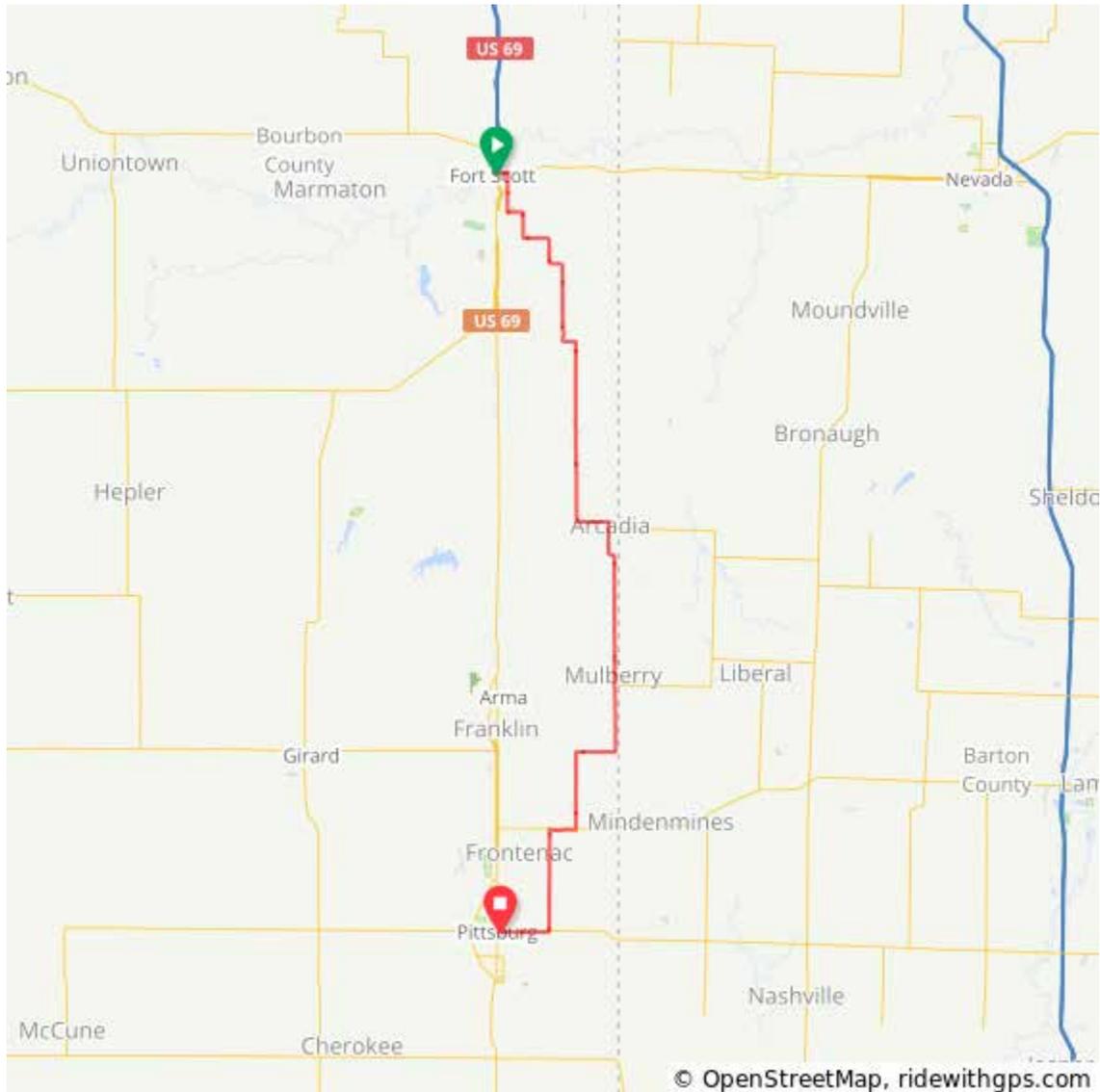
Route map:



Fort Scott ⇄ Pittsburg Bicycle Route

A designated bike route connecting Fort Scott and Pittsburg, on low-traffic rural roads, using wayfinding signs and roadway markings. Approximately 39 miles, from downtown Fort Scott to downtown Pittsburg. Services in Arcadia and Mulberry.

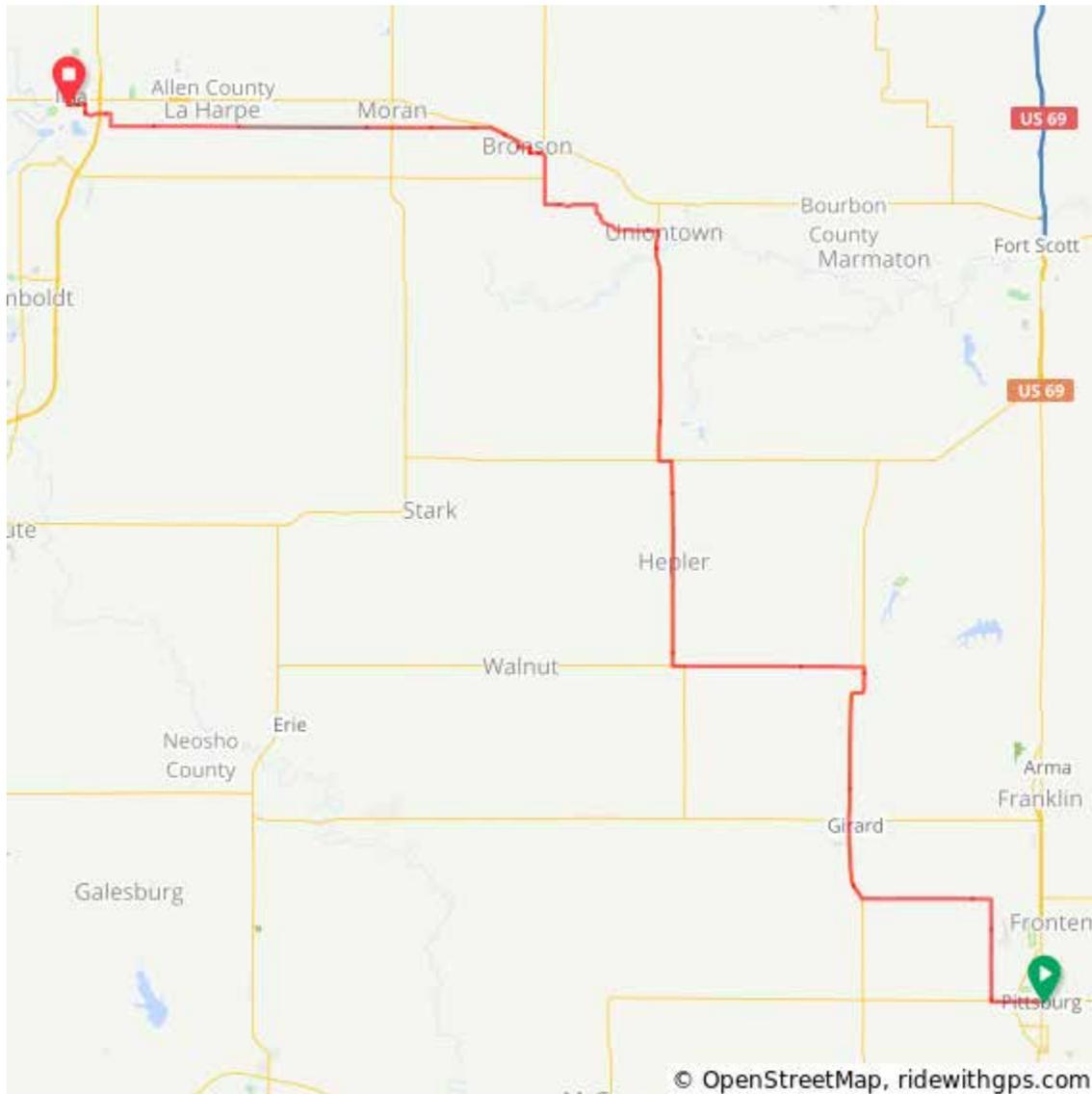
Route map:



Pittsburg ⇄ Iola Bicycle Route

A designated bike route connecting Pittsburg and Iola, on low-traffic rural roads, using wayfinding signs and roadway markings. Approximately 73 miles, from downtown Pittsburg to downtown Iola. The route is mostly paved, and uses a portion of US Bicycle Route 76. Includes about 5 miles of gravel, between Moran and La Harpe. Services in Girard, Uniontown, and Moran.

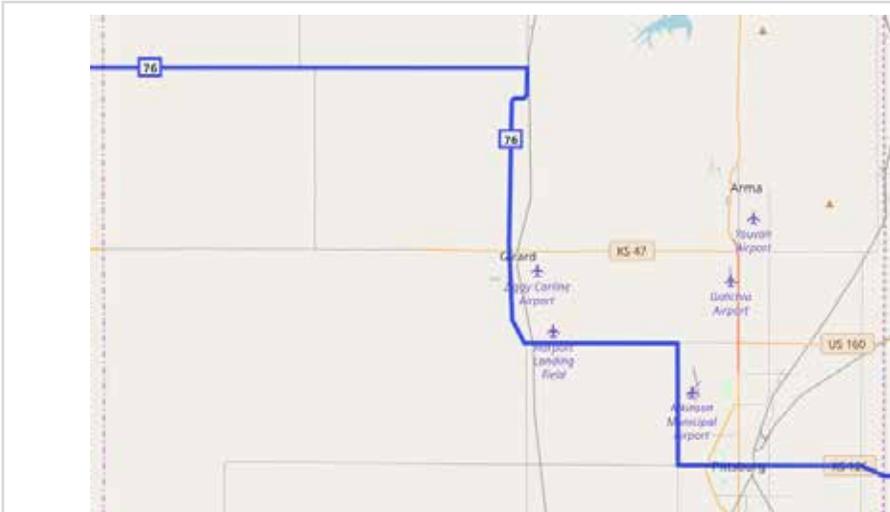
Route map:



US Bicycle Route 76 Wayfinding

United States Bicycle Route 76 (USBR76), also known as the “TransAmerica Trail”, is a national cross-country bicycle route, running from Yorktown VA to Astoria OR (4223 miles). Within Kansas, it has been designated as a bicycle route by the Kansas Department of Transportation. A portion of the route runs through Crawford County (Pittsburg, Girard, Walnut). Although the route is designated, and appears on some paper and online maps, it is not well-marked. Within Crawford County, it is not marked at all. A few other Kansas counties (Barton, Harvey) have taken the initiative to sign the route. Signing the route will help bicycle travelers find their way, raise public awareness of the route, and improve safety.

The ABC Plan calls for signage at regular intervals along the route, as well as roadway markings.



Route map



Example of signage

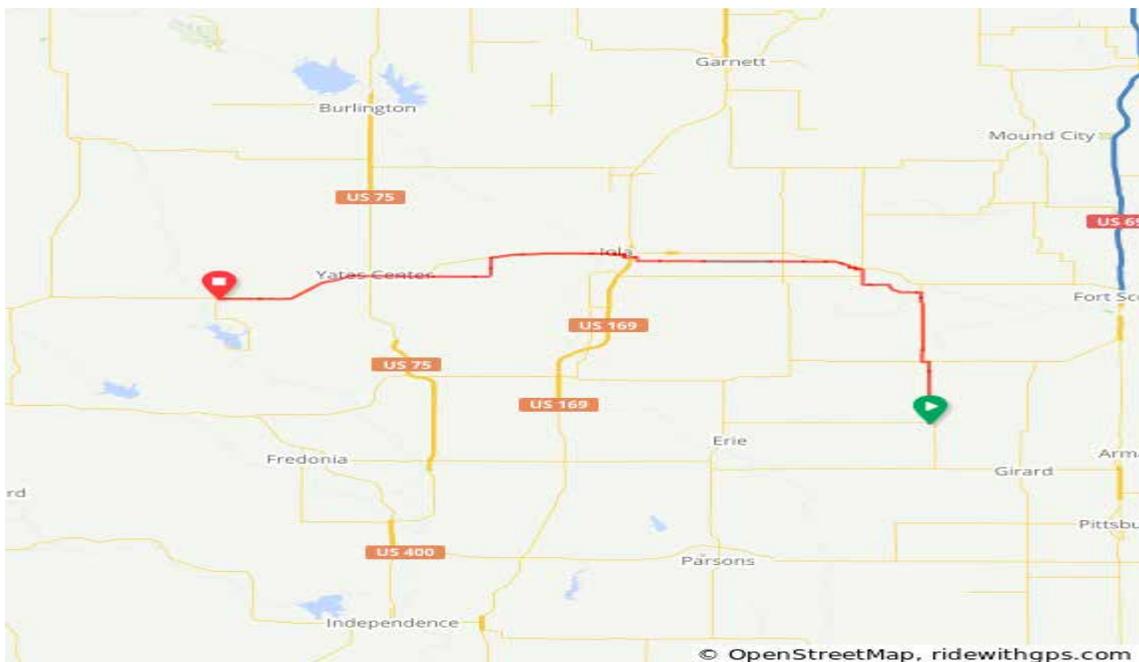


US Bicycle Route 76 Alternate Route

West of Crawford County, the existing USBR76 continues into Neosho County, passing through Chanute, then into Wilson and Woodson Counties. There are currently no traveler services along a 40-mile stretch between Chanute and Toronto.

In order to improve services available to bicycle travelers on USBR 76, this Plan proposes an alternate route through Uniontown, Moran, Iola, and Yates Center, utilizing low-traffic rural roads and highway shoulders. Each of the communities offers multiple options for food, supplies, and scenic and historical points of interest, as well as lodging opportunities in Iola and Yates Center.

This alternate route will improve safety and services for travelers, and provide economic benefits for the communities along the route. The portion of the route between Pittsburg and Iola co-exists with the designated Pittsburg ⇌ Iola Bicycle Route, and a portion of the Fort Scott ⇌ Iola Bicycle Route.



Safe Passing Awareness Education

In 2013, a “3-Foot Law” was enacted in Kansas, and signed by Governor Brownback. The law requires motor vehicles to pass bicyclists with at least three feet of clearance. The law is an attempt to improve safety for bicyclists using public roadways. However, public awareness of the law remains low, and the state has done very little to educate drivers about how to safely pass bicyclists. A few Kansas counties and communities (including Crawford County, as shown in the photo) have erected signs to educate the public about the law.

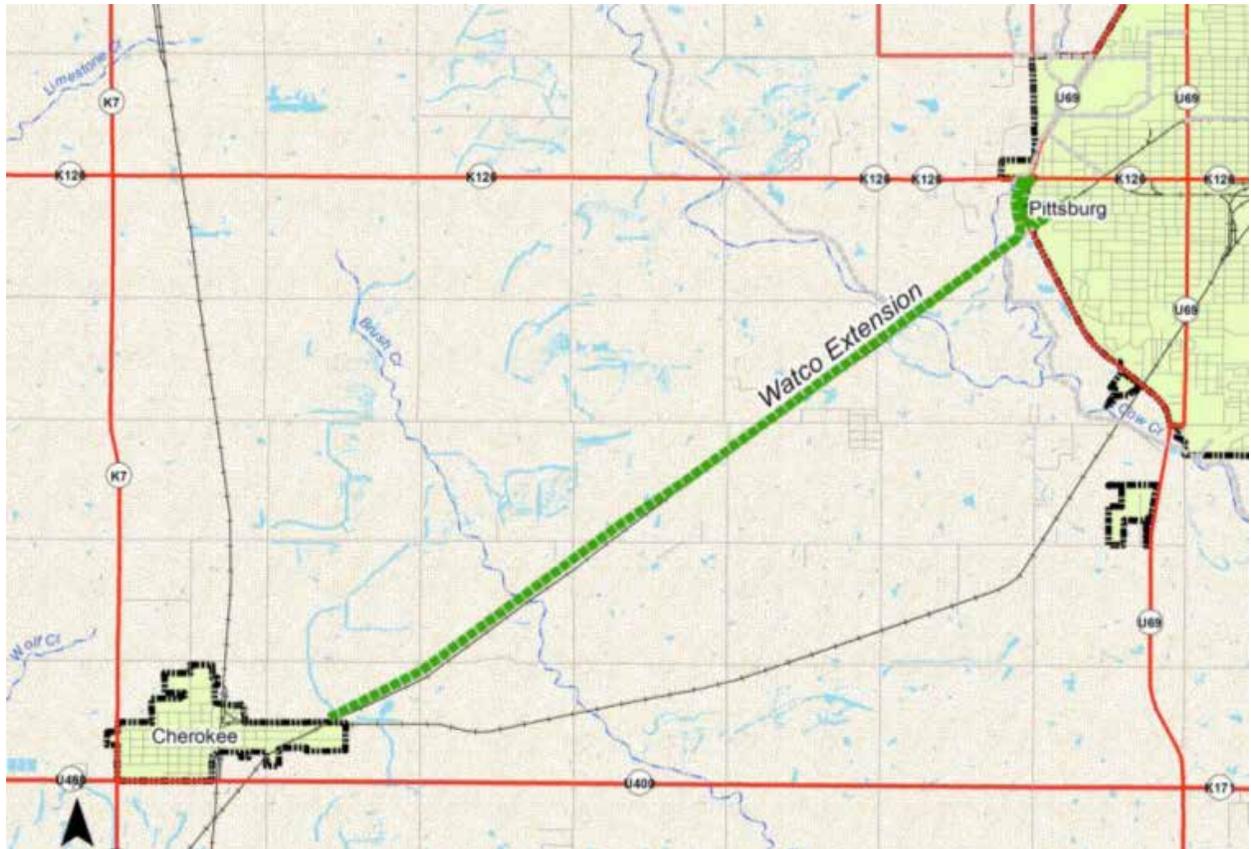


The ABC Plan recommends that Allen and Bourbon Counties follow Crawford County’s lead, and install safe passing signage along all paved roadways used by bicyclists, including designated bicycle routes.



Watco Trail Extension

The Watco Trail is currently a one-mile paved rail-trail within the city of Pittsburg. Plans are underway to extend the trail towards the southwest, past US-69 Highway, and on to the community of Cherokee. The total distance of the Extension will be approximately 7 miles, and will be primarily a limestone gravel surface.



Lehigh Portland Trails Improvements

The Lehigh Portland Trails have been rated one of the top trail systems in Kansas, but need some improvements to reach their full potential as both a recreational amenity for Allen County residents, and as a tourism draw.



In a 2018 community survey conducted by students from Kansas State University, the top requested amenity was restroom facilities, followed by covered shelters, water access, improved signage, and expanded parking.

In addition, the park offers significant potential as a regional educational resource, offering a unique opportunity for both outdoor classroom studies and self-guided studies of diverse natural environments, plants, and trees.

Short-term goals for the Lehigh Portland Trails include restroom facilities, additional shelters, water access, and additional trail mileage.

Long-term goals for the Lehigh Portland Trails include support for educational programs, including event facilities, prairie restorations, and natural environment improvements.



ABC Trails Tourism Resources

Allen, Bourbon, and Crawford County have made, and will continue to make, extensive investments in active transportation and recreation, especially trails and routes. These improvements are undertaken to serve local residents and have also shown to provide an important economic impact by attracting visitors to local regions. Visitors purchase food and beverages, lodging, and fuel, shop at retail outlets, and visit museums, galleries, and attractions. The region can capitalize on word of mouth marketing and directly benefit from visitors telling their friends and families about their experience in each of the communities and the trails. These shared experiences and positive references can certainly impact a person's tourism or relocation decisions.

Much of the tourism component depends on getting the word out. People will not visit unless they know about the long distance, historic, single track..opportunities, unless presented in the best possible light, and informed about all there is to offer. To make the most of the projects outlined in the ABC Plan, there are several strategies:

- Create a website to document bicycle routes, day trips, and resources in our region, and promote trails, events, and bicycling culture within the three counties.
- Create and print a paper brochure for distribution through each of the local chamber of commerce, statewide visitor centers, museums, shops, and hotels. The brochure will briefly describe bicycling opportunities in the counties and pointing visitors to the web site for detailed information.
- Update the major online mapping sites (OpenStreetMap, Google Maps, Bing Maps, Apple Maps, etc.) and biking/running/hiking route web sites (Bikepacking.com, BikepackingRoots.org, Bikepacking.net, MTBProject.com, HikingProject.com, TrailRunProject.com, TrailForks.com, AllTrails.com, Singletracks.com, etc.) to ensure the current and future trails and routes are visible and accurate.
- Manage social media for the ABC Trails (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.). Many of the larger trails have existing social media campaigns, but nothing ties them all together and amplifies the message.
- Manage print and online promotional activities.
- Write articles to market the ABC Trails to local, regional, and national publications, both print and web-based, especially those associated with bicycling, running, trails, and adventure.



ABC Trails Events

A comprehensive strategic marketing plan includes trail-focused events to promote tourism. Events are an excellent way to attract visitors, introduce them to trails and routes, and have shown to make a substantial economic impact on our communities.

Each of the three counties has a history of annual, and growing, biking and running events. The ABC Plan creates the opportunity to build upon the current foundation to create new events and showcase the region. The possibilities are innumerable, but a few ideas are:

- A 3-day weekend supported bicycle tour between Iola, Fort Scott, and Pittsburg, with the start city rotating year-to-year. The total distance would be approximately 150 miles, utilizing the designated bicycle routes between cities.
- A weekend mountain biking or trail running festival, on the existing (and planned) singletrack trail networks in Allen, Bourbon, and Crawford Counties, with the trails rotating year-to-year.
- A gravel race/ride through the three counties, with a rotating host community.

The key concepts here are that events visit each county, and that the “host(s)” rotate yearly, giving each community a chance to shine.



US Bicycle Route 55

The Adventure Cycling Association is leading the effort to establish a nationwide bicycle route network ([map](#)), primarily utilizing existing roads and trails. The north-south route through eastern Kansas has been given the route number "55".

The ABC Plan recommends that USBR55 utilize the Prairie Spirit Trail, the Southwind Rail Trail, and low-traffic rural roads through Allen County. USBR 55 is currently in the conceptual stage; Adventure Cycling is soliciting assistance from local groups to plan the route.

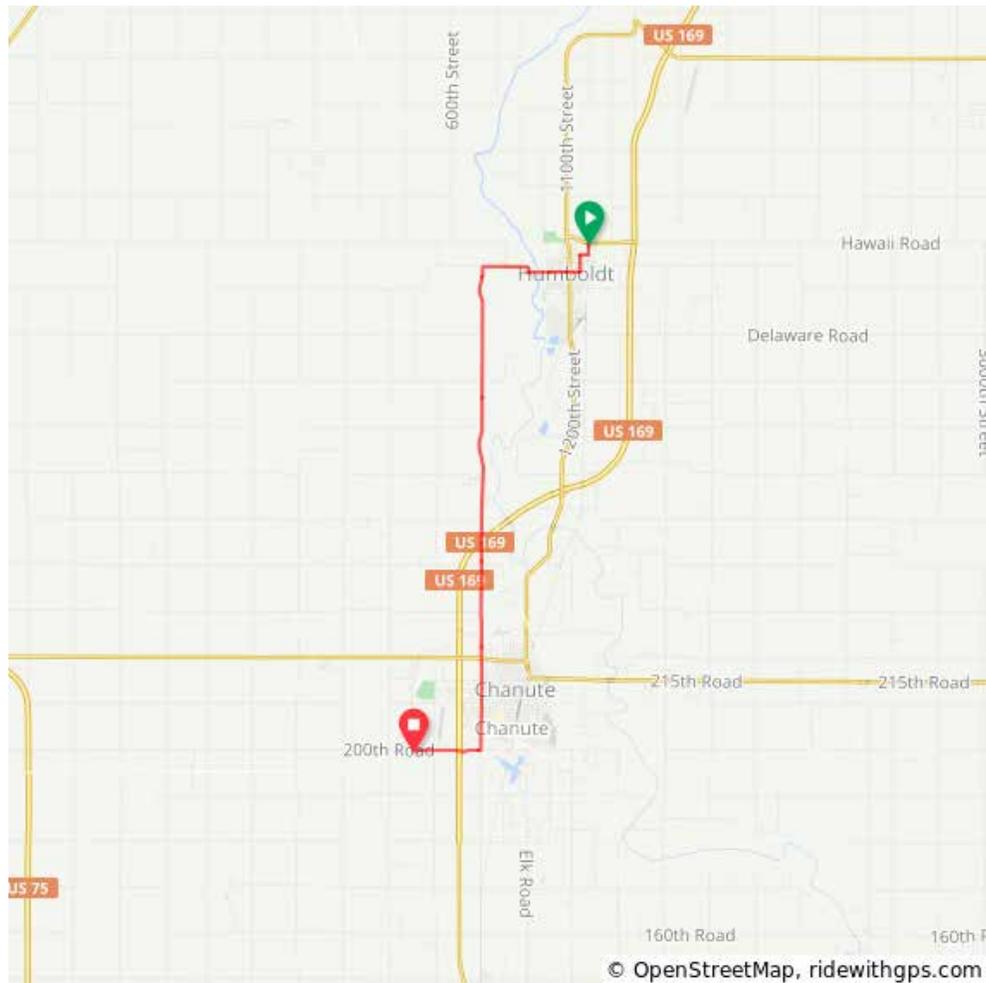
Project activities would involve route planning, coordinating with the Adventure Cycling Association and the Kansas Department of Transportation, and installation of wayfinding signage along the designated route.



Southwind - Western Sky Connector

The Western Sky Trail is a rail-trail between Chanute and Fredonia. The right-of-way has been railbanked, but has not yet been constructed. The Western Sky Trail will eventually connect to the proposed Iron Horse Trail between Fredonia and Augusta, and then to the Redbud Trail into Wichita. In Humboldt, the Southwind Rail Trail runs north to Iola, where it becomes the Prairie Spirit Trail, which connects to the Flint Hills Trail in Ottawa, with future connections planned to Kansas City, Lawrence, and Topeka.

The Southwind - Western Sky Connector Trail is one of the trail concepts called for in the 2013 Kansas Statewide Rail-to-Trails Plan. It is a critical “missing link” between Humboldt and Chanute, in what will eventually be a network of trails totalling well over 300 miles in length. The Connector would utilize low-traffic paved roads from Humboldt, through Petrolia, and into Chanute.



Frontier Military Historic Byway Trail

The Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism and the Kansas Department of Transportation have established the Frontier Military Historic Byway as one of three historic byways in the state. The route commemorates the Old Military Trail that connected Fort Leavenworth, Fort Scott, and Baxter Springs, along the Kansas/Missouri frontier border.



The official Byway is a highway route, largely unsuited to bicycle traffic. The Frontier Military Historic Byway Trail will utilize parallel paved and gravel roads to create a bicycle-friendly trail (or route) that connects the existing historic sites, points of interest, and traveler services.

Within Bourbon and Crawford Counties, the route would include the communities of Fulton, Fort Scott, Arcadia, Mulberry, and Pittsburg. Between Fort Scott and Pittsburg, it would follow the designated Fort Scott \rightleftharpoons Pittsburg Bicycle Route.

Project activities would involve route planning, coordinating with the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism and the Kansas Department of Transportation, coordinating with other Kansas Counties, and installation of wayfinding signage along the designated route.



King of Trails Bikepacking Route

In the days before numbered highways, routes were denoted by name. One such route was called the “King of Trails Highway”, and ran from Canada to Mexico, passing through Iowa, on what eventually became US-169 highway. The “King of Trails Bridge” in Iowa was named in honor of this historic route.



A designated and signed bicycle route, following the King of Trails Highway, could be a premier national cross-country bicycle touring or bikepacking route.

Within Allen County, the King of Trails Bikepacking Route would be largely contiguous with the proposed USBR55, and would utilize the Prairie Spirit Trail and Southwind Rail Trail.

Designating this as an official route would involve route planning, coordinating communities, counties, and states along the proposed route, as well as state DOTs and tourism departments.



Jefferson Highway Trail

Along with the King of Trails Highway, the Jefferson Highway was an original part of the National Auto Trail System, and was a cross-county north-south route connecting Winnipeg Canada to New Orleans LA. It was named in honor of President Thomas Jefferson. It was also known as the “Palms to Pines Highway”.



There were several competing “official” routes for the Jefferson Highway, one of which passed through Fort Scott and Pittsburg, roughly along the US-69 corridor.

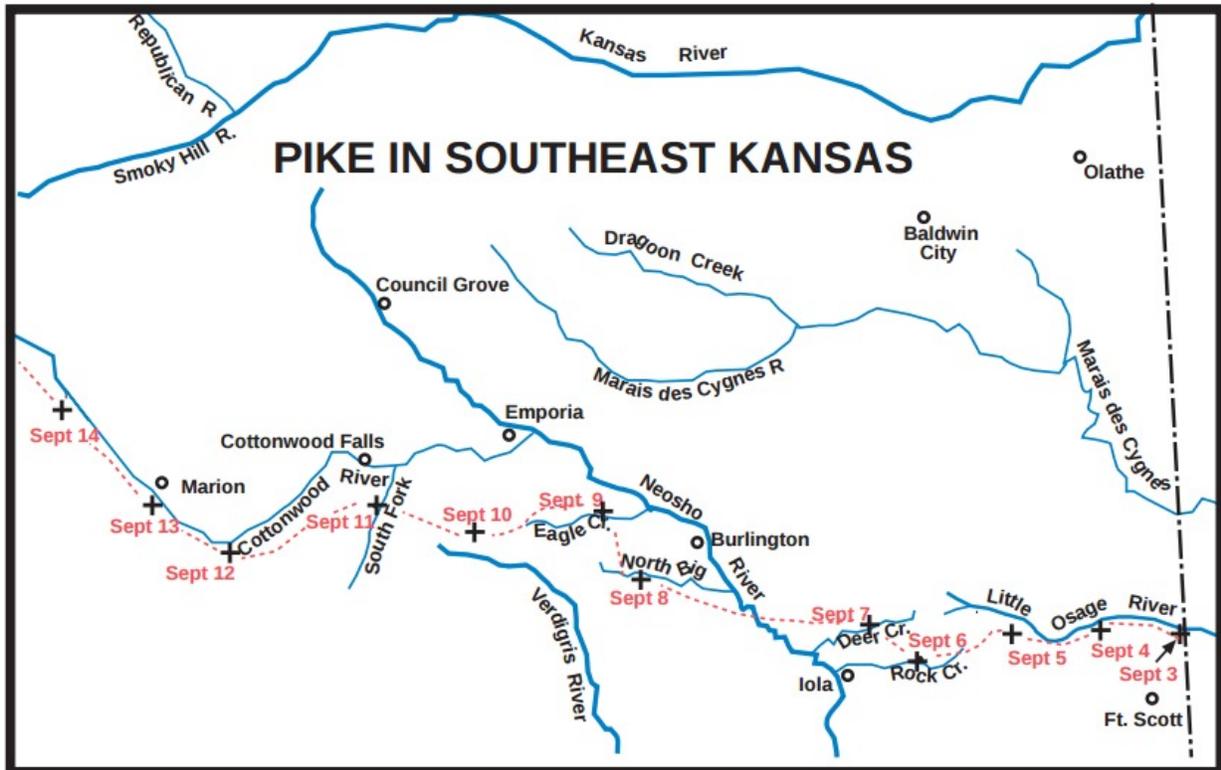
There is a national organization, the [Jefferson Highway Association](#), working to document and sign the historic route for automobile travelers. A bicycle route, utilizing the same or parallel roadways, could be an important national cross-country bicycle touring route.

Within Bourbon and Crawford Counties, the route would likely follow the designated Frontier Military Historic Byway Trail.

Project activities would involve route planning, coordinating with the Jefferson Highway Association, with the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism and the Kansas Department of Transportation, and installation of wayfinding signage along the designated route.

Zebulon Pike Historic Trail

In 1806, Zebulon Pike led an expedition to explore the American west. He started in St. Louis and traveled through Missouri, then entered Bourbon County north of present-day Fort Scott, following the Little Osage River, Rock Creek, and Deer Creek, and crossing the Neosho River north of Iola, passing near Mapleton, Xenia, Moran, La Harpe, and Iola. He eventually reached Pikes Peak in Colorado, before turning south. There are ongoing efforts to establish the route as the "Pike National Historic Trail". <http://www.zebulonpike.org/>

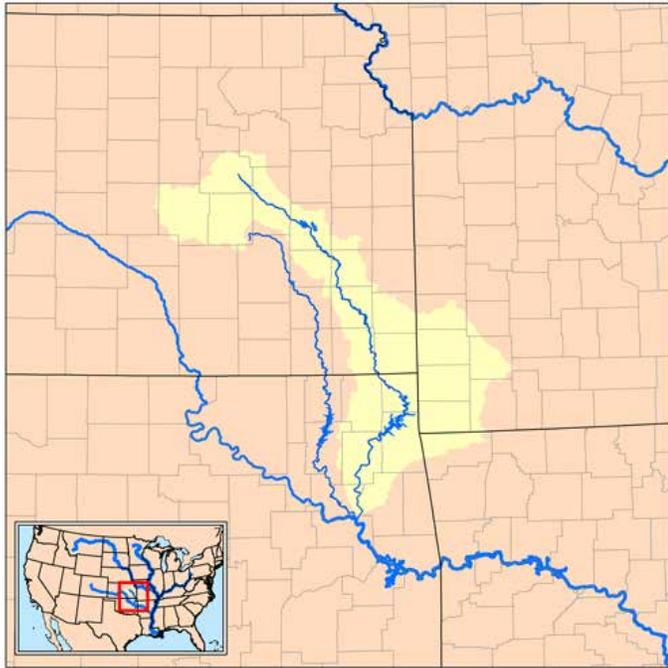


As part of a National Historic Trail, this route would attract both bicycle adventurers and history buffs. Since accounts of the expedition are somewhat vague, we'd have great latitude in selecting the route. It's probable that there would be both an "auto tour route" (using paved roads) and a bicycle route (using more non-paved roads).

Project activities would involve route planning, coordinating with the Pike National Historic Trail Association, with the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism and the Kansas Department of Transportation, and installation of wayfinding signage along the designated route.

Neosho Grand Trail

This is a bikepacking route concept, following the Neosho River from its headwaters northwest of Council Grove, through Emporia, Burlington, Iola, Chanute, Oswego, and on into Oklahoma, where it becomes the Grand River. The route would utilize trails and public roads (primarily gravel). Since the Neosho is the focus of the trail, every opportunity to connect with the river would be utilized – primarily bridges, fishing areas, and public land. The trail would also allow visitors to learn about history, ride/walk trails near the route, and see interesting scenery, art, etc. along and near the route.



Within Allen County, the route would utilize gravel and paved roads, along with the Southwind Rail Trail and a portion of the Prairie Spirit Trail.

Creating the route would involve selecting roads and trails, identifying and documenting support services (food and lodging), and promoting the route.



Mo-Pac Trail

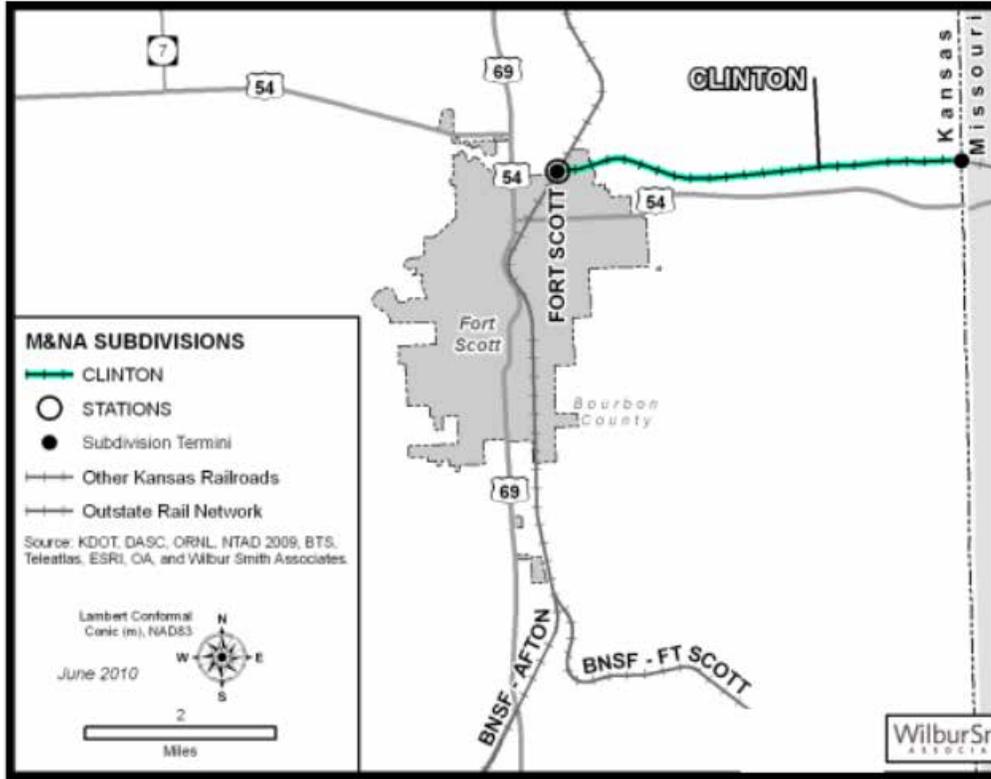
The old Missouri Pacific Railway route between Iola and Fort Scott could potentially be a rail-trail. Most of the right-of-way in Allen County is reasonably intact, though some of the right-of-way in Bourbon County has disappeared. Fort Scott to Bronson was abandoned in 1965. Bronson to Iola was abandoned in 1977. Iola to Piqua was abandoned in 1987. The MKT from Moran to Iola (which parallels the Mo-Pac) was abandoned in 1962.

Since none of the right-of-way was railbanked, it has all reverted to adjoining landowners. However, some of the R-O-W is owned by cities, or KDOT, or is otherwise unsuitable for agricultural use, and so could potentially be turned into a trail. Rural portions of the Mo-Pac Trail could be opened to horse traffic. Once completed, the Mo-Pac Trail could replace the on-road Iola - Fort Scott Bicycle Route.



MKT East

The rail line between Fort Scott and the Missouri state line is owned by Missouri and Northern Arkansas Railroad (M&NA), but no traffic has been run on the line in many years, and is currently overgrown with weeds, brush, and trees. It may be possible to acquire the right-of-way and construct a rail-trail. This would be part of a trail that could eventually connect to Neosho MO, and ultimately to the Katy Trail in Clinton MO.



This trail leads to better health.

The Governor's Council on Fitness recommends 30 minutes of daily physical activity to promote good lifetime health for adults and children.

Walking is great physical activity. Increasing the pace of your walk increases your fitness level and burns more calories to help maintain a healthy weight. This trail is marked with mileage so you can record your distance and time, and track your fitness level. If you can complete one mile in 14 minutes or less without discomfort, you are achieving a good fitness level.

It's important to get up and get active along with eating healthy and avoiding tobacco. Making changes to improve each of those personal behaviors results in a positive lifetime health benefit.

Learn more about "what's your mile?" and take the HealthyKansas pledge at www.healthykansas.org.

Take the HealthyKansas Pledge:

- Get at least 30 minutes of physical activity daily
- Eat a healthy diet, including your fruits and vegetables
- Avoid tobacco use

Healthy Kansas
www.healthykansas.org

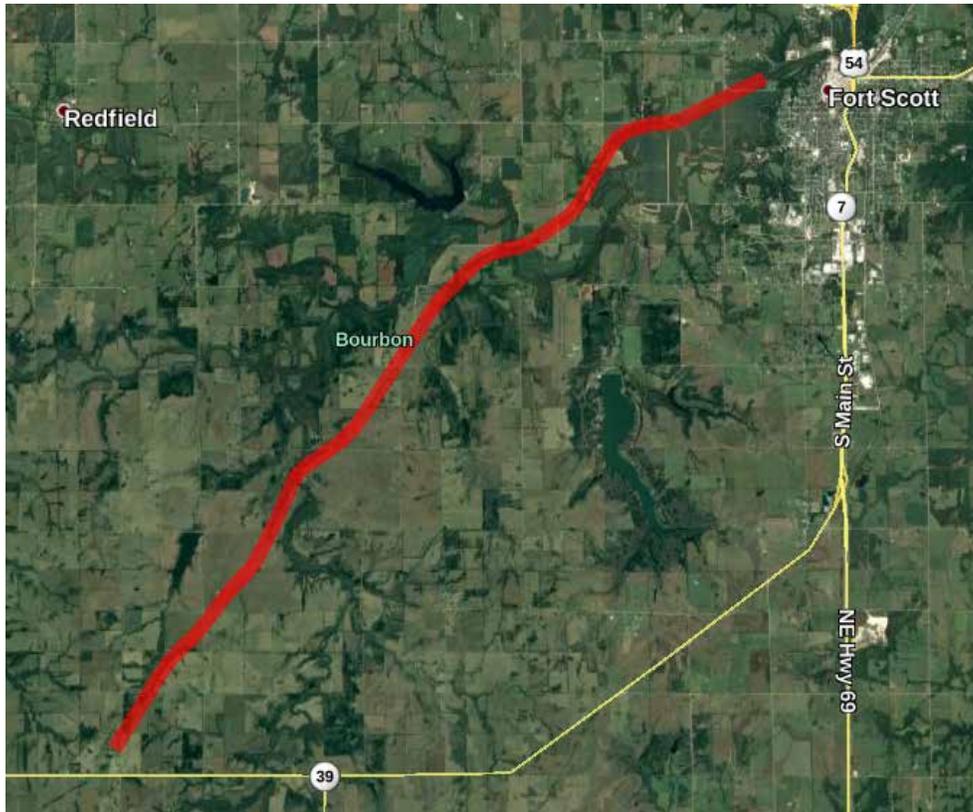
what's your mile?
www.healthykansas.org

KANSAS WILDLIFE PARKS



Old Picher Pike Trail

The remnants of the old MKT (Missouri-Kansas-Texas) rail line are largely intact between Fort Scott, Hiattville, and on to the county line, but the right-of-way was not railbanked, and has thus reverted to adjoining landowners. Known as "Old Picher Pike", the line could be converted to a rail-trail, and provide a safe connection between Fort Scott, Hollister Wildlife Area, Elm Creek Lake, and the community of Hiattville.



Bourbon State Fishing Lake Singletrack

Bourbon State Fishing Lake and Wildlife Area is located in Bourbon County, near the Allen County line, and is known locally as “Elsmore Lake”. The property is managed by the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks, and Tourism. The portion of the property on the east side of the lake is a mixture of steep timbered ravines and open upland prairie, and would be suitable for natural-surface singletrack trails for hiking, trail running, and mountain biking.

Singletrack at the Bourbon State Fishing Lake and Wildlife Area would be an ideal joint project between Allen and Bourbon County trail-builders (i.e. the Gunn Park and Lehigh Portland Trails volunteer groups). The trails would provide recreational opportunities in the three counties, especially for underserved residents of eastern Allen County and western Bourbon County. The trails would also strengthen the US-54 corridor as a mountain biking tourism destination.



Humboldt Riverfront Trails

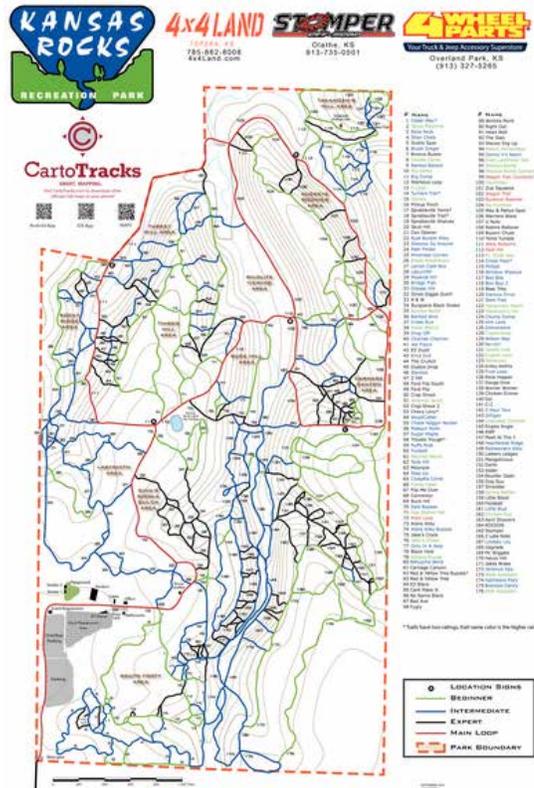
Camp Hunter Park in Humboldt is located near the Neosho River, with a wooded flood plain suitable for natural-surface singletrack trails for hiking, trail running, and mountain biking. There is space for approximately 2 miles of trails, with additional potential trail opportunities to the south, on land owned by the Monarch Cement Company. The trails would provide river access and blufftop views of the Neosho, through a rugged riparian environment.

Camp Hunter Park provides parking, restrooms, water, and camping facilities, making it an ideal trailhead location. The trails would serve Humboldt and southern Allen County residents, as well as residents of nearby Chanute.



Kansas Rocks Singletrack

The [Kansas Rocks Recreational Park](#) in Bourbon County currently has a network of over 60 miles of “jeep trails” through rugged, rocky, and wooded terrain. The existing trails, though open to hiking and mountain biking, are not designed for non-motorized traffic. The park is interested in creating some bike-specific trails.



The potential singletrack at KanRocks could provide expert-level trails to compliment the more beginner-friendly trails at Gunn Park and Lehigh Portland Trails, burnishing the region’s growing reputation as a mountain biking destination. KanRocks can also provide a venue for MTB or trail running events.

The KanRocks organization has tools and equipment to build and maintain trails, and facilities to host events, but lacks the expertise to build compelling singletrack, and the connections to the MTB community.



Mined Land Trails

The Mined Land Wildlife Area in Crawford and Cherokee Counties consists of 14,500 acres dispersed between 47 tracts, surrounding over 200 lakes and 1,500 acres of water. The property is managed by the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks, and Tourism. The areas currently have no developed hiking/biking trails, but it may be possible to add natural-surface trails within the various areas, and then link them together with gravel road routes, creating a large “destination” trail network unlike any other. The Mined Land Wildlife Area has cabins for rent, and free primitive tent camping.

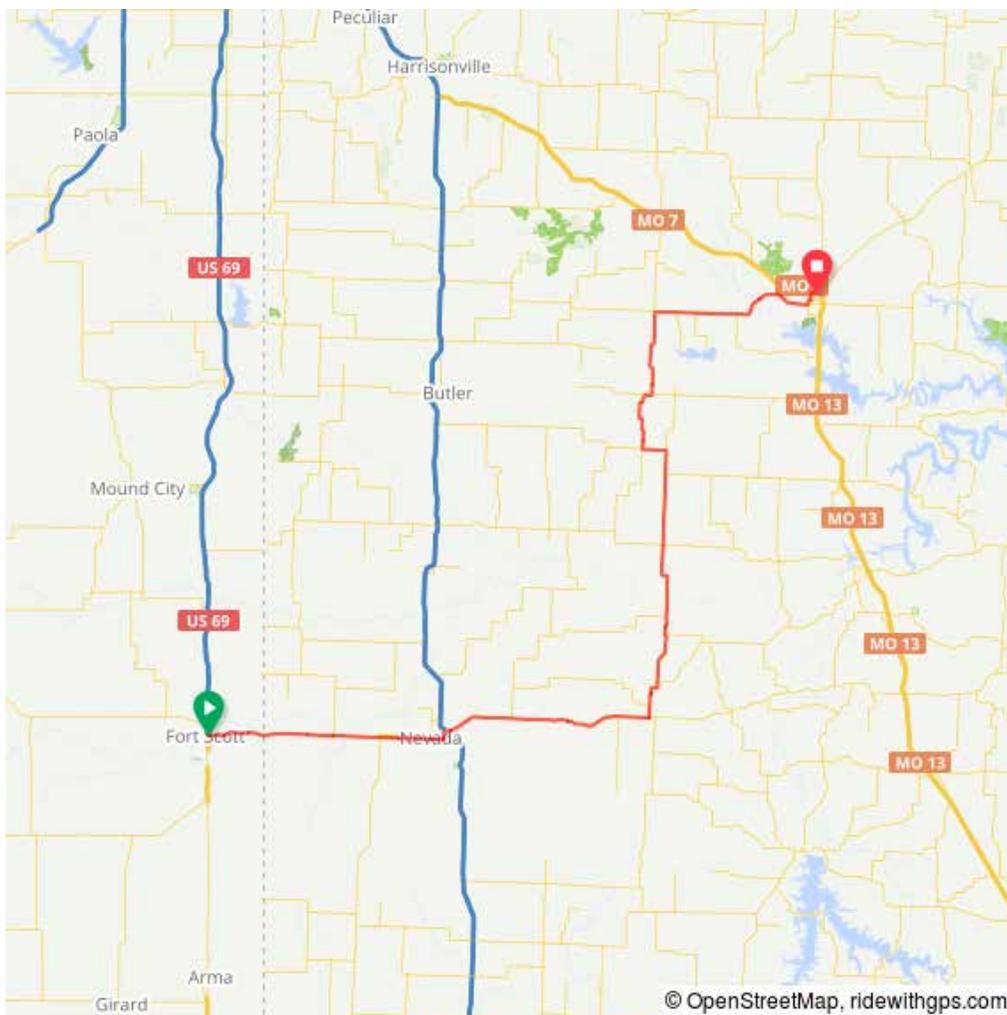


Katy Trail Connection

The Katy Trail is a 237 mile rail-trail stretching across most of the state of Missouri, and is one of the best-known and best-loved trails in the nation, attracting visitors from all over the world.

Southeast Kansas is ideally situated to be a route between US Bicycle Route 76 (the TransAmerica Trail) and the Katy. The proposed Katy Trail Connection is a bicycle route from Fort Scott to the western terminus of the Katy Trail, in Clinton MO. The route uses paved rural roads, as well as the shoulders of US-54 Highway. Only the first 5 miles of the route are in Kansas; the remainder is in Missouri.

Anticipated users of this route are bicycle tourists looking to connect from US Bicycle Route 76 to the Katy Trail, as well as local and regional people who want to ride the Katy Trail. Designating and signing this route would require cooperation from counties and communities in Missouri.



WHY ABC TRAILS?

A LOOK AT RETURN ON INVESTMENT



WHO ARE WE?

Allen, Bourbon, and Crawford Counties (ABC), have a shared vision to establish a regional, interconnected, active transportation plan with the hopes to promote our region's quality of life, encourage economic growth, and increase access to physical activity.

\$351 Average trail user spent for clothing and equipment.¹



\$200 ← → \$444

\$18.6 MILLION

annual economic impact of the Katy Trail in Missouri¹

One in Four

Katy Trail visitors spent at least one night on or near the trail in hotels or campgrounds²

IN KANSAS OUTDOOR RECREATION GENERATES³:

\$7.3 Billion



IN CONSUMER SPENDING ANNUALLY

\$481 Million



IN STATE AND LOCAL TAX REVENUE

\$1.8 Billion



IN WAGES AND SALARIES

A POWERFUL ECONOMIC SECTOR

ANNUAL CONSUMER SPENDING



Bureau of Economic Analysis

Mountain Bikers Travel on Average **566** Miles a Trip

Half of these trips are within **250** Miles from home

14 Million People Live within 250 miles of the ABC Region*

65% OF KANSAS RESIDENTS PARTICIPATE IN OUTDOOR RECREATION EACH YEAR³

SOURCES

¹Katy Trail Economic Report, 2012

²Potential Trail Benefits for Bourbon County, 2017

³Kansas Department of Agriculture via Outdoor Industry Association

⁴StatsAmerica Big Radius Tool

