



Delaware County, Ohio Trail System Master Plan

Delaware County offers big-time attractions and small-town charm just minutes north of Columbus, Ohio. With a wide range of activities and attractions, it's a playground for every generation to enjoy. Experience the energy and excitement of a major metropolitan area or get back to nature with endless outdoor activities like boating, fishing, mountain biking, and camping.

The County is home to two of Ohio's State Parks, as well as Highbanks Metro Park and other public spaces around reservoirs and rivers. Water recreation, birdwatching, and basking in the tranquility of nature are all available within the area. Many of these opportunities are located within one of the County's many Preservation Parks, where trails and natural areas abound. Other major outdoor attractions include the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium, Zoombak Bay, Oletangy Indian Caverns, Stafford Ecological Center, and numerous historic structures and places. The County also hosts two mountain bike destinations, extensive equestrian trails, and many miles of scenic waterways for canoeing and kayaking. Check out the map for the rivers, lakes, and reservoirs located throughout the County.

Visitors can focus their outdoor pursuits in specific parts of the County. In the Sunbury/Galena area, Alum Creek State Park features all types of water recreation, hiking, mountain biking, and camping. Bird watchers can search for species at the Mudflats Boardwalk, wander among the tall trees at Hogback Ridge Preservation Park, and view osprey nests in the northern reaches of Alum Creek.

In the Powell area, a visit to the historic downtown can lead to time hiking at parks like Shale Hollow, Emily Traphagen, or Highbanks. To the west, the small village of Shawnee Hills is located along the shore of the O'Shaughnessy Reservoir. The reservoir's dam includes a park, observation area, and picnic facilities, and just north of town is a place to park, fish, and do a little kayaking.

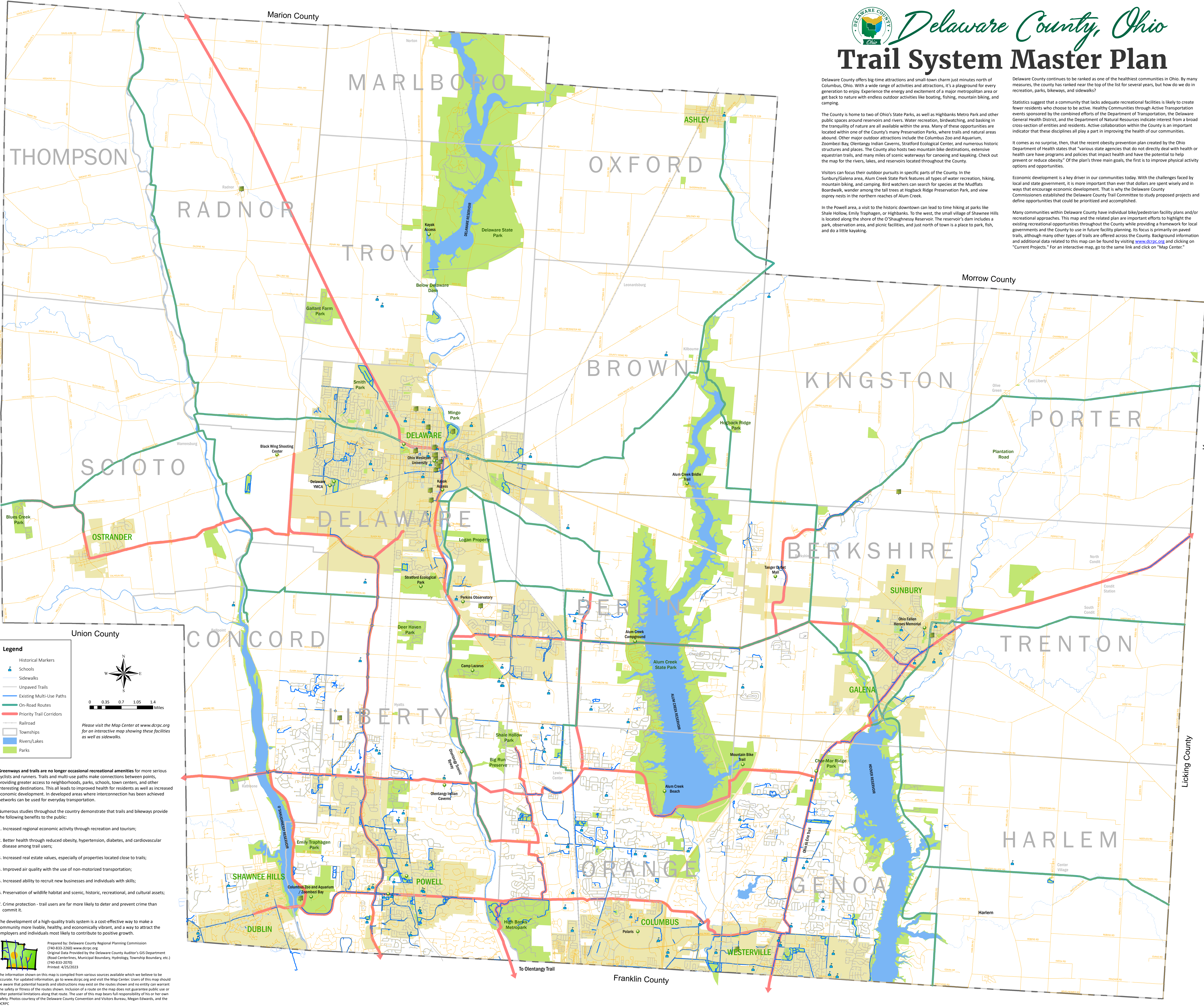
Delaware County continues to be ranked as one of the healthiest communities in Ohio. By many measures, the county has ranked near the top of the list for several years, but how do we do in recreation, parks, bikeways, and sidewalks?

Statistics suggest that a community that lacks adequate recreational facilities is likely to create fewer residents who choose to be active. Healthy Communities through Active Transportation events sponsored by the combined efforts of the Department of Transportation, the Delaware General Health District, and the Department of Natural Resources indicate interest from a broad cross-section of entities and residents. Active collaboration within the County is an important indicator that these disciplines all play a part in improving the health of our communities.

It comes as no surprise, then, that the recent obesity prevention plan created by the Ohio Department of Health states that "various state agencies that do not directly deal with health or health care have programs and policies that impact health and have the potential to help prevent or reduce obesity." Of the plan's three main goals, the first is to improve physical activity options and opportunities.

Economic development is a key driver in our communities today. With the challenges faced by local and state government, it is more important than ever that dollars are spent wisely and in ways that encourage economic development. That is why the Delaware County Commissioners established the Delaware County Trail Committee to study proposed projects and define opportunities that could be prioritized and accomplished.

Many communities within Delaware County have individual bike/pedestrian facility plans and/or recreational approaches. This map and the related plan are important efforts to highlight the existing recreational opportunities throughout the County while providing a framework for local governments and the County to use in future facility planning. Its focus is primarily on paved trails, although many other types of trails are offered across the County. Background information and additional data related to this map can be found by visiting www.dcrpc.org and clicking on "Current Projects." For an interactive map, go to the same link and click on "Map Center."



Legend

- Historical Markers
- Schools
- Sidewalks
- Unpaved Trails
- Existing Multi-Use Paths
- On-Road Routes
- Priority Trail Corridors
- Railroad
- Townships
- Rivers/Lakes
- Parks

0 0.35 0.7 1.05 1.4 Miles

Please visit the Map Center at www.dcrpc.org for an interactive map showing these facilities as well as sidewalks.

Greenways and trails are no longer occasional recreational amenities for more serious cyclists and runners. Trails and multi-use paths make connections between points, providing greater access to neighborhoods, parks, schools, town centers, and other interesting destinations. This all leads to improved health for residents as well as increased economic development. In developed areas where interconnection has been achieved networks can be used for everyday transportation.

Numerous studies throughout the country demonstrate that trails and bikeways provide the following benefits to the public:

1. Increased regional economic activity through recreation and tourism;
2. Better health through reduced obesity, hypertension, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease among trail users;
3. Increased real estate values, especially of properties located close to trails;
4. Improved air quality with the use of non-motorized transportation;
5. Increased ability to recruit new businesses and individuals with skills;
6. Preservation of wildlife habitat and scenic, historic, recreational, and cultural assets;
7. Crime protection - trail users are far more likely to deter and prevent crime than commit it.

The development of a high-quality trails system is a cost-effective way to make a community more livable, healthy, and economically vibrant, and a way to attract the employers and individuals most likely to contribute to positive growth.

Prepared by: Delaware County Regional Planning Commission
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The information shown on this map is compiled from various sources available which we believe to be accurate. For updated information, go to www.dcrpc.org and visit the Map Center. Users of this map should be aware that potential hazards and obstructions may exist on the routes shown and no warranty is made as to the safety or fitness of the routes shown. Inclusion of a route on the map does not guarantee public use or other potential limitations along this route. The user of this map bears full responsibility of his or her own safety. Photos courtesy of the Delaware County Convention and Visitors Bureau, Megan Edwards, and the DCRPC.