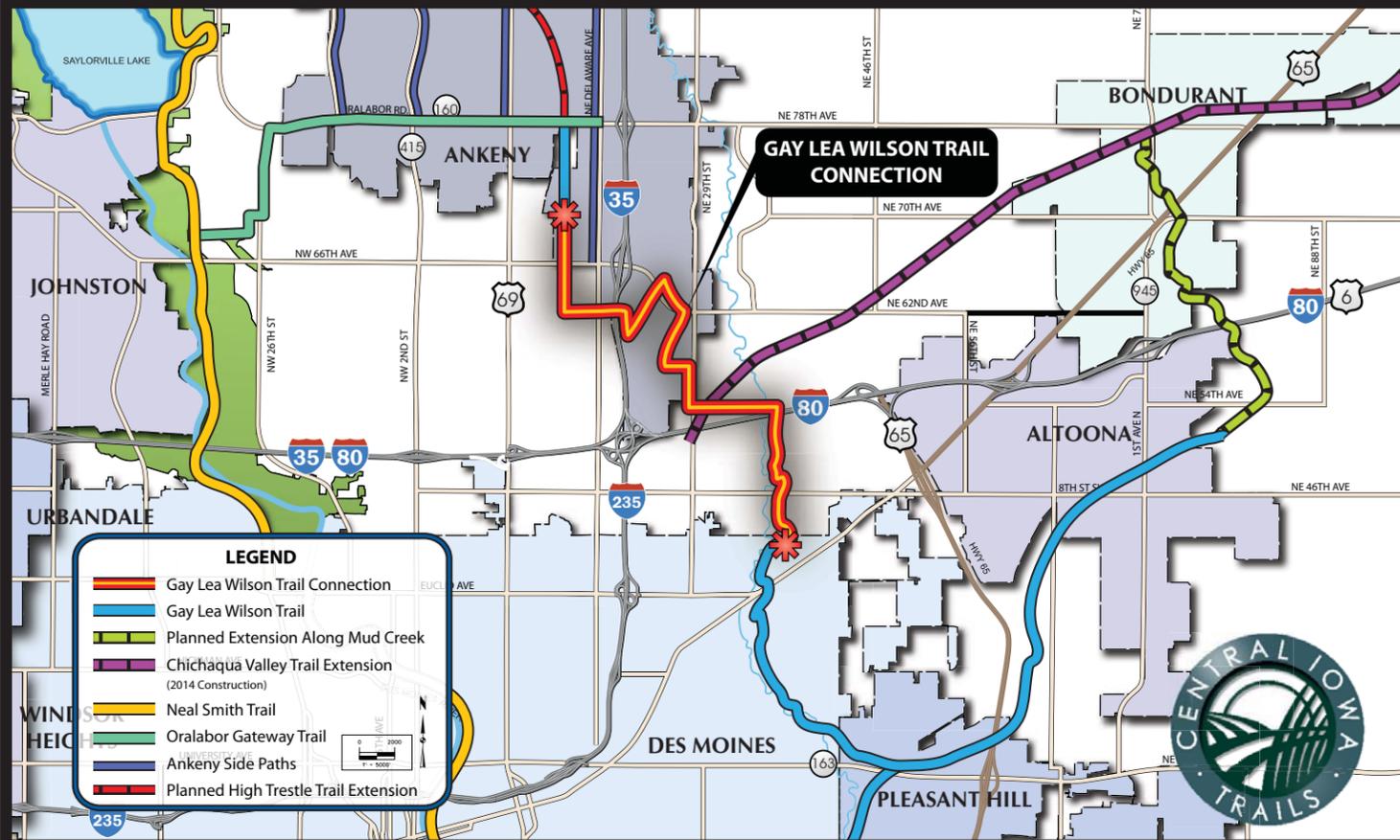


GAY LEA WILSON TRAIL CONNECTION

Ankeny to Des Moines • Polk County, Iowa



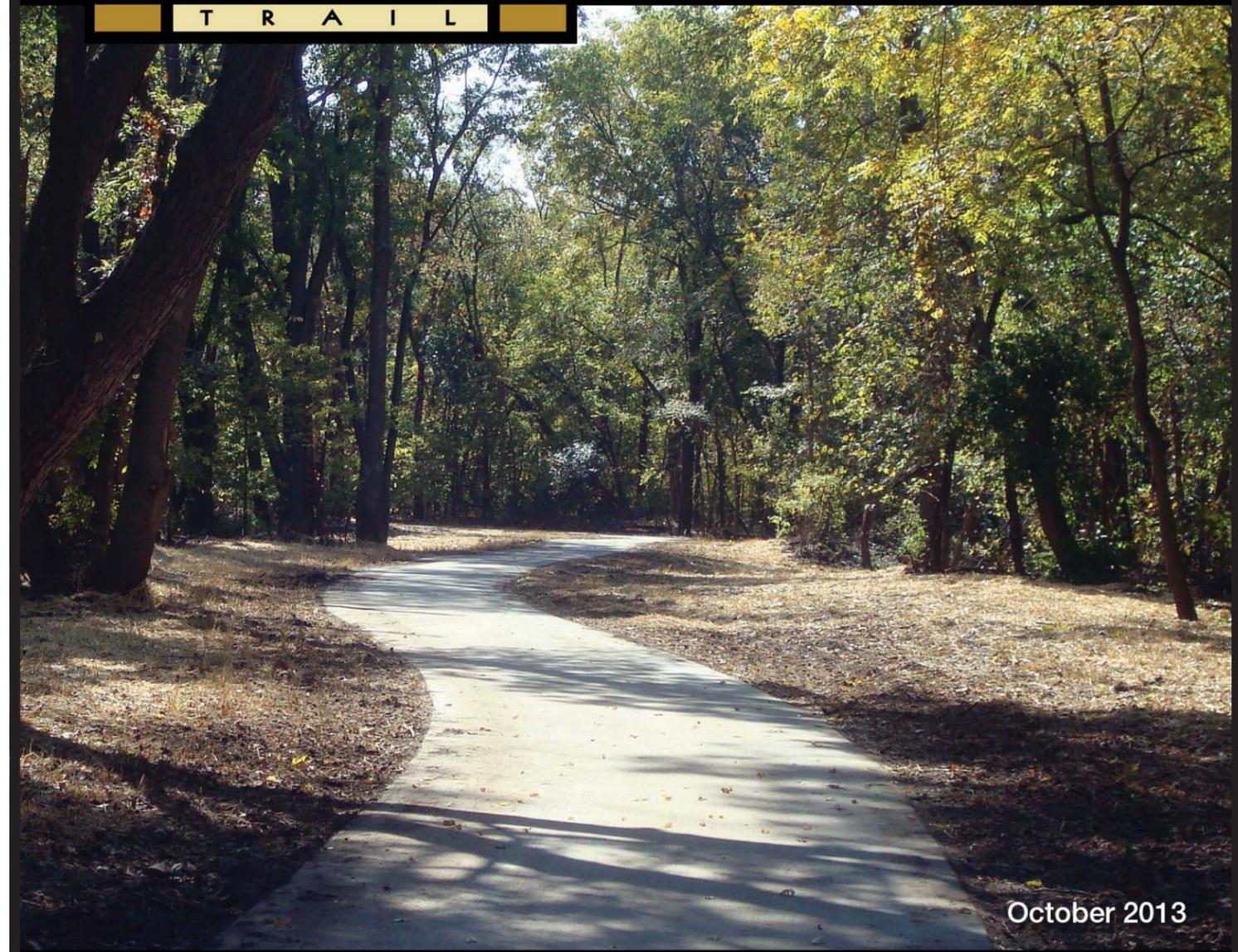
PROJECT GOALS

- ✓ Connect Ankeny trail system to Des Moines/Pleasant Hill/Altoona trail systems
- ✓ Provide route for commuters between the east side of Des Moines and Ankeny
- ✓ Establish a connection to the Chichaqua Valley Trail, which connects to Bondurant and Jasper County
- ✓ Enhance the Central Iowa Trail Network
- ✓ Create new opportunities for outdoor recreation
- Increase use of Four Mile Creek Greenbelt
- Increase use of Mally's County Park
- Enhance quality of life and environmental quality



GAY LEA WILSON TRAIL CONNECTION

ANKENY TO DES MOINES



October 2013



GAY LEA WILSON TRAIL CONNECTION

Ankeny to Des Moines • Polk County, Iowa

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Originally contemplated in the late 1980's, the Gay Lea Wilson Trail Connection project was put on paper as part of a larger Five County Trails Alliance study in 1996. This study envisioned the creation of a 100+ mile looped trail system by connecting the existing Gay Lea Wilson Trail to the Chichaqua Valley Trail, the Heart of Iowa Nature Trail, and the Neal Smith Trail. The envisioned trail projects to connect these trails were the "hard parts" toward the completion of the Central Iowa Trail Loop, now envisioned as the Central Iowa Trail Network.

However, as a planned improvement now on each jurisdiction's radar, small pieces of the trail began to develop as other infrastructure improvement projects occurred along the planned route. The City of Ankeny and Polk County Conservation eventually gathered enough funding to start the design and construction process to complete the connection between Carney Marsh (SE 54th Street) in Ankeny, and Aurora Avenue in Des Moines.

The connection was completed in three construction projects. In 2011, the City of Ankeny extended the trail from SE 54th Street to SE Delaware Avenue. In 2013, the City of Ankeny paved from SE Delaware to the City Limits at the intersection of SE Four Mile Drive (NE 29th Street) and NE 54th Avenue. Polk County Conservation paved from East Aurora Avenue to meet the Ankeny project at the City Limits.

The three projects created 7.2 miles of new 10' wide trail with a total construction cost of approximately \$2.1 million. The City of Ankeny and Polk County Conservation utilized funding from the Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) program through the Iowa DNR, STP Transportation Enhancement funds through the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (DMAMPO), State Recreational Trail Funds through the Iowa DOT, and the funds from the Polk County Water and Land Legacy Bond.

This trail utilized former railroad right of way, City and County roadway right of way, excess Interstate right of way, coordination with future industrial and technology park, and the Polk County Fourmile Creek Greenbelt to provide a transportation corridor for alternative methods of transportation. As a key connection between Des Moines and Ankeny, it is anticipated that the route will be used by commuters as well as involving all modes of recreational trail uses. Interactions with vehicular traffic are very limited, as there are only seven at-grade roadway crossings in the 7.2 miles.

As a critical link in the Central Iowa Trail Network, the Gay Lea Wilson Trail Connection provides both local access and an important regional link that connects the east side of Des Moines, Pleasant Hill, and Altoona to Ankeny, and cities as far away as Jefferson, Iowa, all on continuous paved trail.

