

Tuscarawas County Trail & Green Space Plan

Executive Summary

“...a bold vision for the conservation, interpretation, development and management of the cultural, natural and recreational resources in Tuscarawas County...”

TUSCARAWAS COUNTY PARKS

Introduction & Vision

The Tuscarawas County Trail and Green Space Plan is a bold vision for the conservation, interpretation, development and management of the cultural, natural and recreational resources in Tuscarawas County. The plan identifies over 25 trail and green space projects, including 256 miles of hiking and bicycling trails, 400 acres of green space and 130 miles of scenic roadways throughout its nine watershed regions. The plan showcases the county's unique character as part of a regional trail and green space network, providing hikers, bicyclists and travel enthusiasts with safe and reliable connections to the restaurants, lodging facilities and attractions in Tuscarawas County. With the implementation of the Trail and Green Space Plan, there will be numerous positive community and economic impacts including increased tourism, from visitors seeking to experience the county's many offerings, business retention and development as companies seek communities that offer safe and reliable leisure opportunities and increased property values.

These trails, green spaces and historic resources offer families and individuals opportunities to explore the active farm life and crafts in the western regions or the industrial legacy of mining, bricks, and clay products and steel-making of the eastern regions or the distinctive scenery and community patterns of the southern regions of the County. From the agricultural communities of Sugar Creek and Baltic, to the early settlement towns of Newcomerstown, New Philadelphia and Zoar and canal towns of Bolivar and Port Washington, to the business and industrial centers of Dover, Dennison and Uhrichsville, each reveals the county's distinctive character and charm through their settlement patterns, architecture and native ecology. Through the conservation, development, interpretation and linking of its diverse resources, residents and visitors can experience the rich heritage of the county, stimulate community and economic development and create a legacy for future generations.

Because of its strategic location in northeast Ohio, Tuscarawas County is the crossroads of numerous regional trail networks, including the 3,200-mile North County Scenic Trail, Ohio's 1,200-mile Buckeye Trail, the 500-mile Great Allegheny Passage from Ohio to Washington, D.C., and the 101-mile Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail from New Philadelphia to Cleveland. The County is included within the boundaries of the Ohio & Erie National Heritage Canalway. Connecting to these regional and national trail networks elevates the visibility of the county's resources and enables the region to be marketed as a destination for hiking, bicycling, bird watching, touring, hunting and fishing. Through the network of countywide regional trail and green spaces, individuals and families can enjoy an Amish meal, explore the remains of the Ohio & Erie Canal, learn about the county's railroad heritage or experience the Moravian and Zoarite cultures and traditions. Utilizing the remnants of former canal lands, railroad lines, agricultural landscapes, and scenic roadways, the Trail and Green Space Plan links the various township, village and city parks, and public lands, like pearls on a necklace. Rather than isolated places, collectively, these county resources provide a compelling visitor experience.

The Plan

The Tuscarawas County Trail and Green Space Plan is divided into nine distinct regions based on geographic watershed boundaries and envisioned to focus on the special character of each region. Individually, each region is thematically portrayed by its distinctive geographic, cultural and recreational resources and its heritage. Collectively, the regions complement one another to tell the story of the rich tapestry of resources that make Tuscarawas County such a special place. The Tuscarawas County Trail and Green Space Plan provides a blueprint for the planning, development and management of trail and green space linkages throughout the county. Through the conservation and development of trails and green spaces, and enhanced visitor services, tourism opportunities will be created for communities to capitalize on and become more prosperous as a result of the implementation of the plan. It provides the citizens of Tuscarawas County and their guests the opportunity to experience the region while protecting privacy, benefiting the economy and encouraging stewardship of the County's precious resources.

Implementation

Much in the same manner in which this plan was assembled, the success of the Tuscarawas County Trail and Green Space Plan is dependent on the participation of all community partners. Working in partnership with Elected Officials, units of government, Chambers of Commerce, Corporations, Businesses, Foundations, non-profit organizations, the Tuscarawas County Park Department seeks to obtain the necessary resources to implement the projects outlined and fulfill the plan's vision. Working cooperatively, the Plan's partners will develop a trail and green space network that builds economic prosperity, promotes resource conservation and stewardship of the County's resources, creating a legacy for future generations.

Early Action Projects

The Early Action Projects illustrate the public/private partnership model that will be necessary for the development of trails and green spaces and implementation of the plan. Through the implementation of the Early Action Projects, regional trail and green space linkages will begin to be developed that connect the County's many resources.

Sugar Creek Region
The Sugar Creek Trail provides residents in Strasburg with a trail system along Sugar Creek, with linkages to existing parks, schools and recreation facilities.

Zoar Valley Region
The Village of Bolivar is working on a Canal Park, and the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail that parallels its downtown, with linkages to Fort Laurens and the Village of Zoar.

Industrial Heartland Region
The Zoarville Segment of the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail is from Zoarville to New Philadelphia along the Tuscarawas River and is the final leg of the 101-mile multi-use recreational trail linking New Philadelphia with the City of Cleveland on Lake Erie. New Philadelphia serves as the heart of the trail network, and is the gateway to southern Tuscarawas County.

Dover Canal Park celebrates the canal legacy of Canal Dover and provides potential linkages to the Ohio & Erie Canalway. The plan features historic canal remnants, diverse shops, boutiques and restaurants, interpretive displays of canal life and a connection to the popular New Towne Mall.

The Roswell Trail connects New Philadelphia with Roswell Park and the County's eastern mining heritage communities, along an abandoned rail route that was a vital link between coal resources and the regions industry.

The Southern Gateway Canal Village is seen as the signature visitor resource at the southern terminus of the Ohio & Erie Canalway. The plan features historic canal remnants, diverse shops, boutiques and restaurants, interpretive displays of canal life and a connection to the popular New Towne Mall.

Stillwater Creek Region
The Stillwater Creek Trail is a 2.4-mile loop trail, linking the recreational facilities of Uhrichsville and Dennison. With a bridge over the Stillwater Creek, residents and visitors will be able to utilize the City Parks, swimming pool and playgrounds in both communities. The trail loop connects with community resources like the Twin City Hospital, area schools, downtown retail corridors, the Uhrich Mill, Union Cemetery and the Dennison Depot Museum.

Tuscarawas River Valley Region
The Trenton Heritage Park is a 90-acre green space along the Tuscarawas River and the old State Dam outside the Village of Tuscarawas. Potential future use of this green space includes educational programs and environmental workshops by permit.

Buckhorn Creek Region
The Buckhorn Creek Trail is an 8-mile rail trail, linking the communities of Stonecreek and Newcomerstown. The trail follows the Buckhorn Creek and serves as the southern gateway to the Tuscarawas County trail network.

Brush Run Region
The Port Washington Road is a 16-mile road connecting Baltic with Port Washington that celebrates the designation of the first state route in Ohio. A 15-mile secondary loop through Stone Creek and Ragersville offers expanded potential to view the culture and economy of this scenic region.

Conotton Creek Greenway Trail - Atwood Lake Segment
The Atwood Lake Segment provides the residents and visitors of Atwood Lake with a connection to the Conotton Creek Trail, connecting with the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail, Sherodsville and New Philadelphia, by way of the Roswell Trail.

Zeisberger Trail Extension
As the Zeisberger Trail network in and around the Village of Tuscarawas is being developed, this trail extension provides residents with a connection across the Tuscarawas River to link Tuscarawas, Gnadenhütten, Midvale, and Barnhill.

Sugar Creek Greenway Trail - Sugar Creek Loop Segment
With the confluence of the Sugar Creek Greenway Trail and the Norma Johnson Trail, the Sugar Creek Loop Segment provides linkages to existing parks, schools and recreation facilities in the Village of Sugar Creek.

Tuscarawas River Valley - Newcomerstown Segment
The Newcomerstown Segment provides the residents in the Village of Newcomerstown with a trail system connecting area destinations with regional ones.

Planning Regions



The Zoar Valley Region celebrates the legacy of the Zoarite community, as well as the early settlement at Fort Laurens. Through the development of the popular Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail, visitors can experience the Revolutionary War site at Fort Laurens as well as the German Separatist Community of Zoar Village.

The Conotton Creek Region recognizes the history of water management, from early practices to the current operations at Atwood Lake. The Conotton Creek Greenway and Scenic Roadway is a 6-mile bicycle and 11-mile motorist route that links the Atwood Lake region with the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail in Zoarville and the Roswell Trail. The trail is the gateway to the many public recreation areas in Carroll County.

The Sugar Creek Region commemorates the rich heritage of the Amish and Swiss cultures and the special bond they have with the land, fostered by their stewardship ethic. By visiting the Norma Johnson Nature Center or traveling the Sugar Creek to Beach City Scenic Roadway, visitors and residents can explore the agricultural heritage of western Tuscarawas County.

The Brush Run Region recalls the founding of the transportation corridors so critical to the region's settlement. It provides families and individuals with the opportunity to experience the Port Washington Road, a 31-mile looped Scenic Road connecting Baltic with Port Washington. Developed originally to provide farmers with a connection to the Ohio & Erie Canal, the road was Ohio's first state route.

The Buckhorn Creek Region showcases the agricultural landscape of Tuscarawas County and its rural communities, as it parallels the Buckhorn Creek from Stonecreek to Newcomerstown. The Buckhorn Creek Trail is an 8-mile rail trail, following the Buckhorn Creek and serves as the southern gateway to the 350-mile Ohio to Erie Trail from Cleveland's lakeshore to Cincinnati.

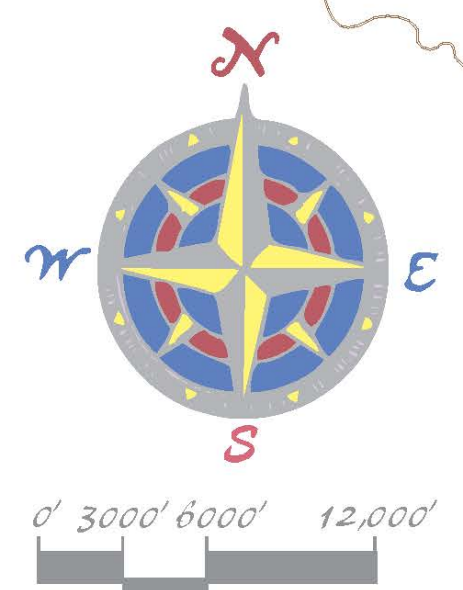
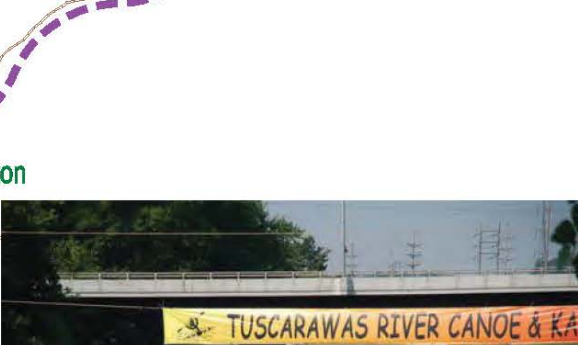
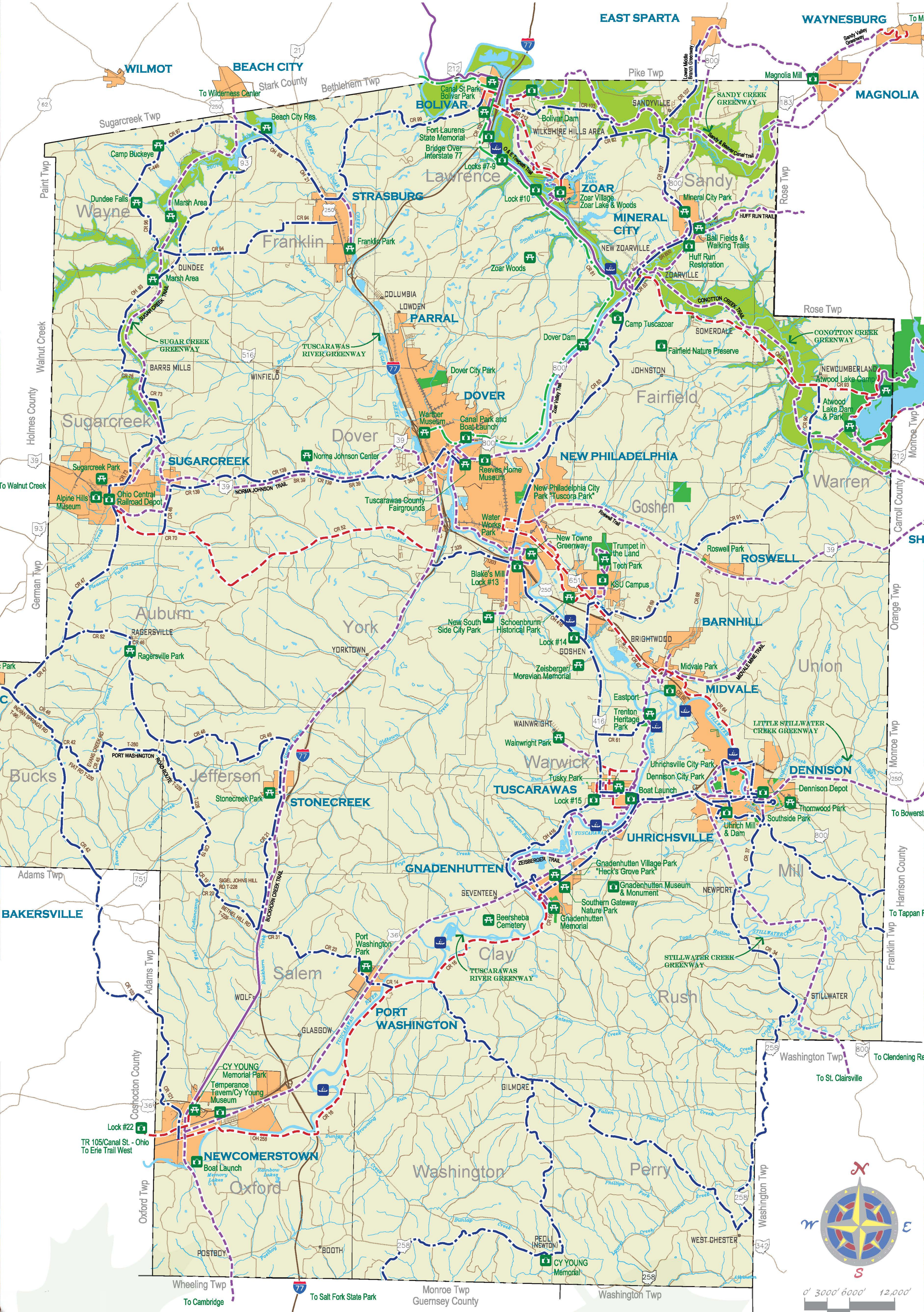
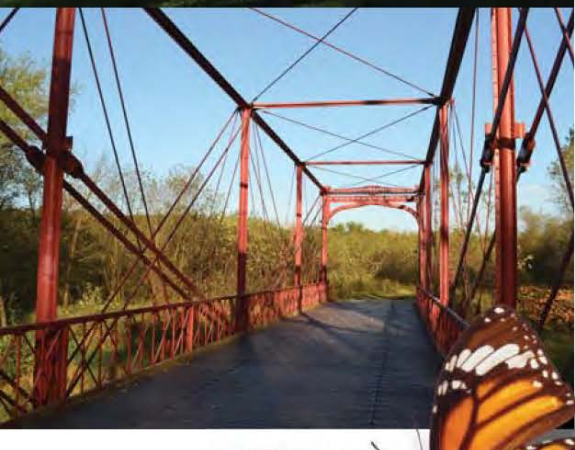
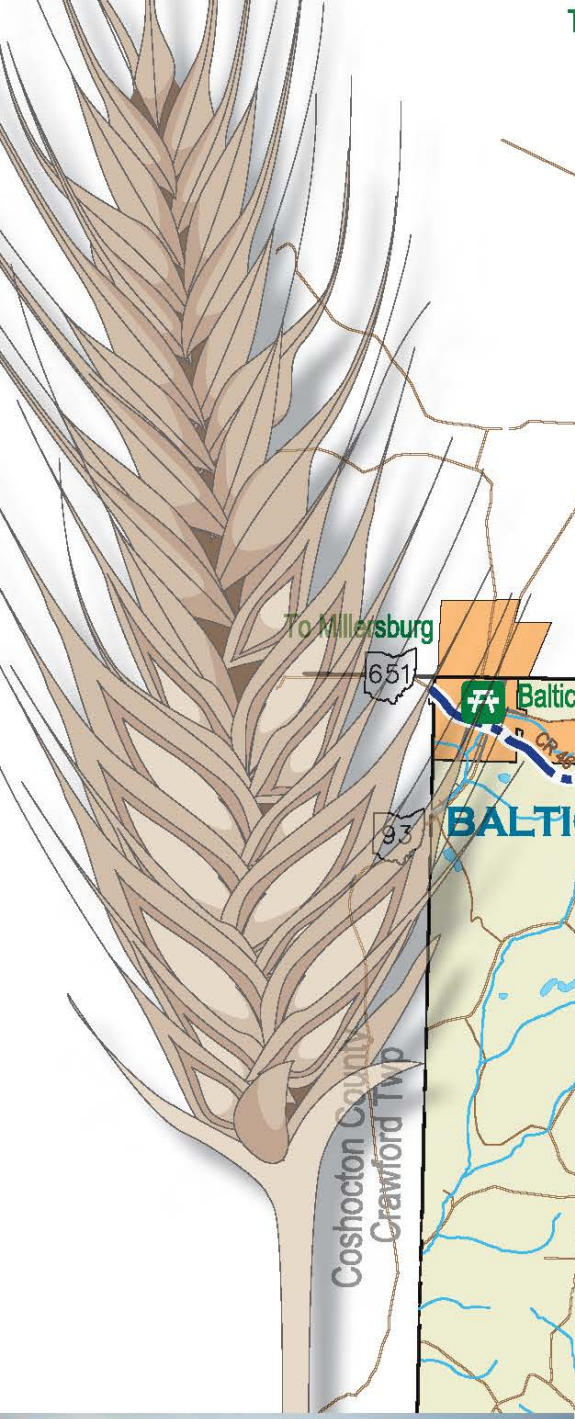
The Industrial Heartland Region serves as the centerpiece of the trail and green space network in Tuscarawas County, with potential linkages to all points of the compass. Through its series of trails and green spaces, the region's role as the hub of economic growth and prosperity in the County is revealed. Dover Canal Park, the Southern Gateway Canal Village, New Philadelphia's downtown, the Reeves Museum, Schoenbrun Village, and the County's emerging Technology Park are some of the features of this experience.

The Stillwater Creek Region portrays the region's history of resource development and transportation evolution through its distinctive worker communities of Barnhill, Midvale, Dennison and Uhrichsville. The Stillwater Creek Trail is a 2-mile loop trail linking the parks, ball fields, swimming pool and playgrounds in both communities. The Midvale Mine Trail follows a mining tram line from Midvale to its former mine site, revealing the working lifestyle of mining communities of the region.

The Tuscarawas River Valley Region's broad and lush valley illustrates the legacy of early settlement patterns along the river valley from the Village of Tuscarawas to Newcomerstown. The Moravian Trail is a 14-mile rail trail that travels the heritage of the American Indians' and Moravians' settlement of the river valley, as it craves through the towns of Tuscarawas, Gnadenhütten, Goshen, Port Washington and Newcomerstown. Its companion scenic roadway (SR 416) captures the spirit of valley settlement during the era of the Ohio & Erie Canal.

The Scaenic Hill Country Region typifies the characteristic geography of the Appalachian foothills with vivid scenery and long views. It forms the gateway to the recreational lakes of Carroll, Guernsey and Harrison counties, including Salt Fork State Park resort. Through a series of Scenic Roadways, residents and visitors can explore this uniquely beautiful region.





Tuscarawas County Trail & Green Space Plan



The Tuscarawas County Parks Department will partner with local communities and non-profit organizations to develop a county-wide network of trails and parks, promote agricultural land and greenspaces, stimulate community and economic development and enhance the quality of life for the citizens of Tuscarawas County.



Assistance and financial support for this project was provided by the following partners: First National Bank of Dennison, Mr. Dale Foland, Environmental Design Group, Indian Creek Foundation, Governor's Office of Appalachia, Ohio Department of Development, Ohio & Erie Canalway Coalition, Roger & Judy Read, The Timken Charitable Trust, Tuscarawas County Commissioners, Tuscarawas County Convention & Visitors Bureau, Tuscarawas County local governments and organizations.

- LEGEND**
- Ohio & Erie Canal Scenic Byway Route
 - Existing Off-Road Trails
 - Proposed Off-Road Linkages
 - Existing Road Improvement For Bicycles
 - Proposed Road Improvement For Bicycles
 - Scenic Roadways
 - Roads
 - Visitor Feature
 - Water Trail
 - Public Lands/Parks
 - Flowage Easement/Greenway
 - Urban Areas