RESOLUTION 1824

A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE 2019 WEST BRANCH REGIONAL TRAILS PLAN

WHEREAS, West Branch offers the benefits of a small town, but is close enough to larger cities to provide additional opportunities and attractions; and

WHEREAS, City Officials with the support of local citizens intend to maintain this positive and progressive position by creating and investing in the West Branch Regional Trails Plan; and

WHEREAS, this plan presents a strategy to integrate our city network of trails to an comprehensive multi-use network for connecting people, places and destinations to other surrounding communities; and

WHEREAS, it is well understood that building a trail system as proposed in this plan is a long-term undertaking, and segments will emerge over time and grow together, and adjustments will be made to the proposed routes as circumstances change and more information becomes available; and

WHEREAS, it is now necessary for the City Council to adopt this resolution.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the City Council of the City of West Branch, Cedar County, Iowa, that the City Council adopts this 2019 West Branch Regional Trails Plan.

* * * * * *

PASSED AND APPROVED this 8th day of July, 2019

Roger Laughlin, Mayor

Attest:

Redmond Jones II, City Administrator / City Clerk

West Branch Regional Trails Plan 2019

Adopted 2019 by the West Branch City Council

West Branch Community Trails Plan

City of West Branch
110 North Poplar Street
West Branch, Iowa 52358
www.westbranchiowa.org
319-643-5888

West Branch Parks and Recreation Commission

- Angie Miller, Chair
- Mike Fryauf, Vice Chair
- Shane Staker, Commissioner
- Douglas Klein, Commissioner
- James Ellyson, Commissioner
- Tom Burger, Commissioner
- Kristopher Slutts, Commissioner

West Branch City Council

- Mayor Roger Laughlin
- Mayor Pro Tem Colton Miller
- Councilperson Jordan Ellyson
- Councilperson Nick Goodweiler
- Councilperson Jodee Stoolman
- Councilperson Brian Pierce

Trails Committee

- Roger Laughlin, Mayor of West Branch
- Pete Swisher, Hoover NHS Superintendent
- Mike Dalton, West Branch Resident
- John Fuller, Planning and Zoning Chair
- Phil Johnson, West Branch Resident
- Mike Fryauf, Parks and Recreation Commissioner
- Melissa Russell, West Branch Parks and Recreation Director

Plan prepared by: West Branch Trails Committee with assistance from Melissa Russell
West Branch Parks and Recreation Director.

Introduction

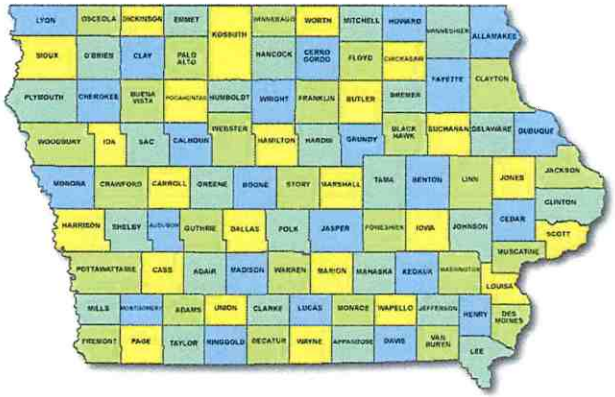
West Branch offers the benefits of a small town, but is close enough to lager cities to provide additional opportunities and attractions. It has a quality school system, businesses that provide local employment, and is the site of the only national park in Iowa, Herbert Hoover National Historical Site. To maintain this positive and progressive position, city officials with the support of local citizen have created a community trail plan. This trail plan introduces a potential asset for West Branch's future.

Communities of all sizes throughout the United States have found trails and the preservation of open space can make their community more attractive. Being pro-active, the West Branch city and residents have looked at what is possible and logical for their specific community. Each section of trail has been considered for safety, alternative transportation, and recreation. The challenges will include funding, especially in trying economic periods. Also, the problem of access is typical for a community trail plan where development has already occurred. West Branch does have the advantage and example of the Hoover Nature Trail. It is already a positive feature for the city and this plan includes extending this part of the American Discover Trail. This plan will also prepare West Branch to link with trails from the region further benefitting the city.

West Branch Community Trails Vision:
West Branch will have a trail system linking city parks, schools, National Park Service, West Branch Public Library, business districts, neighborhoods and other communities, enhancing the lives of residents, and attracting more visitors to enjoy our community.

Trail Planning Principles:

1. The trails will be accessible to all residents and visitors to the region.
2. The trails will be a multi-partnership effort to accomplish our goals.
3. Trails will represent the local region by being sensitive to the cultural, physical, and environmental conditions unique to the West Branch Community.
4. When possible we will use environmental sustainable designs and materials.



West Branch, Iowa is located in central, eastern Iowa along the Wapsinonoc Creek, which flows into the Iowa River. It is in Cedar County, ten minutes east of Iowa City and 2 hours east of Des Moines.
The population is approximately 2,500 residents. The community supports a strong downtown and business sector and is one of 36 Main Street Iowa programs. The community has a grade school, middle school, and high school.

The area was first settled by Quakers in the 1800s from Ohio. The city was a also a stop along the Underground Railroad. The most famous resident was the 31st President Herbert Hoover. His birth site and related buildings make up the Herbert Hoover National Historic Site manage by the National Park Service. There are other historical buildings and homes in the city, including the Hoover Presidential Library and Museum.

The Hoover Nature Trail was the main trail in West Branch. It is part of the American Discovery Trail[1]. It has been a popular amenity in the community. There are some existing trails and sidewalks, but there is a need for logical linking of trails to parks, businesses, schools, and tourist sites.

1. American Discovery Trail-Iowa, https://discoverytrail.org/states/iowa/

Neighboring county, Johnson, has planned to link with West Branch with Iowa City on the Hoover Highway. Johnson County also plans to link Solon to West Branch via the Hoover Nature Trail. This plan will be a compressive trail plan to provide recreation and alternative transportation opportunities.

Trails Network Plan Proposal for West Branch

- Throughout this text the term "trail" is used in its most generic sense – a wide multi-purpose surface for use by casual pedestrians, bicyclists, skaters, runners and others.
- Trails are differentiated from sidewalks in that they are wider and located where more users are expected and directed.
- The trails plan presented in this document includes a network of off-road trails and wide sidewalks.

History and Background

There is increasing popularity and federal recognition that trails are a desirable quality-of-life feature and may be a significant element of the "complete" transportation networks across the country.

Trails may take several forms, the most common being:

- Off-road facilities such as the main 8-10 foot wide Hoover Trail and Cubby Park Trail, separated from streets;
- Wide paved shoulders, most common along rural roadways, such as the those planned by Johnson County on Herbert Hoover Highway connection Iowa City and West Branch;
- Wide unstriped outside travel lanes that provide extra room for bicycles and automobiles to occupy the same general area;
- Bike lanes striped within the width of street paving; and
- Wide sidewalk facilities.

The Trail Network

This report identifies a trails network, **This network of approximately 13.25 miles** provides good connectivity throughout the city to important destinations while minimizing future maintenance costs for the city. It takes advantage of existing infrastructure so that a robust looped network can be developed with relatively few new connections and built upon as development and redevelopment occurs. It provides a backbone network for citizens of West Branch to enjoy family outings and possibly to save gasoline by making some pleasure trips and chores attainable without an automobile. Last, it provides for appropriately scaled sidewalks both within and outside the trails network.

The trails network map is a planning document that identifies general locations, and can be thought of as a "corridor map." Once approved, specific plans for locating each segment of trail will need to be developed. Importantly, it should be thought of as a "living" document that can and should be updated and modified over time as conditions change.

Priority Connections

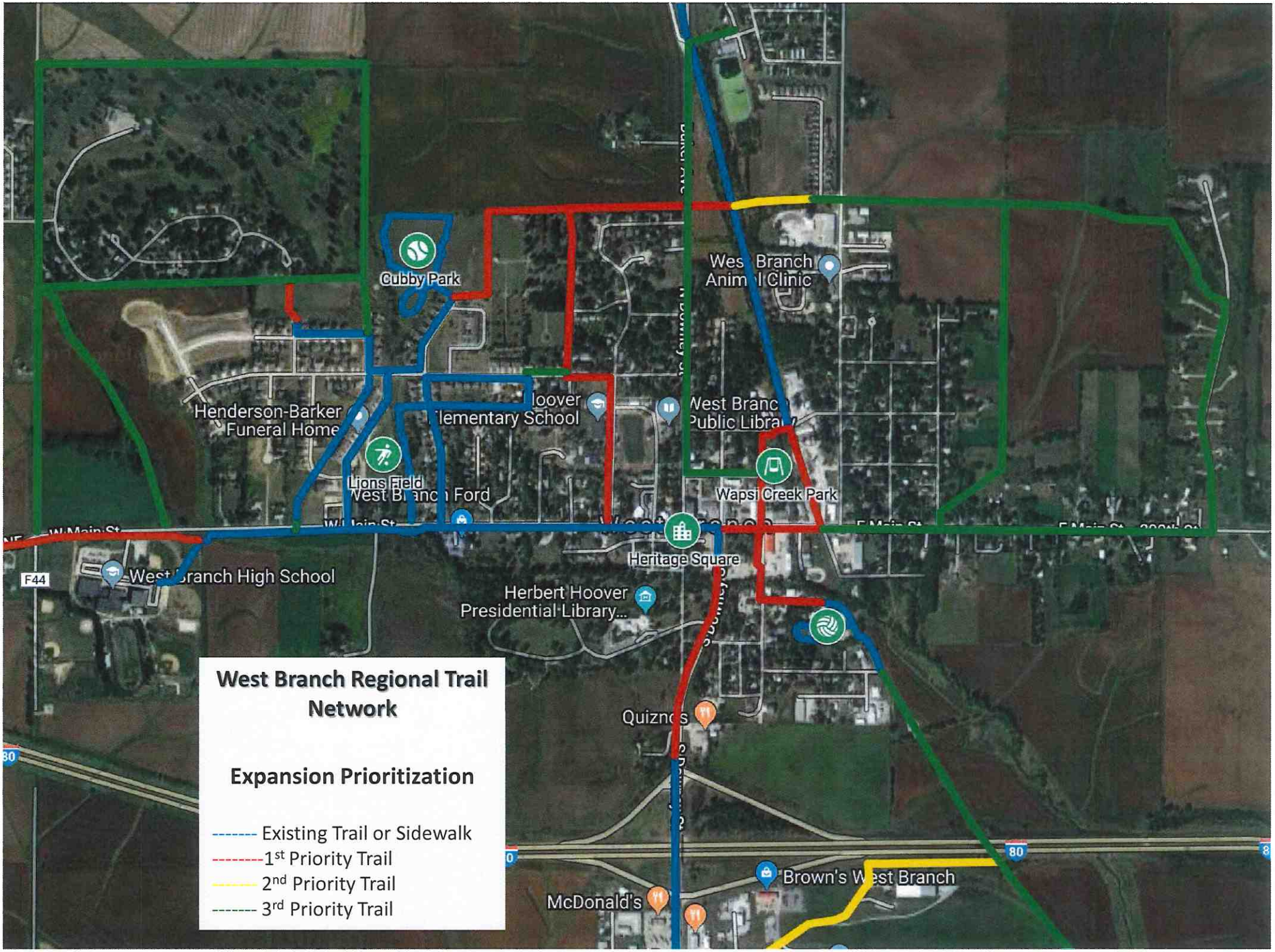
Existing Trail or Sidewalk. These sidewalks and trails have been established over a multitude of years. They vary in surface material and width. It would be difficult to establish a 4 foot wide sidewalk within established trails and sidewalks.

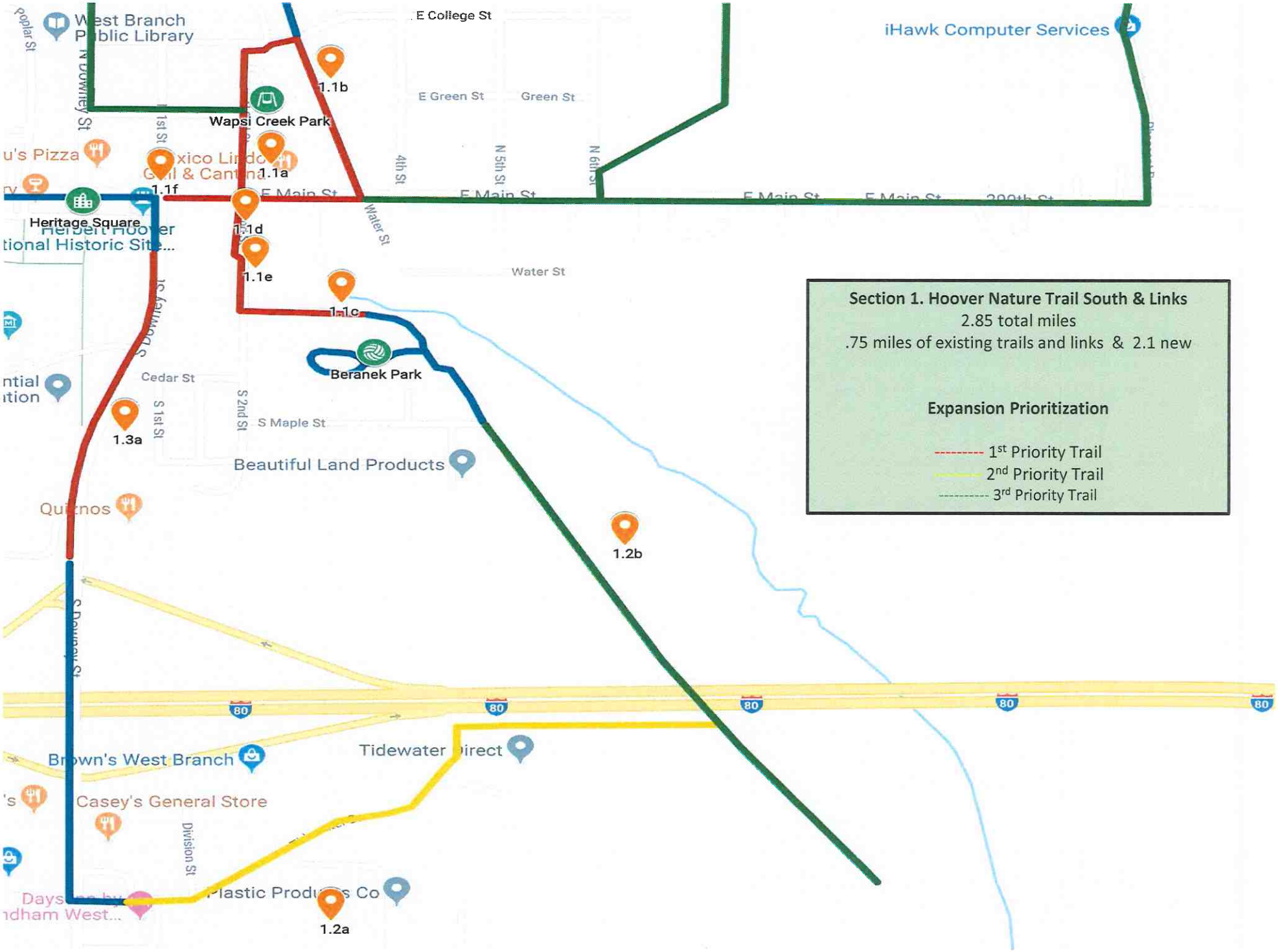
First Priorities. These projects can be completed quickly and easily, and provide a substantial impact.

Second Priorities. These projects are somewhat larger in scope than the first priorities, and may take somewhat longer to budget and accomplish.

Third Priorities. This lowest grouping of priorities addresses the longer-range projects dependent on other circumstances to fall into place.

With Development. Trail corridors in this category are anticipated to be constructed as new development or major street reconstruction projects occur.


West Branch Regional Trail Network
Expansion Prioritization
Existing Trail or Sidewalk
1st Priority Trail
2nd Priority Trail
3rd Priority Trail
Cubby Park
Henderson-Barker Funeral Home
Lions Field
Wapsi Creek Park
Heritage Square
Herbert Hoover Presidential Library...
McDonald's
F44
80


Section 1. Hoover Nature Trail South & Links
2.85 total miles
.75 miles of existing trails and links & 2.1 new
Expansion Prioritization
1st Priority Trail
2nd Priority Trail
3rd Priority Trail
West Branch Public Library
E College St
iHawk Computer Services
E Green St
Green St
Wapsi Creek Park
1.1b
1.1a
1.1f
1.1d
1.1e
1.1c
E Main St
Water St
Heritage Square
Herbert Hoover National Historic Site
Beranek Park
Cedar St
S Maple St
1.3a
Beautiful Land Products
Quiznos
1.2b
Brown's West Branch
Tidewater Direct
Casey's General Store
Division St
Plastic Products Co
1.2a
Days Inn by Wyndham West
80

Section 1. Hoover Nature Trail South & Links- 2.85 Miles
.75 miles of existing trails and links and 2.1 new trails

Section 1.1 - Continue Hoover Nature Trail south to Wapsi Park, Beranek Park to south of interstate 80.

Priority 1 connections

- 1.1a. East College Street to Main Street. This route will go along Wapsi Park. This will complete the connection to NPS Village Green
- 1.1b. Connect East College Street to Main Street via old Croell site.
- 1.1c. Beranek Drive to Beranek Park.
- 1.1d. Main to 2nd Street intersection. This completes a connection to NPS Village Green.
- 1.1e. 2nd Street from Main Street to Beranek Drive along NPS property.
- 1.1f. 2nd Street to Parkside Drive along Main Street.

Section 1.2 - From Hoover Nature Trail to Baker Ave (motel and fast food area), include safe pedestrian crossings

Priority 2 connections

- 1.2a. Commercial Drive to City Water Treatment Plant along Tidewater Drive.

Priority 3 connections

- 1.2b. Beranek Park to Tidewater under the interstate.

Section 1.3 - North along Hwy 30, crossing I-8O on pedestrian lane on west side of overpass

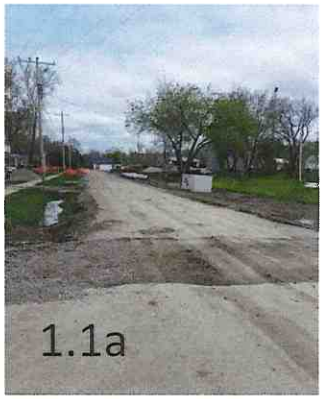
Priority 1 connections

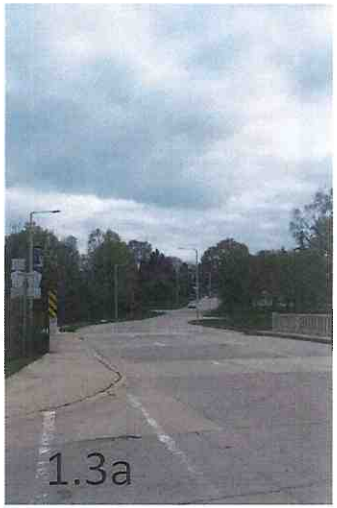
- 1.3a. Parkside Drive to interstate 80

Issues and Ideas

- When crossing the Interstate entrance and exit lanes, trail will need safety controls.
- Trail easement will need to be obtained for Section 1.2b
- Section 1.3a is located on National Park Service Property.

Future county or state plans can include continuing Hoover Nature Trail south to West Liberty if land access is available.





Section 2 Northeast
3.2 total miles
1 miles of existing trails and links & 2.2 new
Expansion Prioritization
1st Priority Trail
2nd Priority Trail
3rd Priority Trail
2.4a
2.1b
2.1a
2.1c
2.1d
2.2a
2.3a
2.4b
West Branch Village
Hoover Blvd
Patton Dr
4th St
Lincoln St
Baker Ave
N Oliphant St
N Downey St
Cargill Animal Nutrition
West Branch Animal Clinic
Northside Dr
6th St
St Bernadette Catholic Church
E Orange St
N 4th St
W Orange St
ary School
Poplar St
West Branch Public Library
E College St
iHawk Computer Services
E Green St
Green St
1st St
N' Lou's Pizza
Mexico Lindo Grill & Cantina
Winery
E Main St
N 5th St
N 6th St
Heritage Square
Herbert Hoover National Historic Site...
2nd St
Water St

Trails Section 2. Northeast- 3.2 Miles

1 mile of existing trails and links and 2.2 miles of new trails

Section 2.1 -Trail link Hoover Trail to Pheasant Run

Priority 2 connection

- 2.1a. Create a trail link from Hoover Trail and Northridge Drive to Reagan Blvd.

Priority 3 connection

- 2.1b. Build a pedestrian bridge connecting Hoover Trail to Mobile Home Village
- 2.1c. Create a trail from Reagan Blvd at 4th Street to Pheasant Run Lane
- 2.1d. Build a trail link from the trail to that runs parallel to Pheasant Run Trail and exits at the intersection of Main Street and 6th Street.

Section 2.2 –Trail link at Pheasant Run Lane

Priority 3 connection

- 2.2a. Trail through Pheasant Run Lane connecting trail 2.1 to 290th Street.

Section 2.3 –Trail link from Pheasant Run to Hoover Trail at Main Street

Priority 3 connection

- 2.3a. Build a trail parallel to 290th Street from Pheasant Run Lane entrance to connecting trail at Main and former trail section on Main Street between 4th Street and 2nd Street.

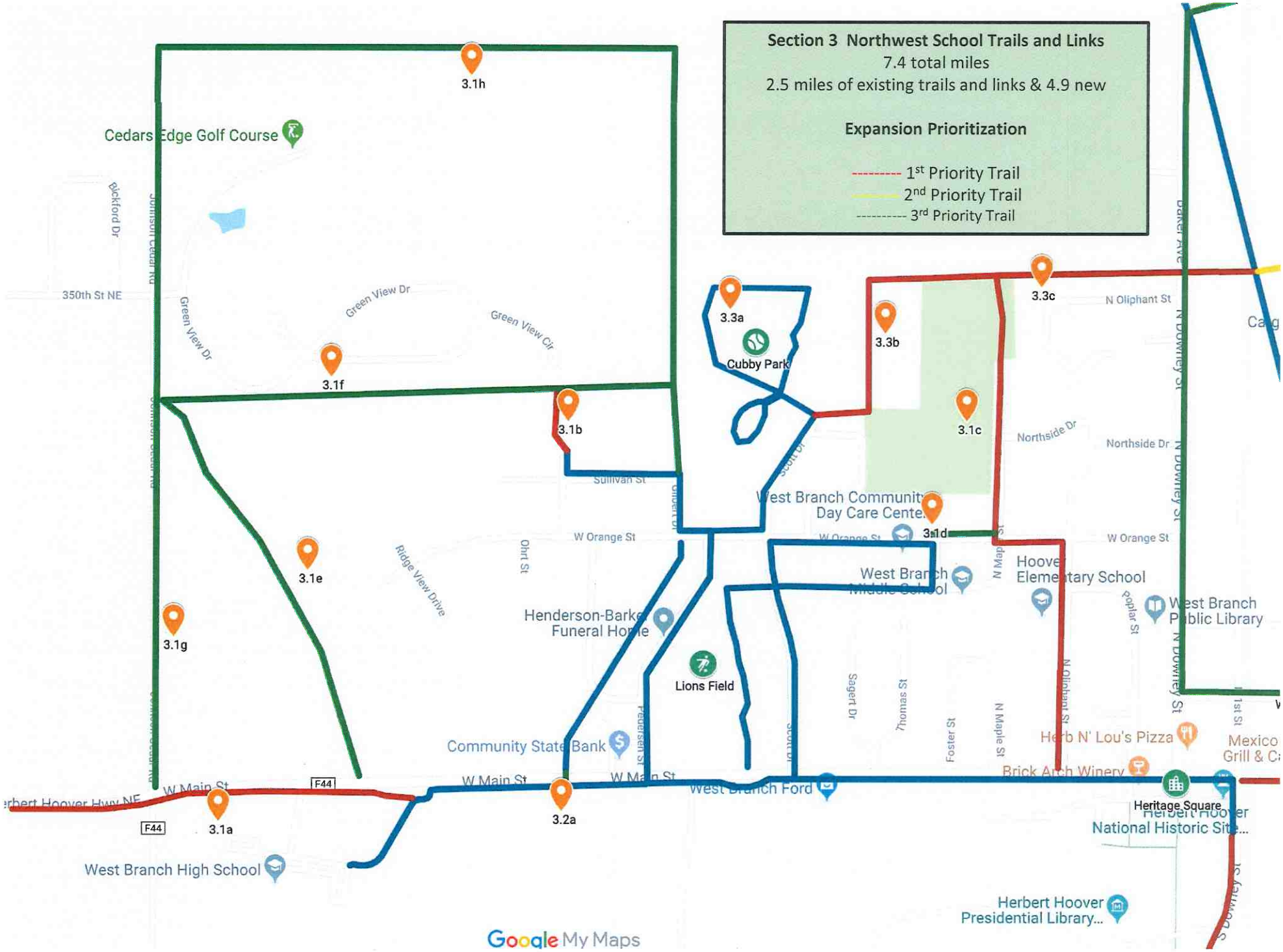
Section 2.4 –Dog Park to Green Street on Baker

Priority 3 connection

- 2.4a Dog park to Green Street on Baker Avenue/Downey Street.
- 2.4b. North Downey to Wapsi Creek Park.

Issues and ideas

- Property may need to be acquired to create a trail from Reagan Blvd. to Pheasant Run Lane.
- Building a bridge to connect Hoover Trail and the Mobile Home Village may not be possible due to DNR restrictions. Alternatives to a bridge may need to be considered.
- Use flashing warning lights and signs to alert vehicles of all trail crossings.


Section 3 Northwest School Trails and Links
7.4 total miles
2.5 miles of existing trails and links & 4.9 new
Expansion Prioritization
1st Priority Trail
2nd Priority Trail
3rd Priority Trail
3.1h
Cedars Edge Golf Course
Bickford Dr
350th St NE
Green View Dr
Green View Cir
3.1f
3.1b
3.3a
Cubby Park
3.3b
3.3c
N Oliphant St
3.1c
Northside Dr
Sullivan St
West Branch Community Day Care Center
3.1d
W Orange St
Ohrt St
Ridge View Drive
3.1e
3.1g
Henderson-Barker Funeral Home
Lions Field
West Branch Middle School
Hoover Elementary School
West Branch Public Library
Poplar St
N Downey St
Sagert Dr
Thomas St
Foster St
N Maple St
N Oliphant St
Community State Bank
Herb N' Lou's Pizza
Brick Arch Winery
Heritage Square
Herbert Hoover National Historic Site...
W Main St
F44
3.1a
3.2a
West Branch Ford
West Branch High School
Herbert Hoover Presidential Library...
Google My Maps

Trails Section 2. Northwest School Trails & Links- 7.4 Miles

2.5 miles of existing trails and links and 4.9 new trails

Section 3.1 - West Trail - from West Branch High School on West Main Street to County Line Road north to south side of golf course development, east between residential developments, south to tie in with trail through residential area.

Priority 1 connections

- 3.1a. Connecting High School to Cedar Johnson Road and Iowa City.
- 3.1b. Greenview connection to Meadows development.
- 3.1c. North Maple from cemetery to Hoover Elementary.
- 3.1d. West Orange from Maple to Oliphant Street.

Priority 3 connections

- 3.1e. Trail network along creek and through new development.
- 3.1f. Trail connecting Cedar Johnson Road to Greenview Connection
- 3.1g. Trail along Cedar Johnson Road to Cedar's Edge Golf Course.
- 3.1h. Trail around Cedar's Edge Development to Cubby Park

Section 3.2 - Central Trail - from existing trail to the high school, across Main Street at approximately 800 feet from the high school property line

Priority 3 connections

- 3.2a Intersection at Main from trail between Pedersen St. and Hilltop Drive.

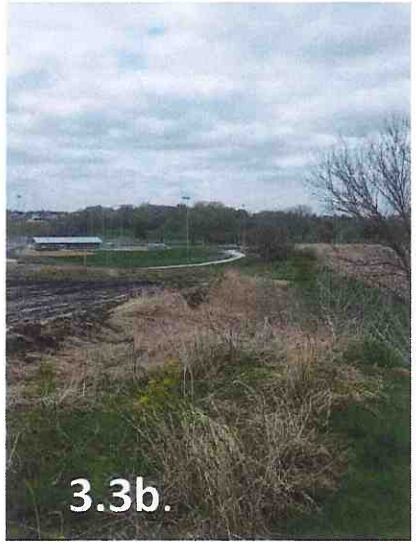
Section 3.3 - North Trail - from north central trail across northern side of current development to North Downey Street.

Priority 1 connections

- 3.3a Cubby Park trails around park including detention basin

Priority 3 Connection

- 3.3b. Cubby Park trail along cemetery property line
- 3.3c. Cubby Park to Hoover Trail behind cemetery and homes on Oliphant Street.



Trail Construction Unit Cost Estimates Iowa Trails 2000, Chapter 5. Iowa DOT

Trail Element	Unit	Price per Unit (2009 est)
Gearing and grubbing	Acre	$2,500.00
Grading for hard-surfaced trails	Mile	$3,800.00
Grading for natural-surfaced trails	Mile	$3.200.00
Granular surfacing	Sq. ft	$.50
Granular subbase	Sq. ft	$.50
Asphalt surfacing	Sq. ft	$1.50
Concrete	Sq. ft	$3.00
Seeding/mulching	Acre	$2,040.00
Other costs (drainage/signage/support services)	Mile	10% of trail cost
Planning	Mile	2% of trail cost
Preliminary design	Mile	2% of trail cost
Construction documents	Mile	5% of trail cost
Construction services	Mile	5% of trail cost
Administration	Mile	5% of trail cost

Trail Construction Cost Estimates (Based Upon Estimate from Iowa Trails 2000, Chapter 5. Iowa DOT) A variety of trail designs can be used to meet the need for the community. Cost, level of anticipated use, and conditions must be balanced to guide the engineering design.

- Concrete is the recommended surface material for typical community trails within the city limits. Depending on the level of use, 8-10 feet wide trails are optimal. Concrete with a 4 inch depth on the majority of the trail and 6 inch deep base at road crossings will minimize maintenance and assure a long life for the trails.
- Right-of Way Acquisition will vary drastically depending upon the situation of land ownership. Ideally, new trails are planned on land already owned by the city, but the city can purchase trail corridors or include dedication of trails in the same category as park land and development infrastructure.
- Bridge costs can vary on conditions, height, and type of bridge required to meet the needs of the trail users. Estimated cost of a new pedestrian/bicycle bridge will range from $51 for a boardwalk to $150 square foot for steel structure with wood decking.

Benefits of Trails

Trails have been acknowledged through research and experience as an attractive community amenity. A good trail system enhances the quality of life for residents by increasing opportunities for physical activities, social interaction, and creating new economic opportunities.

A trail provides a safe alternative for children to be active and to travel to school. Trails are part of a national effort to reduce childhood obesity. Having safe routes connecting schools, parks, houses, and public facilities makes it easier to get children active. Promoting trail use for health improves the health and mental well-being of residents of all age groups and physical ability.

Trails can provide that one more attraction to keep visitors longer in the community. When visitors stay longer, especially if their trip is multiple days, their visit increases the opportunities to make purchases, increasing local business revenues. Financially, communities benefit when new businesses are created to provide services to trail users. The city and state also benefit when sales and lodging taxes are collected from out-of-state and out-of-region visitors.

Interpretation

West Branch has the unique history of being the birthplace of the 31st President Herbert Hoover. The community can use this opportunity to highlight the historical features of the community along the trails using waysides, kiosks, and historical walking tours. Trails can also be used in promoting health and wellness for local residents. Local hospitals and health departments can create programs using the trails.

Liability

The trail system is part of the city assets and would be covered under the same position as any city park. Regular inspections and maintenance with records showing these actions would provide support.