

Trail Connect Chicagoland

Our vision for a continuous trail network in Northeastern Illinois



The Chicago area provides opportunities to enjoy more than 1,100 miles of trails that crisscross the region. Not only are these trails fabulous recreational assets, they are also an underutilized transportation network, providing low-stress walking and biking connections within and between communities.

Despite this great regional resource, too often people walking or biking on our regional trails encounter dead ends, dangerous crossings, diversions onto stressful streets and other gaps in the network. These gaps can be a just a few blocks long or go on for miles. Furthermore, many trails are only accessible by getting in a car and driving to the trailhead and then proceeding on foot or bike.

All these issues prevent people from using trails for everyday transportation and recreation. But the surging popularity of multi-use trails and the growing appreciation for the related health, economic and environmental benefits they can bring our communities has opened a window of opportunity to make our regional trail network safer, more inviting and more functional. Building on our decades of experience advocating for trails, Active Transportation Alliance is launching Trail Connect

Chicagoland, a new campaign to close 142 miles of trail gaps in the suburbs and 45 miles of gaps in the city of Chicago. Filling these gaps is crucial to creating a truly connected regional network of trails for walking, running and biking.

Moving forward, Trail Connect Chicagoland will work to build the grassroots support, political will and technical know-how needed to achieve this ambitious goal.

Communities throughout the region strongly support trail networks and creating trails that are uninterrupted. Gap segments are already getting filled on the Skokie Valley Trail, Cal-Sag Trail and others. Working together with grassroots advocates, local leaders and public officials, we will strive to build on this momentum in other priority areas throughout the region as well as work to create a collective vision to unify our trail system.

THROUGH TRAIL CONNECT CHICAGOLAND, ACTIVE TRANS WILL:

- **Build a collective vision for a connected regional trail network**
- **Create a Regional Trail Coalition for advocates and leaders to coordinate on advocacy across Chicagoland**
- **Lead grassroots organizing and technical assistance to close priority gaps in the network**
- **Advocate for low-stress biking and walking connections between local communities and their trails**
- **Provide trail advocates the tools, training and support they need to successfully advocate for their own local priorities**

For more information, contact matt@activetrans.org.
Donate today to Trail Connect Chicagoland at [activetrans.org/donate](https://www.activetrans.org/donate).

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