



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Federal Grant Boosts Trail Connectivity Within Milwaukee's 30th Street Corridor:
A Model for Collaborative Community Development**

MILWAUKEE— With the support of a \$1.6 million federal Reconnecting Communities grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation, community leaders, residents and the City of Milwaukee are partnering to transform the historic 30th Street Corridor from an unused railway to a trail that will connect neighborhoods.

This is the first federal investment in the corridor's trail connectivity, which aims to link people, places, and opportunities—prioritizing stronger access and connections throughout the area.

The grant enables a four-phase planning process for the 30th Street Corridor Equitable Development Plan (EDP), setting the stage for the development of a seven-mile, shared-use trail running alongside the railroad between the Havenwoods State Forest and the Menomonee Valley. The trail will link neighborhoods along the corridor to jobs, schools and parks while driving economic revitalization and enhancing pedestrian and bicycle transportation infrastructure.

"For the Near West Side and beyond, this grant represents a tremendous win for neighborhoods throughout Milwaukee. Near West Side Partners looks forward to collaborating with residents, existing businesses and other partners along the corridor to ensure infrastructure investments benefit the community," said Lindsey St. Arnold Bell, executive director of Near West Side Partners. "As we work to develop the 30th Street Corridor Equitable Development Plan, we are rethinking how we connect our neighborhoods, job centers and community assets like the newly-opened Davidson Park."

Focused on community-driven planning, the EDP champions local collaboration, leveraging a thorough engagement process to ensure diverse and meaningful participation with key partners, including the 30th Street Industrial Corporation (30IC), Havenwoods Neighborhood Partnership, Near West Side Partners, Northwest Side Community Development Corporation,

Rails to Trails Conservancy (RTC) and the City of Milwaukee, as well as residents in neighborhoods along the corridor.

The project is part of a broader vision to reimagine this industrial rail corridor as a vibrant, accessible space that strengthens Milwaukee's economy, improves public safety and supports long-term growth.

"This incredible grant is the culmination of years of collaboration," said Willie Karidis, RTC's Project Director for the Route of the Badger. "As Milwaukee reimagines the 30th Street Corridor, it sets a precedent for other cities to follow: Trails as a foundation for long-term economic growth, empowering communities to thrive while preserving their identity."

The 30th Street Corridor project is part of a growing national movement to create active transportation networks enhancing connectivity and quality of life, and the process being spearheaded in Milwaukee creates a blueprint for cities across the country seeking to leverage trails for economic development in their communities.

With more than 150 active transportation networks under development across the United States—at least one in every state—half of all Americans now live in communities where these transformative systems are being built. These projects are, in part, supported by federal grants, including Reconnecting Communities, which provide the critical funding needed to deliver the economic, mobility and safety benefits these networks promise.

"The City of Milwaukee is thrilled with the award to local organizations working within the 30th St Corridor," Mayor Cavalier Johnson said. "The city has long been committed to seeing this area thrive and looks forward to partnering on the upcoming Equitable Development Plan."

When complete, the project will connect to the Hank Aaron State Trail, the Oak Leaf Trail and the Beerline Trail, creating a 17.5-mile connected "Milwaukee Loop" around the city as part of The Route of the Badger—a trail-network project with a vision of connecting 705-miles of trail across Southeast Wisconsin—is one of RTC's TrailNation™ projects, which are focused on catalyzing the development of trail networks nationwide.

About Near West Side Partners

Near West Side Partners (NWSP) is a non-profit organization that works to revitalize the Near West Side of Milwaukee in four key focus areas: safety, housing, attracting and retaining businesses, and promoting the well-being of our neighbors. NWSP was founded through the support of business and civic leaders, including the organization's five anchor institutions – Aurora Health Care, Harley-Davidson, Marquette University, Molson Coors and Potawatomi Ventures.

About Rails to Trails Conservancy

Rails to Trails Conservancy is the nation's largest trails organization—with a grassroots community more than 1 million strong—dedicated to building a nation connected by trails, reimagining public spaces to create safe ways for everyone to walk, bike and be active outdoors. Connect with RTC at railstotrails.org and [@railstotrails](https://twitter.com/railstotrails) on social media.