Biking and Walking in Elkhart County

2017 Trail Guide for North Central Indiana
Elkhart · Goshen · Middlebury · Nappanee · Bristol · Wakarusa
The Elkhart County, IN Convention and Visitors Bureau invites you to a unique opportunity to experience our region by walking and biking.

Visit HTadventures.com to find lodging, restaurants, shopping, and entertainment throughout the county that meet your travel needs. Contact us by phone or email for trip planning services, including personalized bike and walk tours.

The Visitors Center is located just off the Indiana Toll Road (I-80/90) at Exit 92, behind Cracker Barrel. Hours are Monday to Friday 8am-5pm and Saturday 9am-4pm. The Center is closed on Sunday and major holidays.

This guide is designed by Dovetail Projects LLC. May 2017.
BEFORE YOU HEAD OUT

Look over these items as a reminder of what you may want to take with you on your walk or ride.

CHECKLIST FOR WALKS:

- Water bottle
- Small snack (e.g. nuts and dried fruit)
- Mobile phone
- Sunscreen and lip balm
- 2–3 clothing layers
- Comfortable socks and shoes
- Backpack or shoulder bag
- Driver’s License or ID card
- Sunglasses or hat
- Insect repellent
- First Aid (e.g. bandages and medication)

CHECKLIST FOR RIDES:

- All of the walking items, plus...
- Helmet
- Lock
- Basket or panniers
- Spare inner tube
- CO2 cartridge or air pump
- Small emergency bike repair tool kit

In all things of nature there is something of the marvelous

–Aristotle
Welcome to Elkhart County
Elkhart
The city of Elkhart is a great place to spend a day walking or biking along riverways and in its many parks and gardens. You can stay close to downtown on the RiverWalk Trail or head off into the urban forest to follow the River Greenway Trail. Paths in Elkhart connect you to performing arts at the Lerner Theatre; history at the Ruthmere Museum and Havilah Beardsley House; relaxation at the Wellfield Botanic Gardens; and educational programs at the Elkhart Environmental Center. Elkhart is also a good starting point for longer trips to surrounding communities. The Quaker Trace Trail connects to Bristol and Middlebury; the MapleHeart Trail connects to Ox Bow County Park and Goshen; and the West County Tour connects to Wakarusa and Nappanee.

Goshen
With over 30 miles of trails, Goshen has one of the most connected greenways in the region. The Millrace Canal Trail is a major artery of the city for walkers and bikers to food and entertainment in the historic downtown district. From south Goshen, the Winona Interurban Railway Trail connects to sporting events and performing arts at Goshen College. A Southeast County Tour begins and ends at Fidler Pond Park and connects to River Preserve County Park, the beautiful DeFries Calendar Gardens, and the small towns of Benton and Millersburg. Fidler Pond Trail is a unique 1.5-mile loop around an old quarry and is the site of the annual Rock the Quarry Triathlon. Other trails throughout the city get you to numerous parks and the Elkhart County 4-H Fairgrounds. Abshire Park, northeast of downtown, is a major trailhead for the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail. The Pumpkinvine leads you to Middlebury and Shipshewana and connects to the MapleHeart Trail, a major route to Elkhart.

Middlebury
The Pumpkinvine Nature Trail is the backbone of biking and walking in Middlebury. From north to south, the trail connects you to a blend of old-style and modern restaurants and stores. The trail winds past Krider World’s Fair Garden and across a historic trestle bridge, accessible only to bikers and walkers. Following the Pumpkinvine southwest takes you to Goshen and east to Shipshewana, a hub of LaGrange County and Amish culture. The Wayne Street Trail and the Ridge Run Trail are two off-shoots of the Pumpkinvine, connecting to each other at the Village Shops of Das Dutchman Essenhaus Inn & Conference Center. The Ridge Run Trail will be under construction in Spring 2017, opening the following summer. The Quaker Trace Trail meets the Pumpkinvine Trail at the whimsical Krider World’s Fair Garden, connecting Middlebury to Bonneyville Mill County Park, Bristol, and Elkhart.
Bristol
As one of the county’s oldest towns, Bristol is an important stop to learn about the region’s history. The Elkhart County Historical Museum is free to the public and hosts a couple special events every month. Just walking around downtown, you will find many beautifully restored buildings, including the Bristol Opera House, home to Elkhart Civic Theatre. This small town is the half-way mark along the Quaker Trace Trail between Elkhart and Middlebury, making it a great stop for a quick bite to eat downtown or a quiet rest in one of the parks along the Saint Joseph River. Bonneyville Mill County Park, a favorite walking and mountain biking location with its own unique story, is also nearby. This guide suggests a Goshen / Bonneyville Link that connects Goshen to the Bristol area.

Nappanee
In Nappanee, horse-drawn buggies are common and historic preservation is celebrated. Amish Acres, on the west side of town, is the only Old Order Amish farm listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The restored 80-acre homestead offers guided tours, authentic Amish meals, and live theater. East of downtown is Coppes Commons, originally a cabinet factory, now renovated to include a variety of small shops selling handmade crafts, fabrics and fresh baked goods. Speaking of baked goods, Nappanee’s annual Apple Festival is home to Indiana’s largest apple pie and serves approximately 800 slices from the 7-foot pastry. Several parks throughout the town make for a nice walk or afternoon picnic. This is the halfway mark of the 43-mile West County Tour.

Wakarusa
A single stoplight and lots of small-town charm is at the center of Wakarusa. The town is highlighted as a stop on the West County Tour for strong bikers, and is a lovely place to explore on its own for any walker or biker looking for a short stroll or roll. Quiet tree-lined sidewalks take you past historic shops and homes. Visitors to the downtown can get a bite to eat at Cook’s Pizza or a handful of old-style candy at the Wakarusa Dime Store. If you visit in the spring, you may want to time your trip to see the annual Wakarusa Maple Syrup Festival, widely considered the best in Indiana.

Share the Road: Bikes and Buggies
Elkhart County is home to many in the Amish community. If you spend much time on our roads, you will see horse-drawn buggies. Most horses are well-trained to drive with traffic; however, they can still be unpredictable, so caution is always advised.

- Just as cars pass on the left, bicyclists should also pass to the left of a buggy.
- Give plenty of space as you pass, for your own safety as well as the safety of the buggy occupants and the horse.
- Avoid quick movement and loud sounds. Horses can be easily startled.
- Stay alert. Buggy drivers typically travel between 5 and 8 mph, but may speed up or slow down suddenly without warning.
Local Events: Walks, Rides, & Runs

Elkhart County hosts many events for bikers, walkers, and runners. Every month of the year, you will find opportunities to challenge yourself and meet others who enjoy outdoor recreation. Check out some of these local favorites!

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Elkhart County is a regional leader when it comes to providing opportunities to walk and bike. In addition to annual events, several shops and clubs in the area host monthly or weekly events. These groups offer a great way to explore new trails and routes with some of the people who know them best.

Contact the Elkhart County Convention and Visitors Bureau for more information about walking, hiking, running, and biking groups. We can also help you set up a personalized biking or walking tour that meets your needs and interests. Call (800) 262-8161, email ecconv@eccvb.org, or stop by the Visitor Center at 219 Caravan Drive in Elkhart.

More Ways to Explore

**DRIVE THE HERITAGE TRAIL**
This full-county loop has been voted a USA Today Readers Choice and named one of America’s “Most Scenic Drives.” Ask us about the 90-mile audio tour (CD or digital download) connecting Elkhart County’s welcoming communities, arts and culture, and Amish and rural life. It’s easy to follow and you set the pace.

**TAKE A WALK THROUGH HISTORY**
Explore the quirky backstories of history in downtown Elkhart and Middlebury with a guided historical walking tour. Experienced guides share local folklore and fun facts to reveal a hidden side to these communities. Visit HTadventures.com/walkingtours to reserve your tour.

**PADDLE THE BLUEWAYS**
The Saint Joseph River, the Elkhart River, and the Millrace Canal provide a unique perspective of Elkhart County. Our waterways take you through the center of towns and into quiet wooded countryside. Public access sites are located in Elkhart, Bristol, and Goshen as well as Ox Bow County Park and River Preserve County Park.

**FIND THE QUILT GARDENS**
The Quilt Gardens along the Heritage Trail join quilting, gardening, and art into a one-of-a-kind event. This colorful patchwork of quilt-inspired gardens and quilt-themed murals is linked by the roads of the Heritage Trail. The gardens are best viewed when they are in full bloom June through September and are free to view. Visit QuiltGardens.com to download a map and summary of this year’s gardens.

**DISCOVER THE PARKS**
You will find many miles of trails for hiking and cross-country skiing in the Elkhart County Parks. Each park offers rentable shelters for special gatherings. Visit ElkhartCountyParks.org for rental prices and printable park maps.

**BIKE THE HILLS**
Hills in northern Indiana? Bristol and the surrounding area stands out from the rest of the county with its rolling hills, formed by glaciers thousands of years ago. The Bonneyville Mill Mountain Bike Trail is 5.63 miles and makes the most of this unique topography. The best starting point for riders new to mountain biking is at the Briar Patch Shelter (15344 CR 8). Visit nimba-bike.org to download a map of the trails.
What's Your Style?

Everyone has a different reason for getting on the trail or taking off on a county road. Knowing what you most enjoy about biking and walking will help you choose the right route.

Each route in this guide recommends the type of biker or walker that may want to try it out. For example, if you know that you want to take it easy and stop to watch ducks along the river, look for the “Casual” recommendations.

CONFIDENT, BUT CAUTIOUS
- Your route is mostly on trail and sidewalk.
- Some sections require merging with car traffic, but only on local, low-traffic roads.
- You will often be in busier parts of town, close to some good food and entertainment.

CASUAL
- Your route is mostly on off-road trails.
- Expect very few road crossings, if any, and lots of opportunities to view wildlife.
- You will be in the quieter, slow-paced corners of our communities.

STRONG AND FEARLESS
- Your route is mostly on county roads, but you will also see sections of our off-road trails.
- Some routes have long, straight stretches great for getting in training mileage. Some will require more navigation.
- You will be in the rural areas of the county, passing Amish farms and corn fields.
You can walk and bike in any weather if you have the right gear!

Walking in the rain can be a very relaxing activity, but only if you are dressed right. Wear a venting jacket with hood, waterproof boots, and two pairs of socks. Carry a water-proof bag for items that should not get wet.

Bicyclists should invest in a good riding poncho that attaches over the handlebars to keep your legs dry. Fenders with mud flaps and water-proof shoe covers are well worth the money, too.

The key to walking and biking in cold weather is wearing several layers so you can remove some as your body warms up. Overheating is a real concern, so remember to wear breathable materials. Wide bike tires with tread are a necessity to bike in snow.

**CYCLISTS: CHECK YOUR A, B, Cs**

- **Air:** Tires lose a little air every day. Check the pressure before a ride and add air as needed. The amount your tires need is printed on the side of the tire in PSI (Pounds per Square Inch).

- **Brakes:** Squeeze and release your brake levers to make sure they move easily. Check the front and back brake pads and see that they both touch the rim when the levers are squeezed.

- **Chain:** A dry chain can skip, lock up, or break suddenly. Wipe down and apply chain lubricant regularly to keep it clean and moving smoothly.

**CHECKLIST FOR WALKS:**

- Water bottle
- Small snack (e.g. nuts and dried fruit)
- Mobile phone
- Sunscreen and lip balm
- 2–3 clothing layers
- Comfortable socks and shoes
- Backpack or shoulder bag
- Driver’s License or ID card
- Sunglasses or hat
- Insect repellent
- First Aid (e.g. bandages and medication)

**CHECKLIST FOR RIDES:**

- All of the above, plus...
- Helmet
- Lock
- Basket or panniers
- Spare inner tube
- CO2 cartridge or air pump
- Small emergency bike repair tool kit

Does your bike need a tune-up? Do you need new gear or want to rent a bike for the day? These locally-owned businesses can help you.

**Pumpkinvine Cyclery**  
413 N Main St, Middlebury  
Tu-F: 10–6, Sat: 9–4  
(574) 825-2252  
pumpkinvinecyclery.com

**Family Bicycle Center**  
3410 S Main St, Elkhart  
M-F: 9–6, Sat: 9–4  
(574) 294-2865  
familybicyclecenter.com

**Lincoln Ave Cycling**  
430 W Lincoln Ave, Goshen  
M-F: 10–6, Sat: 9–4  
(574) 533-7425  
lincolnavenuecycling.com

**Elkhart Bicycle Shop**  
401 E Jackson Blvd, Elkhart  
M-F: 10–6, Sat: 9–3  
(574) 294-7243  
allaboutcycling.net

Want to connect to a community bicycle shop or advocacy group?

**Chain Reaction Bicycle Project**  
510 E Washington St, Goshen  
(574) 903-3056  
crpb.org

**Pedal Power Bike Shop**  
1320 Prairie St, Elkhart  
(574) 361-0009

**Bike Elkhart**  
bikeelkhart.org

**Bike Michiana Coalition**  
bikemichiana.org
NOTES FOR BICYCLISTS:

1. Cyclists always ride on the right side of the road (with the flow of traffic).
2. Ride in a straight line. Weaving between parked cars makes you less visible and less predictable to motorists.
3. If you want to turn left at an intersection, signal with your arm as you move to the right side of the left lane and turn when it is safe to do so, yielding to oncoming traffic as required.
4. Obey turn-only signs. If you want to travel straight through an intersection, stay to the left of a right turn only lane.
5. Move back to the furthest right lane once you are through the intersection.
6. Pedestrians always have right-of-way. Always. A cyclist must yield to pedestrians in a crosswalk, just as cars do.
7. Ride at least 2–3 feet away from the road edge so you have room to maneuver around unexpected potholes or other obstacles without going off the road or hitting the curb.
8. Cross railroad tracks at a 90-degree angle to avoid getting your tire caught in the gaps. Return to the right side of the lane.
9. Need to make a connection? Check out the Interurban Trolley map and schedule at interurbantrolley.com. You can secure up to two bikes on a rack located on the front or back of any Trolley. Then, sit back and relax awhile.
10. Note: Bicycles are not allowed inside the Trolley. If the rack is full, you must wait for the next available Trolley. Regular fare is $1.00 per person for each one way trip. Children 5 and under ride free when traveling with an adult.
Trails & Routes
Elkhart RiverWalk Trail

A good route for Casual walkers Confident, but cautious walkers

General location Downtown Elkhart

Route access points
- Franklin Street parking lot
- NIBCO Parkway parking lots
- Lundquist Bicentennial Park
- Pulaski Park / Island Park bridge

Trail length 1.7 miles • loop

The RiverWalk Trail gets you to some of the most popular food and entertainment of downtown Elkhart, but keeps you next to the beauty of the Elkhart River. Sculptures, gardens, parks, and five pedestrian bridges make this a unique route for anyone who enjoys outdoor recreation. Try this loop for an easy family outing, walking meetings, or your own quiet meditation. Two historical walking tours start at the north and south ends of the trail.
Millrace Canal Trail

A good route for Casual bikers and walkers

General location Central Goshen

Route access points
a Powerhouse Park
b Shanklin Park or Millrace Park
c Goshen Dam Pond

Trail length 2 miles • one-way

Goshen’s hydraulic canal was completed in 1868 and was the catalyst for many new industrial businesses in the city. These days, the Millrace Canal is a popular trail for both recreation and commuting walkers, runners, and bikers. The trail connects downtown Goshen to some of the most densely populated neighborhoods. Several intersecting trails provide additional links to Goshen Middle School and many elementary schools, as well as to Goshen College and Goshen Hospital. Three highlights along the trail are the old powerhouse at the north end, Tommy’s Kids Castle at Shanklin Park, and the canal headgates at the Goshen Dam. Lots of water wildlife lives along the canal, including turtles, muskrats, ducks, geese, swans, and herons.
Winona Interurban Railway Trail

A good route for Casual bikers and walkers

General location South Goshen

Route access points
1 College Avenue and 9th Street
2 Goshen College Church-Chapel
3 Greencroft Goshen at 15th Street
4 Bethany Christian Schools

Trail length 1.5 miles • one-way • north/south trail
0.5 mile • one-way • east/west spur

Approximately two miles of paved trail connects Waterford Elementary School, Bethany Christian Schools, Goshen College, and Greencroft Goshen. The Winona Trail is entirely separated from the noise of car traffic, but you will likely see a freight train as you follow this active railroad.

Many local residents use this trail for quiet evening walks, training for endurance runs, and slow, easy bike rides. It is also a highly-traveled corridor for commuters between home, work and school.
Middlebury Loop Trail

A good route for Casual bikers and walkers

General location Central Middlebury

Route access points
1. Krider World’s Fair Garden
2. Intersection of Wayne Street, Berry Street, and Railroad Street
3. Intersection of Pumpkin Vine and Ridge Run Trails
4. Das Dutchman Essenhaus at Wayne Street

Trail length 3.7 miles • loop

The Pumpkin Vine Nature Trail has become a model for many other trails in our region, with arguably the largest impact on Middlebury. The Wayne Street Trail begins at the intersection of Wayne Street and the Pumpkin Vine. Construction on the Ridge Run Trail began in Spring 2017 and is expected to be open to the public by summer of the same year.

These three trails form a loop, connecting the Middlebury Greenway to neighborhoods, churches, Greencroft Middlebury, and the Middlebury Schools campus. The whimsical Krider World’s Fair Garden is the crown jewel in the Middlebury park system. The gardens were originally designed for display in the 1933-1934 Chicago World’s Fair and feature water pools and falls, a windmill, toadstool sculptures, pergola, and arbor with swings.

Near the gardens, the Middlebury Greenway Learning Corridor highlights a series of informational signs about unique sights along this section of the Pumpkin Vine Trail. Two guided walking tours provide even more insight into the history of this town. Food and entertainment opportunities are located in the downtown area and Das Dutchman Essenhaus Village Shopes to the west.
Elkhart River Greenway Trail

A good route for
Casual bikers and walkers (trail only)
Confident, but cautious bikers and walkers (extended route)

General location
Central Elkhart

Route access points
- Elkhart Environmental Center (a)
- Studebaker Park (b)
- Joanne Drive (c)

Route length
1.9 miles • one-way • trail only
6.1 miles • loop • trail and road

Follow this trail along the Elkhart River and you will forget that you are in the middle of a city. The 120-acre greenway is home to deer, river otter, muskrat, beaver, coyote, fox, pileated woodpeckers, screech owls, and nesting wood ducks. Bird watchers may find many migrating species. Start at the Elkhart Environmental Center where you can learn about local wildlife, view eco-friendly building models, or take a yoga class. Heading north, you will end at Studebaker Park, a popular choice for pick-up soccer games and afternoon picnics.

For those interested in exploring a little further, this guide recommends an additional loop around American Park and Rice Park. The roads on this route are low-traffic and are a nice way to dip into some quiet Elkhart neighborhoods.

![Map of Elkhart River Greenway Trail](image_url)
Celebrated as one of the best rail trails in Indiana, the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail offers a unique opportunity to experience northern Indiana's more rural areas, almost entirely off-road. From wooded marshland to open fields and prairies, the variety of wildlife brings daily surprises to even the frequent visitor. Whether you explore this trail in small sections or in a full round-trip, make sure to give yourself time for soaking up the beauty around you.
MapleHeart Trail

A good route for All levels of bikers and walkers

General location Northwest Elkhart County

Route access points
- Franklin St parking lot in Elkhart
- Intersection of Sterling Ave and Lusher Ave
- Ox Bow County Park
- Abshire Park in Goshen

Route length 11.6 miles • one-way

Following US 33 and the historic Lincoln Highway, the MapleHeart is a direct route between Elkhart and Goshen, connecting two cities with lots of food and entertainment options. The trail also parallels one of the busiest railroads in the region, making it a great route for train watching.

Ox Bow County Park is a nice halfway stop for a more natural landscape. Pack a picnic lunch to enjoy in the prairie or take something to play catch for a quick game. Look for the pedestrian and cyclist entrance to the southeast of the main gate; non-motorized visitors enter for free.

Goshen to Ox Bow is the recommended section for casual bikers and walkers who prefer to stay off-road. Leaving and entering Elkhart requires a bit more confidence as the trail merges with local traffic.

Download turn-by-turn directions at HTadventures.com
Quaker Trace Trail

A good route for Strong and fearless bikers

General location North Elkhart County

Route access points
1. Franklin St parking lot in Elkhart
2. Congdon Park in Bristol
3. Bonneyville Mill County Park
4. Krider World’s Fair Garden in Middlebury

Route length 17.8 miles • one-way

Note: Plans are underway to build additional off-road trail between Elkhart and Bristol. Construction could begin as soon as Spring 2018.

This lovely new bike route follows the Saint Joseph River and the Little Elkhart River, from Elkhart to Bristol to Middlebury. We suggest starting in downtown Elkhart on the RiverWalk Trail, meandering along the Elkhart River, through several parks and across multiple pedestrian bridges.

Greenleaf Boulevard and County Road 8 are the two main roads in this route. You will find tree-lined roads, uniquely designed houses, and some spectacular views of the rivers. Make a stop in the old town of Bristol for a snack in Congdon Park or a tour of the Elkhart County Historical Museum.

You will also pass through Bonneyville Mill County Park where you can see Indiana’s oldest continuously operating flour mill.

Download turn-by-turn directions at HTadventures.com
West County Tour

A good route for Strong and fearless bikers

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Route length 43.3 miles • loop

Wakarusa and Nappanee are the highlighted destinations of this tour. We recommend following the route clockwise, heading south on County Road 7 and north on County Roads 3 and 1.

Nappanee makes a good half-way stop for food and the downtown has lots of unique clothing boutiques, gift shops, and home decorating ideas. Consider visiting on the second Saturday of any month; events and special discounts are offered all day. The suggested route takes you through Nappanee’s historic residential district and then to Coppes Commons on Market St, at the end of Hartman St. This renovated cabinet factory now houses many small shops including Rocket Science, a flash-frozen ice cream parlor - a perfect stop on a hot day! Several nice parks are also located throughout the city and each has its own set of trails to explore.

On your way back to Elkhart, Wakarusa offers a quieter scene with tree-lined streets and walking paths. In downtown, Wakarusa Hardware is a sight to see with its “wall of a thousand drawers” and Wakarusa Dime Store has over 450 kinds of candy to give you the boost you need for the ride home.

County roads on this tour are mostly straight and flat, which makes for a good training route, while riding past miles of idyllic farmland and open views.
Southeast County Tour

A good route for

Strong and fearless bikers

Route access points

- Fidler Pond Park in Goshen
- Goshen College Church-Chapel
- River Preserve County Park
- DeFries Calendar Gardens
- Intersection of Co Rd 127 and Canal Dr
- Intersection of Jefferson St and Washington St

Route length

30.3 miles • loop, including Fidler Pond Trail

This tour is best as an all-day ride so you can stop and enjoy the views. We recommend riding it counter-clockwise - from Fidler Pond, head south to Goshen College and the Winona Trail. The route takes you past the Goshen Airport to the River Preserve County Park with short paths to wetlands and the old hydroelectric dam. Continue on to the beautiful DeFries Calendar Gardens, which showcases plants of different colors and textures in every season. Millersburg, a town of just over 900 residents, has its own unique charm. Take a rest in Eagle Park before riding back to Goshen.
Goshen–Bonneyville Link

A good route for

Strong and fearless bikers

Route access points

A Abshire Park in Goshen
B Intersection of CR 26 and CR 31
C Bonneyville Mill County Park

Route length 12.0 miles • one-way • via Pumpkinvine Trail

Get into the hillier part of the county with this route. The Pumpkinvine Nature Trail gets you started in Goshen with packed gravel, then paved path. After four miles on the trail, you will head north on county roads to see some of the beautiful countryside up close. Your ride will take you past horse farms, through wooded areas, and over the rolling hills that bikers love.

The Bonneyville Mill is the oldest continually operating mill in Indiana, producing freshly-ground flour since the 1830s. The park is a great place for a picnic next to the Little Elkhart River and dahlia gardens. Or give your bottom a rest and walk the trails through marshes and meadows. And if you still aren’t worn out, check out the park’s 5.63 mile mountain bike trail.