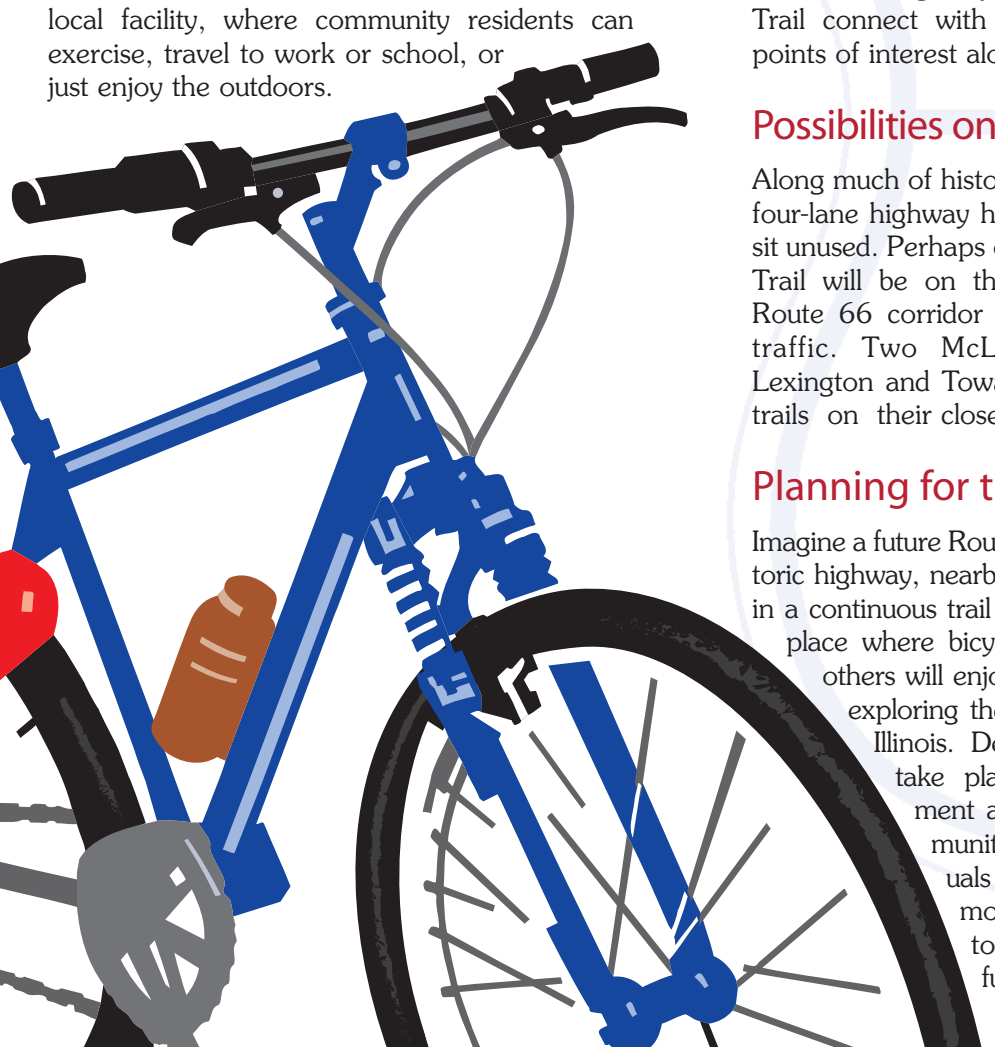


The Route 66 Trail

A trail that follows historic Route 66 offers a whole new way to experience this classic piece of America's heritage. The 369-mile Route 66 Trail is an opportunity to get close-up views from the seat of a bike rather than the inside of a car. This trail adds another dimension to recreation and tourism along Route 66, another way to enjoy the lore of the historic highway.

Long-distance and local

Route 66 was all about traveling long-distance, a strip of pavement that carried Americans to new lives and adventures in the 20th century. Now the Route 66 Trail, too, offers possibilities for bicycle touring and other recreational uses along the entire Illinois Route 66. The trail is also a valuable local facility, where community residents can exercise, travel to work or school, or just enjoy the outdoors.



On-road and off-road

Today, most of the trail is an on-road bicycle route, on the signed historic Route 66 where possible; on nearby, less-busy roads that are more bicycle-friendly; or on off-road bike trails, where riders can enjoy a more leisurely atmosphere, yet be close to the historic highway. All segments of the Route 66 Trail connect with all of the communities and points of interest along historic Route 66.

Possibilities on the closed pavement

Along much of historic Route 66, two lanes of the four-lane highway have been closed to traffic and sit unused. Perhaps one day much of the Route 66 Trail will be on this old pavement, within the Route 66 corridor but separate from motorized traffic. Two McLean County communities, Lexington and Towanda, have already developed trails on their closed pavement.

Planning for the future

Imagine a future Route 66 Trail that includes the historic highway, nearby trails, and bike-friendly roads in a continuous trail from Chicago to St. Louis: a place where bicyclists, equestrians, hikers, and others will enjoy an extraordinary experience exploring the heritage of Route 66 across Illinois. Developing this future trail will take planning, involvement, commitment and time. Join the many communities, organizations, and individuals already supporting and promoting Route 66 interests and tourism and help create the future Route 66 Trail.

Visiting the Route 66 Trail

The League of Illinois Bicyclists has developed a Route 66 Trail User's Guide. Get a copy and tour the trail. The guide is available on-line at **http://www.bikelib.org/route66**. For a printed copy, contact the Illinois Department of Natural Resources at **dnr.greenway@illinois.gov** or phone 217/782-3715.

Historic Route 66–Illinois received the prestigious National Scenic Byway designation in 2005 and is an America's Byway. Visit the Illinois Route 66 Heritage Project website **http://www.illinois route66.org** for more information, or phone 217/525-7980.

The Route 66 Association of Illinois offers traveling tips, extensive information about the historic icons along the highway, and much more, including the guidebook *Traveling the New Historic Route 66 of Illinois*. Visit **http:// www.il66assoc.org** or write to the Association at 110 W. Howard Street, Pontiac, Illinois 62764.

You can drive **Route 66** in Illinois simply by following the brown and white Historic Route Illinois 66 signs. A map and traveling information will make your trip more enjoyable.

Executive Council

Twenty-seven members of the Route 66 Trail Executive Council include elected officials, community organizations, park agencies, tourism interests, and more. The Council serves as an independent body providing oversight for Route 66 Trail planning.

Vision

Establish the Illinois Route 66 Trail as a world-class bicycling, recreational and learning experience for Illinois residents and visitors.

Mission

The Route 66 Trail Executive Council will serve as a cooperative partnership of agencies and organizations working toward implementation of the Route 66 Trail, linking communities along the trail with efforts to promote economic growth through tourism and recreation.

Regional Committees

Regional committees for the trail's three geographic regions (north, central, and south) deal with a wide range of local considerations, such as trail alignment, coordination among jurisdictions, and trail promotion.

This brochure was sponsored by:

Keep up with the development of the Route 66 Trail. Contact the communities along Route 66, tourism officials, and park and recreation agencies. For general trail information contact:

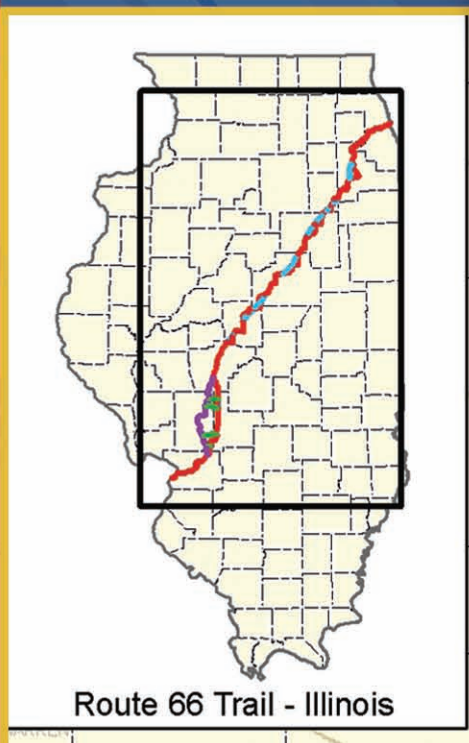
Illinois Department of Natural Resources
One Natural Resources Way
Springfield, IL 62702
217/782-3715
dnr.greenway@illinois.gov

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Some Route 66 Trail Facts

- 438 total miles from Chicago to the Mississippi River: 369 miles on the main trail plus 69 miles on the western alternate.
- Includes all three historic Route 66 alignments: 1926-30, 1930 to 1940, and 1940-1977.
- Connects with restored Route 66 landmarks.
- Passes through communities that retain the heritage of Route 66.
- Offers historic cafes and restaurants that continue to serve travellers.
- Close to many of Illinois' historic sites.
- Includes some of the original Route 66 highway, less-busy country roads, and nearby off-road trails. Mainly an on-road bike route today, with more off-road in the future.


Route 66 Trail - Illinois



In addition to connecting Chicago and St. Louis, the Route 66 Trail also connects communities along the historic highway and neighborhoods within those communities. The trail can become a backbone for state, regional and local trail networks.

