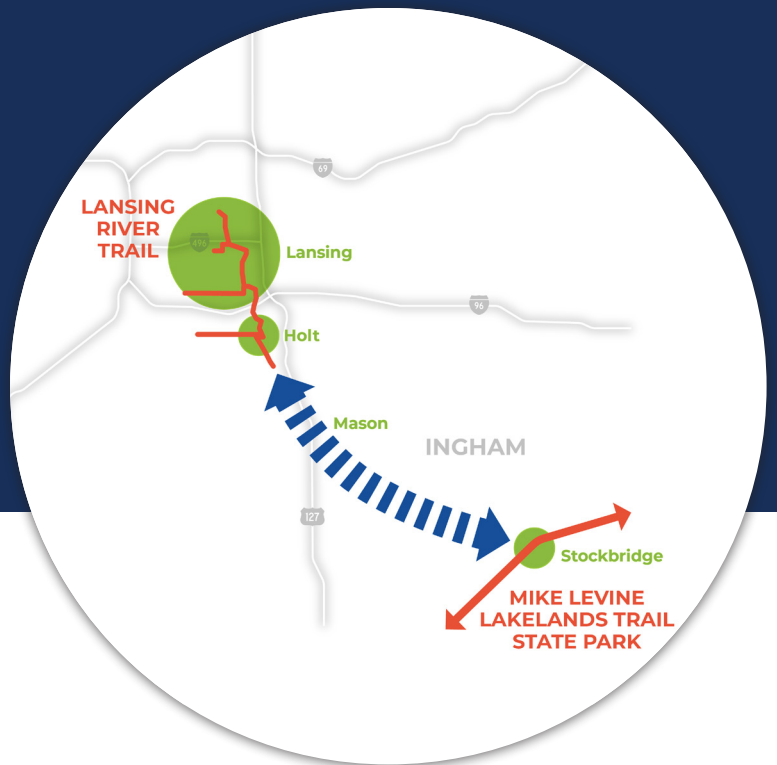
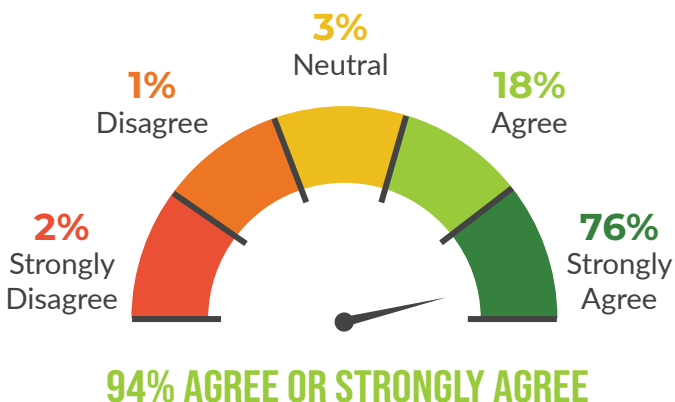


MIKE LEVINE LAKELANDS TRAIL STATE PARK TO LANSING RIVER TRAIL

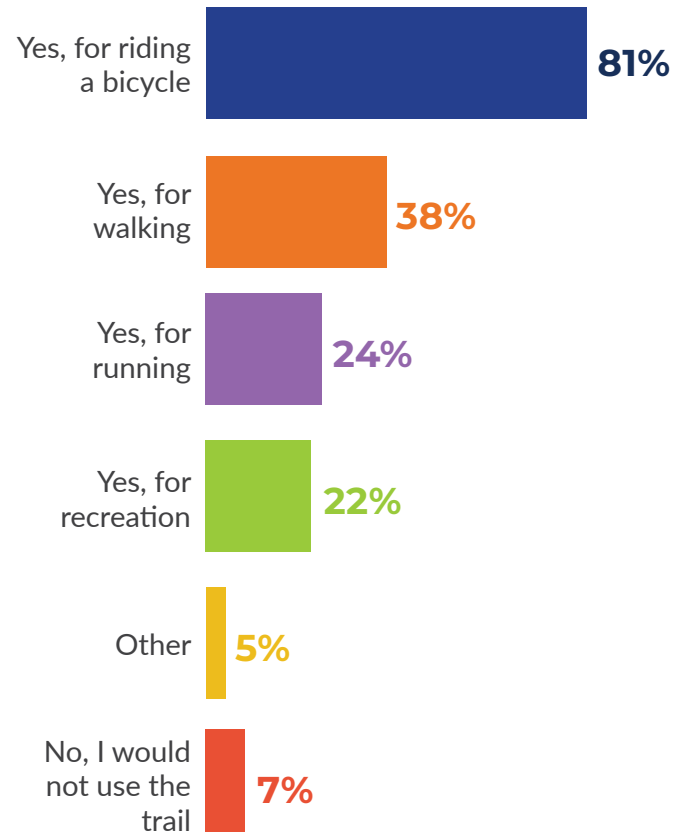
COMMUNITY INPUT SUMMARY

During April and May 2025, public engagement for the Tri-County Regional Trails Plan included six open houses across the region and an online survey to encourage broad participation. A total of 171 surveys were completed for the proposed Mike Levine Lakelands Trail State Park to Lansing River Trail connection, and 21 people attended open houses in Stockbridge and Vevay Twp. Community members shared their opinions on the proposed route, including their support or concerns. This valuable feedback played a key role in shaping the final route. This document summarizes the input received during the process.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO PROVIDE A TRAIL CONNECTION BETWEEN MIKE LEVINE LAKELANDS TRAIL STATE PARK AND LANSING RIVER TRAIL



WOULD YOU USE THE TRAIL CONNECTION?



WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT THE PROPOSED ROUTE:



Trail Access & Convenience — The proposed trail improves accessibility with convenient entry points near homes and parks, encouraging frequent use by individuals and families. It supports active lifestyles and offers a safe space for walking, running, and biking—especially valuable in areas lacking pedestrian infrastructure.

Connectivity & Expansion — The trail links existing paths like the Hayhoe Trail to communities such as Mason, Leslie, and Stockbridge, creating a regional network that connects Lansing to Detroit, Ann Arbor, and Jackson. This encourages longer rides and a more cohesive trail system.

Safety & Traffic Separation — Residents value the trail's design, which limits interaction with traffic by using interurban and rail corridors. This improves safety, especially for children and families. Would like to see that type of connection between Leslie and Stockbridge.

Community Engagement & Support — There is strong community backing for the trail, with residents expressing excitement about the project. Suggestions include adding sculptures from local artists to foster community involvement and pride.

Inclusive & Multi-Use Trail Design — There may be opportunities to incorporate both paved and natural surfaces, accommodating a broader range of users. Proposals for dedicated equestrian trails reflect interest in supporting horseback riding alongside walking, biking, and other recreational activities.

WHAT DO YOU DISLIKE ABOUT THE PROPOSED ROUTE:



Safety & Comfort Concerns — Trail users are uncomfortable with segments located along busy roads (e.g., Cedar Street, Fitchburg Road, Kipp Road). These conditions reduce usability for families and other trail users. Off-road, fully separated trails are preferred for improved safety and overall experience. Routes adjacent to highways or relying on paved shoulders expose users to traffic, noise, and other hazards, making them less effective.

Concerns About Paved Shoulder Between Leslie & Stockbridge — The proposed segment along the paved shoulder between Leslie and Stockbridge lacks adequate separation from vehicle traffic. Physical barriers are desired to ensure user safety. Off-road or gravel alternatives are considered safer and more practical, some users are unlikely to use a route located on the shoulder.

Connectivity & Route Design Issues — The proposed alignment lacks direct connections to several schools in Mason. The routing near the Dart facility is indirect and may be bypassed. More scenic and direct alternatives, such as a route through Dansville, are not included. There is also limited connectivity east of Lansing to communities like Okemos and Meridian Township.

Maintenance & Funding Concerns — Sustaining long-term maintenance of the expanded trail network is a critical challenge. Rural areas often lack the necessary resources and staffing. Funding models focus primarily on new construction, with insufficient allocation for the routine upkeep of existing facilities.

Insufficient Amenities — Essential facilities are needed to support long-distance trail use. This includes restrooms, designated parking areas, trailheads, wayfinding signage, benches, shelters, and rest areas. These features are critical to accommodate diverse users and ensure the trail is both functional and accessible.

**TELL US ANYTHING
ELSE YOU FEEL IS
IMPORTANT:**



Trail Connectivity and Completion — Emphasis on finishing key connections such as Holt to Mason, Mason to Lansing River Trail, and linking existing trails like Hayhoe, Mike Levine, and Border to Border. There is a strong desire for routes to connect towns like Leslie, Stockbridge, and Vevay Township, and to expand regional trail networks.

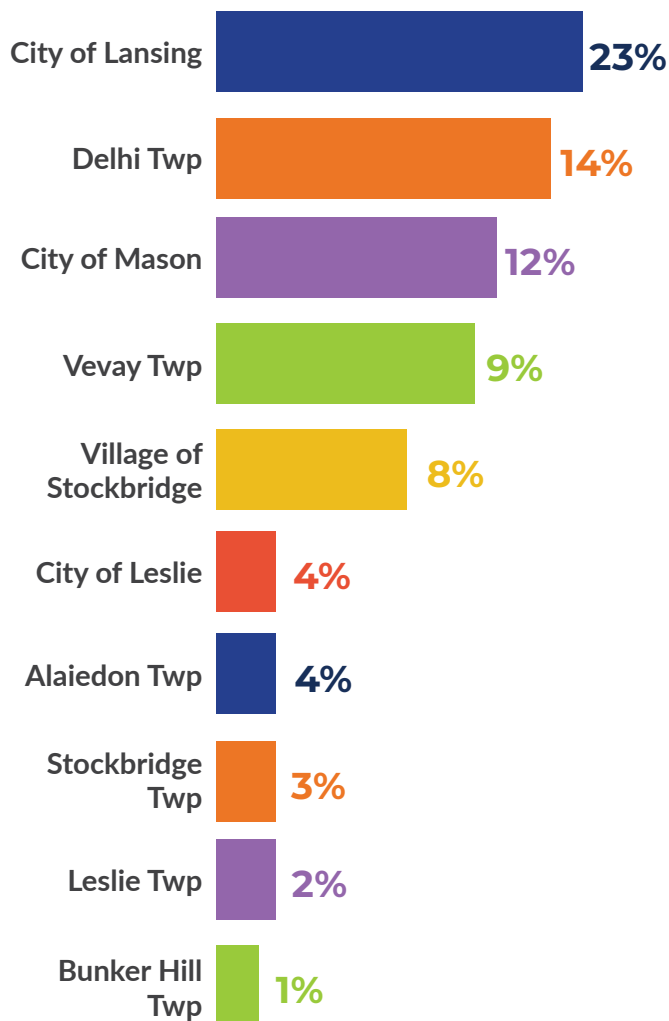
Safety and Separation from Traffic — Support for fully separated, non-motorized trails away from busy roads. Importance of safe crossings with clear sight lines, pedestrian blinking lights, and avoidance of narrow, fast, or high-traffic road shoulders.

Amenities, Facilities, and Trail Quality — Requests include restrooms, benches, bike parking, trash cans, shade, and clear signage to improve comfort and use. Paved trails are preferred over gravel for better safety and accessibility. Maintenance concerns focus on flooding, uneven surfaces, and tree root damage.

Maintenance and Funding Transparency — Questions about ongoing trail upkeep, costs, and staffing. There is a desire for clear communication on maintenance plans and funding sources, especially as trail networks expand. Existing trails need maintenance and repairs, prior to adding new ones.

Prioritize Existing Trails — Maintaining and repairing current trails should be a top priority. A line on a map doesn't guarantee the trail is complete or safe. The Sycamore Trail, for example, was specifically mentioned due to regular flooding.

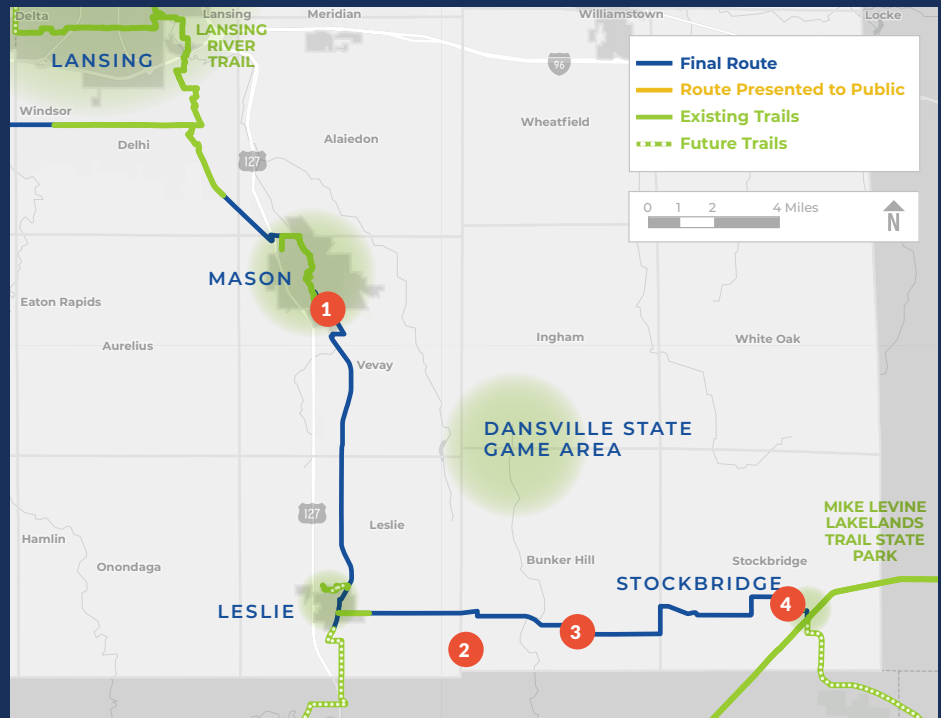
**SELECT THE AREA YOU LIVE IN OR ARE
MOST FAMILIAR WITH:**



Other areas represented 19% of respondents, including East Lansing, Okemos, Meridian Twp, Delta Twp, Delhi Twp, Iosco Twp, Vermontville, City of Williamston, Watertown Twp, Onondaga Twp, Village of Pinckney, Howell, and Brighton.

HOW COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IS SHAPING THE TRAIL:

KEY ROUTING UPDATES BASED ON FEEDBACK



1

Connection to Mason Schools

Exploring options to route the trail past Mason High School as to avoid safety, feasibility and access concerns along Kipp Road.

4

Safe Access into Stockbridge

Trail planners are coordinating with property owners to secure easements and ensure a safe, direct connection into downtown Stockbridge.

2

Linking to Meridian-Baseline Historic State Park

Community members identified the Meridian-Baseline Historic State Park as an important destination between Leslie and Stockbridge. Improved signage and wayfinding will help guide trail users to this unique landmark.

3

Address Paved Shoulder Concerns Between Leslie and Stockbridge

Concerns were raised about the use of paved shoulders. Added protections such as wide shoulders and buffer zones are being considered for safety and comfort.

BROADER INSIGHTS AND KEY TAKEAWAY

Community engagement around the proposed regional trail revealed several emerging themes that offer direction for future trail planning and investment. These broader insights highlight not only where public support is strongest but also where focused planning is needed to ensure a successful and sustainable trail system.



Provide Key Infrastructure to Support Safe and Comfortable Trail Use

Participants emphasized the need for basic infrastructure to support trail use, especially on longer-distance routes. Key trailheads should be identified and improved with amenities such as parking, signage, restrooms, water stations, and seating areas. Provide wayfinding including location and destination markers to enhance the user experience. Incorporate current best practices for trail crossings appropriate for an all ages and abilities trail.



Define Maintenance Responsibilities and Funding

Ensuring the long-term maintenance of the regional trail is a priority for many, particularly in rural communities. Many rural areas lack the staffing, equipment, and budget capacity to support trail upkeep. To ensure safe, year-round access, a clear maintenance plan is needed that defines roles and secures outside funding. This will prevent local governments from being overburdened by an asset they cannot sustain on their own.



Prioritize Connections to Satellite Communities First

There is strong public support for expanding the trail outward from Lansing to connect with nearby towns. These segments are viewed as more feasible in the short term and align with areas of higher population and clear community backing. In addition, these routes are likely to be more competitive for grant funding due to the connections they provide, making them a strategic starting point for trail expansion.



Address Challenges with Remote Extensions

Trail segments extending farther from Lansing face more significant challenges. These include longer distances between points of interest, a lack of amenities or destinations along the route, and less visible community support — especially from rural residents. These realities suggest a need to reassess the pace and approach for these extensions and to consider how features, access, and local engagement could be improved over time.

