

WHITESIDE COUNTY GREENWAYS & TRAILS PLAN

GREENWAY AND TRAIL RESOURCES

Greenway and trail resources include the natural and man made features that affect open spaces and thus provide the basis for developing plans and establishing priorities for greenways. Natural features include soil types, terrain, and drainage characteristics with corresponding flood plains and wetlands, as well as vegetation and wildlife habitat. Man made features include urbanization and the associated constraints for greenways. Other man made features include existing trails, roads and railroad rights of way which offer potential for use as greenways or trails.

Drainage is primarily directed to the 2 major rivers within Whiteside County, the Rock River and the Mississippi River and their tributaries. A large portion of certain parts of the county are within designated flood zones. The flood plains of these and other streams of the County are not well suited for intensive development but have great value as wetlands and linear open space. These areas, along with wooded and natural areas throughout the county, offer wonderful habitat for all types of wildlife.

Urban growth brings with it opportunities for greenway planning and development. Local zoning and subdivision ordinances can be of positive influence on the development of the greenways and trails. The Sterling-Rock Falls area has the highest growth and local subdivision ordinances should provide for the dedication of land or cash in lieu of land for park and recreational purposes, including greenways and trails.

The need to provide quality land use relationships with adequate open space and recreational areas are apparent as population growth can have a major influence on the need for and development of greenways.

The majority of the County's population is in the Sterling/Rock Falls metro area. It is anticipated that there will continue to be a demand for subdivision within those cities as well as within the small communities and rural areas throughout the county. However, special effort should be made to limit rural growth to areas that have or will be provided with satisfactory roads and infrastructure, and to discourage urban development on prime farmland and environmentally sensitive areas. These areas should be supplemented through proper subdivision and zoning regulations.

Public open space is land owned by public entities and accessible to the general public. The majority of public open space sites in Whiteside County are state and national parks. Whiteside County State Park, Prophetstown State Park, Big Bend Conservation Area, Albany Wildlife Refuge, the Hennepin Feeder Canal and the U.S. Fish and Game Wildlife Refuge are all primary examples of valuable public open space and greenway areas.

Many small to medium neighborhood parks are provided by all of the cities and villages within the county. The largest asset the county possesses for the development of greenways and trails are the Rock River, the Mississippi River and the historic Hennepin Feeder Canal. The Mississippi has already generated the Great River Trail throughout the entire length of the county and all but a small portion has been completed and is experiencing wonderful use. The Rock River is currently creating the interest to develop a trail system from the proposed upper dam in Sterling to the Oppold Marina at the eastern edge of the county. Rock Falls is also planning a trail along the river to the upper dam to Lawrence Park, the park on an island. The other gem of the county is the historic Hennepin Feeder Canal, built to connect the Rock River with the Illinois Mississippi Canal; it is the perfect example of a linear park containing wildlife habitat, water and a scenic trail to rival any other in the state.

IMPLEMENTATION

As the Whiteside County Greenway and Trail Plan is completed, the planning process enters the crucial phase of implementation. The plan creates a vision to serve as an advisory guide for public and private actions regarding greenway preservation and development within the County. Consistent with this purpose, the planning process began with the creation of Greenway and Trail Coalition, a citizen-based organization charged with evaluating the existing greenway resources in relation to anticipated future needs for greenways.

To fulfill the plans purpose as a guide for the region wide development and preservation of greenways, this chapter presents a summary of the available methods and the responsibilities for implementation to achieve the vision for Whiteside County.

1. A number of methods and strategies are available to aid in the implementation of the proposed greenways and trails. These include the use of regulatory ordinances and a variety of acquisition, ownership and financial strategies.
2. Regulatory ordinances including zoning, subdivision regulations, and the comprehensive plan may be used by local governments to guide development and also have requirements for greenway creation and preservation. Regulatory ordinances provide a legal framework for the implementation of proposed greenways.
3. Zoning controls the use of land and the zoning ordinance is probably the most effective means for implementing the Greenway and Trail Plan. The County should review its current zoning ordinance to ensure that it includes adequate provisions to preserve open space and wildlife habitat.
4. The subdivision ordinance also represents another effective tool for implementing greenway requirements. By setting standards for the design of streets, sidewalks, utilities and community facilities, subdivision regulations can greatly affect the overall patterns and quality of development. These regulations may also require dedications of land, or fee in lieu of land for parks, open space or trails in new developments. Subdivision regulations may also require dedications for storm water detention basins designed to serve dual usage as recreational facilities.

Acquisition and ownership strategies are the most difficult aspect of implementing a greenways plan. A wide variety of acquisition options are available for consideration. A number of these are widely accepted and often used with much success. A number of other less common but innovative options are also available and may be effective in certain situations.

Along with determining how to acquire a particular greenway, another important issue must be addressed: who will own it? There are three avenues of ownership - private, public or mixed ownership. Usually, if the greenway will be used for a recreational purpose or is used as a mode of transportation, local government would be the most likely owner. However, if the greenway serves an environmental purpose such as wetlands protection, wildlife habitat protection, or stream preservation, a private entity such as a land trust may be the most appropriate owner of the greenway. There may be instances where multiple or joint ownership of a greenway will occur, particularly for regional greenway systems or where implementation and management costs are a burden for one entity. A number of potential acquisition and ownership strategies have been identified by the Conservation Fund, a national nonprofit land and water conservation organization that protects land through partnerships. These strategies are identified in the following tables.

SUMMARY

The following is a summary of the future actions that are required to successfully implement this plan.

1. The process should begin with the official adoption of the plan by Whiteside County.
2. The Greenway and Trails Coalition should determine the feasibility of one of its member organizations, becoming a foundation or similar entity with the legal capabilities to acquire property, manage and maintain greenways on a countywide basis, and receive and disperse funds derived from private donations, government grants and other sources.
3. Once this has been determined, the Coalition or whatever management group has been created should target future greenways for implementation. Strategies for acquisition, ownership and financing or targeted greenways should be evaluated to maximize the use of private funding sources along with Federal and State grant programs.
4. The Coalition in cooperation with Whiteside County should perform an annual review of the Greenway and Trail Plan to measure progress and to target future projects for next year. Major updates of the plan should be considered at intervals of no more than 10 years.
5. An active public relations and education campaign should be carried out by the Coalition to broaden public understanding and support for greenways. Effective sources should include a newsletter, slide and video presentations and implementing a Whiteside County Web Site to attract tourism.

TYPES OF TRAILS

Dedicated Trails are designed and built off-road for the exclusive use of pedestrians, bicyclists, cross-country skiers, skaters, people in wheelchairs, equestrians, or by motorized use such as snowmobiles. The uses allowed on each trail are established by the organizations and public agencies involved in its acquisition, development and maintenance. Although more than one type of non-motorized use is allowed on most trails, motorized recreational vehicle traffic typically is segregated by location or season.

Shared-Use Trails are low-volume streets or rural roads designated and intended to be shared by existing vehicular traffic with proposed bicycle and other non-motorized uses. Generally shared-use trails will require at least some signage and perhaps paint striping to identify the routes and to alert motorists. Some may accommodate other uses such as equestrians or snowmobiling within the right-of-way, although not on the pavement. State law and local ordinances govern such uses.

GREENWAY DEFINITION

A greenway is any linear open space established along either a natural corridor such as a stream valley or overland along a man-made corridor such as a converted railroad right-of-way, canal, scenic road or parkway. Like arteries linking vital organs, greenways connecting parks, nature preserves, wetlands, streams, cultural and historic sites with each other and with populated areas.

Some greenways - though not all - are trails that allow humans passage into and through the natural world. Any natural or landscaped course for pedestrians or bicycles is a greenway.

COUNTRYWIDE PRIORITY SCHEDULE

The ultimate goal of this project is for the Whiteside County Greenway and Trail Plan to become a link in the Grand Illinois Trail. Obviously, the first step toward achieving this is for Whiteside County to have a continuous path stretching from the Hennepin Feeder Canal on the east end of the county, traveling cross-county to the Mississippi River and the Great River Trail on the west.

As a condition to all of the above, the Whiteside County Board should adopt a resolution creating a task force which will coordinate the construction of the various separately funded portions of the construction of the local greenways and trails over the next five years.

The following priority schedule should be used as a guideline for the implementation of the plan.

1. Rockwood Trail from Kelly Park to Covered Bridge, Covered Bridge to Rockwood State Park, and Rockwood State Park to Great River Trail at Fulton - Morrison/Mt. Pleasant Township.
2. Connect Morrison City Trails to Hazel Rd. to Sterling to Rock Falls Hennepin Feeder Canal.
3. Connect Morrison City Trails at Sawyer & Feldman Rd to Lyndon at old bridge over Rock River.
4. Riverfront Trail from Upper Dam to Oppold Marina - Sterling Park District
5. Riverfront Trail from Upper Dam to Lower Dam - Coloma Park District/City of Rock Falls
6. Riverfront Trail connection from Meridiosa Road to Bunge Grain
7. Village of Albany
8. Riverfront Trail from Lower Dam to Lawrence Park - Coloma Park District/City of Rock Falls
9. Lynn Boulevard Trail from Locust Highway to Locust Avenue - Sterling Park District
10. Bridge for creek crossing at Marina - City of Fulton
11. Heritage Park Trail from Cordova River to Albany Road, Cordova Road to Great River Road - Village of Erie
12. Lynn Boulevard Trail from Locust Avenue to Westwood - Sterling Park District
13. Cattail Park connection to the Great River Trail - City of Fulton
14. Lyndon Road connection to the historic Lyndon Bridge - Lyndon/Prophetstown

LOCAL PRIORITY SCHEDULE

The following priority lists for each municipality is based on the conditions at the time of the creation of this plan. The priority lists should also be part of the ongoing review process and revised as needed.

- ALBANY**
1. Riverfront Trail connection from Meridiosa Road to Bunge Grain
- ERIE**
1. Marking, Striping, and bicycle safe storm sewer grates of shared use routes
 2. Heritage Park Trail from Cordova Road to Albany Road
- FULTON**
1. Cattail Park connection to the Great River Trail
 2. Bridge for creek crossing at Marina
- LYNDON**
1. Lyndon Road connection to the historic Lyndon Bridge
 2. Marking, Striping, and bicycle safe storm sewer grates of shared use routes
- MORRISON**
1. Rockwood Trail from Kelly Park to Covered Bridge, Covered Bridge to Rockwood State Park, and Rockwood State Park to Great River Trail at Fulton - Morrison/Mt. Pleasant Township.
 2. Marking, Striping, and bicycle safe storm sewer grates of shared use routes that connect local parks & schools.
 3. Dedicated path from Jackson St. to new city park (Sports Complex)
 4. New Rt. 30 Bridge over Rock Creek w/ dedicated path
 5. Dedicated path along n. side Rt. 30 from Genesee to the new bridge over Rock Creek
 6. Shared use trail extension from Industrial Park Rd. to Sawyer Rd.
 7. Shared use trail on Genesee Ave. to Prairie Center Rd. to Henry Rd.
 8. Dedicated trail from w. end proposed Rock Creek Bridge along n. side of Rock Creek to Covered Bridge
 9. Dedicated trail from Academic Dr. to the junction of Rt. 78 & Industrial Park Rd.
- PROPHETSTOWN**
1. Lyndon Road connection to the historic Lyndon Bridge
 2. Marking, Striping, and bicycle safe storm sewer grates of shared use routes
- ROCK FALLS**
1. Riverfront Trail from Upper Dam to Lower Dam
 2. Riverfront Trail from Lower Dam to Lawrence Park
 3. Signage from Lawrence Park to Feeder Canal
 4. Marking, Striping, and bicycle safe storm sewer grates of shared use routes
- STERLING**
1. Riverfront Trail from Upper Dam to Oppold Marina
 2. Lynn Boulevard Trail from Locust Highway to Locust Avenue
 3. Marking, Striping, and bicycle safe storm sewer grates of shared use routes

LEGEND

SHARED USE TRAIL (PAVED)



SHARED USE TRAIL (GRAVEL)



EXISTING DEDICATED TRAIL



PROPOSED DEDICATED TRAIL



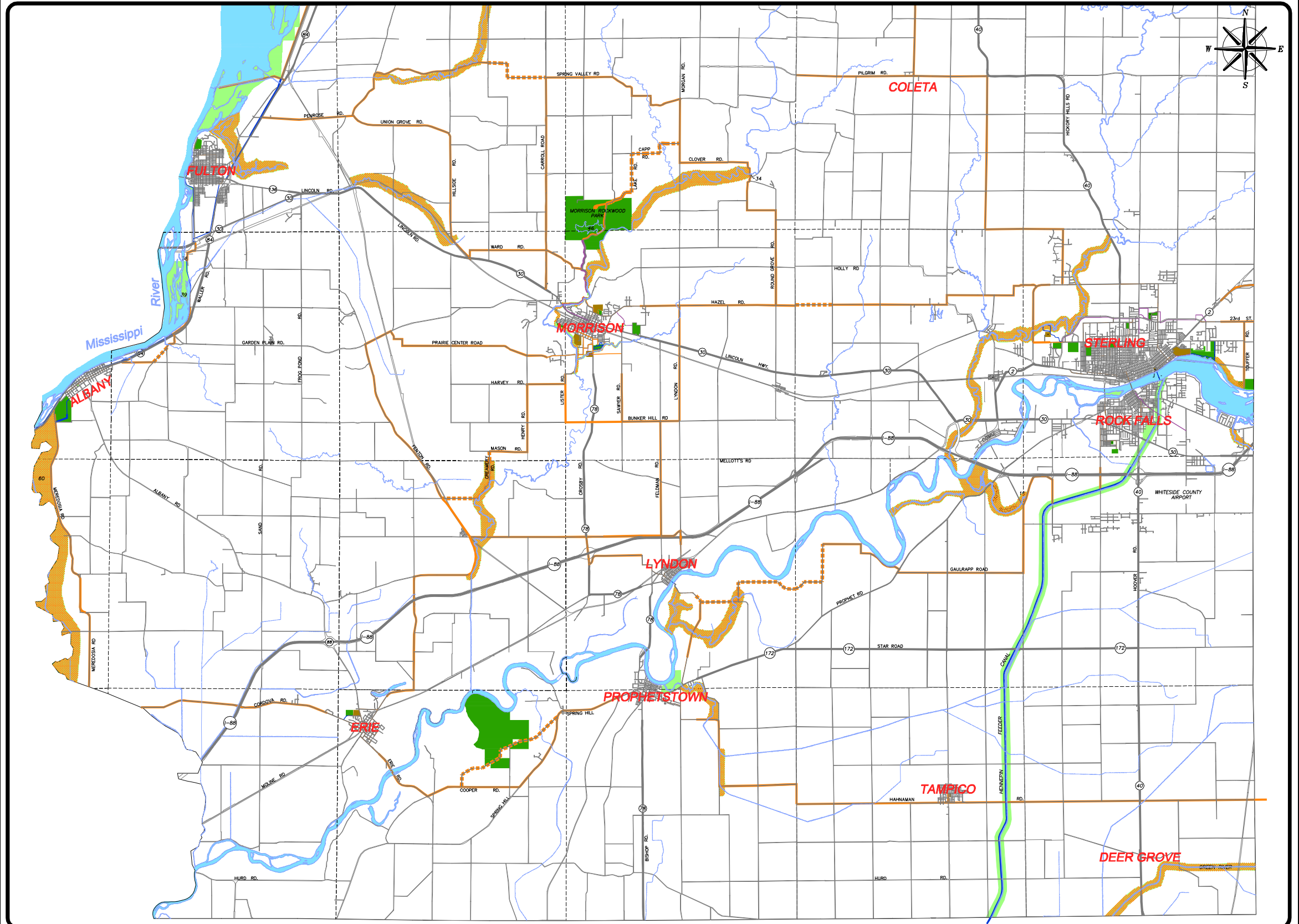
EXISTING GREENWAY



OR PARK

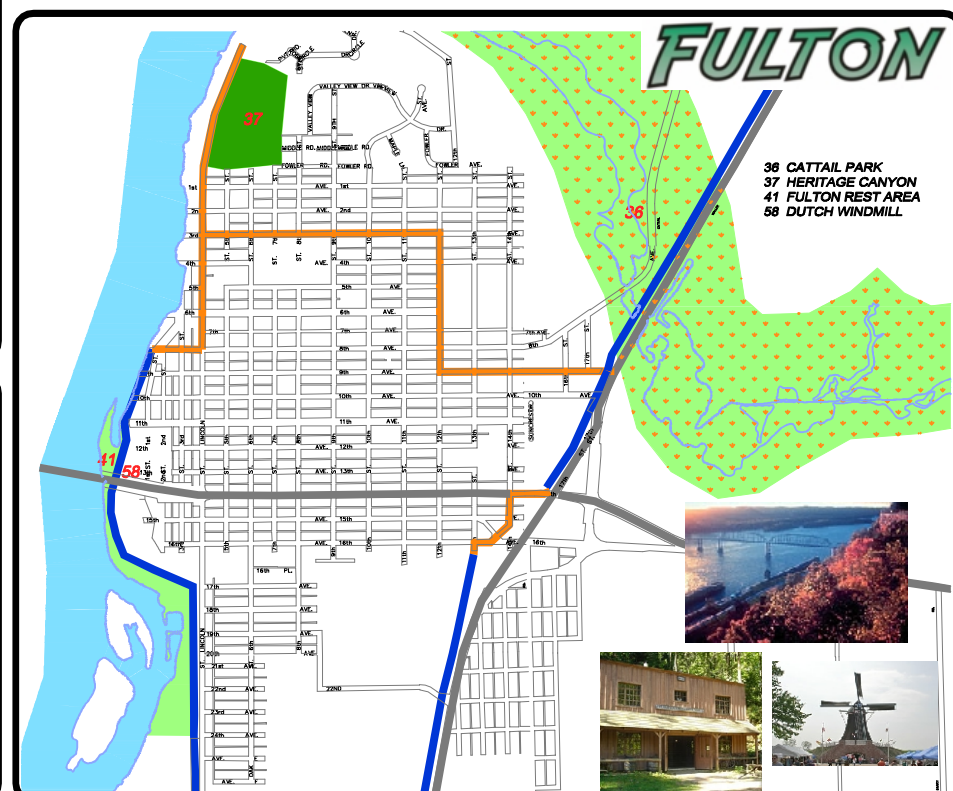
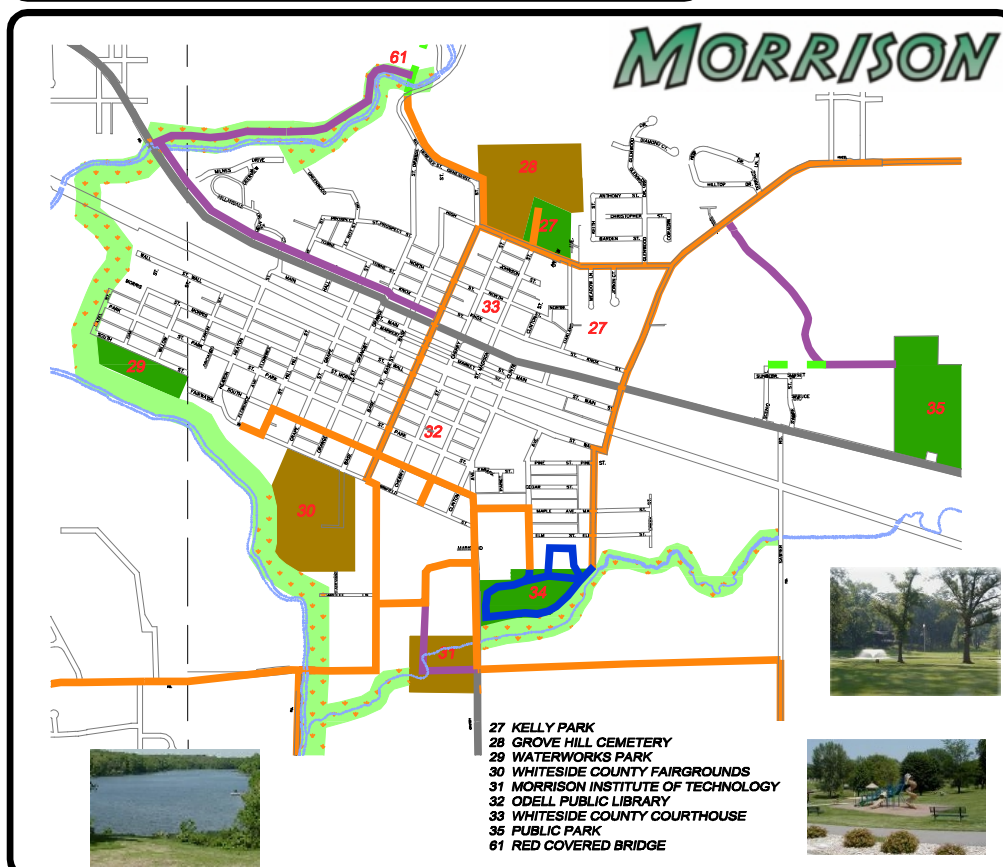
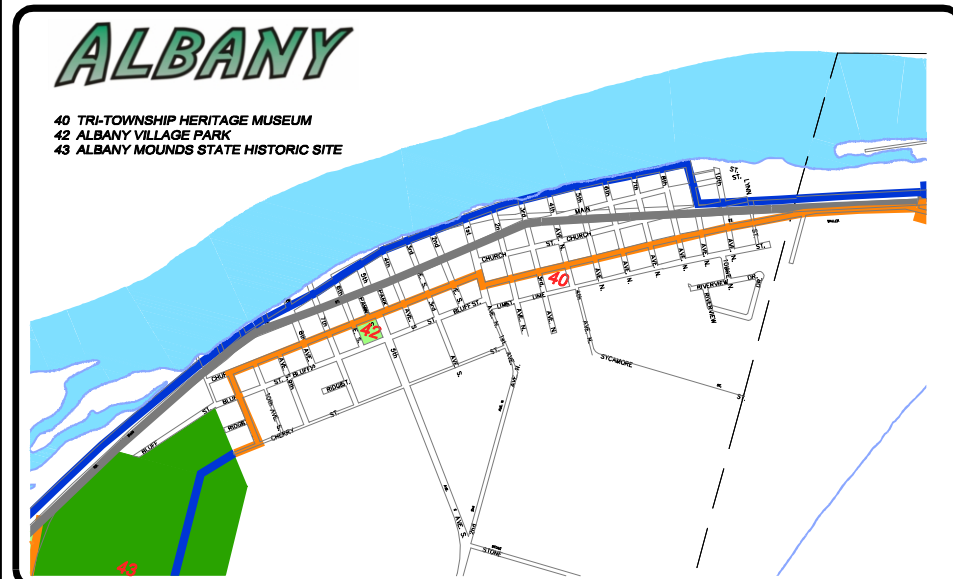
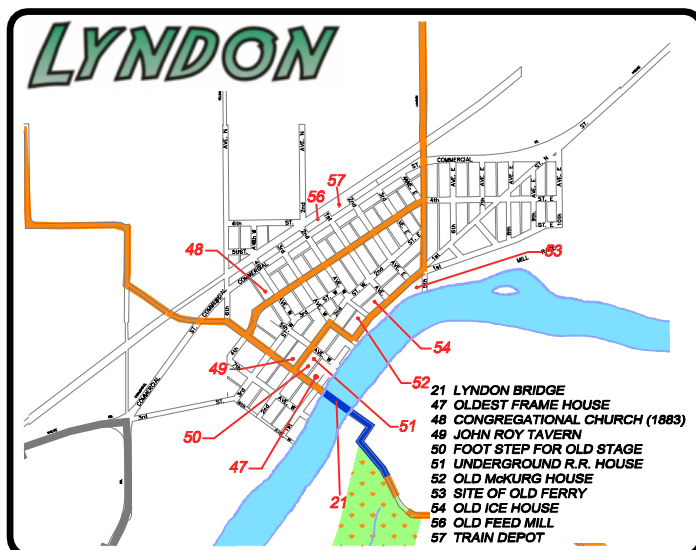
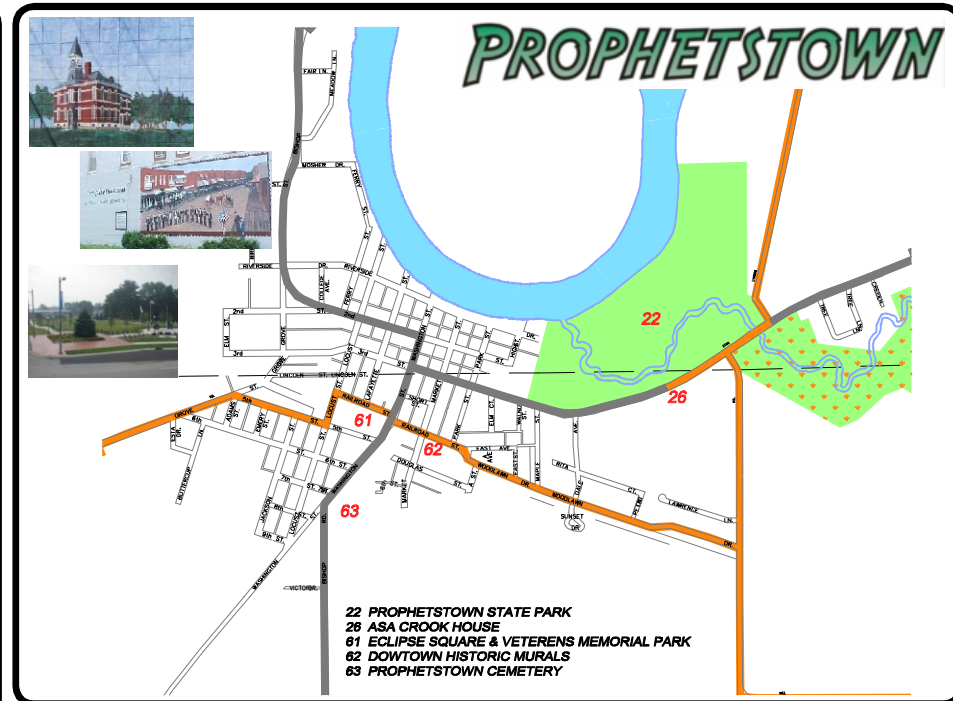
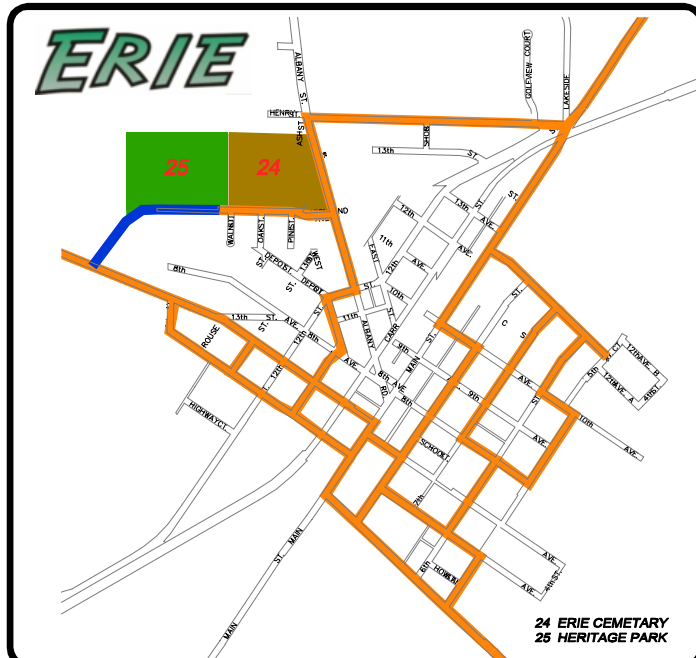


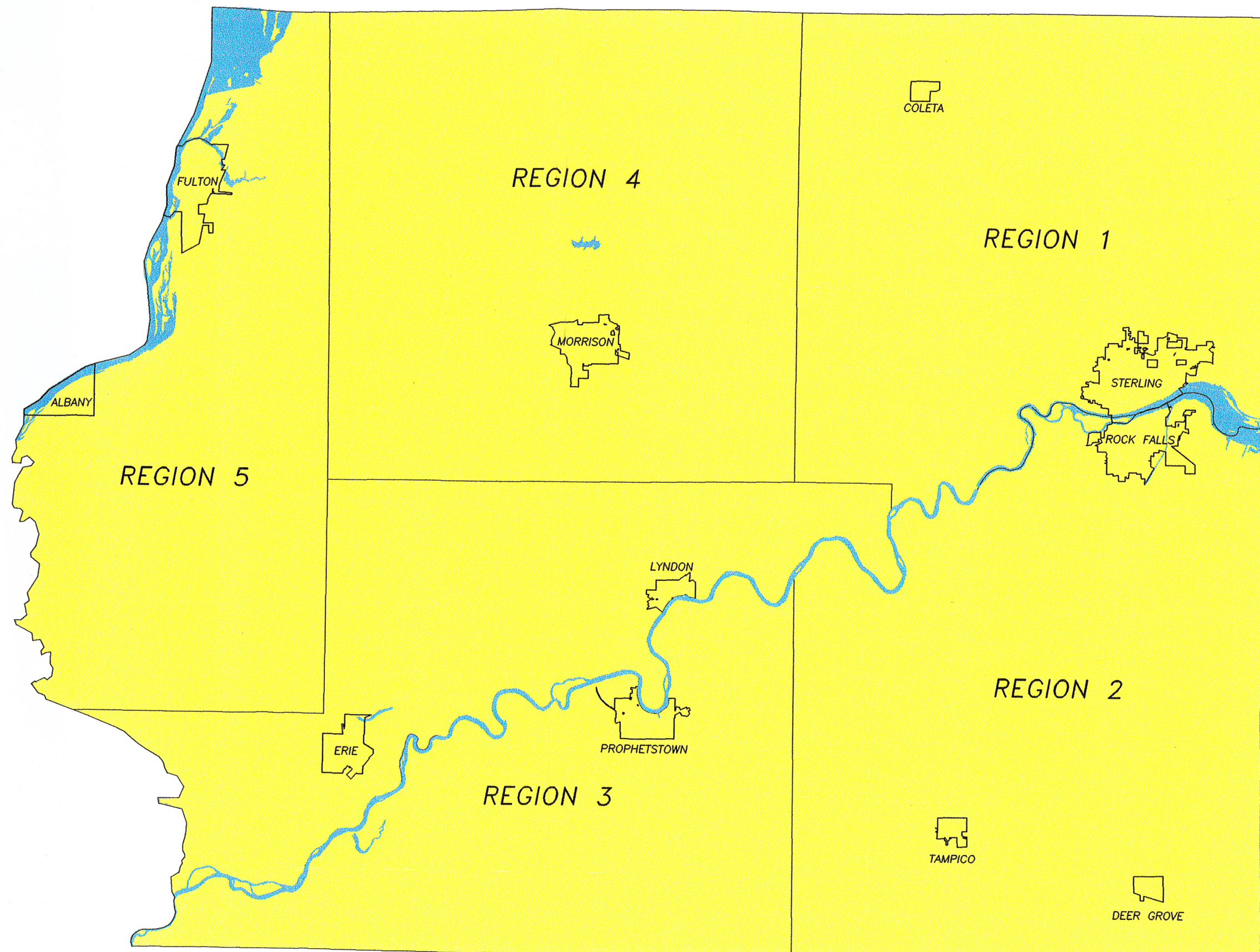
PROPOSED GREENWAY



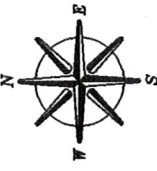
WHITESIDE COUNTY GREENWAYS & TRAILS PLAN

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DIXON, IL (815) 288-2261
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STERLING, IL (815) 626-4428
WARRENVILLE, IL (630) 836-1035

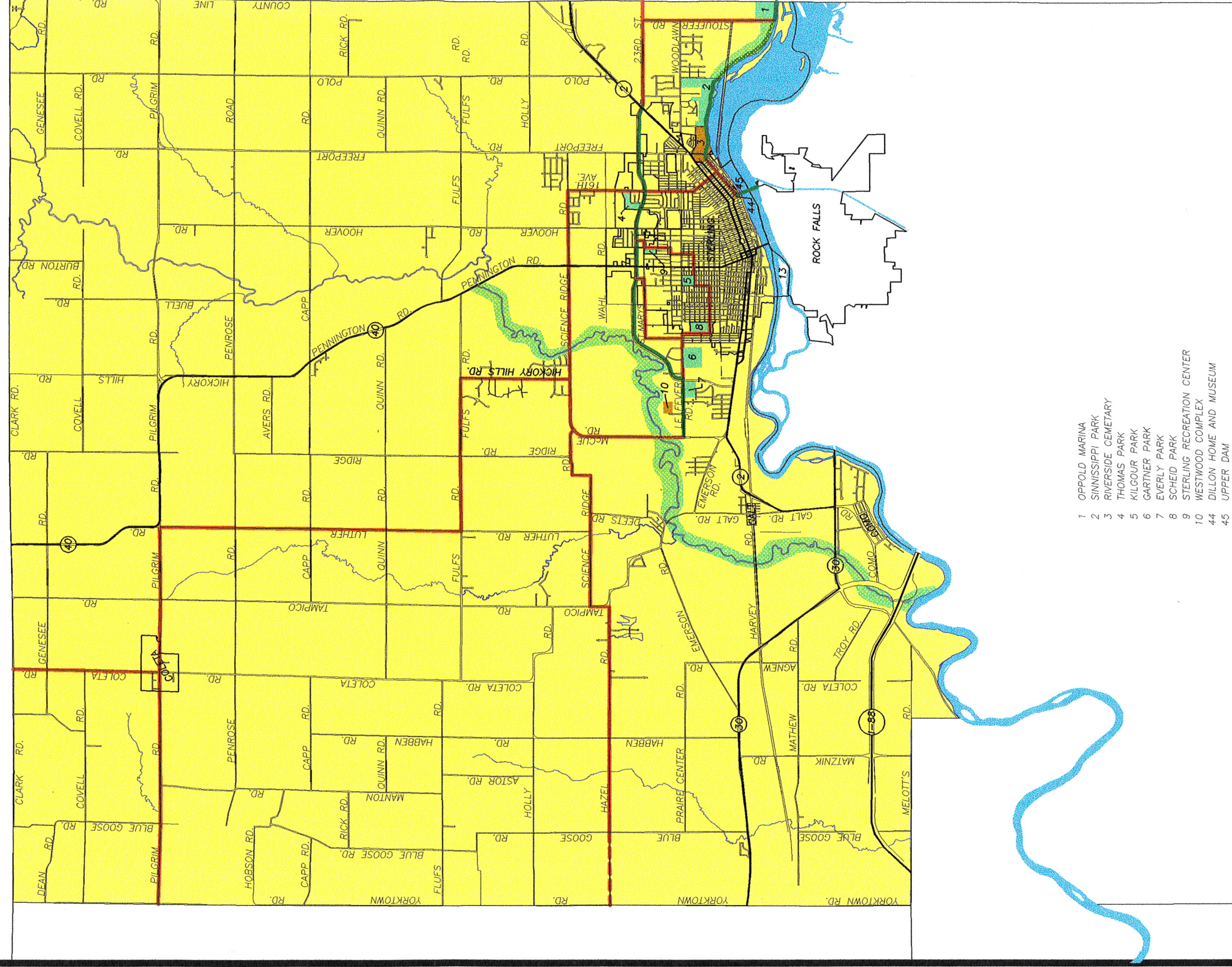




REGION 1

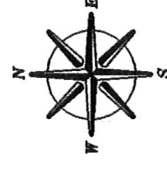


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- SHARED USE TRAIL (GRAVEL)
- EXISTING DEDICATED TRAIL
- PROPOSED DEDICATED TRAIL
- EXISTING GREENWAY OR PARK
- PROPOSED GREENWAY



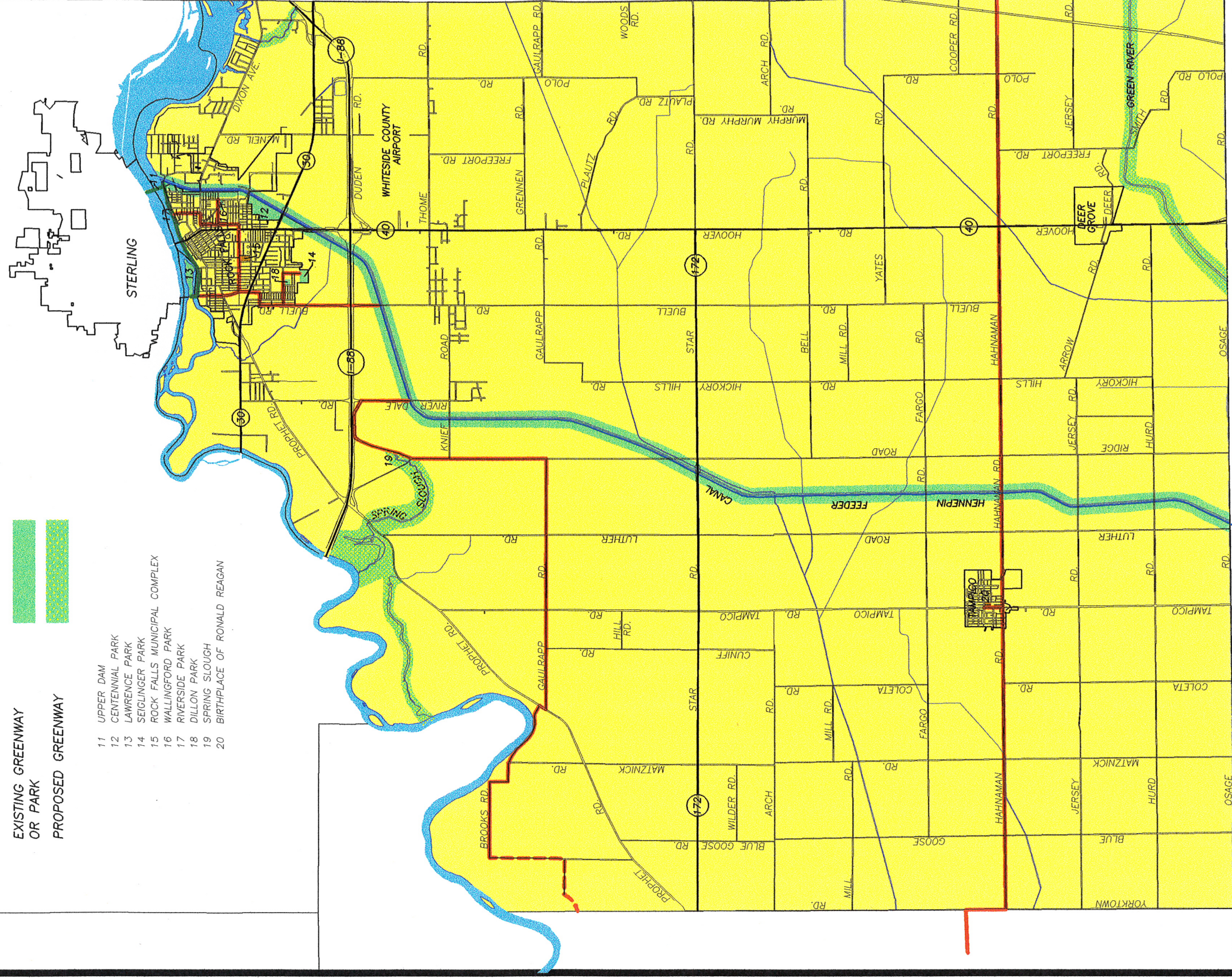
GREENWAY AND TRAIL PLAN

REGION 2



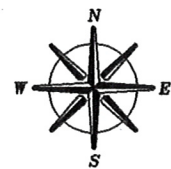
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- 11 UPPER DAM
- 12 CENTENNIAL PARK
- 13 LAWRENCE PARK
- 14 SEIGLINGER PARK
- 15 ROCK FALLS MUNICIPAL COMPLEX
- 16 WALLINGFORD PARK
- 17 RIVERSIDE PARK
- 18 DILLON PARK
- 19 SPRING SLOUGH
- 20 BIRTHPLACE OF RONALD REAGAN

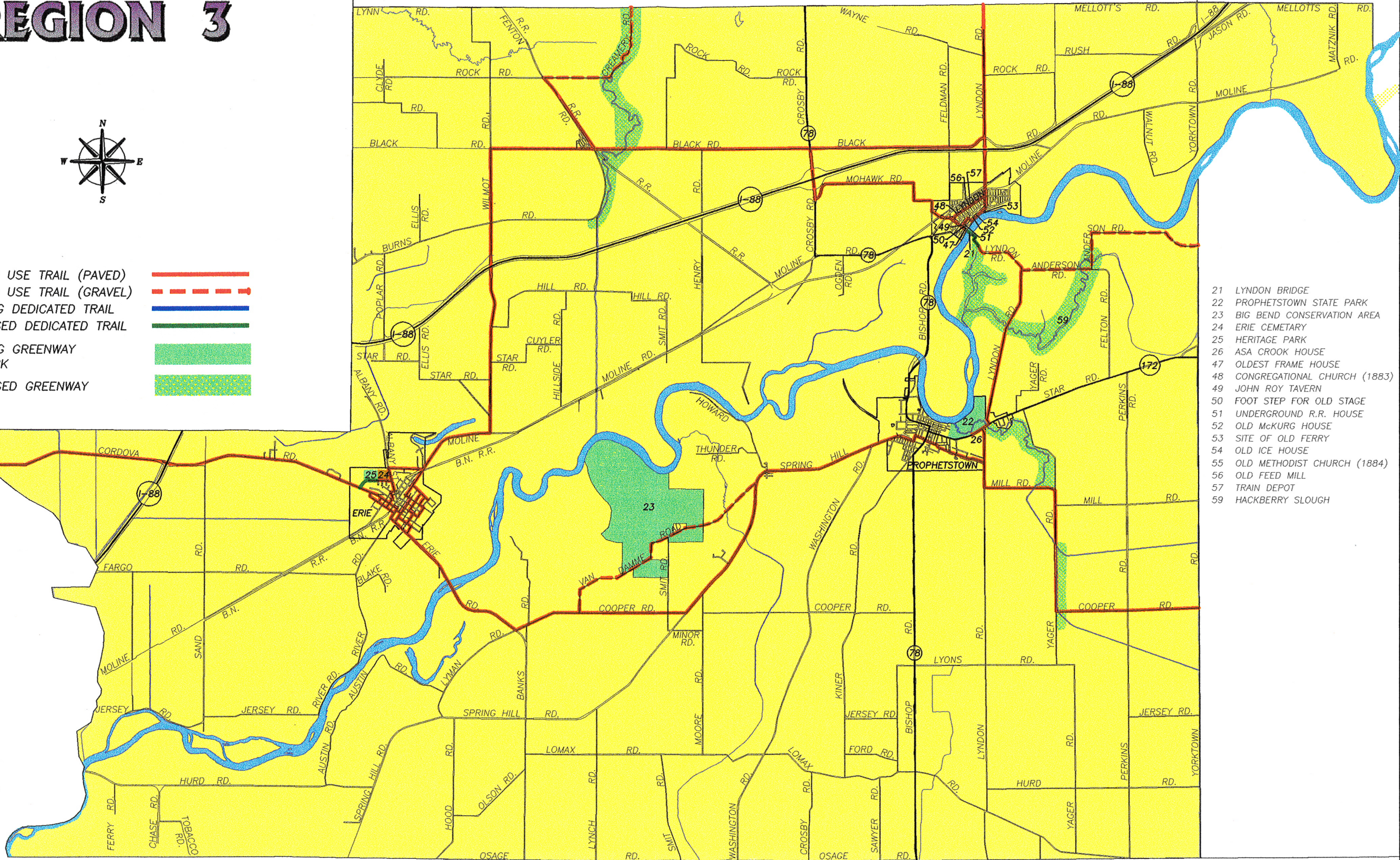


GREENWAY AND TRAIL PLAN

REGION 3



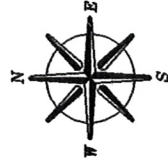
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- PROPOSED GREENWAY



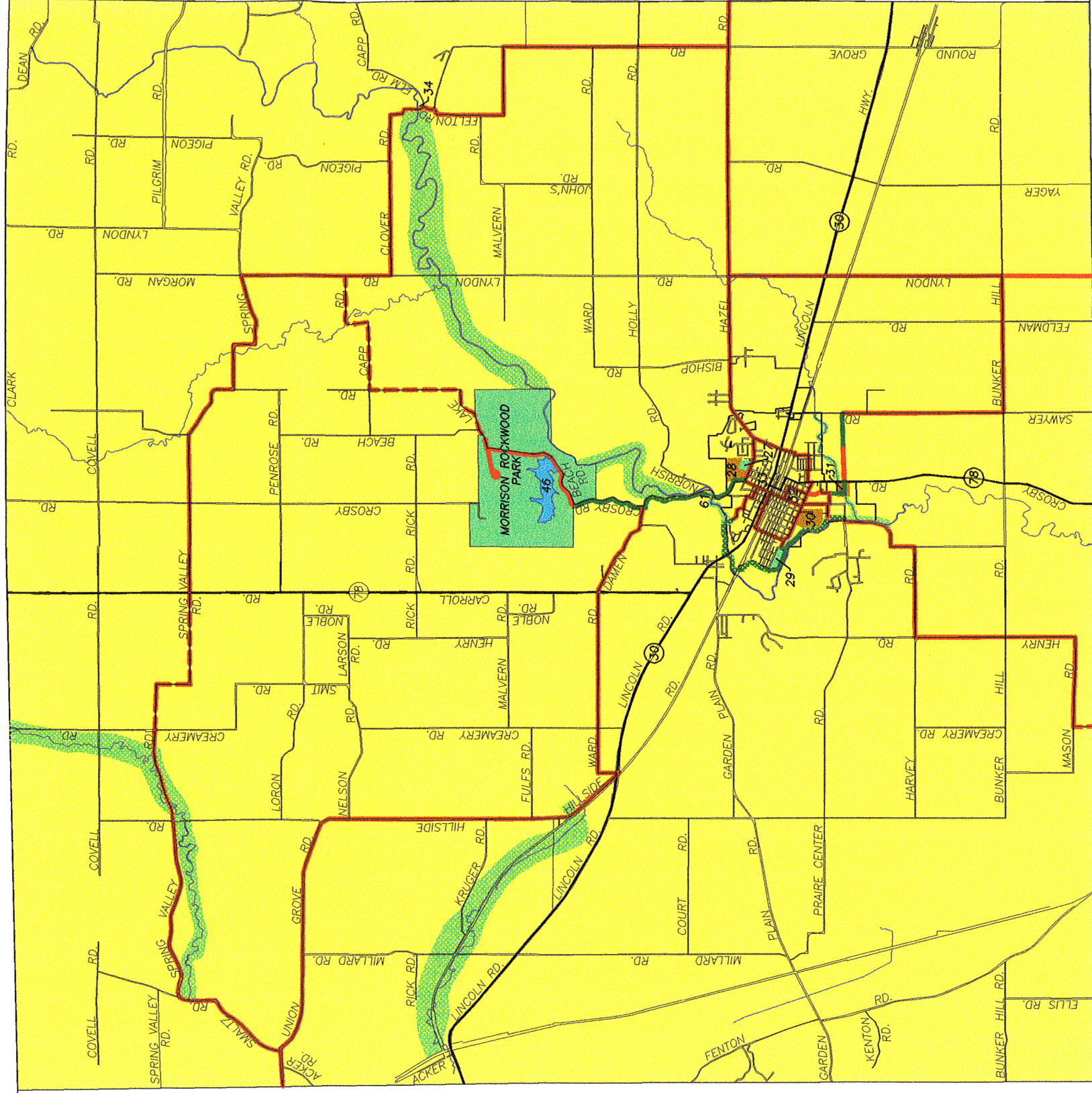
- 21 LYNDON BRIDGE
- 22 PROPHETSTOWN STATE PARK
- 23 BIG BEND CONSERVATION AREA
- 24 ERIE CEMETARY
- 25 HERITAGE PARK
- 26 ASA CROOK HOUSE
- 47 OLDEST FRAME HOUSE
- 48 CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH (1883)
- 49 JOHN ROY TAVERN
- 50 FOOT STEP FOR OLD STAGE
- 51 UNDERGROUND R.R. HOUSE
- 52 OLD McKURG HOUSE
- 53 SITE OF OLD FERRY
- 54 OLD ICE HOUSE
- 55 OLD METHODIST CHURCH (1884)
- 56 OLD FEED MILL
- 57 TRAIN DEPOT
- 59 HACKBERRY SLOUGH

GREENWAY AND TRAIL PLAN

REGION 4



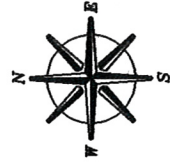
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- PROPOSED DEDICATED TRAIL
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- PROPOSED GREENWAY



- 27 KELLY PARK
- 28 GROVE HILL CEMETERY
- 29 WATERWORKS PARK
- 30 WHITESIDE COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS
- 31 MORRISON INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
- 32 ODELL PUBLIC LIBRARY
- 33 WHITESIDE COUNTY COURTHOUSE
- 34 MALVERN MILL
- 46 LAKE CARLTON
- 61 RED COVERED BRIDGE

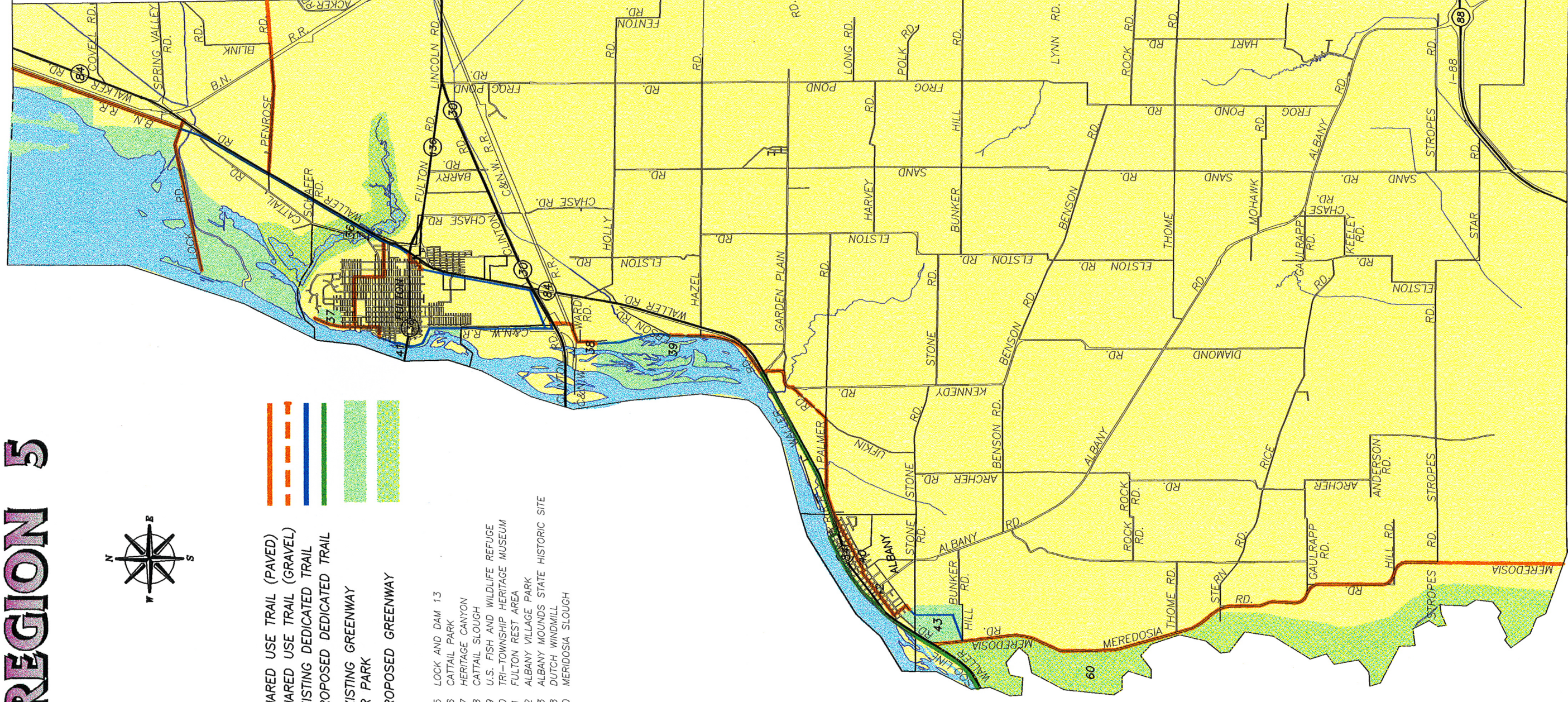
GREENWAY AND TRAIL PLAN

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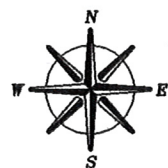


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- SHARED USE TRAIL (GRAVEL)
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- PROPOSED DEDICATED TRAIL
- EXISTING GREENWAY OR PARK
- PROPOSED GREENWAY

- 35 LOCK AND DAM 13
- 36 CATTAIL PARK
- 37 HERITAGE CANYON
- 38 CATTAIL SLOUGH
- 39 U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE REFUGE
- 40 TRI-TOWNSHIP HERITAGE MUSEUM
- 41 FULTON REST AREA
- 42 ALBANY VILLAGE PARK
- 43 ALBANY MOUNDS STATE HISTORIC SITE
- 58 DUTCH WINDMILL
- 60 MERIDOSIA SLOUGH



ALBANY

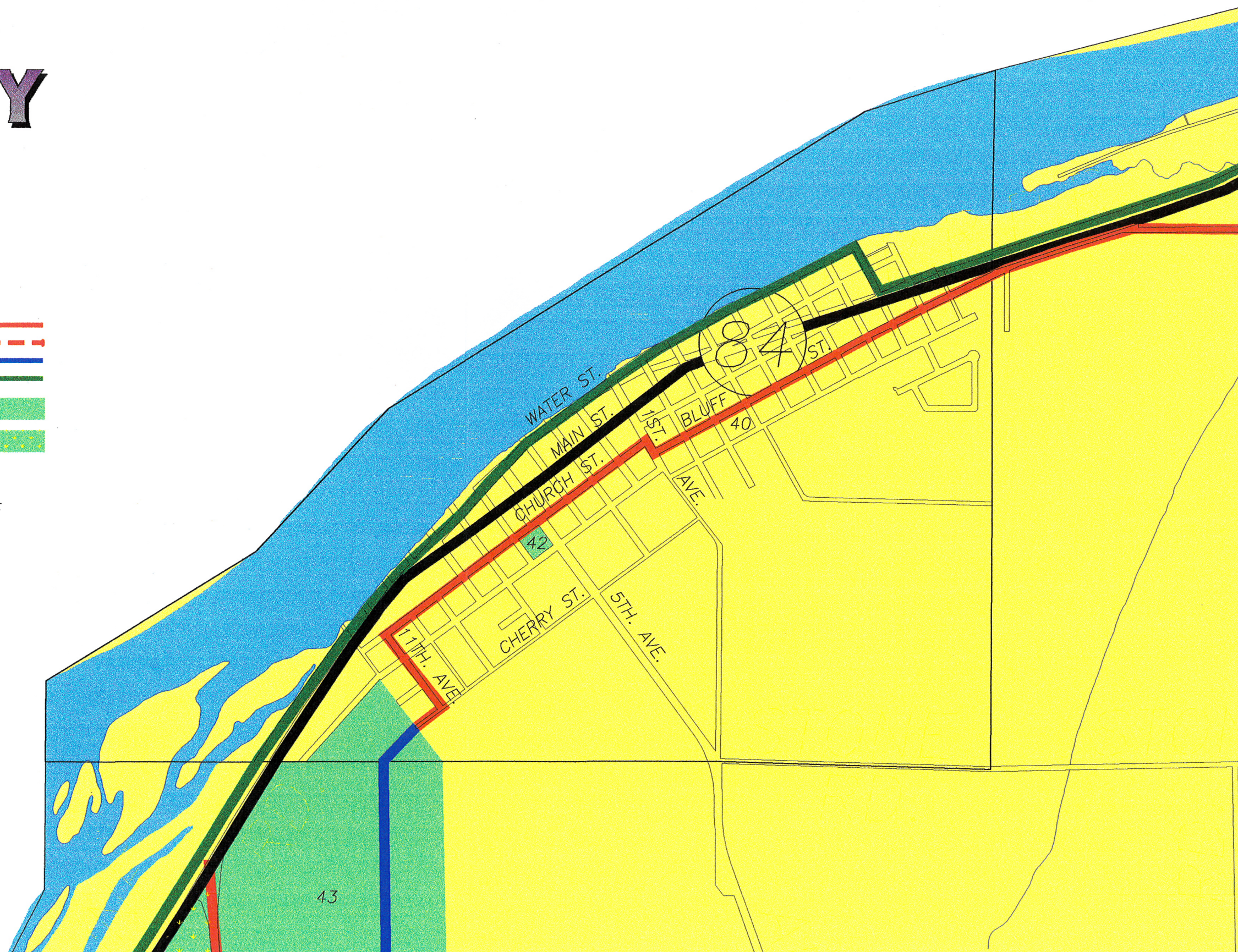


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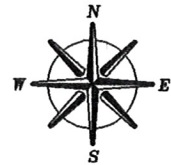
EXISTING GREENWAY
OR PARK

PROPOSED GREENWAY

40 TRI-TOWNSHIP HERITAGE MUSEUM
42 ALBANY VILLAGE PARK
43 ALBANY MOUNDS STATE HISTORIC SITE

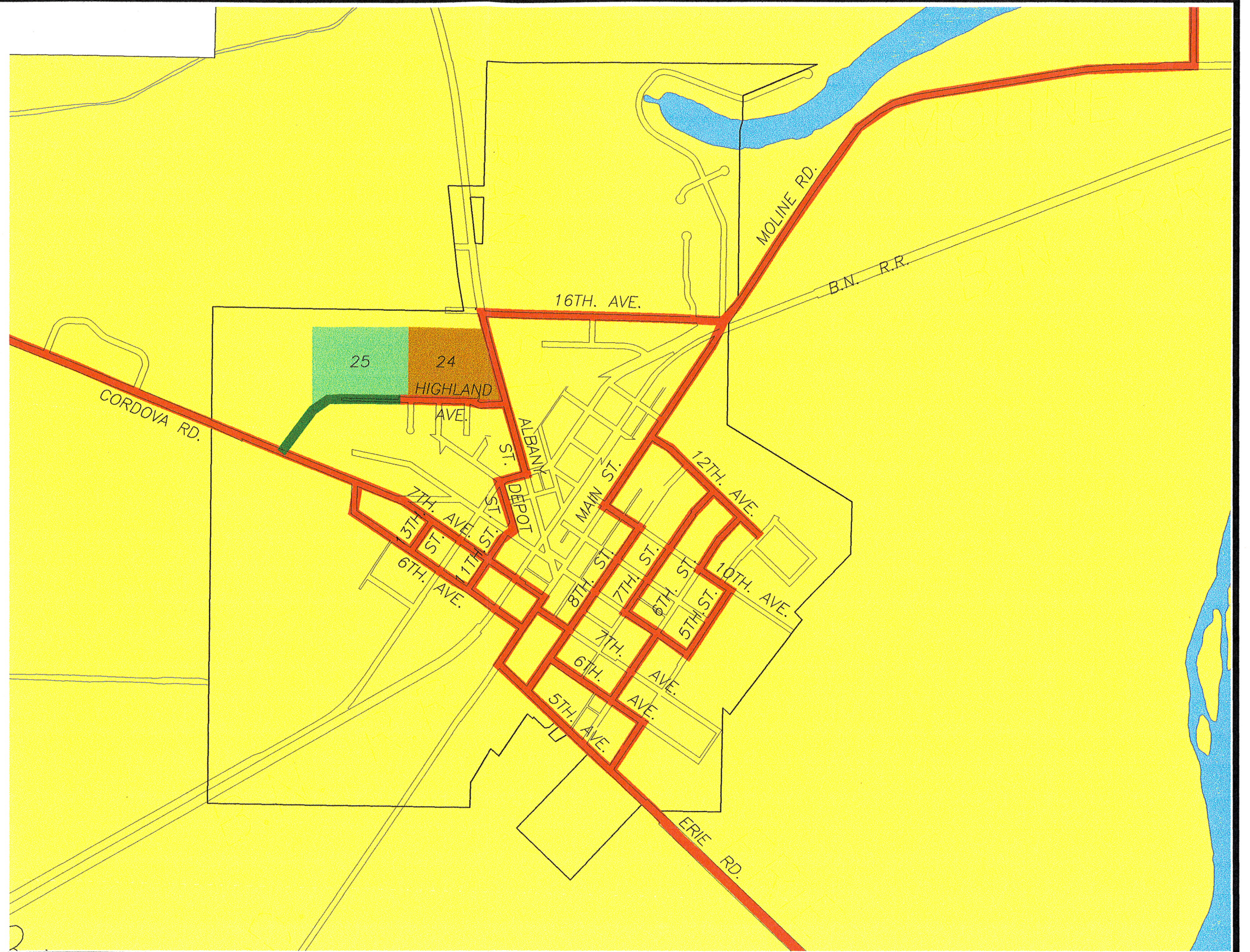


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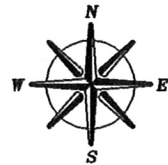


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24 ERIE CEMETARY
25 HERITAGE PARK

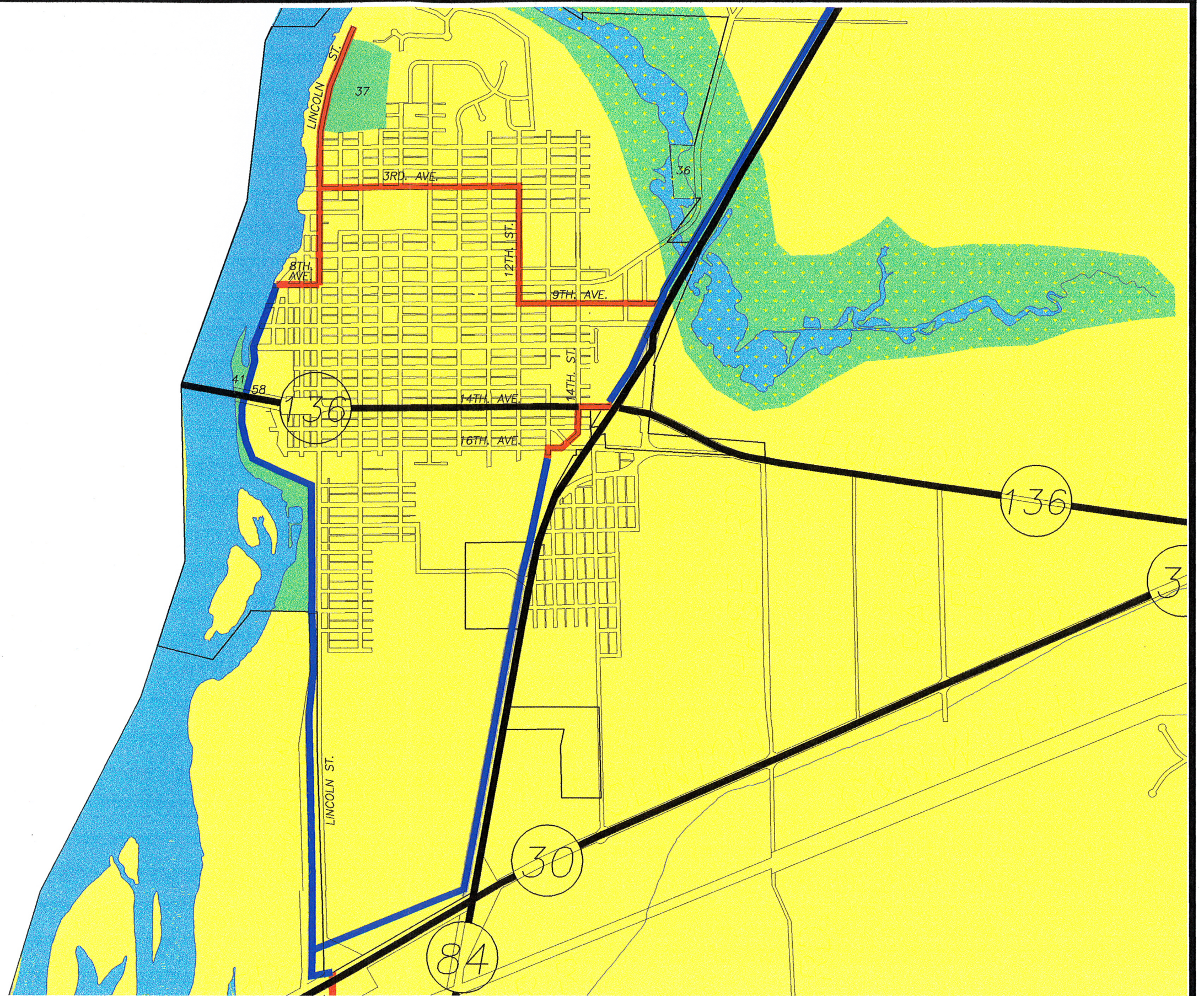


FULTON

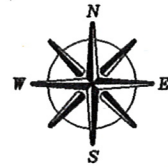


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 PROPOSED DEDICATED TRAIL ———
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 PROPOSED GREENWAY

36 CATTAIL PARK
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 58 DUTCH WINDMILL

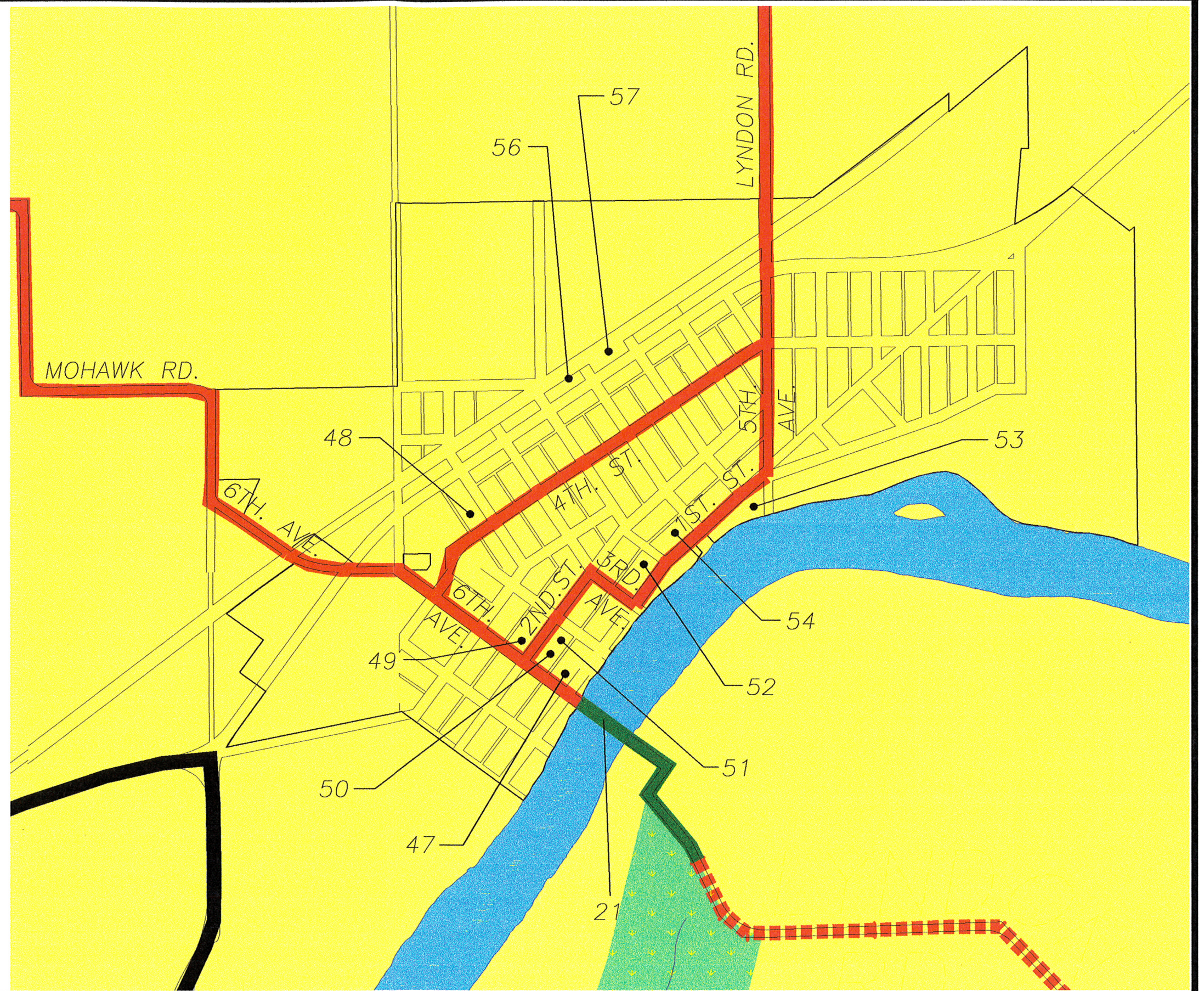


LYNDON

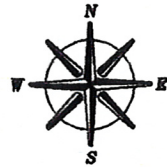


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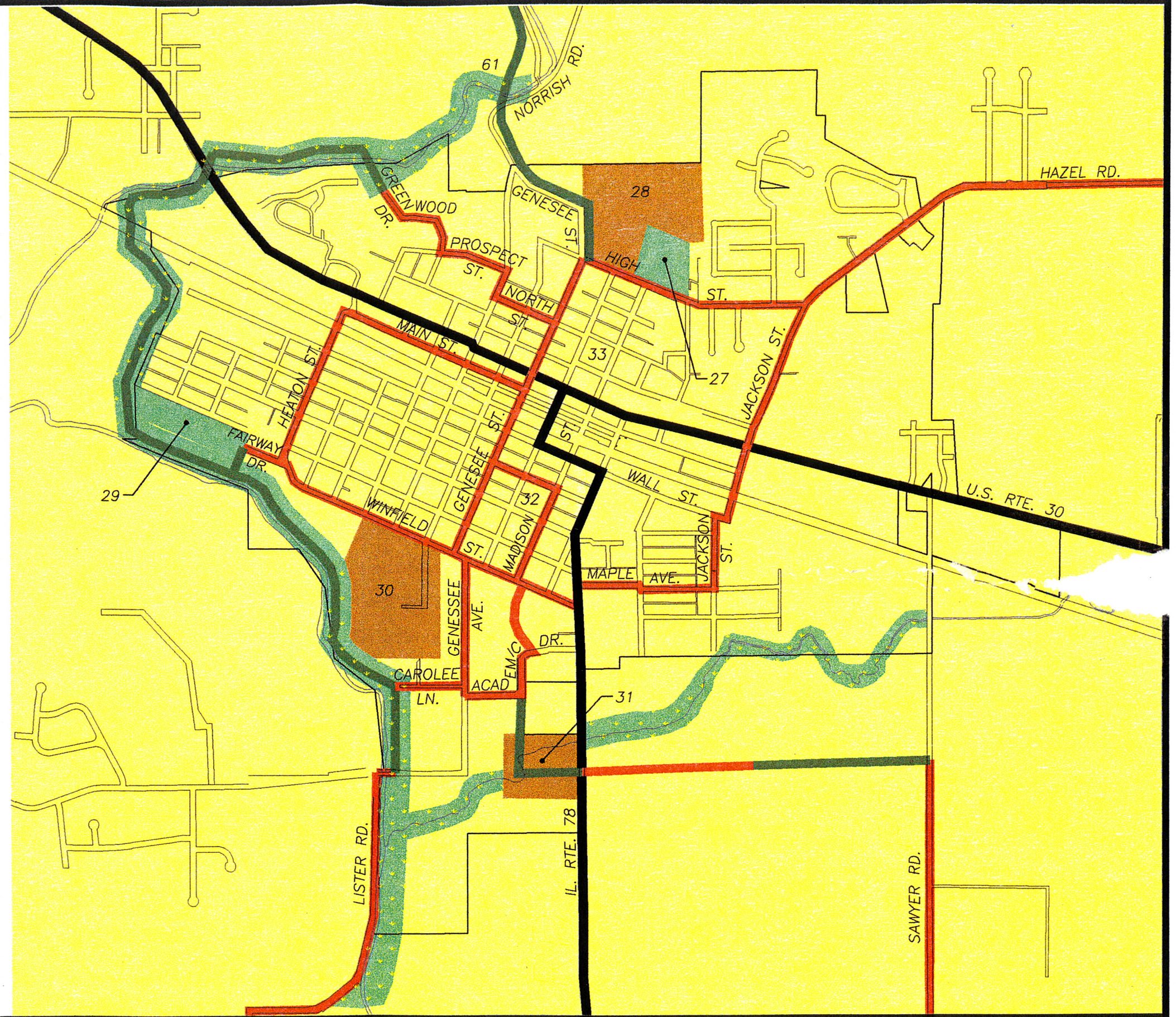


MORRISON

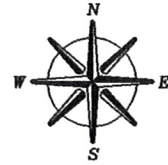


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- 27 KELLY PARK
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- 61 RED COVERED BRIDGE

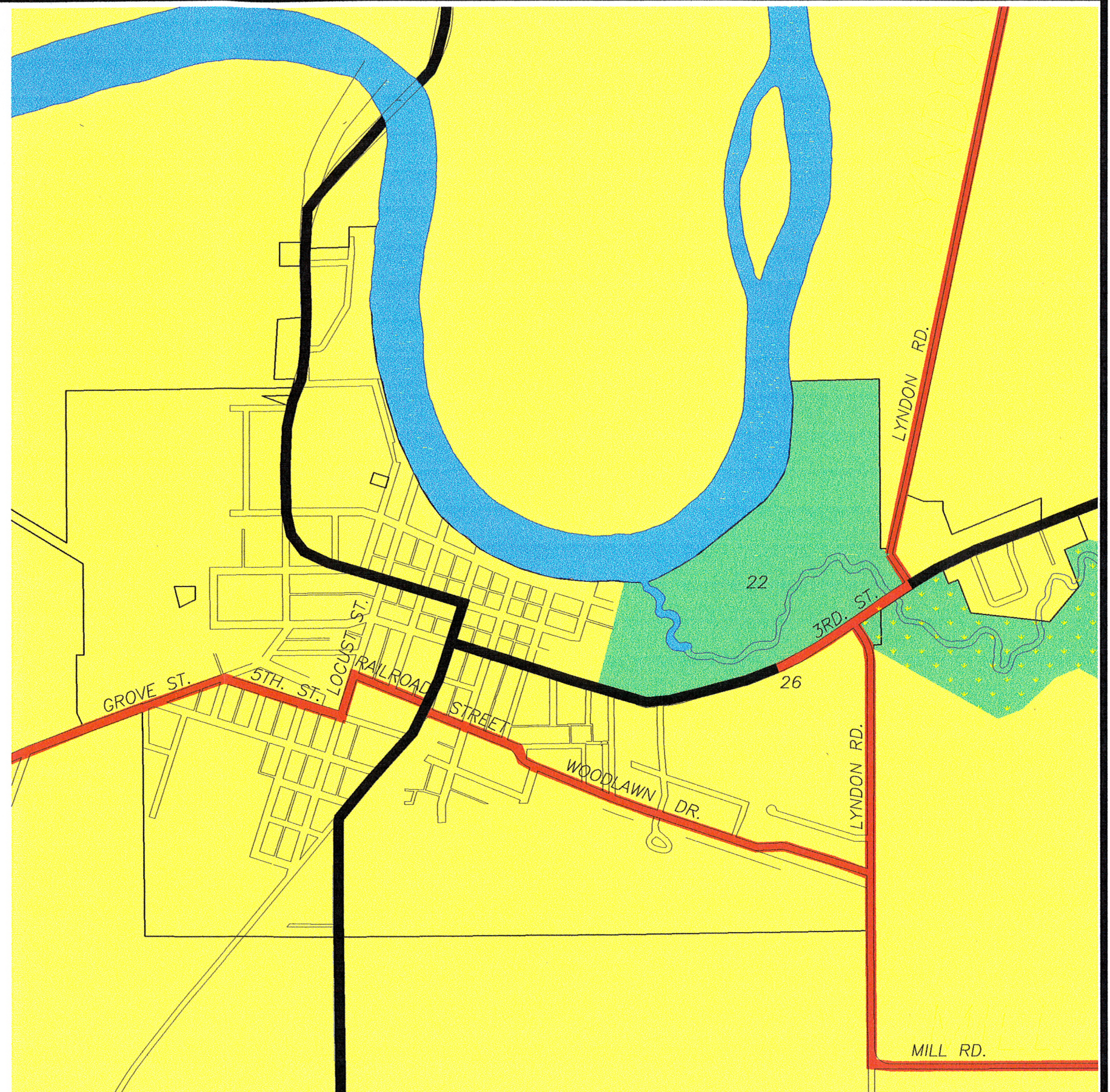


PROPHETSTOWN



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22 PROPHETSTOWN STATE PARK
26 ASA CROOK HOUSE

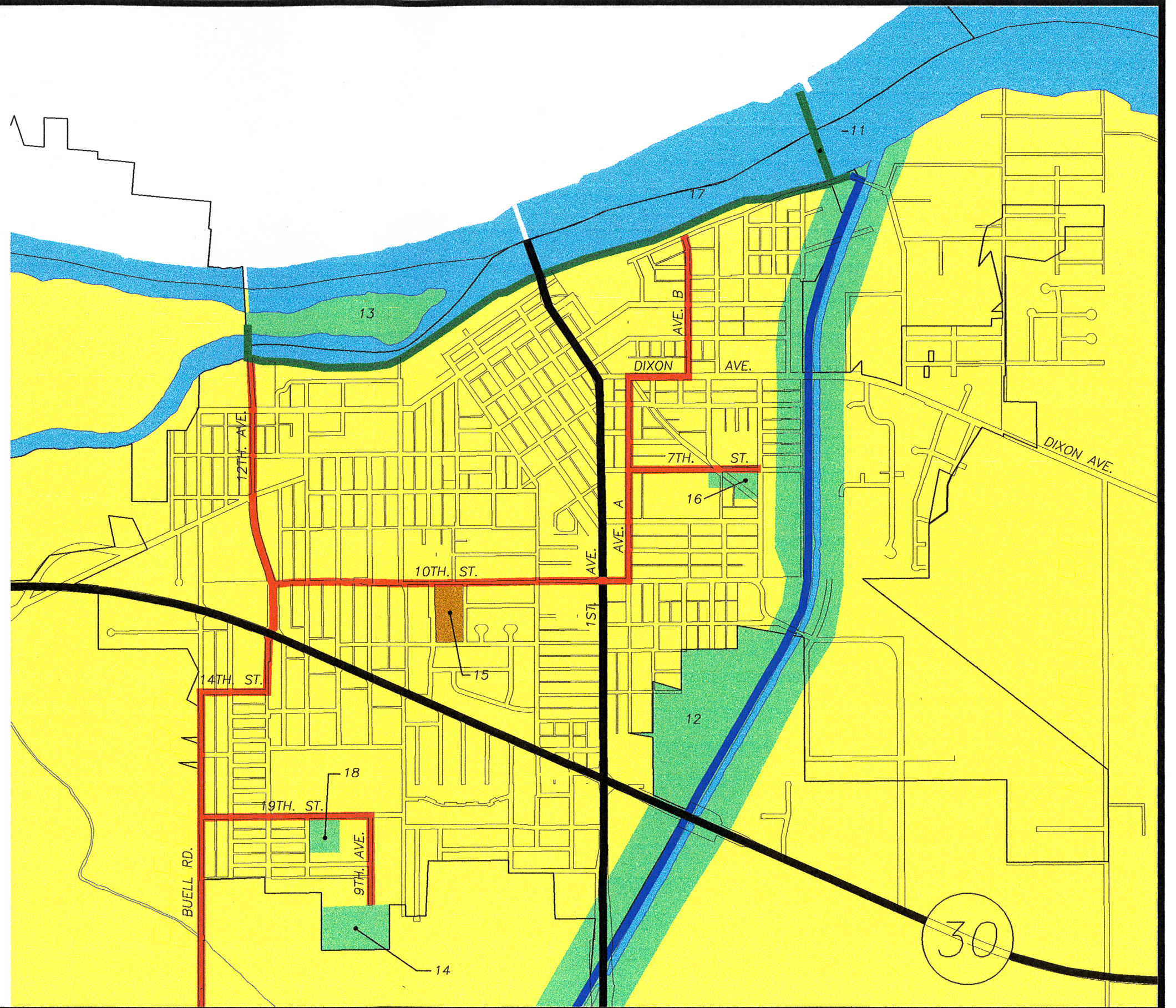


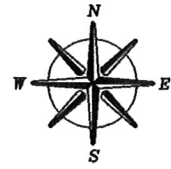
ROCK FALLS



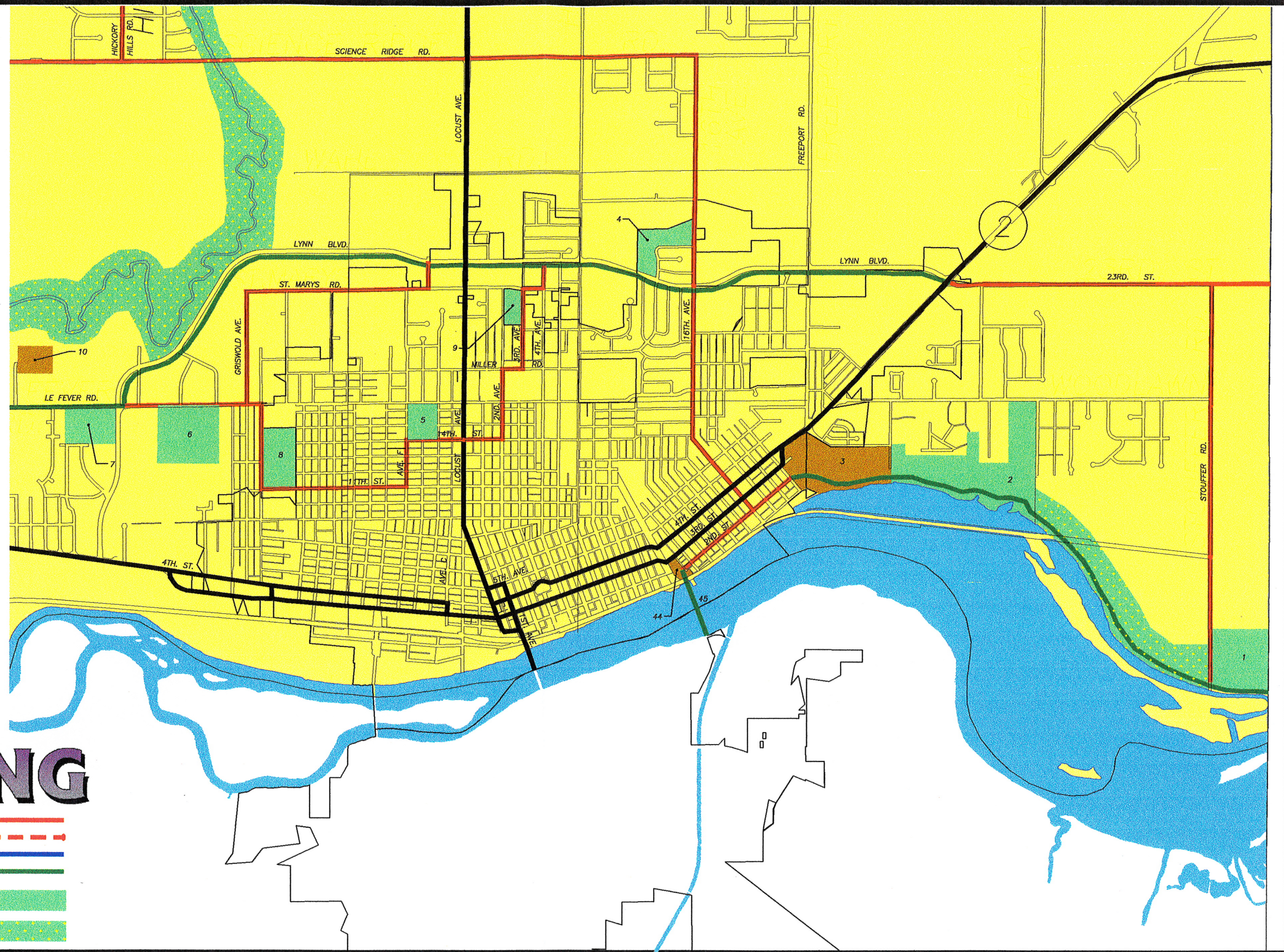
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- 13 LAWRENCE PARK
- 14 SEIGLINGER PARK
- 15 ROCK FALLS MUNICIPAL COMPLEX
- 16 WALLINGFORD PARK
- 17 RIVERSIDE PARK
- 18 DILLON PARK





- 1 OPPOLD MARINA
- 2 SINNISSIPPI PARK
- 3 RIVERSIDE CEMETARY
- 4 THOMAS PARK
- 5 KILGOUR PARK
- 6 GARTNER PARK
- 7 EVERLY PARK
- 8 SCHEID PARK
- 9 STERLING RECREATION CENTER
- 10 WESTWOOD COMPLEX
- 44 DILLON HOME AND MUSEUM
- 45 UPPER DAM



STERLING

- SHARED USE TRAIL (PAVED)
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- EXISTING DEDICATED TRAIL
- PROPOSED DEDICATED TRAIL
- EXISTING GREENWAY OR PARK
- PROPOSED GREENWAY

