



Chichaqua Valley Trail

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www.chichaquavalleytrail.org



The Chichaqua Valley Trail (CVT) takes you across Central Iowa's rolling hills, wooded clearings, picturesque rivers, sprawling meadows, rolling farmland, and beautiful hardwood timber on a 30-mile journey.

Designated as a National Recreation Trail in 2007, CVT is a peaceful change of pace from trails of the nearby Des Moines metro area. It follows a right-of-way constructed by the Diagonal Railroad in 1883. The rail line was abandoned in 1984, reopening three years later as the CVT, a multi-purpose recreational path.

Chichaqua (pronounced "cha-chak-wah") derives from a Fox Indian word early settlers mistook to mean "skunk". It actually refers to the smell of wild onions along the Skunk River, which the trail crosses.

The CVT trail connects a mile west of Berwick at a junction with the Gay Lea Wilson Trail to Altoona and Des Moines – also connecting to Ankeny, the High Trestle and Neal Smith Trails.



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TRAIL TOWNS

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BAXTER: In 1883, the community of Baxter was excited about the Diagonal Railroad being built from Marshalltown to Des Moines. However, they couldn't understand why the station was located a mile and a half to the northeast of town. Recognizing the importance of being on the rail line, the town migrated towards the station. Baxter is the north trailhead of the Chichaqua Valley Trail.

BERWICK: Berwick was first settled in 1846 near the confluence Fourmile Creek and Muchikinock Creek. Henry Taylor platted the town in 1884 and secured a station on the newly constructed Diagonal Railroad. He named the town after his hometown of Berwick, Maine. Berwick was home to several coal mines, including the 200-acre Norwood-White's Klondike No. 1 until 1920.

BONDURANT: Pioneer A.C. Bondurant arrived in Iowa in 1857. With the 1883 building of the Diagonal Railroad, the town of Bondurant was platted and he offered a lot to anyone who would build on it. The town's first business was a general store and post office, with the second floor serving as a church, social center and undertaker's parlor. Through the years, A.C. Bondurant's homestead became a thriving rural community, blending farming with commercial enterprises. Today, it is the largest city along the trail.

IRA: Ira was established in 1883, after a plat was drawn to coincide with the Diagonal Railroad's placement of a depot and water tank. Some suggest Ira was named for a railroad superintendent, while others attribute the name to a local resident.

MINGO: Mingo's history started with the small coal-mining village of Greencastle in 1855. When the Diagonal Railroad built two miles north of Greencastle in 1883, citizens decided to relocate their town adjacent to the railroad. By 1884, fifteen businesses, two churches, five doctors and a large school moved to form Mingo, named after a town in Ohio. In 1904, the Newton and Northwestern railroad was also constructed through town, establishing Mingo as an important Jasper county town.

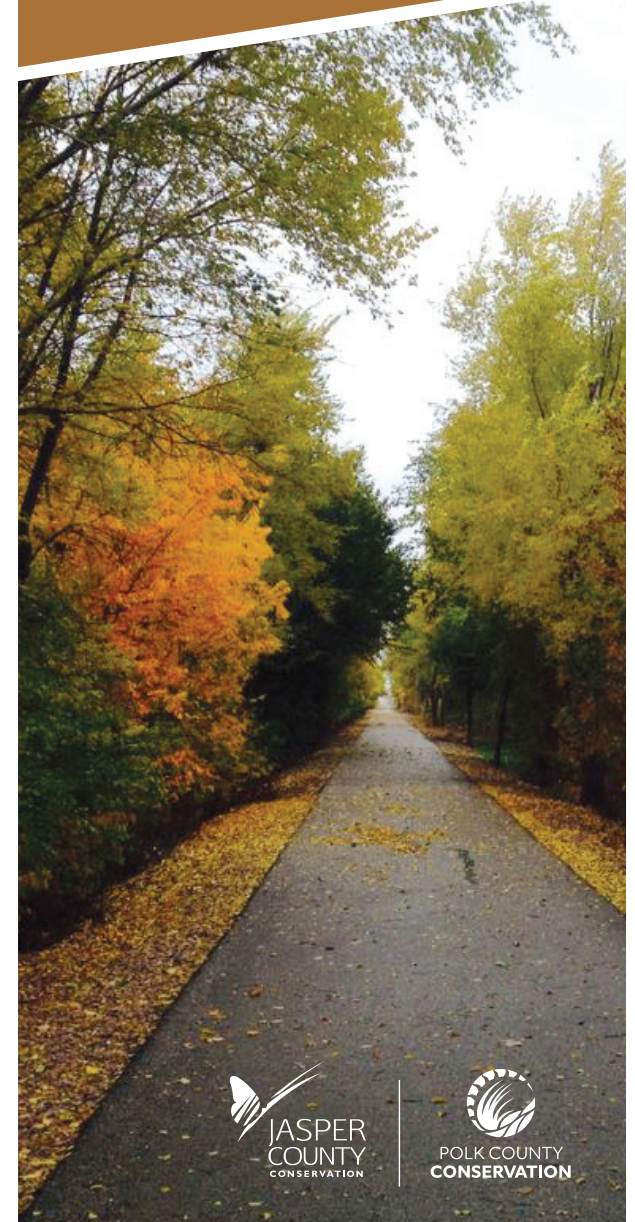
NORWOODVILLE: Norwoodville is an unincorporated community in Polk County, Iowa, west of Fourmile Creek. Norwoodville was home to several coal mines. The Norwood-White No. 1 was 215 feet deep, accessing a 4-ft thick coal seam. By 1908, this mine extended over roughly 200 acres. In 1914, Norwood-White produced over 100,000 tons of coal, ranking among the top 24 coal producers in the state with 129 members.

VALERIA: In the early 1860s, the William H. Johnson family left to escape the Civil War to settle in Valeria. William's daughter, Edna Valeria, fell in love with a young civil engineer named McBride, who worked for the Diagonal Railroad. They convinced her father to allow the tracks to cross the Johnson land and an agreement was reached on naming the town Valeria. Edna ultimately married McBride, and subsequently Valeria adopted the slogan, "Town of Railroad Romance". In addition to the Diagonal mainline, there was a three-mile spur line to tap coal along the Skunk River, and a junction with the Colfax and Northern Railroad.

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MAP KEY

- Trail Information
- Water Station
- Parking / Trailhead
- Playground
- Restrooms
- Shelter
- Food
- Bike Repair Station
- Tent Camping



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BONDURANT:
 BonduBikes
 BrickHouse Fitness
 Brick Street Cafe
 Farm Boys BBQ
 Founders Irish Pub
 Reclaimed Rails Brewing Company
 Somewhere in the Middle Coffee Shop
 The Creamery

MINGO:
 Greencastle Tavern
 Station Street Cycle Shop

BAXTER:
 Baxter Family Market
 Baxter Veteran's Memorial and Huey
 Benola's Pub & Patio
 Hilltop Haven
 Java on Main
 The Hideout

AREA BIKE SHOPS:
 Kyle's Bikes – Ankeny
 Rasmussen Bike Shop – Altoona